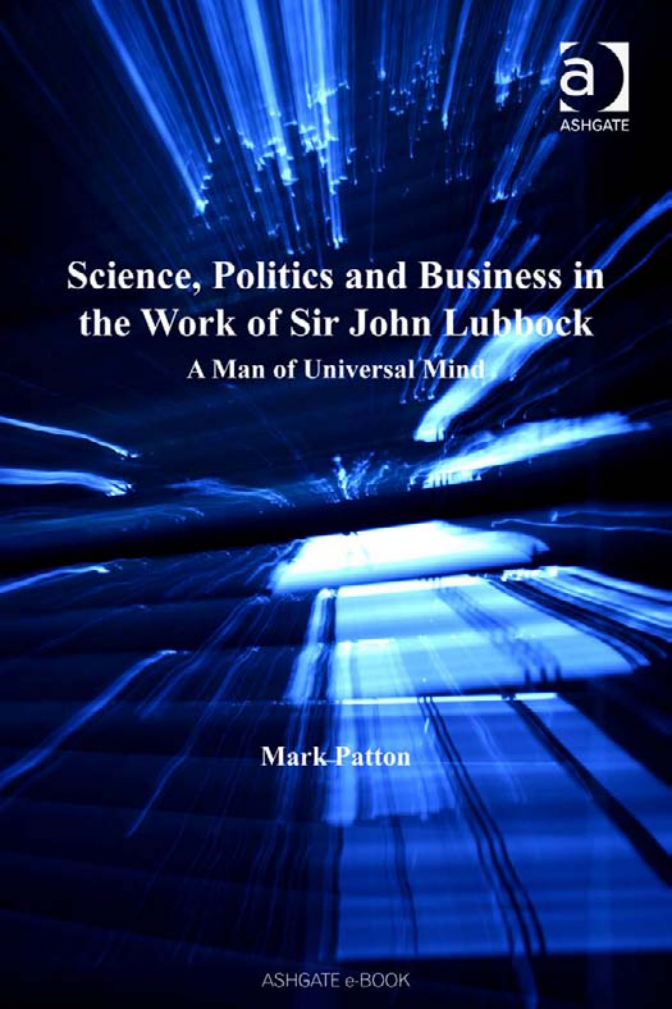
ASHGATE
Science, Politics and Business in the Work of Sir John Lubbock
A Man of Universal Mind
Mark Patton
ASHGATE e-BOOK

SCIENCE, POLITICS AND BUSINESS IN THE WORK OF SIR JOHN LUBBOCK

Sir John Lubbock (1834–1913), first Lord Avebury, was a leading figure in the scientific, political and economic world of Victorian Britain, and his life provides an illuminating case study into the ways that these different facets were interlinked during the nineteenth century. Born into a Kent banking family, Lubbock's education was greatly influenced by his neighbour, Charles Darwin, and after the publication of *The Origin of Species*, he was one of his most vocal supporters.

A pioneer of both entomology and archaeology and a successful author, Lubbock also ran the family bank from 1865 until his death in 1913, and served as a Liberal MP from 1870 until his ennoblement in 1900. In all these roles he proved extremely successful, but it is the inter-relations between science, politics and business that forms the core of this book. In particular it explores the way in which Lubbock acted as a link between the scientific worlds of Darwin, Huxley and Tyndall, the political world of Gladstone and Chamberlain and the business world of Edison and Carnegie. By tying these threads together this study shows the important role Lubbock played in defining and popularising the Victorian ideal of progress and its relationship to society, culture and Empire.

About the author

Dr Mark Patton is Dean of the Harrow Business School at the University of Westminster, UK.

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A Man of Universal Mind

MARK PATTON
University of Westminster, UK

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Series Editor Preface

John Lubbock was one of the most eminent men of his day. He was best known for promoting in Parliament the first secular bank holiday, in August, informally called St Lubbock's Day; and for his list of the 100 best books. His wealthy background, his political career which culminated in his being made Lord Avebury and a Privy Councillor, his scientific and financial abilities, conciliatory disposition, and wide circle of friends and admirers made him a valuable president or treasurer of learned societies, and member of important commissions, especially concerned with scientific education. He had the gift of writing accessibly about scientific matters, at a time just before science became fully professionalized and popularizing despised: his writings were often reprinted, and widely translated.

Lasting fame in science is bestowed upon those whose interests are narrower and deeper than his. Working in natural history, especially of invertebrates (stemming from meeting, as a child, his neighbour Charles Darwin who became his friend and patron), he was famous for his 'tame wasp' and for his studies on the social insects: ants, bees and wasps. Archaeology was also one of his passions: he divided the 'stone age' into Palaeolithic and Neolithic, realized how long prehistory had been, and promoted the first bills to protect ancient monuments, including the huge stone circle at Avebury from which he took his title. As an anthropologist, he guided the Ethnological Society through a crisis and split promoted by racist sympathisers with the American confederate states. Bringing these interests together, he explored parallels between early mankind and modern 'savages'. A 'moderniser', promoting progressive Darwinism, he joined with T.H. Huxley and others in the X-club, often seen at the time as a sinister agnostic conspiracy; but Lubbock remained an Anglican,first President of the Metaphysical Society devoted to discussing issues of belief, in the hope that differences between reasonable men could be reconciled, and common ground found.

Scientists whose names are associated with some particular theory, equation, chemical reaction, law, process, episode or unit are remembered by posterity. This has the unfortunate effect of perpetuating the popular notion that science is advanced mainly by solitary geniuses, introspective, eccentric, and absent-minded about the ordinary affairs of life. There are such people, but this does not reflect either the pre-professional generations of whom Lubbock was one of the last, or the next generation brought up with a scientific education of the sort which he promoted. Modern science is and always has been public knowledge: the arcane speculations and practices of the alchemist, divulged only to initiates, belong to an earlier epoch. That means that men like Lubbock, a well-connected polymath promoting scientific societies for the free exchange of knowledge in an era of rapid specialization, were vital. Science didn't come free: the public, supporting it as consumers and taxpayers, wanted to know about it; and Lubbock had the Enlightenment conviction that science

was liberating, that the truth will set us free – and the energy to write and speak (he was an excellent lecturer) about it.

Even now that science is a career rather than a hobby, there is more to scientists than science: they have private, and sometimes public lives. Down to Lubbock's time, when most men of science had to support themselves by taking on a profession, probably as doctor, parson, lawyer or industrialist, their lives were often not dominated by the science that has subsequently made them famous. This makes the biographer's task difficult: and for men such as Robert Boyle and Joseph Priestley we have sometimes had 'scientific' lives concentrating upon these achievements only and pushing everything else into a hazy background. This is not how people saw their own lives; and it prevents us seeing them in the context of their times. Thus different people with interests in politics, banking and science might portray Lubbock, 'full of wise saws and modern instances', as though he were three people of the same name who lived at the same time. He wasn't, and this biography is to be commended for bringing together his many interests so that we get a picture of the earnest Victorian world in which he moved, and how he promoted science through his discoveries, his financial expertise, his committee work, and his political career. He occupied a central place in the intellectual networks of the day, and his life shows how wires were pulled, ideas crossed intellectual frontiers, and science advanced in a period of rapid social, economic and political change.

DAVID M. KNIGHT
University of Durham

Acknowledgements

Academics commonly acknowledge the inspiration that they have drawn from those who taught them, and in my case I must certainly acknowledge the role that Professor Glyn Daniel and Professor Colin Renfrew played in sparking my interest in the history of archaeology during my undergraduate years at Cambridge. It is less common that we acknowledge the inspiration that we draw from those we have taught, but in this instance it would be most remiss of me not to do so. At the University of Greenwich I taught an undergraduate module on historic gardens. Students had to choose a specific garden on which to undertake a project, and Jennifer Magni chose Sir John Lubbock's garden at High Elms. It was one of the best projects I have seen, and reignited in me the spark of interest that I had carried with me since my own student days.

I am most grateful to members of the Lubbock family: notably the present Lord Avebury, his son the Hon. Lyulph Lubbock, his niece Emma Lubbock and her husband, Michael Page, for allowing me free access to the archive materials in their collection, clarifying various points of family history and pointing me in the direction of relevant material. Lyulph Lubbock is a keen family historian and has been a tremendous source of knowledge. I am grateful, also, to the archivists and staff of the British Library, Cambridge University Library, Royal Institution Archive, Royal Society Archive, Imperial College London Archive, University of London Archive, Bristol University Archive and Centre for Kentish Studies, who have gone out of their way to facilitate my access to material of relevance.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to the many colleagues and friends who have openly shared with me the fruits of their own academic labours, acted as a sounding board for my ideas and offered constructive comments on parts of my text, notably Professor David Knight, Professor Peter Bowler, Professor Richard Harding, Dr David Livingstone, Dr Ruth Barton and Charlotte Taylor. I owe an even greater debt to my personal assistant at the University of Westminster, Catherine Ossei, who has (quite remarkably) managed my diary in such a way as to allow me the time to research and write this book at the same time as running a large and complex school.

Last, but certainly not least, I am very grateful to Ruth, who has been a fountain of inspiration, good humour and common sense, at times when my mind was moving between three centuries.

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List of Abbreviations

BL Add.	British Library, Additional Manuscripts Series.
CUL DAR	Cambridge University Library, Darwin Archive.
Dreams	Notebook, in John Lubbock's hand, recording his dreams from 1899 to 1902, in Lubbock family possession.
Harriet Lubbock	Diary of Harriet Lubbock (John's mother), 1834–54, in Lubbock family possession.[1]
ICL HP	Imperial College London, Huxley Papers.
PRO	Public Records Office.
RI JT	Royal Institution, Tyndall Archive.
RS LUA	Royal Society, Lubbock Archive.
UoLSA	University of London Senate Archive.

1 There are two copies of the diary in the family possession: an original and an edited contemporary copy (the latter in a different hand). There are minor differences between the two. Pagination references in this book, except where otherwise stated, relate to the copy. The precise date of the copy and the identity of the copyist are unknown.

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Introduction

A Man of Universal Mind

On the 30 April 1834, Charles Darwin, together with some of the officers and men of the *Beagle*, was trekking up the Santa Cruz River in southern Patagonia. The previous day they had '... hailed with joy the snowy summits of the Cordilleras as they were seen occasionally peeping through their dusky envelope of clouds'.[1] He was just over two years into a five-year voyage of discovery which would provide him with the raw material for a lifetime of scientific research.

Eight thousand miles away in London, Harriet, the wife of the banker and amateur astronomer, John Lubbock, gave birth to a son, their first, whom they also named John. Some years later, fortune was to bring Darwin and the young Lubbock together as neighbours and scientific collaborators – and his relationship with Darwin was to become one of the defining factors in John Lubbock's career.

Though separated by a generation, Darwin and Lubbock had much in common. Both were born into the emergent mercantile class, Darwin an heir to the Wedgwood fortune fired in the potteries of the English Midlands, Lubbock to a banking dynasty built up by his father and grandfather in the City of London. Both families held liberal and progressive views: opposed to slavery, in favour of free trade, passionate about science and suspicious of religious dogma.

Under Darwin's tutelage, the young John Lubbock was to become a naturalist, first helping with the illustrations for Darwin's monumental tomes on barnacles,[2] and then publishing his own first papers, based on Darwin's collections, at the age of 19.[3] After the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859, he became one of Darwin's most enthusiastic supporters, a pioneer of entomology[4] and the study of animal behaviour[5] and a popularizer of natural history. He spoke on the evolutionists' side in the famous British Association debate of 1860, in which Thomas Huxley and Joseph Hooker clashed with 'Soapy Sam' Wilberforce, the Bishop of Oxford.

Lubbock's achievements, however, were not to be limited to natural history. He became a significant figure in archaeology and ethnology, laying the ground for an enduring marriage between these two disciplines.[6] He contributed also to geomorphology, with works on the scenery of Switzerland and England.[7] He was a significant politician, becoming Liberal MP for Maidstone in 1870, and for London

1 R. Keynes (ed.) 1988, 237.
2 C. Darwin 1851; 1851–54; 1854.
3 J. Lubbock 1853 a–c.
4 J. Lubbock 1873a; 1882a.
5 J. Lubbock 1888.
6 J. Lubbock 1865a; 1870a.
7 J. Lubbock 1896; 1902a.

University in 1880 and, as an MP, was one of the most effective backbenchers of his day, pushing through legislation on Bank Holidays, the protection of ancient monuments, the reduction of working hours and the establishment of public libraries.[8] Amid all of this, it is easy to forget that his primary occupation was as a banker, who played a key role in the development of the British banking system, originating the Country Clearing System in 1858, which allowed cheques drawn on any UK bank to be processed by any other without transaction fees; the practical basis for an integrated British economy with free movement of capital, much as the electronic transfer of monies provides the basis for an integrated global economy today.

By the mid 1870s, when Lubbock turned 40, his was a household name, one of the top celebrities and key opinion formers of Victorian England. He was, by this time, Sir John Lubbock, having inherited the family baronetcy on his father's death in 1865. He was already a pillar of the English scientific establishment, Vice President of the Royal Society, Vice Chancellor of the University of London, and the author of four books (*Prehistoric Times*, *The Origins of Civilization*, *The Origin & Metamorphosis of Insects* and *British Wild Flowers Considered in Relation to Insects.*) With the passing of the Bank Holidays Act in 1871 he had achieved near universal popularity. The Daily Mail wrote:

> Blessings upon the head of Sir John Lubbock, who invented a decent excuse for holidays for Englishmen. We never wished for a revival of Saints' Days but we did certainly wish that some great inventive genius could discover a reason why the people should not work all the year round, Sundays, Good Fridays and Christmas Days excepted. Well, Sir John Lubbock was scientific enough to invent Bank Holidays, and hence on Monday thousands of Her Majesty's subjects were able to enjoy themselves.[9]

The sketch writer for the *World* described him[10] as 'A man of universal mind' who had 'strolled into Parliament' but was 'hardly a politician, and at all events absolutely devoid of political partisanship'. 'The true impression', the writer continued, 'is that Sir John Lubbock, banker, savant, Member of Parliament, is a country gentleman to whom science ... has been a relaxation and pursuit, just as classical studies were to a bygone generation of statesmen'.

It was precisely this combination of Liberal politics, science and commerce that defined the mindset of the Victorian upper middle class to which Lubbock belonged. He shared these interests and concerns with an influential circle of friends that included Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley, the sociologist Herbert Spencer and the botanist Joseph Hooker. In 1864, Lubbock, Huxley, Spencer, Hooker and four like-minded friends established the X-Club, which has been described[11] as 'a sort of Masonic Darwinian Lodge, invisible to outsiders' which sought to 'free nature from a reactionary theology, free science from aristocratic patronage and place an intellectual priesthood at the head of English culture'. The X-Club[12] was to dominate

8 B. Mallet 1924; H. Hutchinson 1914.
9 *News of the World*, 7 August 1871.
10 Cited by B. Mallet 1924, 49.
11 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 526.
12 R. Macleod 1970; J. Jensen 1972; R. Barton 1990, 1998.

the English scientific establishment in the 1870s and 1880s, keeping the presidency of the Royal Society firmly in its grip from 1873 to 1885.[13]

For the members of the X-Club, and for the many who were influenced by their writings and by the public lectures that they gave, Liberal politics, science and commerce were intimately bound up together. It was Spencer, not Darwin, who coined the phrase 'the survival of the fittest, an idea that both explained the natural evolution of species and provided proof positive of the merits of free trade. Biological evolution became a metaphor for the development of human civilization and Lubbock[14] picked up the story where Darwin had left off, using archaeology and ethnology to show how civilization had emerged from 'savagery', and how peaceful commercial competition had replaced the brutal 'struggle for existence' which dominated the animal kingdom. It was the members of the X-Club (and most notably Huxley, Lubbock and Spencer) who did more than anyone else to popularize 'Darwinism' through their books, articles and lectures. In their hands, however, 'Darwinism' became something subtly different from what Darwin (a close friend of Lubbock and Huxley, but not a member of the X-Club) had envisaged. Darwin himself rarely used the term 'evolution', preferring the more neutral word 'transmutation'[15] to denote the changes that had occurred in species as the result (as he saw it) of wholly random and accidental variations. For Darwin there was no underlying logic and no inevitability about 'progress'. Lubbock, Huxley and Spencer never explicitly took issue with Darwin on this point, but the model of evolution that leaps out from their pages (and which continues to influence popular perceptions to this day) is much more ordered and progressive than that which Darwin actually presented.[16]

The model of evolution promoted by Lubbock and the X-Club provided the intellectual basis for a Liberalism that was quite different to what we understand by this term. Whilst some themes are familiar (Lubbock was, for example, a prominent advocate of proportional representation, of public libraries and of legislation to regulate working hours) others are antithetical to modern 'liberal' opinion. Lubbock came to see imperialism as a positive liberal movement, arising from the abolition of slavery and with a mission to bring the benefits of English civilization and free trade to all parts of the world. He served as Chairman of the British Empire Federation League, the ultimate aspiration of which (though an aspiration which Lubbock probably recognized as unrealistic) was to establish the empire as an integrated federal state. In a tribute to Huxley in 1900,[17] Lubbock asserted that '... the people of England, Scotland and Ireland – ay and of the colonies also – constitute one great nation'. Imperial integration, however far off, was, for Lubbock, a progressive aspiration, a move towards international and inter-cultural harmony, peace and tolerance, rather in the way that European integration is viewed by some modern 'liberal' commentators.

13 J.D. Hooker 1873–78; W. Spottiswoode 1878–83; T.H. Huxley 1883–85.

14 J. Lubbock 1865a; 1870a.

15 P. Bowler 1988, 13.

16 C. Darwin [1882] 1975, for example 117–8.

17 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) (ed.) 1903.

For those who shared Lubbock's outlook, slavery and socialism were equally to be deplored. Slavery was an abomination, not only because of its obvious cruelty but also because it was an affront to the 'scientific' principles of free trade. Both Darwin and Huxley had first-hand experience of slavery and both had been repelled by it. Darwin was shocked by the brutality that he saw shown towards slaves in Brazil, and later followed enthusiastically the progress of the Union armies in the American Civil War.[18] Huxley was equally shocked by what he saw in Brazil, making a favourable contrast between the black slaves and their 'beastly Portuguese masters',[19] but was more ambiguous about the American Civil War, having a sister in Tennessee and a nephew in the Confederate army. He wrote to his sister, telling her that his heart was with the South but his head with the North, not out of 'sentimental sympathy with the negro' but because 'slavery means, for the white man, bad political economy, bad social morality, bad internal political organization and a bad influence on the free labour and freedom all over the World'.[20] Lubbock was similarly ambiguous: whilst opposing slavery he feared the consequences of civil war in America and, in a postscript to an article on American archaeology, in which he had discussed the destruction of earlier American civilizations, he wrote:

> Let us hope that our kinsmen in America may yet pause ere they, in like manner, sacrifice a common prosperity to a mutual hatred.[21]

Socialism posed an equally unwelcome threat to Lubbock's 'scientific' approach to politics. In a Presidential Address to the Sociological Society in 1908,[22] Lubbock (ennobled in 1900 as Lord Avebury) recognized the 'lofty aims and excellent intentions' of socialists, but insisted that their policies would, in practice, '... pauperise those they wish to help and make their victims more dependent instead of independent'. In most respects, Lubbock was optimistic about human nature but not, apparently, in relation to peoples' financial behaviour: 'Mankind, in general', he insisted, 'desires to obtain the maximum of effect with the minimum of effort ... There is indeed no practical limit to the number of those who may be tempted over the borderline, and reduced to paupers, if public funds are freely devoted to the purpose'.[23]

This view of human nature (harking back to the Poor Law debates of the 1830s) was not the only basis for Lubbock's rejection of socialism. Central to the political vision of Lubbock and his circle was the notion that cooperation, rather than conflict, between social classes was the key to progress. This was not new – nineteenth- century Liberals had always seen government as '... a matter of integrating and harmonising different classes and interest groups within the political nation'[24] and Lord John Russell had spoken in 1831 about the power of politics to '... bind firmly and kindly

18 F. Darwin [1892] 1958, 263.
19 L. Huxley 1903, I, 47.
20 Ibid., 363.
21 J Lubbock 1863a, 26.
22 Cited by B. Mallet 1924, 59–60.
23 Ibid.
24 J.B. Parry 1993, 3.

the different classes of society together'.[25] In 1890, Huxley wrote an article entitled 'Capital, the Mother of Labour',[26] in which he insisted that capital and labour were necessarily close allies. Lubbock put this concept of class cooperation into practice by working with Cardinal Manning and others to mediate between employers and employees in a number of prominent industrial disputes, such as the London docks strike of 1889[27] and the London omnibus dispute of 1891.[28]

When Lubbock entered Parliament in 1870, the Liberal benches he joined were dominated by the figure of William Ewart Gladstone. Gladstone had been elected as a (Tory) MP the year before Lubbock was born, and had given a maiden speech opposing the abolition of slavery. He split with the Tories, only in 1859, becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer in Palmerston's government and entering 10 Downing Street two years before Lubbock's by-election victory in Maidstone. Gladstone was a generation older than Lubbock and his Liberalism (as a convert from Peelite Toryism) based on different intellectual premises. In contrast to Lubbock and the X-Clubbers, he drew far more inspiration from Classical literature than he did from science, and was deeply wedded to a conservative theological position (Bishop Wilberforce, Huxley's sparring partner in the evolution debate, was a close friend, and had campaigned with him in Manchester).[29] Lubbock, however, respected Gladstone's reputation for fiscal prudence and, in particular, his success in reducing the national debt (one of Lubbock's key concerns) from £809 million in 1859 to £654 million in 1895.[30] He also admired Gladstone's approach to foreign affairs and, following the announcement of Gladstone's retirement from the Commons in 1894, he gave a generous speech in which he expressed the view that '... the noblest services that Mr Gladstone had rendered to his countrymen and, we might say, to the civilized World, had been by promoting the settlement of international differences by the rational and Christian method of arbitration, rather than by the cruel and barbarous chance of war'.[31]

During the 1880s, however, a fault-line was opening within the Liberal Party. The split occurred over the issue of Irish Home Rule, Gladstone's main priority following the general election of 1885. In the run-up to this election, some were even tipping Lubbock for appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer.[32] When Gladstone introduced the Home Rule Bill in 1886, however, Lubbock (along with a number of others) voted with the Conservatives. It was rejected again in May, and Gladstone dissolved Parliament. In the election that followed, the Tories stood down their candidates in those constituencies whose Liberal MPs had opposed the bill, and Lubbock was easily re-elected despite opposition from Gladstone's candidate, Frederic Harrison. From this point onwards Lubbock sat as a Liberal Unionist, and

25 3Hansard 800, 22 March 1831.
26 T.H. Huxley 1890, 532.
27 BL Add. 49653, 36–7, 44, 49, 64.
28 BL Add. 49656, 152–3.
29 R. Jenkins 1995.
30 J.B. Parry 1993.
31 Cited by B. Mallet 1924, 60.
32 H. Hutchinson 1914.

it was from the Conservative administration of Lord Salisbury that he received his peerage in 1900. The basis for Lubbock's opposition to Home Rule is not difficult to see. He feared that it would lead to 'the dismemberment of the Empire'[33] and that it would only give Irish nationalists 'a leverage for further demands'.[34] Typical of his combination of political and other interests, he used archaeology and linguistics to argue against the premise that Britain consisted of four distinct nations, suggesting a far more complex pattern of ethnicity in which:

> ... the Saxon division would include the greater portion of the East of England, the East of Ireland and of Scotland; the Celtic division would comprise most of the West of Ireland and West of Scotland with Wales and Cornwall; the Scandinavian the North of Scotland, several maritime districts on the West, Westmoreland, Cumberland and Pembroke, while the extreme South-West of Ireland would be Iberian.[35]

With such a complex ethnic division, any concept of separate 'nations' within Great Britain seemed to him to be absurd. Unionism was, for Lubbock, a logical extension of his scientific and liberal world view, and it was the Gladstonians, rather than the Liberal Unionists, that were departing from the core principles of liberalism. Privately, Lubbock considered that federalism, or even Irish independence, would be preferable to Home Rule, but at heart he wanted to see the union spreading out to embrace the colonies rather than contracting or fragmenting, and he was not prepared to play a role in brokering a compromise. For Lubbock, as for Lord Hartington (the Parliamentary leader of the Liberal Unionists), Gladstone's position on Home Rule represented a triumph of 'passion ... over reason; separation over assimilation; populist appeals over parliamentary discussion; mob values over manliness ... sentimentalism over science'.[36]

Ireland was not the only issue on which Lubbock became estranged from the Liberal Party establishment. The split of 1886 saw many of Lubbock's natural allies crossing with him into the Liberal Unionist camp: moderate Liberals such as Lord Hartington, Lord Sherbrooke, Lord Rothschild, Lord Selbourne, Leonard Courtney, Lyon Playfair and Craig Sellar. Some radicals within the Liberal Party saw their departure as an opportunity to change the direction of party policy. G.W.E. Russell wrote in 1889 that, having 'sloughed off the Whigs ... a Liberal Government is not likely again to be restrained from all energetic legislation by the territorial prejudices of actual and expectant dukes or the economic treasons of mediocre millionaires'.[37] A radical platform, based around the principle of direct redistribution of wealth had been developing within the party for some time. In 1886 Joseph Chamberlain (who himself defected with Lubbock to the Liberal Unionists, despite the differences in their political philosophies) talked of '... excessive inequalities in the distribution of

33 H. Hutchinson 1914, II, 19.
34 BL Add. 49650, 136–9.
35 *The Times*, 19 March 1887.
36 J.B. Parry 1993, 306.
37 G.W.E. Russell 1889, 493.

riches', of the benefits of locally administered 'socialism' and of the 'ransom' which men of property should be expected to pay in the form of rates and taxes.[38]

In 1889 Lubbock topped the poll, in the City of London, in the election for the newly established London County Council (LCC) (significantly, with the support of both the Liberals and the Conservatives) and rapidly found himself locked into conflict with a radical faction led by Charles Harrison. In contrast to his earlier career, he increasingly found himself, both in the LCC and in Parliament, opposed to those who were described as 'progressive'. It was a sign that the definition of 'progress' favoured by the X-Club was on the wane: not that Lubbock's views had changed, it was the world that had moved on. Lubbock, however, continued to promote his brand of scientific liberalism and, in 1892, the successful passage of the Public Libraries Act brought him a renewed popularity almost as great as that which had accompanied the Bank Holidays Act. Throughout the 1890s he was in great demand to open public libraries the length and breadth of the country. A cornerstone of his liberalism was the idea that education, rather than welfare, was the route to progress for the working classes, and he served as Principal of the Working Mens' College from 1893 to 1898. He put this belief into practice in his local role as a Kent squire, as well as in his political life, insisting (with strong backing from his wife, Ellen, and from Charles and Emma Darwin, but contrary to the wishes of the local vicar, George Sketchley Ffinden), that the schoolroom at Downe (of which Lubbock and Darwin were the key patrons) should be open as a reading room for local labourers on winter evenings.[39]

Lord Avebury's final estrangement from the Liberal Party establishment came in 1909, when he made a withering attack on Lloyd George's budget, condemning new taxes on property and income as '... unwise, unjust and unnecessary'[40] and the budget itself as representing an attack on the poor, rather than on poverty, since '... if you wage implacable war, as this budget does, against energy, industry and confidence and thrift, the whole nation will be worse off, but it is the poor who, in the long run, will be the greatest sufferers'.[41]

Throughout his political career, Lubbock continued to pursue his scientific interests and publishing activities. In 1882 he published *Ants, Bees & Wasps*,[42] in which he explored the social organization of insects, and used experimentation to show that bees and wasps could distinguish colours. He followed this up, in 1888, with *The Senses of Animals*,[43] exploring animal behaviour through experiments, including some on his own dog, Van. In 1911, in his last significant contribution to science, he returned to his early interests in archaeology and ethnology, with a volume on *Marriage, Totemism and Religion.*[44]

38 J.B. Parry 1993.
39 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 600–606.
40 BL Add. 49676, 133–5.
41 Cited by B. Mallet 1924, 46.
42 J. Lubbock 1882a.
43 J. Lubbock 1888.
44 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1911a.

Lubbock never hesitated to use his personal wealth to support the causes he cared about. Archaeology, the subject of his first book, was an enduring interest (Alice, his second wife, was the daughter of his friend and archaeological colleague, General Pitt-Rivers) and when, in 1871, he was informed of a planned development threatening the great stone circle of Avebury, he intervened and purchased the land. He later made further purchases at Avebury, including Silbury Hill (still in the family possession) and the West Kennett long barrow.

In his later years he became increasingly conscious of the influence that he had as an opinion former, and set out to use this influence through magazine articles and letters to newspapers on a variety of current topics and through books on subjects such as proportional representation[45] and free trade.[46] He also produced what we might today call 'lifestyle' or 'self-help' books: *The Pleasures of Life*[47] in 1887 and *The Use of Life* in 1894.[48] These were much criticized by the cognoscenti of the day (John Ruskin wrote of the '... rubbish & poison of Sir John's list' of 100 best books[49]) but were, nonetheless, best-sellers, and attracted great volumes of fan mail.[50]

A major concern for Lord Avebury, as he approached the end of his life, was the avoidance of war between the great powers of Europe. In March 1900, when the rumours were of impending war with France, he wrote to the French magazine, *Le Gaulois*, insisting that '... war between England and France (whatever the outcome might be) would be one of the greatest possible misfortunes for both'.[51] Five years later, when Germany had become the potential enemy, he played a leading role in establishing the Anglo-German Friendship Society, even attempting (unsuccessfully) to involve King Edward VII in rebutting a perception that the English people held a 'profound dislike' of Germany.[52]

Fate spared him the personal realization of his worst fears. Lord Avebury died at Kingsgate Castle on 28 May 1913. The war, which he had so assiduously endeavoured to prevent, was to claim the lives of two of his sons: Eric, who was killed in aerial combat over Ypres,[53] and Harold, who fell on the Western Front in April 1918. The ideals which had informed and inspired John Lubbock's political, academic and commercial work over the eight decades of his life were to be shattered: peaceful competition through commerce had not replaced forever the bloody struggle for existence; and intellectual and technological progress did not lead inevitably to an increase in human happiness – indeed they could, in the wrong hands or the wrong circumstances, make a horrendous contribution to the burden of human misery. These, however, were problems which the twentieth century would have to wrestle with. Lubbock's role had been to help shape and define the mindset of the nineteenth.

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45 J. Lubbock & H.O. Arnold-Foster 1884.
46 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1904.
47 J. Lubbock 1887, 1889.
48 J. Lubbock 1894.
49 *Pall Mall Gazette*, cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 261.
50 BL Add. 49678–9.
51 BL Add. 49667, 51–2.
52 BL Add. 49673, 177–8.
53 A. Lubbock 1918.

Viewed from the perspective of our own age, Lubbock's achievements were truly remarkable. He was one of the best-known businessmen of his day and, in an age of polarization between capital and labour, one of the few who was respected as much by ordinary working people as by his fellow capitalists, a plutocrat whose wealth was resented by almost nobody. In politics he never held (and probably never sought) high office, yet as a backbencher he had an almost unique reputation for independence and integrity. In science, he made real original contributions, but his most significant role was as a popularizer of scientific ideas.

Lubbock also has a legacy which endures to this day: a legacy in which we partake every time we write a cheque, borrow a book from a public library, enjoy a Bank Holiday with family and friends or visit a protected ancient monument. Doubtless many of these things would have happened anyway but, in the event, it was Lubbock that made them happen and, in consequence, it was he that defined the way in which they happened (the concept of a 'Bank Holiday', for example, would certainly not exist had it not been for him).

How is it, then, that Lubbock has been largely forgotten? It has been suggested[54] that the First World War, occurring as it did so soon after Lubbock's death, marked a radical break between the Victorian–Edwardian era and the later twentieth century, with much that belonged to the former being forgotten and rejected, but this can only be a partial explanation. It seems likely that the breadth of Lubbock's interests counted against him in an age increasingly dominated by specialists and professionals. Given his breadth of interests, Lubbock could hardly be expected to be as great a scientific figure as Darwin, as eminent a statesman as Gladstone, or as outstanding a business leader as Carnegie. Yet it is precisely this breadth of interests that places him centre stage in any serious attempt to understand nineteenth-century attitudes to science, politics and business.

Commerce, science and politics, together influenced the leading figures of the day: Prince Albert, Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, all in their different ways, but it is Lubbock's breadth of interests that brings them all together, and it is, perhaps, through an analysis of Lubbock's life and career that we can best understand the complex and often unseen interrelationships between them. He played a key role in fostering and developing these interrelationships, frequently acting as a political spokesman for the scientific establishment, using his personal influence to promote its interests and providing, for men of science such as Huxley, Hooker and Darwin, one of a number of important links to the practical worlds of commerce and government.

The age that formed the backdrop to John Lubbock's youth, and his most formative years, was also the age that gave birth to that most optimistic statement of Victorian identity, the Crystal Palace. John Lubbock visited the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park as a teenager, made his first ever financial investment in the Crystal Palace Company when it was moved to Sydenham, and later, as a young man, courted his sweethearts there. It defined the spirit of the age, and it made the deepest of impressions upon him. It projected a positive vision of '... the World as a free market and at peace' and a '... performance of a liberal dream of international politics being based in commercial relationships, in friendly exchanges', with

54 R. Pumphrey 1958.

free trade '... idealised as a form of international communication'.[55] The weekly magazine which accompanied it, *The Illustrated Exhibitor*, set out to '... validate and sustain a culture in which a progressive artisan elite would live out the visions of internationalism, rational progress and industrial imperialism represented by the Crystal Palace and its contents'.[56] Whilst the young John Lubbock was captivated by the Crystal Palace and its optimistic vision of progress, this view was far from being universally shared. The social commentator John Ruskin, a generation older than John Lubbock, hated the exhibition and everything it stood for: for Ruskin, far from representing progress, industrialization was symptomatic of the erosion of traditional values and the enslavement of once proud and independent artisans. Victorian capitalism, he argued, increasingly produced 'bads' rather than goods and 'ilth' rather than wealth.[57] Whilst Lubbock looked forward to a future more free, more prosperous and more peaceful than anyone had known, Ruskin looked back to the comforts of a simpler age:

> On the whole, these are much sadder ages than the early ones; not sadder in a noble and deep way, but in a dim and weary way, – the way of ennui, of jaded intellect, and uncomfortableness of soul and body.[58]

Lubbock and Ruskin, with their respective allies and supporters, represent the opposing poles of a debate that divided Victorian society. They occasionally collaborated and often quarrelled, but always were competing for the soul of the nation.

Recent years have seen a reassessment of the careers of some of the key figures of the nineteenth century, including Ruskin,[59] Darwin,[60] Huxley,[61] Chamberlain[62] and Gladstone.[63] A jig-saw puzzle is being put together, which creates a new picture of the relationships between scientific, political and commercial life in Victorian England, but there are a number of missing pieces in this puzzle, and Lubbock is clearly one of these. It seemed, therefore, an appropriate time for a new biography.

There are two main published sources relating to the life of John Lubbock. The first, by Horace Hutchinson[64] is, in Roy Jenkins's unflattering but apposite phrase,[65] a 'commissioned tombstone life', whilst the second, edited by Lubbock's daughter,[66] is a set of essays by Lubbock's former colleagues on aspects of his work. Both bear the hallmarks of their age, and are largely descriptive and heavily edited accounts

55 L. Purbrick 2001, 8–9.
56 B. Maidment 2001, 80.
57 W. Kemp 1990, 318.
58 Ibid., 214.
59 Ibid.
60 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, J. Browne 1995, 2002.
61 A. Desmond 1998, P. White 2003.
62 D. Judd 1993.
63 R. Jenkins 1995.
64 H. Hutchinson 1914.
65 R. Jenkins 1995, xvii.
66 U. Grant-Duff (ed.) 1924.

– both, arguably, were written too soon after Lubbock's death, and were too closely influenced by his immediate family, for any objective evaluation of his contribution to be possible.

In addition to these sources, and to Lubbock's own published works, I have made use of the extensive archive of John Lubbock's correspondence and diaries held in the British Library.[67] This archive, however, gives the impression of having been carefully edited, either by Lubbock in his own lifetime or, more probably, by his second wife, Alice, shortly after his death. All evidence of an unseemly row between Lubbock and the pioneer of geology, Sir Charles Lyell (whom Lubbock accused of plagiarism), for example, has been expunged, and some passages in the diaries (including a passage dealing with his feelings for his first wife, Ellen) have been cut out.[68] In order to gain a full picture it has been necessary to consult other collections, including the Darwin Archive of the Cambridge University Library, the Huxley Archive at Imperial College London, the Tyndall Archive at the Royal Institution, the Lubbock papers in the Library of the Royal Society (which include his scientific notebooks, and which Hutchinson, his official biographer, seems not to have had access to) and in the Kent County Archives, and the material (including the diary of Lubbock's mother) remaining in the family possession. Much of this material has not seen the light of day since Hutchinson's biography of Lubbock was published in 1914.

Together, these sources help us to build up a picture of a man who played a leading role in shaping the way in which Victorian society saw itself; and together they also help us to understand the relationships between science, commerce and liberal politics in the evolution of the Victorian notion of 'progress', which continues to exert a profound (if unacknowledged) influence on our own twenty-first century expectations of the future. Lubbock may not be a household name today, but it certainly was in his time, and the rediscovery of his legacy may help us to understand the historical background to the society in which we live, almost a century after his death.

67 BL Add. 49638–81.

68 BL Add. 62679, 47.

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PART I
Darwin’s Apprentice, 1834–60

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Chapter 1

A Large Insect under a Glass

> 'The first two things I can remember are sitting at a window in front of some red cloth drapery, to see the Queen's Coronation from the Royal Exchange rooms in Pall Mall, and a large insect under a glass' (Lord Avebury, looking back to his childhood).[1]

John Lubbock was born on 30 April 1834 at 29 Eaton Place, Belgrave Square, London.[2] The family had at that time two homes: the town house, where they stayed during the week, when John's father, a banker, was working in the City, and a more rural residence in Mitcham Grove, where they could escape the noise and grime of the metropolis.

Banking may have been bread and butter to John's father but science was his passion, particularly astronomy and mathematics. He had studied mathematics at Cambridge, and was the co-author of a book on probability.[3] At the time of John's birth he was working on a book on the moon and planets.[4] He was a prominent Fellow of the Royal Society, serving as Vice President from 1830 to 1846.[5] A leading Liberal, he had, before John's birth, entertained parliamentary aspirations, seeking selection (unsuccessfully) as one of the Whig candidates for Cambridge University in 1832.[6]

John's mother was a woman of deep religious convictions. She held what were, for her time, highly progressive views on education, and was influenced by French educational theory. In 1836 she wrote:

> My dear husband and I have very different views of education to what most people have, and we have lately read with great pleasure Madame de Painsure's 'Etude du Cours de la Vie' … My great wish is to guide a child's will rather than break it entirely – we by no means wish to see our dear children mere automatons … but we wish to give them a right principle of action and to see them hereafter do what is good and resist what is evil, not from the fear of punishment or from the hope of reward, but because they know their duty to God and their duty to Man requires it of them.[7]

The world into which John Lubbock was born was a world dominated both by the reality and by the expectation of change. In 1831 John Stuart Mill had written:

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1 H. Hutchinson 1914, 5.
2 Harriet Lubbock, 1.
3 J.W. Lubbock (senior) & J. Drinkwater-Bethune 1830.
4 J. Lubbock (senior) 1836.
5 K. Moore 1995, 44.
6 Royal Society, Herschel Manuscripts, HS11, 358.
7 Harriet Lubbock, 17–18.

> The conviction is already not far from being universal that the times are pregnant with change; and that the Nineteenth Century will be known to posterity as the era of one of the greatest revolutions of which history has preserved the remembrance ... .[8]

The labour pains of that pregnancy were borne out in the dynamics of the industrial revolution: the progress of the steam age, the shrinking of journey times, migration to the towns, unprecedented economic growth, but with a degree of social inequality hitherto unimaginable. The expectation of future change inspired hope and fear in equal measure: the rewards for success were greater than they had ever been – as were the costs of failure. In *Crotchet Castle,* published in 1831, Thomas Love Peacock depicts a society divided between the enthusiasts for progress (represented by the characters of Mr Crotchet and Mr MacQuedy) and those who are fearful and suspicious of it (Mr Chainmail and the Rev. Dr Folliott) and '... out of all patience with this March of Mind'.[9] The Lubbocks were cautious members of the progressive camp, and their banking business helped to finance the growth of industry. Then, as now, banking was not a universally popular profession; Mr Crotchet's son was a banker who:

> ... in the days of paper prosperity ... applied his science-illumined genius to the blowing of bubbles, the bursting of which sent many a poor devil to the jail, the workhouse or the bottom of a river, but left young Crotchet rolling in riches.[10]

The Lubbocks were probably not the models for the Crotchets (whose antecedents were Scottish) but they belonged to the same social class and milieu.

The annual meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science were a magnet for the progressive elements of early-nineteenth century society. Starting in 1831, these meetings of the 'Parliament of Science' moved between cities, providing an opportunity for scientific amateurs from around the country to meet up.[11] John's father was not a regular attender; a Fellow of the elite and exclusive Royal Society, he was perhaps sceptical of the value of an open membership association, whose meetings (attended by more than a thousand people) were as much social as scientific. He was not alone in this scepticism: 'Boz' (Charles Dickens) satirized the organization as the ' Mudfog Association for the Advancement of Everything', with characters such as Mr Muddlebranes, Dr Kwakly and Professors Woodensconce and Grime,[12] whilst a Sunday magazine, commented on the ' beautiful women, sound claret and strong whisky' as having played a greater part in proceedings than scientific discussion.[13] This scepticism, however, had not prevented John's father from accepting a grant from the Association to fund his research on tides, and, having

8 J.S. Mill 'The Spirit of the Age', cited by P. Bowler 1989.
9 T.L. Peacock 1831, 20.
10 Ibid., 7.
11 J. Morrell & A. Thackray 1981, 8.
12 'Boz' (Charles Dickens) 1838.
13 Cited by J. Morrell & A. Thackray 1981, 95.

been criticized for not attending the meetings in Edinburgh in 1834 and Dublin in 1835, he was under considerable pressure to attend the 1836 meeting in Bristol.[14]

The railway age was still in the planning phase, so travel was by carriage, with two overnight stops between London and Clifton, where the family boarded a steamer. They stayed in the Bath Hotel and, John's parents took an after-dinner walk in the rain '... to see the chain getting across for the new bridge which young Mr Brunel is making; a wondrous undertaking'.[15]

Later that autumn John enjoyed his first visit to London Zoo, and was '... very much pleased with the animals, and with running up and down the hills with Papa'.[16] Harriet was, by this time, expecting her third child (John's sister Mary having been born in 1835) and approached the delivery fearing for her own survival:

> God grant that I may get through it as well as I have hitherto done, but should it please him to take me from this World may I be forgiven my sins for the sake and through the merits of my blessed redeemer, who died for me ....[17]

In the event, however, the delivery passed without incident, and John's sister Diana was born on 4 November.

John's father became Vice Chancellor of the newly established University of London in 1836,[18] a post which he would hold until 1842, and which John himself would hold later in his life.

Another baby, Henry, arrived in 1838. Although only four, John's interests in life were starting to become apparent. On the 29 April Harriet wrote 'John is exceedingly fond of flowers and I expect will be a botanist', and again on 26 September, 'His great delight at present is insects; butterflies, caterpillars and ladybirds are great treasures, and he watches a spider there is outside my window most anxiously'.[19]

Inspired by her strong views on education, Harriet was taking personal charge of her older children's education, teaching them spelling, arithmetic, French and geography.[20]

When John's grandfather died in October 1840, his father inherited both the baronetcy and the family properties. They moved into the London house in St James' Place almost immediately, leaving Eaton Place behind, but decided to build themselves a new mansion at High Elms, the family estate in west Kent.

The estate covered 3,000 acres of woodland and gardens between the villages of Downe and Farnborough, and was by far the largest and most prestigious in the area. The family moved in in November 1842, as soon as the mansion had been completed.

It was also in 1842 that John first heard of Charles Darwin:

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14 Ibid., 320
15 Harriet Lubbock, 13–15.
16 Ibid., 17.
17 Ibid., 20.
18 Harte 1982.
19 Harriet Lubbock, 40, 44.
20 Ibid., 50.

> My father returned one evening from the City, and said he had a great piece of good news for me. He excited my hopes and curiosity, and at last announced that Mr Darwin was coming to live at Downe ... I little realized what it meant to me, nor how it would alter my entire life.[21]

As a regular of Royal Society and British Association functions, Sir John had in all likelihood met Darwin, but probably did not know him well. He would, however, have been entirely familiar with Darwin's scientific work, which was well respected in the circles in which Sir John moved long before the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859. In any case, given how much they had in common (in terms of social class and politics as well as interest in science) it was to be expected that the Darwins and the Lubbocks would become friends as well as neighbours.

Time was moving on, however, and John could not complete the whole of his education at home. His father shared many of Harriet's views on education, but wanted his son to have the benefits of a formal education, as he had. It was agreed that he should start at a preparatory school in Abington in the spring of 1843.[22] His start there was delayed for a few weeks because all of the children had whooping cough, so his first term was a short one. He had, however, in these few weeks, already developed a love of cricket, which his father encouraged, having wickets set up at High Elms. Sir John had apparently shown little enthusiasm for cricket in his youth but, inspired by his son's love of the game, took it up energetically, organizing regular matches between the boys of Downe and Farnborough, and between the servants and tradesmen. Philip Norman, who played at High Elms as a boy, recalled how Sir John had '... marked out the positions of the fields by heaps of daisies, from which it was deemed treason to stray' , and also that he '... kept a pony saddled at the cricket ground, and mounted and rode off at rapid pace when his presence was required elsewhere'.[23]

John transferred to Eton in September, 1845. Harriet would much have preferred to keep him at Abington for another year, but Sir John insisted. In the archives of the Royal Society is a small 'commonplace book' of 1845–46, a combined exercise book and diary in which John Lubbock's earliest known writings are preserved. Among translations of Virgil, Horace and Sophocles are records of his recreational activities, including billiards, rounders and Eton fives as well as cricket (Eton fives is a ball game, played against the wall of the college, and John Lubbock later built a fives court at High Elms). It was also at this time, however, that concerns about John's health came to the fore. In his commonplace book, he records feeling sick and missing lessons on a number of occasions, whilst Harriet's diary refers to John's 'attacks', one of the worst occurring on 1 January 1846, with sickness '... continuing unabated' for nearly ten days.[24] In 1848 he was sufficiently ill to be sent home from Eton. The family doctor diagnosed '... weakness of lungs' and his parents decided to

21 Cited by U. Grant-Duff 1924b, 15–16.
22 H. Hutchinson 1914, 112.
23 P. Norman 1897, 99–100.
24 Harriet Lubbock, 166.

Figure 1 **High Elms in 1843: John Lubbock is the fifth figure from the right, holding a cricket bat (Lubbock family archive).**

Figure 2 **1844 portrait of John Lubbock with bluebells (Lubbock family archive).**

withdraw him from Eton.[25] John himself would later rationalize his departure from Eton as having arisen due to an unexpected vacancy in the family bank:

> In 1848, when I was nearly fifteen, my father's two partners being both in bad health, he had to choose between engaging another or bringing me at once in to the bank to assist him ... .[26]

Alternatively, it was explained as having arisen from his father's dissatisfaction with the Eton curriculum, with too much emphasis on the Classics, and not enough on science and mathematics.[27]

The reality, however, is that John did not begin work at the bank for almost a year after leaving Eton, and that Sir John, whatever misgivings he may have had about the Eton curriculum, was sufficiently satisfied to keep John's brothers there. It is clear from Harriet's diary that John was withdrawn because of concerns about his health. Ever the pessimist in such matters, Harriet even feared for his survival, writing on 31 October 1849:

> Dear John is full of good and right feeling and, if it please God to spare him to us I trust he will be a blessing to his generation. But he is very delicate, and I do not allow myself to look forward with any security about him.[28]

The precise nature of John's medical condition is unclear: the symptoms seem to have included nausea and vomiting as well as 'weakness of lungs', and they seem to have persisted into his early twenties and then disappeared.

Whilst misgivings about the Eton curriculum may not have been the reason for John's departure, they were very real, at least as far as John himself was concerned. As an adult looking back on his time at Eton, he was to write:

> At that time the whole education consisted of Latin and Greek, with one lesson a week in geography, confined mainly to Italy, Greece and Asia Minor ... Neither arithmetic, modern languages, science, nor drawing were regarded as essential portions of education ... Arithmetic, French and German had, indeed, just been started, but they were treated as extras, like fencing or dancing. They were only taken if parents especially wished it, and then in playtime. My father did not think they were well taught, and the result was that I never did a sum, or had a lesson in any modern language, the whole time I was at Eton ... so far from giving me a classical education, the result is to give nine boys out of ten a profound dislike of classical literature ... .[29]

Remarkably, Harriet seems to have foreseen this conflict. In the original version of her diary, on 23 August 1834 (only four months after John was born), she copied out for the benefit of her 'dear boy', an extract from the *Quarterly Review*:

> Whether the rudiments of the exact sciences, the higher branches of arithmetic, or the elementary parts of mathematics should be generally enforced as a branch of school education, is a question

25 Ibid., 182–3.
26 Cited by Hutchinson 1914, 22.
27 Cited by U. Grant-Duff 1924a, 11.
28 Harriet Lubbock, 190.
29 Cited by U. Grant-Duff 1924a, 11

> which would deserve a profound & philosophical examination. The names of Sir John Herschel & Mr Lubbock [John's father] may prove that the modern system of Eton instruction contains nothing fatal to the development of the most splendid scientific attainments.

John would later give this question the 'profound and philosophical examination' demanded by the author, and would draw from this examination a far less ambiguous conclusion.

It was probably in 1848 that he first spent significant amounts of time with Charles Darwin, who had recently been traumatized by the death of his own father. John's fascination with the '... unimaginable microscopic world, teeming with life' seen through Darwin's microscope seems to have provided a welcome distraction for both, and Darwin persuaded John's father to buy him a microscope of his own.[30]

When in London, John attended all of the public lectures organized by the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street.[31] These Friday night lectures were 'glittering affairs', attended by socialites as much for the soirée as for the scientific content of the lectures. The Institution was a cornerstone of the Liberal educational establishment, 'run by technocrats' (and presided over by Michael Faraday), '... the few who saw science as essential to an efficient society'.[32]

Harriet records that John accompanied his father to the bank for the first time on 15 October 1849, and that he visited the Great Exhibition with his brothers and sisters on 14 May 1851.[33] We also know that, in 1850, he gave his first public lecture (on wireworms, to the villagers at Downe).[34] His fascination with natural history and his concern to communicate this fascination to others were developing hand in hand.

Quite what the teenager made of the Great Exhibition is not recorded, but his visit may well have been one of the formative experiences of his life, since the exhibition embodied themes which would become fundamental to his scientific and political life.[35] In the words of Prince Albert,[36] the exhibition was founded on the great complementary principles of 'the Unity of Mankind' and the 'Division of Labour', through which Humanity approached the fulfilment of its 'Great and Sacred Mission', the use of God-given reason to discover the laws by which the Almighty ruled Creation so that, by applying them, Man might 'conquer Nature to his use'. The exhibition set out to '... give a true test and a living picture of the point at which the whole of Mankind has arrived in this great task, and a new starting point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions'. Even before the Great Exhibition opened, a writer in *The Economist* had predicted that 'All who have read and can think' would believe that endless and ever faster progression was '... the destined lot of the Human Race',[37] a view of the world which John Lubbock would embrace with zeal and enthusiasm.

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30 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 361.
31 Harriet Lubbock, 185–6.
32 A. Desmond 1998, 175.
33 Harriet Lubbock, 190, 198.
34 U. Grant-Duff 1924a.
35 G. Stocking 1987, 3.
36 Anon. 1851, 1, 3–4.
37 G. Stocking 1987, 111.

Chapter 2

A Tendency to Progression

Given the value that his parents placed on education, John must have felt a keen sense of disappointment at his failure to gain much benefit from his time at Eton, and he seems to have been determined to make up for lost time. He approached his self-education with an almost obsessive enthusiasm. In 1852, he described his daily routine (on days not spent at the bank) as follows:

> I get up at past 6, dress, say my Prayers, read the Psalms and Chapters and go to Papa with my Mathematics, which takes about ten minutes before breakfast. From 8 till 9 read Natural History; 9 to past Prayers; past 9 till past 1 1 work with the microscope; past 11 to 1 read Natural History; 1 to past lunch. I generally go out for an average of 2 hours in the afternoon and do half an hour Poetry and half an hour Political Economy; tea past 4 to 5; till 5 more Science; hour 's Natural History; 6 to 7 History; 7 to 8 Whist; 8 to past History; 8 to 9 Mathematics; 9 to 10 Sermons; 10 to 1 1 German; 11 to 12 Prayers; 12 Bed. [1]

In later life friends and colleagues would often express amazement at his capacity for work and the wide range of his activities. Part of the explanation must surely lie in this compartmentalization of his life, and the iron self-discipline with which he organized his time, from his teenage years onwards.

On one level, John's social position was assured by birth: he was set to inherit the family bank and the great wealth that went with it. To have wealth alone, however, was seen as vulgar – a Victorian gentleman was expected to distinguish himself in a variety of ways. In the eighteenth century, imitating the mores of the aristocracy, the upper middle class had demonstrated such distinction through connoisseurship, patronage of the arts and an appreciation of the Classics. By the 1850s, however, with growing confidence in Britain's industrial and commercial future, they increasingly did so through involvement in, and patronage of, science and investment in technology. Even the aristocracy were responding, with Prince Albert providing energetic leadership in the celebration of technological, scientific and commercial progress. With his Liberal politics and embrace of free trade, his position in the Royal Society, his astronomical and mathematical researches, and his knowledge of modern languages, John's father was, in many ways, the epitome of this new model of upper-middle-class sophistication, which John himself must have feared not living up to. His father seems to have given him the space to develop his interests – John's diary for March 1852 suggests that he was at the bank only on Mondays and Saturdays[2] – but this could only ever be a temporary arrangement.

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1 Cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 30–31.

2 BL Add. 62679, 6.

Impressed by John's developing scientific ability, even Darwin doubted whether he would be able to continue. He wrote to the American naturalist, James Dwight Dana, commending John Lubbock to his attention and saying that he 'may do good work in natural history', but only so long as he could resist his 'great wealth, business and rank'.[3]

John's microscopic explorations under Darwin's guidance that had begun five years previously, as a distraction, had become something far more serious. He was now undertaking original scientific research. Darwin himself was engaged in the detailed study of barnacles which he had brought back from his *Beagle* voyage in 1836.[4] He taught John the art of illustrating specimens, and enlisted his help with the illustrations for his barnacle volumes, quickly recognizing in John a talent for illustration that he himself lacked. He also gave John part of his collection to work on – a series of minute crustaceans known as entomostraca, 'insects within shells'. John started keeping a detailed scientific notebook in November of 1852, in which he worked up the description of his first new species, one of Darwin's entomostraca, which he named *Labidocera darwinii*.[5] He had learned from Darwin the process of technical description of new species, which entailed dissection, illustration and comparison with specimens of known species (that John found in the collections of the British Museum and the College of Surgeons). By the end of November he had submitted his first scientific paper for publication,[6] and had begun work on describing another new species, which he named *Labidocera (Ira) magna*.[7] The following year he published two further scientific papers,[8] in which he identified and described four new species of crustacean, *Labidocera (Ira) magna* (already mentioned), *Labidocera (Ivella) patagoniensis, Monops grandis* and *Pontella bairdii*.

Whilst John's father had been fascinated by the infinitely distant universe of astronomy and by the abstract logic of mathematics, his own fascination was with the infinitely tiny universe viewed through his microscope. Darwin had doubtless regaled him with tales of the strange beasts that he had encountered on the other side of the world, but John was amazed to find an entire bestiary of even stranger creatures in the humble ponds surrounding his home, including species new to science and others not previously recorded in Britain. He began taking samples from the ponds at Farnborough and Southborough and observing closely the *Daphnia*, *Cyclops* and other minute creatures that lived there.

Science did not take up all of his time; there were opportunities for skating on Bromley Common in the winter and for cricket in the summer, playing for west Kent. Young ladies, unsurprisingly, were very much a focus of interest. There were a number of eligible young ladies in the Lubbocks' social circle in Kent. He sent valentines to Sibella Norman (the daughter of a neighbour and friend at Bromley

3 F. Burkhardt & S. Smith 1994, 1533. The original is in the Sterling Library, Yale University.

4 C. Darwin 1851; 1851–54; 1854.

5 RS LUA1.

6 J. Lubbock 1853a.

7 J. Lubbock 1853b.

8 J. Lubbock 1853b–c.

Common) and to Margaret Wells (the future aunt of H.G. Wells), but Di Creyke seems to have been his main romantic interest in 1853. They sat on the rocks together during a visit to his uncle in St Leonards in May and John noted that '... we seem to suit beautifully'.[9]

In September John attended, for the first time, the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held that year in Hull. On the way up he stayed in Manchester with relatives, and it was here that his Aunt Hannah introduced him to Ellen Hordern, the daughter of a clergyman, who would become his first wife. His first impressions of her were positive, but not notably romantic (he described her as having 'A good forehead, though rather small and a little too much mouth' and said only that she seemed 'very nice, unaffected and getonable with'[10]) and, when he arrived in Hull a few days later, it was once again Di Creyke who was his companion, chaperoned by his Aunt Lucy.[11]

Whilst in Manchester, John's cousins had taken him to a number of factories and he was greatly impressed with the industrial processes and machinery that he saw. At the Sharpey Brothers Iron Foundry he records:

> We saw iron an inch thick cut by a machine as by a pair of scissors. The steam hammer was at work, and there was a man making holes in a bit of wood with a gimlet revolving by steam 6000 times a minute.

Later they went on to Lockitt's textile printing factory which was '... the most interesting of all' and that evening he stayed up until after midnight, talking to his cousin William about machinery.[12]

It was John's first direct experience of the industrial and technological processes that so defined the Victorian notion of progress, and which he must previously have seen displayed and celebrated in the Great Exhibition. Having grown up in the rural setting of Downe and Farnborough where carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers and wheelwrights laboured to make things by hand, and having only heard about the very different world of the industrial North, the contrast must have been striking indeed and, whilst this contrast horrified conservative commentators such as John Ruskin, who lamented the passing of traditional craftsmanship, it was a source of great excitement to Lubbock, brought up from birth to believe in progress as the salvation of mankind. Ruskin had hated the Crystal Palace, a building designed by one man, the pieces pre-fabricated in a factory and the workers who merely put it together 'utterly enslaved' by an industrial process which dehumanized them and reduced them to the status of 'tools'.[13] John Lubbock, on the other hand, was entranced both by the building and by its contents, an expression of technology which promised to liberate the lower orders from the drudgery of manual labour and provide a platform for economic growth which would lift the fortunes of all classes in society. Earlier that year he had made his first ever financial investment,

9 Ibid., 8.
10 BL. Add. 62679, 19.
11 Ibid., 22.
12 Ibid.
13 W. Kemp 1990, 189.

in the Crystal Palace Company, which its architect, Joseph Paxton, had established to buy out the building and move it from Hyde Park to Sydenham. Paxton, who had previously campaigned to have the building remain in Hyde Park (it was originally intended, like the later Eiffel Tower in Paris, to be only a temporary construction) had to raise £500,000 in £5 shares to finance the move, five of which were purchased by John Lubbock.

John's diary records an interesting late-night discussion with his cousins, Charles and Henry Strickland, in Manchester. They were speculating about '... the immutability of species' and John recorded that 'we all agreed that it seemed probable they might change into one another'.[14] It is most unlikely that this conversation was inspired by previous discussions between Lubbock and Darwin. Although Darwin had formulated the rudiments of his theory as early as 1842, he was extremely reticent about sharing it with anyone. Conscious of the storm that it would provoke, terrified of ridicule and tormented by his inability to reconcile his theory with the Christian faith that his wife, Emma, held so dear, he had kept it secret even from his closest colleagues. John would, however, have been familiar with Robert Chambers's best selling book *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*[15] and possibly with Herbert Spencer's article on ' The Development Hypothesis' published in the *Leader* in 1852,[16] both of which argued for evolution. Given his strong interest in natural history and his ability to read French, he may also have read Lamarck,[17] the prime inspiration for pre-Darwinian believers in evolution. The important point, however, is that if (as seems almost certain) John Lubbock had become convinced of the probability of evolution quite independently from any conversations with Darwin, he must have done so under the influence of writings in which evolution is presented in a very different light to that which later appeared in *The Origin of Species*. For, in this pre-Darwinian view of evolution, species changed according to a pre-determined progressive logic, rather as an embryo develops by stages into an adult animal. The following year, Darwin was to write to his friend and colleague, the botanist Joseph Hooker:

> Heaven forfend me from Lamarck nonsense of a tendency to progression ... but the conclusions I am led to are not widely different from his; though the means of change are wholly so ... I think I have found (but here's presumption) the simple way by which species become exquisitely adapted to various ends.[18]

Darwin's model of 'transmutation' (he rarely used the term 'evolution') was much more arbitrary, with natural selection acting on random variations in nature to produce new species which would survive if their unique features happened to give them a competitive advantage, or become extinct if they happened not to. For Darwin, there was nothing pre-determined or inevitable about 'progress', at least as far as the natural world was concerned.

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14 BL Add. 62679, 20.

15 Anon (R. Chambers) 1844.

16 *The Leader*, March 20 1852; reprinted in H. Spencer 1891, 1, 1–7.

17 Translated as J-B. de Lamarck [1809] 1963.

18 F. Darwin [1888] 1969, 2, 23.

This 'tendency to progression', however, had in all probability been imprinted on John Lubbock's mind before 1853, and was certainly to influence his later work. Having earlier spent half an hour a day reading political economy, it is likely that he had read Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics*, in which it was argued that:

> Progress ... is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower.[19]

John's sense of inevitable progress, inherited from his parents and encouraged by his visits to the Great Exhibition, had clearly been reinforced by the technological wonders that his cousins showed him in the foundries and mills of northern England, and by his experience of rail travel, in stark contrast to his horse-drawn childhood peregrinations.

Returning to High Elms with the excitement and benefits of rail travel fresh in his mind, John threw himself into a campaign to establish a local station at Farnborough. His father saw an opportunity to teach John something of the world of business and together they put together a consortium of local landowners which would buy up enough shares in the Crystal Palace Line to influence the company. By the end of the year 2,000 shares had been taken at £25 each, the equivalent of around £2.6 million in today's terms (a quarter of this being put up by Sir John).[20] It proved insufficient to bring the railway to Farnborough (a station was opened at Bromley in 1858 and, ten years later, the line was extended to Orpington) but, once again, Lubbock was positioning himself firmly on one side of an intellectual and emotional divide, the other side of which was represented most eloquently by John Ruskin. Ruskin detested rail travel, considering that it consisted of 'merely "being sent" to a place, and very little different from becoming a parcel'.[21]

John Lubbock's disappointment with his railway venture was balanced by the increasing success of his scientific endeavours. Darwin's confidence in him was growing and, in October 1854, he invited John to dinner, in order that he might meet Sir Charles and Lady Lyell, and Dr and Mrs Hooker. Lyell was an 'old Prince of Science', the most distinguished geologist of the nineteenth century. His *Principles of Geology*, published in three volumes between 1830 and 1833,[22] had inspired Darwin on his *Beagle* voyage, and had been important in establishing the principle of 'uniformity' – the idea that the whole of the geological record had been shaped by the slow and gradual processes of erosion and deposition that could be observed at work in the present.[23] These processes could be measured, and their effects quantified, paving the way for the startling realization that the earth (and ultimately the species on it, including humanity) was infinitely more ancient than had been imagined. Hooker was the rising star of the relatively young science of botany.

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19 H. Spencer 1851, cited by R.M. Young 1990, 150.

20 £1,348,547: J.J. McCusker 2001. NB, all such calculations in this book are made using the Retail Price Index.

21 W. Kemp 1990, 34.

22 C. Lyell 1830, 1832, 1833.

23 J.J. McCusker 2001.

He had first met Darwin in 1839, just before embarking on an Antarctic voyage of discovery on HMS *Erebus*, and had subsequently undertaken another expedition, collecting plant specimens in the Himalayas. He was, in 1854, the Assistant Director of Kew Gardens (under his father, Sir William), and had become Darwin's most trusted scientific confidante.

The day after their dinner with Darwin, John took Lyell and Hooker to Green Street Green, to examine the geology of the gravel pits. Whilst this geological expedition did not reveal anything out of the ordinary, it may have inspired a subsequent expedition which certainly did. At Maidenhead with Charles Kingsley, fossicking around another gravel pit, Lubbock was rewarded by the discovery of the skull of a musk ox.[24] Darwin was delighted:

> I must congratulate you on such a capital discovery. Considering the habits of Ovibos, and the nature of the drift beds, I declare I think it one of the most interesting discoveries in fossils made for some years.[25]

Since musk ox (*Ovibus moschatus*) is an Arctic species, its presence demonstrated that, in the relatively recent geological past, an Arctic climate must have prevailed in the British Isles. Resembling a shaggy cow, but in fact more closely related to the sheep, its current geographical range is confined to northern Canada, Greenland and northern Siberia. Lubbock and Kingsley's discovery attracted the interest of Sir Charles Lyell, who introduced John to his colleague, Joseph Prestwich, a city vintner and amateur geologist who was taking a great interest in the antiquity of the earth and of the human species, challenging the received wisdom (based on biblical extrapolation) that only a few thousand years had elapsed between the creation of the world and the ministry of Christ (most contemporary copies of the Bible contained a note, based on calculations by Archbishop Ussher, suggesting that the creation had occurred in 4004 BC, and some clerics had taken the argument still further – Bishop Lightfoot asserting that it had taken place on 26 October of that year, at 9.00 in the morning).[26] The musk ox discovered by Lubbock and Kingsley was just one of many discoveries that were coming to light in the gravel deposits of the Thames in England and the Seine and Somme in France. Other discoveries were of warm climate animals such as hippopotamus and hyena, and both warm and cold species were occasionally associated with the bones and tools of early humans. Together, these discoveries allowed a picture to emerge of a previously unimaginable time period, a period of tens or perhaps even hundreds of thousands of years, long enough for significant climatic fluctuations to have taken place, and during which early humans had shared the earth with species now extinct. For Prestwich, the Maidenhead musk ox was yet another piece in this jigsaw puzzle, the coming together of which was revolutionizing the Victorian view of the history of the earth and of humanity's place in this history. Prestwich corresponded with John Lubbock,[27] suggesting a joint excursion with Lyell to another gravel pit near Staines. The discovery of the musk

24 BL Add. 62679, 55.
25 CUL DAR146, 59.
26 G. Daniel 1975, 27.
27 BL Add. 49638, 18–19.

ox, and the reactions it provoked, helped to inspire John's interest in exploring the antiquity of our own species, and he was starting to read some of the key texts of geology, making detailed notes on Lyell's *Principles of Geology* and on works by Murchison on the Alps and Hull on the Cotswolds.[28]

By this time, however, true to Darwin's fears, the bank was taking up an increasing amount of John's time at the expense of his scientific work. He often slept in his rooms at the bank and, in January 1855, John recorded that he had only '... one holiday a week, just now',[29] which he could devote to his scientific work. This suggests that he was spending five days a week at the bank, with his father, at the age of 52, perhaps easing himself into retirement.

John Lubbock married Ellen Hordern in April 1856. Di Creyke's marriage to Robert Harvey in August of the previous year appears to have jolted him into the realization that he could afford to dither no longer in matters of love and he proposed to Ellen in October. In anticipation of the wedding, John's father had passed on to him the title deeds of several minor properties. John was, therefore, now a landowner in his own right, albeit on a modest scale, his total holdings valued at just over £1,085,[30] equivalent to around £52,000 today.[31]

Shortly after the wedding, an important gathering took place at Darwin's house. Hooker and his wife arrived on Tuesday 22 April, Thomas Huxley and his wife the following Saturday. Huxley, a man of humble origins, had worked his way up the ladder from apothecary's apprentice in the squalor of London's East End, via the dissecting rooms of Charing Cross Hospital to a position as Assistant Surgeon in the Royal Navy. Like Darwin, he had travelled the world, sailing on HMS *Rattlesnake* to Brazil, Australia and New Guinea. He had met his future wife, Henrietta (known as Nettie), in Sydney during the voyage in 1847[32] but, being strapped for cash, had to wait eight years before he could afford to bring her to London as his wife. He was a young man in a hurry and, having left the Navy, he had been appointed to the staff of the government School of Mines in 1854, and was carving a place out for himself as a leading member of Britain's emerging salaried scientific elite.

The Cambridge entomologist, T. Vernon Wollaston, was also present that weekend, and John Lubbock joined the party for dinner on the Saturday evening. Over the next couple of days, Darwin, who was by this stage working seriously on the final draft of his *The Origin of Species*, took the opportunity of sharing his ideas openly for the first time with a select group of colleagues, sounding out Hooker, Huxley and Wollaston on natural selection.[33] News of the meeting soon leaked out, and Sir Charles Lyell noted with astonishment that:

> When Huxley, Hooker and Wollaston were at Darwin's last week ... they (all four of them) ran a tilt against [immutable] species farther, I believe, than they are deliberately prepared

28 RS LUA17.
29 RS LUA1.
30 Kent County Archive, U1979 T22/1.
31 J.J. McCusker 2001.
32 A. Desmond 1998, 70, P. White 2003, 26–32.
33 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 434–6.

> to go. Wollaston least unorthodox. I cannot easily see how they can go so far and not embrace the whole Lamarckian doctrine.[34]

What part, if any, John Lubbock played in these discussions is unclear, but the meeting seems to have been a watershed in Darwin's mind, if only because he knew that he had answers to all of the objections posed by Wollaston and Huxley (as soon as Huxley had gone, Darwin scribbled a series of notes knocking down his objections one by one).[35]

Lubbock, similarly, may have taken confidence from the fact that, thanks to Darwin, men of science whose names had previously only been known to him as authors and lecturers were now becoming his dining companions, and he was able to see himself creating a niche alongside them as part of a new generation of scientific thinkers.

Despite the demands of the bank, John Lubbock found time to publish a number of articles describing new species of crustacean,[36] and a paper for the *Entomologists' Annual*[37] on the objects of a collection of insects (decrying collection for its own sake). One paper, however, was more significant than the others. To date, his research had been essentially descriptive, requiring much hard work, and a high degree of technical competence, but rather less in terms of original thought. He now undertook a detailed study of the reproductive physiology of *Daphnia*, minute 'water-fleas', which John collected from the ponds around High Elms. Carrying out a range of observations and experiments, in many cases with Darwin's help,[38] Lubbock was able to demonstrate the existence of two forms of reproduction – one sexual and the other asexual (in effect, a natural cloning process). When he finally submitted his paper on *Daphnia* in December 1856, it was not to the *Annals & Magazine of Natural History*, nor to the *Transactions of the Entomological Society*, as his previous papers had been, but to the far more prestigious *Proceedings of the Royal Society.*[39] Darwin thought the paper 'decidedly interesting and, on the whole, very clear',[40] (commenting on an earlier draft in March, Darwin had advised John to remove an irreverent comment about '... maidens having epidermic babies',[41] which advice was taken). Darwin wrote to John the following year giving him feedback on the paper from the innermost circle of the Royal Society:

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34 Ibid., 435.

35 D. Ospovat 'Darwin on Huxley and Divergence: Some Darwin notes on his meeting with Huxley, Hooker and Wollaston in April 1856.' Unpublished transcript, cited by Desmond & Moore 1992, 436.

36 J. Lubbock 1854; 1856a–b.

37 J. Lubbock 1856c.

38 RS LUA13, 9. In the notebook he describes them being expelled through the rectum, whereas in the published article he refers to 'papillae' located on either side of the rectum.

39 J. Lubbock 1857a.

40 CUL DAR146, 68.

41 CUL DAR146, 75. This letter is dated 30 March, and has been assigned by an archivist to '1858 or 1859'. The paper referred to, however, can only be J. Lubbock 1857a, and the correct date must therefore be 1857.

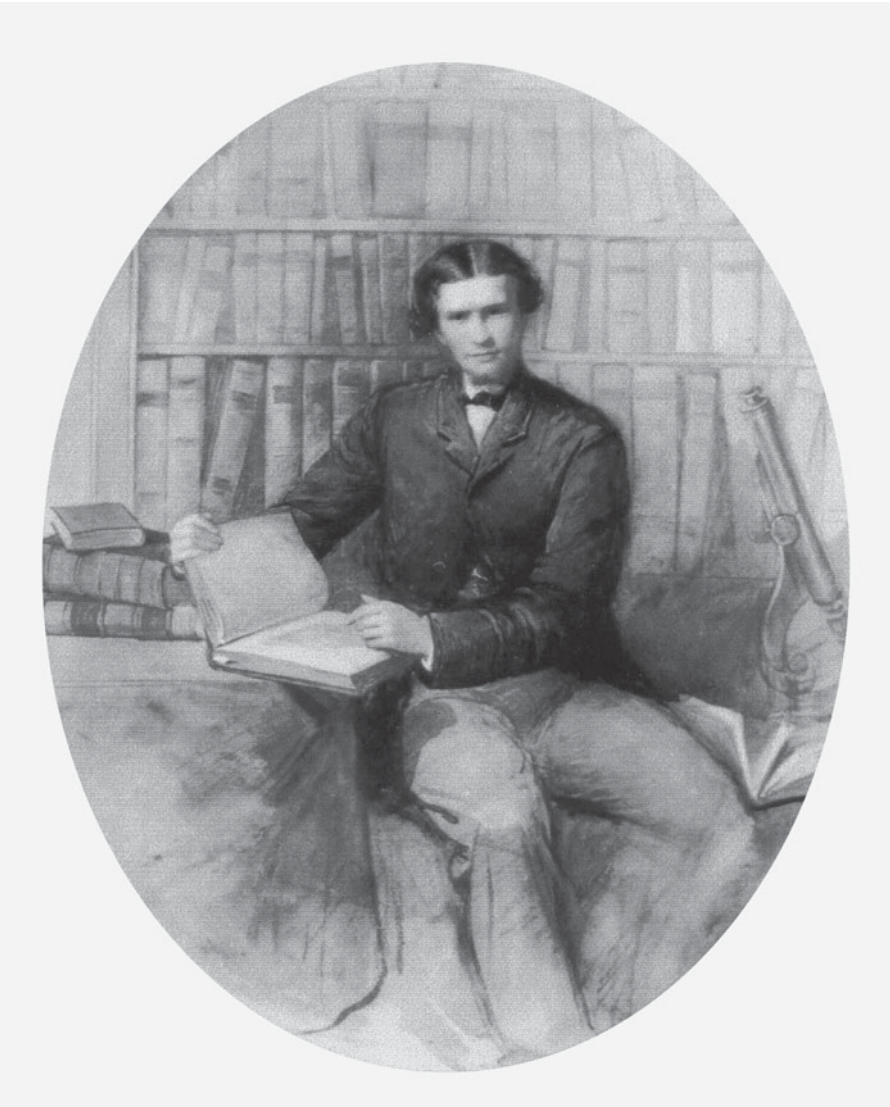

Figure 3 **1856 portrait of John Lubbock with books and microscope (Lubbock family archive).**

Figure 4 Ellen Lubbock (Lubbock family archive).

> At the Philosophical Club last Thursday I overheard Dr Sharpey speaking to Huxley in such high and warm praise of your paper, and Huxley answering in the same tone, that it did me good to hear it.[42]

Huxley himself wrote to John, welcoming the fact that he had taken up '... so interesting a subject as that of the development of the Daphnida', and stating that he knew of no subject '... more likely to repay careful work'.[43]

Whatever had been discussed with him the previous April, Darwin had clearly by this stage developed enough confidence, both in his own theory and in John, to share with him the drafts of *The Origin of Species*, and John, having been taught mathematics by his father (an expert on probability), was able to correct a major error on Darwin's part. Darwin was trying to discover the quantitative rules governing the appearance of chance variation in nature, comparing plant genera containing a large number of species with those containing a smaller number. In July 1857, Darwin wrote to Hooker:

> [Lubbock] has pointed out to me the grossest blunder which I have made in principle, and which entails two or three weeks lost work; and I am at a deadlock till I have these books to go over again, and see what the result of calculation on right principle is. I am the most miserable, bemuddled, stupid dog in all England, and I am ready to cry with vexation at my blindness and presumption.[44]

To Lubbock, Darwin wrote:

> You have done me the greatest possible service in helping me to clarify my brains ... If I am as muzzy on all subjects as I am on proportion and chance – what a book I shall produce! ... I am quite convinced yours is the right way ... but should never have done it had it not been for my most fortunate conversation with you ... It is enough to make me tear up all my MS in despair ... But oh, if you knew how thankful I am to you![45]

It was a crucial correction, since Darwin's theory depended upon the random occurrence of variation in species, on which natural selection then acts. If he had made a mistake with the basic mathematical rules governing the occurrence of such variation, he would have exposed himself to precisely the sort of ridicule that he had feared, so that his gratitude to Lubbock is not difficult to imagine. It was a turning point for Lubbock: having learned so much from Darwin he had now reached the stage where Darwin was actually learning from him. Ironically, having grown up in his father's shadow, Lubbock was always modest about his mathematical abilities. His father had, in 1844, commented to his friend, the astronomer John Herschel, that John showed '… little turn for figures' but '… a most decided turn for natural history',[46] and John seems to have taken his father's judgement to heart.

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42 Cited by U. Grant-Duff 1924b, 16.

43 RS LUA3.

44 F. Darwin [1888] 1969, 2, 103–4.

45 Ibid., 104. The relevant passages in *The Origin of Species* are in Chapters 2; C. Darwin 1859 (or [1859] 1964), 55–9 and 4; Ibid., 120–126.

46 Royal Society, Herschel Manuscripts, HS 11, 372.

Lubbock's life was increasingly a juggling act, balancing the demands of his scientific career with his commitment to the bank and the pressures of a growing family. Throughout 1857 John seems to have been working four days a week at the bank. He seems, by this stage, to have been firmly in command of the business and, true to his belief in technological progress, he had, at the end of 1855, supervised the introduction of gas lighting:

> We have at last had gas put on at the bank. Mr Kennedy is delighted, and says that 'it looks like a garden of tulips'. Some few complain of the glare but, as Mr Kennedy says, 'Clerks are like bats and, after being so long accustomed to oil, gas is too bright for them'.[47]

He still found time, however, for experiments on *Daphnia*, testing on them the effects of darkness (there were no significant effects), and for intricate dissections of insect larvae. Even a family holiday in Weymouth became an opportunity for scientific discovery, with John identifying eight new species of crustacean in the waters of the Wey estuary, which he proceeded to publish, and one of which (*Pontella wollastoni*) he named after T. Vernon Wollaston, whom he had met at Darwin's house the previous year.[48]

John Lubbock was simultaneously engaged in another juggling act, which came far easier to him than it did to Darwin: between his scientific career and his Christian faith. Lubbock published one further paper in 1857, and it is significant for what it tells us about his emerging interests and outlook. It was for the *Entomologists' Annual*, a journal read by amateur entomologists, and was on the breathing organs of insects.[49] Insects do not breathe through their mouths, and do not possess lungs. Instead they have air openings between the joints of their bodies, from which a network of tracheae supply air to the various organs. Lubbock wanted to encourage amateur naturalists to carry out their own dissections:

> If ... the insect be fresh, one set of tubes, distinguished by a silvery white colour, will be seen running over and among the other organs, like the roots of a tree in the Earth; these are the tracheae, or air tubes, part of the breathing organs of which it is my object here to give a brief account.

In the same paper, he gives examples of insect larvae and crustacea (including *Daphnia*) which have gills, and also certain dragonfly larvae which extract air from water taken up through the rectum:

> Truth is indeed stranger than fiction. What man could have imagined such a machine? What but Almighty wisdom and power could have contrived and carried out these and many other means for supplying air to the internal organs of animals apparently so insignificant?

He concludes:

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47 F. Darwin [1888] 1969, 2, 104.

48 J. Lubbock 1857b.

49 J. Lubbock 1857c.

> ... though we must confess that God alone can see all that he has made, Man also, we may hope, can perceive that it is 'very good'.

Harriet Lubbock would doubtless have approved of her son's faith in the Almighty, but these are certainly not sentences that Darwin could have written in 1857. Darwin had once insisted that a belief in evolution was consistent with Christian faith. In 1842, in the first draft of his evolutionary theory, he had written:

> It is derogatory that the creator of countless worlds should have created each of the myriads of creeping parasites and worms which have swarmed each day of life on land and water ... that a group of animals should have been directly created to lay their eggs in bowels ... .[50]

It was a '... far grander' vision to think of a beneficent God creating the natural laws that enabled animals to evolve towards perfection than to imagine that 'Since the time of the Silurian he has made a long succession of vile molluscuous animals.'[51]

By 1857, however, Darwin had (at least in private) abandoned any such notion, and he was later to write:

> I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation ... The old argument for design in nature ... which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered ... There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings, and in the actions of natural selection, than in the course which the wind blows.[52]

John Lubbock would never adopt the agnosticism which Darwin (with much soul-searching and reluctance) and Huxley (with the relish and zeal of an evangelist) embraced. Whilst opposing religious dogmatism, Lubbock would nonetheless always see in nature a reflection of God's glory and grace.

The scene was set for a conflict between Darwin, Hooker and Huxley on the one hand, and the traditionally Anglican scientific establishment on the other. At stake were the most fundamental beliefs about the relationships between the divine and material worlds, and between the human species and the animal kingdom. Intellectually and spiritually, John Lubbock's position may have been ambiguous but, his long-standing relationship with Darwin and growing friendship with Hooker and Huxley left little doubt as to where his ultimate loyalties would lie. At stake also were questions of cultural authority; whether biblical revelation and those schooled in it, or scientific observation and those skilled in it, should be taken as the ultimate arbiters of truth. And on this issue, Lubbock was not remotely ambiguous – any more, probably, than his father was.

The precise nature of John Lubbock's faith at this point in time is unclear to us (and very possibly was to him also). He had, of course, grown up in a Christian context, and worshipped in the Anglican Church, but his was certainly not a High Church background and his parents were wary of religious dogma. His mother may

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50 Cited by A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 294.

51 Cited by J.R. Moore 1988, 296.

52 F. Darwin [1892] 1958, 62–3.

have been brought up in an Evangelical household: her faith was very much in Christ as her personal redeemer; John's own faith (and probably his father's) may have been rather different. John's early public and private writings refer to 'God', but not to Christ and rarely to the Bible (never drawing authority from it). Revealed religion, with its miracles, angels and direct interventions by the Creator in the affairs of the world, may have held less sway with the up-and-coming man of science than the 'natural theology' which had been especially popular around the time of his birth, focussing on the evidence within nature itself, rather than in revelation, for God's existence and benevolence.[53] If revelation is taken out of the equation, however, then it is only the act of worship itself that stands between Christianity and other philosophies more accurately described as 'Deistic' or 'Pantheistic'. Tennyson's poem, *The Higher Pantheism* may, in fact, come closer than anything in the Old or New Testaments to summing up the vision of God that Lubbock embraced as a young man:

> The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains
> Are not these, O soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?
> Is not the Vision He? Tho' He be not that which he seems?
> Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?
> Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
> Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from him?
> Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
> For is He not all but that which has power to feel 'I am I'?
> Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom
> Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour and gloom.
> Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.
> God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
> For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.
> Law is God, say some: no God at all says the fool;
> For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool;
> And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
> But if we could see and hear, this Vision – were it not He?[54]

53 See, for example, W. Paley 1826, W. Buckland 1836, W. Swainson 1834; see also, for a synopsis, D. Knight 2004, 37–91.

54 A. Tennyson 1953, 222–3, cited by D. Knight 2004, 83.

Chapter 3

The War of Science and Religion

By the beginning of 1858 John Lubbock had, in effect, completed his scientific apprenticeship. From a generalized fascination with natural history, distinct research themes were emerging in his work, concerning the internal anatomy, reproductive physiology and life cycles of invertebrates, and he was becoming a recognized member of Britain's scientific community.

But relations within that community were far from amicable. At the heart of the scientific establishment battle lines were being drawn up between Huxley's young guard and more conservative figures such as Richard Owen at the British Museum and Adam Sedgwick at Cambridge.

Central to this polarization was the relationship between science and theology. Many members of the conservative academic establishment combined their scientific work with service to the Church in Holy Orders, as Sedgwick did, and saw their study of the natural world as part of their devotion to God. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were umbilically linked to the Church of England, and everything that was taught and written there was influenced by this association (the University of London had been established precisely as a counterweight to this and John Lubbock's father, though an Anglican and a Cambridge man himself, had played a role in setting it up). Huxley saw no place for God in scientific discourse – his was a rationalist vision of science, seeking material explanations for all natural phenomena, and he was viscerally opposed to 'Theology and Parsondom', which he regarded as '... the natural and irreconcilable enemies of science'.[1] There was a social dimension, also, to the divide. Huxley came from a very different background to Lubbock, and had experienced at first hand the poverty and squalor of London's streets. Motivated by a seething resentment at a system that privileged status over ability, he was convinced that only by creating a cadre of publicly visible and recognized experts could science be freed from the shackles of aristocratic patronage. For Huxley, a meritocratic class structure and a rationalist vision of the world were two sides of the same coin, opposed to the irrational theological dogmatism that had for centuries supported a social system based on inherited status and wealth.

Socially, as well as intellectually, John Lubbock could have swung either way in this debate. Like his father, he belonged to a long tradition of gentleman–scientists of independent means, and he saw absolutely no contradiction between science and religion. Had he followed in his father's footsteps and gone up to Cambridge, he might well have fallen under the influence of Sedgwick. Several factors combined, however, to ensure his alignment with the radical faction. The most important was the influence of Darwin, Huxley and Hooker, but there was also the psychological

1 Cited by A. Desmond 1998, 253.

and social structure of the divide, which pitted new ideas against received wisdom and vigorous young men against stuffy old professors. In any case, although he stood to inherit both a substantial fortune and a landed estate, the Lubbocks' wealth was, in relative terms, 'new money', earned in the commercial marketplace rather than handed down through centuries of land ownership, and the family tradition had been fairly consistently radical. John Lubbock's ambiguous position, however, meant that he would continually find himself on the horns of a dilemma, seen as a partisan in a 'War of Science and Religion', the basic premises of which he did not accept.

This conflict had been fermenting for many years. The sixteenth-century architects of the Reformation had insisted on the importance of the individual conscience in matters of belief, and it can be argued that the subsequent development of political and philosophical liberalism led inevitably to a 'free market in opinion',[2] which was bound to clash with more orthodox Christian teaching.

A crucial issue in the mid-Victorian marketplace of ideas was that of the relationship between humanity and the animal kingdom. The established orthodoxy, pounded out from the pulpit of every village church and drilled into children at Sunday school, was that man had been uniquely created in the image of God himself and was, as such, utterly different from any other creature: a difference of kind, not of degree. This view, rooted in the teachings of the Old Testament, and comforting in the certainty that it gave to the promise of life after death, had, for a very long time before the publication of *The Origin of Species*, been an issue of intellectual dispute. Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus, had written a poem tracing the evolution of life and human society back to the simplest organisms brought into being by the 'First Great Cause',[3] but such ideas had, for decades, been ignored. Charles Darwin's patient scientific observations over many years had finally produced the synthesis of an argument which the establishment would be unable to ignore and, although he did not include an explicit statement on the position of humanity in relation to evolution, the implications were clear enough.

Whatever Huxley believed about natural selection, one thing was absolutely clear in his mind: 'Man' was '... one with the rest of the organic World' to the 'very root and foundation of his nature'.[4] Darwin had long since reached the same conclusion, and Lubbock agreed. Unlike Huxley and Darwin, however, Lubbock did not see this conclusion as a challenge to his religious faith. He believed, much as Charles Darwin had in the 1840s (and Erasmus Darwin in the 1790s) that the whole of the natural world and the laws by which it operated (including, most importantly for Lubbock, the law of inevitable progress) were indicative of the ingenuity and benevolence of the divine will. In Erasmus Darwin's lifetime, such rationalist and materialist ideas could quite easily be discredited on political grounds, by association with the philosophies that had inspired the French and American Revolutions, as emblems of a dangerous and threatening radicalism. Sixty years on, with revolutionary mayhem a distant memory, this radicalism no longer seemed so threatening, especially given

2 O. Chadwick 1975, 21–3.
3 E. Darwin 1803.
4 A. Desmond 1988, 241.

the remarkable congruence between Darwin's theory of natural selection and the commercial logic of Britain's developing capitalist economy.

Although Sedgwick and Owen could not reconcile themselves to the materialism of Darwin and Huxley, they were themselves no simple-minded creationists. Owen's palaeontological researches had convinced him that creation had been a process rather than a single event. In Huxley's own lecture theatre, Owen had produced a fossil amphibian, *Anchegosaurus*, which he placed between fish and land vertebrates 'linking and blending them',[5] and a 'weasel reptile', *Galesaurus*, linking reptiles and mammals. For Owen, however (as for John Lubbock), there was a divine force behind these transformations, an idea rejected by Huxley as turning 'Nature's patterns into God's thoughts'.[6] More fundamentally, Owen believed that the human brain was so distinctive as to separate humanity from the rest of the animal kingdom. He created a new sub-class, the *Archencephala* ('Ruling Brain'), and identified a structure in the human brain, the *Hippocampus minor*, which he believed to be unique to humans. Huxley proved this to be simply wrong, dissecting ape brains to reveal the same structure, and here John Lubbock was firmly on Huxley's side, both because of the evidence and because his flexible theology did not require humans to be radically separated from other animals. The Oxford mathematician and Christian thinker, Baden Powell (a friend, incidentally, of John Lubbock's father, who had corrected a mathematical mistake in one of Baden Powell's scientific works on the dispersion of light)[7] had, in 1857, published a series of essays and sermons in which he had argued that the Old Testament was irrelevant to religion in the modern world, that it had been made redundant by the Gospel of Christ. Christianity was, therefore, '... not the religion of Moses, nor of Abraham, nor of Adam, but something far higher, more advanced, more spiritual.'[8] If Christians were entitled to ignore the Old Testament altogether, much of the dogma surrounding orthodox belief could be stripped away, making it easier for believers like John Lubbock to reconcile faith and science.

Throughout 1858 John Lubbock continued his research. He conducted further experiments on the reproduction of *Daphnia*,[9] dissections of insect respiratory systems[10] and studies of the embryology of creatures as widely separated as earwigs and chaffinches.[11] He produced two scientific papers, the first on the digestive and nervous system of *Coccus hesperidum*,[12] and the other on the muscular system of the caterpillar of *Pygaera bucephala*.[13] The first is important for the observation that it makes on the 'extraordinary' extent of variation in the nervous systems of individuals, a point enthusiastically taken up by Darwin in *The Origin of Species*:

5 Ibid., 232–3.
6 Ibid., 218.
7 P. Corsi 1988, 163.
8 B. Powell 1857, cited by J. Moore (ed.) 1988, 3, 499.
9 RS LUA13, 1–2.
10 RS LUA1.
11 RS LUA13, 75.
12 J. Lubbock 1858a.
13 J. Lubbock 1858b.

> It would never have been expected that the branching of the main nerves close to the great central ganglion of an insect would have been variable in the same species ... yet quite recently Mr Lubbock has shown a degree of variability in these main nerves in Coccus, which may almost be compared to the irregular branching of the stem of a tree.[14]

John Lubbock's revelation of the extent of variation apparent in the internal anatomy of a single species was precisely the sort of evidence that Darwin needed to demonstrate the principle of natural and random variation on which natural selection could operate. T. Vernon Wollaston, whilst accepting that variation occurred, had insisted that it did so only within clearly circumscribed limits. Here, in the nervous system of an insect, John Lubbock had found for Darwin the definitive answer to Wollaston's doubts.

In June 1858, at the age of 24, John Lubbock received the ultimate scientific accolade, being elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society. It was to prove a uniquely exciting summer to be joining the ranks of Britain's scientific elite. Within a matter of days, Darwin had received a tip-off from Lyell that another biologist, Alfred Russell Wallace, was about to submit a paper setting out the case for natural selection. Joseph Hooker engineered a joint communication[15] as a compromise solution, which would save face on both sides, and it was he who read the two short papers (Wallace's and Darwin's) one after the other, at the Linnaean Society on 1 July 1858. Darwin's cat was now firmly out of the bag, and Lyell acted as his agent persuading John Murray to publish *The Origin of Species*.

John Lubbock, meanwhile, seems, for the first time, to have been developing a degree of enthusiasm for his vocation as a banker. It occurred to him that, if the scientific principles of reason could elucidate natural phenomena, they could equally be applied to business, and that, at the same time as uncovering the natural laws of progress in his scientific work, he could use his position as a businessman to be an agent of economic progress in the contemporary world. Five years previously he had been struck by the industrial developments that he saw in Manchester. With his banking background, he was keenly aware that such progress depended on the movement of capital. Yet the banking system acted as a barrier to such movement. There were no national banks, only regional or 'country' banks and London banks. Most banks charged a commission when they cashed cheques drawn on another bank and, to make matters worse, when a cheque drawn on a country bank was presented in London, it had to be sent by post back to the originating bank before payment could be made.[16]

When the country banks, recognizing the inefficiency of this system, proposed to establish a London office specifically for the clearing of country cheques, Lubbock saw his opportunity to make his mark. He was convinced that a clearing system run by the London banks would cost less and carry fewer risks.[17]

Most country banks, after all, already operated in partnership with a London bank, which acted as its agent, and John Lubbock proposed that the London banks

14 C. Darwin 1859, 45–6; C. Darwin [1859] 1964, 45–6.

15 C. Darwin & A. Wallace 1858.

16 H. Hutchinson 1914.

17 J. Lubbock 1865b, 365.

should hold a 'clearing', presenting to one another all the cheques from the country banks that they represented. The country banks, in turn, should send all cheques drawn on banks outside their area to London, to be dealt with in the same way. His first approaches to the London bankers met with an 'indifferent' response.[18] Undeterred, he held individual meetings with the chief clerks of the various London banks, bringing them on board one by one. With Lubbock's help, the clerks convinced their owners and, by November 1858, he had secured the agreement of '... every London clearing bank that had any country business'. A few provincial banks held out against the system, but Lubbock was confident that '... they must conform to our rules or they will injure their business'.[19] By the end of January 1859 the scheme had been universally adopted, with the sole exception of the Yorkshire Bank, which finally joined in 1861.

On one level, this reform of the clearing system represented a simple application of commercial common sense. For John Lubbock, however, there was nothing very common about it – all around him he saw irrationality, and everywhere he saw this as a barrier to progress that had to be overcome, whether it was the irrational stranglehold of dogmatic religion over science, or of traditional banking practices over economic progress. The early nineteenth-century banking system was predicated on a network of largely self-contained rural communities, with most transactions taking place within, rather than between, them. Each market town had its own banks, serving the surrounding villages, and the large London banks, which served the businesses and wealthy individuals of the metropolis, had little impact on the lives of ordinary people in the country. As the industrial revolution gathered pace, however, these rural communities were breaking down. Young people flocked to the cities to find work, and needed to send money home. Wealthy Londoners were investing in railways and factories in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Transactions between communities, especially between London and rural Britain, were outpacing those within rural communities. Lubbock's solution was obvious, and it was only a matter of time before somebody adopted it. The impact was hardly dramatic, but was nonetheless significant. Transactions between London and the country, and between different parts of the country via London, became more efficient and payments were made more quickly. This efficiency, like the railways which increased the speed of physical communications, helped to nurture the growth of the economy. The importance of the London banks in the country was enhanced and the scene was set for their eventual takeover of their smaller country cousins. Lubbock himself grew in stature, as the young voice of reason and progress in the somewhat stultified and conservative world of banking – a world whose inhabitants lamented the replacement of oil lamps by gas.

John Lubbock continued with his entomological researches, and his paper on the eggs of insects was published by the Royal Society in 1859.[20] Darwin was impressed with Lubbock's intricate dissections of houseflies, wasps and other insects and, in February of 1859 wrote to John on the subject:

18 BL Add. 62679, 62.

19 Ibid., 63.

20 J. Lubbock 1859.

> ... it has occurred to me that you, and probably no one but you in England, could write a capital paper on the position of certain anomalous insects in the nat. system, as judged by their internal organs. Their externals have been discussed *ad nauseam*.[21]

John's interests, however, were broadening, and a notebook dated 1857–63[22] makes it clear that his reading during this period focussed increasingly on archaeological topics, including Worsaae's *Primeval Antiquities*, Bateman's *Ten Years Diggings in Celtic and Saxon Gravehills*, and Colt-Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire*.

In 1858 Joseph Prestwich and Hugh Falconer had found fossil remains of a bear together with a stone implement in a cave at Brixham in Devon. Later that year, whilst travelling through northern France, Falconer had met a local exciseman, Jacques Boucher de Crèvecoeur de Perthes, who had made similar discoveries of flint implements associated with the bones of extinct animals in the Somme valley around Abbeville. Lubbock had apparently planned to travel with Prestwich and John Evans to Abbeville in 1859, but was prevented from doing so by a 'pressing engagement'.[23] He must have regretted missing this visit, for it turned out to be highly significant. Prestwich and Evans spent a considerable amount of time with Boucher de Perthes, and became convinced of the association between flint axes and other human artefacts and the bones of extinct mammals. Evans, whose main interest had previously been in ancient British coins, wrote in his diary:

> I can hardly believe it. It will make my ancient Britons quite modern if Man is carried back in England to the days when Elephants, Rhinoceroses, Hippopotamuses and Tigers were also inhabitants of the country.[24]

Having been convinced of the reality of evolution, and of the need to abandon literal interpretations of the Old Testament, Lubbock (like Prestwich, Evans and Boucher de Perthes) was increasingly fascinated by the question of early human origins, and determined to play his part in uncovering the evidence. Although he missed the 1859 visit to Abbeville, he was to make up for this in the coming years, playing a key role both in formulating and in popularizing a new orthodoxy in relation to human origins.

Darwin's *The Origin of Species* was published at the end of the year, and was an immediate success, the initial run of 1,250 copies selling out on the first day. Darwin, however, was desperate for reassurance that his ideas were accepted by his colleagues and, in December, he wrote to Lubbock:

> My book has been, as yet, very much more successful than I ever dreamed of: Murray is now printing 3000 copies. Have you finished it? If so pray tell me whether you are with me on the general issue or against me. If you are against me I know well how honourable, fair and candid an opponent I shall have, and which is a good deal more than I can say of all my opponents ... .[25]

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21 CUL DAR146, 78.
22 RS LUA5.
23 A. Keith 1924.
24 Cited by G. Daniel 1975, 60.
25 F. Darwin [1888] 1969, 241.

John Lubbock's response to Darwin is not preserved, but it was obviously positive for, on 17 December, Darwin wrote back to him:

> I am delighted to hear that you are on my, or rather our side ... .[26]

Darwin's instincts were to pacify rather than antagonize his potential opponents. He even sent a complimentary copy of *The Origin* to Richard Owen, and received a courteous reply. Darwin's disciples, however, were less diplomatic than their master, and the truce was decisively shattered by Huxley in an anonymous review for *The Times*, which took a carefully aimed and brutal swipe at Owen.[27] This Huxley followed with the first public lecture on *The Origin* at the Royal Institution on 10 February 1860.[28] Darwin was not present at Huxley's lecture, but soon received reports of it, and was underwhelmed. Huxley 'intended to have backed the book' but 'managed to damage it'. He ended his lecture with a flourish against 'parsonism', but had said almost nothing about natural selection. Darwin considered his lecture 'an entire failure'.[29]

Owen, incensed by Huxley's attack, and egged on by letters from Sedgwick, the Duke of Argyll and even David Livingstone in Africa, turned decisively against Darwin as, predictably, did the overwhelming majority of the Anglican clergy.

Neither Huxley nor Lubbock was 'against' Darwin, but neither was completely 'with' him either. Both admired Darwin's scholarship and saw his book as making a decisive contribution to the search for 'a rational explanation of life',[30] but Huxley had an explicit anti-clerical agenda which Darwin (despite his private agnosticism) saw as a distraction, and neither Huxley nor Lubbock were much concerned with the mechanics of biogeography and natural selection which, to Darwin, were the whole point of the book.

John Lubbock, for his part, continued his scientific engagement. On 19 January 1860 his paper on the tracheae of insects was read before the Linnaean Society,[31] exploring, for the benefit of a more scientific audience, the ideas that he had discussed in his popular article published in the *Entomologists' Annual* in 1857. He discussed the relationships between the tracheae and the reproductive and digestive systems, and the extent of variation between individuals of the same species. More significantly, however, he compared the respiratory systems of the larva with those of the developed insect (imago) of the same species and found that, whereas in some species, the respiratory systems of larvae and developed insects were very similar to one another, in other species (those which undergo a 'perfect metamorphosis' such as beetles and butterflies) they are very different. Most tellingly of all, he found that:

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26 CUL DAR 263, 31.
27 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 478-9.
28 L. Huxley 1903, 254.
29 A. Desmond 1998, 269–70.
30 Ibid., 271.
31 J. Lubbock 1860a.

> ... in some cases the tracheae of the larva seem to agree in species where those of the perfect insect are different: so that ... it would seem that the larval trachae are, in both respects, less differentiated and more in accordance with the original type than those of perfect insects.[32]

His use of the term 'original type' is highly significant, in that it links him more closely to Owen than to Darwin. Owen's conceptualization of 'continuous creation' envisaged 'archetypes' in the mind of the Creator from which life forms had become, by stages, increasingly differentiated and increasingly complex as the Divine Plan unfurled.[33] This was diametrically opposed to Darwin's view of evolution as occurring through the action of natural selection on random variations, and was precisely what Huxley had in mind when he railed against natural theology. Owen's influence on Lubbock is underlined by the fact that, since 1855, Lubbock had kept a notebook on 'Homologies',[34] exploring similarities between different invertebrate species at various stages in their development. This notebook contains the thinking which ultimately fed into the 1860 article, and the use of the word ' homology' is a direct reference to Owen's 1846 paper on 'the archetype and homologies of the vertebrate skeleton' – Lubbock was, in effect, applying Owen's paradigm to invertebrates.

John Lubbock evaded Huxley's beak and claws by omitting from the paper any explicit reference to Owen, avoiding the use of the word 'archetype' and, most importantly, in contrast to his 1857 article, steering clear of theological references. The thread of continuity between the two papers, however, is unambiguous, and the surreptitious nod in Owen's direction makes this all the more interesting. Perhaps, in any case, the friendship between Lubbock and Huxley was by this stage strong enough to allow this difference to be overlooked (just as the personal animosity between Huxley and Owen had by this time become so great as to make any reconciliation between them unthinkable).

The 1860 meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was held at Oxford in the last week of June. John Lubbock presented a paper[35] on the development of the eggs of marine molluscs, continuing his interest in invertebrate embryology. At the same meeting, however, he also played a cameo role in one of the most celebrated debates in scientific history: that between Thomas Huxley and the Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, on the subject of evolution.

Although absent from the meeting, Darwin's was the name on everyone's lips. Most would have read his book, and could easily have identified among their own ranks, his leading supporters and opponents. A clash was eagerly awaited, but the key protagonists circled around each other, avoiding a direct conflict.

The showdown eventually came on the Saturday, when John William Draper of New York University was scheduled to speak on the 'Darwin hypothesis'. Huxley, apparently, had not even intended to be present, and it was only a chance meeting with Robert Chambers, the anonymous author of the much derided (by Huxley and Wilberforce among others) *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, that

32 Ibid., 49.

33 R. Owen 1846, see also N. Rupke 1994.

34 RS LUA 8.

35 J. Lubbock 1860b.

persuaded him to stay. He apparently feared Wilberforce's reputation as a 'first class controversialist',[36] an ironic fear coming, as it does, from Huxley, the supreme controversialist of nineteenth-century science, of whom it was said that whilst 'cutting up monkeys' was his forte, 'cutting up men' was his foible.

The meeting was so well attended that it had to be moved from the lecture theatre of the University Museum to the long West Room. On a swelteringly hot summer's day the room was packed with more than 700 people most of who had come, not to hear Draper, but to hear Wilberforce's response. In the chair was John Henslow, a distinguished botanist and, coincidentally, Joseph Hooker's father-in-law. It was a clergyman, John Dingle, who provoked hilarity, following Draper's speech, by using the blackboard and stating 'Let this point A be Man and let that point B be the mawnkey'. He was shouted down by rowdy undergraduates yelling 'Mawnkey! Mawnkey!' (however reticent Darwin may have been about the implications of his theory for humanity, the real point was clearly lost on no-one). Henslow struggled to restore order, and then called the bishop to speak.[37]

Hooker describes Wilberforce as speaking '... for half an hour, with inimitable spirit, ugliness and emptiness and unfairness' and 'ridiculing you [Darwin] badly and Huxley savagely'.[38] Towards the end of his speech, the bishop interjected a joke regarding Huxley's own ancestry. There are differing accounts, but the consensus is that he asked whether it was on his grandfather's or his grandmother's side that Huxley claimed descent from an ape.

Huxley took offence, and responded that, if asked whether he would rather have '... a miserable ape for a grandfather, or a man highly endowed by nature, and possessed of great means and influence, and yet who employs these faculties and that influence for the mere purpose of introducing ridicule into a grave scientific discussion', then he would '... unhesitatingly affirm [his] preference for the ape'.[39] Huxley claims to have spoken with 'perfect good temper', but other eyewitnesses described him as being 'white with anger'.

According to Hooker, Huxley '... could not throw his voice over so large an assembly' and '... did not allude to Sam's weak points, nor put the matter in a form or way that carried the audience'. It was, in Hooker's account to Darwin, left to himself to deliver the final blow:

> ... I smacked him amid rounds of applause – I hit him in the wind at the first shot in ten words taken from his own ugly mouth, and then proceeded to demonstrate in as few more 1, that he could never have read your book and 2, that he was absolutely ignorant of the rudiments of bot[anical] science.[40]

Huxley, by contrast, claimed that his retort provoked '... inextinguishable laughter among the people' and that they '... listened to the rest of my argument with great

36 L. Huxley 1903, 272.

37 L. Huxley 1903, 1, 262–5.

38 A. Desmond and J. Moore 1992, 494–5.

39 ICL HP 15, 115 (letter from T. Huxley to F. Dyster, 9 September 1860), cited by A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 497.

40 CUL DAR100, 141–2, cited by A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 495–6.

attention'. He conceded, however, that Lubbock and Hooker spoke after him 'with great force' and that, together, they '... shut up the Bishop and his laity'.

John Lubbock spoke after Huxley but before Hooker, emphasizing the embryological evidence for evolution and insisting that '... many of the arguments by which the permanence of species was supported came to nothing'. He made a joke about some wheat that was '... said to have come off an Egyptian mummy, and was sent to him to prove that wheat had not changed since the time of the Pharaohs; but which proved to be made of French chocolate'.[41]

John Lubbock has left us no account of his own of these events, indeed his diary has no entries at all for 1860, his mind probably preoccupied with family matters. What is clear, however, is that he was now perceived very clearly as being in the Darwin–Huxley camp and that, however much he may have hedged his bets earlier in the year, no reconciliation with Owen would now be possible.

A month after the debate, Huxley received news that the Dublin-based *Natural History Review* was in financial problems and was on the market. Huxley saw control of a major scientific journal as a potentially powerful weapon against Owen. Huxley lacked only one thing – money. Lubbock had deeper pockets and was quickly roped in, as were a number of others, and the journal was bought.[42]

At some stage in 1860 (the dates are unclear) John Lubbock at last found time to visit Boucher de Perthes in Abbeville, accompanied by Joseph Prestwich, George Busk and Douglas Galton. He was as impressed as John Evans had been the previous year:

> I am sure ... no geologist could return from such a visit without an overpowering sense of the change that has taken place and the enormous time which must have elapsed since the first appearance of Man in Western Europe.[43]

It was becoming clear to Lubbock, as it had to Evans, and to Boucher de Perthes himself that the scope of human prehistory in Europe had to be measured in terms not of thousands, but of tens or even hundreds of thousands of years, and this chimed well with his confidence in the continuity between humanity and the rest of the natural world. If human ancestors had lived in Europe for 40,000, or 400,000 years before the first written records, rather than the 4,000 assumed by Archbishop Ussher, then the distinctions between humans and their closest animal relatives could have emerged gradually, as Darwin's theory implied.

Darwin's *The Origin of Species* had appeared at the very end of 1859. Almost exactly a year later, a book was published which (though largely forgotten now) made the furore over Darwin's theory look like a discussion at a vicarage tea party, provoking '... the greatest religious crisis of the Victorian age'.[44] This book, innocuously titled *Essays and Reviews*,[45] came from within the Church of England itself. A group of liberal theologians, led by the headmaster of Rugby, Frederick

41 L. Huxley 1903, 1, 271.
42 A. Desmond 1998, 284.
43 Cited by A. Keith 1924.
44 I. Ellis 1980, ix.
45 F. Temple (ed.) 1860.

Temple (later to become Archbishop of Canterbury), questioned the literal truth of much that was in the Bible, and sought a rapprochement with science. The most controversial papers in the volume (those by Benjamin Jowett[46] and Baden Powell) dealt with the issue of biblical criticism. Jowett provided, perhaps, the most controversial statement, insisting that the Bible should be understood '... like any other book',[47] whilst Baden Powell argued that:

> ... when a reference is made to matters of external fact (insisted on as such) it is obvious that reason and intellect can alone be the proper judges of the evidence of such facts.

This meant that any biblical claims that did not make rational sense should, and indeed must, be rejected.

> When, on the other hand, the question may be as to points of moral or religious doctrine, it is equally clear other and higher grounds of judgement and conviction must be appealed to.[48]

Other contributors made an explicit appeal to the spirit of progress that had been invoked by Robert Chambers and Herbert Spencer and reinforced by Huxley and (however unintentionally) by Darwin. Temple himself wrote:

> This power, whereby the present ever gathers into itself the results of the past, transforms the human race into a colossal man, whose life reaches from the creation to the day of judgement. The successive generations of men are days in this man's life ... He grows in knowledge, in self-control, in visible size, just as we do ... We may, then, rightly speak of a childhood, a youth and a manhood of the World.[49]

Temple saw three stages in the 'training' of the world by God, Law (the Commandments), Example (the ministry of Christ) and the Gift of the Spirit. This was an early statement of the notion of 'Providential Evolution', heresy in 1859 but orthodoxy by the time Temple ascended to the See of Canterbury in 1896.[50]

All of this was music to John Lubbock's ears. By giving primacy to reason over faith in matters of fact (such as, for example, whether miracles had occurred) and to faith over reason in issues of morality, the essayists and reviewers had provided Lubbock with the basis for a marriage of rationalism and religion. This book, and especially Temple's contribution to it, was arguably more influential on Lubbock's later writings than was *The Origin of Species*, despite his personal debt to Darwin.

Wilberforce was incensed, raging against the fact that:

> ... men holding such posts should advocate such doctrines; that the clerical head of one of our great schools ... two professors in our famous University of Oxford, ... that such of these should be the putters forth of doctrines which seem at least to be altogether

46 B. Jowett 1860.
47 Cited by Parsons 1988, 41.
48 B. Powell 1860, 97.
49 F. Temple 1860, 3–4.
50 G. Elder 1996, 2.

> incompatible with the Bible and the Christian Faith as the Church of England has hitherto received it ....[51]

Militant agnostics, such as Frederic Harrison, eagerly joined the fray describing the philosophy of *Essays and Reviews* as 'Neo-Christianity', and 'the *Reductio ad Absurdum* of the Broad Church career'.[52] The essayists and their supporters were at risk of sinking between the Scylla of orthodoxy and the Charybdis of unbelief.

Essays and Reviews was not a particularly original contribution to theology. The biblical criticism drew on well-established German traditions, and added little to them.[53] Many of the Anglican clergy had long since abandoned literalist interpretations of the Old Testament (not least Charles Kingsley, who shared Lubbock's view that Darwinism was wholly compatible with Christianity). What was unique about *Essays and Reviews*, however, and what scandalized the clerical hierarchy, was that it was unapologetically aimed at an educated lay readership; these were no longer the subjects of arcane discussions among theologians, which could be tolerated, but rather of vigorous debate in the streets, which undermined the most fundamental fabric of belief.

In the public debate surrounding the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, John Lubbock had played a supporting role in a campaign led by Huxley and Hooker. In relation to *Essays and Reviews* it was Lubbock himself who, together with his friend William Spottiswoode, took the lead. Spottiswoode came from a similar background to Lubbock, having inherited his role as head of the family printing firm. He was an amateur mathematician and a liberal Anglican with close links to Benjamin Jowett and his circle in Oxford.[54] The English bishops, led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, had issued a letter of censure to the authors. Lubbock wrote an open letter to Frederick Temple, expressing surprise and regret at the bishops' position and seeking to express '... our sense of the value which is to be attached to enquiries conducted in a spirit so earnest and reverential, and our belief that such enquiries must tend to elicit truth, and to foster a spirit of sound religion'. The letter goes on to express the view that '... the discoveries in science, and the general progress of thought, have necessitated some modification of the views generally held on theological matters' and to welcome '... these attempts to establish religious teaching on a firmer and broader foundation'.[55]

Lubbock and Spottiswoode sent this 'memorial' out to a large number of people, whom they hoped would be sympathetic, securing the signatures of Charles Darwin and Sir Charles Lyell, among others. Others were less sympathetic: writing from Pembroke College Cambridge, the astronomer, John Couch Adams (who had, in the 1840s, played a role in the discovery of Neptune) responded that he was not surprised at the bishops' censure, and did not regret it. He did not regard *Essays and Reviews* as being 'very "reverential" in spirit' or likely to foster 'a spirit of sound religion'. Some parts of the book, he protested, were hardly compatible '...

51 J. Hedley Brooke 2001.

52 *Westminster Review*, July 1860, 33–49.

53 J. Altholz 1988.

54 R. Barton 1990, 56–7.

55 BL Add. 49639, 29.

with any belief in Christianity at all. For what is Christianity without a belief in our Lord's Resurrection, and how can we believe in that who believes all miracles to be impossible in the nature of things?'[56]

T. Vernon Wollaston also refused to sign,[57] linking the issue to Darwinism, in which he stated he did not believe. Both Huxley and Hooker refused, ostensibly for different reasons; the former, as a declared agnostic, believing himself unqualified to comment on church matters, the latter fearing that it would '... give the impression that science had dictated our religious views'.[58] Huxley's position may have been ambiguous: John Lubbock wrote to him on the subject on 28 February 1861[59] in terms which suggest that he viewed Huxley as an ally, asking him to solicit support for his campaign from Sir Roderick Murchison and others. This may, of course, reflect a simple misunderstanding on Lubbock's part, but it may equally be that Huxley was playing a double game, adopting different positions in public and in private. Lubbock added an intriguing postscript to the letter, written on the train on his way in to London:

> Ramsay thinks the position of the Essayists untenable for clergymen, so do you and many others (perhaps I too!) but we avoid all reference to this. Could you see him also on this subject?

What is clear, however, is that if Huxley was covertly supporting the campaign he was doing so for very different reasons to Lubbock. Harrison's point (and, ironically, Wilberforce's) was that *Essays and Reviews* undermined the basis of Christian belief; if Huxley supported it, it was because he agreed with this analysis; Lubbock supported it precisely because he did not.

The controversy over *Essays and Reviews* continued for several years, with two of the authors being dragged through the courts in a heresy prosecution that was eventually overturned. It has been argued[60] that its publication set back, rather than advanced, the liberal faction within the Church of England, delaying the general acceptance of biblical criticism by 30 years, and certainly the backlash unleashed by Wilberforce and the Anglican hierarchy was a ferocious one. This, however, is to overlook the very real influence that the book had on the educated middle classes, struggling to make sense of a world in which religious certainties had been removed by the advance of science. Reason did not allow them to follow Wilberforce in his rejection of any science that did not conform to scripture, but nor did emotion allow them to follow Huxley into a Godless universe with no redeemer, and no promise of an afterlife. *Essays and Reviews* provided a way through this dilemma, and it was to have a profound influence on John Lubbock's understanding of man's place in the universe.

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56 BL Add. 49639, 41–2.
57 BL Add. 49639, 71–3.
58 Cited by A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 501.
59 ICL HP 22, 61–2.
60 I. Ellis 1980.

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PART II
Man of Stone, 1861–69

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Chapter 4

The Three Ages

By 1861, John Lubbock was sufficiently well regarded in the scientific community to be elected to the Council of the Royal Society. Together with Huxley, Busk and others, he served as an editor of the *Natural History Review*. During the course of the year he also published a number of scientific papers, following his well-established research themes: a review of a German book on *Daphnia*,[1] a study of a parasite of the humble bee[2] and another paper on the embryology of invertebrates.[3] He found time that year for two overseas visits, a climbing holiday in the Alps with Huxley and another friend, the physicist John Tyndall,[4] and a visit to Denmark with George Busk. Ellen did not go with him on either occasion. A daughter, Constance, had been born the previous year and, by the spring of 1861, Ellen was again pregnant.

The Danish trip was significant in that he seems to have travelled there quite specifically to see and study the country's archaeological treasures and, over the next few years, archaeology and anthropology were to occupy an increasing amount of his time, so much so that, in 1863, Tyndall could write to him:

> You are an archaeologist, I am a naturalist. You love to ponder on dead mens' bones – I to dwell with everlasting nature. Go thy way to Abury, ponder with sympathetic delight upon the flint and granite, fit emblems of thy own strong heart. But let me hear the music of the sea waves, the song of birds and the rustle of the wind through the foliage of the undercliff. Go thy way thou man of stone, of bronze, of iron. I, being of flesh and blood, with warm heart and warm sympathies, seek my companions amid the living and the beautiful, and not among the dead.[5]

Tyndall was, of course, pulling Lubbock's leg, but the comment is indicative of the shift in Lubbock's interests – one could hardly have written this of Lubbock in 1860.

Denmark was an interesting and appropriate destination because Danish archaeologists were in the process of making a major breakthrough in understanding the chronology of European prehistory. In 1819, the National Museum had opened to the public, laid out according to the 'Three Age System' devised by its curator, Christian Jurgensen Thomsen. Thomsen, drawing on the earlier work of the historian, Vedel-Simonsen, had concluded, from the occurrence of different combinations of artefacts on different sites, that there had been three distinct ages before the beginning

1 J. Lubbock 1861a.
2 J. Lubbock 1861b.
3 J. Lubbock 1861c.
4 A. Smith-Woodward 1924.
5 RI JT 1/T/1040.

of historic times in Denmark: the Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. This was the first serious attempt to understand the chronology of prehistoric Europe. Prior to this, those who were interested in prehistoric sites and artefacts knew only that they were prehistoric. As Rasmus Nyerup wrote in 1806:

> ... everything that has come down to us from Heathendom is wrapped in a thick fog; it belongs to a space of time which we cannot measure. We know that it is older than Christendom, but whether by a couple of years or a couple of centuries, or even by more than a millennium, we can do no more than guess.[6]

The Three Age System provided the first glint of light to penetrate this fog. It provided only a relative chronology – the length of each age remained unclear, although by 1861, with the discoveries at Brixham and Abbeville, it was becoming fairly obvious (certainly to Lubbock) that millennia were indeed involved.

One of Thomsen's students, Jens Worsaae, had given a series of lectures in Britain in 1846–47,[7] and Thomsen's guidebook to the Danish Museum had subsequently been published in English.[8] The book, however, sold few copies and only a very small number of British researchers recognized the full significance of the Three Age System for European, rather than simply Nordic prehistory.[9]

John Lubbock had read Worsaae's *Primeval Antiquities* (his notebook of 1857–63 makes reference to it), and was already convinced of the merits of the Three Age System before he visited Denmark.[10] His conversation with his Danish host, Japetus Steenstrupp, focussed on the finer points of it, and specifically whether the Stone Age should be subdivided (Lubbock thought it should, Steenstrupp was less sure).[11]

Steenstrupp took his visitors to see a number of prehistoric sites which he and others had been excavating around the Isefjord. These were *kjokkenmoddings* or 'kitchen middens', enormous piles of shell and animal bone deposited around the Danish coast.

On his return, John Lubbock wrote a paper for the *Natural History Review*, based on his experiences in Denmark.[12] He referred to the 'genius' of Christian Jurgensen Thomsen, and used his article as an opportunity to set the Three Age System for English readers. He came down firmly on the side of a subdivided Stone Age, commenting on the great differences he had noted between the flint tools he had seen in Denmark and the 'older forms' that he had seen in the Valley of the Somme the previous year. He also commented on the absence of a Copper Age in Denmark, from which he inferred that the beginning of the Bronze Age must represent the arrival of a new race of people, since it was inconceivable that bronze could have been developed without a prior knowledge of copper.

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6 Cited by G. Daniel 1975, 38.
7 J. Worsaae 1847.
8 Royal Society of Northern Antiquities 1848.
9 For example, F.C. Lukis 1849.
10 RS LUA5.
11 Ibid.
12 J. Lubbock 1861d.

For Lubbock, however, it was not enough to develop a chronology of prehistory: he wanted to humanize it, to understand what life was like for prehistoric Danes and Britons. It was clear that it must have been very different from life in nineteenth-century Europe, and Lubbock hit upon the idea that modern 'savages' (non-industrialized and non-urban peoples) might provide the key to understanding the prehistoric societies of Europe. He, of course, had no direct experience of such peoples, having never travelled outside Europe, and therefore had to rely on the observations of those who had. One such was Lubbock's friend and mentor, Charles Darwin, and Lubbock now cited Darwin's description of life among the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego, as giving '... a vivid and probably correct idea of what was passing on the shores of the Danish fjords several thousand years ago'.[13]

His choice of analogy is a significant, if unsurprising one. Darwin's encounters with the 'Fuegians' on their native soil had been relatively fleeting. From what little he saw of them, however, Darwin (who had grown up with eighteenth-century notions of the 'noble savage' inherited from his father and grandfather) was shocked by the physical and moral condition of the natives, commenting that the difference between 'savage and civilized man' was greater than that between wild and domesticated animals, and that '… no lower grade of man could be found'.[14]

The combining of archaeological and ethnographic evidence to build a picture of past societies was to become a distinctive feature of John Lubbock's work, but he may not have realized the extent to which the observational science of ethnography was in its infancy. Unable to make ethnographic observations of his own, his work would always be constrained by the quality of other men's observations and judgements.

Charles Darwin had done John many favours over the years, and was now in a position to ask for a favour in return. John and his father set up Darwin's son William with a partnership in a Southampton bank, though not before a great deal of haggling over terms, which tried the patience of all concerned.[15]

The Lubbock family was rapidly outgrowing High Elms. The 1861 census return gives a snapshot of the household:[16] in addition to John's parents, John and Ellen and their three children, there were five of John's brothers and one of his sisters, three cousins (presumably visiting) and another visitor. Below stairs were 20 servants, including a butler, housekeeper and cook, a nurse, four lady's maids and three footmen.

With another baby on the way, John and Ellen were keen to set up home on their own, and eventually settled for a house in Camden, which they called Lamas, and which they moved into in August 1861.[17] Their son Norman was born in December.

Earlier that year, during his holiday in Switzerland, John had been impressed by the archaeological remains of wooden structures that he had seen around the shores of Lake Geneva, and he spent much of his Christmas break at Lamas with Ellen

13 J. Lubbock 1861d, 500.
14 R. Keynes (ed.) 1988, 120–125.
15 CUL DAR146, 93–106.
16 PRO RG9 462 49.
17 BL Add. 62679, 64.

and the children, writing up his thoughts on the Swiss discoveries for publication.[18] Again, he emphasized the Three Age System and argued for a subdivision of the Stone Age, his detailed study of the artefacts and animal bones from the Swiss sites leading him to suggest that animal domestication may have been a feature of the later Stone Age. He was in regular correspondence with the leading Swiss archaeologist, Alphonse Morlot, whom he had met in Lausanne. Both were intrigued by the parallels between the Swiss lake sites and Herodotus' description of lake settlements around Lake Prasias in Thrace. Morlot wanted to mount an expedition to Lake Prasias to find evidence for these settlements, and Lubbock offered financial help, but it never happened, Morlot being put off by reports of banditry and violence in the Balkans.[19]

John Lubbock returned to France at Easter for a week with Prestwich and Evans and, on his return, set about writing this up also. In this paper[20] he tackled head-on the question of human antiquity, expressing astonishment that a host of evidence for the co-existence of humans with extinct animals, both from Britain and France, had been ignored for so long. He posed four fundamental questions in relation to Boucher de Perthes's discoveries at St-Acheul (which we now know to be hundreds of thousands of years old):

1. Are the so-called flint implements of human workmanship, or the results of physical agencies?
2. Are the flint implements of the same age as the bones of the extinct animals with which they occur?
3. Are we entitled to impute a high antiquity to the beds in which these remains occur?
4. What are the conditions under which they were deposited?

To the first three questions the answer, as he saw it, was unambiguously affirmative, whilst in response to the fourth question, it was clear that they were deposited under climatic conditions very different from those that exist at present.

Although archaeology had, by this time, become John's main scientific interest, he had not entirely forgotten his earlier fascination with entomology. In his notebook he recorded his surprise at discovering an insect in a pond near High Elms using its wings to swim under water, and at the ability of this insect to survive for over 12 hours in water without taking down a bubble of air.[21] Darwin was greatly interested in this discovery and incorporated it in later editions of *The Origin of Species* as evidence against separate creation, since, if species had been separately created, they would presumably have specific adaptations for swimming (paddles, for example, instead of wings), just as '... upland geese which rarely go near water would not have webbed feet'.[22]

18 J. Lubbock 1862a.
19 BL Add. 49639, 133; 49640, 9.
20 J. Lubbock 1862b.
21 RS LUA22, 264.
22 C. Darwin [1882] 1975, 165–6.

At the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in the autumn of 1862, John Lubbock presented two papers:[23] the first drawing on his earlier work on *Sphaerularia* (a parasite of the humble bee) and the second on his observations on the diving insect. He managed two further papers by the end of the year – one on the metamorphosis of a fly[24] and the other on the co-existence of humans with *Dinornis*, an extinct flightless bird in New Zealand.[25]

As a teenager, John Lubbock had enjoyed the evening lectures at the Royal Institution. In February 1863 he gave his first lecture there on his archaeological observations in Denmark, Switzerland and France. He seems to have been a little nervous and told Ellen that he had 'lectured very badly', but Tyndall wrote to her assuring her that he could '... number on my finger-ends the lectures which have been equally successful during the years of my connection with the Royal Institution'.[26]

John Lubbock' s archaeological demonstration of human antiquity went hand in hand with his lobbying for reform within the Church of England and, in this regard, he had a potential new ally. John William Colenso was Bishop of Natal in South Africa, and had just published the first volume of his critical analysis of the first five books of the Bible. Colenso took up where the essayists and reviewers had left off, but set out his arguments in far greater theological and historical detail. He described how a 'simple-minded but intelligent native' of Natal had questioned him incredulously about the veracity of the story of Noah's flood and how he, in response, felt unable to 'speak lies in the name of the Lord'.[27]

Colenso was lampooned, both in South Africa and in England, as a 'nigger-lover' who had gone native and abandoned his superior western values. A contemporary limerick sums this attitude up:

> A Bishop there was, of Natal,
> Who took a Zulu for a pal,
> Said the Kaffir 'look 'ere, ain't the Pentateuch queer?'
> And converted my Lord of Natal.[28]

In May 1862, Colenso had sailed for England seeking support. Joseph Hooker arranged a meeting between Lubbock and Colenso at Kew,[29] and both were briefly drawn in to a campaign organized by Colenso's friend, John Westlake. Westlake's campaign aimed to secure reform of the '39 Articles', the points of faith to which all Anglican clergy had to sign up, and many of which Colenso, along with the essayists and reviewers, had publicly disavowed.[30] Lubbock helped Westlake to secure the support of Charles and Erasmus Darwin and others, but the campaign fell

23 J. Lubbock 1862c–d.
24 J. Lubbock 1862e.
25 J. Lubbock 1862f.
26 RI JT/1/T/1044–5.
27 J. Colenso 1862, vii.
28 Cited by J. Morris 1979, 324.
29 BL Add. 49640, 27–8.
30 BL Add. 49640, 44.

apart because, whilst everyone could agree on what they did not believe in, it was far more difficult to achieve a consensus around what they did believe.

The debates within the Church attracted greater public attention than at any time since the Reformation, and a series of popular satirical cartoons were printed showing prominent scientific figures pitted against leading churchmen. Colenso, despite his (contested) episcopal status, was placed clearly in the 'Science' camp along with Huxley, Tyndall and Darwin.[31] John Lubbock was not yet a sufficiently prominent public figure to feature in these cartoons, but it is not difficult to see where he would be located. In similar vein, *Punch* published a satirical poem 'Monkeyana',[32] bringing together the debates on evolution and human antiquity and the rivalries between the personalities involved:

Am I satyr or man?
Pray tell me who can,
And settle my place in the scale.
A man in ape's shape,
Or an anthropoid ape,
Or a monkey deprived of its tail?

The Vestiges taught
That all life came from naught,
By 'development' so-called 'progressive'.
That insects or worms
Assume higher forms,
By modification excessive.

Then DARWIN set forth
In a book of much worth,
The importance of 'Nature's Selection'.
How the struggle for life
Is a laudable strife,
And results in 'Specific Distinction'.

Let pigeons and doves
Select their own loves,
And grant them a million of ages.
Then doubtless you'll find
They've altered their kind,
And changed into prophets and sages …

Then HUXLEY and OWEN,
With rivalry glowing,
With pen and ink rush to the scratch.
Tis brain versus brain,
Till one of them's slain!
By Jove! It will be a good match!

31 ICL HP 79b, 19–21.
32 *Punch*, 18 May 1861.

Says OWEN, you can see,
The brain of chimpanzee
Is always exceedingly small,
With the hindermost 'horn' of extremity shorn,
And no 'hippocampus' at all.

The Professor then tells 'em
That Man's 'cerebellum',
From a vertical point you can't see,
That each 'convolution'
Contains a solution
Of 'archencephalic' degree ...

… Next HUXLEY replies
That OWEN he lies,
And garbles his Latin quotation;
That his facts are not new,
His mistakes not a few,
Detrimental to his reputation.

'To twice slay the slain'
By dint of the brain
(thus HUXLEY concludes his review),
Is but labour in vain,
Unproductive of gain,
And so I shall bid you 'adieu'.

Sir Charles Lyell's book *The Antiquity of Man* was published early in 1863.[33] Whilst challenging the orthodox view by arguing strongly for human antiquity, Lyell infuriated Darwin by failing to make a clear statement on evolution or the relationship of humanity to the rest of the animal kingdom. Darwin wrote to Hooker:

> ... I am deeply disappointed ... to find that his timidity prevents him from giving any judgement ... The Lyells are coming here ... I dread it, but I must say how disappointed I am that he has not spoken out on species, still less on man. And the best of the joke is, he thinks he has acted with the courage of a martyr of old.[34]

Lyell's *Principles of Geology* had inspired Darwin on his *Beagle* voyage. It was Lyell that had tipped Darwin off about Wallace's article, finally persuading him to publish *The Origin of Species*, and Lyell who had acted as his agent to ensure that the publishers were on board. Darwin counted on Lyell as an ally and a friend and Lyell had let him down, his moral and religious conservatism restraining him from a full embrace of Darwin's position.

Lubbock was furious for a different reason. He was putting together a book of his own which would present the evidence for human antiquity and develop a chronology of European prehistory, drawing on his earlier published papers on the

33 C. Lyell [1863] 1914.

34 Cited by F. Darwin [1892], 1958.

Danish middens, the Swiss lake villages and the discoveries in the Somme valley. To be beaten to this end by Lyell would always have been an irritation but, to add insult to injury, Lyell had made substantial and unacknowledged use of Lubbock's published work, basing four of his 24 chapters on this material. Whether this should be seen as plagiarism in the strict sense is open to debate (Lyell, with impeccable Lincoln's Inn logic, argued that since the intellectual property in question belonged to Steenstrupp, Morlot and Boucher de Perthes, all of whom were fully acknowledged, Lubbock had no claim on it) but there can be little doubt that he had drawn heavily on Lubbock's work and ought to have acknowledged this.

Both Darwin and Huxley had their own scores to settle with Lyell. Rather than calm the tension between Lubbock and Lyell they inflamed it, encouraging Lubbock in his indignation. Lubbock published a review of Lyell's book in the *Natural History Review*[35] which delighted Darwin by criticizing Lyell's timidity on evolution, and suggesting that 'Even the Bishop of Oxford might agree ...' to the equivocal statements expressed in Lyell's book. Darwin wrote to him on 5 April:

> I like particularly your review of Lyell and agree to all you say. Whether Lyell will like it quite so much, especially about the B. of Oxford, may well be doubted. But nothing you can say can annoy him much; and it is all just.[36]

Lyell' s intervention made John Lubbock all the more determined to press ahead with his own book on prehistory. He published a review of recent publications on North American archaeology[37] and, in the spring of 1863, he travelled to Scotland to examine some coastal middens near Elgin which he compared to those that he had seen in Denmark.[38] It was in the context of his research for the book that Lubbock started amassing what was to become a substantial collection of archaeological artefacts. Japetus Steenstrupp assisted by negotiating for Lubbock the purchase of a collection of 251 objects from a Danish student, Vilhelm Boye.[39] This collection came with a catalogue, and Lubbock continued Boye's catalogue as the basis for his own records as his collection grew.[40] The collection was intended to inform and illustrate Lubbock's research. In his earlier paper on insect collecting,[41] Lubbock had emphasized the pointlessness of collecting for its own sake, and described an unstudied collection as being comparable to a library of unread books.

By May 1863 John Lubbock completed a first draft of *Prehistoric Times* which he sent to Huxley for comments. He had inserted a note which, whilst avoiding a direct attack on Lyell, nonetheless left the potential reader in no doubt as to the accusation that was being made:

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35 Anon. (J. Lubbock) 1863.

36 CUL DAR146, 113; see also DAR 263, 57.

37 J. Lubbock 1863a.

38 BL Add. 62679, 64, and see J. Lubbock 1863b.

39 BL Add. 49640, 48; 71–2, cited by J. Owen 2000.

40 Preserved as the 'Avebury Catalogue' in the Bromley Museum – see J. Owen 2000, 104.

41 J. Lubbock 1856c.

> In his celebrated work on the Antiquity of Man, Sir Charles Lyell has made much use of my earlier articles in the Natural History Review, frequently indeed extracting whole sentences verbatim, or nearly so. But as he has in these cases omitted to mention the source from which his quotations are derived, my readers might naturally think that I had taken very unjustifiable liberties with the work of the eminent geologist. A reference to the respective dates will, however, protect me from any such inference.[42]

Huxley clearly approved, and wrote to Lubbock:

> No man was ever reproached in a more gentle, manly, dignified and forcible way than is Lyell in that little note.

In the same letter, Huxley took issue with one of the central pillars of Lubbock's view of evolution. Lubbock set out to build on Darwin's achievement by using archaeological and ethnographic evidence to develop a model of human social and cultural evolution. Unlike Darwin's model of biological evolution, however, Lubbock's was explicitly progressive. Following the lead set by Frederick Temple[43] in *Essays and Reviews*, his was a providential model of evolution, in which the progressive civilization of humanity led inexorably to greater happiness and enlightenment. Huxley was unsure, suggesting that, whilst the 'civilized man' might escape '... a good deal of the physical pain' associated with 'savage' life, he also had '... mental tortures to suffer of which the savage knows nothing'. For Huxley, happiness could be expressed as a ratio between possessions and desires and, whilst the 'civilized man' undoubtedly had more possessions than the 'savage', he also had greater desires.[44] Lubbock's optimistic vision of evolution as progressive improvement (which was shared by others) was to prove crucial to the acceptance of evolutionary theory by the middle classes of Victorian England.[45] Such a metaphor was naturally more attractive and re-assuring than Darwin's vision of a brutal struggle for existence. It was also easier to reconcile with the teachings of the Church. Darwin, of course, had been writing of the biological evolution of species, whilst Lubbock was concerned with the social evolution of human communities, but this crucial distinction was easily lost in a generalized debate around the meaning of 'Evolution'.[46]

John Lubbock was an enthusiastic member of the Ethnological Society of London and probably drew much of his understanding of modern 'savages' from the lectures that he attended and the conversations he had with other members. Ladies were welcome at meetings, and Ellen Lubbock seems to have participated with as much enthusiasm as her husband. In the spring of 1863 a number of members, led by Dr James Hunt, broke away from this society to form the rival Anthropological Society. Hunt gave Huxley an honorary fellowship, and there may at first have been some hope that the new society would provide a breath of fresh air: Hunt's initial

42 Quoted in Anon. 1865, 346.
43 F. Temple 1860.
44 BL Add. 49640, 59–61.
45 See, for example, P. Bowler 1988, 1989.
46 See, for example, P. Bowler 1988.

manifesto[47] emphasized scientific objectivity and seeking a broader 'Science of Man' than was normally included under the label of 'Ethnology'. It soon became clear, however, that Hunt had a deeply unpleasant and explicitly racist agenda. By no means everyone in the Society shared Hunt's views, but his irreverent and charismatic personality, and his access to funds secretly provided by the Confederate government in America[48] enabled him to dominate it.

In his original manifesto, Hunt had insisted that '…the objects of this Society will never be prostituted to such an object as the support of the slave trade …'. He proceeded, however (at least in Lubbock's and Huxley's view), to do precisely that. In his first article in the *Anthropological Review* 'On the Physical and Mental Characteristics of the Negro', Hunt argued that there was '... as good reason for classifying the negro as a distinct species from the European as there is for making the ass a distinct species from the zebra'.[49] In a letter to Lubbock dated 2 May 1863 Huxley described Hunt's society as '... a nest of imposters' and made clear that he had returned his honorary diploma to them '... with a petite note declining to have anything to do with them'.[50] The conflicts of the American Civil War were about to be played out on the pages of English scientific journals and the Ethnological Society was rapidly reorganized in readiness, with Lubbock assuming the Presidency and Busk and Huxley joining him on the Council.

Victorian attitudes to race were, of course, very different from those which are taken for granted in the twenty-first century. John Lubbock was entirely comfortable with the use of the word 'savage' as a noun and all that this implied. Both he and Huxley expressed a degree of ambiguity about the American Civil War. For both Lubbock and Huxley, however, the idea of black and white races as separate species was, quite simply, scientific nonsense and, for both, science was the only reliable guide to social policy.

Taking a break from the acrimony that he knew was to come, John Lubbock set off with Ellen, in July 1863, for a tour of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, which was to be part holiday and part archaeological exploration. It was Ellen's first overseas trip, and she described it in a travelogue published the following year.[51] Steenstrupp took them to the middens around the Isefjord, and Ellen even participated in the excavation, which she described with great enthusiasm:

> We were provided with a couple of stout iron forks and, like besiegers before an unyielding city, we sat down in front of the walls of shells and rubbish and proceeded to work away ... Anything so exciting as that day of grubbing among the oyster shells I never experienced. I could never remember in my excitement that I was gradually undermining the wall at which I worked; consequently, every now and again, down came a perfect avalanche of shells and bones upon my devoted head, and I emerged from the confusion one mass of

47 J. Hunt 1863a.
48 D. Lorimer 1978, 138–9; A. Desmond 1998, 320–326.
49 J. Hunt 1863b, 387.
50 RS LUA3.
51 E. Lubbock 1864.

> white rubbish, with fragmentary bits of oyster shells down my back, amongst my hair and filling up every crevice in my clothes.[52]

Later that summer, John Lubbock enjoyed a climbing holiday with Tyndall and Huxley (it was not their first – Tyndall and Huxley were keen mountaineers, and Lubbock, though less experienced, had climbed the Galenstock with them in 1861). They climbed the Jungfrau where their expedition almost came to grief in an incident described in an article published in the *Saturday Review* on 1 August 1863.[53] The article is written in the first person in a way that suggests that either Huxley or Tyndall was the author (Lubbock is referred to in the third person throughout). According to the account given in the article, the party got into trouble when one of their two Swiss guides made a foolish mistake by trying to cross an insubstantial snow bridge over a crevasse rather than having the patience to walk around it. He fell in and his colleague panicked. The article describes how this second guide was 'extremely agitated' and how '... his education as a Roman Catholic, by furnishing him with saints and angels to appeal to, augmented his emotion'. He became hysterical to the extent that they considered his own life to be in danger and one of the three admonished him in supremely Victorian fashion 'If you behave like a man we shall save him; if like a woman he is lost'. Since the fallen man had taken with him the only decent rope, they took off coats, waistcoats and braces and tied them together. Lubbock lowered the guide and Tyndall down and they dug the man out. The guide '... wrought like a hero but at times he needed guidance and stern admonition'. Eventually they freed the injured man from the ice and debris and Lubbock hauled the three of them back up. Night was coming on and they spent the night in a nearby cave, successfully descending the following day.

The accuracy of the account is questionable. Tyndall wrote a letter to *The Times* in September 1863,[54] in which he commented on the 'various accounts' that had appeared in print and set out 'to give the correct one' (Huxley must, by implication, have been responsible, directly or indirectly, for the account that appeared in the *Saturday Review*). According to Tyndall, the party was caught in an avalanche, which could hardly have been blamed on any of them. The leading guide, Jenni, is described as having acted at all times with 'great courage and skill'. Lubbock, on the other hand, pasted the *Saturday Review* article into his diary without comment.[55]

Whatever the truth, however, the *Saturday Review* article is fascinating for the insight it gives into the unquestioned assumptions that informed the world view of men such as Lubbock and Huxley. The superiority of modern, rational, manly, Protestant middle-class Englishmen over backward, superstitious, Catholic and hysterical foreign peasants is an assumption that runs through and colours every part of this account. The same assumption coloured Lubbock's vision of social and cultural evolution, unambiguously placing his own nation and class at the pinnacle of the evolutionary pyramid. That this assumption should have been couched by

52 Ibid., 365.

53 A copy of this article is to be found in the Lubbock papers in the British Library – BL Add. 62679.

54 *The Times*, 30 September 1863; copy in Wellcome Library, MS 777/108.

55 BL Add. 62679, 65.

the author of the article in terms of a discourse of 'manliness', contrasting their 'manly' behaviour with the 'womanly' conduct of the guide, is very much in keeping with a liberal Anglican construction of masculinity (rational rather than emotional, firm but gentle with 'inferiors', including women and children, taking responsibility for others) espoused, for example, by Thomas Arnold, Benjamin Jowett, Frederick Maurice and Charles Kingsley, and which came to form part of the paternalistic liberal justification for imperialism.[56]

John Lubbock made one more foreign excursion before the end of the year – a visit to St-Acheul with Joseph Hooker in October.[57] He also returned, briefly, to his earlier interest in crustacea, publishing an article on some new species of freshwater entomostraca,[58] some of which he had discovered in ponds near High Elms and others of which he had found in a pond near Rouen during his visit to France with Evans and Prestwich the previous year.

At the beginning of 1863 John Tyndall had commented on Lubbock's many travel plans, joking that 'I never saw such a weathercock in all my life!'.[59] It was indeed a frenetic year and, although John Lubbock was made Honorary Secretary of the London Bankers in 1863, it is difficult to imagine that he found much time during the year to devote to this role, or indeed to his own bank, whose managers presumably got on quietly with their jobs during his prolonged absences.

Lubbock, Busk and Tyndall, together with Huxley, were forming an increasingly close social circle, linked by common leisure pursuits as well as a passion for science. Busk, who had accompanied Lubbock to Denmark in 1861, was a Naval surgeon, who had served on HMS *Dreadnought* and was, by this time, based at Greenwich. He had been introduced to John Lubbock by Huxley, who had known Busk and his wife Ellen since the 1850s. The social link between the four men included their families – Ellen Lubbock, Ellen Busk and Henrietta Huxley corresponded with and visited one another on a regular basis. Ellen Busk, whom Huxley greatly admired, was a lively personality and freethinker, 'well-read rather than well-bred'; Huxley compared her to an 'Egyptian priestess'.[60] Tyndall (an Irish Protestant and Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Institution) was still, at this point in time, a bachelor, but he had a lively sense of humour and flirted playfully with all the women in the circle, particularly Ellen Lubbock. A common project was beginning to crystallize, shared by Tyndall, the Lubbocks, Busks and Huxleys: it was a project based around an optimistic vision of evolutionary progress, a proselytic belief in the value of science to society and a passionate desire to share with as broad a public as possible their own fascination with the wonders of nature.

56 N. Vance 1985; B. Hilton 1989; see also P. White 2003, 21–2.
57 DAR170, 41.
58 J. Lubbock 1863c.
59 RI JT/1/T/1040.
60 A. Desmond 1998, 160.

Chapter 5

Prehistoric Times

In January 1864 John Lubbock began a series of public lectures at the Royal Institution on 'The Antiquity of Man', based on his published archaeological work. The high profile debates surrounding Darwin's *The Origin of Species* had made the London public hungry for scientific education and Lubbock, Huxley and Tyndall were all performing to packed halls; Lubbock on archaeology and ethnology, Huxley on zoology and evolution, and Tyndall on physics. Science was defining the spirit of the age, and it was increasingly to the men of science rather than to the clergy that people turned to for an explanation of the world and their place within it. The previous year, Charles Kingsley had written to his fellow liberal clergyman, Frederick Maurice, that:

> The state of the scientific mind is most curious; Darwin is conquering everywhere, and rushing in like a flood, by the mere force of truth and fact ... .[1]

Issues that previously had been taboo, discussed in secret by dangerous radicals, were now open for discussion. Orthodoxies that had been suspect for decades in private, but nonetheless unchallengeable in polite society, were now blown apart. Science was suddenly sexy, and the middle classes of London could not get enough of it, spurning the music halls in favour of lectures on the Swiss lake villages and the Danish shell middens, gorillas and giraffes, electricity and light.

Huxley used one of his lectures on mammalian anatomy in February to deliver a broadside[2] against James Hunt, who had published an article on 'The Negro's Place in Nature'.[3] Once again, Hunt had insisted that Negroes and Europeans belonged to separate species, but this time he had explicitly linked this to support for slavery. Whilst opposing Hunt, Huxley was careful to distance himself from the 'fanatical abolitionists' in America who believed in the equality of black and white races, a proposition which Huxley regarded as '... so hopelessly absurd as to be unworthy of serious discussion'.

Huxley went on to demolish Hunt's claims that Negroes were incapable of standing fully upright (he appears to have had a Negro skeleton in the lecture hall to prove his point), and that the blood and hair of the Negro were vastly different from those of the European. Referring explicitly to the civil war raging in America, Huxley did not shrink from what he saw as the political implications of scientific facts; however much his heart might admire the courage of the Confederate forces, his intellect

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1 Cited in F. Darwin [1888] 1969, 3, 2.

2 A detailed account of the lecture was published in *The Reader*, 27 February 1864; vol. 3, 267.

3 J. Hunt 1864.

insisted that the North was '… justified in any expenditure of blood or money which shall eradicate a system hopelessly inconsistent with the moral elevation, the political freedom or the economical progress of the American people'.

Hunt, in turn, found support in some unlikely places. Charles Kingsley knew Hunt as a speech therapist, who had helped him to overcome his own stammer. Kingsley diplomatically avoided actually joining Hunt's Anthropological Society, but offered support from the wings on the basis of what he saw as an explicitly Darwinian perspective. Kingsley agreed with Hunt's most provocative statement, that the Negro was as different from the white man as the donkey was from the zebra, and even speculated that folk beliefs in such beings as dwarves and satyrs might reflect a remembrance of sub-human life forms which had '... died out, by the law of natural selection'.[4] That such a line could be taken by one of the leading figures in Victorian Christian Socialism underlines just how isolated was the position on race adopted by Lubbock and Huxley, and also demonstrates the wide variety of positions that could be supported by 'Darwinian' logic. For Huxley and Lubbock (whose own paternalistic views on 'the Negro' are certainly racist by the standards of today) the key issue was a simple one – the unity of the human species – and this, rather than any suggestion of equality, was the key dividing line in Victorian thinking on race.

Alongside his public lectures, John Lubbock continued with his research, both in entomology and in archaeology, publishing another paper on parasites[5] and carrying out an analysis of prehistoric burial mounds in England to demonstrate the applicability of the Three Age System.[6] He also published a review[7] of W.R. Wilde's book on Irish prehistory,[8] which is interesting in what it tells us of the development of Lubbock's views on Ireland, a subject that was later to occupy him a great deal in his political career. Wilde suggested that the use of bronze in Ireland had begun at a later date than elsewhere and Lubbock commented that 'This is not the only respect in which the Irish were far behind the rest of Europe.' In common with many of his English contemporaries, Lubbock had a low cultural opinion of the Irish, and he was to become a vociferous opponent of Home Rule. He frequently made links between his scientific work and his political views, interpreting archaeological evidence in ways that supported, rather than challenged his political opinions and presenting the latter as scientifically informed.

At Easter 1864 John Lubbock made an archaeological excursion to France to see the cave sites of Laugerie, La Madelaine, Les Eyzies and La Gorge d' Enfer, which had been excavated by Edouard Lartet and Henry Christy, in the Dordogne.[9] Lubbock recognized that the material from these caves (which we would today characterize as Upper Palaeolithic) was more recent than that from Abbeville, but older than that from the Danish shell-middens, and another piece in the chronological puzzle fell into place. He was particularly surprised to find evidence for art at such an early

4 BL RP500.
5 J. Lubbock 1864a.
6 *The Reader*, 8 March 1864, vol. 3, 400–401, J. Lubbock 1865c.
7 Ibid., 26 March 1864, vol. 3, 88–9.
8 W.R. Wilde 1864.
9 BL Add. 62680, 1.

stage, as this conflicted somewhat with his preconceptions as to the 'savage' nature of early people:

> Although it is natural to feel some surprise at finding these works of art, still there are some instances among recent savages of a certain skill in drawing and sculpture being accompanied by an entire ignorance of metallurgy.[10]

Lubbock assumed that different facets of 'progress' – technological, aesthetic, political, moral and religious would have taken place in concert with one another, rather as a child develops as it grows, its intellectual and physical development being inextricably linked. He was as surprised when the evidence threw up something that did not conform to this assumption as he would have been to see an artistic masterpiece created by one of his small children.

Lubbock, Huxley and Tyndall were increasingly conscious of the influence that they had over the public as the standard-bearers of science and were determined to use this influence in a coordinated way. They were also very aware of the vulnerability of their rationalist world view, both to clerical reaction (Colenso had, by this stage been formally deposed as Bishop of Natal and over 10,000 clergy had, in June 1864, signed a declaration affirming the literal truth of '... the whole canonical scriptures'[11]), and to charlatans such as Hunt. In the autumn of 1864 they formed a club of like-minded men. The members of this club, in addition to Lubbock, Huxley and Tyndall, were George Busk, Joseph Hooker, Edward Frankland, Thomas Hirst, Herbert Spencer and William Spottiswoode. Frankland was a colleague of Tyndall's and Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Institution. He had played a key role in defining the principle of valency, which explains the processes by which chemical elements react to form compounds and was also one of the first chemists to act as a commercial consultant to industry and government (on issues as varied as the deodorization of the Thames, the protection of limestone buildings from the effects of acid rain and the measurement of air pollution in London).[12] Hirst and Spottiswoode were both mathematicians, the former a teacher at University College School, the latter an amateur and, by profession a printer and publisher, who held the contract with Her Majesty's Stationery Office (he had also collaborated with Lubbock on the campaign to support the authors of *Essays and Reviews*).[13] Spencer was a journalist and philosopher, who had already published on social evolution.[14]

Ostensibly this was simply a private dining club which met on the first Thursday of every month, prior to the meeting of the Royal Society, but from the start, it had a clear agenda that was about influencing scientific and popular opinion, as Hirst later explained:

> ... besides personal friendship ... the bond that united us was devotion to science, pure and free, untrammelled by religious dogmas. Amongst ourselves there is perfect

10 J. Lubbock 1864b.
11 The Oxford Declaration – see Brock & Macleod 1976.
12 C.A. Russell 1996, 202.
13 J. Jensen 1972, R. Barton 1990.
14 H. Spencer 1851.

> outspokenness and no doubt opportunities will arise when concerted action on our part may be of service.[15]

At first they could not agree on a name for the club, and it was reputedly Ellen Busk, amused by this indecision, who suggested naming it after the unknown quantity, and it was thereafter known as the X-Club.[16] The invitation would go out a week in advance in the form of an algebraic expression, for example X = 3, meaning that the club would meet on the third of the month. The first meeting was held on 3 November, at St George's Hotel in Albemarle Street. Champagne was consumed, but it was not an especially lavish affair: the dinner bill came to 15 shillings and 4 pence each[17] (around £40 in today's terms).[18]

George Busk chaired the first meeting, at which the members agreed to purchase and reorganize the *Reader*, a magazine which reported on the scientific lectures that were proving so popular in London society. Too academic to appeal to a broad readership, the *Natural History Review* was losing money. The *Reader* had a more populist focus, and the X-Clubbers decided to cut their losses, closing down the *Review* and buying a publication that they hoped would increase their influence. They may have been prompted by advance notice of an editorial in the November edition of the *Reader*, entitled 'A Plea for Slavery', which took Hunt's part and argued that 'Slavery in a Christian country is, at the worst, a necessary evil'.[19]

The X-Clubbers were also working behind the scenes at the Royal Society, in precisely the sort of 'concerted action' that Hirst had envisaged. They secured the award of the Society's Copley Medal for Darwin, a gesture of great symbolic significance. Busk proposed him, and Hugh Falconer seconded (Falconer was one of a number of scientific men who, whilst not being a member of the X-Club, largely shared its agenda and could be relied upon for support).[20] Darwin was absent when the award was presented, but Lubbock and Huxley were incensed when the President, General Edward Sabine, inserted an unauthorized sentence in his valedictory speech, specifically excluding *The Origin of Species* from '... the grounds of our award'.[21] Huxley created a scene, calling for the minutes of the previous council meeting, and demanding that the offending sentence be struck from the record.

In less inflammatory tone, Lubbock wrote to Darwin:

> You will, of course, have seen in the President's address the manner in which he alludes to 'The Origin of Species'.
>
> I am much vexed about it, but would like to know your feeling on the subject if it would not bore you to write.[22]

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15 Cited by R. Macleod 1970, 311.
16 M. Frankland & S. Frankland 1901, cited by R. Macleod 1970, 305.
17 X-Club Minutes, RI JT/3/50.
18 J.J. McCusker 2001.
19 *The Reader*, 16 November 1864, vol. 3, 629.
20 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 526.
21 R. Barton 1998, 434.
22 CUL DAR170, 49.

Darwin's reply was sanguine:

> The magnificence of all the first and last part of the President's address quite obliterated the little he said about 'The Origin' ... I heard all about Huxley attacking the Pres., and it was just like him to defend an absent friend[23]

Incensed by Pope Pius IX's 1864 encyclical on 'Modern Errors', which condemned the 'free progress of science,' Huxley published his own rival 'Encyclical' on 'Science and Church Policy' in the *Reader*. His intemperate language, however, damaged the sales of the magazine and within a year it would hit financial problems, eventually being bought out by Thomas Bendyshe, one of Hunt's supporters.

John Lubbock, however, had his mind set on achieving for himself a more direct form of influence – he was ready to run for Parliament. In 1863 he had been approached by the City of London Liberals to run as their candidate, but his father had refused him permission.[24] Then in March 1865 he was approached by George Warde Norman, the chairman of the west Kent Liberals. Again his father refused, but Norman was an old friend of Sir John's, and prevailed upon him to change his mind.[25]

A month later, John Lubbock's first book, *Prehistoric Times*, was published.[26] It opened with an insistence on the great antiquity of the human species, to '…a period so remote that neither history, nor even tradition, can throw any light on his origin or mode of life' and went on to define four 'great epochs' in human prehistory: 'that of the drift' which he called Palaeolithic, 'the later or polished Stone Age', which he called Neolithic, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. With these statements in the first chapter of his first book, Lubbock effectively founded the modern discipline of prehistoric archaeology and coined the key chronological terms around which the discipline is structured even today. None of it was entirely original. Boucher de Perthes, Joseph Prestwich and Hugh Falconer had all contributed far more than John Lubbock to the demonstration of human antiquity, whilst the Three Age System was entirely a Danish invention. When Jens Worsaae had lectured on the Three Age System in London and Dublin in the 1840s, he had insisted that:

> … it has become possible to enter upon an entirely new enquiry into the history of the earliest state of the European nations, by means of the antiquities alone.[27]

Lubbock now made the same point but, whilst Worsaae's arguments had been rejected or ignored by most of the English-speaking world,[28] Lubbock's were to prove more influential. *Prehistoric Times* established Lubbock as the first great synthesizer of Europe's prehistoric archaeology, drawing together the evidence from his earlier papers and marshalling the facts in such a way that their implications

23 CUL DAR263, 60.
24 B. Mallet 1924, 37.
25 BL Add. 62680, 1.
26 J. Lubbock 1865a.
27 J. Worsaae 1847.
28 J. Wilkins 1961, M. Morse 1999.

could no longer be ignored. He insisted on a European or even global focus, where earlier archaeologists had taken a mainly local view of their evidence. Where they had concentrated on gathering facts, Lubbock insisted on interpreting them, and on drawing from them a general conceptual framework, much as Darwin had done in his *The Origin of Species*.

The Three Age System provides only a relative chronology: it does not in itself provide any guide to the length of time covered by the Palaeolithic, the Neolithic, the Bronze Age or the Iron Age. In an attempt to provide some indication of absolute chronology, Lubbock turned, in Chapter 10 of *Prehistoric Times* (as in his earlier paper on the Swiss lakes[29]), to the evidence of sedimentology, citing two studies in Switzerland (one by Morlot, the other by M. Gilliéron) in which estimates had been made of the time taken for sediments to accumulate. These studies suggested that the Swiss Neolithic began around 6,000–7,000 years ago and lasted until around 4,200 years ago, and that the Swiss Bronze Age ended around 2,900 years ago. There is a supreme irony here, in that subsequent generations of archaeologists, basing their conclusions on comparisons between the prehistoric sites of Europe and the historically dated civilizations of Egypt and the Near East, revised this chronology, insisting that the Neolithic of Central Europe had been much shorter and more recent, beginning at around only 4,200 years ago and ending at around 3,800 years ago.[30] They were wrong, and Lubbock, Morlot and Gilliéron had been closer to the truth: it was only with the emergence of the scientific techniques of radiocarbon dating and tree-ring calibration in the 1960s that the true dates were revealed.[31] A subsequent book on Swiss archaeology[32] sets the beginning of the Neolithic at around 3,000 uncal bc[33] (around 5,800 to 5,500 years ago) and the beginning of the Bronze Age at around 2,000 uncal bc (around 4,400 to 4,300 years ago), not so very far apart from the estimates made by Lubbock and his Swiss colleagues a century before the 'Radiocarbon Revolution' was conceived.

The final three chapters of *Prehistoric Times* are taken up with a description of 'modern savages', comparing their technologies and modes of life with those of Stone Age and Bronze Age Europeans. In the modern context these passages are the most difficult to read, since, by the standards of today, they are unambiguously and offensively racist. In 1865, however, those (including Colenso) who argued for racial equality were isolated voices crying out in the wilderness, and the mainstream discussion was between reactionaries such as Hunt, who viewed Negroes as a separate species making slavery as natural as animal husbandry, and Liberals such as Lubbock and Huxley who insisted on the unity of the human species and the moral and economic bankruptcy of any system founded upon slavery.

29 J. Lubbock 1862a.

30 V.G. Childe 1932.

31 A.C. Renfrew 1999.

32 M. Sakellaridis 1979.

33 Radiocarbon dating produces determinations which are consistently too young, and which have to be calibrated against dendrochronological or tree-ring dates. An uncal date is the raw date produced by the radiocarbon laboratory.

Lubbock's understanding of ethnology was, of course, coloured by the observations of those who had travelled to, and written about, non-European societies, and some of the claims which he took at face value have subsequently proved to be entirely fallacious, such as, for example, the suggestion that most Fijians died at the hands of their own children[34] or that most 'savage' societies had no system for counting beyond ten.[35] It is equally clear, however, that he had both a preconceived developmental model and an unshakeable moral framework in his mind and rejected all evidence and claims that did not fit with these. His understanding of the 'Hottentots' of Southern Africa, for example, drew heavily on a book by P. Kolben, who regarded them as '…the most friendly, the most liberal and the most benevolent people to one another that ever appeared upon the Earth',[36] but Lubbock insisted that they were '…among the most disgusting of savages', citing practices such as infanticide and the abuse of the elderly. Only in very rare passages do we see a hint of the cultural relativism which we would today take for granted, as for example, when he refers to the Tahitians for whom eating was not considered a social activity and of whom he wrote:

> … a dinner party would have seemed as wrong to them as many of their customs seem to us.[37]

Lubbock insisted that most 'savage' races were 'entirely without religion',[38] a claim that was flatly contradicted by Colenso when he addressed the Anthropological Society on 16 May, stating that all the native groups of Southern Africa had '…an idea of God and futurity'.[39] Lubbock was certain that intellectual and moral progress went hand in hand, and lamented the '…separation of the two mighty agents of improvement' in human society – science and religion. He pointed to statistics from his own society, indicating that, '…of 129,000 persons committed to prison in England and Wales during 1863, only 4,829 could read and write well',[40] and expressed the view that:

> … our criminal population are mere savages, and most of their crimes are but injudicious and desperate attempts to act as savages in the midst, and at the expense, of a civilised community.

Lubbock' s aim was to build a conceptual model of human social and cultural evolution that could be tacked on to Darwin's model of biological evolution, raising a crucial question as to the way in which natural selection applied to humanity. This, of course, was not a problem for those who believed that the black and white races belonged to different species, but it was a very significant one for those who insisted

34 J. Lubbock 1865a, 360.
35 Ibid., 475.
36 Cited by J. Lubbock 1865a, 342.
37 Ibid., 388.
38 Ibid., 468.
39 *The Reader*, 1865, 605.
40 J. Lubbock 1865a, 489.

on the unity of humanity. If the conclusions that these two groups reached in terms of policy (the abolition of slavery) were radically different, they were less so in terms of expected outcomes.

By May 1865 the policy issue had been settled, the American Civil War at an end and the North victorious. On 20 May Huxley published an editorial in the *Reader*, in which he stated that the plaintive cry of the Negro 'Am I not a man and a brother?' had finally been answered.[41] He regarded it, however, as 'simply incredible' that:

> … when all his disabilities are removed, and our prognathous relative has a fair field and no favour, as well as no oppressor, he will be able to compete with his bigger brained and smaller jawed rival, in a contest which is to be carried on by thoughts and not by bites.

The 'highest places in the hierarchy of civilisation' were 'assuredly not within the reach of our dusky cousins', though Huxley thought it 'by no means necessary that they should be restricted to the lowest'.

For Lubbock, as for Huxley, natural selection still held sway between different human races, but the contest was to be mental rather than physical, peaceful rather than violent, but with outcomes no less stark:

> The great principle of natural selection, which in animals affects the body, and seems to have little influence on the mind, in man affects the mind and has little influence on the body. In the first it tends mainly to the preservation of life: in the second, to the improvement of the mind and consequently to the increase of happiness.[42]

The darker side of this optimism was that the promised land he envisaged was not for everyone. Less-favoured races would, as in the animal kingdom, become extinct:

> As a race, the North Americans are rapidly disappearing. Left to themselves they would perhaps have developed an indigenous civilisation, but for ours they are unfit. Unable to compete with Europeans as equals, and too proud to work as inferiors, they have profited from intercourse with the superior race only where the paternal government of the Hudson's Bay Company has protected them both from the settlers and from themselves.[43]

Five years previously, Lubbock had been impressed by Frederick Temple's idea of a 'childhood, youth and manhood' of humanity,[44] and now he suggested that 'savages' could be seen as having '…the character of children with the strengths and passions of men', but in intelligence he thought them inferior to a four year old and, he insisted, that they were also inferior morally. 'Savages', then, were not just children, they were children who could probably never grow up. Throughout his adult life, Lubbock kept a series of notebooks in which he recorded ideas and quotes from the books which he was reading. That he made the connection between Temple's theological argument and his own developing model of human social progress when

41 *The Reader*, 20 May 1865, 561–2.
42 J. Lubbock 1865a, 491.
43 Ibid., 418.
44 F. Temple 1860.

he first read *Essays and Reviews* is shown by the note that he made on reading Temple's paper:

> Not in his knowledge only, but in development of powers, the child of twelve now stands at the level where once stood the child of fourteen, when ages ago stood the full-grown man.[45]

Lubbock allowed none of this to temper his personal enthusiasm for progress. Accepting that his own society was '…but on the threshold of civilisation' he ended his book with a flourish of optimism:

> The future happiness … which poets hardly ventured to hope for, science boldly predicts. Utopia, which we have looked upon as synonymous with an evident impossibility … turns out, on the contrary, to be the necessary consequence of natural laws.[46]

Charles Darwin was delighted that Lubbock, unlike Lyell, had explicitly endorsed natural selection. On 11 June he wrote to Lubbock:

> I cannot resist telling you how excellently well, in my opinion, you have done the very interesting chapter on savage life … but I ought to keep the term original for your last chapter, which has struck me as an admirable and profound discussion … I do sincerely wish you all success in your election, and in politics, but after reading this last chapter, you must let me say: oh dear! oh dear! oh dear![47]

With the active encouragement of both Huxley and Darwin, John Lubbock had published in the preface to *Prehistoric Times* the note implicitly accusing Lyell of plagiarism. Hooker looked at the two books and found little basis for Lubbock's assertion. The note was, in his view, '… rude and insulting' and required an apology from Lubbock. He wrote to Darwin, asking for his support in '…healing this ugly break'. Somewhat naively, he suggested that the whole business arose from a social conflict between Lyell and Lubbock:

> And now my dear D, shall I tell you what is at the bottom of it all? Perhaps you won' t believe – that Lady Lyell will not call on Mrs Busk, nor invite the Busks to her parties, and this the Lubbocks and the Huxleys resent.[48]

Lady Lyell may or may not have been a frightful snob, but Darwin knew only too well that this was not the source of the conflict between her husband and John Lubbock. Having put Lubbock up to it, he could hardly now join with Hooker in healing the rift he had helped to create. Darwin responded to Hooker, praising Lubbock's book and insisting that Lyell had 'no excuse' for failing to identify his debt to Lubbock's work.[49] Lyell appealed directly to Hooker, Darwin and Huxley, presumably ignorant

45 RS LUA19.
46 J. Lubbock 1865a, 491.
47 Cited by F. Darwin [1888] 1969, 3, 36.
48 CUL DAR102, 24–7.
49 CUL DAR115, 270.

of the fact that the latter two had been instrumental in the allegation.[50] Huxley responded, somewhat duplicitously, that he had been '…concerned about the matter from the first', and suggesting '…the mutual insertion of a note in the respective books explaining matters'.[51]

Lyell insisted that he had not intentionally plagiarized anything, and asked:

> What real harm could Lubbock have suffered if, in matters on which both were anticipated by the Danes, he had been supposed to help himself partly, in making his abstract, of my resumé of the same.[52]

Lyell's defence may have been naive, but he had a point. The great need was for synthesis rather than originality, and this was what both Lyell and Lubbock were attempting to provide. In doing so it was inevitable that both would draw extensively on the work of others and, given that conventions on referencing were not as formalized in 1865 as they subsequently became, accusations of plagiarism could quite easily be bandied about. Lubbock himself could, with as much justice, have been so accused by Morlot for his account of the sedimentological evidence for the dating of the Swiss Neolithic and Bronze Age,[53] or by Henry Darwin Rogers whose three central questions relating to human antiquity[54] were replicated almost verbatim and without reference in Lubbock's paper on the same subject.[55] Lyell's carelessness probably was just that, but it was conspicuous, and Lubbock was not his only accuser.[56]

Agreement was eventually reached, and both Lubbock's and Lyell's texts were amended. First editions of *Prehistoric Times* are rare today, but almost none of the surviving copies contain the accusatory note.[57]

With Lubbock's book published and his row with Lyell resolved there was time for some light relief. It had been agreed at an early stage that the X-club would hold one meeting in the country each summer, with their respective wives. They spent a June weekend in Maidenhead, taking moonlit boat rides on the Thames and picnicking at Burnham Beeches, where they '… listened to Huxley's readings of Tennyson's Oenone, sang duets and catches and watched the climbing antics of Tyndall, Busk and Lubbock'.[58] Amid the revelling, however, the club also found

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50 ICL HP 6, 100–101.

51 ICL HP 6, 102–3.

52 ICL HP 6, 106–7.

53 J. Lubbock 1862a. He does make reference to Morlot's article, but the text is phrased in such a way that a reader might easily assume the sedimentological dating to be based on original observations by Lubbock.

54 H.D. Rogers 1860.

55 J. Lubbock 1862b.

56 Both Falconer (1863a,b) and Prestwich (1863) accused Lyell of appropriating their ideas (see also W. Bynam 1984; D. Grayson 1985). Falconer was far more vitriolic than Lubbock, and Hooker even reported to Darwin that Lubbock had helped to calm him down (CUL DAR 101, 121–5).

57 The note is, however, reproduced *in extenso* in an unfavourable review of the book – Anon. 1865, 346.

58 Hirst's diary, cited by A. Eve & C. Creasey 1945, 115.

time formally to endorse Lubbock's parliamentary campaign, resolving unanimously that '… scientific men would regard him as a most appropriate representative in Parliament'.[59]

Lubbock returned to sad news. His father had been ill for some time and, on 20 June 1865, he died.[60] Despite his original opposition to his son's parliamentary ambitions he had relented and warmly endorsed him, praising him for an '… excellent speech at Maidstone' and willing him to 'Go on and prosper'.[61] John now inherited the family baronetcy along with the title deeds to High Elms and became Sir John Lubbock.

His inheritance could easily have been short-lived. On 9 July he and Ellen were travelling by rail from Paddington to Birmingham when the train was de-railed near Banbury. In a letter to his mother he described how they were thrown about in the carriage and how the '… only distinct idea … that he could remember was … that in a few minutes more we should probably solve many of the questions which interest us so much'.[62] In fact nobody was killed in the accident, although Ellen was quite badly cut and needed medical attention.

Unshaken, Sir John now threw himself into his election campaign. It had apparently been suggested to him that he should delay publication of his book until after the election, as his uncompromising view of evolution might alienate some voters, but that he refused to do so because he regarded it as 'dishonourable'.[63] Whether this was the real reason is perhaps open to question. At the end of June a fund was set up to support Colenso in his legal fight to retain his diocese: the committee included Busk, Frankland,Tyndall, Jowett, Westlake and Erasmus Darwin, but the name of Sir John Lubbock is conspicuously absent, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he was standing aside in order to avoid political damage.[64]

Lubbock's election address, published in the Liberal-supporting *Kentish Independent* on 29 April 1865 emphasized his support for non-intervention in foreign affairs, his determination to '… place within the reach of everyone the benefits of education' and his commitment to '… a Liberal extension of the Suffrage'.[65] In campaign speeches he deplored the 'unfortunate conflict' in America but looked forward to the abolition of slavery.[66] He was also asked for his opinion on the issue of women's suffrage and replied that he '…should not wish for the fair women of Kent to be puzzling their minds with politics, because they could be put to better use'.[67]

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59 M. Frankland & S. Frankland 1901, 157.
60 BL Add. 62680, 1.
61 BL Add. 49641, 19.
62 BL Add. 49641, 71–4.
63 U. Grant-Duff 1924, 18.
64 *The Reader*, 24 June 1865, vol. 6, 70.
65 *Kentish Independent*, 29 April 1865.
66 *Kentish Mercury*, 22 April 1865.
67 Ibid. 17 June 1865.

The election campaign appeared to be going well – the *Kentish Independent* had published an upbeat editorial in May, stating that the canvas returns for west Kent left 'no doubt' that both Liberal candidates would be returned.[68]

The votes in west Kent were counted on 20 July 1865.[69] There were two Conservative candidates (Viscount Holmesdale and William Hart-Dyke) and two Liberal candidates (William Angerstein and Sir John Lubbock) contesting two vacancies, with each elector having two votes. The figures were:

Holmesdale	4133
Hart-Dyke	4054
Angerstein	3861
Lubbock	3896

The Liberals had won the general election, gaining 26 seats across the country, but the Conservatives had retained west Kent.

Lubbock's election agent, George Warde Norman was convinced that '… the clergy and the clergy alone have beaten us … they voted against us almost to a man, and in such numbers as to much more than account for the majority by which the Conservatives have been returned'.[70]

Since the 1865 general election was not contested on the basis of a secret ballot, so it is possible to establish from the electoral records[71] who voted for whom. Norman's analysis was substantially correct: the clergy had indeed voted overwhelmingly for the Conservatives (257 clergy voted in total, of whom 225 voted Conservative and only 25 Liberal), and the clerical Conservative vote was greater than Hart-Dyke's majority of 158 over Lubbock. It is by no means certain, however, that this was a result of clerical indignation with Lubbock over *Prehistoric Times* (or indeed *Essays and Reviews*, which probably weighed more heavily with them). Such sentiments may have increased the clerical turnout, but virtually all of the clergy who voted did so along straight party lines, suggesting that Tory churchmen were coming out to vote Tory rather than Liberal churchmen being alienated by Lubbock's views (only seven clergymen split their votes, of whom four voted for Lubbock).

Lubbock escaped for a holiday in Switzerland with Tyndall and Hirst, returning via France, where he met up with his Danish colleague, Steenstrupp, for a visit to the flint mines of Grand Pressigny on which they went on to write a joint paper.[72] Returning to England, High Elms was ready for the family to move in.[73]

Sir John was now 31 years old, and was coming to public note both as an archaeologist and as a politician. He had replaced his father as a member of the Senate of the University of London. Twenty-eight years on from his first childhood visit to High Elms, the property was his, and with it his father's fortune, listed in

68 *Kentish Independent*, 29 May 1865.
69 W. Hall 1865.
70 BL Add. 49641, 75–6.
71 W. Hall 1865.
72 J. Steenstrupp and J. Lubbock 1867.
73 BL Add. 62680, 1.

his accounts for the following year as £39,000[74] (around £1.8 million in today's terms[75]). His business empire was growing almost as rapidly as his archaeological collection: he recorded[76] that, in only a few days in 1864, a total of £23,000,000 passed through the bank (around £1.2 billion in today's terms),[77] in addition to which he had purchased the Anglo-Italian Bank, and had become chairman of a new company, the Millwall Iron Works[78]. This wealth gave him the freedom to pursue his own interests, be they scientific or political, at his leisure.

74 RS LUA12, cited by J. Owen 2000, Appendix 5.1.
75 J.J. McCusker 2001.
76 J. Lubbock 1865b, 362.
77 J.J. McCusker 2001.
78 BL Add. 62680, 1.

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Chapter 6

A Steady Progress

At the end of 1865, Sir John Lubbock was engaged in a lively public debate with another archaeologist, James Fergusson, on the date of some of Britain's most prominent ancient monuments. Fergusson had opened the discussion with a claim, inferred from historical evidence that Silbury Hill and Avebury were memorials to battles fought by King Arthur, and that Stonehenge was a cenotaph erected by Aurelius Ambrosius in AD 467 in memory of 300 British chiefs slain by Hengist.[1] Fergusson's logic presupposed a post-Roman date for the monuments. Lubbock responded, insisting on a prehistoric date,[2] and pointing to Richard Colt-Hoare's study of the burial mounds surrounding Stonehenge, the grave goods from which he attributed to the Bronze Age. At Silbury Hill the evidence was even more clear – Lubbock and Tyndall had made careful observations on the site, showing that a Roman road actually swerves around it, proving a pre-Roman date.

Fergusson's own observations suggested that the road passed under the mound, and must, therefore, be earlier[3] (modern techniques have shown clearly that Lubbock's observations were correct) but, more fundamentally, he lamented the fact that Lubbock had not produced '… a single historical testimony in favour of his views'. Here was the real dividing line between Lubbock and Fergusson. For Fergusson, as for so many of his contemporaries, archaeology was only useful insofar as it illustrated and complemented written history, whereas for Lubbock the scientific study of material evidence provided the only means of understanding prehistory. 'We cannot', insisted Lubbock, '… have historical testimony of a prehistoric fact'.[4]

Lubbock's view of prehistoric archaeology as a science, more closely allied to geology than to history, was a radical one which had first been set out by the Danish archaeologist, Jens Worsaae, in his visit to Britain in the 1840s and which, prior to 1865, had been very much a minority viewpoint (albeit that this minority, led by such men as the brothers, Frederick and William Lukis, Augustus Franks and A.H. Rhind, was increasingly vociferous and articulate).[5] Fergusson's view, on the other hand, had been that of the archaeological and historical establishment.[6] Lyell's book, and then Lubbock's, had started to tilt the balance in favour of the 'geological

1 The *Athenaeum*, 13 December 1865 (copies of this and subsequent correspondence at RS LUA2).

2 Ibid. 23 December 1865.

3 Ibid. 13 January 1866.

4 Ibid. 15 January 1866.

5 F.C. Lukis 1849, W.C. Lukis 1864, A. Franks 1854, A.H. Rhind 1856.

6 See, for example, T. Gardner Wilkinson 1860, T. Wright 1866a, b.

archaeologists'.[7] Lubbock, however, was not simply a 'geological archaeologist', more fundamentally he was a scientific archaeologist, who saw the objective study of material evidence as the key to understanding human prehistory, just as it was the key to understanding the natural world, and who saw in the evolutionary paradigm a theme that united the two.

The issue of chronology came up again in September, at the meeting in Nottingham of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, when another member of the archaeological establishment, Thomas Wright, attacked Lubbock's 'uncritical acceptance' of the Three Age System,[8] and urged caution in relation to 'the new school of prehistoric archaeology'.[9] Wright's argument with Lubbock reflects a fundamental conflict about the nature of scientific enquiry. Wright was working within an inductive tradition, suspicious of generalization, theory and hypotheses, according to which science proceeded by gathering facts and gradually building up a detailed picture. Lubbock, on the other hand, following in the footsteps of his old mentor Charles Darwin (and, however loath he may have been to admit it, Sir Charles Lyell), was following a deductive logic, using the available facts to construct an explanatory hypothesis which could then be tested against the evidence.

Alfred Russell Wallace attempted to use the Nottingham meeting to begin healing the rift between the Ethnological and Anthropological Societies, and made a limited concession to Hunt, allowing the word ' anthropology' to appear in the programme for the first time. Huxley supported this initiative, but Lubbock and Busk were sceptical.[10]

Any thought of a reconciliation, however, was shattered by a controversy which erupted in the autumn of 1866 and which reopened all of the old arguments about race that Huxley and Lubbock had hoped to have been buried with the end of the American Civil War. A rebellion had erupted the previous autumn in the Morant Bay area of Jamaica. Paul Bogle, a black Baptist minister, led a mob that burned down a courthouse, killing 17 whites including a number of magistrates. The Governor of the colony, Edward Eyre, declared martial law and the rebellion was brutally suppressed. Paul Bogle was hanged from the yardarm of HMS *Wolverine*.

Up to this point, Eyre's actions, though brutal were unsurprising. Not satisfied with putting down the rebellion and executing its acknowledged leader, however, he was determined to round up the usual suspects. He was convinced that the rebellion had been inspired by another black minister, William Gordon. Gordon, who had been nowhere near Morant Bay, gave himself up in Kingston where martial law did not apply. Instead of putting him on trial in Kingston, however, Eyre shipped him in chains to Morant Bay, where he was court-martialled by three junior officers and summarily hanged.

The affair provoked outrage in England. Rival committees were formed, one to indict Eyre for Gordon's murder (supported by Darwin, Lyell and Huxley, as well as by John Stuart Mill, John Bright, Herbert Spencer and Alfred Russell Wallace)

7 See A. Van Riper 1990.
8 Cited by A. Van Riper 1990, 203–4.
9 T. Wright 1866a, 84.
10 ICL HP22, 65–6.

and the other to defend Eyre (supported, predictably, by James Hunt, but also by John Ruskin, Charles Dickens, Alfred Tennyson, Charles Kingsley and, perhaps most surprisingly, John Tyndall). Hooker sat on the fence, insisting that the Negro was 'pestilential' and 'a most dangerous savage at the best', but arguing that, since massacres had occurred on both sides of the Jamaica conflict he could not take any public side on the questions of impeachment or defence.[11] Both Ellen Busk and Ellen Lubbock wrote to Tyndall, expressing their support for Eyre, the latter declaring that:

> If that brave and unfortunate man is brought to trial like a criminal … I should like to go and stand in the dock by his side.[12]

Eyre lost his job and retired back to England in disgrace, but was never prosecuted.

Through all of this debate, Sir John Lubbock said not a word either in public or, apparently, in private. The only possible clue to Lubbock's position is a note in the diary of Thomas Archer Hirst dated 9 November 1866:

> The question of the Jamaica rebellion has divided men who habitually sympathise and agree: Carlyle and Mill, Tyndall and Huxley, Sir John and Lady Lubbock and a host of others are opposed.[13]

If Sir John and Lady Lubbock were at odds with one another on the matter, then Sir John must have followed Huxley in supporting Eyre's indictment, since Ellen made her position clear in her letter to Tyndall. He kept remarkably quiet about his position, however, and one can only assume that, as with the campaign to support Colenso the previous year, he thought it more politic to keep his opinions to himself. There may also have been family reasons for Lubbock's silence – his brother, Nevile, had business interests in the West Indies, and in later years acted as a spokesman for the plantation owners.[14]

At the beginning of 1867 Sir John Lubbock was elected as Honorary Secretary of the London Bankers. Having introduced the Country Clearing System for cheques ten years previously, his first act as Secretary was to persuade the committee of the desirability of publishing clearing house returns on a weekly basis. This drew praise from Walter Bagehot, the editor of *The Economist*, who was convinced that the publication of returns would be valuable '… both as a guide to the public as to the quantity of business done and as a return to statistical enquirers in many important problems'.[15] Lubbock seems to have achieved this with a minimum of fuss

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11 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2571.

12 RI/JT/1/TYP/8, 2575–6.

13 Cited by A. Eve & C. Creasey 1945, 123.

14 Nevile Lubbock (1883) subsequently published an article in *The Nineteenth Century*, which implicitly questioned the value of emancipation; he estimated the cost of the policy to the planters as £129,000 and explicitly used John Lubbock's analogy between Negroes and children to argue for their fundamental inferiority. John may not have approved of this use of his published work – and it cannot have been comfortable for him politically as a Liberal MP – but he did not publicly take issue with his brother.

15 BL Add. 49642, 4.

or controversy, but it was significant in that it was one of the very first steps towards the principle of public disclosure of financial information by companies, and it was achieved by voluntary agreement rather than by legislation.

In April 1867 Lubbock, Huxley and Hooker visited Brittany, 'rambling about the neighbourhoods of Rennes and Vannes, and combining the examination of prehistoric remains with the refreshment of holiday making'.[16] Politics, however, was never far from his mind and, in July, he seemed hopeful of securing the Liberal candidacy for the University of London parliamentary seat.[17]

The September meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was held in Dundee. The proceedings were dominated by discussion of evolution and Darwinism, and the Anglican *Guardian* reported that Darwin's theory was 'everywhere in the ascendant'. Evolutionary ideas which, in the pre-Darwinian age, had gone hand in glove with the most extreme forms of political radicalism were now being lashed to a far more cautious and gradualist Liberalism with which Lubbock and Huxley could easily identify. The meeting's president, the physicist and lawyer, W.R. Grove, expressed it thus:

> … the revolutionary ideas of the so-called natural rights of Man … are far more unsound … than the study of the gradual progressive changes arising from changed circumstances, changed wants, changed habits. Our language, our social institutions, our laws, the constitution of which we are proud, are the growth of time, the product of slow adaptations, resulting from continuous struggles. Happily in this country practical experience has taught us to improve rather than remodel; we follow the law of nature and avoid cataclysm.[18]

Lubbock presented two papers in Dundee, one entomological (on the anatomy of springtails)[19] and one archaeological, (on 'The Early Condition of Mankind'). The second paper built on the points he had made in *Prehistoric Times*, insisting that the sole unifying logic of human prehistory was '… a steady progress towards civilisation'.[20] There were, he argued, indications of progress '… even among savages' (citing, as examples, the domestication of maize and of llamas in the Americas, and the abandonment of cannibalism in Tahiti), just as there were traces of '… original barbarism' even among the most civilized nations. The Duke of Argyll took exception to these evolutionary arguments and remonstrated with Lubbock. The Duke was a Liberal in the old aristocratic Whig tradition. He did not believe in evolution but accepted human antiquity, seeing no conflict between this and the biblical account of creation. His main criticism of Lubbock was that there was no justification for conflating a low level of technology with a '… debased mind or moral sense', and he doubted the validity of comparisons between prehistoric Europeans and modern 'savages'. Argyll believed that these 'savage' races had degenerated from more culturally advanced peoples, and that their degradation was a function of

16 T. Huxley, cited by L. Huxley 1903, 1, 414.
17 BL Add. 62680, 2.
18 W.R. Grove 1867, 346, cited by A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 536.
19 J. Lubbock 1867b.
20 J. Lubbock 1868a, 1, see also J. Lubbock 1868b.

the harsh environments into which they had been pushed. The argument continued over several years, and Lubbock would always present it as a matter of evolution versus degradation, ignoring Argyll's most perceptive comment (which has become axiomatic to modern social anthropology) about the inappropriateness of drawing inferences about the 'moral condition' of a people from their level of technology.[21] Like Thomas Wright at the previous year's meeting, Argyll also took issue with Lubbock's use of the Three Age System, and Lubbock thought it necessary to publish yet another paper setting out the evidence in favour of it.[22] Having travelled to Scotland for the meeting in Dundee, Lubbock took advantage of the opportunity to visit Orkney and Shetland[23] before returning to London via the 'parallel roads' of Glenroy, a series of lacustrine terraces on which he paused to write a geological article.[24]

On 5 April 1868 Charles Darwin dined in London as the guest of the X-Club.[25] It was one of his very few social engagements outside of his home since long before the publication of *The Origin of Species*. With the X-Club, however, he felt that he was truly among friends. Too much of a recluse actually to be a member of the club, he was unquestionably its intellectual godfather. The X-Club was very much in the ascendant within the scientific establishment and, in 1868, they secured the election of one of their number, Joseph Hooker, as President of the Royal Society.

A few days later, Lubbock set out for the Continent. With Tyndall and other friends, including Archie Hamilton, he travelled through France to Italy reaching Naples on 17 April. They visited the Dog Grotto which, at low levels, was filled with carbonic acid. Tyndall amused the company by performing an experiment, filling Lubbock's hat with the gas, placing a lighted match in Hamilton's hat and then pouring the gas from Lubbock's into Hamilton's hat to extinguish it. They expressed outrage, however, at a 'scandalous experiment' conducted by a local guide, holding a dog on the floor until it suffered convulsions.[26] Whilst in Naples they also visited Pompeii and climbed Vesuvius and twice approached the crater during an eruption.[27] They returned via Rome and, although spending only a day in the city, Lubbock found the time to visit an archaeological colleague, L. Pigorini, and to sketch out a joint paper with him on pottery and metal objects from the late Bronze Age.[28]

Returning to England, politics were once more to the fore. The Liberal triumph in 1865 had been short-lived. Lord Palmerston had become Prime Minister, but had died shortly after taking office and his replacement, Lord John Russell, had failed to build an effective consensus around a package of constitutional reforms which were too weak for some in his party and too radical for others (this package would have added 400,000 votes to the franchise). The government had fallen apart and the

21 See N. Gillespie 1977.
22 J. Lubbock 1867a.
23 BL Add.62680, 2.
24 J. Lubbock 1867c.
25 RI JT/3/50.
26 A. Eve & C. Creasey 1945, 129.
27 BL Add. 62680, 3.
28 L. Pigorini & J. Lubbock 1868.

Conservatives had gone on to form an administration, with Disraeli pulling a rabbit out of the hat by proposing his own Reform Bill far more radical than Russell's, which extended the franchise by around a million. When, at the end of December, Russell stood down as Liberal leader, making way for Gladstone, the scene was set for a Liberal rally and a general election in 1868.

At the beginning of August the west Kent Liberal Association met and confirmed that their candidates would be, as in 1865, Sir John Lubbock and William Angerstein. Lubbock took another brief holiday in Switzerland and, on his return, threw himself into the election campaign. It was not long before he was in the thick of controversy. Disraeli's volte-face on electoral reform had put many sitting Tory MPs on the back foot, including Lord Holmesdale and Sir William Hart-Dyke, who had always opposed the extension of the franchise, as had most of their supporters. With research as assiduous as anything in his scientific papers, Lubbock marshalled the evidence, quoting *in extenso* from Holmesdale's 1865 speeches at Tunbridge Wells, Town Malling and Chatham.[29] There was little that Holmesdale could say in response: he had promised his Conservative electorate that he would hold out against any extension of the franchise, and had then gone on to support Disraeli's bill. Holmesdale and Hart-Dyke had lost all credibility, and the Conservatives had already selected two new candidates, Charles Henry Mills and John Gilbert Talbot. By August it was suggested that the Conservative cause in west Kent was hopeless and that Mills and Talbot were only contesting the seat in order to test the constituency and gain '… passports to another constituency in the future'.[30]

Education and the national finances were the key themes of Lubbock's campaign, emphasising the link between poor education and crime and deploring the increases in public spending (particularly military spending) under Disraeli's administration. Election meetings in the nineteenth century could be rumbustious affairs, and Lubbock addressed one particularly 'uproarious' meeting in Woolwich in which there was so much heckling and jeering that the Conservatives were accused of having '… hired a gang of Guildhall lambs at half a crown a head to disrupt the meeting'.[31]

The election came at the end of November. Darwin lent Lubbock his carriage to take voters to the poll. Lubbock would have preferred to have used it early in the day to take his 'doubtful voters' to the poll before they were either 'bribed or intoxicated', but Darwin preferred to vote early himself, so Lubbock's doubtful voters had to wait.[32]

When the votes were counted on 23 November 1868,[33] the results were as follows:

29 BL Add. 49642, 156–66.

30 *Kentish Independent*, 1 August 1868.

31 Ibid. 26 September 1868.

32 CUL DAR170, 65–7.

33 E. Hughes 1868.

Mills	3440
Talbot	3378
Angerstein	3196
Lubbock	3328

Once again the Liberals swept to power nationally, but once again the Conservatives had hung on to west Kent, with Lubbock losing this time by a tantalisingly small margin of 55 votes. The clergy had not come out in such large numbers as in 1865 (only 100 clergymen voted in 1868, compared with 257 in 1865) but had still voted overwhelmingly for the Conservatives (85, as compared to 12 for the Liberals and a further three for Lubbock alone).[34] Lacklustre organization was identified as the reason for the unexpected Liberal defeat in west Kent – an editorial in the *Kentish Independent* blamed '… an inexperienced agency, an overweening confidence in success and a complete want of power and organization' for turning 'what ought to have been a triumph into a defeat'.[35]

For the time being, Lubbock had time to pursue his archaeological interests. At the Ethnological Society in February 1869 he read a paper on stone implements from South Africa, which he saw as evidence for the universality of the Stone Age.[36] He also became involved in a public row over the destruction of ancient monuments, a subject that he was later to take up in Parliament. A megalithic monument in Cornwall, the Great Tolmaen near Penryn, had been destroyed by its owner, who wanted to use the granite for a building. Lubbock had been given advance warning of this by the local vicar and had contacted the owner offering to buy the site from him. The owner, however, proceeded with the destruction. Lubbock wrote to *The Times*,[37] condemning this '… wanton barbarism'. He also persuaded the Ethnological Society to set up a committee to '… ascertain the present state of prehistoric monuments in these islands and the best means for their preservation'; in addition to Lubbock himself, the committee included Huxley and the archaeologists John Evans and Colonel Augustus Lane-Fox (later General Pitt-Rivers). The offer to buy the site was the first of many attempts by Lubbock to use his personal wealth to protect the nation's archaeological heritage from destruction. The magnanimity of this offer, however, should probably be seen in the context of a deliberate policy on Lubbock's part of protecting his own wealth through the progressive acquisition of land: in each year from 1866 to 1869 he had invested £1,500 in land purchases[38] (around £73,500 in today's terms)[39] and he continued to invest in further purchases in each year until 1881, progressively increasing the amount of this annual investment.

1869 marked the tenth anniversary of the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* and also saw the publication of a much revised fifth edition. The ridiculed ideas of the 1850s had become the orthodoxy of the 1860s and, with Hooker as President

34 E. Hughes 1868.

35 *Kentish Independent*, 28 November 1868.

36 J. Lubbock 1869.

37 *The Times*, 23 March 1869, reprinted in *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London* 1, 87–8.

38 RS LUA12, cited by J. Owen 2000, Appendix 5.1.

39 J.J. McCusker 2001.

of the Royal Society, the radicals of 1859 had become the new establishment. Even Frederick Temple, who had courted notoriety with the publication of *Essays and Reviews*, had become sufficiently respectable to be made Bishop of Exeter. Evolution and the philosophy of progress may have become orthodox, but these beliefs were not shared by everyone. The Duke of Argyll's book *Primeval Man* was published in 1869[40] and was a direct attack on Lubbock, continuing the argument which he had begun at the 1867 meeting of the British Association. Argyll repeated his assertion that modern 'savages' were examples of degraded humanity.[41]

He also renewed his attack on the Three Age System, stating that there was '… no proof whatever that such ages ever existed in the World'[42] and, making a distinction between 'Time Relative' and 'Time Absolute', insisted that only history, and not archaeology, could furnish any knowledge of the latter.[43]

Argyll made a more fundamental attack on the 'priests of the new philosophy' (in which capacity he presumably included Huxley, Tyndall and Darwin as well as Lubbock), comparing them to the Catholic dogmatists who had suppressed scientific discovery in the sixteenth century.[44]

Lubbock responded to Argyll later that year, when the British Association held their meeting in Exeter, and he was also working on his next book, *The Origin of Civilisation*, intended as a more comprehensive rebuttal of Argyll and his other critics.

Argyll's comments raised fundamental questions about the relationship of science to religion, questions that were shared by many of his contemporaries, even if there was no consensus on the answers to these questions.

It was precisely with such questions in mind that a diverse group of men got together early in 1869 to provide a forum for discussion. Lubbock was influential in persuading Huxley to join, writing to him on 16 April:

> Hutton and Bagehot are setting up a club or small society to discuss metaphysical and theological matters in a scientific manner! There is to be a preliminary dinner on Wednesday … There will be about a dozen there, including ArchB Manning, Dean Stanley, Tennyson, Martineau, Ward of the Dublin Review, Bagehot of the Economist and Hutton of the Spectator.[45]

The Metaphysical Society, as it became, was to meet nine times a year for the next 11 years. At its height it had 62 members, including the sitting Prime Minister (Gladstone) and Chancellor (Lowe). Lubbock was elected President at its first meeting on 21 April 1869.[46] It was also at this meeting that Huxley first coined the term ' agnostic' to describe his intellectual position, the crucial point being not a disbelief in the existence of God, but a rejection of both faith and revelation as

40 G.D. Campbell (Duke of Argyll) 1869.
41 Ibid., 192.
42 Ibid., 180–181.
43 Ibid., 78–9.
44 Ibid., 21–2.
45 ICL HP 22, 68.
46 A. Brown 1947.

sources of knowledge, and a consequent recognition of the impossibility of knowing anything beyond the bounds of the physical universe.[47]

Largely due to Lubbock's influence, the aims and scope of the society were different from those originally intended. The initial idea had come from the journalist, James Knowles, who contacted a group of churchmen, including the Catholic Cardinal Manning and the Liberal Anglican Dean of Westminster Abbey, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (the churchman closest to the X-Club). Knowles's idea was:

> … to bring together all shades of religious and theological opinion, from the Roman Catholic to the Unitarian, in an effort to counteract scientific materialism and unite warring theological factions as much as possible in a common cause.[48]

It was Stanley who insisted that it should be the 'Metaphysical' rather than the 'Theological' Society. There was initially some doubt as to whether the Society should be open to those, such as Huxley and Tyndall, who explicitly rejected religion, and it was probably Stanley who advised Knowles to consult Lubbock on the matter. As Lubbock later recalled, his advice to Knowles was unambiguous:

> I said at once that to draw the line at the opinions that they were known to hold would, as it seemed to me, limit the field of discussion … .[49]

Once again, the X-Club were working quietly behind the scenes to control the agenda: far from counteracting scientific materialism, the Metaphysical Society would provide a platform for the agnostic, Huxley, the pantheist, Tyndall, and the humanist, Frederick Harrison, allowing their radical views to be pitted against those of more conventional faith.

Undeterred by the earlier failures of the *Natural History Review* and the *Reader*, Huxley took the leading role in establishing a new journal, which first appeared on 4 November 1869. Huxley opened the first edition of *Nature* with a dramatic quote from Goethe:

> Nature! We are surrounded and embraced by her:
> Powerless to separate ourselves from her, and
> Powerless to penetrate beyond her.
> Without asking or warning, she snatches us up
> Into her circling dance, and whirls us on until
> We are tired, and drop from her arms.[50]

Huxley may have been secretly, or perhaps even unconsciously, dancing on the grave of James Hunt, who had died suddenly in August 1869 at the age of 36, struck down, it appears, by meningitis at the Exeter meeting of the British Association.[51] His death

47 A. Desmond 1998, 374.
48 A. Brown 1947, 21.
49 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1903a, 26–7.
50 Cited by A. Desmond 1998, 372.
51 J. Beddoe 1870.

brought to an end the acrimonious debates over race and slavery that had dominated the 1860s, and which had been so intimately tied up with the civil war in America.

As 1869 drew to a close, Sir John Lubbock, now aged 35, was impatient for the new challenge of a parliamentary career. The central project of the X-Club, to establish scientific rationalism and a belief in evolutionary progress as the orthodoxy of the Victorian age, was well on course, and Lubbock had contributed to two of its key debates: he had been part of the supporting cast in the conflict surrounding Darwinian evolution and, more importantly, he had been the single most significant figure in the establishment of prehistoric archaeology as a distinct discipline in Britain, applying the principles of Darwinian evolution explicitly to the human past. He had made a connection between his scientific and business careers, seeking to engineer in the banking industry precisely the sort of evolutionary progress that he had identified in the natural world and in human prehistory, and using the principles of natural selection to ensure that other banks were drawn in to what he saw as the inevitable march of progress. Politics was a logical next step, allowing him to apply these same principles to the weightiest matters of state, and providing the X-Club with a spokesman in the corridors of power.

PART III
Saint Lubbock's Days, 1870–85

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Chapter 7

A Holiday by Act of Parliament!

At the beginning of 1870, the sitting Liberal MP for Maidstone, Mr Lee, retired, prompting a by-election. It is likely that he stepped down explicitly to make way for Sir John Lubbock, who was unanimously adopted as the Liberal candidate.

The Maidstone by-election campaign of February 1870 was, at times, boisterous, but was generally good natured. The Conservative candidate, W. Foster White, sought to present himself as the spokesman for the poor, blaming poverty and depravation on the Liberal insistence on free trade. There was some amusement at the hustings as his supporters paraded around with a horse's skull, beneath which was the inscription 'Sir John Lubbock's food for the working men'.[1]

Among the issues which came up was that of electoral reform. Remembering his earlier election campaigns, in which some of the clergy had put extreme pressure on his supporters to change their vote or stay away, Lubbock was strongly in favour of the secret ballot, something the Conservatives opposed. One of Lubbock's supporters, a 'working man' writing under the pseudonym of Brad Awl, wrote to a local newspaper:

> It is in the country districts that the hobgoblin of coercion is most plainly seen. The Rev. Mr Genesis takes a glass of Squire Broadacre's port and, over that aristocratic liquor, they enter into their calculations. They know very well who to touch and who to leave alone; they dare not meddle with any man who is in any way independent ... .[2]

Lubbock emphasized his support for 'universal free and unsectarian education' and, though he was hesitant about making it compulsory (he did '... not quite like the idea of introducing the policeman into the school'), he clearly wanted it to be truly universal, linking the issue of education directly with that of crime:

> ... we are told, gentlemen, that any increase of education would lead to an extra amount of expense; and I can only say that I think we should be very foolish indeed if we were to grudge expense in that manner ... each child in the schools costs us only a few shillings a year; but every child in the reformatories costs us £18 a year, and a convict costs £25 a year; and depend on it that a thief costs a great deal more even than that when he is out of prison.[3]

He saw education also as a vehicle for social mobility and the 'betterment' of the poor, envisaging 'a parish school in every parish and a district school in every

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1 *Kentish Mercury*, 26 February 1870.
2 *Maidstone Telegraph & West Kent Messenger*, 19 February 1870, 8.
3 Ibid., 5.

district', together with open competition for all public service jobs, so that '... every child, however lowly his parents, might, by his own individual exertion, find a great career open to him'.

Other themes of Lubbock's campaign were the restriction of election expenses, the benefits of free trade and the case for public holidays.[4] It was a winning formula, although the election was by no means a walkover: Lubbock was elected with a majority of 102 votes (1,504 votes to Foster White's 1,402[5]), joining the back benches of Gladstone's Liberal administration, within which he had every prospect of advancement. The clergy had not played such a crucial role in this election as in Lubbock's previous attempts (only ten voted, four for Lubbock and six for Foster White): probably they were fewer in number because of the more urban and concentrated nature of the constituency. Whilst the majority of professional men, labourers, servants and agricultural workers voted for Foster White, the majority of shop assistants and clerical workers, and an overwhelming majority of tradesmen (992 to 634 – more than three times his overall majority) voted for Lubbock.

Among the first to congratulate Lubbock was Charles Darwin, who wrote:

> Although you will be overwhelmed with congratulations, I must write to say how heartily I rejoice over your success. Your speech at Maidstone struck me as quite excellent, and I fully expect to see you a great man in Parliament, as you are in science. But even in the moment of triumph I must let one little groan escape me for poor deserted science. Anyhow, I know that you will always love your first born child, and not despise her for the sake of gaudy politics.[6]

Sir John Lubbock took up his seat in the House of Commons on 8 March, and made his maiden speech the following month, calling attention to the Report of the Military Education Commission, and advocating a broader curriculum for cadets, including natural and physical science.[7] It was to become one of the consistent themes of Lubbock's parliamentary career.

Lubbock's early parliamentary mailbag included a letter from Lydia Becker of the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage.[8] She refers to an earlier correspondence between them, which appears not to have been preserved, but in the course of which he evidently declined to give his support for women's suffrage, mainly on the grounds that 'Lady Lubbock did not wish for a vote, and did not think any woman ought to wish for one.' Becker now sought his support for a limited measure, which would have granted the vote exclusively to unmarried women (on the principle that every household deserved representation). His reply is not preserved, but it is clear from subsequent statements that Lubbock did not embrace the issue of women's suffrage (a cause that was supported by the most radical elements in his

4 Ibid.
5 Borough of Maidstone 1870.
6 CUL DAR146, 122.
7 3Hansard 200, 1552–81.
8 BL Add. 62685, 43–4.

Party, men such as John Stuart Mill and John Bright) though he did subsequently vote (in 1877) for the admission of women to degrees of the University of London.[9]

Lubbock spent the Easter holidays travelling through France with Mr and Mrs Grant-Duff, calling at Blois, Bordeaux, Carcassonne and Arles.[10] Ellen did not travel with them. Her health was in serious decline.[11] Subsequent family tradition suggests that she may have been drinking heavily, but it is equally possible that seven pregnancies had taken their toll (her last child, Florence, had been born in 1868) or that, having been prescribed opium to relieve pain (either when she had been injured in a railway accident or during one of her deliveries) she had become addicted.

The Easter recess over, Lubbock returned to his parliamentary duties. When he had first considered running for Parliament, five years previously, he had decided to focus on three areas of policy: the promotion of science education in schools, accelerating the payment of the national debt and the introduction of national holidays.[12] Having spoken on the first of these areas in his maiden speech, he now moved to the second. Setting aside party loyalty, and drawing instead upon his status as a banker, he criticized the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Robert Lowe, for massaging the figures on debt repayment. He was emerging, also, as a powerful advocate for the banking interest, successfully passing his first private member's bill, to prevent the absconding of debtors following the initiation of bankruptcy procedures.

If Lubbock was emerging as an effective parliamentary spokesman for the banking lobby, it equally seems always to have been his intention to act in the House of Commons as a spokesman for the scientific community and, in July, Darwin approached him with a direct request.[13] The issue concerned the forthcoming national census into which Darwin wanted to see a clause inserted, asking about marriages between cousins. Darwin referred to his 'experiments', which suggested the possible existence of a 'great physiological law' which produced 'injurious consequences' from such marriages, and he looked to the census clause as a means of testing whether there was, in fact, a relationship between consanguineous marriages and either reduced fertility or health problems for the offspring. It was an issue of great personal gravity to Darwin, for the primary 'experiment' that he had in mind was his own marriage to his cousin, Emma. Darwin had been devastated by the death, in 1851, of his daughter, Annie, and, later, by that of his son, Charles Waring, in 1858 (the latter having suffered from Down's syndrome),[14] and agonized over whether the circumstances of his marriage may have contributed to their 'lessened vitality'. Lubbock raised the issue in the House of Commons on 25 and 26 July, but the House divided with a majority of 47 against, with one MP having objected to families and children being 'anatomised for the benefits of science'.[15]

9 UoLSA, ST2/1/9, 19, 70–71.
10 BL Add. 62680, 3.
11 S. Grant-Duff 1982, 15.
12 Undated, cited by B. Mallett 1924, 6.
13 F. Darwin [1888] 1969, vol. 3, 129.
14 R. Keynes 2002.
15 3Hansard 203, 817; 1006–10.

Lubbock's second book, *The Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man*[16] was published in July 1870, and his diary entry records that the first print run sold out on the first day.[17] Whilst *Prehistoric Times* used ethnographic evidence to illustrate and make sense of archaeological material from prehistoric Europe, *The Origin of Civilisation* (based on a series of lectures that Lubbock had given at the Royal Institution in 1868) focussed on the ethnographic evidence itself, attempting '... to describe the social and mental condition of savages, their art, their systems of marriage, and of relationships, their religions, language, moral character and laws'.[18] Here Lubbock was on perhaps his weakest intellectual ground, having no personal familiarity with the data themselves, other than the physical objects in his own and other collections, taken out of their cultural context and shipped to England. The theoretical framework for his study was very much the same one that he had used in *Prehistoric Times*, based on the assumption that current geographical variations between the cultures of people in different parts of the world (for example, Europeans, Chinese, Africans, Australian Aboriginals) were analogous to variations in time identifiable from the archaeological record, representing stages in an evolutionary sequence, through which all societies progressed, but some at a far quicker pace than others. Here also, in the theoretical sense, Lubbock is at his least Darwinian, and closer to Herbert Spencer's notion of inevitable and unilinear progress, comparable to '... the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower'.[19]

In seeking to define evolutionary sequences for the development of the family, of marriage, of religions and so on, it is clear that Lubbock had in his mind a preconceived idea of which societies fitted where in the scale of things – Australian Aboriginals at the lowest level (presumably, though not explicitly, because they used 'Palaeolithic' tools), Europeans (naturally) at the highest level and Africans, Native Americans and Asians in between (and in that order). Thus, for example, in discussing the developmental sequence for religions, he sees 'atheism' (as practised, he claims, by Australian Aboriginals) as the most primitive form, followed by 'fetichism' (practised by many African societies), shamanism (practiced by many Native Americans), idolatry (practised, among others, by the ancient Greeks) and finally, the recognition of the deity as the author of, rather than part of, nature (as in Christianity or Islam). The ubiquity of tree-worship in different parts of the world is seen here as '... one among many illustrations that the human mind, in its upward progress, passes through the same, or very similar stages'.[20]

In all of these respects, Lubbock was within the mainstream of the ethnographic thought of his day. Contemporary authors, including James MacLennan, Edward Tylor, Henry Maine and Daniel Wilson, adopted similar developmental perspectives which, together with Lubbock's work, defined the character of British ethnography for a generation.[21] As British national identity was increasingly defined in relation to

16 J. Lubbock 1870a.
17 BL Add. 62680, 4.
18 J. Lubbock 1870a, v.
19 H. Spencer 1851, cited by Young, 1990, 150.
20 J. Lubbock 1870a, 192.
21 J.F. MacLennan 1865; E.B. Tylor 1865; H.S. Maine 1861; D. Wilson 1862.

the Empire, so the public appetite grew for tales of the exotic peoples who inhabited its farthest corners, with particular interest in the prurient details (often sensationalized and exaggerated) of their sexual practices and 'savage' religious customs. Lubbock's book was a best-seller, and he lectured on it all over the country. From a twenty-first century perspective, however, of all his scientific books, it is perhaps the one that, intellectually, has stood the test of time least well. In no small part, this was because he ignored the Duke of Argyll's most perceptive criticism of his work (on the inappropriateness of drawing inferences about the 'moral condition' of a people from their level of technology),[22] focussing instead on countering the Duke's rejection of the evolutionary paradigm in general, and his specific insistence that 'savage' races were 'degraded'. Lubbock's book ends with three general conclusions, of which the first is very clearly intended as a rebuttal of the Duke of Argyll:[23]

1. That existing savages are not the descendants of civilized ancestors.
2. That the primitive condition of man was one of utter barbarism.
3. That from this condition, several races have independently raised themselves.[24]

The third conclusion is explicitly optimistic, a point highlighted by Lubbock in the final sentences of his book:

> These views follow, I think, from strictly scientific considerations. We shall not be the less inclined to adopt them, on account of the cheering prospects which they hold out for the future.[25]

This optimism is, perhaps, another reason for the popular success of Lubbock's book (and, more generally, for his appeal as a public figure). The debates of the 1860s having dented one basis for optimism, founded on a simple faith in a literal interpretation of scripture, Lubbock, Huxley and others were putting a new one in its place, based on an unshakeable belief in human progress, dovetailing neatly with the rapid technological and political changes that were going on all around them.

In contrast to certain passages in *Prehistoric Times*, Lubbock does not, in *The Origin of Civilisation*, use the Darwinian concept of natural selection in relation to 'savages', but rather focusses on their ability to develop, however slowly, towards 'civilized' standards of behaviour. He could, in this context, be seen as adopting a less brutal and more paternalistic view of the relationships between 'civilized' and 'savage' peoples, and of the duties of the former to the latter, something that would be consistent with many of his later political statements. That he was keenly aware of the political implications of his work is shown by his statement, in the preface to the book, that such a study had '... a peculiar importance to an Empire such as ours, comprising races in every stage of civilisation yet attained by Man'.[26] His view of the contemporary moral state of 'savage' peoples, however, remained quite pessimistic,

22 See N. Gillespie 1977.
23 G.D. Campbell 1869.
24 J. Lubbock 1870a, 333.
25 Ibid.
26 J. Lubbock 1870a, viii.

insisting that '... the moral condition of savages is really much lower than has been generally supposed',[27] and illustrating this proposition with reference to practices such as cannibalism, human sacrifice, geronticide and infanticide.

In what, to modern sensibilities, may seem like an extraordinary piece of Victorian prudishness, Lubbock, having described in some detail the role of blood sacrifices and cannibal feasts in 'savage' religions, explained why he stopped short of considering the early development of the 'higher religions' on the grounds that:

> ... the worship of personified principles, such as fear, love, hope etc. could not have been treated apart from that of the phallus or lingham, with which it was so intimately associated in Greece, India, Mexico and elsewhere; and which, though at first modest and pure, as all religions are in their origins, led to such abominable practices that it is one of the most painful chapters in human history.[28]

Lubbock and his son Johnny travelled through France and Switzerland in August 1870, reaching Paris just as war broke out between France and Prussia. They encountered fear and suspicion (the balance of public opinion in Britain being on the Prussian side), but left France before things became really ugly. By the time they returned home, France had fallen and Paris was in chaos. Public opinion in Britain shifted rapidly from support for the Prussian position, and admiration for their army, to sympathy for the Parisian people. Lubbock, together with Huxley, John Ruskin, Cardinal Manning and others established a committee to raise funds to send food aid to Paris as soon as the siege was ended.[29] It was one of the first examples of organized humanitarian relief aid in modern history, and was also the first of many occasions on which Lubbock would work closely, towards a common goal, with others, including Ruskin, whose philosophies differed markedly from his own.

The Lubbocks entertained at High Elms most weekends, often for family but frequently also for Sir John's business and political contacts, and these were occasions on which Lubbock could introduce to one another people from his various social circles who might never otherwise have met. Thus, for example, on 15 January 1871, Huxley stayed at High Elms, together with Grant-Duff and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Robert Lowe (evidently on friendly terms with Lubbock despite their disagreement on the national debt).[30] During their stay they walked to Downe and called on the Darwins, Lubbock introducing Darwin to Lowe. Quite what was discussed at this and similar informal gatherings is not recorded, but what is clear is that Lubbock's breadth of interests and contacts enabled him to bring together the most influential people in late-Victorian science, politics, business and religion, facilitating dialogue between them.

He was even, finally, in a position to facilitate dialogue between ethnologists and anthropologists. By the beginning of 1871, with Confederate funds having dried up, and amid allegations of fraud, the Anthropological Society was bankrupt. Hunt's death had removed the main impediment to reunion with the Ethnological Society,

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27 J. Lubbock 1870a, 263.

28 Ibid., 236.

29 B. Mallet 1924.

30 M.E. Grant-Duff [1897] 1911, 232.

and the two came together to form the Anthropological Institute. Sir John Lubbock became president, and took with him on to the board a number of key allies: his fellow X-Clubbers, Busk and Huxley joined him as vice presidents. A few members of the old Anthropological Society, including Richard Burton, remained on the Council as a menacing presence, and the early editions of the Institute's Journal included a handful of papers that carried forward their ideas.[31] In his presidential address for that year, Lubbock skilfully and pointedly avoided using the word 'anthropology', referring instead to 'the science of Man', and focussing on recent archaeological discoveries.[32]

Lubbock had continually to balance his scientific and his political commitments and, at the end of February 1871, with Parliament back in session, he introduced two private member's bills, the Bank Holidays Bill and an amendment to the Endowed Schools Act. The Bank Holidays Bill made astonishingly fast progress, receiving its second reading on 15 March and its third on the 29 March. On 19 May it received its final approval. Lubbock's diary entry for that day is worth quoting at length, since it gives a flavour of the frenetic pace of his life at that stage:

> A varied day. Beginning with the beginning, an hour on the Army Regulation Bill, then to bed at 1.30. At nine, breakfasted at the Athenaeum, at 10 to the Public School Commission, where we discussed the Eton Statutes. Then I went for a short time to the Court of Queen's Bench, where the Titchbourne case is going on … Then to poor Sir John Herschel's funeral … Then I went to the Science Commission; Then to the House of Commons, where we had two divisions on the Westmeath Bill. We dined at Cecil Chaplin's, where we spent the night. The Chaplins themselves were dining out, so we had a pleasant tete-à-tete. Then we went to the Queen's Ball, after which I dressed again and went down to the House. Lastly, at 2 this morning, I got the House to consider the Lords' amendments to the Bank Holidays Bill, though it had only that evening come down from the Lords, and also to adopt them, so that the Bill now only wants the Queen's assent, which we shall no doubt get in time for Whit Monday.[33]

There are various points in the diary where he comments on Ellen's tiredness, which, if this description of their life together is at all typical, seems hardly surprising!

The Commons' debates on the Bank Holidays Bill, happening, as they did, in the early hours of the morning, were poorly attended, but it had cross-party support, and was sponsored in the Lords by the Conservative, Lord Salisbury.[34]

Looking back on the passage of the bill in 1896, Lubbock commented:

> The Bank Holidays Bill met with no opposition and … has been in operation for nearly a quarter of a Century. Its easy passage was, I believe, partly the result of an accident. On the old holidays, bills of exchange are payable the day previously, i.e. Sunday bills on Saturday. We felt that it would be difficult to extend this to the new holidays and, after some consideration, we determined to propose that they should be payable the day after instead of before. Hence we had to devise some special name for the new holidays, and

31 For example, J. Jackson 1871, J. Gould Avery 1873.

32 J. Lubbock 1872a.

33 BL Add. 62680, 4–5.

34 3Hansard 206, 128; 861–7.

> we called them 'Bank Holidays'. If we had called our bill the 'General Holiday Bill' or the 'National Holiday Bill', I doubt not that it would have been opposed; but the modest name of 'Bank Holiday' attracted no attention and roused no opposition … .[35]

Whether it was as accidental as Lubbock suggests here is open to doubt: he may well have adopted it in the expectation that, given his prominence as a banker, it would attract no attention and rouse no opposition, particularly if it came up for debate in the small hours. The record of the Lords debate makes it clear that, in the Upper House at least, peers understood perfectly well what they were agreeing to. Lord Overstone even proposed substituting 'General Holiday' for 'Bank Holiday', to which Lord Salisbury replied that, whilst '…no good purpose would be served by confining its action to banks …', he did not propose to alter the terminology.[36]

Lubbock's determination to introduce public holidays was prompted by a widely shared belief that the work–life balance in British society was, for too many people, leaving inadequate time for precisely those 'rational recreations' that had the capacity to 'improve' the poor. Lubbock doubtless had in mind the reading room that he made available in the schoolhouse for the local labourers at Downe, and the many thousands of working men and women who attended his public lectures in London. In 1840, the factory inspector, Leonard Horner, had commented that the working regime for textile workers left them '... utterly unfit for anything like mental improvement ... and not very fit for much social enjoyment ... with their families'.[37] Bank holidays offered a limited respite from the drudgery which was the norm for British shop-workers:

> Work, work, work, till the brain begins to swim,
> Work, work, work, till the eyes are heavy and dim!
>
> Oh, men with sisters dear!
> Oh, men, with mothers and wives!
> It is not linen you're wearing out,
> But human creatures lives![38]

The Bank Holidays Bill transformed Lubbock's public reputation, turning him almost overnight into one of the most popular figures in British public life. Bank holidays became known colloquially as 'Saint Lubbock's Days' and the press heaped praise upon his head:

> The people may forget a great many deeds of glory and names of renown: but they will never forget him who has given them a new and universal day of repose and recreation.[39]

35 Cited by B. Mallet 1924, 40.
36 3Hansard 206, 862.
37 P. Bailey 1978, 12.
38 T. Hood, cited by T. Sutherst 1884, i.
39 *Daily Telegraph*, cited by Hutchinson 1914, 122.

> A statute holiday! A holiday by Act of Parliament! ... Sir John Lubbock, a name memorable in natural history … has never vired a more sterling note across his counter than in the piece of paper which commands, in the name of Her Majesty, as the great cashier of her people's happiness, that they, the Queen's lieges, shall each and severally accept draughts of health and coin of pleasure unlimited, in exchange for toil and vitiated air.[40]

In little more than a year after his election, Lubbock had already achieved one of his original political ambitions, and he now turned his attention once again to the national debt. He seconded a resolution 'to make early provision for reducing the debt [by] not less than £10,000,000 a year', insisting that national indebtedness was '… one of the three great dangers which threaten Europe – namely, pauperism, war and debt'. Poor laws, he argued, '… appeal to our best sympathies against our better judgement', whilst militarism '… rouses some of our deepest passions against our calmer reason' and, with debt, '… the love of present ease stifles the voice of prudence and the sterner dictates of duty'. He went on meticulously to document the high levels of interest on public debt in Britain, compared to America and other European countries and argued that, since borrowing would always be necessary during times of war, '… national ruin would only be a question of time' if repayments were not made in times of peace.[41] He made a moral, as well as an economic case for repayment, describing it as a '… high moral discipline' and asking how, 'If the nation was indifferent to its debt …', private persons could be expected to '… exercise an exceptional prudence'? It was far more difficult, however, for a backbencher to influence Treasury policy than it was to introduce a measure such as the Bank Holidays Bill. Chancellor Lowe asked for more time to demonstrate that he was, in fact, making repayments, and the resolution which Lubbock had seconded was withdrawn.

In early June 1871, Lubbock took what must have been a very welcome break, taking his daughters, Harriet, Amy and Constance, to see some of the prehistoric antiquities of Wiltshire and Berkshire: the Uffington White Horse, Wayland's Smithy, Avebury, Silbury Hill, Stonehenge and Old Sarum.[42]

By the middle of June he was back in Parliament, and his primary concern now was with education. The previous year, the Elementary Education Act had been passed, a cornerstone of Liberal policy, and one which Lubbock had strongly supported. It was one of the more radical elements of the government's programme and even Gladstone (an educational traditionalist) had serious reservations. It did not provide for compulsory elementary schooling (Lowe[43] strongly opposed this and even Lubbock had stopped short of calling for compulsion) but did provide for government grants to establish non-denominational schools, and established local school boards (the first statutory bodies in England, incidentally, for which women could vote and stand), which could either establish their own schools, or pay for poor children to attend denominational schools.

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40 *Bell's Life*, cited by Hutchinson 1914, 124.

41 3Hansard 204, 1534–43.

42 BL Add. 62680, 5.

43 R. Lowe 1868.

On 14 June 1871, Lubbock proposed an amendment to the Endowed Schools Act 1869, seeking to ensure that governing bodies would be free from religious bias, but was again defeated by an alliance of Conservatives and traditionalist Liberals.[44] Then, on 21 July, he turned his attention to the curriculum of elementary schools, proposing a resolution '… to give more encouragement to the teaching of history, geography, elementary social economy'.[45] His concern was that the curriculum established under the 1870 Act, with its emphasis on reading, writing and arithmetic, was too narrowly defined. Doubtless thinking back to his own education at Eton, he complained that schools '… loaded the brain instead of educating the mind', '… taxed the memory instead of cultivating the intellect' and '… had too much instruction and too little education'.[46] He believed that it was more important that children should '… like their lessons' than that they should learn them, since:

> A child who left school at 14, knowing much but hating his lessons would, at 20, have forgotten almost all he ever learned: while another who, at 14, had learned little but had acquired a thirst for knowledge would, by the time he was 20, have taught himself more than the other ever knew.[47]

Lubbock made approving references both to the curriculum adopted by the London School Board (of which Huxley was a leading member), and to a school in rural Hampshire often cited by nineteenth-century educational reformers, Kings Sombourne, established by Dean Richard Dawes in 1842. This school had strong X-Club connections: both Edward Frankland and John Tyndall had helped out there, whilst teaching at nearby Queenwood College, and the former had effectively been adopted by Dawes who, though happily married, was childless.[48] Dawes tutored both Frankland and Tyndall in scientific German. A third X-Club member, Thomas Archer Hirst had also taught at Queenwood, and was almost certainly familiar with Kings Sombourne.

The population which Kings Sombourne served was predominantly agricultural, and Dawes's primary concern was to devise a curriculum that was relevant to the lives of his pupils, creating one of the first school science laboratories, using levers, wheels, pumps, model engines and voltaic batteries to demonstrate to the children the science of 'everyday things'. Dawes published a handbook for schoolmasters, emphasizing the importance of experimentation and observation as part of the teaching and learning process.[49]

In his parliamentary speech, Lubbock cited the opinion of a school inspector on Kings Sombourne:

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44 3Hansard 207, 1–33.
45 3Hansard 208, 102.
46 3Hansard 208, 111–12.
47 3Hansard 208, 112.
48 D. Layton 1973, 37.
49 R. Dawes 1849.

> Here, where so many other things are taught besides reading, the children are found in advance, in reading, of other schools, in the majority of which scarcely anything else is taught.[50]

The 1871 debate was cut short by the Speaker, and Lubbock was forced to withdraw his amendment. He tried again the following year, insisting that reading, writing and arithmetic '… do not, in themselves, constitute an education, however humble, any more than a knife and fork make a dinner',[51] but once again was forced to withdraw his resolution under government pressure.

Britain's second bank holiday came around on 7 August 1871 and Lubbock penned in his diary a note of satisfaction:

> Our next Bank Holiday was a great success. The day was splendid, and the holiday very generally kept. Every seaside place near London, every railway and place of amusement, was chock full. Light excursion trains went to Margate alone. The SER had only prepared for two; indeed the railways and hotel keepers were altogether taken by surprise.[52]

When he returned from his summer holiday with the Grant-Duffs in Switzerland, he found that the nation's bank clerks, grateful to him for establishing bank holidays, had prepared a 'testimonial' for him, no fewer than 23,000 of them having contributed to raise a sum of more than £700, which he used to establish two scholarships, one at the City of London School and the other at Maidstone School.[53]

During the course of 1871, Lubbock had been elected Vice President of both the Royal Society and the British Association for the Advancement of Science. His monograph on *Collembola and Thysanura* had also been published.[54] Unlike his two previous books, this was definitely not a piece of popular science, but rather a book written by an entomologist for the benefit of other entomologists, setting out in great descriptive detail, illustrated by himself (265 pages, with 78 plates), the anatomy and life cycle of 17 species of springtail, one of the most ancient families of insect. It remains, in many respects, the standard work of reference for these species. The inspiration for it was clearly Darwin's work on barnacles,[55] which the young John Lubbock had helped to illustrate. It was Hooker that had commented to Darwin back in 1847 that nobody had the right to '… examine the question of species who had not minutely described many'[56] and Darwin had probably advised Lubbock of the importance of this scientific rite of passage. At the same time, however, Lubbock was taking the first tentative steps on a new direction in his scientific career, doubtless inspired by his continued visits to, and conversations with Charles Darwin. He was increasingly interested in using experimental observation to investigate and understand animal behaviour. In June 1871 he recorded in one of his

50 3Hansard 208, 103.
51 3Hansard 212, 1456.
52 BL Add. 62680, 6.
53 BL Add. 62680, 7. *The Times*, 14 September 1871, 10.
54 J. Lubbock 1871b.
55 C. Darwin 1851; 1851–54; 1854.
56 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 341.

scientific notebooks[57] that he was conducting experiments on bees, distracting them with honey whilst he snipped off their wingtips (he records that this did not seem to bother them or impede their ability to fly) to allow him to identify individuals, and then placing a saucer of honey between two bunches of flowers to see which the bees would visit (they visited the flowers but not the honey). Such experiments, with wasps and ants as well as bees, were to become a defining part of Lubbock's later scientific work.

These new interests, however, seem to have complemented rather than detracted from Lubbock's fascination with archaeology. Throughout his life he kept a notebook on *Prehistoric Times*, and another on *The Origin of Civilisation*, which he used to update the books for successive editions. At some stage between 1869 and 1871, Lubbock commissioned a series of 18 paintings from the illustrator, Ernest Grisset. These paintings, now in the Bromley Museum, depict scenes from European prehistory, and the choice of subjects (including, for example, a Danish kitchen midden[58] and two Swiss lake village scenes[59]) suggest strongly that they were intended, in some sense, to illustrate *Prehistoric Times*. They are not particularly great works of art (Lubbock was no connoisseur), and it is unclear whether they were intended for public or simply private use. Family recollection holds that they were hung along the upstairs corridors of High Elms, in which case they would have been seen by the guests staying at the house, but not by the public who, when invited into the house, would have remained in the downstairs rooms.

Among the first houseguests who would have seen the paintings were the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Robert Lowe, and two other prominent Liberal politicians, Sir James Stansfield (a member of Gladstone's cabinet) and Albert Grey, who stayed together at High Elms in January 1872.[60]

At the end of 1871, Lubbock received a telegraph from the Rector of Avebury, Brian King, telling him of an impending threat to the great prehistoric stone circle: a series of cottages were about to be built within it, starting the following week. Lubbock immediately telegraphed King, offering the cottagers a sovereign each for the land. The purchase was agreed, and Lubbock became the owner of part of the monument the name of which he was later to adopt as his baronial title.[61]

In May, Lubbock and the Grant-Duffs took a holiday in France, travelling down to the Pyrenees and back home via Paris.[62] It was on this trip that Lubbock did something quite extraordinary: he acquired a pet wasp, which he was to bring back to England and keep for nine months! He later recorded the circumstances in his book, *Ants, Bees and Wasps*:[63]

> I took her, with her nest, in the Pyrenees, early in May … I had no difficulty in inducing her to feed on my hand; but at first she was shy and nervous. She kept her sting in constant

57 RS LUA22, 381–2.
58 Bromley Museum, LDBMP 74.83.14.
59 Bromley Museum, LDBMP 84.1.6.
60 BL Add. 62680, 9.
61 H. Hutchinson 1914, 132.
62 BL Add. 62681, 2–4.
63 J. Lubbock 1882a, 315–6.

> readiness; and once or twice in the train, when the railway officials came for tickets, and I was compelled to hurry her back into her bottle, she stung me slightly – I think, however, entirely from fright. Gradually she became quite used to me, and when I took her on my hand, apparently expected to be fed. She even allowed me to stroke her without any appearance of fear, and for some months I never saw her sting.

Back home for the May bank holiday, the papers were again full of praise for Lubbock:

> All other popularity, in arms, arts, song or statesmanship, was as nothing on Monday last compared with that of Sir John Lubbock. If there had been a question that day of electing someone to any office whatsoever, from the Lord High Admiralty of England to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Sir John had only stood for it, the women and children of London, let alone the citizens, would have elected him by acclamation.[64]

In June 1872, Sir John Lubbock became Vice Chancellor of the University of London, a post previously held by his father. Modestly, he at first suggested that he was '… deficient in qualifications which a Vice-Chancellor ought to possess', having not had the benefit of a university education, and having, he thought, particular weaknesses in Classics and mathematics,[65] but he was, nonetheless elected, and served in that role until 1880.

For much of the summer of that year, Lubbock and his X-Club colleagues were preoccupied with a political row that had blown up over the management of Kew Gardens, and which almost cost Joseph Hooker his job as director of the gardens. The problem had started in December 1870, when Gladstone's Minister of Works, Acton Smee Ayrton, had promoted one of Hooker's subordinates above his head. Ayrton proceeded over the next two years to interfere constantly in the management of the gardens, to the point at which Hooker felt reduced to the status of a 'Park Superintendent'.[66]

In June 1872, a petition was drawn up to Gladstone, protesting against Ayrton's treatment of Hooker. It was signed by 11 of the top scientific figures in England, including Darwin, Lyell, Huxley, Tyndall, Spottiswoode and Busk. Lubbock agreed to take the matter up in the House of Commons.

Huxley and Hooker favoured a head-on confrontation with Ayrton, and consulted Lord Derby (who was taking up Hooker's case in the House of Lords) about releasing the petition to the press. Lubbock took a more conciliatory approach, which worried Hooker considerably. On 18 June, Hooker wrote to Tyndall:

> I greatly fear that Lubbock has been prevailed against. Campbell, who saw him yesterday and questioned him, has an idea that he has had an interview with Ayrton … This looks black.[67]

64 *Daily Telegraph*, 22 May 1872.
65 H. Hutchinson 1914, 137.
66 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2612–15.
67 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2658.

Despite Lubbock's insistence that the petition should remain confidential,[68] Huxley, acting on advice from Lord Derby,[69] proceeded to leak the petition to the press, targeting the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily News*, *Spectator* and *The Economist*. As Huxley had predicted, public opinion increasingly came behind Hooker.

Lubbock was trying to avoid a public confrontation with Ayrton, preferring to settle the matter by negotiation. On the 11 July, Hooker again wrote to Tyndall, complaining of Lubbock:

> … this is the third time he has been put off. I have told him plainly that he is being trifled with … In spite of all my exertions no-one, not even Lubbock, has seen Lord Derby. I cannot but suppose that, in Lubbock's political position, he dares not.[70]

Ayrton, meanwhile, was stalling, refusing to hand over relevant correspondence.[71] When the papers were finally presented and laid before Parliament they contained a most unwelcome surprise: a report on the management of Kew Gardens, deeply critical of Hooker, and of his father.[72] The author of the report was that old nemesis of the X-Club, Professor Richard Owen. Hooker wrote to Tyndall on 31 July:

> The affair is terribly complicated by Ayrton's last dastardly action, of getting Owen to write a disparaging statement, and censures on my father and self … It reminds me of certain animals that, when they see that all is up, urinate in their enemy's face, or worse.[73]

Unknown to Hooker, Huxley or Tyndall, Lubbock had dined with Gladstone the previous week, and saw him again on 30 July, negotiating a compromise that he now presented to Hooker as a fait accompli:

> I have this evening seen Mr Gladstone, who authorises me to assure you that Mr Ayrton has had no intention of giving you offence. Under these circumstances, I said that, if you were satisfied, I had no wish to make any attack on Mr Ayrton … Mr Gladstone expressed himself in a very friendly spirit towards you personally, and said that in this case no further difficulties would arise as regards Kew.[74]

On the basis of this rather lame assurance, Lubbock asked Hooker formally to withdraw his allegations against Ayrton. Hooker had previously stated that there were only three possible outcomes to the dispute: his resignation, Ayrton's, or the transfer of Kew to another government department. He now responded, however, offering to comply with Lubbock's request on two conditions: that Parliament be told that Owen's allegations were untrue, and that Gladstone should appoint someone to meet

68 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2662.
69 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2663.
70 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2677–8.
71 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2679.
72 Cited by A. Desmond 1998, 423.
73 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2692.
74 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2696.

with Huxley and Spottiswoode to agree a framework for the future management of the gardens.[75]

Huxley, rather uncharacteristically, proposed a compromise, that Hooker should withdraw his allegations on condition that Ayrton withdrew his memorandum, together with Owen's statement.[76]

This was the settlement that was agreed. Lubbock went with Lord Frederick Cavendish to see Ayrton on 6 August. Ayrton agreed to the trade-off but was '… anything but gracious', and went on, when the matter did come before Parliament the next day, to give what Lubbock described as '… a very angry speech, in which he sneered at science very foolishly'.[77] Both Ayrton's withdrawal and Hooker's were equivocal, but Ayrton gave Hooker no further trouble at Kew.

Ayrton's agenda had been to close down the scientific elements of Kew and keep the gardens simply as a public park, whilst Owen's was for the British Museum to take over the collections. Both failed, and their failure was due, in large measure, to the way in which the X-Club orchestrated the campaign in Hooker's defence. Lubbock, however, was on the edge of this campaign: invaluable to the X-Club because of his voice in Parliament and his contact with Gladstone, yet with instincts very different from those of Hooker, Tyndall and Huxley, seeking to negotiate a compromise whilst they were spoiling for a fight.

Hooker's position at Kew Gardens assured, Lubbock travelled to Brighton in August for the 1872 meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.[78] The following day he gave his address as President of the Biology Section, in which he referred approvingly to the adoption of science teaching by the governing bodies of public schools, and by the school boards of London and Liverpool.

Lubbock's pet wasp made a personal appearance during the Brighton proceedings, much to the amusement of the press:

> One of the most curious attendants this year at the gathering of the British Association in Brighton was a little gentleman in brown overcoat, with black and yellow nether garments, wearing a sharp sword poisoned at the tip. We are inclined to think that ... this visitor might be called by far the most remarkable and best worth attention among all the assembled notorieties. It was Sir John Lubbock's pet wasp; and the respect which would naturally be paid to any friend of the benevolent savant, ... was really due to this insect on its own account'[79]

The wasp died the following year, and Lubbock later recorded the circumstances in his book, *Ants, Bees and Wasps*:[80]

> When the cold weather came on she fell into a drowsy state, and I began to hope she would hibernate and survive the winter. I kept her in a dark place, but watched her carefully, and fed her if she ever seemed at all restless.

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75 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2697; ICL HP3, 159bis.
76 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2699.
77 BL Add. 62681, 8.
78 J. Lubbock 1872b.
79 *Daily Telegraph*, 26 August 1872.
80 J. Lubbock 1882a, 315–16.

> She came out occasionally, and seemed as well as usual until near the end of February, when one day I observed she had nearly lost the use of her antennae, though the rest of her body was as usual. She would take no food. Next day I tried again to feed her; but the head seemed dead, though she could still move her legs, wings and abdomen. The following day I offered her food for the last time; but both head and thorax were dead or paralysed; she could but move her tail, a last token, as I could almost fancy, of gratitude and affection. As far as I could judge, her death was quite painless; and she now occupies a place in the British Museum.

Lubbock's sentimental and anthropomorphic empathy for insects was to become a feature of his later entomological writings. Contrasting ironically with his ethnological writings, he seems to have found it easier to empathize with ants, bees and wasps than to do so with human 'savages', doubtless because he had closer personal familiarity with the insects than he did with non-western peoples. This anthropomorphism was very much a feature of the age. Lubbock's children were probably familiar with James Greenwood's book, *The Purgatory of Peter the Cruel* (illustrated by Ernest Grisset, whose paintings of prehistoric life were displayed at High Elms),[81] a morality tale in which a sailor who had tortured insects was punished by being metamorphosed successively into different species of insect and made to endure himself the pain that he had inflicted on them. Even Darwin was criticized by G.H. Lewes for '... the fallacies of anthropomorphic interpretation' in relation to insects:[82]

In October 1872, Lubbock travelled with the Grant-Duffs and the Greys through Vienna, down the Danube to Varna and on to Constantinople.[83] They met with the Ottoman Governor-General, who loaned them a boat and an escort of soldiers, so that they could travel on to the Dardanelles, where they stayed near Hisarlik (Troy). Lubbock had hoped to meet with the excavator, Heinrich Schliemann, who unfortunately was not there.

Like Lubbock, Schliemann was a banker, and a man of independent means who was able to use his wealth to finance the pursuit of his private passions. Unlike Lubbock, however, he drew his inspiration from Classical literature, especially Homer, and was determined to prove that the tales recounted in *The Iliad* represented a real historical account. Still more unlike Lubbock, Schliemann was also a fantasist and an egomaniac, given to boasting, exaggerating and, on occasions, lying about his discoveries. Schliemann later wrote to Lubbock from Troy[84] informing him that he was back in the field with 120–150 labourers, aiming to complete the excavations before June, so that he could turn his attentions to Mycenae, Olympia, and perhaps Delphi. He invited Lubbock to visit Troy again, an invitation that Lubbock was not able to take up. A subsequent letter from Schliemann to Lubbock betrays something the former's state of mind:

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81 J. Greenwood 1868.

82 G.H. Lewes 1879, 118, 131.

83 BL Add. 62680, 14–15.

84 BL Add. 49644, 48–50.

> Hurrah the Ikaean Gates … hurrah the copper bolts with which they were shut; Hurrah the House of Priamus, which is the lower one just North-East of the gate, for, as Your Excellency will see, the upper one was only built when the lower one, as well as the Ikaean Gate and the paved road were covered ten feet high … .[85]

Whilst in Anatolia, Lubbock carried out one of his very few archaeological excavations, on the so-called 'Tumulus of Hector' at Bunarbashi, but found almost nothing. They took an excursion into the hills to the source of the Scamander, where they camped, guided by an '... old brigand' who, '... having run away with the daughter of a man in authority, had been consequently outlawed'.[86]

The social milieu to which Lubbock returned in England was a world apart from that of rural Anatolia, and his own position within that milieu was increasingly secure. Earlier in the year he had noted, in his diary, that business at the bank was very active (the British economy was, at that point, just emerging from a deep recession), and that the bank had a balance with the Bank of England of £6,000,000 on 6 April (around £270,000,000 in today's terms). The total value of his estate by that stage was £98,000 (around £4,500,000 today).[87] His social circle was even widening to include former emperors. Having been deposed at the end of the Franco-Prussian war, Napoleon III was, by this time, living in exile with the Empress Eugénie at Chiselhurst, and Sir John and Lady Lubbock called on them. Lubbock and the Emperor discussed archaeology (a shared interest), the museum at St-Germain and Lubbock's collections, but the Emperor apparently looked ill, and they did not like to stay long.[88]

By the end of 1872, some of the key themes in Lubbock's political career were also clearly emerging. He was sticking quite closely to the priorities that he had identified for himself when he first considered standing for Parliament: education, the national debt, national holidays, and had made a tangible and widely publicized difference on at least the third of these. By challenging the government directly on issues such as the national debt, education and (however diplomatically) Kew, and by focussing on those areas of policy, such as bank holidays and working hours, which were close to his own heart, rather than on government priorities, Lubbock was, in effect, ruling himself out of consideration for ministerial office; and he would always be something of an outsider from the inner circle of the Liberal leadership, respected for his independence and integrity, but something of a political loner, nonetheless. Equally, the dispute over Kew had placed him somewhat on the fringes of the X-Club, the other members uncertain as to whether he was truly 'one of them'. Quite simply, he was not; he was increasingly someone who was operating between the social circles of science, politics and banking, rather than at the heart of any of these: bringing people from within these circles together and acting as a link between them. In part because of the different (and often contradictory) pressures that each of these circles placed on him (but also, in part, because of his natural temperament), he

85 BL Add. 49644, 54.

86 BL Add. 62681, 26.

87 Figures from J. Owen 2000, Appendix 5.1; currency conversions based on J.J. McCusker 2001.

88 BL Add. 62680, 12.

became an expert at brokering compromises and agreements and, in stark contrast to Huxley (operating in a far more partisan way at the very heart of the scientific establishment), avoided head-on confrontations wherever possible.

Chapter 8

Opposition Benches

Sir John Lubbock stepped down as President of the Anthropological Institute at the beginning of 1873.[1] His fellow X-Clubber George Busk, succeeded him, apparently going back on some form of understanding that he would be followed by a former member of the Anthropological Society.[2] Burton remained on the Council, and the atmosphere was toxic, as an undated letter from Ellen Lubbock to Emma Darwin makes clear:

> Yesterday I was at the Busks, and Mr Busk was groaning and lamenting over his Presidency of the Anthro – (I never can spell the horrid word) Society – the name irritates him, as it does John, and it isn't the right one. We never wanted to be merged and swallowed whole in and by this mushroom society with no good men in it ….[3]

Ellen went on to suggest a scheme whereby the Lubbocks, Darwins, Busks and others would raise the money to cover the debts of the Anthropological Institute (amounting to £700), but only on condition that it reverted to the name 'Ethnological'. In the event, the scheme was not needed, for the malcontents walked away and formed their own society, the London Anthropological Society, with Burton citing 'sharp practice' in the presidential election for the Anthropological Institute. Burton urged his supporters to '… fight under the old flag of 1863'[4] but that flag, like the Confederate stars and bars that had inspired it, was torn, tattered and trampled in the dust. The new society lasted for less than a year.

Harriet Lubbock died on 12 February 1873, and Sir John recorded in his diary:

> My mother died … If ever there was an angel on Earth, she was one. I do not believe she ever said an angry or unkind word to me in all my life … .[5]

Her influence on him had been profound. She had succeeded, where Eton conspicuously had failed, in instilling in him, as a child, the love of learning that he now sought for the nation's children, including a passion for nature and a flair for modern languages. She had also given him a moral framework that remained with him throughout his life, founded on a deep but un-dogmatic Christian faith.

Lubbock pressed on with his parliamentary work, putting down a bill for the protection of ancient monuments. With housing, industrial and railway developments

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1 J. Lubbock 1873b
2 *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* 3, 499–502.
3 CUL DAR173.
4 *Anthropologia* 1, 3.
5 BL Add. 62680, 16.

all proceeding at an unprecedented pace, both in the cities and in the countryside of Britain, the nation's monuments were under threat as never before. At the same time, the growth of the middle class and the increasing public appetite for 'improvement' through education heightened the public awareness of this threat and deepened their concern. Lubbock had already intervened personally to prevent destruction at the Great Tolmaen (unsuccessfully) and at Avebury (successfully). In seeking to address these concerns through legislation, however, he was up against one of the most powerful moral and political forces in Victorian society – an inheritance that went back centuries, arguably even to Magna Carta – the notion of the inviolability of private property.

Lubbock's bill proposed the establishment of a National Monuments Commission, which would have the power to assume 'guardianship' of monuments listed in a 'schedule'. Such monuments could remain in private ownership, but, if demolition was proposed, the Commission would have the right of purchase. Historic houses were excluded, as were the ruins of castles and abbeys: true to Lubbock's own interests, the legislation seems to have been intended specifically to protect prehistoric sites.[6] The proposal received widespread support from within the scientific community, with a very favourable editorial appearing in the journal, *Nature*.[7]

The second reading of the bill took place on 6 May 1873. Lubbock was clearly under pressure of time, since his speech was constantly interrupted by cries of 'Move!'. The Home Secretary, Henry Bruce, made it clear that the government could only accept the bill if it were amended to remove any suggestion that public funds might be used to purchase monuments.[8] Knowing that the alternative was to lose the bill, Lubbock reluctantly agreed, and the second reading was approved.

At the end of May, Lubbock took a short holiday with the Grant-Duffs in Belgium and Luxembourg. The Hookers joined them for part of the time. Returning to High Elms, he continued his experiments with bees, attempting to 'tame' a dozen of them, which he had distinguished by painting them green, and installing a glass hive in his sitting room, so that he could observe them more continuously. He also purchased Silbury Hill, one of Wiltshire's most significant Neolithic monuments (and, in contrast to his Avebury purchase the previous year, one that was not directly threatened), for the sum of £500.

On 10 June 1873, Lubbock made a speech in the Commons which, to a remarkable extent, anticipated some of the key environmental concerns of the twenty-first century. It was in the context of the Rating (Liability and Value) Bill, and Lubbock's concern was to oppose the rating of timber on the grounds that this could encourage the removal of woodland. There could be no doubt, he insisted:

> … that in other countries great changes of climate had followed the destruction of forests. Many long-civilised countries now suffered greatly from drought, owing to that cause.

6 T. Champion 1996.

7 *Nature* 1873a.

8 3Hansard 215, 1607–8.

Pointing out that Britain, at that stage, had only two per cent of its land under wood, compared to 16 per cent in France and 28 per cent in Prussia, he cited Hooker as an authority who:

> … should regard any general measure that would interfere with the remaining woods of England as a very hazardous one.[9]

For most of his parliamentary career, Lubbock would plough his own furrow. There were only a few occasions on which he was drawn into the machinations of government itself, and the first of these came in June 1873. He was called in to see Edward Cardwell, Gladstone's Minister for War, and asked to move an amendment to a motion by Mr Assheton Cross, on the finances of the Post Office and Telegraph. He may not have realized that this was a likely indication that he was being considered for ministerial office, and was initially reluctant to take it on, believing that others knew more about the subject than he did. Cardwell was insistent, however, and Lubbock eventually agreed.[10]

Assheton Cross's motion accused the Post Office (and, indirectly, the Exchequer) of improperly using funds from revenue and savings bank balances for capital investment in the telegraph system. Lubbock's amendment removed the reference to 'misappropriation' and, in his speech Lubbock insisted that '… there had been no fraud'. Both Lowe and Gladstone, in summing up, emphasized their preference for Lubbock's wording, which was eventually carried with a majority of 50.[11] Lubbock had helped the government to avoid a major embarrassment, but Lowe's reputation was tarnished, and he lost his job at the Treasury, being moved to the Home Office, whilst Gladstone himself took on the Exchequer in addition to his Prime Ministerial responsibilities. Two more junior ministers arguably more at fault than Lowe for the accounting regularities at the Post Office, lost their positions in government: one of these was the First Commissioner of Works, Acton Smee Ayrton![12] Hooker and Huxley may have doubted Lubbock's resolve on the issue of Kew, but he had taken Ayrton's scalp in the end.

Lubbock had hoped to introduce another bill to Parliament in the summer of 1873, limiting the hours of work in shops to ten hours per day, but was forced to withdraw this in July because of lack of time for debate.[13] He had been actively campaigning on this since the beginning of the year, having chaired a meeting of shopworkers in Mile End in January[14] and another in Manchester in April.[15] Following on from his success with the Bank Holidays Act, this campaign was drawing a great deal of public support, and the Manchester meeting, at which both the Mayor and the Bishop spoke, in addition to Lubbock, had seen the city's town hall filled to capacity with shop assistants. It was to be a long and uphill struggle. More than ten years

9 3Hansard 216, 734.
10 BL Add. 62681, 52–3.
11 3Hansard 217, 1189–1229.
12 R. Jenkins 1995, 315.
13 BL Add. 62681, 51.
14 BL Add. 62680, 16.
15 Ibid., 17; *The Times*, 25 April 1873, 10.

after Lubbock first introduced the Shop Hours Bill, Thomas Sutherst estimated that the majority of shop assistants in the country, many of them children, worked between 75 and 90 hours per week, and documented the toll that this took on their health. Factory workers were protected from such long hours by legislation which did not apply to shop workers, an irony that was noted by one of the shop managers interviewed by Sutherst:

> He has often noticed in one and the same house this strange anomaly. The factory inspector has gone upstairs to the milliners' workwomen and enforced the Factory Acts, but the poor, weary milliners' saleswoman below in the shop is taken no notice of, because not protected by legislation. Yet the saleswomen worked harder and longer ....[16]

In pursuing such causes, Lubbock did not hesitate to forge alliances with those who were, more typically, his opponents. Victorian Liberals generally opposed legislation that restricted free enterprise, and much of the support for the restriction of shop hours came from Tories, concerned at the moral consequences of long hours (particularly for young men, for whom the pub and brothel offered the only recreation in the few hours when they were free) and emphasizing the role that shorter hours could play in fostering family values and cultivating religion.

In October, Lubbock, together with the Grant-Duffs, Albert Grey and a Miss Watson, took a holiday in Egypt, travelling to Marseille and sailing to Alexandria, before taking the train to Cairo and hiring a boat to travel along the Nile, visiting the Pyramids and Sphinx, Thebes, Karnac and Luxor.[17] Although he visited Egypt very much as a tourist and did not study the archaeology in any detail, Lubbock did write up his notes as a lecture, giving an overview of the archaeology and ancient history of Egypt, and this was later published.[18]

Lubbock returned to find that his latest book, *On the Origin and Metamorphosis of Insects*, was in print.[19] The preface of the book makes it clear that it was aimed at a general readership, although the first chapter contains a fairly daunting amount of Latin taxonomy, reflecting a dilemma that Lubbock often faced in balancing scientific rigour with popular appeal. The book sets out to trace a developmental sequence from the most primitive insects, including the springtails on which Lubbock had previously published the definitive work, through to the full range of living insect species. Insect embryology was discussed in some detail, and Lubbock stressed the great similarities, at the embryonic stage, between species which, in their adult forms, are very different. This he saw as providing clues to the developmental process, arguing that:

> … the time will come when it will be generally admitted that the structure of the embryo, and its developmental changes, indicate as truly the course of organic development in

16 T. Sutherst 1884, 11.
17 BL Add. 62680, 18; BL Add. 62681, 61–84.
18 J. Lubbock 1879b.
19 J. Lubbock 1873d.

> ancient times as the contents of rocks and their sequence teach us the past history of the Earth itself.[20]

This is an evolutionary argument, certainly, but it is not, strictly speaking, a Darwinian one.[21] Darwin's model of evolution by means of natural selection depended neither on embryology, nor upon fossil sequences, but rather on the forms and distributions of living species, and on the relationships between them. Lubbock's developmental model drew on pre-Darwinian evolutionary thought, most notably that of Herbert Spencer, whose *Principles of Biology* Lubbock quoted in the book to illustrate the link between embryology and evolution:

> Each organism exhibits, within a short space of time, a series of changes which, when supposed to occupy a period indefinitely great, and to go on in various ways instead of one way, give us a tolerably clear conception of organic evolution in general ….[22]

Spencer wrote this after the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, but he was returning to a theme that he first developed in the 1850s, inspired not by Darwin, but by Lamarck.[23]

Lubbock, however, did not distinguish clearly between the ideas that he had taken from Darwin and those that he had taken from Spencer, and perhaps from other sources, as this quote shows:

> … the metamorphoses of insects have always seemed to me one of the greatest difficulties of the Darwinian theory. In most cases, the development of the individual reproduces, to a certain extent, that of the race; but the motionless, imbecile pupa cannot represent a mature form. No one, so far as I know, has yet attempted to explain in accordance with Mr Darwin's views, a life history in which the mouth is at first mandibulate, and then suctorial, as, for example, in a butterfly ….[24]

In fact, this poses a far greater problem for a Spencerian model of evolution (in which the development of the embryo provides the key to the evolution of the species) than it does for a Darwinian one (in which those traits, including the possession of mandibulate mouths in the larval stage, which give individuals an advantage in the struggle for existence, are passed on to the next generation, whilst those which do not are extinguished). Lubbock's solution was to produce a synthesis of Spencerian and Darwinian ideas, distinguishing between 'developmental' changes in organisms (a concept that Darwin would not have recognized, but which Spencer would) and 'adaptive' changes which have reference to the specific environmental conditions in which a species finds itself (an idea with which Darwin would have been far more comfortable).

The comments which Lubbock made in this book on insect behaviour are as interesting and revealing as those on insect embryology and evolution. He refers

20 Ibid., 108.
21 P. Bowler 1988, 50–51.
22 H. Spencer 1867, vol. 6, 349, cited by Lubbock 1873d, 64.
23 R.M. Young 1990.
24 J. Lubbock 1873d, 70.

to the work of the French entomologist, Lespès, as having noted the existence of a species of blind beetle, *Claviger duvalii*, in some nests of the ant, *Lasius niger*.[25] These beetles were carefully tended by the ants, who would, in contrast, normally kill an intruding insect, and both Lubbock and Lespès regarded them as having been 'domesticated' by the ants, although for what purpose they were unclear. Lespès had noted, however, that these beetles were found only in some nests of this particular species, and found that when he introduced the beetles into nests that did not already have them, they were invariably killed. Commenting on this, Lubbock wrote:

> He concludes from these observations that some communities of ants are more advanced in civilisation than others: the suggestion is no doubt ingenious, and the fact curiously resembles the experience of navigators who have endeavoured to introduce domestic animals among barbarous tribes.[26]

This largely forgotten book represents a landmark in the development of Lubbock's views on evolution. For Lubbock, as for Spencer and Huxley, evolution was pre-eminently a directional and progressive process – it was in the natural order of things to become ever more complex and 'advanced'. This is what Lubbock had in mind when he referred to 'developmental' changes in organisms. This model of evolution, based on an assumption of inevitable progress, was pre-Darwinian in inspiration: it was familiar to Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus, and it was almost certainly the model which informed the young John Lubbock's first recorded conversation about evolution with Charles and Henry Strickland in the autumn of 1853.

Charles Darwin made no such assumption. Commenting on the fact that some of the 'lowest' creatures continue to flourish, he had written, in *The Origin of Species*:

> On our theory, the continued existence of lowly organisms offers no difficulty; for natural selection, or the survival of the fittest, does not necessarily include progressive development – it only takes advantage of such variations as arise and are beneficial to each creature under its complex relations of life. And it may be asked what advantage, as far as we can see, would it be to an infusorian animalcule – to an intestinal worm, or even to an earthworm, to be highly organised? If it were no advantage, these forms would be left, by natural selection, unimproved, or but little improved, and might remain for indefinite ages in their present condition.[27]

Through his reference to adaptive change, however, as in his earlier comments in *Prehistoric Times* that had been so well received by Darwin, Lubbock demonstrated that he did in fact understand, perhaps to a greater degree than Spencer or Huxley ever did,[28] what Darwin actually meant by natural selection. For Lubbock, though, these 'adaptive' changes were of peripheral importance compared to the 'developmental' process which informed both his scientific and his political world view.

In contrast to most of his contemporaries, Lubbock did not see 'culture' or 'civilization' as uniquely human attributes which began to develop as biological

25 C. Lespès 1868.
26 J. Lubbock 1873d, 13.
27 C. Darwin [1882] 1975, 117–18.
28 P. Bowler 1988, 34; 64–77.

evolution reached its pinnacle: on the contrary, he examined the 'culture' and 'civilization' of ants in very much the same terms as he examined that of human communities. Biological and cultural evolution were, for Lubbock, parallel rather than sequential processes, and he seems to have recognized that they were driven by different processes: he generally avoided, in relation to the former, the Lamarckian language of 'intentionality' (the use of words such as attainment, effort, self-improvement) that Herbert Spencer often used[29] and, in relation to the latter (with the exception of the few passages from *Prehistoric Times*) specific reference to natural selection.

At the beginning of February 1874, Gladstone surprised his parliamentary colleagues by dissolving Parliament and calling a general election. His majority had, by this point in time, broken down into 'unruly factions',[30] with some Liberals, such as Joseph Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke, openly embracing republicanism, and with deep rifts opening up in the government over issues as diverse as education and foreign policy. Gladstone doubtless hoped that, by calling the election, he would put an end to these quarrels and stamp his authority on the government, but it was to prove a miscalculation.

Lubbock was as surprised as anyone: he and Ellen had been staying in Maidstone, and only discovered the news when they opened the morning paper on 2 February.[31] Anticipating the election, but not its timing, Lubbock had even called on the Gladstones the previous year, loyally offering to give up his own seat in the Prime Minister's favour. It is just possible that Lubbock hoped, by this gesture, to gain some advancement, but Gladstone at that time told him that he was tired of public life, and that he was considering leaving Parliament altogether.[32]

Lubbock was re-elected in Maidstone, topping the poll with 1,558 votes, 144 ahead of his Tory rival. Elsewhere, however, the Liberals did very badly, and Lubbock noted with some dismay that they had lost west Kent by 1,900 votes, a seat for which he had been beaten by a majority of only 55.[33] Personal popularity, rather than party allegiance, had probably saved Lubbock's seat. Lubbock's diary recounts that, when the votes were counted in Maidstone on 26 February, there was a '... great crowd' in the High Street, and that the announcement was followed by ' ... a famous procession with bands and colours'.[34] Nationally, however, it was the worst Liberal defeat for more than 30 years, allowing Disraeli's Conservatives to glide effortlessly into power.

Despite his conversation with Lubbock, expressing a wish to retire, Gladstone had led the Liberals into the 1874 election, adopting a platform of fiscal austerity. He saw this as the policy most likely to unite the party, but he could hardly have been more wrong. Joseph Chamberlain, then the Mayor of Birmingham, described it as '... simply an appeal to the selfishness of the middle classes', whilst a leading radical

29 P. Bowler 1988, 39.
30 F. Harcourt 1985, 33.
31 BL Add. 62680, 19.
32 BL Add. 62680, 17.
33 BL Add. 62680, 19.
34 BL Add. 62681, 87.

journal, *The Bee Hive*, complained that 'Mr Gladstone has sacrificed the lower classes, who worshipped him, to the richer classes, who disliked him.'[35] Disraeli, by contrast, had played the patriotic card, promising a 'National' government that would unite the country in defending 'traditional institutions' against the 'ravages of an iconoclastic Liberalism', and a foreign policy 'more appropriate to Britain's status as a great power'.[36]

Lubbock was normally an advocate of financial austerity, and had criticized Gladstone's administration for not going far enough in the direction of debt reduction, but Gladstone had gone too far, even for him, in advocating the abolition of income tax. Speaking in Parliament on the issue, Lubbock emphasized that, whilst he would be '... glad to see the Income Tax abolished', as it was '... of all taxes, the one which falls most heavily on those engaged in business', he could not think that it could be '... wise or just ... to repeal a tax which falls on the rich, while leaving untouched others, which, like the duties on tea and coffee, press more heavily on the poor'.[37]

Lubbock's approach to the income tax is indicative of a paternalism, which was fundamental to his approach both to domestic and foreign policy issues, and which owed much to his status as a Liberal country squire. Whilst opposing the direct redistribution of wealth (something that was favoured by many of the more radical figures within the Liberal Party, notably Joseph Chamberlain), Lubbock believed that the privilege of wealth came with a moral responsibility to carry a fair share of the financial burden of the nation, and that men of property such as himself were precisely the people who ought to take the lead in the repayment of the national debt. It is, similarly, indicative of his political independence that, on issues such as the income tax and education, he was willing to hunt with the radical hounds, whilst on others, such as redistribution, the monarchy and women's suffrage he preferred to run with the traditionalist 'Whig' hare. This independence of any faction would keep him permanently on the edges of the political establishment, whilst at the same time providing the cornerstone of his public, political persona, as a man of integrity who would always act as he saw right, rather than in pursuit of personal advancement or party advantage.

Lubbock's Shop Hours Bill had not been given sufficient parliamentary time to make progress in the previous year's session, whilst his Ancient Monuments Bill had fallen as a result of Gladstone's unexpected dissolution of Parliament. He reintroduced both bills in March 1874.[38] The Shop Hours Bill again made no progress, but the Ancient Monuments Bill was debated on 15 April.

Lubbock, in introducing the bill, pointed out that a number of other countries had already introduced legislation to protect their ancient monuments, and emphasized the limited nature of the legislation he was proposing, depriving landowners of '… nothing but the childish pleasure of destruction'.[39]

35 Cited by R. Jenkins 1995, 376.
36 P. Durrans 1982, 263.
37 J. Lubbock 1879c, 103–5.
38 BL Add. 62680, 19.
39 3Hansard 218, 576.

Such a bill, however, was even less likely to succeed in the face of a Conservative majority than it might have been under a Liberal administration, a point made by George Betinck, the Secretary of the Board of Trade, in his response to Lubbock's speech:

> He thought that this was a bill which would have had more chance of passing in the late than it had in the present Parliament, that former assembly being so much used to the practice of spoilation by legislation.

Mounting a far more robust opposition than Lubbock's Liberal colleagues had offered in the previous year, Betinck described the bill as '... legalising burglary by daylight', and as being '... at variance with the commonest rights of property'. The ideal Commissioners, he suggested, would be '... some of the most experienced burglars that could be found'. Another Conservative MP, Mr Bromley-Davenport, said that:

> He saw nothing in it which would prevent the Commissioners from coming to any Honourable Member's churchyard and disinterring his grandfather ....[40]

The Chancellor of the Exchequer intervened (as his Liberal predecessor had done) to insist that no public money should be made available for the purchase of monuments.

When the House voted by a majority of 53 to delay consideration of the bill by six months, Lubbock understood perfectly well what this meant in practice, recording in his diary simply that 'Our Ancient Monuments Bill was thrown out by 147 to 94.'[41]

The following day, Lubbock intervened in the Budget debate, doubtless finding this easier from the opposition benches:

> Sir John Lubbock congratulated the Right Honourable gentleman on the statement which he had just made, and the magnificent surplus which he inherited from his predecessors. He, however, could not but regret that the Right Honourable gentleman did not propose to do more for the reduction of the national debt.[42]

In July 1874, Lubbock put aside his earlier (and probably tactical) reluctance to 'introduce the policeman to the school', and joined with some of the most radical MPs on the Liberal benches to support the Elementary Education (Compulsory Attendance) Bill, which would have made school attendance compulsory. Predictably, given the Conservative majority, the move was unsuccessful.

When not in Parliament, Lubbock continued with his scientific work, publishing two papers based on his experiments with bees,[43] and one on the Stone Age of Egypt[44]. In August 1874 he made one of only three visits in the course of his lifetime, to the island of Ireland, attending the Belfast meeting of the British Association for

40 3Hansard 218, 579–87.
41 BL Add. 62680, 20.
42 3Hansard 218, 681.
43 J. Lubbock 1874a,b.
44 J. Lubbock 1874c.

the Advancement of Science. It was at this meeting that his friend, and fellow X-Club member, John Tyndall, gave a dramatic presidential address, in which he hailed the victory of science over religion, declaring that scientists '... claim, and ... shall wrest from theology, the entire domain of cosmological theory'. Lubbock made no public comment on Tyndall's Belfast address. He would have agreed with much of it but, true to the position he had adopted in relation to *Essays and Reviews*, he would never accept Tyndall's central point (which Huxley, and probably most other members of the X-Club shared) that '... religion and science stand in necessary and enduring conflict'.[45]

The following month Lubbock spent a few days in Cornwall, 'botanising' with Grant-Duff, but had to return early to High Elms, when Ellen collapsed. Later in the month, she was well enough to enjoy a few days in Boulogne with Sir John and the children, but her health was clearly giving much cause for concern.[46]

These concerns were still very much to the fore when, in January 1875, the Lubbocks attended a political dinner at Strawberry Hill, with a number of senior Liberal figures: the Cardwells, Vernon Harcourt and Sir Edward Perry, and Sir John noted in his diary:

> Poor Nelly so ill that we could not enjoy it.[47]

Following the Liberal defeat in the previous year's general election, Lord Hartington had replaced Gladstone as party leader. An aristocratic Whig grandee in the most traditional mould (heir to the seventh Duke of Devonshire), Hartington had little truck with radicalism. His father had been Chancellor of London University when Lubbock's had been Vice Chancellor, so the two families knew each other well.[48] Hartington had something of a reputation for laziness and complacency: a week before his election as Liberal leader, he had given a speech at Lewes in which he freely accepted that the Conservatives were more in tune with public opinion, stating that he had '... no particular fault to find' with them, and that his hope was simply to keep the party together for a future time.[49]

Lubbock had tabled the Ancient Monuments Bill for the third time in February 1875,[50] having previously raised the matter privately with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who '... seemed disposed to consider it favourably'.[51] He moved the second reading on 14 April, emphasizing the '... infinitesimally small' burden that the bill was likely to impose on the public purse, compared to the public benefits to be gained. Once again, however, he came up against determined Conservative opposition. Lord Francis Hervey was particularly dismissive about the monuments that would be protected under the proposed legislation:

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45 F. Turner 1981, 172–3.
46 BL Add. 62680, 21.
47 BL Add. 62680, 23.
48 J. Parry 1993, 250.
49 *The Times*, 28 January 1875, cited by T. Jenkins 1988, 44.
50 BL Add. 62680, 23.
51 BL Add. 62681, 117.

> It was said that there were Celtic monuments which ought to be preserved. England was once inhabited by barbarians – he would not call them our ancestors, but our predecessors – who stained themselves blue, ran about naked, and practised absurd, perhaps obscene, rites under the mistletoe. They had no arts, no literature; and when they found time hanging heavily on their hands, they set about piling up great barrows, and rings of stones. Were these the monuments which the Honourable Baronet was about to preserve?[52]

Not all Conservatives were of one mind, however. Mr Beresford-Hope, the Conservative MP for Cambridge University, intervened in support of Lubbock's bill, describing Hervey as '... the comic muse of the occasion' and suggesting that his '... posturing was helpful neither to his own reputation, nor to the success of the cause on behalf of which he was appearing'.[53]

The Attorney General, on behalf of the government, spoke against the bill, arguing that '... every clause of the bill was either itself an invasion of the rights of property, or depended for its efficacy upon some other clause which would interfere with such rights',[54] whilst Sir William Harcourt (Oxford City) commented that:

> It was wonderful to see how some Honourable Members sank all their ordinary principles whenever one of their peculiar hobbies was affected. Even the Honourable Member for Cambridge University (Mr Beresford-Hope), for an object connected with art and learning, became a Communist, put on the red cap, and said that private property was nothing to him.[55]

Lubbock was as surprised as anyone when the government was defeated on the issue by 187 to 165, and the bill referred to a select committee. As Beresford-Hope had suggested, Hervey's overblown histrionics had probably backfired. Lubbock recorded in his diary that 'We had no hope of winning, nor any idea how strong the feeling was in favour of the bill'.[56] Despite the optimism of an April evening, however, the bill was later withdrawn, when the government refused to allocate parliamentary time.[57]

In October, Lubbock turned his attention once again to education, and the primary school curriculum. Concerned at his lack of progress on this issue, despite a number of parliamentary interventions, he decided to approach it as he would a scientific problem, by gathering evidence to test his central hypothesis that the overemphasis on reading, writing, arithmetic and Classics, together with the lack of attention to science and modern languages, was harmful to children's education. He designed a questionnaire survey (a very early example of a research instrument which later became commonplace in the social sciences), which he sent out to all the head teachers of the major public schools in England, and also to a number of prominent scientists, including his X-Club colleagues, Huxley, Tyndall and Hooker.

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52 3Hansard 223, 885–6.
53 3Hansard 223, 889.
54 3Hansard 223, 899.
55 3Hansard 223, 900.
56 BL Add. 62681, 121.
57 3Hansard 225, 90–91.

The respondents were asked to state their ideal allocation hours per week to the following subjects, assuming a 38 hour scholastic week:

Classics and Ancient History
Modern Languages and History
Arithmetic and Mathematics
Science
Political Geography
Religion

There was some confusion among the head teachers as to whether they were being asked to state an ideal allocation of time, or give details of the actual arrangements within their schools. F.W. Walker of Manchester Grammar School attempted to do the latter,[58] prompting the following response from Lubbock:

> ... permit me to say that I did not at all ask for detail of your actual school arrangements ... but merely to ask your opinions as to the best mode of dividing the time ....

Other respondents questioned the omission of English from the list, or suggested separate 'scientific' and 'literary' streams in schools.[59] J.S. Philpott, of Bedford Grammar School, raised the question of the Oxford and Cambridge requirements for Greek, as an obstacle to change that he would otherwise have seen as desirable.[60]

Lubbock compiled these various responses[61] into an article,[62] summarizing the case for a broader curriculum. He was keen to emphasize that, whilst leading scientists were quite modest in the demands they made on the curriculum, educationalists themselves agreed on the need for reform:

> The general result ... proves that, while on the one hand scientific men are very far indeed from wishing to claim an exorbitant share of time for science, or to exclude classics from our system of education, those who are practically involved in school management are, with very few exceptions, of opinion that much more time and attention ought to be devoted to science and modern languages than is now the case.[63]

As Lubbock was at pains to emphasize, the leading men of science were indeed modest in their demands: Tyndall proposed eight hours per week for science, as compared with nine for Classics and ancient history,[64] Hooker and Huxley both proposed six hours as compared with ten.[65] It is difficult, however, not to see in this a classic X-Club fix, an apparently modest proposal behind which lay a more radical agenda for change.

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58 BL Add. 62685, 127–8.
59 BL Add. 62685, 106–7; 121–2.
60 BL Add. 62685, 133–8.
61 BL Add. 49644, 100–140; 62685, 91–181.
62 J. Lubbock 1879e.
63 Ibid., 53.
64 RI JT/1/T/1041.
65 BL Add. 49644, 138; 139.

Although Lubbock concluded with an emphasis on '... the direct utility of science' to business and commerce, urging parents to put pressure on schools to give it greater weight,[66] this was very much an afterthought. Like Huxley, Lubbock was more concerned with the moral and intellectual value of science as a training for the mind than with its practical application. It encouraged a '... a respect for observation and experiment rather than authority, … taught the value of evidence and instilled a belief in immutable moral and physical laws'.[67] As such, it was an essential part of a 'liberal' education of the mind and character,[68] encouraging freedom of thought anchored in disciplined observation. The X-Club was by no means alone in promoting this agenda, which was very much shared by liberal Anglican educationalists such as Frederick Farrar, Arthur Stanley, Benjamin Jowett and Matthew Arnold.[69]

The school curriculum that Lubbock was proposing does not look so very different from the late-twentieth-century national curriculum for schools, but Victorian Britain was not ready for it and, despite raising these issues on the floor of the House time and time again over many years, he would never succeed in implementing it. The government did eventually add history, geography and grammar to the list of compulsory subjects, but not science. Lubbock was particularly dismissive as to the value of grammar, pointing out that many 'savages' possessed a very complicated grammar, and used it 'most correctly', but that this did not alter their status as 'savages'.[70] He was similarly doubtful with regard to the history curriculum in Scottish schools which, by emphasizing past wars between Scotland and England, he felt could create bad feelings between the two countries.[71] For Lubbock, if education were to be the vehicle for social progress that he intended it to be, it had to be based on the Liberal view of the world that he took for granted, a view of the world illuminated by science, the idea of progress and the embrace of free trade.

In November 1875, Lubbock set off with the Grant-Duffs and Miss Florence Ainsworth, for a holiday in Italy. They took with them 17 artificial glass-sided ants' nests, which Lubbock aimed to fill in Capri. In the event, they never made it to Capri because of poor weather, and he filled them instead at Castellamare. They unexpectedly met with Schliemann in Pompeii, and returned via Rome, where Lubbock met with a number of his archaeological contacts.[72]

Lubbock published another paper on ants, bees and wasps[73] and, by the end of the year, his book *On British Wild Flowers, Considered in Relation to Insects* had been published.[74] The book looks at the relationships between plants and insects and, in particular, at the way in which '... the forms and colours of wild flowers' result from '... unconscious selection exercised by insects'.[75]

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66 J. Lubbock 1879e, 67.
67 P. White 2003, 77–8.
68 T.H. Huxley 1856.
69 See, for example, M. Arnold 1868.
70 J. Lubbock 1879h, 75–6.
71 Ibid., 77.
72 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, vol.1, 144–8.
73 J. Lubbock 1875a.
74 J. Lubbock 1875b.
75 Ibid., 2.

Because he was concerned here with an aspect of 'adaptive' rather than 'developmental' evolution, the intellectual framework is explicitly and faithfully Darwinian, drawing in particular on Darwin's work on the variation of animals and plants under domestication[76] to show how natural selection acts on the relationships between plants and insects to produce changes in the former.

Lubbock's rationalist, Darwinian approach, however, was not universally admired, and it certainly offended the romantic sensibility of John Ruskin, who wrote to Miss Susan Beever:

> I've been made so miserable by a paper of J. Lubbock's on flowers and insects, that I must come and whine to you. He says, and really as if he knew it, that insects, chiefly bees, entirely originate flowers; that all scent, colour, pretty form, is owing to bees; that flowers that insects don't take care of have no scent, colour, nor honey ... but the man really knows so much about it, and has tried so many pretty experiments, that he makes me miserable.[77]

Lubbock's first biographer commented that 'Ruskin's whole attitude towards the men of the Darwinian school might be described as that of a man who said that "all truth is beauty" opposed to men who said that "all beauty is truth".'[78] Lubbock and Ruskin were both inspired, throughout their lives, by a sense of wonder and amazement at the natural world but, whereas for Lubbock, this sense of wonder and amazement led him to seek scientific explanations for natural phenomena, for Ruskin these explanations undermined the wonder itself.

76 C. Darwin 1868, Chapter 17.

77 Cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 261–2.

78 Ibid., 262.

Chapter 9

The Embrace of Empire

When the 1876 parliamentary session opened in February, Lubbock attempted once again to introduce his Ancient Monuments Bill, but he was unlucky in the ballot for private member's bills, leaving him with little hope of success.

Lubbock continued his series of lectures on insects to the Linnaean Society, focussing on ants, and specifically on experiments designed to test their ability to communicate with one another, their sensory organs and their '... affection or regard for one another'. He described a number of experiments in which he had immersed ants in water and then left them close to the nests in order to see how other ants responded. In most cases they '... took no notice of their unfortunate brethren', and the exceptions to this were so few that 'Sir John said he was disposed to regard these as ants with individual feelings, which were by no means those common to the community'.[1] When, in March, Lubbock took his daughter, Amy, on holiday to Italy with the Grant-Duffs, he took with him more glass-sided nests and collected ants of 16 different species.[2] These nests, like those that he had filled the previous autumn, were of his own invention, with soil being held between two glass plates, allowing the activities and behaviour of the ant colony to be observed. They became known as 'Lubbock nests' and, although the term has largely disappeared, they are still widely in use today. Lubbock's sitting room at High Elms was becoming increasingly full of these nests, together with similar observational nests and hives for his bees and wasps. Some months after the holiday in Italy, Grant-Duff noted, on visiting High Elms:

> Lubbock's ants, which he collected when we were together at Castellamare in the winter, and at Spezia in the spring, are flourishing; and he showed us, among other things, the slave ants picking up their masters and carrying them in their mouth. The possession of slaves has had the same deteriorating influence upon them as it has elsewhere; but in these communities there have been no abolitionists, and the masters have even lost the instincts of feeding themselves.[3]

Grant-Duff, like Lubbock, was observing the ants through the prism of Liberal politics. The Liberal case against slavery had always depended on the premise that the institution of slavery harmed the slave-owners as much, if not more than, it harmed the slaves, distorting markets and encouraging idleness and sloth.

Lubbock regularly referred to these nests in his public lectures, and the fact that he was sharing his house with these insects became a source of some amusement in

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1 *The Times*, 18 February 1876.
2 BL Add. 62680, 25.
3 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, 207.

the media. Ellen Lubbock kept a diary, into which she pasted cuttings that amused her, among which are the following, which appear to come from an American magazine:

> Family Festivals
>
> Sir John Lubbock greatly enjoys his Bank Holidays, and so do his sisters, his cousins and his ants.
>
> Lady Lubbock is a real helpmeet to her husband, the distinguished naturalist. She is an accomplished amateur artist and, taking the keenest interest in his pursuits, she often assists him in illustrating his work. And so do his sisters, and his cousins, and his ants.[4]

Lubbock returned from his holiday and ant collecting in Italy to find a political storm brewing. He had earlier spoken out against Disraeli's foreign and imperial policy, which was threatening to provoke a war over the Suez Canal. His departure had been delayed by a debate on a related issue – Disraeli's proposal to make the Queen Empress of India.[5] Now the issue of the Queen's imperial title came up again. Hartington, as Liberal leader, made a half-hearted speech in opposition to the proposal, accusing the government of 'unnecessary haste', and of preventing Parliament from expressing a view. Lubbock went further, asking what time had been afforded '... to ascertain the feelings of the colonies towards it', and '... where was the evidence' that there was '... a strong feeling in India' in favour?[6]

Disraeli had committed himself to the cause of Empire in a speech at Crystal Palace in 1872, and it had formed a significant plank in his election platform two years later. Although many of the most prominent Liberals, notably Gladstone, Lowe and the Duke of Argyll, together with radicals such as John Bright, opposed Disraeli's imperialism vehemently, many in the party leadership, especially the Whig faction which, included Hartington, recognized its popularity and mounted only a token opposition.[7]

Disraeli's imperial ambitions entailed a significant increase in military expenditure. In keeping with his long-established concern for the public finances, this was the ground on which Lubbock chose to attack the government, reminding Disraeli of his own criticism of military expenditure some years previously:

> When our armaments were much less extensive than they now were, the present Prime Minister called them 'bloated armaments'; he should like to know what the Right Hon. Gentleman would call them now.

4 BL Add. 62690, 9; 26.
5 BL Add. 62681, 140–141.
6 3Hansard 228, 1768–74.
7 P. Durrans 1982.

'An enormous military expenditure', Lubbock insisted, was '... the great misfortune of Europe at the present moment', and he hoped that '... this country would refrain from setting a bad example in this respect'.[8]

In his opposition to Disraelian imperialism in 1876, Lubbock was allying himself with Gladstone, Lowe and the radical faction, rather than with the Whigs. Despite occasional clashes when the Liberals were in government, Lubbock and Lowe were personally close: Lowe represented London University in Parliament, and was a frequent house-guest at High Elms. Like Lubbock, Lowe considered Disraeli's policies to be financially profligate, lambasting the fact that a Liberal surplus of nearly £6,000,000 had been replaced by a Tory deficit of almost the same amount in under two years.[9]

In his robust support of Gladstone and Lowe against Disraeli's imperialism, Lubbock was keeping faith with the Liberalism that he had absorbed with his mother's milk; a Liberalism according to which peaceful commercial competition between nations was supposed to have replaced forever the barbarities of war. Cowper's poem on commerce had been copied out by Harriet Lubbock in 1852 in a commonplace book that was later handed down to Ellen:

> The band of commerce was designed,
> To associate all the branches of Mankind,
> And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
> Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
> Wise to promote whatever ends he means,
> God opens fruitful nature's various seams;
> Each climate needs what other climes produce
> And offers something to the general use;
> No land but listens to the common call,
> And in return receives supplies from all.
> This genial intercourse and mutual aid,
> Cheers what were else an universal shade.
> Calls Nature from her ivy-mottled den,
> And softens human creatures into men.[10]

A measure of the contempt that Lubbock had for Disraeli's imperial ambitions is suggested by a satirical magazine article which Ellen pasted into her diary, and which refers to Cairo donkey-boys naming their beasts after English ladies, bishops and statesmen, suggesting that:

> ... if Lord Beaconsfield [that is, Disraeli] is not sick of his 'spirited foreign policy' there is an opportunity for a stern exercise of his Lordship's imperial instincts towards the Cairo donkey-boys.[11]

8 3Hansard 229, 744–5.
9 R. Lowe 1878.
10 BL Add. 62687, 56.
11 BL Add. 62690, 25.

Disraeli, however, knew how to manipulate public opinion, and a large number of previously Liberal-minded people were being caught up in the enthusiasm for Empire. An editorial in *The Times* concluded that '... colonial, as well as foreign policy, has gradually settled down into a system which is independent of party tendencies'.[12] It was one of those moments in British history when axioms and paradigms were shifting, when what defined 'conservative' and 'progressive' changed, much as it later did under Lloyd George, Attlee and Thatcher. John Bright, the great nineteenth-century champion of Liberal free trade, of commercialism as opposed to militarism, was by this time an old man, and his philosophy was losing its appeal, especially when contrasted with the potential glories of empire which, in Disraeli's rhetoric, shone like the Koh-i-noor as a beacon for Britain's future.

Lubbock, however, played only a peripheral role in the definition of such grand visions of the future. Most of his parliamentary time was taken up with the issues of detail that were closer to his heart. In August 1876 he spoke in the House of Commons on the issue of vivisection, arguing against too tight a control on techniques which had, he argued, among other things, contributed to Harvey's understanding of the circulation of blood, and Hunter's study of the recovery of arteries after ligature, and which had the potential to contribute to the development of snakebite antidotes for use in India.[13] Here he was acting in his established role as a parliamentary spokesman for the scientific community, and he explicitly cited Darwin's authority. Lowe supported him, very possibly influenced by a conversation with Lubbock and Darwin during one of his many visits to High Elms.

The parliamentary session ended on 12 August, and Lubbock noted in his diary:

> I often ask myself whether it is worthwhile being in the House of Commons. This year I have spoken on marine insurance, on education in the elementary school, on the Education Bill, the Cruelty to Animals Bill, and passed the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill. It seems very little. However, one hopes a great deal.[14]

Certainly he had made no progress in relation to the soaring national debt, nor in relation to shop hours, nor ancient monuments: the issues that he cared most about. What he had been doing, quietly, uncontroversially and very successfully, was setting in place a framework of regulation within which the financial services sector could grow and develop. The Bankers' Books Evidence Bill was a simple measure, unopposed by the government, which allowed certified copies or extracts from bankers' records to be produced for scrutiny rather than handing over the originals.[15] Lubbock's business interests included insurance as well as banking, and his support for the government's Maritime Contracts Bill focussed around the prevention of excessive valuation, which was damaging this growth industry.[16]

A new foreign policy controversy was looming over the horizon. News was breaking of a series of massacres conducted against the predominantly Christian

12 Cited by P. Durrans 1982, 264.
13 3Hansard 231, 896–900.
14 BL Add. 62681, 156.
15 3Hansard 229, 1597–8.
16 3Hansard 227, 162–3.

Bulgarians by their Turkish rulers. During the summer and autumn of 1876, more than 500 meetings were organized the length and breadth of Britain, by the Eastern Question Association, led by Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Edward Burne-Jones and others, whipping up moral outrage against the Turks. Gladstone himself adopted an extreme anti-Turkish position, openly calling on Christian Russia to secure Bulgaria against the Turks. Disraeli, meanwhile, stood aloof from the moralizing, insisting that the interests of Britain and its Empire depended on support for Turkey as a buffer against Russian expansion. War broke out between Russia and Turkey, and Disraeli, encouraged by the Queen and concerned that Russia might seize control of the Bosphorus, came close to committing Britain to intervention on the Turkish side. Charles Darwin followed Gladstone, adding his name to the list of sponsors for the anti-Turkish demonstration in St James's Hall in London, and contributing £50 to the relief fund.[17]

Lubbock addressed a meeting on the subject in Maidstone on 11 September, and recorded in his diary that he 'Did not speak long.'[18] His position was ambiguous. He could not justify the massacre of an estimated 15,000 people, but considered the Russians to be as capable of such acts as were the Turks. His instinct was for non-intervention in the affairs of other countries. Nobody, in any case, was seriously proposing that Britain should intervene militarily on the Russian side and, in the absence of such a political will, Gladstone's posturing seemed absurd. Lubbock's opposition to Disraeli's imperialism had been based on a concern with the public finances, and on the view that it violated the principles of free trade: he did not share Gladstone's deeper seated moral objections. Like Karl Marx, Lubbock probably thought that Gladstone was '... a High Anglican putting his Christianity before his Liberalism, who preferred an Orthodox, Tsarist oppressor to a Turkish one'.[19] It was Lubbock's first serious dispute with Gladstone, and one that brought him more into line with the Whig majority in the Liberal Party.

Lubbock took a holiday in September, travelling around Brittany with his daughter, Amy, and the Grant-Duffs, and visiting the megalithic monuments of Carnac, Locmariaquer and Gavrinis. They met James Miln, a Scotsman who had carried out a number of important excavations in the area, and went on to visit the great megalith of Bagneux, near Saumur, which Lubbock attempted to purchase, but the owner would not hear of selling it.[20]

Back at High Elms in November, the Lubbocks entertained the Lowes for a weekend; Hooker, Huxley and the radical Liberal politician, John Bright joined them for dinner on the Saturday,[21] the Hookers, together with the editors, John Morley (the *Fortnightly Review*) and Walter Bagehot (*The Economist*) on the Sunday.

In December, Lubbock spent a few days in Cambridge with a Mr Hughes, '... to open a barrow in Six Mile Bottom'. Lubbock may have been the great synthesizer of nineteenth-century prehistoric archaeology, but excavation was never his strong

17 A. Desmond and J. Moore 1992, 625–6.
18 BL Add. 62681, 158.
19 A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 626.
20 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, 220.
21 BL Add. 62680, 27.

point. As with his excavation of a burial mound near Troy, the account of his work is brief, and was never published:

> A memorable day. We did not, I think, find the central interment, but we got two nice cups and a number of flakes.[22]

He ended the year reflecting on his ants, and the fact that he had collected around 15 species and more than 30 nests.

On 10 January 1877, Sir John Lubbock addressed the annual meeting of the Liberal Association in Maidstone. He spoke on '... the relations between the mother country, India, Ireland and the colonies', and he later commented that 'The Times had a nice leader on it'.[23] In his speech, he referred to the '... many pamphlets and speeches' that had been published and made with regard to the Eastern Question, and to the fact that '... in many of these, not only had the conduct of Government been seriously attacked, but the policy of England with reference to her colonies and foreign countries had been ... rather seriously questioned'. He stated his own belief that '... so far from that conduct having been characterised by any cynical or reckless spirit, there had been barely a year in which England had not been at large and continuous expense for the benefit of other countries'.[24]

The Times editorial expressed surprise at the tone he had taken:

> Sir John Lubbock's speech at Maidstone the other day upon our relationships to India and the colonies marks a somewhat curious reversal of opinion. Not very long ago, a considerable school of economical politicians was fond of denouncing our Colonial Empire as a kind of extravagant luxury ... they engaged in a kind of crusade to show that it was our first duty to contract, as far as possible, our engagements towards such Settlements and Dominions.[25]

Only the previous year, Lubbock had been a leading member of that 'school of economical politicians', now he appeared to have done a volte-face.

Lubbock followed up his speech with an article in the *Nineteenth Century*,[26] in which he wrote in the most glowing terms of Britain's imperial legacy:

> Indeed, when we look back on the whole history of the past, it is not, I think, too much to say that our country has exercised its great trust in a wise and Liberal spirit, and governed the Empire in a manner scarcely less glorious than the victories by which that Empire was won.[27]

Lubbock quantified what he saw as '... considerable expenditure incurred for the good of others' but, in marked contrast to his earlier attitude, this expenditure was seen as something to be celebrated rather than lamented – emphasizing, for example, the role

22 BL Add. 62680, 27.
23 BL Add. 62681, 167.
24 *The Times*, 11 January 1877, 6.
25 *The Times*, 13 January 1877, 9.
26 J. Lubbock 1877a; reprinted as J. Lubbock 1879f.
27 J. Lubbock 1877a, 49.

of the Royal Navy in the eradication of the African slave trade, and the favourable treatment of Native Americans in Canada, as compared with the America.[28]

There were probably many reasons for Lubbock's change of heart with regard to the Empire. First, it is clear that he was irritated by what he saw as the moralistic grandstanding of the Eastern Question Association: some had argued that Britain's whole foreign policy was driven by greed and rapacity, a point that Lubbock could hardly be expected to accept, given that he had spent years arguing that the Empire was a huge drain on the public purse. He was clearly uncomfortable being seen in the same camp as some of these stump orators, perhaps even, on this issue, at being in the same camp as Gladstone, whose moral high horse was very high indeed. Second, it is likely that he was influenced by the rise of a new and more populist vision of imperialism,[29] which was being embraced by an increasing number of senior figures within the Whig faction of the Liberal Party, including the Parliamentary leader, Lord Hartington, and even by some more radical figures such as Joseph Chamberlain (another politician who was increasingly on the guest list at High Elms). This vision of imperialism, as an altruistic, Liberal movement, was very much in keeping with the paternalistic sentiments hinted at by Lubbock in *The Origin of Civilisation*. Nor was Lubbock alone in being converted to this 'new' imperialism: Huxley wrote in the same year 'The family declare I am becoming a Jingo!', his daughter, Mady, stating that 'Pater is becoming quite a Conservative ... funny, Professor Huxley a "true blue."'[30] Lubbock and Huxley would have seen the moralizing of the street demagogues as motivated more by emotion than by reason, something that men of their class frequently decried as 'unmanly'.

At the beginning of the parliamentary session in February, Lubbock had tabled his Ancient Monuments Bill yet again.[31] When it received its second reading the following month, it was, once again, Lord Francis Hervey that led the attack on the bill, complaining that it did not seek to protect '... glorious old abbeys and historical castles', but rather '... the monuments of that barbarous and uncivilised race whom our forefathers took the trouble to expel from the country'.[32] Grant-Duff gave a spirited speech in Lubbock's support, culminating with a gently sarcastic rebuttal of Hervey's 'sneering' at the ancient Britons:

> ... when prehistoric archaeology is more developed, it will disclose that there is reason to believe that the Noble Lord's ancestor was a Celt who sailed to the Levant with a return expedition from the Cassiterides; that he settled in Philistia, found the climate suited him, lived there and prospered. In after times one of his descendants, nearer ancestor of the Noble Lord, married a daughter of the giant, which explains at once the Noble Lord's valour in rushing to the attack, and his frequent discomfiture.[33]

28 J. Lubbock 1879f, 15–22.
29 F. Harcourt 1985.
30 Cited by A. Desmond 1998, 493.
31 BL Add. 62681, 168.
32 3Hansard 232, 1528–31.
33 3Hansard 232, 1537.

Lubbock had been led to believe that the government intended to support the bill but, at the end of the debate, the Attorney General rose to speak against it.[34] A significant number of Conservatives voted with Lubbock, however, and the second reading was granted with a majority of 48. Lubbock published an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, setting out the rationale for his bill, and commenting of Lord Francis Hervey:

> If a Noble Lord and Member of Parliament, educated at our great seats of learning, entertains such opinions, how can we be surprised that farmers and agricultural labourers are ready to destroy these ancient remains, if they can thereby make a few shillings.[35]

Although the bill went on to pass successfully through the committee stage, Lubbock was yet again forced to withdraw it in August, due to lack of time for debate.[36]

On 10 March 1877, Gladstone and his wife came to spend the weekend at High Elms. Lyon Playfair joined them, another Liberal MP with strong scientific and educational interests, as did Huxley and the editor, John Morley. It was Gladstone's first meeting with Morley, who was later to become his biographer. On the Sunday they all walked together to Downe, and Lubbock introduced Gladstone to Darwin. Lubbock noted in his diary that Gladstone had '... made himself very pleasant', but added 'He is full of Turkish inquisition.' Lubbock, Playfair and Huxley doubtless lost no opportunity in trying to interest Gladstone in scientific matters, but they held little interest for him, theology and the Classics being the great passions that guided him. He did reportedly ask Darwin '... what evolution held in store', whether the future belonged to America as the Eastern civilization decayed? After mulling it over, doubtless somewhat perplexed, Darwin apparently ventured 'yes'.[37] Politically, Darwin was a great admirer of Gladstone (far more so than either Lubbock or Huxley) and, according to Morley, was dazzled that 'such a gentleman' should have visited him.[38]

At the end of April, Lubbock and Grant-Duff intervened in a parliamentary debate surrounding the establishment of commissions to look into the affairs of the University of Oxford and Cambridge. They proposed Hooker and Huxley as commissioners, but both were rejected, Lord Randolph Churchill describing Huxley as '... far too persuasive, enthusiastic and energetic a reformer to be entrusted with the task of applying' the '... enormous, if not awful' powers of the commission.[39] Although not a member of the X-Club himself, Grant-Duff had seemingly been recruited by Lubbock as one of a small band of pro-scientific parliamentarians (Lyon Playfair was another, as was Leonard Courtney) who could, at his bidding, be relied upon to support its agenda.

A few days later, the leaders of the Liberal Party learned of Gladstone's intention to table five resolutions on the Eastern Question. Whig grandees such as Lords

34 3Hansard 232, 1554–6.
35 J. Lubbock 1877b; reprinted as J. Lubbock 1879g, 168.
36 BL Add. 62680, 30.
37 Cited by A. Desmond & J. Moore 1992, 626.
38 Cited by R. Jenkins 1995, 409.
39 3Hansard 233, 1950–2010.

Hartington and Granville and George Goschen '... certainly disapproved', as did others, including Lubbock, Grant-Duff and Chamberlain. It was agreed to respond by 'putting the previous question',[40] a parliamentary device allowing a proposal to be set aside as 'inappropriate to the occasion' without expressing any opinion on its merits. Those who had hopes of high office, however, hesitated to come forward for a head-on confrontation with one of the biggest beasts in the Victorian political jungle, and the task, therefore, fell to Lubbock.

Lubbock met secretly with the Conservative Minister, Sir Stafford Northcote, and '... thought it best to tell him' the line he intended to take.[41] Following this meeting, Lubbock formally tabled his intention to 'put the previous question'. When Gladstone bowed to pressure and agreed to modify his resolutions to reflect '... the almost unanimous wish of the country … to maintain neutrality',[42] Hartington signalled to Lubbock to back down. The Conservatives, angered by Lubbock's turnaround, managed to drag the debate out over five days, and the motion that was finally put to the House was somewhat anodyne, expressing 'dissatisfaction and complaint' at Turkish conduct in Bulgaria, but not committing Britain to any action.[43]

Unable to resist an assault on the moral high ground Gladstone concluded the debate with a petulant and self-indulgent speech, which went well beyond the wording of the motion:

> If Russia should fail, her failure would be a disaster to Mankind; and the condition of the suffering races for whom we are supposed to have laboured will be worse than it was before. If she succeeds, and if her conduct be honourable, nay, even if it is but tolerably prudent, the performance of the work she has in hand will, notwithstanding all your jealousies, secure for herself an undying fame. When that work shall be accomplished, though it be not in the way and by the means I would have chosen, as an Englishman I shall hide my head, but as a man I shall rejoice. Nevertheless, to my latest day I will exclaim: would God that, in this crisis, the voice of the Nation had been suffered to prevail; would God that in this great, this holy deed, England had not been refused her share![44]

Lubbock must have listened to his speech with dismay. He nonetheless loyally voted with Gladstone, but the resolution was defeated by a majority of 131, and the Liberals were seen to be in disarray. Gladstone, long seen as an electoral asset, was becoming a liability, and Lubbock was finding it increasingly difficult to support him.

Early in 1878, Robert Lowe came to stay at High Elms, together with the radical Liberal politician, Sir Charles Dilke. They were joined by Tyndall, and by the naturalist, George Romanes. Tyndall brought with him a flame apparatus which was extremely sensitive to sound, and it was placed next to one of Lubbock's ants' nests to see whether, when the nest was disturbed, there was any indication of the ants communicating vocally with one another.[45] The flame showed no such effect, but it

40 BL Add. 62681, 180.
41 BL Add. 62681, 180.
42 3Hansard 234, 400.
43 3Hansard 234, 402.
44 3Hansard 234, 972.
45 Ibid.

is interesting to note how some of Britain's most influential politicians were being brought by Lubbock into direct contact with experimental science, and with some of the leading men of science of the day.

Lubbock had, yet again, introduced his Ancient Monuments Bill in January, but noted in his diary that he had done badly in the ballot, coming last but two out of more than 100 members.[46] A colleague helpfully proposed it, and it came up for second reading on 19 February, passing with a majority of eight votes (rather more predictably, it ran out of time later in the session). Lubbock was more successful with another piece of legislation that received its second reading on the same day, the Dental Practitioners' Bill, which introduced, for the first time, a system of regulation ensuring that only qualified and registered dentists could practise.[47] Prior to this anyone could practise as a dentist and people without any training, and with little education, toured the summer fairs pulling teeth and offering quack remedies.

Lubbock was surprised, in March 1878, to be made a trustee of the British Museum.[48] Such an advancement might have been expected under a Liberal government, but a letter of appointment from Disraeli[49] was certainly unexpected. Disraeli seems to have recognized the usefulness of reaching out to carefully selected Liberals, who might be persuaded to break ranks with their party under certain circumstances. Lubbock's political independence was well known, and he was therefore an obvious candidate for Disraeli's tactical largesse.

On 22 March, Lubbock brought forward another private member's bill, dealing with the issue of war at sea, and specifically the practices of blockading enemy ports and the seizure of merchant cargoes.[50] The Declaration of Paris, signed in 1856, had outlawed privateering and protected merchant cargoes, but it was honoured more in the breach than in the observance and some countries, notably America, had declined to ratify it. Lubbock sought to go further by outlawing altogether the capture of private property at sea. This, he considered, to be a matter of overwhelming national interest, given Britain's absolute dominance in terms of maritime trade (British cargoes accounted for around 44 per cent of global maritime trade). Nor was the issue a theoretical one: Lubbock noted that England had, during the Crimean War, imported 500,000 quarters of Russian grain.[51]

Responding to opponents of his proposal, Lubbock took an optimistic view of the future of warfare:

> Mr Bourke, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, last year said that it would be absurd that the merchant ships of an enemy should safely enter our ports in time of war. He did not, however, point out the nature of the absurdity, that foreign ships would only come to bring us something which we wanted ... .

46 BL Add. 62681, 209.
47 3Hansard 237, 1978–93.
48 BL Add. 62680, 33.
49 RS LUA L3.
50 BL Add. 62681, 214.
51 J. Lubbock 1879i, 136–9.

> Another objection is that of Lord Palmerston who, in 1862, said that if we adopted these principles we should almost 'reduce war to an exchange of diplomatic notes'. Well, and a good thing too. That would be a result which I, for one, should contemplate not only with equanimity, but with satisfaction. The tendency of history has been to render wars more humane, as civilisation progressed. The extension of the Declaration of Paris to all property afloat is merely a step in that direction.
>
> In the earliest wars, all enemies were killed, and even their corpses mutilated. In a further stage they were enslaved; after that they were ransomed; then milder principles began to be extended to property, first at land, subsequently at sea ... .[52]

He expressed the hope that England:

> ... would take the initiative in proposing to other countries the adoption of a step which would be a decided advance in civilisation, which was in harmony with the dictates and principles of our religion, which would do much to mitigate the sufferings of wars and, by increasing the security of commerce, to enhance the advantages, and therefore to promote the maintenance, of peace ... .[53]

Here, once again, Lubbock was allying himself with one of the most radical strands in English Liberal thought, with the tradition of Richard Cobden, John Bright and John Stuart Mill. He was keeping faith, also, with the sentiments expressed in Cowper's poem on commerce, which had inspired his mother, and was interpreting these sentiments in the light of the vision of social progress that he had himself set out in *The Origin of Civilisation*. The Whigs lined up with the Conservatives to oppose Lubbock; Grant-Duff and Leonard Courtney spoke in Lubbock's support, but Sir William Harcourt led the opposition from the Liberal benches, insisting that '... war was not war merely between governments, but between peoples ...' and that 'It was a universal principle of law that, when war broke out, all contracts between private subjects of the two belligerents were suspended ...'.[54] Lubbock had no option but to withdraw his bill – he almost certainly knew from the outset that he had no realistic prospect of passing such a radical measure by means of a private member's bill, and probably intended simply to air the issues.

In August, Ellen accompanied her husband on a visit to Dublin, for the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Lubbock lectured on ants on the 16th August, and noted that the hall was very crowded, with hundreds being turned away. Plans had been made for him to give his lecture outside, but rain prevented this. The following day, there was an excursion to Howth, where Oscar Wilde spoke, and a few days later, a trip to Tara, where James Fergusson recited poetry to Ellen. Before returning to England, Lubbock received an Honorary Doctorate from Trinity College Dublin.[55]

At the end of August a new guest was entertained at High Elms – Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone. Robert Lowe and his wife came also,

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52 Ibid., 143.
53 3Hansard 238, 1850.
54 3Hansard 238, 1858.
55 BL Add. 62680, 34.

and together they made the obligatory pilgrimage to Downe, introducing Bell to Darwin.[56] The main purpose of Bell's visit, however, was to conduct experiments with Lubbock's ants. Lubbock's earlier experiments with Tyndall's flame apparatus had been inconclusive as to whether ants did or did not communicate vocally with one another. Bell now attached a sensitive microphone to the underside of one of the nests, which was then disturbed. Ants could clearly be heard walking about, but no other sounds could be distinguished. Concluding finally that ants did not communicate by means of sound, and puzzled as to how they did communicate, Lubbock speculated that '... insects may possess a sense, or rather, perhaps, sensations, of which we can no more form an idea than we should have been able to conceive red or green if the human race had been blind ...'.[57]

In the autumn of 1878, Lubbock took his daughter Constance on a holiday with the Grant-Duffs, travelling through France to Marseille and on to Algiers. Lubbock and Grant-Duff had been much taken with Algiers the previous year, and had, between them, decided to buy a holiday home there. This was their first opportunity to arrange things in the property.[58] The villa was on a hillside overlooking the Mediterranean, the view framed by the blue mountains of the Grande Kabylie on the one side and the granite Cape Matjou on the other. Behind the building were grounds with almonds, Japanese medlar, vines, figs and olives, and a wood of Aleppo pines, rising to over 400 feet.[59]

Back in London in December, Lubbock made his first direct parliamentary intervention on the issue of British rule in Ireland. He was responding to two Irish MPs, Sullivan and O'Connor Power, who had been accusing Britain of '... cruelty and perfidy'.[60] Under the leadership of Charles Stewart Parnell, Irish supporters of Home Rule were becoming increasingly vocal within Parliament, and were deliberately obstructing domestic legislation, often keeping the House in session long into the night to make their voice heard. Their aim, quite literally, was to make Britain ungovernable until concessions were made on the issue of Home Rule. Lubbock both opposed them on the substantive issue (arguing that British rule in Ireland had been benign and beneficial) and objected to their tactics (which frequently obstructed his own bills, as well as giving him and others many sleepless nights).

During the course of 1878, Lubbock also published one scientific article.[61] It was on the colours of British caterpillars and, building on his earlier work on 'adaptive' as distinct from ' developmental' evolution, looked at patterning and colours that helped protect caterpillars from being eaten by birds.

In February 1879, the Lubbocks hosted one of their many weekend parties at High Elms. Present were the Grant-Duffs, the radical Liberal politician, Sir Charles Dilke, Francis Galton (Darwin's cousin, and a scientist in his own right) and a judge, Sir James Stephen (the uncle of Virginia Woolf). The conversation ranged over many

56 BL Add. 62681, 229.
57 J. Lubbock 1879j, 186.
58 BL Add. 62681, 230–235.
59 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, 2, 76–8.
60 BL Add. 62681, 236.
61 J. Lubbock 1878.

political topics, including the future of China and Japan, but Grant-Duff described how, after lunch:

> Sir J. Lubbock and Galton had contrived an arrangement with the microscope, by which they enabled us to look through the eye of a beetle, seeing a perfectly distinct image of the object at which we looked through each facet.[62]

As Randal Keynes[63] has noted:

> The picture is one to hold on to. One of the great houses of England at a time when the nation's confidence in itself was supreme. The great men gather, they are summoned to this fine room overlooking the park and Lubbock invites them to look at the World through a beetle's eye.

Lubbock and the Grant-Duffs made another visit to Algiers in April, and bought some more land.[64] Back in Parliament on his return, Lubbock attacked Disraeli for financial extravagance, contrasting this with the prudent record of the previous Liberal administration, and pointing out that national expenditure had risen from £74,000,000 in 1875 to £85,000,000, most of which was as a result of military expenditure.[65] Here he was returning to an old theme, but in a subtly different way – he was no longer arguing that that the money should not have been spent, simply that it should have been raised through taxation rather than borrowing, and the burden spread more fairly (as he saw it) between the different parts of the Empire. Earlier in the year he had made a very clear pro-imperial statement, regarding British policy in South Africa:

> ... the fact was that this country had spent its money and its blood there, because it honestly believed it was necessary to protect the lives and property of Englishmen. It might be an error of judgement: but he thoroughly believed that there was nothing to be ashamed of in our conduct there. We were, in fact, making heavy sacrifices, believing that we were doing our duty ... .[66]

Here was the fundamental U-turn; within the space of a few months Lubbock, like so many others on the Liberal side, had moved from being a radical opponent of imperialism to being a supporter of the broad policy who criticized only the detail of how it was to be financed.

In May 1879, Lubbock lectured on ants at the Royal Institution. His focus was on the analogies between ant and human societies, and he tentatively, but clearly applied to ants the evolutionary model of social development that he had previously articulated in relation to human societies:

> ... we find in the different species of ants different conditions of life, curiously answering to the earlier stages of human progress. For instance, some species, such as Formica fusca,

62 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, 116.
63 R. Keynes 2003.
64 BL Add. 62680, 36.
65 3Hansard 245, 1071–8.
66 3Hansard 243, 170.

> live principally on the produce of the chase … These ants probably retain the habits once common to all ants. They resemble the lower races of men, who subsist mainly by hunting ... they hunt singly, and their battles are single combats, like those of Homeric heroes ... .

Other species, such as *Lascius flavus*, he saw as representing '... a distinctly higher type of social life', showing 'more skill in architecture' and, having 'domesticated' aphids could be compared to the 'pastoral stage of human progress'. Harvesting ants he compared to 'agricultural nations'. As in *Prehistoric Times*, he explicitly used the Darwinian concept of natural selection:

> I am disposed to hazard the conjecture that they [the more advanced ants] will gradually exterminate the mere hunting species, just as savages disappear before more advanced races.

As with the beetle's eye view in his sitting room one February afternoon, Lubbock was keen to imagine the world as it must appear to an ant, and to inspire similar empathy in his listeners:

> They have their desires, their passions, even their caprices. The young are absolutely helpless. Their communities are sometimes so numerous, that perhaps London and Pekin are almost the only human cities that can compare with them ... one cannot but long to know more of their character, how the World appears to them, and to what extent they are conscious and reasonable beings ... .[67]

Intellectually, he reserved judgement on the last question, but his instinctive empathy runs through all his writings on the subject:

> When we see an ant hill, tenanted by thousands of industrious inhabitants, excavating chambers, forming tunnels, making roads, guarding their home, gathering food, feeding the young, tending their domestic animals, each one fulfilling its duties industriously, and without confusion, it is difficult altogether to deny them the gift of reason; and yet it is perhaps wiser to admit that the whole question is still a mystery.[68]

Never someone to focus exclusively on one subject, Lubbock turned his attention to an article on the history of money, tracing the evolution of tokens, coinage and banknotes across the world from the earliest shell currencies in China and the earliest trade contracts in Assyria down to the emergence of the banking system in which he was an active player. Banking itself he traced back to Babylon in the eighth century BC, referring to 'Egibi & Company' (known from clay tablets found at the site of Hillah in Iraq) as '... the earliest banking firm of which we have any account', although he doubted that they '... acted as bankers in our sense of the word'.[69]

In August, Sir John Lubbock and his daughter Constance travelled together to Sheffield for the British Association meeting. Ellen joined them later. Lubbock lectured

67 Ibid., 174.
68 Ibid., 190.
69 J. Lubbock 1879k, 793–4.

on fruits and seeds, and noted that he had a large audience and that afterwards he and Ellen had gone to see Thomas Bateman's collection of archaeological artefacts.[70]

Back at High Elms the following month, however, Ellen was taken ill. For two weeks, Sir John stayed with her almost every day, noting that she was very weak and was eating little.

Ellen died on 19 October 1879, the twenty-fourth anniversary of their engagement. Her passing is described in Sir John's diary:

> The last time I left her awake she smiled at me and pressed my hand. In the middle of the night they called me to say she was not so well. I went and found her in a sort of faint. Monty gave her some brandy and milk, and I fanned her, but she gradually passed away, so quietly that I really do not know when she died. I had hold of her dear hand ... .[71]

70 BL Add. 62680, 38.

71 BL Add. 62681, 12–13.

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Chapter 10

Weep not for Death

Weep not for Death!
Tis but a fever stilled,
A pain suppressed – a fear at rest,
A solemn hope fulfilled.
The moon-sheen on the slumbering deep
Is scarcely calmer,
Wherefore weep?

Weep not for Death!
The fount of tears is sealed:
Who knows how bright the inward light
To those closed eyes revealed?
Who knows what holy light may fill
The heart that seems so cold and still?

Weep ye for life!
For smiles that end in sighing,
For love whose guest hath never rest,
For the heart's hourly dying.
Weep not, when silence lacks the breath,
Life is the bitterness of Death.

The year before her death, Ellen Lubbock copied into her diary these lines from Menella Bute Smedley's poem, *To Music*.[1] Sir John copied them as the last entry in her commonplace book[2] a few weeks after her death, and later cited them in his book, *The Pleasures of Life*.

Ellen's health had been in decline for some years. She found it difficult to adjust to the demands of her husband's political career (their close friend, Joseph Hooker, had expressed concern for Ellen's health in a letter to Darwin[3] when John first stood for Parliament in 1865): certainly she seems not to have taken much delight in the company of his political friends and colleagues, and she played little part, for example, in his friendship with the Grant-Duffs. Although she shared her husband's Liberal outlook, copying into her diary a number of satirical references to the Conservative Party in general, and Disraeli in particular, power held little attraction for her. Science, on the other hand, fascinated her, and she was never happier than when in the company of John's fellow X-Clubbers and their wives. She certainly

1 BL Add. 62690, 40.
2 BL Add. 62687, 72.
3 CUL DAR102, 15–16.

shared John's friendship with Charles Darwin, and wrote the following poem for him in 1875:

From the insects to their friend, Charles Darwin
We saw that you were watching us,
We felt you were our friend,
And as we, in a general way,
Come to a fearful end,

It suddenly occurred to us
That we would have a look,
At what you said about us,
So we crawled upon your book.

We now have buzzed all over it,
And find, as we had feared,
Voracious plants could tell us
How our friends have disappeared.

(I never trusted Drosera,
Since I went there with a friend,
And saw its horrid tentacles
Beginning all to bend.

I flew away, but he was caught,
I saw him squeezed quite flat -
I don't go any more to plants
With habits such as that).

We are very much obliged to you,
For now, of course, we shan't
Be taken in and done for
By any clever plant.

But this has to be considered:
It isn't much we need,
But if we daren't go to any plant,
On what are we to feed?

We feel that you, in pointing out
The dangers that we run,
Have meant to do the kindest thing
To us that could be done.

Therefore to your abode in Down,[4]
With joyful buzz and hum,
From every quarter of the globe,

4 The name of the village was traditionally Down, but it was changed to Downe because the Post Office were concerned that mail might accidentally be sent to Northern Ireland. Local people who had always written Down continued, in many cases, to do so.

We insects all will come.

Great plates of honey you will set
For us upon your lawn;
We'll feast away and bless the day
That ever you were born.[5]

Darwin was among the first to express his condolences to Sir John after Ellen's death:

> I cannot help writing, though it is so soon, to tell you how deeply I sympathise with you in your dreadful loss. It is a terrible calamity. She used to show in every word and her expression how devotedly she loved you. Her image, so bright and beautiful, now rises clearly before my eyes, as I saw her first years ago in the Crystal Palace.[6]

Ellen had also been a close friend of Emma Darwin, and the two women had played an active role in the running of the village school at Downe, conspiring together to ensure that the schoolroom remained open on winter evenings as a reading room for local labourers, despite the opposition of the vicar.[7]

Ellen appears to have had a lively sense of humour, enjoying wordplay and riddles, which she exchanged with Emma Darwin, Ellen Busk and Henrietta Huxley, among others. She also shared her husband's belief in progress, making a list in her diary in 1877 of '... things which did not exist around fifty years ago ...',[8] a list which included railways, ocean steamers, postage stamps, policemen, revolvers, Mormonism and homeopathy, but also Bank Holidays!

This liveliness was greatly admired by many of Sir John's scientific friends, even though it sometimes led her to step outside the bounds that were supposed to constrain Victorian ladies. Thomas Archer Hirst, lamenting her death, wrote in his journal that she was:

> ... full of noble purpose, though often wayward and capricious ... In strength of will and determination of character she had few equals – none whatever at home. There was no one there strong enough even to temper or rather check her caprice.[9]

Bereft of such a spirit, which had illuminated High Elms for so many years, the great house must have seemed a lonely place indeed. Sir John Lubbock's daughters, Constance and Gertrude, took him to Algiers after the funeral hoping, but in vain, to provide some relief from the sense of desolation that he felt.

Back in London at the beginning of 1880, Lubbock tried to deal with his loss by throwing himself back into his political work. On 5 February he tabled the Ancient Monuments Bill yet again. Two weeks later he thought he had succeeded, and wrote:

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5 Copy in Lubbock family archive, original at Kew Gardens.
6 CUL DAR263, 68.
7 CUL DAR173.
8 BL Add. 62690, 25.
9 Journal of T.A. Hirst, typescript in archive of Royal Institution, f2091.

> At last I succeeded in getting my Ancient Monuments through after nine years of work. I am very curious to see what will happen to it in the Lords. How pleased dear Nelly would have been.[10]

His optimism, however, was premature. The bill did not complete its passage through the Lords because Parliament was dissolved on 8 March. Lubbock immediately returned to Maidstone and began canvassing for the general election.[11]

Nationally, the result was a Liberal landslide. Gladstone, in contrast to his performance six years previously, ran a highly populist campaign in Midlothian, denouncing Disraeli for his foreign adventurism and financial profligacy, and appealing to the masses against the privileged. The Conservative defeat probably owed as much to the economic recession which had set in since 1876–77 as to any political issue, but this could ' ... never have been guessed from Gladstone' s orations'.[12]

Given the national swing, it is more than a little surprising that Lubbock lost his seat in Maidstone to the Conservatives. Lubbock's first biographer, Horace Hutchinson, suggested that the Liberals may have been punished for property speculation by Lubbock's running mate, Sidney Waterlow.[13] Lubbock, however, had a simpler explanation for his and Waterlow's defeat, referring in his diary to '... ominous evidence of bribery on the other side' and lamenting that such corruption could have been '... so effective or so well organised'.[14]

Sir John Lubbock, however, was by this time a national figure significant enough for his defeat to be noted across the country. A telegram inviting him to stand for a seat in Hampshire arrived the following morning before breakfast; another, inviting him to stand in Nottinghamshire, was waiting for him when he arrived at the bank for work that morning and, before lunch, a third had arrived inviting him to contest south Lincolnshire.

As Vice Chancellor, Lubbock was the returning officer for the University of London constituency, and presided over the re-election of Robert Lowe. A fellow X-Clubber, George Busk, took Lubbock aside at the meeting, and told him of the rumour that Lowe was about to be elevated to the House of Lords, intimating that this would leave the field clear for Lubbock to become MP for the University. Lowe's elevation was announced a few weeks later.[15] Potential rivals for the Liberal candidacy included Sir William Gull, an eminent physician, and Sir George Jessel, an equally distinguished lawyer. An election was held to select the Liberal candidate using, almost uniquely (and almost certainly under Lubbock's previous influence as Vice Chancellor), the single transferable vote. Lubbock easily won the poll, with the figures being as follows:

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10 BL Add. 62682, 20.
11 BL Add. 62682, 21.
12 R. Jenkins 1995, 444.
13 H. Hutchinson 1914, 167.
14 BL Add. 62682, 22–3.
15 BL Add. 62682, 23–6.

	1 st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	4th preference
Goldsmid	33	241	358	191
Gull	49	130	201	419
Jessel	192	354	203	125
Lubbock	769	132	53	39

These figures are recorded in Lubbock's diary,[16] and he noted that, although it had been intended to publish them, he agreed not to do so, to in order to avoid embarrassment to his opponents. The Conservatives decided not to oppose Lubbock's election, so that the formal election showed him elected unopposed as MP for the University of London.

When Parliament reconvened in January 1881, Lubbock introduced the Ancient Monuments Bill again, together with two other pieces of legislation, one providing for the registration and accreditation of teachers, the other for the provision of free libraries,[17] but both ultimately fell victim to the Parliamentary guillotine.[18]

Grant-Duff and another political colleague, Arthur Balfour, spent a weekend at High Elms in January, walking to Downe to visit Darwin, who talked to them about his research on earthworms.[19] The following month Gladstone stayed there again, together with his wife Catherine and daughter Mary.[20] Except when he was entertaining, however, Lubbock stayed away from High Elms, preferring the London lodgings which he shared with Grant-Duff.[21]

Away from High Elms, politics must have been a welcome distraction, and the House of Commons was becoming increasingly animated. Gladstone, together with most of the leading figures in Parliament, was increasingly preoccupied with the issue of Irish Home Rule. The Parnellite campaign of parliamentary obstructionism had intensified to the point, at the beginning of February, of keeping MPs, including Lubbock, in the House for a 42 hour session, from Monday afternoon to Wednesday morning when the Speaker finally insisted on drawing matters to a close[22] and suspending more than 30 of the Irish MPs.[23]

Having been unlucky in the ballot for private member's bills, and realizing that he had little chance of progressing his Ancient Monuments Bill, Lubbock decided on another tactic, a resolution calling on the government to take steps to protect ancient monuments. The debate came up in the early hours of the morning of 12 March, after an acrimonious debate on Irish matters, and a weary Gladstone declined to accede to Lubbock's request, deliberately missing Lubbock's point (that his bill had, on several occasions, been clearly supported by the House) in his summing up:

16 BL Add. 62682, 26–7.
17 BL Add. 62682, 46.
18 3Hansard 258, 1598–1603.
19 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, 289.
20 BL Add. 62682, 49.
21 BL Add. 62682, 51, 76.
22 BL Add. 62682, 49.
23 M.E. Grant-Duff 1898, 293.

> My hon. Friend, it appears, is beginning to despair of success in these efforts, that is, to frame a plan to which he could obtain the acceptance of the House.[24]

Lubbock received back-handed compliments in the debate from a number of his Conservative opponents, including one who expressed sympathy '... for one who had so persistently and so good naturedly brought forward this subject year after year' and now '... sat like patience on a monument smiling with grief – the grief to which his motion always inevitably came'.[25]

Lubbock was disappointed with Gladstone's position, but pushed the matter to a vote, defeating the government by 79 to 56.[26] When he later pressed the government on the matter, Gladstone responded that he had '... neither mental strength nor time' to address this issue. Lubbock again pushed the matter to a vote, but this time was defeated.[27]

Gladstone's mind was preoccupied with foreign matters. Four years previously, Disraeli's government had annexed the Transvaal in South Africa. Whilst this was presented as a move to protect the Grigua, a local tribe, from oppression by the Boers, most saw it as an attempt to secure access to lucrative sources of diamonds, and possibly gold. Gladstone, in his Midlothian campaign of 1879 had lambasted Disraeli for his '... insane and immoral policy of annexation'.[28] On his election, however, Gladstone insisted that condemning the annexation did not presuppose withdrawal. This was the last straw for the Boers who, under the leadership of Paul Kruger, went on to launch a ferocious guerrilla war, culminating in a humiliating defeat for the British at Majuba Hill in February 1881 and a subsequent treaty that was little short of outright surrender.[29]

Within the British Parliament, opposition to the Transvaal annexation was led by MPs such as Leonard Courtney and John Bright, on the radical wing of the Liberal Party, and influenced by the Manchester School of political economy (with its doctrines of free trade and non-interference in the affairs of other countries). When in January, before the disaster of Majuba Hill, one of the radicals, P. Rylands, had condemned the annexation as '... impolitic and unjustifiable', Lubbock had come to the government's defence, insisting that, whilst annexation had been 'impolitic', British rule in the Transvaal was not unjust. Lubbock emphasized reports of Boer cruelty towards the natives, and even accused them of practising slavery in the Transvaal.[30] Lubbock doubtless believed these accounts to be true although, with hindsight, it is clear that many of them were exaggerated.[31]

Lubbock may have defended the position of Gladstone's government in power, but he certainly did not endorse the position on the Transvaal that Gladstone had adopted during the West Lothian campaign. Later in the year he pasted into one

24 3Hansard 259, 873.
25 3Hansard 259, 861.
26 BL Add. 62682, 52–3.
27 3Hansard 263, 534–89.
28 J. Lehmann 1985, 80.
29 S. Marks 1985, 362–365, J. Lehmann 1985.
30 3Hansard 257, 1109–28.
31 J. Lehmann 1985, 46.

of his notebooks the following lines, which had been sent to him by a friend (unnamed):[32]

Who caused the Boer Rebellion?
I, said the peoples' Willy,
With my speeches so silly,
I caused the Boer rebellion ...

Who advised surrender?
I, said surly Bright,
For I'd never, never fight,
I advised surrender ...

Who'll have to pay the piper?
I, says poor John Bull,
Whoever plays the fool,
I have to pay the piper.

Although the words are not Lubbock's, it is clear from the context that he approved of them, and indeed he forwarded them to the *Yorkshire Post*, in which they were reproduced in November 1881. They reveal a shift in Lubbock's allegiances. Gladstone was under attack both from the radicals (who believed that the annexation had always been wrong, and should have been abandoned following the Liberal victory) and from the Conservatives (who believed that it had been right, and should have been defended more robustly and competently). Lubbock had frequently made common cause with the radicals but he, along with many on the Whig wing of the Liberal Party, was on this issue aligning himself more closely with the Conservative position. By making foreign policy such a key electoral issue, Gladstone had opened a rift in his own party which threatened the stability of his administration, and alienated important elements of both the radical and Whig wings.

Lubbock's political mind, however, was often more exercised by the intricate details of the sometimes arcane policy issues that he cared most about, than with the great issues of state that dominated the newspaper headlines. The currency was one such issue and, in May 1881, he stood up in the House to oppose a motion from a Scottish MP, G. Anderson, to amend the banking laws by allowing banks to issue notes based on government securities rather than gold. This, Lubbock saw as an attempt to reintroduce the £1 note, threatening the gold standard and the economic stability of the country. Gold sovereigns, he believed, would be driven out of the country in favour of notes, there would then be a run on the banks and '… finally, a crash, very injurious to the interests of the commerce of the country'.[33]

Elsewhere, Lubbock had apparently described the gold standard as 'a scientific system', an assessment that was challenged by an Irish MP, W. Shaw Clark, who thought that '… nothing could be more unscientific than that system'.[34]

32 BL Add. 62688/62689, 21.
33 3Hansard 260, 1779–92.
34 3Hansard 260, 1791–2.

Anderson's bill was withdrawn. It may seem strange, in the modern context, that anyone should have thought, as Lubbock clearly did, that something so humble as a £1 note (or its modern equivalent, the £1 coin), or indeed (as Lubbock had previously argued) the postal order, could bring the economy crashing down, but he and his banking family had grown up in a world in which currency was not trusted in the way that it is today, and in which rumour and speculation could bring thousands of people to the bank counter, anxious to convert their notes into something of more tangible and intrinsic value. It also seems that Lubbock made no distinction between what we might think of as 'hard' and 'soft' sciences: the gold standard was 'scientific' in relation to the classical rules of political economy, which Lubbock assumed to be as secure a guide to economic policy and banking practice as biology and chemistry were to the conduct of surgery and medicine.

Ever since his election to Parliament in 1870, Lubbock had depended greatly on the friendship of the Grant-Duffs, and never more so than in the aftermath of Ellen's death. Mountstewart Grant-Duff was a career politician in a way that Lubbock never would be – he served as a junior minister in Gladstone's administration and, in June 1881, he was appointed as Governor of Madras. Lubbock noted in his diary on 30 June:

> Grant-Duff's appointment is announced. I shall miss them dreadfully. Little did I think on Friday as G-D and I looked at the comet, that it should be the last time that he and I would walk home from the House together.[35]

Before the Grant-Duffs sailed for India, they had spent time with Lubbock in York, for the annual meeting of the British Association, over which Lubbock presided. In his presidential address,[36] to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Association, he expressed his pleasure at the progress of science during that period, praising especially the work of Darwin and pointing out that, when the organization had been founded, it had been ' ... generally assumed that the human race suddenly appeared on the scene about 6000 years ago ...'. He referred to the discovery of Neptune, the inner ring of Saturn and the Martian moons, and also to the medical benefits of the work of Pasteur, Tyndall and Lister on bacteria, some of which, like the possibility of inoculation against infectious diseases, had yet to be realized. Nor could he resist a political aside:

> I scarcely think that, in the present state of the question, I can be accused of wandering into politics if I observe that the establishment of the doctrine of free trade as a scientific truth falls within the period under review.

Lubbock himself presented two papers at the meeting, the first botanical, looking at seed dispersal, and the second zoological, returning to some of his very earliest researches under Darwin's tutelage, and investigating the perception of colour among various 'lower animals', including *Daphnia* and bees.[37]

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35 BL Add. 62682, 68.

36 J. Lubbock 1881a.

37 J. Lubbock 1881b,c.

In October Gladstone and his wife paid another visit to High Elms. The editor, James Knowles, was also present, as was the social thinker, G.H. Lewes. Lubbock noted, however, that the Prime Minister '... seemed rather to avoid all interesting talk'.[38] After the weekend, Lubbock followed Gladstone to his own estate at Hawarden, on the English–North Welsh border. He recorded a long conversation with the Prime Minister about Homer, and about his British Association papers and noted that '... under other circumstances, I should have enjoyed it'.[39] Whether this is a reference to his ongoing desolation over Ellen's death, or to his increasing political distance from Gladstone, is unclear.

Lubbock's book on *Ants, Bees and Wasps*[40] was published at the beginning of 1882. In his preface he made it clear that his aim was not '... so much to describe the usual habits of these insects as to test their mental condition and powers of sense', and emphasized his experimental approach, pointing out that, whilst nobody previously had kept an ants' nest for more than a few months, he had, by this stage, had one under constant observation for more than seven years, enabling him to carry out experiments to investigate their social behaviour, their recognition of 'relatives' and 'friends' , their senses and intelligence, as well as those of bees and wasps (although he considered ants to have '... more power and flexibility of mind' and to be easier to observe, being '... calmer and less excitable'). There was, in fact, little in the book that was new – it simply brought together in one volume the various observations that Lubbock had presented in his lectures and scientific papers over the previous few years.[41] Publishing as a single book, however, allowed Lubbock to reach a much wider readership. Those who attended lectures at the Royal Institution were, in social terms, a fairly select group, whilst those who read papers in the *Journal of the Linnaean Society* were, like Lubbock himself, members of the scientific elite. A book such as *Ants, Bees and Wasps*, however, could sit on the shelves of a public library or a Working Men's Institute, accessible to the growing army of clerks, and to thousands of the first generation of literate artisans. It became a best-seller, running to its fifth edition within a few months. It was one of around 120 popular science titles published in the 'International Scientific Series' between 1871 and 1910 and issued simultaneously in the America and in five European countries, their '... familiar red covers ... a guarantee of sound material within'.[42] The publication also marked the culmination of Lubbock's career as an entomologist, during the course of which he had not only been the first person to observe ants' nests over long periods, keeping the colonies between two glass plates in a way which must now be familiar to every schoolchild, but was also the first to mark individual insects as a means of experimentation; to produce female ants in captivity and witness the foundation of a colony from the egg and to observe the eggs of aphids being carried by ants into

38 BL Add. 62682, 98.
39 BL Add. 62682, 101–2.
40 J. Lubbock 1882a.
41 J. Lubbock 1874a,b; 1875a,b; 1879j; 1881c.
42 R. Macleod 1980.

their nests in the winter, the young aphids then being taken out and placed on their proper food plants in the spring.[43]

Lubbock continued his studies of ants and published a paper later in the year, using experimental observation to draw conclusions about how ants recognize their 'friends' (ants from their own colonies) and distinguish them from intruders.[44]

Lubbock's well-publicized researches on insects gave *Punch* magazine the perfect excuse to publish an amusing cartoon image of Lubbock as a bee, complete with a poem:

Figure 5 'The banking busy bee' (Punch cartoon).

43 H. StJ. K. Donisthorpe 1924.

44 J. Lubbock 1882b.

Lubbock's daughter Constance married Sydney Buxton, an aspiring Liberal politician, in February 1882. Lubbock himself had been laid up for several weeks with gout, a condition that would give him increasing problems over the coming years, but he recovered in time to get to church and give her away.

Later that month, after consideration of the Queen's speech, Lubbock yet again moved a resolution calling on the government to introduce legislation for the protection of ancient monuments. This time, perhaps to Lubbock's surprise, the government assented and, although one Conservative MP, Charles Warton, sought to oppose the measure, he was unable even to find a seconder,[45] despite the House being full.

In April, Lubbock returned to one of his well-worn parliamentary themes, the importance of science in the primary school curriculum. Lubbock's views were opposed by some within the educational establishment – he himself quoted two members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate who had criticized his emphasis on science, one of them referring contemptuously to '… the notion of some 3,835,272 little Sandfords and Mertons walking about the highways and byways of Great Britain, listening to sermons on stones and spiders, or discussing petals and sepals with duly qualified Mr Barlows'.[46]

The Minister responsible, A.J. Mundella, sympathized with Lubbock's views, but pointed out that, with many children leaving school at the age of ten, the curriculum was necessarily restricted, and lamenting the fact that compulsory education could not be extended to the age of 13 or 14, as in France or Germany.

Lubbock was keen to use his wealth and business experience to help turn scientific discoveries into tangible emblems of progress. It was natural, therefore, that, having previously driven through the transition from candlelight to gas lighting at his bank, he should become an investor in Thomas Edison's electric lighting company. He had joined the board of the company in March and was actively involved in the negotiations over patents. The Holborn viaduct had been selected as one of the first London locations to be illuminated by electric lighting and, on 21 April, Sir John took his daughters, Constance and Gertrude, to see the illuminations switched on.[47] It should have been a moment of triumph, but it was overshadowed. The chill wind of death had blown another candle out.

Lubbock heard the news of Charles Darwin's death on 20 April, the day after it actually occurred. He noted in his diary that Darwin had been one of his '... kindest, best friends' for 30 years. Darwin's body was scarcely cold, however, when the X-Club network swung into operation to claim him as a national hero of science. On Friday 21 April, Lubbock (with the support of 20 MPs) petitioned the Dean of Westminster to secure a burial for Darwin in the Abbey.[48] By Monday he had received authorization, and on Wednesday 26 April the funeral took place, with Lubbock acting as a pall-bearer, along with fellow X-Clubbers: Huxley, Hooker and Spottiswoode, Alfred Russell Wallace, the Duke of Argyll and the US Ambassador,

45 BL Add. 62682, 115; 3Hansard 266, 885–8.
46 3Hansard 268, 598–625.
47 BL Add. 62682, 119–24.
48 BL Add. 62682, 124.

James Russell Lowell. Lubbock recorded that 'The gathering in the Abbey was very striking, and it seemed to me as if all the leaders of science were there'.[49] Lubbock said of his former mentor that he would '... rank with Bacon and Shakespeare, Newton and Young, among the very greatest men whom our country has ever produced'.[50]

Unlike Huxley and Lubbock, Darwin had never courted publicity. His own wish had been for a quiet burial in the churchyard at Downe, and the local carpenter, John Lewis, had prepared a simple coffin with this in mind. But Darwin's widow, Emma, and eldest son, William, had been persuaded by his nephew, Francis Galton, and by Spottiswoode (as President of the Royal Society) that an Abbey burial, close to Sir Charles Lyell and Sir John Herschell, was more appropriate, and Lewis's coffin was discarded in favour of a more elaborate one.[51] Darwin's family, however, were ambiguous about the arrangements, and keen not to be seen as having instigated them. On the day before the funeral, Lubbock had written to William Darwin with words of reassurance:

> I quite sympathise with your feeling, and personally I should greatly have preferred that your father should have rested in Down amongst us all. It is, I am sure, quite understood that the initiative was not taken by you. Still, from a national point of view, it is clearly right that he should be buried in the Abbey. I esteem it a great privilege to be allowed to accompany my dear master to the grave.[52]

Darwin's national status as a prince of science took precedence, as far as the X-Club was concerned, over his private wishes. Science had to be put before sentiment, and his funeral was an opportunity to '... celebrate both the man and the naturalistic, law-governed science that he, and each member of the Darwinian circle, had striven ... to establish'.[53] For Lubbock and Huxley, it was simply too good an opportunity to miss.

There was a double irony to the Abbey burial: not only was an intensely private man given a far more public ceremony and resting place than he would have wished for, but an avowed agnostic was given the most elaborate of Christian rites. As Darwin's coffin was carried down the aisle, the Abbey rang to the words of the Anglican funeral service: 'I am the Resurrection and the Light ... he who believes in me, though he dies, shall have eternal life ...'. As Lubbock and Huxley well knew, Darwin had believed no such thing.

Two years before Darwin's death, Marian Evans (George Eliot) had breathed her last. Herbert Spencer (who seems, much earlier in his life, to have had some form of romantic involvement with her) had petitioned for an Abbey burial for her, which Huxley had opposed. On 27 December 1880, Huxley had written to Spencer, stating that, since Westminster Abbey was a Christian church, and the Dean of the Abbey a Christian priest, he felt unable to ask the Dean to read over her body '… a service

49 Ibid., 125.
50 J. Lubbock 1883, 44.
51 J. Browne 2002, 495–7.
52 Cited by F. Darwin [1892] 1958, 349.
53 J. Browne 2002, 496.

not one solitary sentence of which she would have accepted for truth while she was alive'.[54]

That Huxley could sit beside Lubbock, apparently without embarrassment, and hear the same words being read over the body of Charles Darwin is probably due, in part, to a willingness simply to suspend such principles in pursuit of what he saw as a higher aim (the public celebration of science through the lionization of Darwin), and in part to Darwin's blameless private life (as Huxley saw it), in contrast to George Elliot's (despite his rejection of Christian dogma, Huxley clung fast to a conservative moral position, especially in relation to marriage).

Death intervened yet again in May 1882, this time in a more violent and brutal way, and with serious political consequences. The violence of the Fenian uprising in Ireland was reaching a peak and, within 24 hours of his arrival in Dublin, Gladstone's Chief Secretary in Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish, was hacked to death in Phoenix Park. Cavendish was well known to Lubbock: they had been allies in protecting Hooker's position at Kew, and had dined together only a few days before Cavendish's departure.[55] Lubbock described the murder as 'shocking' and it may have hardened his attitude to Irish politics. For the moment, however, he remained loyal to Gladstone, hoping to influence his party from within, as he had made clear in a speech that he had given to the Forest Hill Liberal Association a month earlier:

> It was most important that the Liberal Party should be unanimous in support of Mr Gladstone, for it could not be denied that this country is face to face with a considerable danger and difficulty in Ireland ... no true patriot could fail to support a Government that had done its best to promote religious equality, the institution of reforms and the establishment of free trade, together with a national system of education.[56]

The limits to this loyalty first became apparent in July when Lubbock, defying party whips but with the support of the Conservatives, tried unsuccessfully to amend the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Bill to limit the protection given to Irish tenant farmers.[57]

Lubbock's main parliamentary concerns, however, as the 1881–82 session drew towards its close, were electric lighting and ancient monuments. Pecuniary interest was not, in the Victorian context, an automatic barrier to parliamentary action. Just as Lubbock often acted as a parliamentary spokesman for the banking community, his involvement with the Edison Company made him ideally qualified to manage the passage of the Electric Lighting Bill, from which that company stood to make considerable profits as municipal authorities across the country replaced gas lighting with the electric lighting that Edison supplied.

Having previously given evidence (wearing his Edison hat) to the select committee, Lubbock (wearing his legislator's hat) now waxed lyrical on the floor of the House about the benefits of electric lighting:

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54 Cited by L. Huxley 1903, 2, 18.

55 BL Add. 62682, 127.

56 *The Times*, 6 April 1882.

57 3Hansard 272, 357–74.

> One of the Metropolitan theatres was lighted with the electric light, and a very great improvement it was. It was more beautiful, it was a light that did not vitiate the atmosphere, and did not raise the temperature – a great gain in buildings or workshops where a number of people were gathered together. The action of gas, as was well known, was to consume oxygen in the air, and to raise the temperature, having the effect of making the air unwholesome.[58]

This is Lubbock the politician, the man of science and the man of business speaking with a single clear voice, confident in his belief that, in all three spheres, he was contributing to the inexorable forward march of progress.

In a subsequent debate he was challenged by a Welsh MP, Sir John Jenkins, who argued that the bill would '... run the risk of creating monopolies, such as those already given to the gas companies'.[59] The potential monopoly that Jenkins had in mind was Edison. The House of Lords had proposed an amendment to the bill, giving lighting companies 21 year contracts rather than the originally proposed 15 years. Jenkins suggested that Edison had been alone in lobbying for this amendment –Lubbock insisted that two other companies (Swan and Hammond) had also objected. Shortly afterwards, Lubbock helped to negotiate a merger between Edison and Swan.

The Ancient Monuments Bill finally passed into law in August 1882. Lubbock recorded in his diary for 15 August that:

> The Ancient Monuments Bill got through Committee and passed … I have had a satisfactory session ... now, after 11 years, a bill is really through which, if not all that could be wished, is a great step in the right direction.[60]

The 1882 Ancient Monuments Act was not technically Lubbock's bill at all, it was a government initiative, but it was widely recognized as having come about through his tenacity and persistence (he had made, in total, eight attempts to legislate on the subject between 1873 and 1880). It established a National Monuments Commission, which would maintain a list or 'schedule' of monuments of national importance, and which would have the right to take these into 'guardianship' (in effect, to purchase them with public funds) with the owner's consent (Lubbock had wanted to include a right of compulsory purchase but, in the government's hands, the bill was watered down). It also created the post of Inspector of Ancient Monuments, responsible for administering the law, and this post went to Lubbock's archaeological colleague, the retired General Augustus Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers. Pitt-Rivers held the post until his death in 1910, by which time 43 monuments had been taken into guardianship.[61]

Lubbock's 'satisfactory session' (a typical understatement), the fulfilment of his long-standing ambition to legislate for the protection of ancient monuments and his success in piloting through the Electric Lighting Bill may have provided some consolation in the face of the tremendous sense of loss that he had felt, first with the death of his wife, then the departure to India of the Grant-Duffs, the friends on

58 3Hansard 272, 618–20.
59 3Hansard 273, 1780–82.
60 BL Add. 62682, 141–2.
61 T. Champion 1996.

whom he came most strongly to depend, and finally the death of his great friend and mentor, Charles Darwin. The Ancient Monuments Bill may have been a particular consolation because it seems to have been a cause which Ellen Lubbock cared deeply about. With its passing, Sir John Lubbock seems to have emerged from what seems, in emotional terms, to have been one of the most difficult periods of his life.

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Chapter 11

Remarriage

Returning from a holiday in Switzerland in the autumn of 1882, Sir John Lubbock seems to have been more comfortable than he had been since Ellen's death spending time at High Elms. The Huxleys, together with John Morley and Michael Foster came for a weekend in October, and Lubbock took Huxley for a walk to Downe, to call on Emma Darwin. Lubbock noted that Morley regretted his earlier support for Gladstone's Irish policy, and that he now seemed '... very anti-Gladstonian'.[1]

For his part, Lubbock remained on friendly terms with Gladstone. They dined together on 26 October, Gladstone confiding in him that putting together his current government had been one of the most difficult decisions he had ever had to take.[2] Politically, however, the distance between the two men was growing. They clashed in October on a matter of parliamentary procedure – it appears to have been a noisy debate, and Lubbock recorded in his diary that 'I do not like speaking to Conservative cheers'.[3]

Other weekend guests at High Elms[4] in the last months of 1882 included the Busks and Hoovers in November and, somewhat improbably, Adam Sedgwick in December. Sedgwick had sided with Richard Owen in the evolution debate that followed the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. He was thus in the opposite camp to the X-Club. Lubbock had had little contact with him in the intervening years, but met him in Cambridge in 1882, and seems to have seen this as an appropriate moment for reconciliation. It was a fairly characteristic gesture for Lubbock to make: unlike Huxley, he did not like scientific or political conflicts to spill over into personal animosity.

From the beginning of 1883,[5] Lubbock's scientific work focussed increasingly on the question of animal behaviour. In January he was conducting research on the behaviour of *Daphnia* in relation to light, returning to a theme that he had explored in the past but, in February, he acquired a puppy, and this seems to have been the cue for an interest in vertebrate behaviour, an entirely new direction in his research. He began 'working with' the puppy almost as soon as it arrived, hiding its meals in a saucer beneath a card on which was written the word 'food' and placing it beside an identical saucer covered by a blank piece of card. It was the first of a number of experiments intended to assess the intelligence and cognitive development of the dog.

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1 BL Add. 62682, 152.
2 Ibid., 153.
3 BL Add. 62682, 155.
4 High Elms Visitors' Book, Lubbock Family Archive.
5 BL Add. 62683, 3.

In March, however, he was drawn back to an earlier theme, that of the protection of ancient monuments; specifically in fact, the most iconic of English prehistoric monuments, Stonehenge. He had, in January, received a letter from the Reverend A.C. Smith of the Wiltshire Archaeological Society, advising him of a proposal by the London & South-Western Railway to put a new line close to Stonehenge, cutting through the cursus.[6] The cursus is a prehistoric linear feature, formed of parallel banks and ditches, which runs between Stonehenge itself and the banks of the Avon. Its function is uncertain (it is often assumed to be a ceremonial avenue) and most of it is not easily visible on the ground, but it is clearly an important and integral part of the Neolithic landscape around Stonehenge. Under the Railways Acts, proposals for new railway routes required parliamentary approval. As an MP, Lubbock was therefore able to put down a motion of opposition to the LSWR Bill, which could have blocked the scheme. When the matter came up in Parliament in March, Lubbock referred not only to the destruction of the cursus, but also to 'the whole aspect of this solemn and mysterious scene' being 'irreparably destroyed'.[7] The railway line was never built, but the case made by Lubbock is interesting. Most nineteenth-century approaches to monument conservation focussed on protecting the monuments themselves, and many authorities would have afforded protection only to the visible stone structure itself. That Lubbock should have insisted on including also the less visible avenue and cursus is, perhaps, unsurprising given his archaeological background, but his concern with the landscape setting of the monument seems strikingly modern to anyone who has followed the twentieth- and twenty-first century debates concerning the presentation and management of Stonehenge. Sufficiently pragmatic to settle for what he could achieve, he never attempted to include the protection of the landscape in any of his Ancient Monuments Bills, but his conservationist vision clearly embraced such contexts, and he was prepared to use his power as a legislator, on a case-by-case basis, to ensure their protection as far as possible.

Apart from this intervention, Lubbock's parliamentary activities in 1883 centred around two bills: the first, which he brought on behalf of the Institute of Bankers, on bankruptcy procedures (intended to give creditors greater confidence in his industry); and the second, which he brought on behalf of the Society of Arts, on the regulation of patents (intended to incentivize invention by improving the protection given to intellectual property).[8] Neither made it onto the statute book, although much of the bankruptcy legislation was incorporated into a government bill, which did become law. Lubbock also tried, unsuccessfully, to press his views once again on the reform of the primary school curriculum and to argue for the establishment of a separate Ministry of Education.[9]

Death intervened yet again in July, when typhoid claimed the life of William Spottiswoode, dying in office as President of the Royal Society, the first of the nine members of the X-Club to die. It was George Busk, on this occasion, who argued for a burial in Westminster Abbey (which Spottiswoode duly received) – Hooker and

6 Cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 194.
7 3Hansard 276, 1717–8.
8 BL Add. 62683, 3–10.
9 3Hansard 282, 627–58.

Spencer were opposed and, in contrast to Darwin's funeral, this threatened to tear the club apart.[10] Lubbock presumably supported the Abbey burial, since he, alone of the X-Club members, acted as a pall-bearer, together with political heavyweights including Lord Salisbury, and the industrialists Siemens and Armstrong.[11]

Spottiswoode's death left a vacancy for the Presidency of the Royal Society, and Lubbock's own name was in contention, although he probably never knew this. It was Hooker, prior to Spottiswoode's death, who had suggested Lubbock as a possible candidate but, on the eve of the contested Abbey funeral, it was also Hooker who wrote to Huxley, insisting that he (Huxley) was the man for the job.[12] Despite being on the verge of a nervous breakdown, brought on by overwork, and by the pressures of caring for a depressive daughter, Huxley accepted, and was duly elected. Clearly Busk and Lubbock had displeased Hooker and Huxley over the line that they had taken on Spottiswoode's funeral. For Hooker and Huxley, Darwin's funeral had been a one-off gesture, an exception to all normal rules, a unique statement (as they saw it) of the triumph of science over superstition. Spottiswoode had been a friend and an ally to Hooker, as much as he had been to Busk and Lubbock, but his presence in the Abbey undermined the uniqueness of the grand statement.

Lubbock may have been out of favour, for the moment, with Hooker and Huxley, but he was increasingly in favour with the public, continually in demand as a figurehead for campaigns and institutions, as someone to 'do the honours' when a campaign was launched or a college or library opened. In February he had become President of the London Working Men's College and in June he was feted in Cambridge with the award of an honorary doctorate.[13] The following month his campaign in favour of the establishment of free libraries was celebrated when he was asked to open the new public library in Oldham.

Despite his celebrity status, and the frenetic pace of his activities, Lubbock was still grieving deeply over Ellen's death. In April, having gone down to High Elms for a weekend with his children, he commented 'It always makes me feel sad to go there, the place is so full of memories, sad ones ...'.[14]

In early November, Lubbock's weekend guests at High Elms included the Duke and Duchess of Marino. Lubbock recorded that:

> The Duchess kindly pressed me to marry again, and even suggested a wife![15]

The identity of the wife suggested by the Duchess is not recorded, but the following weekend Lubbock and his daughter Gertrude went to stay with his archaeological colleague (and, by this time, the Inspector of Ancient Monuments, responsible for enforcing Lubbock's Act), General Pitt-Rivers. Lubbock's diary records a number of

10 A. Desmond 1988, 524–5.
11 BL Add. 62683, 10.
12 ICL HP 3, 272.
13 BL Add. 62683, 8.
14 Ibid., 5.
15 Ibid., 16.

walks and talks with the General's daughter, Alice Fox-Pitt, whom he had first met as a teenager some years earlier.[16]

Alice's parents appear to have been tyrannical even by Victorian standards and, according to her grand-daughter, she ' ... remembered with bitterness a hard and unhappy childhood'.[17] It is not difficult to understand why she enjoyed the gentler courtesies of the man who, though old enough to be her father, was becoming her suitor.

In the months that followed, Alice became an increasingly frequent visitor to High Elms[18] and became increasingly close to Sir John.[19] He finally proposed to her on Easter Saturday, and she accepted.

Sir John Lubbock was 49, Alice Fox-Pitt 22, four years younger than Lubbock's daughter, Amy. Such an age difference was not remarkable by Victorian standards: it was common for eligible widowers to contract marriages with much younger women and, in society terms, widowers did not come much more eligible than Sir John Lubbock.

Sir John and Lady Alice Lubbock were married on 17 May 1884, at St Peter's Church in Eaton Square, London, the same church in which, almost 50 years earlier, the infant John had been christened. The guests included the great and the good of both the political and scientific worlds – the Playfairs, Goschens, Mundellas, Birkbecks, Hookers, Sir John and Lady Hogg and others. Returning from a honeymoon in France and Switzerland,[20] Sir John organized parties with fireworks at Green Street Green and at Downe, inviting the villagers to join in the wedding celebrations. He even invited the clerks from his bank to come up to High Elms in order that they could meet his new bride.[21]

Alice, however, did not necessarily make the best of impressions with her husband's scientific friends, most of whom had been deeply fond of Ellen Lubbock. Thomas Archer Hirst noted in October that:

> I went to High Elms and saw the successor to the Lady Lubbock whom I so loved and respected. I will enter into no comparisons or reflections.[22]

Shiela Grant Duff later recorded that Alice:

> ... had no interest whatsoever in anthropology or any other branch of science ... .[23]

Alice's parents appear to have had few social graces to pass on, and she seems not, at least at this point in her life, to have enjoyed entertaining. She was happiest when alone with her husband in his rented London residence, rather than at High Elms,

16 S. Grant-Duff 1982, 16.
17 Ibid., 16.
18 BL Add. 62683, 17–19.
19 BL Add. 62691.
20 BL Add. 62683, 28–9.
21 Ibid., 32–33.
22 Royal Institution, Hirst Papers, HiJ f.2155.
23 S. Grant-Duff 1982, 15.

in the shadow of her stepdaughters and at the centre of a bustling and sophisticated social world.

She was not disappointed, therefore, that Sir John's political commitments kept them in London for much of the time. Throughout their courtship he had been dashing to and fro, days in the woods or at the British Museum with Alice interspersed with business meetings and parliamentary debates, and this naturally continued after their marriage.

Lubbock's overriding political priority in 1884 was the campaign for proportional representation, into which he threw himself with tremendous enthusiasm. He had long supported proportional representation, and it was an idea that had solid radical credentials: as early as the 1860s, Liberal intellectuals such as John Stuart Mill held it up as an antidote to crude populism, believing that it would ensure the election of '... intelligent men who … would not win favour with majority opinion in a large territorial constituency'.[24] The 'intelligent men' that Mill and others had in mind were those educated in the 'scientific' principles of political economy, and the populism that they feared was Tory populism, specifically the protectionist tendency, which they saw as sacrificing long-term gain for the sake of alleviating short-term pain.

It took on a particular importance in 1884, however, because Gladstone's government began the year by introducing a radical Reform Bill: a bill that would extend to the counties and to Ireland the household and lodger franchise already existing in the urban boroughs; that would increase the electorate by around two million; that would give the vote, for the first time ever, to coal miners; and increase the Irish electorate by 230 per cent, the new voters almost all Catholic and, at least potentially, Nationalist.[25] The measure was opposed not only by the Conservatives, but also by Whig Liberals such as George Goschen and Robert Lowe, who feared that it would benefit the radicals at the expense of more moderate Liberalism.[26]

Sir John Lubbock believed, as ever, that science held the solution, providing a compromise that would meet Gladstone's reforming aspirations at the same time as addressing the concerns of the Whigs, and even those of the Conservatives. That solution was proportional representation.

With his brother Beaumont, Lubbock established the Proportional Representation Society. The first meeting was a small gathering at Beaumont's home,[27] but a few months later, with Lubbock as its first President, the Society could claim the support of 170 MPs, 90 of whom were Liberals, but representing all parties with the sole exception of the Irish Home Rulers.[28] In the parliamentary debate on the Representation of the People Act, Lubbock had raised the issue, pointing out the anomalies that could arise from 'first past the post' elections.[29]

The campaign began in earnest in April, with articles by Lubbock and H.O. Arnold-Foster published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Nineteenth Century*,

24 J.B. Parry 1993, 283.
25 R. Jenkins 1995, 488.
26 T. Jenkins 1988.
27 BL Add. 62683, 22–3.
28 J. Lubbock & H.O. Arnold-Foster 1884, 1.
29 3Hansard 285, 450.

in which proportional representation was presented as a '... means by which we can secure for the majority the power which is their right and, at the same time, preserve for the minority that fair hearing to which they are justly entitled'.[30] Since opponents had always claimed that proportional representation was too complex to be understood by voters, Arnold-Foster successfully designed an experiment, showing that children under the age of 14 could understand it. The articles rehearsed many of the arguments advanced in favour of proportional representation today, but it also set out another, more specific argument in its favour – the case of Ireland:

> To adopt a system by which we should exclude from the representation of Ireland one third of electors, and give the whole power to two thirds, would, under any circumstances, be unjust: but to do so when the one third comprise those who are moderate and loyal, while the two thirds are led by men not only opposed to the Union, but in many cases animated by a bitter and extraordinary hatred of this country, would be an act of political madness.[31]

Lubbock's old friend, Grant-Duff, wrote from India to give his support, expressing the fear that, by Christmas, the country could be '... nearer civil bloodshed than we have been since 1832'.[32] Joseph Chamberlain, on the other hand, ever distrustful of Lubbock's Whig tendencies, wrote to remonstrate with him for seeking to emasculate the reforms:

> Your proposals seem to me to proceed from a settled distrust of the people. You want to trammel their decisions by checks and devices which, if they were adopted, would certainly be swept away by some tide of popular passion ... I have always thought that the most open Tory opposition was less dangerous to Liberal progress than the theories to which you have given your influential support.[33]

Lubbock, meanwhile, was marshalling the 'scientific' case for proportional representation. Objections had been raised that the element of chance could affect the outcome of a proportional election: Lubbock consulted a leading statistician to establish the probability of chance affecting an election by more than 100 votes in a constituency of 25,000 – and got the answer he had hoped for – 44,000 to one against.[34] When he wanted to clarify details of how the system would work in practice, he consulted the Belgian, Professor V. d'Hondt, who had designed the proportional system for elections to his own country's parliament.[35]

And he kept the public pressure up through a letter writing campaign in *The Times*. Chamberlain had objected in a speech that proportional representation would give too much power to minorities. Lubbock countered that only proportional representation could secure effective majority rule:

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30 J. Lubbock & H.O. Arnold-Foster 1884, 1.
31 Ibid., 3.
32 BL Add. 49647, 96–7.
33 BL Add. 49647, 90–91.
34 BL Add. 49648, 30832.
35 BL Add. 49647, 100.

> Suppose a city containing 60,000 electors, of whom 35,000 are Liberals and 25,000 Conservatives, is divided into three wards, each containing 20,000 electors and returning two members. The division might be, and very likely would be, as follows:
>
> | | 1st Division | 2nd Division | 3rd Division |
> |---|---|---|---|
> | Liberals | 17,000 | 9,000 | 9,000 |
> | Conservatives | 3,000 | 11,000 | 11,000 |
> | | 20,000 | 20,000 | 20,000 |
>
> And thus, though in a minority, the Conservatives would actually return four members out of six. This is no mere hypothetical illustration, but actually happened in Switzerland, and led to the revolution of 1846. On the other hand, if the constituency is left undivided, we may have such a state of things as that which has led to the recent disturbances in Brussels where, though the numbers were not very unequal at the last election, being 27,000 Catholics and 22,000 Liberals, the Catholics secured 50 seats out of 52.[36]

Lubbock raised the issue in the House in October, but Gladstone refused to include any consideration of the voting system in the Reform Bill.[37]

Undeterred, Lubbock initiated a national roadshow with public meetings across the country. The first was in Suffolk on 15 December, the second in Manchester two days later. The meetings carried on into the new year at a hectic pace: Leicester on 13 January; Nottingham on 14; Greenwich on 20; Lambeth on 23; Islington on 27; St Pancras on 29; Liverpool on 5 February. The roadshow was halted, briefly, the following day, when Lubbock received a telegram from Gertrude, informing him that Alice had given birth to a little girl, Ursula. Naturally, he caught the first train down, but he was back on the campaign trail the following Wednesday: Tower Hamlets on 11 February; Norwich on 16; Oxford on 18. In each case a mock election was held to demonstrate the simplicity of the system, and in most cases a resolution in favour of proportional representation was subsequently passed, with few dissenters.[38]

Lubbock and his allies may have won the argument for proportional representation in their public meetings across the country, but the parliamentary arithmetic was against them. Like the reform of the primary school curriculum, it was an issue on which Lubbock, persistent though he was, would never get his way.

The government's attention was, in any case, being distracted from the domestic agenda by foreign matters. Although part of the Ottoman rather than the British Empire, and governed by the Khedive, a satrap of the Turkish Sultan, Egypt was very much part of the British sphere of influence. The Suez Canal was of vital strategic importance to British trade, and the British government had a long standing alliance with the Khedive, and provided military assistance. Egyptian rule proved deeply unpopular with the Sudanese, and the discontent enabled a charismatic Islamist firebrand, Muhammad Ahmad, to stir up an active rebellion. He took the title 'Al-Mahdi' (a term that comes from a particular strand of Islamic prophecy),

36 *The Times*, 11 October 1884, 6.

37 3Hansard 293, 56; 265.

38 BL Add. 62693, 37–9.

and proclaimed a divine mission to purify Islam and the governments that defiled it. The Mahdi's tribesmen succeeded in annihilating three Egyptian armies, the last a force of 8,000 men under the British General William Hicks, butchered almost to a man.

Finally the Mahdi laid siege to Khartoum, which the British Governor-General, Charles Gordon, somewhat recklessly, defended. A British force despatched to relieve the city arrived too late, the Mahdi's forces overwhelmed the city on 5 February 1885 and (though contrary to the Mahdi's orders) Gordon himself was killed. There was strong pressure to mount a punitive expedition against the Mahdi and, for a while, this seemed inevitable.

Gladstone's instincts had been against the Sudanese intervention from the start, it was only when the Conservatives whipped up public opinion that, cajoled by imperialists within his own Cabinet, and perhaps even under pressure from the Queen, he had acceded to it. Now that it had ended in disaster, the Conservatives put down a motion of censure against the government, a move that had more than a ring of cynicism about it. Lubbock attempted to give Gladstone a way out of the mess, suggesting that Khartoum, uniquely, might be annexed as part of Egypt and occupied permanently by British troops, leaving the rest of the Sudan outside British control. He could not, however, support a purely punitive expedition, insisting that British troops should only be sent to take territory if the intention was for that territory to be retained.[39]

Gladstone did not take the lifeline that Lubbock had thrown to him: since Egypt itself was not even British territory, the British government could hardly annex territory in its name. Gladstone, in any case, thought that the Empire was over-extended as it was.[40] Despite his objections, Lubbock voted loyally with the government, and the vote of censure was lost, but by a mere 14 votes.[41]

The issue came up again, when another Conservative MP, Sir Walter Barthelot attacked Gladstone personally, insisting that his 'reckless statements' had 'absolutely caused these massacres'.[42] Lubbock conspicuously came to Gladstone's defence, condemning Barthelot for having 'very unjustly' attacked Gladstone over a policy that he (Barthelot) had himself supported and urged. But Lubbock then turned his attentions to the policy itself. Some Conservatives had insisted that victory in the Sudan was necessary, if only as a symbolic gesture to maintain the prestige of the Empire elsewhere, notably in India. Lubbock went on to a different tack:

> He would say nothing of their own sacrifices, but to carry fire and bloodshed through the Sudan, to burn the villages, to ravish the crops, to fill up the wells, to destroy the humble homes, to reduce women and children to beggary and starvation, to slaughter thousands of miserable natives in the heart of Africa in order to produce a sensation in India was a policy too heartless, too cynical – he might say too wicked – to contemplate ... It was contrary to all the principles of the Liberal Party and contrary to all principles of

39 3Hansard 294, 1195–6.
40 R. Jenkins 1995, 500.
41 3Hansard 294, 1719–25.
42 3Hansard 295, 473.

> liberty and justice that the Government should use the might of England to conquer and overthrow a brave people to whose allegiance they had no claim ....[43]

This is a most uncharacteristic speech for Lubbock. It is often difficult, reading his parliamentary speeches, with their careful marshalling of facts and statistics reminiscent of his scientific papers, to imagine him raising his voice on the floor of the House, but he must certainly have done so on this occasion, and its impact on his fellow MPs would have been all the greater by virtue of the fact that it was delivered by him. But not only was the speech uncharacteristic for Lubbock: the rhetorical style that he was adopting would have been instantly familiar to everyone in the House. It was characteristically and unmistakably Gladstonian (ironically, it is precisely the sort of hyperbolic and moralistic language with which Gladstone had so offended Lubbock and others in relation to the Eastern Question some years previously). Lubbock surely knew that Gladstone's instincts had been against the Sudan expedition – the two men had many private conversations – but, in any case, the Prime Minister's instincts were understood by pretty much everyone in Parliament.

Perhaps Lubbock, by adopting this tone and style, was signalling to Gladstone, and to others, that his (Gladstone's) instincts had been sounder than his ultimate judgement and, if this reading is correct, the point may even have been taken: Gladstone did finally pull British forces out of the Sudan. But the government's reputation had been damaged, and the Conservatives were taking full advantage. Ageing and tired, Gladstone had been caught between competing factions and voices: an enthusiastically imperialistic public, Conservative Party and Queen; the non-interventionist radical wing of his own party which saw the Empire as an affront to the principles of free trade; and the growing and vociferous imperialist lobby within the Liberal Party itself, led mainly by the Whigs. These different forces pushed and pulled the government into what Roy Jenkins[44] has characterized as a 'mishmash of Imperial policy'. Old political boundaries were being redrawn and, in the confusion, consistency was often lost. And these forces operated not only between individuals, but also within the minds of individuals who, having been hard-wired with one set of ideas, now found those ideas ill-equipped to deal with a new reality. Lubbock himself had advocated non-intervention on the Eastern Question in 1876 and 1877, but had nonetheless made a striking pro-imperial statement in 1877.[45] He had gone on to make a radical proposal[46] to prevent the seizure of private property in wartime: measures which would, if enacted, have made war in the conventional sense impossible, a clear return to the ideas of his earlier Liberal roots; only to swing back to paternalistic imperialism in relation to South Africa in 1878, and Egypt in 1884, then back again to non-intervention in relation to the Sudan. This is not to deny that there was a direction to the shifts in Lubbock's thinking – taking his career as a whole, there was a clear transition from non-interventionism based on free trade

43 3Hansard 295, 482–3.

44 R. Jenkins 1995, 500.

45 J. Lubbock 1877a.

46 J. Lubbock 1879i (originally published 1878).

in the 1860s and 70s, towards paternalistic imperialism in the 1880s and 90s, and his 1877 paper[47] was undoubtedly the turning point. But it is to note that Lubbock, like many Liberals, was profoundly ambiguous about the implications of this transition, many aspects of which went against the grain of how he had been trained to think.

Faced with such fundamental conflicts, Lubbock frequently turned his attention to the more specific policy areas which he understood best and cared about most. Proportional representation was one such issue but, by the end of March 1885, it must have been clear to him that it was going nowhere in the short term. Another such issue was the reduction of working hours for shop assistants, a campaign in which he had been involved for 12 years. After a holiday in Switzerland with Alice, he revived the popular shop hours campaign, enlisting key supporters from across the political and religious divide. A public meeting on 18 June was addressed not only by Lubbock, but also by the Anglican Bishop of London, the Catholic Cardinal Manning and the humanist, Frederick Harrison.[48] Lubbock had introduced his shop hours legislation (technically an amendment to the Factory Acts, to extend its provisions to shops) to Parliament (he had previously tried to do this in 1873) and, on 9 July, it received its second reading. Its success, however, was short lived. The Conservatives and Home Rulers acted in concert to defeat the government on the relatively insignificant issue of the beer duty, and Gladstone resigned. The country faced the prospect of an autumn general election.

Two great issues overshadowed the 1885 election campaign. The first was the Irish question, with Parnell's Home Rulers playing off the two great British parties against one another; and each of those parties, with similar opportunism, dangling carrots in front of the Irish MPs as a means of defeating the other. The second was a deteriorating economic position within the country as a whole and, in particular, rising unemployment. This created a climate within which the radical faction in the Liberal Party felt able to speak out with a boldness that it had not previously shown. In Birmingham, Joseph Chamberlain was speaking openly of '... excessive inequality in the distribution of riches', of the benefits of 'socialism', especially at local level, and of the 'ransom' (in taxes or rates) that men of property should be prepared to pay.[49] This was very far indeed from the Liberalism of Lubbock or Hartington, and such divisions within the party were not easily hidden or glossed over.

Party leaders could, however, make a brave attempt. A book was published, as an aid to Liberal campaigning, in which various leading figures within the party were asked, in their own words, to answer the simple question 'why I am a Liberal'. They were doubtless cajoled by the book's editor, Andrew Reid, into phrasing their comments in generalizations that would avoid controversy or the appearance of internal rifts; it was, in short, a masterpiece of late-Victorian political 'spin'. Gladstone, not normally a master of the sound bite, may have had assistance from Reid:

47 J. Lubbock 1877a.

48 BL Add. 62683, 45.

49 J. Chamberlain 1885, 3–4; 23, 26.

> The principle of Liberalism is trust in the people qualified by prudence: the principle of Conservatism is mistrust of the people qualified by fear.[50]

Chamberlain who, in terms of actual policies, could agree with Lubbock on almost nothing, came up with a choice of words that must have made him smile:

> Progress is the law of the World: and Liberalism is the expression of this law in politics ....[51]

Lubbock's son-in-law, Sydney Buxton, similarly, based his definition on a belief in progress:

> Desirous that happiness, health and wealth should be increased and diffused, that mankind should become more moral, more intelligent, more capable of, and with more facilities for, enjoyment – in a word, more 'civilised' ....[52]

The same theme is evident in Lyon Playfair's contribution:

> Sociology is governed by the law of evolution. Communities, like animals, may remain stationary ... they may develop into a higher existence; or they may degenerate and lose the position which they have attained.[53]

Lubbock's own contribution opened with a fairly traditional definition of Liberalism (perhaps reflecting why he became a Liberal) but then went on to use specifically Darwinian language to explain the need for change; surprisingly, and in contrast to the contributions cited above, 'adaptive' as much as 'progressive' change.

> I have been a Liberal because the Liberal Party has been contending for principles now generally admitted to be of great national advantage, and among the most important of which may be mentioned civil and religious liberty, peace abroad, economy at home, free trade, a fairer distribution of seats, the extension of the franchise and, last but not least, the general education of the people ...
>
> Moreover, even if our laws were now perfectly adjusted to our environment, still in any complex community, the circumstances are continually changing, discoveries are made, improvements are suggested, and we cannot hope to maintain our population in comfort and prosperity, still less to diminish the suffering and misery around us, unless we are prepared to avail ourselves of all improvements and adapt ourselves to new circumstances and requirements.[54]

Taking the book as a whole, it would not be an exaggeration to say that it has Lubbock's imprimatur stamped large upon it. The vision of Liberalism that emerges from it owes much to his personal world view, and to the themes that he had been developing in both his political and scientific career since the 1860s. Taking their

50 A. Reid (ed.) 1885, 13.
51 Ibid., 15.
52 Ibid., 36.
53 Ibid., 79.
54 Ibid., 71–2.

inspiration from a fusion of Darwinian and Spencerian evolutionary ideas: scientific rationalism, technologically progressive business and progressive Liberal politics marching together hand in hand towards an ever better and more 'civilized' future. Highly contentious in its time, most of this now seems to have been taken for granted by leading Liberals, and to have become the basis for their own political projects. But, of course, this was the spin, not the substance of late-Victorian Liberalism and, even more fundamentally, the autumn of 1885 was not the most auspicious moment at which to be writing a new paradigm of Liberalism – the Liberal star was very much on the wane.

Despite his reservations on issues of policy (tellingly reflected in his use of the past tense – 'I have been a Liberal …'), Lubbock committed himself energetically to the campaign, touring constituencies to support Liberal candidates and chairing a mass rally at the Albert Palace at which Gladstone and others addressed a meeting of 3,000 people.[55] The election results, however, were disappointing. Although Lubbock retained his seat (it was not contested), the overall result was a hung parliament. The real triumph belonged, as Lubbock had warned it might, to the Irish Home Rulers, who had won 86 seats. They held the balance of power and, as they were, for the moment, being courted by the Conservatives, it was the Conservative Lord Salisbury who was asked to form a government.

Lubbock gave a detailed analysis of the election results in a letter to *The Times*, arguing that they vindicated his earlier campaign for proportional representation. The Parnellites had carried 13 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons on the basis of 6 per cent of the popular vote, in Lubbock's view gratuitously endangering the unity of the Empire.[56]

There had been speculation that Lubbock might be asked to serve as Chancellor of the Exchequer in a new Liberal government:[57] this was most unlikely to happen in reality – he had neither sought high office, nor had he served in any ministerial capacity, nor been sufficiently willing to toe the party line to be a likely contender. But with Salisbury in Downing Street, any such speculation was academic. He turned his attention once again to his scientific interests.

The 1885 meeting of the British Association had been held in Aberdeen, and Lubbock had presented two papers, one on ants, bees and wasps; and the other on canine intelligence, based on his ongoing experiments with his own dog, Van. In the latter paper he recorded how his intention, in his experiments with the dog, was to devise ways in which dogs might be able more effectively to communicate with humans:

55 BL Add. 62683, 49–50.

56 *The Times*, 22 December 1885, 9.

57 H. Hutchinson 1914.

Figure 6 1883 portrait of John Lubbock with 'Van' (Lubbock family archive).

> The man and the dog have lived together in a more or less intimate association for many thousands of years, and yet it must be confessed that they know comparatively little of one another ... I have elsewhere suggested that this arises very much from the fact that hitherto we have tried to teach animals rather than to learn from them: to convey our ideas to them, rather than to devise any language or code of signals by means of which they might communicate theirs to us.[58]

Accordingly, he had trained Van first to distinguish the card labelled 'food' from a blank card, to the stage where, after about a month, when the two cards were both placed over empty saucers, the dog would fetch the 'food' card and bring it to his master to request a meal. The dog gradually learned to distinguish a small number of

58 J. Lubbock 1885, 1089.

other cards including, for example, one labelled 'out', although Lubbock was a little disappointed that he could not get Van to '... use the cards in a more sophisticated way, for example, distinguishing colours' (his 'disappointment' suggests that he did not recognize this failure as a potentially significant experimental result in its own right – he interpreted it as a generalized lack of 'sophistication' rather than the straightforward colour blindness, which we now know it to be). He then set out to try to establish whether or not the dog was able to count, referring to published research which suggested that crows, eagles and even wasps were able to do so. Here, however, he was forced to recognize the limitations of his own experimental methodology, and was unable to reach a convincing conclusion, concerned that he was unconsciously communicating indications to the dog.

Lubbock's experimental approach in his work with the dog shows a combination of naivety and nascent sophistication which reflects the relative infancy of experimental behavioural science at the time that he was writing. That he should even have attempted to draw general conclusions about the intelligence of dogs from experimental observations of one dog, an individual animal with which he had a close bond, would affront a modern experimental scientist. That he so clearly recognized the limitations of his own methodology, identifying potential sources of bias, and refraining, in fact, from drawing unwarranted conclusions, is no less remarkable given the context in which he was operating. There are some intriguing assumptions underlying his work; not least, given his earlier assertion that most 'savages' were unable to count (assertions that remained even in the later editions of his books),[59] his willingness to countenance the possibility that dogs, birds and even insects might be able to do so. On the one hand this illustrates the difference between the paradigms that he used to explain biological evolution (essentially Darwinian and non-teleological, despite his distinction between 'adaptive' and 'progressive' evolution) and cultural evolution (Spencerian, thoroughly teleological and uni-linear): he made no assumption that humans were in any way 'superior' to insects, birds or dogs; he did not question the assumption that Europeans were superior in every cultural respect to 'savages'. On the other hand it underlines the point already noted that, whilst rationally insisting on the unity of the human species, emotionally, Lubbock found it easier to empathize (sometimes to the point of anthropomorphism) with animals than he did with humans from very different cultures. The anthropomorphic dimension of Lubbock's empathy for animals appears to have closed his mind to potentially interesting research directions. Thus, in attempting to devise a 'language or code of signals' by which Van could communicate with him, he devised one based exclusively on visual signals, ignoring the fundamental point that dogs rely far more heavily on their sense of smell.

Lubbock retired to High Elms, to spend Christmas with Alice and their family. On New Year's Eve he recorded that he had been working on a variety of papers for publication (one on science, one on reading with a list of 100 recommended books,

59 J. Lubbock 1865a, 475; 1870a, 125; (Lord Avebury) 1912a, 355; (Lord Avebury) 1913, 567.

one on seeds and seedlings), pulling together his lecture notes on 'flowers, fruits and leaves' for publication as a book, and doing further experiments with Van.[60]

He was also, presumably, enjoying married life, and seems to have recovered from the moroseness that had affected him since the time of Ellen's death. But his home life may not have been entirely harmonious: the relationship between Alice and her stepdaughters remained fraught. Sir John had been informed of the birth of little Ursula by his own daughter, Gertrude, but she may not have told him the full story, if this account, by Ursula's daughter, is to be taken at face value:

Figure 7 Alice Lubbock with son Eric (Lubbock family archive).

60 BL Add. 62683, 51.

Figure 8 1892 family portrait: John and Alice Lubbock with son Harold and daughters Irene and Ursula (Lubbock family archive).

> Lubbock's two grown-up daughters by his first marriage were not only older than their step-mother, but accustomed to presiding over their father's house. The occasions for mutual rancour and jealousy were many, and the Victorian precepts about love and unselfishness were painfully tested and found wanting. My own mother, Alice's first child, was born six weeks prematurely as a result of one of the many terrible scenes that were to cloud her childhood and embitter her mother.[61]

Lubbock seems to have done little to restrain either his daughters or his new wife in this conflict. In stark contrast to his father-in-law, domestic firmness was not something that came easily to him. But, in an age in which much emphasis was placed on the authority of the paterfamilias, this was potentially a formula for chaos rather than domestic bliss.

61 S. Grant-Duff 1982, 17.

PART IV
A Noble and Glorious Unity, 1886–1913

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Chapter 12

The Parting of Ways

In March of 1883, Sir John Lubbock's daughter, Constance, had written to him from Ireland; her husband, Sydney Buxton, having been posted there as a junior member of the government. She had established a small charitable fund, to which her father had contributed £10, and was wondering how best to spend it for the benefit of the Irish poor. She had thought of using it to buy seed, but was worried that this might 'tempt a great many … to stay behind and go on trying their luck in this horrible country' and that, by discouraging emigration, she might actually harm the interests of the people she sought to help. She finally settled on the idea, however, on the basis that '… it must be possible for a few people to live in comfort here, if the place is not over crowded'.[1]

Those schooled in classical 'political economy' believed that only by allowing natural selection to take its course one way or another could the situation be improved. Far from being the cause of Ireland's tragedy, emigration was the most humane solution to problems of over-population. In line with Frederick Temple's metaphor, Ireland was a wayward child that could be redeemed only through the tough love of the mother country. Others, who took a romantic view of human aspirations, believed that, free from the shackles of British rule, Ireland would find her own path to prosperity. Gladstone was no supporter of romantic nationalism, but he feared that, without some concessions to the nationalists, Ireland would become ungovernable. His consequent embrace of limited Home Rule delivered the Parnellites into his camp and put him, for the moment, back in Downing Street.

Lubbock returned to his usual seat in the House of Commons in January 1886, noting that 'it was sad to see so few old faces',[2] and knowing that, for the first time in his life he would be unable to give a Liberal government his full support. One of the first votes was on whether Gladstone should form a government with the support of the Parnellites (any such government would have, of necessity, to support Home Rule) and Lubbock was one of 18 Liberals who voted that he should not, but a further 76 absented themselves from the vote, giving an indication of the scale of the rebellion. A campaign was underway and, in April, Lubbock addressed a packed meeting at London's Guildhall, a motion opposing Home Rule being accepted almost unanimously.[3]

Gladstone introduced the Home Rule Bill a few days afterwards, and Lubbock recorded that the House was fuller than he had ever seen it. Gladstone's speech was

1 BL Add. 49646.
2 BL Add. 62683, 51.
3 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 April 1886, 7.

long and rambling – taking up 49 pages in Hansard,[4] chastizing the British political establishment for the use of coercive power in Ireland, which had become 'not exceptional but habitual', and warning that the very rule of law on which civilization depended was becoming 'discredited in Ireland'.

Two leading Liberals, George Trevelyan and Joseph Chamberlain, spoke against the bill, explaining why they had felt compelled to resign from the government. On the second night of the debate there was a particularly bad-tempered exchange between Chamberlain and Gladstone, with Chamberlain arguing that the integrity of the Empire was at risk. Lubbock spoke immediately after Chamberlain, expressing his admiration for Gladstone's 'marvellous eloquence' but insisting that the Home Rule issue had not been 'put fully and fairly before the country at the last general election'. Gladstone himself, Lubbock reminded the House, had insisted that a Liberal government would not be held to ransom by Home Rulers. He took issue with the idea that the Irish were a distinct race, referring to the complex intermixing of 'Celtic' and 'Teutonic' elements in the populations of both Ireland and the British mainland. He objected also to the financial basis of the Home Rule proposal, which he considered unfair to the '… the unfortunate taxpayers of England and Scotland':

> If it was wished to encourage disorder and turbulence in other districts, what more could be done than to declare that if the people only proved themselves sufficiently turbulent, they would be rewarded by having half their taxes taken off and being relieved from contributing to any national emergency.[5]

On the fourth night, Gladstone finally came to sum up the issues that he considered to be at stake, stressing the 'famine of needful and useful legislation' that had resulted from the obstructive behaviour of Parnellite MPs over several years, and commending the Home Rule Bill to the House as 'one bold attempt to free Parliament for its great and necessary work, and to establish harmony by Irish laws for Ireland'.[6]

One of the many proposals that had been frustrated by the Parnellites was Lubbock's Shop Hours Bill and, at the beginning of 1886, he began yet another campaign on the issue, bringing forward a bill providing for a 12-hour daily limit on the work done by young people in shops. In proposing the second reading on 18 February, Lubbock presented a case backed up both by evidence (he had documented the number of shops in each London borough that remained open after 9.30 in the evening, and had extrapolated from this the number of shop assistants working in excess of 70 hours per week) and medical opinion.[7]

Many shopowners supported Lubbock's campaign, but a group of opponents started organizing against it. Lubbock turned up to one of their meetings at the Guildhall, and asked permission to speak. Appealing to those present to take pity on the overworked, he cited an epitaph from a Norfolk cemetery:

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4 3Hansard 304, 1036–85.
5 3Hansard 304, 1234–8.
6 Ibid., 1550.
7 3Hansard 302, 678–88.

Here lies a poor woman who always was tired
For she lived in a world where too much was required.
Weep not for me, friends, she said, for I'm going
Where there'll be neither cooking, nor washing, nor sewing.

I go where the loud Hallelujahs are ringing
But I shall not take any part in the singing.
Then weep not for me, friends, if death us do sever,
For I'm going to do nothing for ever and ever.[8]

The meeting proceeded to vote strongly for the bill rather than against it, as its organizers had intended.[9]

Lubbock had an instinctive sympathy with the lower-middle classes, with clerks and shop workers – the sort of people that he employed and came into daily contact with; urban, literate, articulate, well-mannered people, who attended his lectures on ants and 'savages', and read his books in the free libraries that were springing up all over the country due, in no small part, to his efforts. Others had made, and were making, the case for the rights of the labouring classes, but it was the clerical and retail workers that he was most anxious to support and assist and who, consequently, looked to him for leadership and guidance. Lubbock was convinced that any reduction in the long working hours of these staff would create opportunities for their 'intellectual, moral and spiritual improvement'. Such people not infrequently sought his advice directly, on such subjects as the books they ought to read, or the subjects they ought to study at the burgeoning evening classes that were running in various institutions around London and the provincial cities, including the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, of which he was Principal.

At the end of 1885, Lubbock's annual address to the students of the College had focussed on 'the best hundred books', an initiative taken up by the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which published Lubbock's list of 100 books, and invited others to comment on it. Lubbock's list was not made up of his own favourites (he deliberately excluded books by living authors, and included some works which, he admitted, he had not particularly enjoyed reading), but rather those which, in his opinion, had stood the test of time. Thus he included Confucius, whilst 'humbly confessing' that he did not greatly admire his works, on the grounds that '… they are held in the most profound veneration by the Chinese race, containing 400,000,000 of our fellow men'.[10] But the point of the published list was not to share his private literary tastes, but rather (as he later clarified) to identify those books which, in the '… general verdict of mankind' have most often been recommended, since, he argued, 'There is a "struggle for existence" and a "survival of the fittest" among books, as well as among animals and plants.'[11]

Predictably enough for Lubbock, the list included two works by Charles Darwin (*The Voyage of the Beagle* and *The Origin of Species*) and two by John Stuart Mill

8 H. Hutchinson 1914.
9 BL Add. 62683, 53–4.
10 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1886, 23.
11 J. Lubbock 1887, 71–2.

(*Logic* and *Political Economy*); perhaps more surprisingly, given his bad experiences with the curriculum at Eton, it includes a significant amount of Classical literature (Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*, Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics*, Plato's *Phaedo* and *Republic*, Sophocles' *Oedipus Trilogy*, Euripides' *Medea*, Aeschylus' *Prometheus* and *Persae*, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*), along with works by Malory, Voltaire, Hume, Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Descartes, Locke, Carlyle, Wordsworth, Goethe, and more recent writers including Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, Charles Kingsley and Walter Scott. Among those asked to comment on Lubbock's list were the Prince of Wales, who made a plea for Dryden to be included, and John Ruskin who, complaining of the 'rubbish and poison' in the list, argued for the exclusion of John Stuart Mill ('Sir John Lubbock ought to have known that his day was over'); Charles Darwin ('because it is every man's duty to know who he is, and not to think of the embryo he was, nor the skeleton he shall be'); and Voltaire ('His work is, in comparison with good literature, what nitric acid is to good wine and sulphurated hydrogen to air'): and for the inclusion of Livy and Edward Lear. Lubbock did later amend his list to include Dryden (for which he was accused of Royal sycophancy) and Chaucer, but kept it otherwise very much as it had been.

Publishing such a list was a very new departure for Lubbock who was, after all, known as a politician and a man of science, rather than as a man of letters. It was easy to be sceptical about the prospects of shop assistants and bank clerks reading Marcus Aurelius, Malory and Milton, but Lubbock's list was sufficiently influential for Macmillan to publish the works as a set and, when a librarian in Worcester did a survey to find out which books were actually most in demand in the public library, it was found that the top-scoring books were indeed among those listed by Lubbock (though they were overwhelmingly among the more recent ones – George Eliot, Kingsley, Dickens, Thackeray, Darwin, rather than the classical, medieval and early modern works).[12] It is arguable, however, that many other commentators simply didn't understand, as Lubbock did, the potential of auto-didacticism as a force for social mobility and educational improvement in the population. Lubbock had direct experience of this, both as Principal of the Working Men's College and through his intimate association with the University of London.

The University of London was an 'examining' rather than a 'teaching' university: its graduates (Lubbock's parliamentary constituents) included those who had studied at King's College, University College and the Birkbeck Institute, but these were outnumbered by the 'external' students, many of whom had simply taught themselves. The facility for students to do this, and then to sit examinations and, if successful be awarded the London degree, was the single most distinctive aspect of the University of London system, a system that had been developed by Lubbock's father, when he was Vice Chancellor, and which Lubbock himself would defend enthusiastically. His 'hundred best books' should perhaps be seen in the light of this educational philosophy particularly when one remembers that his own education, after he had dropped out of Eton, although guided both by his father and by Charles Darwin, had been very largely self managed.

12 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1 April 1886, 3.

But the shop-assistants and clerks of London could only educate and improve themselves if they were given time to do so. Lubbock's Shop Hours Bill passed into law on 24 June 1886. As with the Ancient Monuments Act, his tenacity and perseverance had paid off but, as also with the Ancient Monuments Act, he had been forced to compromise on some fundamental points of principle (his preference had been for a fixed closing time for shops – regulating the number of hours that individuals could be made to work was far more difficult to enforce. Only 17 MPs voted against the bill, with 84 in favour, a Home Office Minister stating that he could not imagine '…more humane, more proper work for Parliament to engage in than that of giving relief to overworked young persons of both sexes'.[13]

The issue of Home Rule also came to a head in June, after a month in which leading Liberal opponents of Home Rule, including Lubbock, had shared platforms at large public meetings with Conservative leaders, including Lord Salisbury. They argued from very different premises – Lubbock's point was that there were no ethnic distinctions between Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom that would justify considering Ireland as a separate country sat uneasily with Lord Salisbury's assertion that Home Rule could not work precisely because of those supposed distinctions – democracy was suited only to the Teutonic race, whilst the Irish were more akin to Hottentots or Hindus. Lubbock and Salisbury were united, however, in their opposition to the bill. The second reading of the Home Rule Bill took up 12 days of debate, spread out over a full month. Lubbock did not speak, but was one of the 94 Liberal MPs, including also Joseph Chamberlain, Leonard Courtney, John Bright, Lords Hartington and Selbourne and the Earl of Derby who voted with the Conservatives against the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, prompting Gladstone to announce the dissolution of Parliament.

Commentators were astonished at Gladstone's miscalculation, one contributor to the *Fortnightly Review* marvelling that such an 'old parliamentary hand' as the Prime Minister could have squandered his majority and found himself '… obliged to appeal to the country against a hundred of the men who reposed their confidence in him in the autumn'.[14]

Thomas Huxley, Lubbock's X-Club colleague, and a life-long Liberal, wrote in *The Times* that he had considered, for the first time in his life, voting Conservative (in fact he had not voted), bemoaning the contrast between the 'great heart' and the 'weak head' of the Liberal electorate.[15] John Tyndall (an Irish Protestant by birth) was similarly trenchant in his support for the Unionist position: for Tyndall and Huxley, as for Lubbock, Home Rule was a characteristically Gladstonian example of politics grounded in emotion rather than reason, offending not only against the intellect, but also against the concept of manliness that they shared with Archbishop Temple.[16]

Gladstone's style of politics, his talent for whipping a crowd into an emotional frenzy rather than persuading them with rational argument, was, for them, worthy not

13 3Hansard 306, 1803–69.

14 Anon. 1886, 7.

15 *The Times*, 13 April 1886, 5.

16 N. Vance 1985, B. Hilton 1989.

just of criticism, but of contempt. It may even have reminded them of the time, many years previously that they nearly came to grief whilst climbing together in the Alps and were saved, as they saw it, by their own calm, manly behaviour, contrasted with the supposed effeminacy of their Swiss guides. It may just have helped to bring the X-Club back together. They had begun to drift apart – most had moved away from London, and age was beginning to take its toll on the health of the older members. Spottiswoode had gone, and the surviving members had even quarrelled about his funeral. At the end of April, Joseph Hooker wrote to Huxley:

> I shall not be at the X on Thursday. We must make up our minds as to what is to be done about that venerable institution. I can't bear to think of its extinction – we might make it sporadic.[17]

Hooker's initiative worked, at least in the short term – in June the X-Club did meet – Hooker, Huxley, Tyndall, Lubbock, Frankland and Hirst all attended and Lubbock recorded that it was 'quite like old times', although Busk (who was by this time quite seriously ill) was very much missed.[18]

Meanwhile, Lubbock was wasting no time in forging new political alliances. Lord and Lady Salisbury were invited to dinner on 29 June.[19] Salisbury had by this time decided that the Conservatives would give a free run to all those Liberal MPs who had supported the Union – the forthcoming election would be contested, therefore, not between Liberals and Conservatives but between Unionists (Conservative and Liberal) and Gladstonians.

The Gladstonians clearly would not give a free run to the Liberal Unionists: Frederic Harrison emerged as Lubbock's opponent for the seat representing the University of London. A near contemporary of Lubbock's Harrison was an example of a new type of radical. Like Lubbock, he had read *Essays and Reviews* but, unlike him, he had only scorn for it, describing it as representative of 'Neo-Christianity' in a review of 1860. He was an avowed secularist, and a founder of the Positivist Political and Social Union (based on the ideas of Auguste Comte). He took a far more radical view of foreign policy than Lubbock did – opposing the Boer War, which Lubbock had supported, and openly described himself as 'an Irish Nationalist' (not many Gladstonians would have adopted that sobriquet).[20] On economic matters he tended towards policies that were far more overtly socialistic than any that Lubbock would have supported.

In his election address, Lubbock presented himself as '… an earnest member of the Liberal Party', whose only conflict with Gladstone was over the specific issue of Home Rule. In the general election of July 1886, Lubbock easily retained his seat for the University of London, taking 1,314 votes to Harrison's 516.[21] Nationally, the election went badly for Gladstone, his supporters retaining only 193 of the 333 seats that they had commanded the previous year. Lubbock was one of 73 'Liberal

17 ICL HP3, 283.
18 BL Add. 62683, 56.
19 Ibid., 57.
20 F. Harrison 1911, 126, 219.
21 F. Harrison 1911, 2, 219–20.

Unionists' elected. The Conservatives, under Lord Salisbury, were asked to form a government.

The result put Lubbock and his colleagues in a most uncomfortable position. They had contested the election as 'Liberal Unionists' and, when Parliament reconvened, they insisted on taking up their places on the Liberal benches despite the fact that they found themselves, increasingly, joining the Conservatives in the lobbies. A series of difficult negotiations ensued, to determine the nature of 'Liberal Unionism' and its position in relation to the two main parties. Joseph Chamberlain spent a weekend at High Elms, together with Lubbock's old political friend, Leonard Courtney. The following week, the Lubbocks attended a weekend meeting hosted by the Rothschilds at their mansion in Weddesdon, Sir John noting that he had held private conversations with both Hartington and Chamberlain, but that Hartington had said very little.[22] Hartington's reticence characterized the mood of the moment – nothing would be decided quickly.

Lubbock had never been a party hack, and started the new parliamentary session as a Liberal Unionist with much the same independence as he had previously shown as a Liberal. Not content with the Shop Hours Act that he had previously passed into law, he at once put down a bill providing for the general closing of shops at 8.00 p.m.[23]

The summer and autumn of 1886 brought some relief from high political drama. Lubbock was invited, at the beginning of September, to open the annual industrial exhibition at the Regent Street Polytechnic. He and Alice were shown around the exhibition by the Polytechnic's patron, Quintin Hogg.[24] In his speech to the students, Lubbock focussed on the educational needs of Londoners, arguing the case for science in the school curriculum, but also emphasizing the importance of manual education, referring to an experiment that he had carried out teaching cobblery to boys (he appears to have engaged the local cobbler to teach the boys in the schoolhouse in Downe).[25] Lubbock was fulsome in his praise of Hogg's achievements at the Polytechnic, noting that they had attracted less publicity than projects in Britain's provincial cities (he was doubtless thinking of Birmingham) and, turning to the issue of local government, he argued that the areas of government in London were, in many cases, too small to provide for the educational needs of the population. Here again, it was Joseph Chamberlain's Birmingham that he had in mind – a strong local authority, which London lacked, had in Birmingham permitted the development of an impressive public infrastructure, including a library and museum that could be the envy of any world city. Lubbock was flying a kite – perhaps London needed a similar unitary authority?

Lubbock took advantage of the parliamentary recess to renew old acquaintances and revisit the interests of his youth, his pleasure evident from his diary entry for 24 September 1886:

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22 BL Add. 62683, 60.

23 Ibid., 59.

24 *The Times*, 2 September 1886, 11.

25 J. Lubbock 1886a, 467

> Alice and I joined the Evans' and Prestwich at Dunton Green and went on by Westerham to Limpsfield, to Mr Bills, to walk over the ground with him, where he has been finding flint implements. It was a dull gray day, but I was very pleased to have another day in the field with Evans and Prestwich, and it carried me back to my old days, on the Somme and elsewhere, 25 years ago.[26]

Botany as well as archaeology occupied his mind, and Lubbock pulled together many of the lectures on the subject that he had given around the country over the past years into a book on *Flowers, Fruits and Leaves.*[27] It was a popular book which set out an unambiguously Darwinian understanding of the way in which the forms of plants had evolved in the context of their environment, reiterating the arguments about the relationships between plants and insects that had so enraged John Ruskin when Lubbock first made the point in a scientific paper:

> I have endeavoured to show in a variety of cases how beautifully flowers are constructed so as to secure their fertilisation by insects. Neither plants nor insects would be what they are, but for the influence which each has exercised on the other … just as our gardeners, by selecting seeds from the most beautiful varieties, have done so much to adorn our gardens, so have insects, by fertilising the largest and most brilliant flowers, contributed unconsciously, but not less effectually, to the beauty of our woods and fields.[28]

The analogy between natural selection and the deliberate selection made by gardeners is drawn directly from Darwin, and the book deals exclusively with what Lubbock had earlier characterized as 'adaptive' rather than 'developmental' evolution,[29] with no assumption of inevitable progress.

In October, the Lubbocks embarked on a long holiday, travelling first to Paris, where they met Louis Pasteur, and then, via Marseille, to Greece, where Heinrich Schliemann acted as their guide to the archaeological sites of Athens, the Peloponnese and Macedonia (much to the displeasure of Alice, who found him a 'tiresome old man').[30]

Back home in December, Sir John Lubbock was invited to address the students at the annual prize-giving at the Harris Institute in Preston. He was increasingly in demand for such occasions, and was expected to provide some words of inspiration and encouragement for the young men and women who had just completed a course of study. Such words came easily to Sir John, and he exhorted the graduates to see their learning:

> … neither as a couch on which to rest; nor as a cloister in which to promenade alone; nor as a tower from which to look down on others; nor as a fortress whence we may resist them; nor as a workshop for gain and merchandise; but as a rich armoury and treasury for the glory of the Creator and the ennoblement of life.[31]

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26 BL Add. 62683, 61.
27 J. Lubbock 1886b.
28 Ibid., 42–4.
29 J. Lubbock 1873d.
30 BL Add. 62691, 22.
31 *The Times*, 18 December 1886, 6.

He may have used the word 'creator' in the loosest possible sense, but that he used it at all is surely significant and serves as a reminder (if one were needed – his list of 'best hundred books' did, after all, include Thomas a' Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, Keble's *Christian Year* and Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying*)[32] that, through all the religious debates of the late nineteenth century, Lubbock remained a practising Anglican, holding fast to the liberal Christianity that had so impressed him in the pages of *Essays and Reviews*. He did not, on the whole, wear his religion on his sleeve (he probably regarded it as a private matter and did not wish to offend those of his closest friends and associates who did not share his faith), but it may well have been part of his political motivation, particularly when it came to his persistent campaigning for better working conditions for shop workers.

Certainly he needed to draw whatever strength he could from whatever source to keep doggedly campaigning as he did for the Early Closing Bill against all the political odds. At the end of year he tried to persuade Lord Salisbury to give government backing to the bill, but failed, Salisbury writing to him on Boxing Day, honouring Lubbock's motives and 'self-sacrificing labour', but refusing to support what he saw as an unwarranted restriction on trade.[33] The campaign, however, would go on.

Lubbock's final diary entry for 1886 sums up the year, noting with pleasure his success (albeit limited) in passing the Shop Hours Act and the commercial success of *Flower, Fruits and Seeds*. Curiously, it says nothing about Gladstone, Home Rule or the Liberal Party.

32 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1886.

33 American Philosophical Society ms, B L961.

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Chapter 13

The Duty of Happiness

Despite Gladstone's defeat, Irish Home Rule remained one of the great issues of the day. In March 1887, Sir John Lubbock set out his position in a letter to *The Times*, insisting, as he had done before, that the division of Great Britain into four 'nations' – England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, was 'accidental' and modern, masking a more complex ethnic mix. Ireland itself had significant Anglo-Norman and Scandinavian elements in its population (the Parnells, he noted pointedly, were an Anglo-Norman family). All of this added up, he suggested, to an '… undeniable ethnological fact' that ' the English, Irish and Scotch are all composed of the same elements, and in not very dissimilar proportions'.[1] He was convinced that unrest in Ireland was caused by economic rather than political factors, and looked forward to happier times as the economic situation improved.[2]

When addressing audiences of like-minded people, however, Lubbock was quite clear that his primary concern was with the welfare of England, and of the Empire rather than that of Ireland.[3] At stake, ultimately, was the integrity of the British Empire, the Empire that Lubbock had long since identified as a positive liberal force for progress in the world, the only entity capable of delivering the utopian vision that he had set out in the final pages of *Prehistoric Times*:

> The country at the last election pronounced itself plainly enough in favour of the maintenance of the union. He could not doubt that, if they had another General Election, they would have a still greater and more glorious majority – a majority of Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen determined to maintain the integrity of the Empire, the cause of law and order, of liberty, loyalty and patriotism.[4]

Lubbock clearly believed that, in defending the union, he was upholding the liberal principles on which his political career was founded. It was the Gladstonians, rather than the Liberal Unionists, who had abandoned these principles, and they had done so for the worst of all reasons – out of blind panic – the most unmanly and irrational course that could be followed. And so Lubbock had no hesitation in continuing to view himself as a Liberal, and a significant proportion of the Liberal establishment continued to view him thus. In February 1887, J. Renwick Seagar, Secretary of the City of London Liberal Association, wrote to him asking if he would be prepared to represent the City on the Council of the London Liberal and Radical union.[5] Old

1 *The Times*, 19 March 1887, 12.
2 *The Times*, 19 April 1887, 11.
3 *The Times*, 13 May 1887, 13.
4 Ibid.
5 RS L12.

friendships were kept alive – the Gladstones dined at the Lubbocks' London home in April.[6] There were tensions, however, within the Liberal Unionist ranks. Lord Randolph Churchill was openly referring to 'the Unionist Party', and Salisbury was offering the temptation of the trappings of power. At the beginning of the year George Goschen had become the first Liberal Unionist to join the Conservative government as Chancellor of the Exchequer – Salisbury was hammering the wedge into the cracks in the Liberal establishment.

Lubbock was not tempted. Although on one level, the maintenance of the union was an issue of sufficient importance to split him from the party that he, and indeed his family, had supported through thick and thin, on another, perhaps deeper level, it was a distraction from the things that he really cared about – an issue that simply should not, in his view, have come up. His first action, as Parliament reconvened, was to put down two bills, yet another Early Closing Bill for shops, and a bill to promote free libraries. the Early Closing Bill backed by surveys commissioned by Lubbock, which showed that 86 per cent of shopkeepers in the poorer districts of London, and 90 per cent of those in Liverpool supported the proposed restriction of hours.[7]

Nor would he allow such an issue to distract him from his scientific lectures and public appearances – he was increasingly in demand as a speaker and, in the first half of 1887, he delivered lectures on ants in London and Wolverhampton, on 'savages' in Leicester and in Oxford, and on the intelligence and senses of animals in Walsall, as well as addressing a public meeting on shop hours in Bristol, and opening a public library in Wimbledon.[8]

Throughout this time, Sir John Lubbock was working on a new project, a book that he thought of entitling 'The Conduct of Life', but ultimately published as *The Pleasures of Life* in June 1887.[9] It was a collation of the various speeches that he had made at graduation and prize-giving ceremonies around the country – at the Working Men's College, the Harris Institute in Preston, the Regent Street Polytechnic, Mason College in Birmingham and elsewhere, and set out, quite simply, to provide the newly educated lower-middle classes with a guide to how they should live their lives, as morally good, socially adept and personally fulfilled individuals. The very concept of such a book may seem, to twenty-first century sensibilities, somewhat patronizing, but to see it in this way is to forget the social and historical context of the time at which Lubbock was writing.

Since the end of the medieval era, the separation between 'polite society' and the great majority of the population had been an absolute one. Nowhere is this separation more clearly illustrated than in the works of Shakespeare. The 'rude mechanicals' in *A Midsumernight's Dream* live in an utterly different milieu to that of Lysander and Hermia – as different, in fact, as that of Hermia and Lysander is from the fantasy world of Oberon and Titania. They spoke a different language, lived different lives and did not need to know the rules of 'society' because they were not, and never

6 BL Add. 62691, 41.
7 BL Add. 62683, 66.
8 Ibid., 66–70.
9 BL Add. 62683, 68–71.

could be, part of it. They had contact with it only through the medium of a tiny elite of stewards and butlers, and the ceiling that separated them from it was a ceiling not of glass, but of granite. By the late nineteenth century, this had all changed, as John Stuart Mill had predicted. The rural England of Shakespeare had become the largely urban England of Dickens, and the twelve-times great-grandchildren of a multitude of Nick Bottoms, Tom Snouts and Robin Starvelings had come to town as the David Copperfields and Nicholas Nicklebys of Victorian London. It was to this constituency that Lubbock appealed. Unlike many of their parents, they were literate, and they had aspirations. They may not have been part of 'polite society', but they interacted directly with it, as office and shop workers, and they did need to know its rules if they were to have any chance of success. Social mobility was not easy, but it was possible, and social skills, along with education, were the means by which it could be achieved.

The starting point for Lubbock's advice was optimism. The first chapter is entitled 'The Duty of Happiness' and opens with a quote from the Stoic philosopher, Epictetus:

> If a man is unhappy, this must be his own fault; for God made all men to be happy.[10]

Stoic philosophy underpins much of the book, with liberal quotations from both Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Lubbock placed Epictetus 'at the head of all non-Christian moralists', and regarded his *Enchiridion* as '… one of the noblest books in the whole history of literature.'[11] Stoicism fits well with the Victorian conceptualization of manly virtue.[12] Effort, cheerful acceptance of one's lot, self-control and the avoidance of self-pity were central to this approach to life:

> If we do our best; if we do not magnify trifling troubles; if we resolutely look, I do not say at the bright side of things, but at things as they really are; if we avail ourselves of the manifold blessings which surround us, we cannot but feel how thankful we ought to be for the sacred trusts of health, strength and time, for the glorious inheritance of life.[13]

> 'I have fallen into the hands of thieves', says Jeremy Taylor. 'What then? They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife and many friends to pity me … they have not taken away my merry countenance and my cheerful spirit and good conscience'.[14]

> A man … is his own best kingdom. But self-control, this truest and greatest monarchy, rarely comes by inheritance. Every one of us must conquer himself, and we may do so, if we take our conscience for our guide and general.[15]

10 J. Lubbock 1887, 1.
11 Ibid., 73.
12 N. Vance 1985, B. Hilton 1989.
13 J. Lubbock 1887, 5.
14 Ibid., 23–4.
15 Ibid., 33.

Lubbock exhorts his readers to take time to enjoy the simple pleasures that are available to everyone – the beauty of nature, the warmth of the sun, the blessing of friends, and to avoid overindulgence in the more selfish pleasures of food and drink.

There was no basis for anyone to be jealous of experiences denied to them but enjoyed by others. Reading provided a means by which all could share in the full and rich range of human experiences:

> We may sit in our library and yet be in all quarters of the Earth. We may travel around the World with Captain Cook or Darwin, with Kingsley or Ruskin, who will show us more, perhaps, than we should ever see for ourselves. The World itself has no limits for us. Humboldt and Herschel will carry us far away to the mysterious nebulae beyond the sun and even the stars … history stretches out behind us and geology will carry us back for millions of years before the creation of man, even to the origin of the material universe itself.[16]

Lubbock devoted a chapter each to education and to science, insisting that, together, they provided the key to future happiness. On education he insisted, as he had done many times, that the cultivation of the mind was more important than the cramming of the memory, whilst in relation to science, he looked forward 100 years to a society transformed by the benefits of scientific discovery:

> Let us look forward a hundred years – no long time in the history of a nation. Our coal supplies will then be greatly diminished. The population of Great Britain doubles at the present rate of increase in about fifty years, so that we should, if the present rate continues, require to import over £400,000,000 a year in food … we have before us, as usual, three courses. The natural rate of increase may be stopped, which means suffering and outrage; or the population may increase, only to vegetate in misery and destitution; or, lastly, by the development of scientific training and appliances, they may probably be maintained in happiness and comfort. We have, in fact, to make our choice between science and suffering.[17]

Even to some contemporary critics, the advice given in Lubbock's book seemed trite and patronizing. The satirist, Owen Seaman, parodied the style of the book with a quote that apparently amused rather than offended Lubbock:

> We cannot all be geniuses but a firm grasp of the obvious may be acquired by the humblest amongst us.[18]

An anonymous reviewer in *The Times* pointed out that many people in Britain's cities had neither access to the 'many charms of the country', nor the time to enjoy them:

> The Sheffield grinder perpetually breathing gritty poison; the miner hewing coal on his back with barely room to handle his pickaxe; the seamstress stitching for a shilling or so

16 Ibid., 64.
17 Ibid., 164–5
18 S. Grant-Duff 1982, 15.

> from before dawn to long after dusk, are all plodding along the path of duty, but there are few flowers to be found on it.[19]

Lubbock, however, had not written the book for the benefit of those who wrote columns in *The Times*, and those for whom he had written it seemed to like it. By the end of the year the book was in its fifth edition and, for the rest of his life, fan mail flooded in from grateful readers all over the world: from Charles Lea, a gasworks clerk in Birmingham who had been inspired to read Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus; from Harry Barker, a self-confessed waster in Dudley who had determined to mend his ways after reading Lubbock's book;[20] from an American boy, deeply depressed since his mother's death, whose pleasure in life had been renewed.[21]

The review in *The Times* must have seemed a little unfair to Lubbock given that, in his political life, he was doing more than anyone to ensure that working people did have both the time and the facility to enjoy the pleasures of which he wrote. In July 1887 he successfully passed the Public Libraries Amendment Bill, paving the way for the establishment of many new libraries by empowering parishes to act in consortium with one another to provide them.[22] The Metropolitan Open Spaces Bill, which Lubbock had sponsored, also completed its passage in the Lords, allowing local authorities to turn disused cemeteries into public parks. There might, after all, be some flowers for those who plodded along the path of duty.

In August, Lubbock became embroiled in a parliamentary row on the subject of Post Office Savings Banks. Such banking operations were already being run by the Post Office, allowing working people to deposit up to £30, and providing for these funds to be invested in government securities, thereby insulating them from the risk associated with commercial investments. The government proposed to raise the limit to £50. Lubbock opposed the bill, but was put in a difficult position because, before he was able to catch the Speaker's eye, several members had already spoken, deploring the fact that the opposition came mainly from those MPs who had financial interests in the banking sector. Mr Bartley (MP for Islington North) and Mr Broadhurst (MP for Nottingham West) both saw the opposition to the measure as '… a check on the habit of thrift' introduced simply to protect the commercial interests of the banks,[23] whilst Broadhurst accused the government of running down its flag 'without engaging the enemy on the first indication of attack from the handful of bankers in the House'.[24]

Lubbock emphasized that the proposal would make absolutely no difference to him as a banker (£50 was of very little consequence indeed to a commercial operation on the scale of Robarts, Lubbock & Co.). He opposed it on entirely different grounds. He was completely in agreement with Bartley and Broadhurst on the desirability of promoting thrift among all classes. What was proposed, however, was an increase in government borrowing (since those investing in savings accounts were lending

19 *The Times*, 21 October 1887, 14.
20 RS L12.
21 BL Add. 49678A.
22 3Hansard 316, 1748–9, 1485–8, 1749.
23 3Hansard 319, 816.
24 3Hansard 319, 817.

money to the government) by a public institution (the Post Office) which made a profit.

And herein lay the real point behind Lubbock's argument. He articulated explicitly, for the first time, a concern that he had about the direction in which public policy was moving and a fundamental principle that was to define the latter part of his political career:

> We believe it to be an undesirable thing for the Government to undertake business for the sake of profit … This is an attempt on the part of a great Government to engage in banking business on a large scale.[25]

This was not Lubbock the banker using Parliament to further the interests of a sector in which he had a personal interest (though he had done that on plenty of occasions without much controversy). This was Lubbock the mid nineteenth-century Liberal, defending the 'scientific' principles of political economy that had underpinned his entire political career (principles that his friend and fellow X-Clubber, Herbert Spencer, had done much to elaborate) and finding himself increasingly at odds with a growing late-nineteenth-century trend towards larger government.

On the specific issue of Post Office Savings Banks, the government did indeed run down its flag – the House voted by 89 to 32 to leave the maximum deposit at £30 – but the larger issue of the government's role in the economy was one that would run and run.

A holiday in Northumberland with Alice and the children provided a brief respite in September, and they enjoyed a visit to Holy Island. Then it was back to the political grind.

There were moves to reunite the Liberal Party, and Lord Hartington was consulting his Liberal Unionist colleagues to see whether any compromise could be found on the Home Rule issue that would satisfy both Liberal Unionists and Gladstonians. Lubbock was approached by Craig Sellar MP, a member of Hartington's inner circle:

> Hartington wishes to know what our men think of the proposal that we should formulate a constructive policy, and specifically as to whether we should agree to any form of Irish Parliament or Parliaments with or without an executive.[26]

Lubbock responded that he would oppose any <u>legislative</u> assembly (his emphasis), which he thought would only provide the Parnellites with leverage for further demands. He confided that he considered separation to be a 'lesser evil' than Home Rule. But tactically he believed the Liberal Unionists, rather than coming forward with proposals of their own, should wait for the Gladstonians to do so – 'It is, I think, for them to <u>tell us</u> what they want, and then we can consider it.'[27] Lubbock was absolutely clear on another tactical issue – the Liberal Unionists should on no

25 Ibid.
26 BL Add. 59650, 131–2.
27 BL Add. 59650, 136–9.

account go into government with the Conservatives. Lord Derby consulted him on this, and recorded their conversation in his diary:

> Saw Lubbock: talk with him as to the prospects of the unionists, which he evidently does not think well of. He agrees with me in deprecating a coalition as fatal to the Liberal Unionist Party.[28]

Lubbock was also increasingly tied up with a Royal Commission on the currency, which he had joined on Lord Randolph Churchill's invitation earlier in the year. On 21 November he complained in his diary:

> Gold and Silver Commission again. These commissions are taking up all my time! I have really none for my books on seedlings and senses. I hope I shall never be on another commission.[29]

He seems to have been a man who found it difficult to say no, flattered when his expertise and skills were called upon and frequently (perhaps increasingly) taking on more than he could reasonably cope with. Certainly the commission needed an expert banker, but perhaps it did not need an expert banker who was, at the same time, trying to be an expert botanist, an expert animal psychologist and a MP. It was one of a number of situations in which, against his better judgement, he became immersed in the detail rather than the broad scope of public policy.

Despite these pressures, he did find the time to complete his book *The Senses and Intelligence of Animals*[30] in the early weeks of 1888, and it was published later in the year. It was, in large part, a compilation of his earlier published work, incorporating some of his very early work on *Daphnia*, his subsequent research on insects and his experiments with his dog, Van, and bringing this together with explorations of sensory anatomy and physiology taken mainly from the French and German literature. As a book, backed up by popular lectures, it naturally reached a wider readership than the scientific papers and sought to provide at least partial answers to questions that few people had even thought to pose: how did insects and crustaceans see the world around them, what did they perceive and how were their responses to be understood? What was it actually like to be an ant? In his search for answers he had carried out an intricate dissection of the nerves and tactile hairs in the larva of a gnat; he had fed inedible substances to ants and bees, inferring from their immediate rejection of these that they possessed a sense of taste; he had dipped a feather in musk and waved it over an ant, its movements suggesting to him that its sense of smell resided in its antennae. Unsurprisingly, Lubbock's work on animal behaviour has been eclipsed by subsequent research, but it was the judgement of colleagues writing within a decade of Lubbock's death that this book and the journal articles on which it was based, constituted one of his most significant original contributions to science. Writing in 1924, J.A. Thomson insisted that '… among the greatest of the many services that Lord Avebury rendered to zoology was in being a pioneer of

28 J. Vincent (ed.) 1981, 84.
29 BL Add. 62683, 76.
30 J. Lubbock 1888.

the experimental study of animal behaviour', stressing his use of the experimental method (Pavlov's famous experiments began more than a decade later), his detailed observations of the behaviour of ants, bees and wasps, and concrete discoveries including the sensitivity of ants to ultra-violet light.[31]

Lubbock may have surprised himself by finding time to complete such a work, but the respite from politics was nonetheless a short one. When Parliament reconvened at the beginning of 1888, he was successful in the lottery for private members' bills, and reintroduced the Early Closing Bill, calling for a general closure of shops at 8.00 p.m. on weekdays, and at 10.00 p.m. on Saturdays, with local authorities being empowered to institute weekly half holidays where this had the support of local shopkeepers.[32] Once again he embarked on a public campaign, gaining support for the measure in local meetings and trade associations.[33]

In Parliament, however, Lubbock found a new and formidable opponent. Mr Blundell Maple, a newly elected Tory MP with 25 years' experience in the retail trade, gave his maiden speech in the debate on Lubbock's bill, pointedly asking why there was no proposal to regulate the hours of work in banks, and complaining that the bill would affect sole traders as well as the employers of labour. Lubbock's bill had the support of the British Medical Association, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and the clergy of all denominations, but only 95 MPs could be found to support it, compared to the 278 who voted against.[34] The government had allowed a free vote, but only 11 Conservatives had supported Lubbock, along with 53 Gladstonians, 21 Parnellites and 12 Liberal Unionists, whilst 57 Gladstonians and 14 Liberal Unionists, including Joseph Chamberlain, joined the majority of Conservatives in the 'noes' lobby.[35]

Early closing was not the only seemingly hopeless cause that Lubbock was prepared to champion in Parliament and in the public meeting halls around the country. He had probably lost count of the number of meetings at which he had spoken on the issue of proportional representation. He now sought to amend the Local Government Bill to extend it to local elections. Again he failed to convince his parliamentary colleagues: 94 MPs voted with Lubbock, 372 (again, including Chamberlain) voted against.[36]

Lubbock was, at the same time, sitting as a member of the Royal Commission on Education, and did at least manage to persuade his fellow commissioners not only to support the continuation of proportional representation in school board elections, but even to recommend his preferred system, the single transferable vote.[37] He was not, however, able to carry the commission on the broader issues of the scope of the

31 J.A. Thomson 1924.
32 *The Times*, 20 February 1888, 8.
33 BL Add. 62683, 80; 3Hansard 325, 1099–1101.
34 3Hansard 325, 1103–72.
35 *The Citizen*, 3 May 1888.
36 3Hansard 326, 1859–86.
37 BL Add. 62683, 80.

primary curriculum and increased funding for schools, and he ended up signing the more radical minority report.[38]

Faced with defeats on early closing, on proportional representation and on education, it would be understandable if Lubbock was beginning to despair of his ability to influence policy through the parliamentary process. True to the stoical principles that he had set out in *The Pleasures of Life*, however, despair was not part of Lubbock's mindset. He was not, by instinct, a lateral thinker but, having worked doggedly to further these agendas throughout his 18 year parliamentary career, he did begin to think that there might possibly be other ways of furthering them, perhaps by operating at a more local level, and through institutions other than Parliament, with its rigid protocols and inflexible party machinery.

In March 1888, Lubbock was elected as President of the London Chamber of Commerce. Taking on yet another public responsibility might have seemed a strange thing for Lubbock to do, given how thinly his time was already spread between his political and scientific activities and his growing family (Alice was pregnant with their third child, Harold), but he was probably motivated by the fact that the Chamber had found common cause with him on a number of issues, not least education. The Chamber had already expressed concern about the employment of clerical workers in London offices. Around 40 per cent of such workers were foreign, most of them Germans, and the reason given for this by employers was quite simply that the Germans were better qualified than most young Englishmen, having, in particular, a better knowledge of modern languages (though it was also noted that they were prepared to work longer hours, and for less pay).[39] The Chamber had begun lobbying for a more vocationally oriented school curriculum, a campaign that had already received high profile backing from one of the country's leading industrialists, the Newcastle ship-building and armaments magnate, Lord Armstrong.[40] Despite his own business background, Lubbock was far more concerned about education for its own sake than he was about the training of clerks, but he began to think that he could use the Chamber to advance his educational agenda, whilst lending his own expertise to the Chamber's campaign. As Vice Chancellor of the University of London, Lubbock knew everything there was to know about establishing and running schemes of examination. If the Chamber of Commerce were itself to establish a scheme of examination for use in schools, and if the employers that made up the Chamber agreed to favour its graduates, then natural selection would ensure that schools followed the curriculum on which it was based, without any need for that curriculum to be approved by Parliament, or by a Royal Commission. Lubbock's presidential agenda was set.

Nor was the London Chamber of Commerce the only new vehicle through which Lubbock was seeking to further his long-standing agendas. The kite that Lubbock had flown the previous year in his speech at the Polytechnic was soaring skyward – London was to have a unified county council for the first time and, by the end of

38 M. Sadler 1924.

39 C. Musgrave 1914, 64.

40 Lord Armstrong 1888.

1888, Lubbock was a candidate, having been asked to stand both by the Liberals and by the Conservatives.[41]

41 BL Add. 62683, 85.

Chapter 14

The Politest Reactionary

One of Lubbock's fellow councillors on the London County Council (LCC) was the socialist and trade union activist, John Burns. Burns and Lubbock were occasional allies, more often opponents but one quote from Burns's diary (for 1891) gives a fascinating insight: Lubbock is described as 'the politest reactionary that ever lived'.[1]

Born into a family that regarded itself as 'progressive', Lubbock had promenaded his first loves in that temple to progress, the Crystal Palace, and, in *Prehistoric Times*, he had adapted Darwin's theory of natural selection in animals and plants to build an explanation of human cultural evolution, grounded in a paradigm of progress that Darwin knew did not apply to organic nature but nonetheless passionately wanted to believe (as his father and grandfather had believed) might apply to human society. Lubbock had not only convinced Darwin of this paradigm of progress; with Huxley, Spencer and others he had, in Darwin's name, convinced Victorian London of it. In his political career, Lubbock had carried the flag of progress through interminable debates on education, on working conditions and on international relations. From the perspective of the 1860s and 1870s, Lubbock was the ultimate progressive.

To find him cited in the 1890s as a reactionary comes, therefore, as something of a surprise, although such terms are always relative, and most Victorian politicians were more or less reactionary from the perspective of John Burns, a friend of Karl Marx's daughter Eleanor, and a man who shared the Marxist vision of the wholesale (if gradual) dismantling of capitalism. But Burns was not alone in seeing Lubbock as an opponent of progress. A new definition of progress was emerging, and it was one that Lubbock could not buy into.

The first elections to the LCC, held in January 1889, were not contested along straightforward party lines and Lubbock was keen to emphasize that, despite his Liberal Unionist credentials he was not standing on a party ticket.[2] This non-partisan approach seems to have been popular – Lubbock was cheered for it a couple of weeks later at an election meeting in Farringdon[3] – and, when the votes were counted, he easily topped the poll, securing 8,976 votes, 944 ahead of his closest rival, Lord Rosebery. Lubbock may not have stood on a party ticket, but he still regarded himself as a Liberal: in the days following his election he attended the Liberal caucus meetings, although he found that he was less than welcome there, and expressed the fear that they were '… disposed to be intolerant'.[4]

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1 BL Add. 46311, 45.
2 *The Times*, 2 January 1889, 4.
3 *The Times*, 16 January 1889, 10.
4 BL Add. 62683, 86.

The metropolitan electorate, more broadly enfranchised than ever before, had delivered a clear majority of radical social reformers. The division that emerged was not between Liberals (Gladstonian and Unionist) and Conservatives, as Lubbock may have anticipated, but rather between 'Progressives' (radicals loosely tied to the Gladstonian Liberal Party, but with strong socialist tendencies) and 'Moderates' (Conservatives and Liberal Unionists).[5] No wonder Lubbock had detected 'intolerance' – he had been sitting in the wrong caucus.

Lubbock was elected into the Chair of the LCC on a provisional basis, to oversee matters of procedure, but remained in post only for a few days before handing over to the Progressive candidate, Lord Rosebery, and agreeing to stay on as his Vice Chair.

Lubbock clung to his Liberal credentials like grim death, but around him, positions were shifting. An acrimonious debate was being played out on the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*, focussing both on the specific issue of Irish Home Rule and on the broader issues of difference between the two emerging factions. One commentator, L. Atherley Jones wrote of the defection from Liberalism of the middle and upper classes, insisting that 'the battle of the middle class' (the advance of free trade, the removal of religious discrimination, the triumph of commercial over landed interests) had been fought and won, transforming the bourgeoisie from 'the party of progress to the party of rest'.[6]

A year earlier, Frederic Harrison, Lubbock's erstwhile opponent to represent the University of London, had issued an even starker challenge to the Liberal Unionists:

> It is true that you have given up everything that you have contended for throughout life; that by your help a reactionary minority has been placed in paramount power; that every cause you have worked for is thrust aside or repressed; that all you have ever denounced is become your glory; those whom you have resisted are your present masters; that whether in home affairs or in foreign affairs, in finance, in church, in education, in reform, though you call yourselves Liberals, yet your one dominant idea is to keep the Tory Party in power, and to make Tory policy prevail. This is true: but it serves, you think, only to heighten your merit, and to prove you to be, more conspicuously even than before, the party of morality, of justice, of honour.[7]

In April Lubbock received a delegation from a group of his constituents at the National Liberal Club, protesting about what they saw as his disloyalty to the party, and specifically his support for coercion in Ireland.[8] Lubbock responded with a comment that qualified his earlier, seemingly unbridled, enthusiasm for progress, although it was a qualification that had always been implicit, reflecting Temple's idea of a gradual 'education' of the world:

5 J. Davis 1989.
6 L. Atherley Jones 1889, 186–7.
7 F. Harrison 1888, 769.
8 BL Add. 62683, 89.

Figure 9 **The London County Council in session (Lord Avebury, as Vice Chairman, is seated immediately on the left of Lord Rosebery (standing).**

> Do you … really desire that Ireland should be handed over to lawlessness and outrage? – for this is the alternative you present to me. This seems to me contrary to all the principles of the Liberal Party. Order is the condition of all progress, and the lawless exercise of individual judgement is fatal to the happiness and prosperity of any country.[9]

Lubbock managed to find time to attend an X-Club dinner on 7 March 1889, but complained the following week that the LCC was '… really taking an immense amount of my time.'[10] Having secured a clear majority, the Progressives were in the process of devising an ambitious programme of public works for London. With many elements of this programme Lubbock heartily agreed – he enthusiastically supported the redevelopment of The Strand and the renewal of London's transport infrastructure, including the construction of the Blackwall Tunnel, but there were other elements of the programme where the LCC proposed to intrude on what Lubbock saw as the natural domain of the private sector, most notably the replacement of London's notorious slums, which everyone agreed should be torn down. Lubbock, however, believed that private housing corporations were best placed to build new, affordable, high quality accommodation for the working classes, whilst the more radical members of the Progressive Party believed that the LCC itself must provide this.[11]

Politically, Lubbock refused to be pigeonholed. He would make common cause with the Progressives when he agreed with them, and with the Conservatives when he did not, acting as an advocate for the orderly, measured progress that he had always favoured, whilst cautioning against 'progressive' measures that he considered ill thought out, not supported by evidence, inspired by the heart rather than the head. The courtesy of which he wrote in *The Pleasures of Life* he appears to have practised as well as preached and this, combined with his independence of thought, earned him the respect of friend and foe alike, and of the broader public. The fact that, despite his opposition to many radical causes, Lubbock could carry the respect of labour as well as capital, gave him the ability to mediate in disputes, something that he was increasingly called upon to do as organized labour became radicalized.

On 2 September 1889 Lubbock received a letter from Cardinal Henry Manning, the Catholic Primate of England, asking to see him. The cardinal was seeking Lubbock's help in resolving a trade dispute in the London docks. Lubbock had made common cause with the cardinal on several occasions, and happily consented to the interview.[12] Manning, who was pastor-in-chief to the capital's growing population of Catholic Irish and Scots, many of whom worked on the docks, outlined the issues for Lubbock.

The skilled stevedores, men whose families had worked the docks for generations, occupied a position near the top of the working-class hierarchy. Unskilled dock labourers, by contrast, employed on a casual basis, were among the poorest of the poor.

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9 Ibid.
10 BL Add. 62683, 88.
11 W. Saunders 1892, 135.
12 BL Add. 62683, 93.

These labourers had an articulate spokesman, one of a new breed of professional trade union leaders. Ben Tillett was in many respects the sort of man that Lubbock could identify with: he had started work as a docker himself, but had willingly gone hungry in order to save the money to buy books. And he could describe the dockers' plight in language that Lubbock would understand:

> There can be nothing ennobling in an atmosphere where we are all huddled and herded together like cattle; there is nothing refining in the thought that, to obtain employment, we are driven into a shed, iron-barred from end to end, outside of which a foreman or contractor walks up and down with the air of a dealer in a cattle market, picking and choosing from a crowd of men who, in their eagerness to obtain employment, trample each other under foot, and where, like beasts, they fight for the chance of a day's work … As a brute would throw scraps to hungry wolves to delight in the exhibition of the savage struggle for existence, with the beasts tearing each other to pieces, so these creatures would delight in the spectacle which, while it imbruted the victims of such a tragedy, impeached and cursed society.[13]

Tillett's remonstrances had even persuaded the stevedores' leader, Tom McCarthy, to support the rights of the ordinary dockers in a rare example of working-class solidarity.[14]

Tillett had the backing that he needed to lead his men into a confrontational strike, aimed at winning both a higher rate of pay and greater job security for the ordinary dockers. He had attempted to enlist the support of the Bishop of London, Lubbock's old spiritual mentor, Frederick Temple, but, having been roundly (he thought rudely) rebuffed, he turned to the more sympathetic Cardinal Manning, who now enlisted Lubbock. Manning knew that Lubbock was well placed to help: apart from anything else, there were the family connections – Lubbock's son-in-law, Sydney Buxton, as MP for Tower Hamlets, represented many of the dockers in Parliament, whilst his brother, Nevile, was a Director of the London Docks Company, and one of the leading negotiators on the management side.

Mindful both of his brother's and his son-in-law's positions, Lubbock preferred to operate discretely behind the scenes, leaving Sydney (who had remained loyal to the Gladstonian Liberal Party) to take the limelight as the dockers' parliamentary champion. Lubbock would, in any case, have reacted in a very mixed way to the case presented by Tillett. On the one hand, he had always believed (as had Huxley) that the essence of human civilization lay in men's ability to use their intellectual and moral faculties to rise above the Darwinian struggle for existence. This, rather than any separate ontological status conferred from on high, was what distinguished men from the beasts. Lubbock would therefore have been especially shocked by Tillett's use of Darwinian language to describe the dockside cages. On the other hand, Tillett was speaking a language of industrial struggle that would have alienated Lubbock's Whig sensibilities. Lubbock could not accept the Marxist notion that different classes had fundamentally different interests – there had to be a rational way of bringing those interests together.

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13 B. Tillett 1910, 8,12.

14 Ibid., 14.

Lubbock put together a coalition for compromise that included his brother and Bishop Temple, as well as Cardinal Manning. A deal was thrashed out that involved a lower pay settlement than Tillett was demanding, but with a guaranteed weekly minimum, giving dockers more security. The Bishop and Cardinal put this to the strikers, whilst the Lord Mayor put it to the Docks Company. An agreement seemed certain, and was even reported in the press.[15] Tillett, however, had not agreed, and held out for the higher wage demand. His gambit paid off – concerned by the loss of income to the Docks Company, Nevile Lubbock and his fellow directors finally caved in and, on 15 September, Tillett led his men back to work in triumph.[16] Lubbock left Buxton and Manning to receive the accolades of the workers in Hyde Park – he was in Newcastle with Alice for the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science – entertaining packed halls with lectures on the leaves of oak and vibernum.[17]

It was only a matter of months, however, before Lubbock's services as a mediator were again in demand – this time in a dispute involving London's coal porters, who were seeking to establish a closed shop. On this occasion it was the union side that was prevailed upon to back down. By the beginning of 1890, Lubbock was using his position as President of the London Chamber of Commerce to explore the options for a formal 'Council of Conciliation' to intervene in future industrial disputes and avoid the need to rely on such ad hoc initiatives.

In the Houses of Parliament, each of the main party leaders seems to have made New Year's resolutions to put together an unstoppable coalition, and both were keen to court Lubbock and other Liberal Unionists into their fold with offers of favour. Lord Salisbury opened the bidding, by offering Lubbock a place on the Privy Council. Lubbock had little difficulty in accepting this – there was, then as now, no party whipping on the Privy Council, and it did not require Lubbock to compromise his cherished political independence. Gladstone, however, responded quickly, and deputed one of his lieutenants, Andrew Reid, to write to Lubbock sounding him out on a number of issues. Writing on 4 January, Reid congratulated Lubbock on his recent promotion, but hinted that the Grand Old Man's largesse was potentially far greater, extending even, perhaps, to a seat in the Upper House.[18] Reid was confident that the Home Rule party were willing to negotiate, particularly on the financial questions that had been of concern to Lubbock and others.

Lubbock responded that his objections to Home Rule were as much political as financial. It was not acceptable '… from an English point of view …' that Ireland should have its own Parliament, yet continue to be represented at Westminster. The solution could be made acceptable if there were separate legislatures both for the United Kingdom and for Ireland, as well as a supreme Parliament, but '… that would not be Home Rule, but Federalism'.[19]

15 BL Add. 62683, 93–4.
16 B. Tillett 1910, 29.
17 BL Add. 62683, 95; J. Lubbock 1889, 1891.
18 BL Add. 49654, 2–5.
19 Cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 294–5.

Reid clearly thought that Lubbock was throwing Gladstone a lifeline, and wrote again on 15 January:

> I know how deeply Mr Gladstone esteems you, and I do pray that this great opportunity may be seized upon to find some lines of … agreement … As to Federal session … on what basis would you agree to it? I understand that you do not object on principle.[20]

Lubbock gave no direct response, presumably considering, as he had argued previously, that it was for Gladstone to come up with a federal scheme if that was his preference. Reid wrote again to Lubbock on 22 January, stating that '… the leaders of the Liberal Party are all tending towards, if they have not really accepted Federation as the scheme for the Union of Ireland with Great Britain', and expressed optimism that this would allay Lubbock's fears:

> It appears to me that you will no longer feel it your duty to stand out from us.[21]

Lubbock responded two days later stating that he '… could not advocate' federalism because it entailed '… great difficulties' to which he could not yet see a solution. In the first draft of the letter, Lubbock included a sentence that he later crossed out, and did not include in the version actually sent to Reid – 'I am not, however, committed against it'. He did, nonetheless, end on a note of cautious optimism:

> If Mr G puts forward any new plan which I feel I should be justified in supporting, I would be glad to do so, as my separation publicly from him has been to me personally a matter of deep regret.[22]

Reid responded on 25 January with four direct questions, clearly posed on Gladstone's behalf:

> Would you agree to an Irish Parliament on your conditions?
>
> What are those conditions?
>
> Are the 'difficulties' in your mind such as to leave you without either the desire or the means to solve them in some way or another?
>
> Could you at least 'come in' (to use Mr Gladstone's words) so far as to let us know what difficulties you wish us to address, and to join us in assisting Mr Gladstone to develop a scheme?[23]

Lubbock's response, if he made one, is not recorded, and the correspondence appears to have ended here. He would not be bought with offers of patronage and favour and, however difficult it was for him emotionally, the split between Lubbock and the Liberal Party was now absolute and irrevocable.

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20 BL Add. 49654, 16–17.
21 BL Add. 49654, 27–9.
22 BL Add. 49654, 30–31.
23 BL Add. 69654, 34–7.

Lubbock was sworn in as a Privy Councillor on 8 February 1890. A special train took the new and existing Privy Councillors to the south coast, where they boarded a ferry for the Isle of Wight, and were taken in carriages to Osborne House. Lubbock kissed the Queen's hand, and took the oath of allegiance. When the Privy Council met, a list of parliamentary decisions was read out for the Queen to approve. To Lubbock's great pride and pleasure, the list included the addition of several ancient monuments to the protection of his Ancient Monuments Act.[24]

Back in London, as President of the Chamber of Commerce, Lubbock was preparing for the public launch of the Commercial Education scheme. Candidates would be examined in ten compulsory subjects (English, history, geography, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, mechanics, bookkeeping, drawing and a modern language) and at least one of eight possible optional subjects (mechanics, shorthand, advanced drawing, chemistry, sound, light and heat, electricity and magnetism, natural history and an additional modern language).[25] The curriculum was a compromise, of course – Lubbock would doubtless have liked to see more science in the compulsory list – but it went some way towards the breadth of studies that he had campaigned for all his adult life, and which he himself had so longed for as a boy at Eton.

The results, however, were disappointing. A total of 65 candidates were entered for the examinations, but only 17 of these were awarded certificates. Whilst for many people (including, perhaps, those running the firms that were publicly supporting the scheme) this may have been seen as an abject failure, for Lubbock, characteristically, it was a vindication of what he had been arguing all along:

> This result goes far to prove the original contention of the Chamber, viz. that the average level of tuition in this country is not sufficiently high, particularly in languages and science, to meet the demand for commercial requirements.[26]

It was also through the Chamber of Commerce that Lubbock was pursuing his idea of a Labour Conciliation Board (in effect, the precursor to ACAS). By the end of 1890 the Board had been established – 12 employer representatives led by Lubbock and 12 labour representatives led by Charles Fenwick MP, the parliamentary secretary of the infant Trades Union Congress – and was ready to mediate in disputes.[27]

The LCC continued to take up a great deal of Lubbock's time, particularly since he was acting not only as its Vice Chair, but also as its leading spokesman in the House of Commons, where the essential party division remained the traditional one between Liberals (Unionist and Gladstonian) and Conservatives. As a Moderate in the LCC chamber, Lubbock acted as a brake on the more ambitious schemes of the Progressives but, as a Liberal Unionist in the Commons, he was often the one driving through Progressive schemes on behalf of the LCC in the face of opposition from the Conservative government and its supporters.

At the heart of Conservative objections to the LCC improvement schemes was a Progressive idea that Lubbock wholeheartedly supported – that of 'Betterment'.

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24 BL Add. 62683, 9.

25 *Chamber of Commerce Journal* 9, No. 96, 29.

26 Ibid., 10, No.109, 8.

27 Ibid., 10, No.9, 6–7.

This was an American idea (Lubbock's Conservative opponent, A.A. Baumann, described it as a '… preposterous yankee notion'),[28] the principle being that, since publicly funded improvements to an area had a measurable positive impact upon the value of commercial and residential properties, local authorities should seek to recover a proportion of the costs from the owners of those properties that had benefited. For the Conservative MPs, this was a 'stealth tax' on property, forcing landowners to pay for improvements that they had not asked for. For the members of the LCC, Moderate, in many cases, as well as Progressive, it was an imaginative way of securing much-needed improvements without increasing general taxation. For Lubbock, it was only fair. The contrary, after all, was enshrined in English law, the House of Lords having awarded compensation to a publican whose business had been adversely affected by the construction of a new bridge, and if adverse effects were to be compensated, surely positive effects were to be recognized:

> The House of Lords has introduced the principle of 'worsement', and 'betterment' is surely the necessary correlative. If we are to pay when a property is damaged, and to have no claim when another is bettered, metropolitan improvements are rendered almost impossible.[29]

Despite the pressure of the new work that Lubbock had taken on, both with the London Chamber of Commerce and with the LCC, he still found time for his longer-standing campaigns. In March 1890 he had opened a new public library at Hammersmith, emphasizing that it would '… enable everyone to utilize his vacant moments …', and that it was intended '… not to raise one above another, but to elevate all alike'. He could not resist a return to the rhetoric with which he had linked his archaeological, ethnological and political projects a quarter of a century earlier:

> An honest barbarism is better than a false civilisation. They were trying hard in this country to make theirs a real civilisation … .[30]

Limiting the hours of labour, so as to give people more 'vacant moments' in which to improve themselves, was an important part of this effort, but it was easily frustrated. Lubbock had tabled yet another Early Closing Bill, and had even won the support of the Conservative government but, then as now, a private member's bill could be blocked by a single objection and, once again, this objection came from the Conservative backbencher, Mr Blundell Maple. In his frustration, Lubbock published a letter in *The Times*, both to name and shame Blundell Maple for blocking a popular measure, and to complain about the absurdity of the process,[31] but to no avail.

Lord Rosebery stepped down as Chair of the LCC in July 1890, provoking a split in the Progressive faction. The Progressives would have preferred one of their own number, Lord Ripon, but he was unavailable. Mindful of the even-handed way in which he had conducted himself from the Chair, and of his unqualified parliamentary

28 3Hansard 347, 1266.
29 3Hansard 342, 1118–21.
30 *The Times*, 20 March 1890, 8.
31 *The Times*, 14 April 1890, 3.

support for the LCC, some Progressives had reconciled themselves to the possibility of Lubbock as the LCC's second Chairman. The more radical among them, however, objected to any suggestion of a Moderate in the Chair, and editorials in the Liberal newspaper, the *Star*, raged against his nomination by supposed Progressives, insisting that his appointment would 'weaken the Council, and discredit it in the eyes of the people'.[32]

A rumour was put around the Progressive camp (probably by Andrew Reid) that Lubbock was to be elevated to the peerage in November and would almost certainly step down. Liberals and Progressives could, therefore, vote for him safe in the knowledge that he would serve only as a temporary caretaker.[33] Lubbock was absent from the LCC chamber the following day, when he was elected Chairman of the LCC by a majority of 61 to 28,[34] the cautious Progressive, Sir Thomas Farrer, appointed as his Vice Chair.

The summer, at least, provided some opportunities for relaxation. Lubbock took Alice and little Ursula for a month's holiday in Switzerland, meeting up with John and Louisa Tyndall and, whilst there, he started work on a new book, *The Beauties of Nature*. On his return he went down to Sandwich, for a few days botanizing with Sir Joseph Hooker.[35] By September, he and Alice were back at High Elms, and were making some alterations to the hall. In a matter-of-fact way that rings true to the modern experience, Lubbock recorded in his diary for 12 September that:

> We have been altering the hall, and hoped to have found it finished, but as usual, the workmen were still in.[36]

A few days later he noted that they had been arranging 'flint implements' and 'savage things' in the hall, and it seems that elements of his archaeological and ethnological collections, which he had gathered together so many years previously as a working collection to inform the writing of *Prehistoric Times* and *The Origins of Civilisation* were now being put on display, both as a statement of Lubbock's interests, and his status as a pioneer of archaeology and ethnology, and as a space into which the public could be invited for educational purposes.

The account by Lubbock's granddaughter, Shiela Grant-Duff, however, suggests that there was more to these 'alterations' than simply putting objects on display. Referring to the conflict between Alice and her stepdaughters, Grant-Duff wrote:

> Alice … fought back with spirit. She insisted on refashioning the house and destroying all evidence of the first Lady Lubbock. On the ceiling of the great hall she had her own family coat of arms entwined with that of the Lubbock's, in spite of several sons, potential heirs, by his first marriage … Her family was her prime concern, and, once she had successfully driven her stepdaughters out of the house, she settled down to a devoted marriage.[37]

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32 *Star*, 16 July 1890, 2; 17 July 1890, 1.
33 *Star*, 22 July 1890, 1.
34 *The Times*, 23 July 1890, 10.
35 BL Add. 62683, 104–5.
36 Ibid., 105.
37 S. Grant-Duff 1982, 17.

The idea of displaying archaeological and ethnological items in the hall may well have come from Alice (her father, General Pitt-Rivers, had displayed his much larger collection in a very similar way) and she may have used the idea to persuade her husband to go along with the larger alteration plan, but there are reasons for believing that the alterations became a source of resentment (perhaps unstated or even unacknowledged) on the part of Sir John towards Alice. A decade after the alterations had been completed, Lubbock (perhaps inspired by Freud's work on *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which had by then been published) started to keep a private notebook in which he recorded his dreams. On 3 January 1900 he recorded a disturbing vision:

> I … went to my mother's room. She was reading to Eric. After a bit I went into my sitting room, and found that Alice had rearranged all my furniture, so I thought I would go and disarrange hers. As I went along the passage I woke.

A few weeks later (on the evening of St Valentine's Day) the theme cropped up again:

> … Alice had a rummage lottery in my old sitting room as it used to be years ago. I got several prizes, but there was nothing I cared for.[38]

An X-Club dinner in October must have been quite a relief for Lubbock, particularly since it was well attended – Hooker, Hirst, Spencer, Frankland and Huxley all being present. A couple of years previously, in an attempt to halt the inevitable slow decline of the club, Lubbock and Frankland had argued for new blood, and possible names that were considered included Huxley's student, Michael Foster; Lubbock's fellow archaeologist, Sir John Evans; and Darwin's cousin, the eugenicist Francis Galton. They had not prevailed, and the slow decline went on.[39] Earlier in the year there had been a bad-tempered and public clash between Huxley and Spencer, which had threatened to tear the club apart, a clash ostensibly of ideas but, in reality, of personalities, and a reflection of the natural pugnacity of the two men.[40] Lubbock may have played a part in mediating between them and now, at least, in the autumn, the X-Club existed again as a reminder of things past.

Science may have been Lubbock's first love, and the friendships that went with it may have done more than anything to sustain him, but 'gaudy politics' would not leave him alone with them for long. November came and Reid's promise of a peerage came to nothing – Lubbock had been unwilling to pay the price. It seems, however, that he had by this stage won over his Progressive colleagues in the chamber of the LCC – not only was he re-elected as Chairman, despite the animosity directed at him by the *Star* five months previously, this time his election was unanimous.[41]

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38 Dreams (the pages of this notebook are unnumbered).

39 R. Macleod 1970, 314.

40 J. Jensen 1972, 546.

41 *The Times*, 8 November 1890, 11.

Lubbock had intended to step down as Chairman in October 1891, but was persuaded by his colleagues to stay on until the elections the following year.[42] In stark contrast to the acrimony of his initial election, he received a unanimous 'memorial' signed by every councillor, Moderate and Progressive (with the exception of a handful who happened to be abroad), and felt that, '… under these circumstances' he '… could not but consent'.[43]

Lubbock may well have regretted his decision to stay on. He was soon embroiled in a dispute with the more radical members of the Progressive Party, led by Charles Harrison (the brother of Frederic), over the future of London's water supply. The growth of London's population, combined with increasing prosperity, had created an exponential increase in the demand for water. An 1869 Royal Commission had concluded that the maximum demand likely to arise within the next 50 years was 200 million gallons per day, yet by 1892, with the population still rising, demand had already reached 184 million gallons. This was more than Thames catchment area could possibly supply.[44]

Lubbock and Harrison agreed that something needed to be done, but the question was what. Lubbock and the Moderates preferred to work with the existing private water companies, cooperating where possible and regulating where necessary. Harrison and the Progressives, on the other hand, were suspicious of the profit motive, and sought to bring the growing infrastructure of reservoirs, water pipes and sewers under direct LCC control. Such a policy would come with a very substantial price tag attached, and, knowing that the electorate would not stand for unlimited taxation, Harrison argued for debt-based finance. This proposal went too far even for many of the Progressives, and the LCC Vice Chair, Thomas Farrer, agreed with Lubbock that '… municipalities should undertake business transactions as little as possible …'.[45] Farrer, however, was recovering from illness in the south of France when the matter came up in the LCC chamber, and could offer Lubbock only moral support.[46]

Lubbock secured the support of the LCC's finance committee but the radicals put down a blocking amendment in the full LCC meeting where they had a majority, and the issue of deferred debt to finance the buyout of the water companies was held over until after the LCC elections in the spring.[47]

Sir John Lubbock attended his final meeting as Chairman of the LCC on 1 March 1892, but was persuaded to stay on as an alderman, on the understanding that he would not be expected to serve on committees. He recorded in his diary a sense of '… great relief'.[48]

Lubbock had played an important role in the establishment and formation of London's first unitary authority. In his speech at the Regent Street Polytechnic in

42 *The Times*, 5 October 1891, 7.
43 BL Add. 62683, 114.
44 J. Lubbock 1892a, 224.
45 BL Add. 49657, 175–6.
46 BL Add. 49658, 18.
47 BL Add. 62683, 115.
48 BL Add. 62683, 117.

September 1886, he had been one of the first to advocate the creation of such an authority, and he had gone on to top the poll in the first elections. He seems to have had a better record of attendance than any other member of the first LCC, having been present at 1,337 meetings and missed only 434 (even Lord Rosebery was present at only 931 meetings).[49]

The election of a truly radical majority, standing off against a Conservative government in the country, could so easily have dragged the infant LCC down into a morass of acrimony and mutual mudslinging. That this did not happen was due in no small part to Lubbock's ability to win the trust of both Progressives and Moderates, to use this trust to promote dialogue and broker compromise, seeing beyond the increasingly polarized rhetoric of what we now call 'left and right' to find solutions that worked. It was not only his tact and courtesy that enabled him to do this but, more fundamentally, his position as an outsider in both camps. Progressive leaders such as Lord Rosebery and Thomas Farrer were shrewd to recognize the value of this; no true Progressive would have been trusted either by the Moderates in the chamber or by the Conservatives in Parliament to the extent that Lubbock was, just as no Conservative would have been as acceptable to the Progressive majority, or to the Liberal Party (the break with Gladstone not withstanding).

Lubbock's non-partisan approach held significant popular appeal, and the argument was made for a 'municipal ticket' made up from 'the best men of both sides'. The journalist, William Stead, using rhetoric that was clearly inspired by Lubbock, argued that such a body would have the best chance of 'civilising London' , which he considered to be '… in patches almost as savage as New Guinea', citing Huxley as having '… distinctly asserted his preference for the lot of a Papuan over the lot of a dweller in the slums'.[50]

The municipal ticket, however, did not materialize. The Progressives went into the 1892 LCC election with a radical five point manifesto strongly influenced by socialists, including Sydney Webb,[51] calling for the removal of government restrictions on municipal spending; the municipalization of the water and gas supplies, tramways and docks; the readjustment of local taxation; the placing of the Metropolitan Police under LCC control; and the 'unity of London' (code for the removal of the special privileges of the City). Lubbock could not support this expansion of municipal government, fearing that the LCC would be '… entirely subordinated to the conduct of the most gigantic trading company the World has ever seen'.[52]

Lubbock's point, which was certainly not in tune with a resurgent Progressive movement intent on building a new Jerusalem at whatever cost, was that, whilst governments should govern and municipalities should direct resources and regulate activities, the delivery of goods and services (and especially the employment of large labour forces) was best left to the private sector. Lubbock, however, was certainly not alone in his opposition: his former opponent Frederic Harrison, far to the left of

49 W.T. Stead (ed.) 1892, 38.
50 Ibid., 10.
51 J. Davis 1989, 32–3.
52 W.T. Stead (ed.) 1892. 55–7.

Lubbock, and brother of the Moderates' bête noire, found himself unable to give his unqualified support to the Progressive platform:

> … I was too often unable to agree with the drastic schemes of the reforming majority, and they resented my warm opposition to a proposal to hand over control of the London Police Force to the Council and deprive the Imperial Government of the power even to secure the safety of Parliament and the public offices.[53]

Even the defining figure of mid-Victorian radicalism, Joseph Chamberlain, who, as Mayor of Birmingham, had shown what municipal socialism could look like in practice, with publicly funded gas supplies and the compulsory purchase of water companies, flinched at a philosophy that was openly based on the promotion of class conflict, and published a play, *The Game of Politics*, caricaturing the demands of the new radicals and painting an ugly picture of destructive class warfare.[54]

The London Moderates, meanwhile, published a wholly negative manifesto, criticizing the Progressives without articulating any alternative vision of their own.[55] Predictably, the elections delivered an increased majority to the Progressives: 83 councillors and 17 aldermen, as compared to 35 councillors and two aldermen for the Moderates (the 1889 figures had been 72 Progressive councillors and 18 aldermen, 46 Moderate councillors and one alderman).[56]

Lubbock did not allow his opposition to the Progressive manifesto to stand in the way of his loyalty to the LCC as a whole. When the Conservatives attacked the LCC for financial profligacy leading to rate increases, he was swift to respond that the rating increases had been used to support the creation of new parks, the expansion of the fire service and the installation of new drainage systems, supported by Moderates and Progressives alike.[57] He went on to present a more detailed defence of the record of the LCC in an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, heaping praise on the Progressive Lord Rosebery who had:

> … enjoyed not only the complete confidence of the majority, but the hearty respect and goodwill of the minority also, and whose firmness, kindness and tact were recognised by all.[58]

At the same time as defending the record of the LCC, however, Lubbock reiterated his concerns about the Progressives' proposals for the future. The government of London was, he argued, in danger of being subsumed by '… a joint-stock company, a sort of "London Limited", with the ratepayers as shareholders … '. This, he considered, would be 'very unwise', particularly since the Progressives were planning to use the economic weight of the LCC to distort the labour market:

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53 F. Harrison 1907, 241.
54 D. Judd 1993, 177–8.
55 W.T. Stead (ed.) 1892, 58–9.
56 G. Clifton 1989, 3.
57 *The Times*, 2 March 1892, 12.
58 J. Lubbock 1892c, 159.

> … we are also told that, whilst hours of labour are to be shortened and liberal wages are to be paid to those who work with their muscles, with reference to intellectual work, on the contrary, the Council shall jealously control the increase of large salaries.[59]

This resistance to the rising tide of municipal socialism was to become a defining feature of Lubbock's later political career. Even after relinquishing the Chairmanship, Lubbock was called upon to act as parliamentary spokesman for the LCC: he piloted through the London County Council (General Powers) Bill in the face of opposition from many Conservatives, enshrining the principle of 'Betterment' and authorizing substantial additional borrowing by the LCC (just over £3,000,000 in total, of which £750,000 was for the Blackwall Tunnel, £600,000 for mains drainage, £450,000 for street improvements and £420,000 for the working-class housing scheme that Lubbock personally opposed).[60] Even when, in the spring of 1895, the LCC elections delivered a clear Moderate majority in terms of the popular vote (143,779, as against 133,605 for the Progressives) but a hung council in terms of seats, Lubbock, whilst criticizing the 'absurdity' of the result,[61] remained willing to help where he could, and attempted (unsuccessfully as parliamentary arithmetic would have it) to push through legislation allowing the LCC to move into new and more appropriate premises.[62] On the London Water Bill, however, Lubbock could not make common cause with the Progressive project of municipalization, and clashed with Sydney Buxton on the floor of the House when he instead supported a Conservative proposal for limited regulation of the water companies, which Buxton described as '… a miserable little bill'.[63]

With another election scheduled for the spring of 1898, the London Progressives were developing their most radical manifesto yet. Slowly and subtly the meaning of the word 'progressive' had been reshaped like putty in their hands. For Liberals of Lubbock's generation, illuminated by the light that had shone out to the world from the Great Exhibition of 1851, 'progress' was led by the rapid advance of science, technology and commerce, with political structures changing only gradually in response. For the new radicals such as Sydney and Beatrice Webb, appalled by the gulf that they saw between this rhetoric of optimism and the squalid reality that they encountered in the slums of the metropolis, true 'progress' was defined in terms of the structure and functions of the body politic, and had more to do with the distribution of wealth and power than with the drive for economic growth through the embrace of technological change. Lubbock had watched these developments with a mixture of bafflement and paternalistic concern, probably assuming that they were part of a trend that would wane as quickly as it had waxed. Instinctively, he too was a progressive – he shared many of the aspirations of the new radicals – it was only their means that he doubted, convinced that these would, in all too many cases, have the opposite effect to that intended. As the nineteenth century drew towards its close,

59 Ibid., 170.
60 4Hansard 4, 941–3.
61 *The Times*, 9 March 1895, 16.
62 4Hansard 46, 671–87.
63 4Hansard 50, 652–3.

however, the Progressive star did not appear to be waning, and Lubbock became increasingly concerned at the direction in which it was leading people.

Chapter 15

‘Shoulder to Shoulder with the Gallant Men of Ulster’[1]

Lubbock’s continued support for the work of the London County Council (LCC), despite his personal reservations on many areas of policy, was noted in Liberal circles and, in May, he was feted by the City Liberal Club, organizing a dinner in his honour.[2] The constituency that sent Lubbock to Parliament, however, was not the LCC but the University of London, and, for once, an issue was emerging that was of direct relevance to the university. Many academics shared a long-standing aspiration to establish a ‘teaching University’ in London (the University of London, it was argued, was merely an ‘examining University’ and, as such, not of equivalent status to Oxford, Cambridge, or indeed the civic universities that were springing up in provincial centres such as Manchester, Birmingham and Bristol). At the beginning of 1892 a proposal had been laid before Parliament for the establishment of the ‘Albert University’. Despite having the support of University College, King’s College and the eight London Medical Schools, all of which had uneasy relations with the University of London (the Colleges had no formal place in the governance of the University), and the endorsement of a Royal Commission[3] the idea had come to nothing, until the Gresham Foundation, funded by a long-standing endowment and governed jointly by the Corporation of the City of London and the Mercers’ Company, came forward with a promise of funding and a building, on condition that the institution be styled the Gresham University rather than the Albert University. The possibility that the great London Colleges would break away from the University of London became a real one, and was winning influential support. Lubbock led a large deputation to lobby Lord Salisbury against the idea, and Salisbury responded by referring the matter to another Royal Commission, chaired by Lord Cowper.

Lubbock may have intended to slow down when he stepped down from the Chair of the LCC, but the perception of his friends was that he still did not have much time for them. Huxley, Tyndall and Hooker may have been a little jaundiced, languishing in retirement with too much time on their hands, but they regretted the slow decline of the X-Club, and attached at least some of the blame for this to what they saw as Lubbock’s lack of commitment. At the end of April, Hooker wrote to Tyndall:

1 Lubbock, cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 18–19. (The full quote is given below.)
2 *The Times*, 12 May 1892, 9.
3 S. Marriott 1981, 26.

> I fear that our poor X Club is on its last legs. Frankland is the only dependable attendant. Spencer is always ill, or thinks he is, and that is as bad. Huxley lives too far off, and it is always a toss up whether Lubbock can or will come.[4]

He wrote in similar vein to Huxley:

> And now about the X. The amount of correspondence for every meeting held indicates the feeble hold it has upon its members: in most cases of incapacity, but in such a case as Lubbock's – mere convenience … I am coming to the conclusion that at our ages these clubs are an anachronism.[5]

The following month Hooker wrote again to Huxley:

> I have lost all patience with the X Club … The truth is that, except Frankland, we are all crippled by circumstances of health or distance, or in Lubbock's case, of other demands.[6]

These 'other demands' may have been as much those of a young wife and family as those imposed by civic duty, and Alice Lubbock seems to have been part of the problem as far as Hooker and Huxley were concerned. Hooker and his wife did visit High Elms in 1893, but were less than impressed by Alice's hospitality, Hooker commenting to Huxley that 'Her indifference to her guests touches the sublime.' Huxley evidently was not surprised, and had already decided to stay away from High Elms:

> I quite agree about High Elms – I can't and won't stand my Lady – having been used in my society days to very different behaviour from her betters.[7]

The X-Club was disintegrating, and would be dealt a further blow later that year with the death of John Tyndall: he had been ill and on medication for several years, and died of an accidental overdose administered by his wife, Louisa.

Alice managed to persuade her husband to join her for a yachting trip around the Isle of Wight in June, but he was back in London at the end of the month for another public engagement, a Congress of Chambers of Commerce from around the Empire, which he was hosting in his capacity as President of the London Chamber of Commerce. Lubbock presided over the first three days of business and hosted a grand reception for 1,200 guests at the Natural History Museum.[8] Much of the debate centred around 'free trade' versus 'fair trade', laying bare some of the contradictions at the heart of the late-Victorian world view. On the one hand, liberals such as Lubbock, in common with most of the commercial class to which he belonged, had inherited from their parents an unshakeable belief in free trade. On the other hand, having embraced the idea of Empire, there was a natural tendency towards some form of commercial preference between the colonies and the mother country. A motion

4 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2791.
5 ICL HP3, 389–94.
6 ICL HP3, 391.
7 ICL HP2, 433–6.
8 The *Chamber of Commerce Journal*, Supplement to vol. 11, 125.

in favour of closer commercial union with the colonies was carried unanimously on the first day of the congress: Lubbock's brother, Nevile, responding on behalf of the London Chamber, put down a resolution that such a union should be on the basis of free trade. When this was then amended to read 'free trade with all the World', the contradiction became too obvious to ignore, but an explicit amendment in favour of differential duties was rejected, and, in a glorious piece of political fudge, 'free trade with all the World' was replaced by 'freer trade with all the World'.[9] Imperialism may originally have been a Tory idea but, by the final decade of the century, it was difficult to distinguish Tory from Liberal approaches to Empire. The Liberal Lord Dunraven, writing in 1891, had argued that 'perfect free exchange' was impossible, and that preferential treatment in the context of a large federated entity such as the Empire was the only vehicle whereby the 'binding principle of free trade' could be applied (this is not so very different from the modern arguments for a European single market, but is poles apart from the concept of 'free trade' as it would have been understood in Lubbock's father's generation).[10] The principle of 'federation', including an element of political union, had been accepted by politicians as disparate as the Tory W.H. Smith and the Progressive Liberal, Lord Rosebery, as early as 1884.[11]

As Lubbock sat presiding over the congress, someone handed up to him a slip of paper with an important piece of news – Parliament had been dissolved. The general election that followed was almost too close to call: the Liberals won 273 seats, the Conservatives 269; but the Irish Home Rulers won 81 seats, compared to 46 for the Liberal Unionists. Against all the odds, and much to the irritation of a Queen who hated his rhetorical populism, Gladstone was back in Downing Street but, dependent for the survival of his administration on the votes of Irish Nationalists, he was not in a position to back down on Home Rule even if he had wanted to.[12] Nor was Home Rule the only tension at the heart of the new administration. At the age of 83, the 'Grand Old Man' of British politics had seen his political obituary written time and time again, and cannot have expected a fourth term as Prime Minister. He was no longer the master of his party, and was not even in sympathy, any more than Lubbock was, with everything that the Liberal Party of the 1890s had come to stand for. This he admitted, with impetuous, perhaps foolish, candour, in a letter to the Queen. He was concerned, in particular, with the '... widening of that gap, or chasm, in opinion' which separated '… the upper and more powerful from the more numerous classes of the community'. The Whig elements having deserted the Liberal Party over Home Rule, the party was being pushed in an increasingly radical and democratic direction, something that Gladstone saw as '… a very serious mischief', which had been '… aggravated largely by the prolongation and intensity of the Irish question'.[13] Gladstone's response was to deal directly with the Home Rule issue as quickly as

9 BL Add. 62683, 119.
10 Lord Dunraven 1891.
11 C. Tupper 1891.
12 R. Jenkins 1995, 584.
13 Ibid., 595–6.

possible, hoping that the old Liberal Party would then reunite, the Whigs once again providing a counterweight to the radicals.

The chasm to which Gladstone referred, however, was not simply an artefact of the bitter divisions over Ireland. There was a much more fundamental gap opening up between the Liberalism of the 1890s, increasingly engaging in class struggle on the side of the poorer sections of the community, and that of the 1860s, 70s and 80s, which had always insisted on the commonality of interests between all classes. Lubbock and those closest to him may have disagreed with Gladstone on the Irish question, but they absolutely shared his broader concerns about the direction in which their old party was being taken by a younger generation of politicians and social reformers. The previous year Hooker had written to Tyndall, lamenting both the general trends in British politics and the attitude of the masses towards the Irish question:

> It makes one weary of life to see the spread of democracy and socialism … You may divide the masses into two, one half cannot, and the other will not, see the true state of things in Ireland.[14]

Huxley, meanwhile, had published an article entitled 'Capital, the Mother of Labour' criticizing the economic philosophy of the 'New Liberalism' and attempting to uphold the older Liberal creed of Adam Smith:

> … capital and labour are necessarily close allies: capital is never a product of human labour alone; it exists apart from human labour; it is the necessary antecedent of labour; and it furnishes the materials on which labour is employed … The claim of labour to the total result of operations which are rendered possible only by capital is simply an a priori iniquity.[15]

Although Huxley was responding to Henry George's book, *Progress and Poverty*,[16] it is impossible to read his comments without seeing a phantom lurking behind them – a large, bearded German phantom, whose works can hardly have been completely unfamiliar to Huxley, but the full significance of which may, as yet, have been unclear.

The uncomfortable position in which Lubbock found himself, as an 1860s progressive overtaken by the radicalism of a new age, did not stand in the way of his unanimous re-election as MP for the University of London, and he returned to the Commons ready to continue his long-standing campaigns on everything from the reduction of shop hours, the reform of the school curriculum and the preservation of the union of Great Britain and Ireland.

During the autumn of 1892, Lubbock was able to pursue some of his interests outside of politics. In October he visited Bristol, opening a new science building at the grammar school and highlighting the importance of science in the school

14 RI JT/1/TYP/8, 2782.
15 T.H. Huxley 1890, 532.
16 H. George 1881.

curriculum.[17] Citing the London Chamber of Commerce examination scheme as an example, he pointed optimistically to its growth. In the second round of examinations held in 1891, the number of candidates had gone up from 65 to 86, and the pass rate had improved from 26 to 49 per cent.[18] This may represent only a small commercial elite – those destined to become the chief clerks in the largest banks and finance houses of the City – but Lubbock's vision of a broadened curriculum, of a commercial class enlightened by science and conversant in French and German, which had made so little progress in Parliament during his political career of more than 20 years, was now being carried forward in a different way.

Lubbock had, for several years, been struggling to find time to work on two new books, both of which had finally gone to print in the second half of 1892. The first of these was *The Beauties of Nature*, a book aimed at a popular readership, building on the success of *The Pleasures of Life*, with its exhortation to the masses to forego transient material pleasures in favour of the deeper and more innocent joys to be derived from an appreciation of the countryside:

> The World we live in is a fairyland of exquisite beauty, our very existence is a miracle in itself, and yet few of us enjoy as we might, and none, as yet, appreciate fully, the beauties and wonders which surround us … The love of nature … helps us greatly to keep ourselves free from those mean and petty cares which interfere so much with calm and peace of mind. It turns every ordinary walk into a morning or evening sacrifice, and brightens life until it becomes almost like a fairy tale.[19]

Each season, he insisted, had its own charm and beauty – beauties that he had himself enjoyed at High Elms from month to month over his 58 years and which were, thanks to the public parks that were springing up all over the country, increasingly accessible to everyone: the pure snow, the bright fireside and the gradually lengthening days in winter; the first butterflies, the opening buds, the young leaves and flowers of spring; the song of birds and the sweet new mown hay in the summer; and the golden grain, the fruit and turning leaves of autumn.[20] Although the book would be translated into many languages and sold all over the world, the particular vision of nature on which it is based has its roots very firmly planted in the soil of the garden of England and, more specifically, on the gently rolling hills and in the deciduous woodlands between Downe and Farnborough.

Drawing on his earlier scientific work on entomology, animal behaviour and botany, and even on his father's study of astronomy, Lubbock's aim in this book was to provide those readers who might never open a more seriously scientific volume such as *Ants, Bees and Wasps* or *The Senses of Animals* with just enough science, in varied bite-sized chunks, to enhance their enjoyment of the countryside.

Returning to a theme that he had taken up in a speech in the House of Commons 20 years previously,[21] Lubbock anticipated modern environmental concerns by

17 *The Times*, 22 October 1892, 13.
18 The *Chamber of Commerce Journal*, 10, No. 114, 206.
19 J. Lubbock 1892d, 3–7.
20 Ibid., 35.
21 3Hansard 216, 734.

pointing out that the 'fairyland of exquisite beauty' that he was entreating his readers to enjoy might be under threat from the very technological progress that was giving them the leisure time to do so:

> The reckless and wanton destruction of forests has ruined some of the richest countries on earth. Syria and Asia Minor, Palestine and the North of Africa, were once far more populous than they are at present. They were once lands 'flowing with milk and honey', according to the picturesque language of the Bible, but are now in many places reduced to dust and ashes. Why is there this melancholy change? Why have deserts replaced cities? It is mainly owing to the ruthless destruction of the trees … Even nearer home a similar process may be witnessed. Two French Departments – the Hautes and Basses Alpes – are being gradually reduced to ruin by the destruction of the forests.[22]

Lubbock was one of the earliest celebrities of popular natural history, but it was precisely this status that could lead publishers to miscalculate, making the assumption that any book with Lubbock's name on the jacket would automatically be a block-busting sell-out. If volumes such as *Ants, Bees and Wasps* and *The Senses of Animals* appealed necessarily to a more scientifically literate general readership than *The Beauties of Nature*, many of Lubbock's scientific articles and monographs were really only accessible to a very select community of fellow researchers. The second book that Lubbock completed in 1892 was *A Contribution to our Knowledge of Seedlings*.[23] Dedicated to his old friend, the doyen of British botany, Sir Joseph Hooker, the work was a two-volume, 1,200-page magnum opus on the embryology of plants, with 684 figures (most of them drawn by Lubbock himself) illustrating the process of germination in almost as many species. It is a work of painstaking empirical observation and description, with little theoretical content: functionality of form is assumed, but the Darwinian basis of the argument is implicit rather than explicit. The book won Lubbock the admiration of his fellow researchers (the botanist, A.C. Seward described it as '… the most useful and original of [Lubbock's] contributions to the science'[24]), but it did not win for his publishers much in the way of profit and, within a year of publication, they were writing to Lubbock to express their concern:

> … we send you the account of the book on seedlings which, you will observe, shows a considerable loss, and a loss which we fear will never be recovered unless you carry out a plan which we believe has been already discussed between you and Mr Paul, namely to issue a readable edition of the book from which the purely scientific matter is omitted.[25]

The 'Popular Edition' was eventually published in 1896, but it was never truly popular. There was, in truth, very little in the book other than 'purely scientific matter', so that omitting it was more than a little difficult.

The Home Rule issue still loomed large, and Lubbock had been consulting with the other leading Liberal Unionists at the end of 1892 about tactics in the coming

22 J. Lubbock 1892d, 183.
23 J. Lubbock 1892b.
24 A.C. Seward 1924, 186.
25 BL Add. 49681A, 70–71.

debate. When Gladstone introduced the new Home Rule Bill in February 1893, he was, of course, aware that opinion within the island of Ireland was not united, and that, in particular, the Protestants of Ulster were implacably opposed. He had even expressed the hope that they would recant, and come together to form '… a noble and glorious union with the rest of their fellow countrymen'. Lubbock had no difficulty in turning this on its head:

> They did form now a noble and glorious unity with their fellow countrymen. We were their fellow countrymen, and we meant to remain so.[26]

Opinion in the City of London was strongly against Home Rule and, at a public meeting in March addressed by both Lubbock and Chamberlain, a unanimous resolution was passed opposing it.[27]

On most political issues, Lubbock's style was measured and rational: he was so often the patient seeker after compromise. Irish Home Rule, however, was one of the few issues that gripped him on a visceral level, and his speech to the Guildhall crowd was rhetorical to the point of being inflammatory:

> We, in the City of London, stand shoulder to shoulder with the gallant men of Ulster … Liberal Unionists are sometimes called traitors and deserters. There may be treason somewhere, but it is not among the Unionists. We have not deserted our principles or betrayed our country …
>
> I will conclude in the noble words of Milton, 'O thou, who of thy free grace didst build up this Britannic Empire to a glorious and enviable height, with all her daughter islands about her, stay us in this felicity', and grant, I will add, that we may hand down to our children, whole and unimpaired, the glorious inheritance bequeathed to us by our fathers.[28]

It was not only as a politician that Lubbock could make the case against Home Rule – he could also do so as a banker. In June he again wrote to *The Times*, pointing out the negative impact that the debate was having on the Irish economy. In just over a year, the value of shares in Irish banks had fallen from £18,500,000 to under £17,000,000, a loss to investors of £1.5 million, which he attributed to fear of the Home Rule Bill.[29]

Politically, Lubbock fought a rearguard action, arguing (unsuccessfully) for a reduction in the number of Irish MPs to 40, in line, not with the size of the population, but rather with the scale of the contribution that would be made by Ireland to imperial funds under the Home Rule proposal. Without such a reduction, he insisted, British MPs would be 'committing an act of political suicide', placing the whole of the United Kingdom '… in the power of Ireland' so that 'The Ministry of Great Britain will be made, by our own act, the tools and slaves of the Irish National League'.

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26 4Hansard 8, 1441.
27 BL Add. 62683, 123.
28 Cited by H. Hutchinson 1914, 2, 18–19.
29 *The Times*, 15 June 1893, 4.

> This Bill is indeed a great surrender. You are betraying the destinies of our country into the hands of men who have told us over and over again that they have no love for us … The spirit of the country will never brook it. We have been accustomed to rule, not to be ruled; to govern, not to obey … .[30]

The language of debate was becoming increasingly vitriolic on both sides, and matters came to a head on the evening of 27 July, as Lubbock noted in his diary:

> Went down to vote … and there was a very tumultuous scene – T.P. O' Connor calling Chamberlain Judas, and a real fist fight. The Home Rulers, and some Gladstonians (especially Logan) behaving disgracefully.[31]

Despite the angry scenes, the Home Rule Bill was given its third reading in the Commons on 1 September 1893, with a majority of 34. Less than a week later it was comprehensively (and predictably) rejected by the Lords. This was the end of the line. The solution to the Irish question that Gladstone had been working towards for more than ten years was blown out of the water. Quite how subsequent history would have worked out had it passed into law: whether there would have been the Easter Rising, the Irish civil war, the 'Troubles' of the later twentieth century, or perhaps some other upheaval, such as a civil war between Ulster and the rest of Ireland, is unknowable. Lubbock doubtless believed that the permanent integrity of the Union of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland had been assured; Gladstone somehow knew that this was not the case. Within a few months, Gladstone had resigned for the last time as Prime Minister, Lubbock's old LCC ally, Lord Rosebery, had replaced him, and the 'Irish Question' was off the political agenda for a generation. There was, however, no rapprochement between the former Gladstonians and the Liberal Unionists: the schism was by this time too wide, both in terms of policy and personal relationships, with bitter feelings of betrayal on both sides.

The 'Irish Question' and the Union may have dominated Lubbock's public life throughout 1892 and 1893, as they dominated the British political scene more generally, but there was some time, however limited, for his other established public campaigns. In March 1893 he had spoken on education in Poplar, sharing a platform with the local MP, Sydney Buxton, now Undersecretary for the Colonies. The two men were united as much in grief as by the political agenda – Buxton's wife, Lubbock's daughter Constance, had died suddenly and unexpectedly the previous November.[32] Lubbock felt her loss keenly, but dealt with grief as he always had done, by throwing himself into his public life. Some years earlier, as he had grieved for Constance's mother, Ellen, he had struggled to bring in the Ancient Monuments Act, seeing it, in a sense, as a memorial to her, a reflection of the interest in archaeology that they had shared. Now he committed himself with renewed determination to the shop hours campaign, of which Constance had been a strong supporter. He even remembered the tactical ploy that had ultimately brought him success with the Ancient Monuments Act – introducing it not as a private member's bill, which could be blocked by a

30 4Hansard 14, 1288–90.
31 BL Add. 62683, 125.
32 BL Add. 62683, 121–3.

single dissentient voice, but as a resolution, calling upon the government to act. The government allowed a free vote – Herbert Asquith, as Home Secretary, applauding the principle of Lubbock's proposal but expressing doubts as to the practicality of a fixed limit on hours. The resolution was passed unanimously but, despite his earlier warm words, Asquith did not find government time to translate these into legislative reality. The campaign would have to go on.[33]

In the meantime, however, there were other issues to focus on. As President of the London Chamber of Commerce, Lubbock had put a great deal of effort into the establishment of Boards of Arbitration for the settlement of labour disputes and, when Mr Cremer, the MP for Shoreditch Haggerston, put down a motion calling on the government to enter into a Treaty of Arbitration with America (undertaking to settle any disputes between the two countries by arbitration rather than by war), he lent his enthusiastic support:

> The carnage, suffering and misery which war entailed were terrible to contemplate, and constituted an irresistible argument in favour of arbitration … There might be some excuse for barbarous tribes who settled their disputes by brute force, but that civilised nations should do so was marvellous, and not only repugnant to our moral, but also to our common sense … .[34]

It was repugnant to common sense because of the huge expenditure that arose from preparations for war, and the debts that were accrued as a result. A third of national income, he argued, was spent on preparations for future wars, and a further third repaying the debt from past ones, leaving only one third for the government of the country. He could even relate it directly to the issue closest to his heart at that point in time – that of working hours:

> The unnecessary Army and Navy expenditure compelled every man and woman in Europe to work an hour a day more than they otherwise need.[35]

It was an opportunity for Lubbock both to reconnect with his earlier, traditionally Liberal, attitude to war and trade, as expressed in his 1879 papers on Marine Insurances and the Declaration of Paris,[36] and to make the connection between his concerns for industrial and international relations. It was also relatively uncontroversial, particularly given the close and cordial relations between Britain and America, making war between them almost inconceivable (a proposal for a Treaty of Arbitration with Germany, France or Russia might not have been so well received). It even provided the occasion for a thaw in Lubbock's strained relationship with Gladstone who lauded the contributions of Lubbock and Cremer as '… the speeches of men of humanity, the speeches of men of enlightenment, and the speeches, also, of sober-minded men of business'.[37]

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33 4Hansard 10, 731–65; 4Hansard 11, 1360.
34 4Hansard 13, 1246.
35 4Hansard 13, 1247–8.
36 J. Lubbock 1879d, i.
37 4Hansard 13, 1250.

Lubbock had, for a number of years, suffered from gout, and in 1893 he found it more difficult to shake off than ever before. He decided that the only solution was to 'pair' with a non-active MP and take time out in Switzerland where, it was hoped, the climate would be more sympathetic.[38]

Back in England in January 1894, the early closing campaign went on, and Lubbock addressed a rally in Liverpool, staying with the Lord Mayor, and the George Hall was crowded with more than 4,000 people, all supporting Lubbock's drive for shorter working hours. Momentum for the campaign was clearly building up in the country, if not in Parliament.[39]

Shortly afterwards, the Lubbocks set off for a trip to Paris in the company of another prominent banking family, the Hambros. They took advantage of the opportunity for a holiday – Lubbock took Alice to see Sarah Bernhardt perform on stage, but he was not impressed – the plot, he noted, was 'moral enough', but 'her activity in the love scenes so realistic as to be quite the reverse'.[40]

There was, however, a more serious purpose to the visit. Lubbock and Hambro had been deputed by the London financial community to negotiate with their French and German counterparts concerning the financial affairs of Greece. The Greek government had been declared bankrupt the previous year, and had responded by defaulting on the interest owed to foreign investors. Those meeting in Paris to agree a way forward were all under strong pressure from institutional and individual investors to recover money from the Greek government, but Lubbock knew that their case was weak, the terms of the borrowing having been such as to make default almost inevitable.[41] Lubbock's old friend, Sir Mountstewart Grant-Duff, was deputed to join French and German representatives in negotiations with the Greek government, but they would come home empty-handed, provoking a wider crisis in world financial markets, in which Lubbock would inevitably become embroiled.

Politically, an era was passing. Lubbock had never known a Liberal Party without Gladstone and, despite the rift between them, when Gladstone finally stepped down as an MP in May 1894 (he had first been elected in 1833, a year before Lubbock was born), it was natural that Lubbock should attend his retirement party at the National Liberal Club, and also that he should be among those leading the tributes to him on the floor of the House of Commons, setting aside the issues that divided them, and focussing instead on Gladstone's contribution to the promotion of international peace.[42]

With the Liberal Party finally emerging from the shadow of Gladstone's titanic presence, it was left to men such as Lubbock to express the concerns that the 'Grand Old Man' had raised in his letter to the Queen, and to resist the rising tide of the 'New Liberalism'. In May 1894, Lubbock spoke for the first time against the fundamental

38 BL Add. 62683, 125.
39 BL Add. 62683, 127.
40 BL Add. 62683, 128.
41 BL Add. 62684, 8; J. Levandis 1944, 55.
42 B. Mallet 1924, 60.

principles of a budget presented by a Liberal Chancellor, Lord Harcourt, objecting in principle to the introduction of graduated death duties.[43]

But the principle of equality through redistribution, which informed Harcourt's death duty proposals, along with much of the Progressive platform on the LCC, was being set forth in scientific as well as political fora. When, in 1860, Lubbock had spoken on evolution at the Oxford meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the 26 year old had taken the side (as he saw it) of the progressive Darwinian 'heretics' against the dead weight of Wilberforce's Anglican establishment. But when, in the autumn of 1894, the British Association returned to the city, the 60 year old found himself on the side of the establishment, resisting a new set of 'heretics' (as he saw them) under the leadership of the 35-year-old Sidney Webb. Webb sought to marshal economic theory in support of the LCC's social platform, insisting that the notion of an obligatory law of competition, applied arbitrarily so as to 'degrade the standard of life of the whole community' was '… in flat defiance' of the writings of economists such as Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill.[44]

Webb referred to the absurdity of a Poor Law Board having to rescue from starvation a seamstress employed by its own contractors to make workshop clothing '… at rates insufficient to keep body and soul together', and compared the regulation of wage rates by the LCC to other 'legitimate restrictions for the public good', including the Factory Acts, Mines Regulation Acts and Education Acts. On municipal industry, he argued that this was often cheaper than employing contractors, pointing out that the cleaning of London's bridges by the LCC workforce had delivered a saving of more than a shilling per square yard over the price previously paid to a commercial cleaning company.[45]

Lubbock did not confront Webb directly in Oxford, as he had confronted Wilberforce 34 years previously (it was certainly not his style as a mature man – even in 1860 he had been far more measured in his tone than Huxley or Hooker), but waited until October, when he was due to give his address as President of the International Institute of Sociology in Paris. He quoted Herbert Spencer as emphasizing the 'natural and gradual' process of progressive change in human society, and the evolution '… from warfare in the strict sense to industrial warfare'. He referred to '… the barrenness and ruinous effect of strikes' and pointed instead to arbitration and conciliation as the best means of settling labour disputes.[46] But commercial competition, that civilizing force that had, he thought, made the 'barbarity and wastefulness' of war forever redundant, was the very engine of progress, and any attempt to stifle it in the name of equality was bound to be counterproductive. The rules of that competition could be debated, changed and refined – that was the whole point of civilization, and it was precisely what Lubbock as a politician had always sought do: restricting working hours, promoting financial transparency in companies, introducing statutory regulation of professions such as dentistry; but for

43 4Hansard 24, 548–52.
44 S. Webb 1894, 5.
45 Ibid., 6–7.
46 *The Times*, 3 October 1894, 7.

a public authority, inspired by a political vision rather than by the need to make a profit, itself to engage in commercial activities, whether building houses, supplying electricity or water, or cleaning bridges, was tantamount to throwing a spanner in the engine of progress. Webb's vision was, for Lubbock, quite simply bad politics built on a foundation of bad economic science.

Chapter 16

The Sins of Saint Lubbock

Sir John Lubbock's book, *The Use of Life*, was published in October 1894. It consciously built upon the themes developed in *The Pleasures of Life*, and attempted to respond to some of the criticisms of the earlier book:

> I am sometimes accused of being optimistic. But I have never ignored or denied the troubles and sorrows of life: I have never said that men are happy, only that they might be; that if they are not so, the fault is generally their own; that most of us throw away far more happiness than we enjoy.[1]

As in the earlier book, he encouraged his readers to take care of their bodies and cultivate their minds, and looked forward to technological advances that would free up more time and create more opportunities for this:

> We labour from morning to night and yet, if we could but avail ourselves more fully of the properties of matter and the forces of nature, it is probable that an hour or two would fully satisfy all our bodily and reasonable wants, and leave us ample time for the cultivation of the mind and the affections.[2]

Lubbock took particular exception to the view exemplified by these lines from Cowper: 'The path of sorrow, and that path alone, leads to the land where sorrow is unknown'. Against this, Lubbock opposed the insistence, clearly grounded in his ongoing Anglican belief, that:

> We may be sure that the Creator would not have made all nature beauty to the eye, and music to the ear, if we had not been meant to enjoy it thoroughly.[3]

As the X-Club was disintegrating, so was Huxley's influence on Lubbock, and he was cheerfully returning to the natural theology that he had learned from his mother, and which had influenced some of his earlier scientific papers.[4] Lubbock's natural theology, however, allowed room for doubt, and for an indefinite definition of the divine. 'The man of science who doubts', he insisted, '… does so in no scoffing spirit' – such doubt was an expression '… not of disdain, but of reverence'. And in illustration of this, he quoted Tyndall:

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1 J. Lubbock 1894, 2.
2 Ibid., 7–10.
3 Ibid., 15–16.
4 For example, J. Lubbock 1857c.

> When I attempt … to give the Power which I see manifested in the Universe an objective form, personal or otherwise, it slips away from me, declining all intellectual manipulation. I dare not use the pronoun 'He' regarding it; I dare not call it a 'Mind'; I refuse to call it even a 'Cause'. Its mystery overshadows me.

This, Lubbock thought, was '… not far removed from the Church of Arnold and Maurice, Kingsley, Stanley and Jowett' – the Church of England was 'gradually approximating to this ideal', and the more it did so, the stronger he believed it would grow.[5]

The pages of *The Use of Life* are filled with the sort of practical advice that one might have expected a Victorian father to give to his son, on subjects ranging from tact, to finances, to health:

> Try to meet the wishes of others as far as you rightly and wisely can; but do not be afraid to say 'no' … Many a man has been ruined because he could not do so … Never try to show your own superiority: few things annoy people more than being made to feel small.[6]

> Economy for the mere sake of money is no doubt mean, but economy for the sake of independence is right and manly … Whatever you do, then, live within your income. Save something, however little, every year. But above all things do not run into debt … It is not too strong to say that debt is slavery.[7]

> We bring many diseases on ourselves by errors of diet. The word drink is often used as synonymous with Alcohol – the great curse of northern nations … Honest water never made anyone a sinner, but crime may almost be said to be concentrated alcohol … .[8]

The Stoicism that Lubbock drew from the works of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius is less explicit as the basis of *The Use of Life* than it had been in *The Pleasures* but it is very much present in the background, in the emphasis on the Victorian conceptualization of 'manliness', and in its oft-repeated insistence that 'Moderation is strength, not weakness; it implies self command and self-control.'[9]

Some of the advice that Lubbock offered to his readers is very clearly based on his own personal attitudes to, and experiences of life:

> Never waste anything, but, above all, never waste time. Today comes but once and never returns. Time is one of Heaven's richest gifts; and, once lost, is irrecoverable.[10]

> Cicero said that what was required was first audacity, what was second was audacity, and what was third was audacity. Self-confidence is no doubt useful, but it would be more correct to say that what was wanted was firstly perseverance, secondly perseverance and thirdly perseverance.[11]

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5 J. Lubbock 1894, 222–4.
6 Ibid., 24–35.
7 Ibid., 40–41.
8 Ibid., 79.
9 Ibid., 82.
10 Ibid., 199.
11 Ibid., 202.

Lubbock included chapters on 'Patriotism' and 'Citizenship', which provide some insights into the philosophy that underpinned his attitudes to the Union and Empire.

> The real Imperial spirit is not one of vainglory, but of just pride in the extension of our language and literature; of our people and our commerce … of a deep sense of the great responsibility thus imposed on us.[12]

As with *The Pleasures*, *The Use of Life* was seen by some professional critics as trite, predictable and unoriginal:

> Sir John Lubbock is an able man, an amiable man, a man of wide experience, a well-read man, and a man who keeps a well-filled commonplace book and makes good use of it. Given these qualifications, it is not difficult to determine the character of his latest work entitled THE USE OF LIFE … a series of chapters full of wise saws and modern instances, quite unimpeachable, and often very apposite, but rarely very novel or very profound … his philosophy is kindly and quite wholesome, albeit somewhat trite.[13]

As also with *The Pleasures*, however, copies sold like hot cakes, and translations were soon appearing in the languages of the world: French (seven editions), German, Dutch, Polish, Bohemian, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Arabic (five editions), Marathi, Gujerati, Japanese (six editions), Danish, Russian, Armenian, Estonian.[14]

Lubbock had no intention of forgetting his own advice on the importance of being able to say 'no', at least as far as the Gresham University proposals were concerned. The Cowper Commission favoured the continued exclusive status of the University of London, but on condition that it adopted a federal constitution, with an Academic Council elected by the teaching staff in the constituent colleges. Meanwhile, a campaign had been set up, under the title of the 'Association for the Promotion of a Professorial University for London' and, when it held its first meeting on 3 May 1894, the chair was taken by none other than Thomas Henry Huxley.[15] Although he had opposed the original Gresham scheme,[16] concerned that it would remove opportunities from those who could not afford full-time study, the commission had addressed these concerns, and Huxley was easily convinced of the virtues of putting more academic power in the hands of professional teachers. By the beginning of 1895, Huxley (buoyed up by the support of the Senate, of which he was a member, of Convocation, as expressed in annual meetings, and of the principals of the colleges) felt confident enough to lead a delegation to see Lord Rosebery in Downing Street, to lobby in favour of the Gresham scheme.[17]

Lubbock feared that a new and untested role, as a local university for London, would be privileged over the established and successful role of the University of

12 Ibid., 158–9.
13 *The Times*, 11 October 1894, 8.
14 H. Hutchinson 1914, 2, 45.
15 Ibid., 46.
16 Cited by L. Huxley 1903, 2, 350.
17 UoLSA RO 1/13/2, 59; UoLSA 1/13/3, 2–3.

London as an examining body for the nation and Empire,[18] but the lobbying group that Lubbock put together to oppose the move was styled the 'Gresham Scheme Amendment Committee', suggesting that even he sensed the likelihood of defeat.

When, in June, Lord Rosebery asked the Queen to dissolve Parliament, Lubbock pitched his election address carefully, reaching out to those who were calling for reform of the University of London by accepting publicly that a compromise might, after all, be found between the aspiration of teachers for academic influence and the need to protect the distinctive mission of the University.[19] He insisted, however, that his constituents should have a veto over any scheme, and this brought Lubbock into direct confrontation with many of those who had been his closest supporters. The President of the Royal Society, Lord Kelvin, his own election agent, Michael Foster, Edward Frankland, and such scientific luminaries as Joseph Lister and J. Norman Lockyer, all prevailed on him to change his mind, but to no effect.[20]

Despite the hot water, and the attempt by two radicals to build momentum around their own candidacy, the final election was uncontested and, in July 1895, Lubbock was returned as MP for the University of London without having to give way on what for him was the key issue of principle.

Friendships, however, had been strained to breaking point. The University of London question was just the latest in a long sequence of differences between Lubbock and his old friend, Thomas Henry Huxley. Lubbock's wide-ranging interests, contrasting with Huxley's single-minded pursuit of science, had irritated the older man as, probably, had Lubbock's vaguely defined but nonetheless heartfelt adherence to Anglicanism in the face of Huxley's embrace of agnosticism.[21] The steely frostiness between Alice Lubbock and the X-Club circle, so different from the joyful delight that the first Lady Lubbock had taken in their company, can only have added to the estrangement. Despite his objections to the original Gresham scheme, it was as natural for Huxley, the self-made man of science who had earned his living by teaching and struggled to make his influence felt, to support the proposal to put teachers at the centre of academic policy making, as it was for Lubbock, the man of independent means who had, to all intents and purposes, inherited the Vice Chancellorship of the University of London from his father, to oppose it. It is telling that, when Huxley died of kidney failure on 29 June 1895, Lubbock made no reference to this in his diary. When Darwin, Spottiswoode and Tyndall had died, Lubbock had penned fond memories and expressions of sadness. For Huxley, there was nothing. Although it has been suggested[22] that the public argument between Huxley and Herbert Spencer played out in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century* and the *Daily Telegraph* at the beginning of 1890 was '… the only serious rift' to have divided the X-Club, the private rift between Huxley and Lubbock may have been a deeper one; Huxley and Spencer were at least reconciled in life, Lubbock and Huxley appear not to have been. On at least one issue, however, Huxley and Lubbock seem

18 Anon. 1884.
19 BL Add. 49661, 68.
20 BL Add. 49661, 87–8.
21 T.H. Huxley 1889a, b.
22 J. V. Jensen 1972.

to have been in agreement. A few months before his death, Huxley was quoted in the pages of *Science Gossip* as deploring the use of the term 'scientist':

> To anyone who respects the English language, I would think 'scientist' must be about as pleasing a word as 'electrocution'. I sincerely trust you will not allow the pages of Science Gossip to be defiled by it.

Other authorities were invited to make their views known. Alfred Russell Wallace regarded the word as '… a very useful American term', and commended its use, but Lubbock agreed with Huxley:

> I quite concur with you as to the word 'scientist', and have never used it myself. Why not retain the old word 'philosopher'?[23]

For those historians of science who have sought to understand Huxley's career primarily in terms of the professionalization of science,[24] it might be easy to conceptualize his rift with Lubbock as just one more facet of his struggle against the pre-eminence of amateur 'gentlemen of science' reliant on independent means. The rift between the two men really does seem, however, to have been more personal than philosophical, and they shared a vision of science informing all aspects of the contemporary world view, including the moral dimension, rather than as a merely technical exercise providing solutions to practical problems. And within this vision, the worth of a scientific writer was to be judged by the quality of his writing, not by his status as an amateur or a professional.[25]

The 1895 general election had returned a narrow Conservative majority but, with 50 Liberal Unionist MPs in the House of Commons, the Conservative leader, Lord Salisbury, could comfortably govern for so long as he could count on their support. Determined to shore up his position, he offered ministerial posts to the Liberal Unionists and several were taken up. Chamberlain turned down the posts of Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary, preferring to serve as Colonial Secretary, a choice which underlines the shifting mood of liberal opinion in relation to the Empire.[26]

Almost all the Liberal Unionists shared this enthusiasm for the Empire, as Lubbock had for many years. Earlier in the year he had agreed to serve as Chairman of the Council of the British Empire League, with the Duke of Devonshire as President.

In his role as Lord President of the Council, one of the issues which fell to the Duke of Devonshire to resolve was that of the University of London proposals. This was disadvantageous to the scheme's supporters in two respects. Firstly, the Duke was a good friend and close political associate of Lubbock's, and secondly, he was famed for his laziness and indolence, a man who could 'dismiss most matters with a yawn'.[27]

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23 *Science Gossip*, vol. 1, New Series, No. 11, January 1895, 242.

24 For example, A. Desmond 1998.

25 P. White 2003, 1–4.

26 D. Judd 1993, 187.

27 *Morning Leader*, 29 November 1895, 24.

The Duke backed Lubbock in his insistence that the proposed reforms (despite having been backed both by the Senate of the University of London and by two meetings of Convocation – the body representing graduates) could only go ahead following a full postal ballot of graduates. For the commentator in the *Morning Leader*, it was '… obvious enough' that the proposal had been politically stitched up.

By persevering to the point of obstinacy, Lubbock had won a battle that by all rights he should have lost. He was almost in a minority of one, with the full weight of London's educational, scientific and medical establishment, including the Vice Chancellor and Senate of the University of London, lined up against him. Even the pre-eminent scientific journal, *Nature*, which Lubbock had helped to found, had ridiculed his insistence on a referendum of graduates, pointing out that, even in Parliament, it is the opinion of members present, rather than of the House as a whole, that determines '… the fate not only of measures, but ministries'.[28] Yet still he had stood his ground and, against all the odds, won the day. The supporters of the proposal had not lacked self-confidence or audacity, but Lubbock's perseverance had proved stronger.

Lubbock's insistence on due process for his constituents in determining the future of the University of London sits uneasily with allegations that were made against him during the course of 1895. For more than 20 years he had served as President of the Corporation of Foreign Bondholders, set up to represent the interests of both individuals and institutions with investments overseas. Such investments could deliver high returns, but also carried significant risks, as the Greek bankruptcy had shown. The corporation had been set up in 1872, with the original subscribers being entitled both to the assistance of the executive in respect of their own overseas interests, and to a share of any profits arising from commissions charged to non-members for representing their interests.

In many ways Lubbock was a natural choice as the corporation's president. He was a respected banker, a man of integrity, a public figure with sufficient gravitas to negotiate with prime ministers and presidents. In other respects he was less well suited to the role: he was more comfortable in the role of mediator than in that of advocate, and his instinct when a crisis arose was often to broker a compromise between the creditors and debtors (particularly when he took the view that the creditors had acted more recklessly than he as a banker might have advised) rather than arguing the case of the creditors with all his force, as they doubtless expected him to do. There was also an inevitable tension between the interests of small individual investors and those of large institutional ones, including Robarts, Lubbock & Co. The extent of Lubbock's irritation with small investors seeking to punch above their weight is clear from his diary entry for the 7 January 1897:

> Meeting of Colombian Bondholders to consider the arrangement of the settlement of the debt. John Fleming tried to upset it, but was obliged to admit that he only held one bond of £100, yet he spoke for half an hour.[29]

28 *Nature*, 5 December 1895, 104.

29 BL Add. 62684, 20.

Many individual investors resented the way in which deals were struck privately between the representatives of the large institutions, but some were louder in their criticism than others. In the Corporation of Foreign Bondholders, none were louder than W.H. Bishop. He had raised objections at an early stage, but had been sidelined and ignored. His resentment festered for more than 20 years until, in 1895, he unleashed a torrent of accusations against Lubbock and the executive, ranging from gerrymandering the composition of the board by selling cut-price shares to clerks and cronies, to personal enrichment at the corporation's expense and falsification of the minutes.[30]

These complaints were forwarded to the Board of Trade, but no evidence of any wrongdoing was adduced. The worst case that Bishop could convincingly make against Lubbock was that he used his influence and status to get his own way:

> As Chairman he exercised his authority by enforcing silence on many occasions, by interruptions which disadvantageously affected my purpose in expounding the views I have always entertained. He had access to his own and my colleagues, not within my control. It was easy to see how his influence acted upon their minds. Many knew less than I of the origin of the Corporation, but he was well known to them; and his prominence as a public man gave his opinions and his wishes the cover of authority.[31]

Bishop never withdrew his allegations, and remained a thorn in Lubbock's side until Lubbock stepped down as president of the corporation in 1898, even setting out his complaints in a book in 1901. Lubbock never saw through his threat of legal action, presumably judging that a court case, even if successful, would merely give additional publicity to Bishop's allegations which, as they stood, had limited circulation.

Lubbock remained a respected figure, but he was no longer untouchable. He had been ridiculed for his stance on the reform of the University of London, and his probity and honour had been called into question over his management of the corporation. Saint Lubbock's days were at an end. Perhaps his greatest sin, as his opponents saw it, was in his final desertion of the Liberal cause. He neither sought, nor was offered, office in Salisbury's government, but the fact that Liberal Unionist colleagues had taken the Conservative Prime Minister's shilling made it difficult, if not impossible, for the grouping to maintain any sense of authentic 'Liberal' identity. What it meant to be a Liberal had changed forever, and Lubbock knew that the current usage of the term did not apply in any real sense to him.

Lubbock continued to campaign for those causes that had made him popular, including the reduction of working hours in shops. His Early Closing Bill received a second reading on 19 February 1896: speaking in the House, Lubbock insisted that this was '… not a question of class against class, of employers against employed', but was rather '… the shopkeepers' own Bill' , with the question being '… whether the majority should compel the minority to close at a reasonable time, or whether the minority should compel the majority to keep open unreasonably late'.[32]

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30 W.H. Bishop 1901, 8, 11, 14, 68.

31 Ibid., 87.

32 4Hansard 37, 673.

The bill completed its passage through the Grand Committee the following month, with Lubbock noting that 'We won in every division and the opponents have not succeeded on any point.'[33] It was as close as he had come to success with this legislation but, as always, there was a hitch, and only a few months later hope had turned, yet again, to despair:

> After getting my Early Closing Bill through the Grand Committee, it has been impossible to get any further, as the Govt had the whole time of the House and it was blocked by some London Tory members.[34]

Lubbock had for some years been using his holidays to work on a study of the geology and geomorphology of Switzerland. It had been a favoured holiday destination for Lubbock since his youth, as it was for many English people of his class, offering both serious mountaineering for the young and hearty, and the more sedate pleasures of lakes and upland pastures for those of mature years. His book on *The Scenery of Switzerland* was published in the summer of 1896.[35] It combined an English synopsis of the work of Swiss geologists such as Heim (previously available only in German) with original observations and interpretations, looking at the solid geology, at the processes by which the strata had been folded into mountains, and at the way in which the mountains had subsequently been eroded by rivers and glaciers, and giving detailed geological descriptions of the various regions of the country. It was a serious contribution to geology, much as *Ants, Bees and Wasps* was to entomology, or *Prehistoric Times* to archaeology. Among his original conclusions was the assertion that the pressures that had caused the Alpine folding had come from all sides, most powerfully in the north-south axis, but also exerted at right angles to this (this had to be the case if, as he believed, the folding had been caused by contraction resulting from the cooling of the earth – this, of course, was before the advent of plate tectonics). Lubbock subsequently made a series of plaster casts to demonstrate and test this hypothesis, and these are preserved in the collection of the Natural History Museum.[36]

A reviewer in *The Times* expressed surprise that Lubbock had successfully turned his attention to yet another branch of science:

> The stores of Sir John Lubbock's learning would seem to be almost as boundless as his industry is indefatigable. Not merely does he find time in the course of a busy life, occupied largely by commercial and political affairs, to take up one branch of science. Rather, it appears, he would, like Bacon, take all knowledge for his province, and one can never tell in what direction his mental activity may next lead him.[37]

The book was, perhaps, too technical for those 'destitute of scientific knowledge', but could be read without difficulty by those with '… a slight familiarity with geological and geographical rudiments, such as most educated persons possess

33 BL Add. 62684, 15.
34 Ibid., 17.
35 J. Lubbock 1896.
36 A. Smith-Woodward 1924, 105–13.
37 *The Times*, 10 July 1896, 3.

nowadays'. Lubbock's use of metric measurements was criticized, but his use of language praised for its clarity and expressive qualities:

> Sir John Lubbock, unlike some tedious observers, is far from being blinded to the beauties of a landscape by his interest in its scientific aspect. He speaks with enthusiasm of the glistening snowfields, of the glorious colour of the lakes, and the magnificent views, thus giving his work a pleasantly human touch that will be especially grateful to his non-scientific readers.[38]

Lubbock's mental activity was leading him not only in the direction of new avenues of scientific enquiry but also to trying out new technologies in a practical sense. In the summer at High Elms he was trying to learn to ride a bicycle, and by the end of the year he was recording speeches on the phonograph, and sharing this experience with weekend guests and friends.

It had become almost fashionable to attack Lubbock, and the more implacable of the old-school Tories, frustrated by their inability over many years to lay so much as a finger on his popularity, now sensed the opportunity to do so. One of them, St John Hankin, made a very direct attack in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*, under the title 'The Sins of St Lubbock', calling for the abolition of his most conspicuous political achievement, Bank Holidays:

> Four times in every year … the people of England are turned loose from office, shop and factory by Act of Parliament and bidden to amuse themselves. Four times in every year do these unfortunate people set themselves obediently to look for amusement and find it, usually, in the public house. Four times every year … the various police magistrates dispose of more or less interminable lists of more or less serious offences arising out of the efforts of the State and Sir John Lubbock to secure rest and recreation for the people … .[39]

Bank holidays, argued Hankin, made no distinction between the '… respectable and orderly poor' and the '… drunken, cursing rabble' (the distinction between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor that dominated the class consciousness of the earlier Victorian Conservative mindset) and had thus become '… a source of thriftlessness, extravagance and drunkenness'.[40]

Unrepentant, and convinced that Hankin's assertions were grounded in prejudice rather than evidence, Lubbock wrote to the President of the London Bench, Sir John Bridge, to check his facts.[41] Although unable to supply Lubbock with any statistics, Bridge assured him that there were, in his experience, '… remarkably few charges'.[42] Lubbock's legacy to the future, at least in this regard, was safe: Bank Holidays had become as much a part of British life as tea, toast and muffin rings.

Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in 1897, and Lubbock's mind must have strayed back to the day when he had sat spellbound beside his father,

38 Ibid.
39 St J. Hankin 1897, 467.
40 Ibid., 470–71.
41 BL Add. 49663, 43.
42 BL Add. 49663, 44.

watching the coronation procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey. The Jubilee was an occasion for the celebration of Empire, an opportunity to make late-Victorian Britain feel good about itself. A new and very different procession was orchestrated, one which encapsulated the new Britain that had come into being during the course of Victoria's reign. G.W. Stevens, The leader writer in the *Daily Mail* waxed lyrical:

> Up they came, more and more, new types, new realms at every couple of yards, an anthropological museum – a living gazetteer of the British Empire. With them came their English officers, whom they obey and follow like children. And you began to understand, as never before, what the Empire amounts to … these people are working, not simply under us, but with us – that we send out a boy here and a boy there, and the boy takes hold of the savages of the part he comes to, and teaches them to march and shoot as he tells them, to obey him and believe in him and die for him and the Queen.[43]

Lubbock had a part to play in the celebrations. As Chairman and President of the British Empire League, he and the Duke of Devonshire hosted a celebratory conference in Liverpool. Lubbock travelled up on the train with the state premiers of New Zealand, Canada, South Australia and Queensland. The state premier of New South Wales was later entertained at High Elms, and introduced to the ageing Joseph Hooker, and to Charles Darwin's son, Leonard.[44]

Joseph Chamberlain stayed at High Elms for a weekend in February 1898. He and Lubbock were increasingly close politically: they had both become enthusiasts for the British Empire, and had taken a similarly hard line in relation to Irish Home Rule. Chamberlain's desertion of the Liberal Party, and embrace of the 'Moderate' cause was far more surprising than Lubbock's. Lubbock, though he had flirted with radicalism in some areas of policy, was by birth, upbringing and instinct, a Whig. Chamberlain, on the other hand, had been the arch-radical, who had municipalized the gas and water supplies of Birmingham, and replaced the city's slums with public housing (losing £300,000 in the process, but reducing the death rate in the improved quarter from 53.2 per 1,000 in 1873–75 to 21.3 per 1,000 in 1879–81).[45] The 'Municipal Socialism' that he had pioneered in Birmingham was an inspiration to the London Progressives, but Chamberlain had become more than a little wary of the movement that he had stirred. Chamberlain and Lubbock shared the nineteenth-century Liberal consensus around the need for harmonious relations between classes. His 'socialism' was intended to '… provoke the "haves" into a more responsible attitude towards their own wealth and property, and towards society's "have-nots"',[46] not to provoke the 'have-nots' to seize property and power for themselves. He was, in the words of his biographer, '… a very moderate quasi-Fabian capitalist, striving to avoid class warfare and to render a laissez faire economy more equitable'. The new radicalism of the London Progressives, on the other hand, was a '… full-blooded programme of metropolitan municipal socialism' which, by encouraging class conflict, seemed

43 *Daily Mail*, 23 June 1897.
44 BL Add. 62684, 23–4.
45 D. Judd 1993, 66.
46 Ibid., 177.

to be '… driving men of property out of the Liberal ranks and into the arms of the Tories'.[47]

The political demise of the nineteenth-century Liberal paradigm, with its emphasis on class harmony, was brought into stark relief and etched on the public consciousness by the death, on 19 May 1898, of the 'Grand Old Man' of Victorian politics. Lubbock penned a generous tribute, as he had when Gladstone had retired, but, suffering from one of his increasingly frequent attacks of gout, was not well enough to attend the funeral.[48]

Lubbock dined with Chamberlain when, in June, he went up to London for the meeting of the University Senate, but he could not rely on his friend's support when it came to the future of the University itself. Few opposed Lubbock when he rose in the House of Commons in June to ask the Undersecretary for War to abolish the use of osprey feathers in military plumes (the minister responded that alternatives were being sought, and the practice was abolished shortly afterwards),[49] but many, Chamberlain among them, opposed him the following month when he rose to speak against the London University Bill. Seeking once again to secure a veto for the members of Convocation, the House divided against Lubbock, 158 votes to 30 and, when he then went on to oppose the third reading, it divided against him by 104 to 19.[50]

The result was not, as Lubbock had feared, the dismemberment of the University of London, or the establishment of a second London University in competition with it (whether an Albert University, a Gresham University or, as was suggested in the 1898 debate, a University of Westminster),[51] but rather the federal University of London constitution that survives, more or less intact, down to the present day. For better or worse, the University of London as currently constituted owes its existence to Lubbock's stubbornness in the face of an apparently overwhelming clamour for change.

The summer provided Lubbock with plenty of opportunity for rest and relaxation. At 63, he was spending an increasing amount of his time on the golf course. Guests at High Elms included the Aga Khan, the Governor of the Bank of England, Frederick Temple (now elevated to the See of Canterbury) and Temple's 18-year-old son William (who would himself serve as Archbishop of Canterbury during the Second World War).

In October Lubbock visited Ireland, accompanied by his ten-year-old son Harold. The occasion for their visit was the inaugural meeting of the Irish Institute of Bankers in the great hall of Trinity College, at which Lubbock was the guest of honour. Afterwards they dined with the Lord Lieutenant and enjoyed an excursion to the great Neolithic tombs of Dowth and Newgrange, and the early Christian monastery at Monasterboyce.[52]

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47 Ibid., 178.
48 BL Add. 62684, 30.
49 4Hansard 59, 1209.
50 4Hansard 59, 1199; 1238; 1279–82.
51 4Hansard 59, 252.
52 BL Add. 62684, 33.

Figure 10 Lord Avebury on the golf course (Lubbock family archive).

The campaign against 'municipal trading' was occupying an increasing amount of Lubbock's time, and was not limited to the activities of the London County Council (LCC). Inspired by developments first in Birmingham and then in London, local authorities and corporations the length and breadth of the country were jumping on the collectivist bandwagon. In February 1899, Lubbock spoke in the House of Commons against the Bootle Corporation Bill, invoking the authority of Chambers of Commerce the length and breadth of the country in opposing the '… tendency of municipalities to engage more and more deeply in commercial undertakings'.[53] Even more seriously, he argued, if local councillors were to regulate the wages of an increasing proportion of their electors, there was a real danger of corruption, with

53 4Hansard 67, 13–14.

a '… tendency to set the wages against the votes' – this, he suggested, was already happening in New York.

The main focus of Lubbock's parliamentary activity in 1899, however, was the Telephonic Communications Bill. Lubbock, who had invited Alexander Graham Bell to High Elms to use the telephone as part of his experiments with ants, lamented the slow progress of the telephone in Britain, which he attributed in part to difficulties created by local authorities, and in part to the 'heavy payments' which the National Telephone Company was obliged to make to the Post Office. The original investors, he emphasized, were receiving only a 7 per cent return, yet the government was proposing to allow larger municipalities to set up their own telephone exchanges – yet another example of municipal trading, encouraged not by the radical Progressives of the LCC, but by the Conservative government of Lord Salisbury. For Lubbock, it was folly for local authorities to run telephone exchanges, and even greater folly for a Conservative government to encourage them in this direction.[54] The government, however, saw the provision of telephone networks as a potential financial windfall, and proposed, among other measures, a Post Office monopoly within London. Lubbock cited the authority of Cobden as evidence that the public provision of commercial services could never be made to work:

> I find that you can never make the conductors of these establishments understand that the capital they have to deal with is really money. It costs them nothing, and, whether they make a profit or a loss, they never find their way into the gazette. Therefore, to them, it is a myth – it is a reality only to the taxpayers.[55]

The Telephone Bill was, moreover, opposed by the Chambers of Commerce of London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cardiff, Belfast and 20 other large cities.[56] The government proposals were, in Lubbock's view, not merely unfair to the National Telephone Company, they threatened to derail the very technological advances on which true progress depended:

> The results as regards the progress of applied science will, in my judgement, be even more disastrous. Those who have hitherto devoted thought and time, energy and capital, to apply the principles of scientific discovery to practical purposes are now told that while, of course, if their enterprise does not pay they must bear the loss, on the other hand, if it succeeds, Government will pass an Act of Parliament to deprive them of any advantage.[57]

Lubbock's protestations, however, fell on deaf ears, and the bill passed into law. The Conservatives may have agreed in principle with Lubbock on the objections to 'municipal trading', and supported him in practice whenever loss-making proposals were being promoted by 'Progressive' councils, but, when they saw an opportunity to generate revenues without taxing the electorate, the temptation was simply too great for them to resist.

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54 4Hansard 67, 1415–18.

55 4Hansard 75, 156.

56 *The Times*, 1 June 1899, 8.

57 *The Times*, 3 April 1899, 6.

Lubbock took time out in the summer of 1899 to visit John Ruskin at his home in the Lake District. Ruskin had previously written to Lubbock, rejoicing in his suggestion of a visit:

> And will you really come? It's so wonderful to think that you can forgive me all the ill-tempered things I have said about insects and evolution, and everything nearly that you've been most interested in, and will see the Lake Country first from my terrace … .[58]

Ruskin was, by this time, old and frail: Lubbock recorded that he looked happy, but was very feeble and scarcely spoke.[59] Ruskin died a few months later. Lubbock later wrote a generous tribute to him, describing Ruskin as a friend to whom he was 'warmly attached', and emphasizing his own intense admiration for Ruskin's writing. The political and philosophical differences between them, he insisted, though profound, had '… never in any way formed a cloud or a shadow between us'.[60]

Back in London in October, Sir John Lubbock gave what was to be his last speech from the benches of the House of Commons, supporting Britain's engagement in the Boer War against opposition from radicals, including Lord Harcourt, John Burns and David Lloyd-George.[61]

Lubbock's political activities had, of late, afforded him only limited time in which to pursue his scientific interests, but his paper describing two new species of springtail from Australia was read before the Linnaean Society,[62] and his book *On Buds and Stipules* was published in the International Scientific Series, drawing material from his earlier published articles to give a detailed account of bud morphology and development in a range of plants.[63] It was, in effect, a companion volume to his volumes on seedlings,[64] and looked at the life cycle of plants in much the same way that he had previously looked at the life cycle of insects and crustaceans.[65]

It was on Christmas Day 1899 that Lubbock received the letter from Lord Salisbury, announcing that the Queen had been pleased to confer a peerage upon him. It was not unexpected – indeed it had been predicted at least once before – but Lubbock's political independence meant that he frequently upset Conservatives and Liberals in equal measure and his name was, in all likelihood, passed over several times before he was finally elevated to the Upper House. Having spent almost 30 years on the green benches of the Commons, he may have felt more than a little ambiguous about deserting them for the red benches of the 'other place'. Lubbock's most significant parliamentary achievements, however, were long since behind him (the Bank Holidays Act 1871, Ancient Monuments Act 1882, Shop Hours Regulation Act 1886, Public Libraries Amendment Act 1890) and, as he himself had observed

58 Cited by H.G. Hutchinson 1914, 260–61.
59 BL Add. 62684, 38.
60 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1903b.
61 4Hansard 77, 668–9.
62 J. Lubbock 1899a.
63 J. Lubbock 1899b.
64 J. Lubbock 1892b.
65 J. Lubbock 1873d.

on more than one occasion, it had become increasingly difficult for an independently minded backbencher to achieve much in terms of legislation. His frustration must have been underlined when, in March 1898, he had brought forward a motion on English education, calling for a diversification of the primary school curriculum to include subjects such as elementary science, which were already being taught to Scottish children. Although a number of MPs, including Sydney Buxton, supported him, he clearly did not have the numbers to carry the House, and withdrew his motion without pressing it to a division.[66] These were arguments that he had first articulated in his maiden speech on 8 March 1870, and which he had articulated again and again throughout his time in Parliament: they would not prevail until 1992, when the UK National Curriculum for Schools was introduced, specifically including elementary science as a core subject. Perhaps, after all, Sir John Lubbock had achieved everything he usefully could achieve as an elected MP.

66 4Hansard 55, 417–9; 587–617.

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Chapter 17

A League of International Peace and Goodwill

Sir John Lubbock had only a few weeks in which to clear out his locker at the House of Commons. He signed his 'dear old name' for the last time on 20 January 1900 and thereafter signed 'Avebury'.[1] He took his seat in the Lords a few days later in a 'quaint ceremony', presented by Lords Kelvin and Farrer, and with Alice and two of their daughters looking on. Although he had always been well connected, he quickly discovered that ennoblement carried with it social privileges and, at a function in February, he was surprised to find himself seated beside Princess Louise. He gave his maiden speech from the red benches in May, proposing the second reading of a new Ancient Monuments Bill, seeking to broaden the scope of those monuments which could be protected under the earlier Act.[2]

He stepped down later that year from the Senate of the University of London, noting sadly that he and his father had been '… on from the beginning', but stating clearly that he '… did not wish to undertake the work of the new institution'.[3] Although, through his persistence, the Gresham proposals had been diluted almost to nothing, there was a stubbornness in his character which made it easier for him to resign from the Senate than to be resigned to the changes.

In November, Lord Avebury was called upon to deliver the first memorial lecture for his old friend, Thomas Henry Huxley. It was delivered in what had been Huxley's own lecture theatre in the Museum of Economic Geology. The two men had become increasingly distant towards the end of Huxley's life and this was the opportunity for a reconciliation, even if posthumous. Avebury paid warm tribute, describing Huxley as '… one of the most effective speakers of the day', and crediting him as '… the first to extend Darwin's theory of natural selection explicitly to Man' (Darwin himself almost certainly credited Avebury as the first to do so meaningfully, in *Prehistoric Times*).[4] It was also an opportunity to bang the drum for science, and neither Huxley nor Avebury had ever missed an opportunity to do that:

> Huxley was one of the foremost of those who brought our people to realise that science is of vital importance in our life, that it is more fascinating than a fairy tale, more brilliant than a novel, and that anyone who neglects to follow the triumphant march of discovery … is deliberately rejecting one of the greatest comforts and interests of life … .[5]

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1 BL Add. 62684, 41.
2 4Hansard 83, 153–6.
3 BL Add. 62684, 47.
4 *The Times*, 14 November 1900, 6.
5 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1903a, 7.

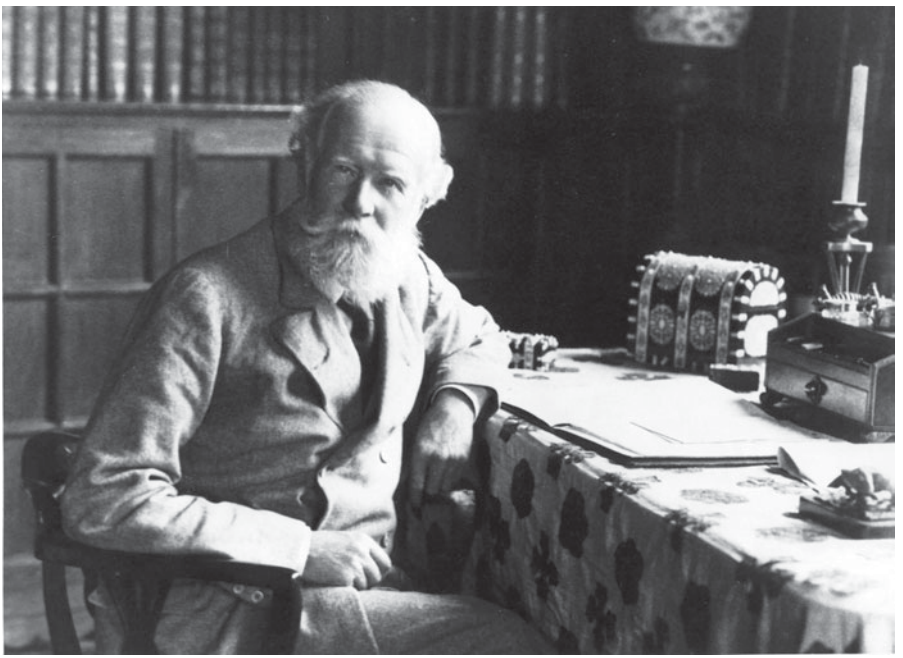

Figure 11 Lord Avebury in 1913.

Huxley was commemorated in more personal style, along with Darwin, Tyndall and Busk, all of whom had rooms named after them in Avebury's newly acquired coastal residence at Kingsgate Castle near Margate,[6] Victorian science memorialized just as the Victorian age was passing in to history. The Queen, whose coronation procession had been watched by the infant John Lubbock, died in January 1901.

Avebury, meanwhile, was continuing to research his most recently acquired scientific interest, geology. Having previously published on *The Scenery of Switzerland* he now turned his attention to that of his own country.[7] He had for some time been using his family holidays to explore the geology of England and Wales, his celebrity status making it easy for him to enlist local experts as guides. With Alice and the children he had explored the coast of South Wales in the company of Richard Tiddeman, and Yorkshire in the company of John Goodchild,[8] combining these with other observations in a book that combined geology and geomorphology, establishing a framework of knowledge that remains valid in large part today (processes of deposition and erosion by rivers and the sea, volcanism, the influence of rocks on scenery and plant life), though without, of course, any concept of plate tectonics and without a clear distinction between intrusive and extrusive igneous rocks. Some old wounds never fully healed: there are only a few passing references

6 BL Add. 62684, 89.
7 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1902a.
8 BL Add. 62684, 45, 53.

to the work of Sir Charles Lyell, although works of lesser importance are quoted liberally. This notwithstanding, Avebury did use the principle of uniformitarianism to extrapolate the age of deposits: he estimated that the English chalk would have taken at least two million years to form, and that around 100 million years must have elapsed since the first fossil-bearing rocks were formed (with the benefit of modern scientific understanding, it is now clear that both are very significant underestimates). Avebury's contribution to geology was recognized in the award in 1903 of the first Prestwich Medal, named in honour of the man who had encouraged Avebury's teenage fascination with human antiquity.

Returning to another of his longstanding interests, Avebury also published a brief history of coins and currency, tracing the evolution of money from its earliest roots. Drawing on both his archaeological knowledge (notably his conversations with Sir John Evans, who had published the seminal work on pre-Roman coinage in Britain) and his perspective as a banker (his support for the gold standard is explicit in a work that refers to the 'disgraceful' practice of debasing the currency adopted by a small number of monarchs).[9]

Archaeology remained an abiding passion and, in April 1904, Avebury was elected President of the Society of Antiquaries, an office that he would hold for four years. His presidential addresses chart the major excavation projects and discoveries of the day – Arthur Evans's work at Knossos, Howard Carter's earliest work in Egypt, Bulleid and Gray's discovery of a lake settlement at Glastonbury which so reminded Avebury of Bronze Age and Iron Age sites that he had visited in Switzerland as a young man – but sticking closely to the theoretical models that he had set out in his earliest books, more than 40 years previously.[10]

Botany, similarly, was revisited, with the publication of a life history of British flowering plants, exploring the links between form and function in the context of a model of 'adaptive' evolution,[11] and giving detailed life histories for a large number of individual species.

At the same time as revisiting many of his varied scientific interests, Avebury, acutely aware of the passage of time, was determined to make a definitive statement on each of a number of political issues that had been of concern to him over many years. One such issue was free trade, and, as it was an issue on which he had vacillated (his enthusiasm for the British Empire tempting him to flirt, at one stage, with the idea of imperial preference, in conflict with his earlier and more traditionally Liberal belief in absolute free trade), he may have had particular reason for wishing to clarify his position. His book on free trade was published in May 1904, at a time when the Liberal orthodoxy of free trade was being challenged, not only by its traditional opponents in the Conservative Party, but also by some on the Liberal wing of Unionism, most notably Joseph Chamberlain, who had delivered a speech in October of the previous year, highlighting the erosion of British agriculture and manufactures in the face of foreign competition. Many of the opponents, as Avebury saw them, of free trade rejected the label of 'protectionism', and presented

9 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1902b.

10 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1905b; 1906a; 1907; 1908.

11 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1905a.

themselves as advocates of a form of free trade. Avebury countered this by setting out a clear definition of 'free trade', cutting through the earlier fudge, with its talk of 'freer trade':

> It is a fiscal system under which the Government impose no duties except for revenue, do not favour any manufacture at the expense of others, and leave trade to follow its natural course. Thus, as we tax brandy and wine, we put as nearly as possible an equivalent Excise Duty on British spirits, beer and cider.[12]

He did not unambiguously rule out all forms of imperial preference, but he came closer to doing so than he had in the past, pointing to 'great difficulties'.[13] What he did rule out in almost all circumstances was 'retaliation' (the policy being actively pursued by the Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, and Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, of imposing tariffs on imports from those countries that imposed them on British exports).[14] This might be justified in cases where Britain had '… grave reason to complain' about the actions of another country but, in all normal circumstances, '… Britons were wise to remain Free Traders whatever policy other countries may adopt.'[15] Challenging the Foreign Secretary (the Marquess of Lansdowne) in the Lords, he pointed to tariff wars between France and Switzerland, and between France and Italy, which had, he insisted, 'greatly crippled trade'.[16]

Avebury was fighting a rearguard action against the submerging of the Liberal Unionist identity within a larger Unionist party that had inherited from the Conservative side a longstanding protectionist tendency. At a meeting called by the Duke of Devonshire (another prominent advocate of truly free trade) in July 1904, he had argued for a retention of separate Liberal Unionist Associations '… to fight the protectionists', but had found himself in a minority.[17] The Duke raised a protest at a party meeting the following year, but Balfour and Chamberlain prevailed, and Avebury feared that it would be disastrous '… if Protection is to be really the policy of the Party'.[18]

Looking in broad terms at the future of Europe, Avebury thought that war between the European powers was unthinkable: France was 'friendly and peaceful', whilst Germany had '… nothing to gain which could possibly recompense her for the enormous risk of a war'.[19] The real threat, therefore, was economic, and came from across the Atlantic. America, he noted, was protectionist with regard to other countries, but had complete free trade between its states, promoting economic growth. What is more, America spent only £40 million annually on its army and navy, whilst the 'disunited states of Europe' spent more than £250 million. Avebury referred approvingly to a proposal mooted by the Chinese government for an

12 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1904, 31.
13 Ibid., 78.
14 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1903c.
15 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1904, 31.
16 4Hansard 147, 663–4.
17 BL Add. 62684, 70.
18 Ibid.,
19 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1906b, 419.

International Federal Council, a suggestion which drew criticism from Conservative commentators, notably J. Ellis-Barker, who referred to '… the corrosive influence of free-trade cosmopolitanism' and to Avebury's '… romantic and idealistic ideas of a league of international peace and goodwill'.[20] To the very core of his being, Avebury believed (in common with others in the X-Club circle) that civilization had ended, or at least ought to have ended, forever the physical destructiveness of the Darwinian struggle for existence, allowing humanity to rise above the level of the beasts. Ellis-Barker, on the other hand, believed that the struggle remained very much a matter of life and death, and that war between Britain and Germany was likely, if not inevitable. He published a follow-up article, predicting the German annexation of Holland, and the debate was joined by others with similarly alarming scenarios.[21] The American business magnate, Andrew Carnegie, weighed in on Avebury's side, accusing Ellis-Barker of 'crying wolf', and insisting that German industrial competition, rather than German militarism, was the real threat to British and European prosperity.[22]

Carnegie could, in some respects, be thought of as an American counterpart to Avebury: he was very much wealthier, and was not as actively involved in either science or politics, preferring the role of patron to that of participant, but had a similar breadth of interests and a similar liberal philosophy. There is even a direct X-Club connection – Carnegie conducted a lengthy correspondence with Herbert Spencer, whom he regarded as his 'dear friend and counsellor' and 'master teacher'.[23] Carnegie was an Anglophile, who made regular visits to London, staying at the Langham Hotel. He had a particular affection for the Natural History Museum, and among his acts of beneficence was the presentation to the museum of the diplodocus skeleton which now stands in the entrance hall. As a trustee of the museum, it fell to Avebury to host the reception given to mark the gift, and to give the speech of thanks to Carnegie.[24]

Unlike Carnegie, Avebury could not be satisfied with the role of patron of the sciences. He was willing to use his wealth when it could make a difference (as with his land purchases at Avebury), and business was the basis of this wealth, but business never commanded his full attention as it did Carnegie's. In June 1906 Avebury presided over the annual meeting of the International Institute of Sociology, which was held in London. Herbert Spencer had the greater claim to be the founding father of British sociology but he was resident in Brighton, and had become a hypochondriac recluse. Avebury, in any case, had far more social graces than Spencer had, and was the perfect host, entertaining delegates to a soirée at High Elms. In his presidential address, he paid generous tribute to Spencer and hailed the emergence of sociology as a science. The speech provoked a response from the young H.G. Wells (a former student of Huxley's, whose father had played cricket with Avebury, and whose aunt had once been courted by him). Wells took issue with the idea of sociology as a science, insisting that it could only be considered as such

20 J. Ellis-Barker 1906a, 529.
21 J. Ellis-Barker 1906b; A.S. Hurd 1906.
22 A. Carnegie 1906.
23 UoLSA MS 791/312–15.
24 BL Add. 62684, 76.

in the same 'loose sense' that modern history was a science.[25] There was, for him, a gradation '… as one passes from mechanics and physics and chemistry, through the biological sciences to economics and sociology', a gradation which made results less predictable, conclusions less objective and generalizations less believable:

> I question profoundly whether the word 'science', in current usage anyhow, ever means such patient disentanglement as Darwin pursued. It means the attainment of something positive and emphatic in the way of a conclusion, based on amply repeated experiments, capable of infinite repetition … .[26]

Herein, however, we see the emergence of just the sort of narrow definition of 'science' that Avebury opposed in his preference for 'philosopher' over 'scientist'; a definition that excludes not only Spencer (with which exclusion most modern 'scientists' might well concur), but even Darwin; a definition which, in its exclusivity, provides the basis for precisely that rigid separation of scientific from humanistic discourses in modern British intellectual life, which Avebury, in his embrace of a broad curriculum for schools, had sought to stave off.

But Avebury's viewpoint was, in so many ways, characteristic of his status as a gentlemanly amateur of science, a status that he had inherited from his father and which looked increasingly anachronistic to a younger generation of university-trained specialists. 1906 saw the death of Sir Mountstewart Grant-Duff, a fellow amateur with whom Avebury had shared so many scientific and other interests: 'How much have we seen and done together', Avebury lamented after a tearful deathbed leave-taking.[27] The two families, however, had become inseparably linked: Avebury's daughter, Ursula, had fallen in love with Grant-Duff's son, Adrian, and the couple were married in July.

Grant-Duff had been closer than anyone to Avebury on most political issues, not least free trade and municipal trading, and it was to the latter that Avebury now turned his attention, keen to set out a definitive statement of the position that he had so often argued on the floor of the House of Commons, and in the debating chamber of the London County Council (LCC). As a politician, Sir John Lubbock had opposed the direct involvement of local authorities in the provision of housing, water and telephone services, arguing that private companies could generally provide a better service at a lower cost, and warning of the risks of corruption that would be involved if councils themselves became the employers of a large section of their electorate. In his book on municipal trading, published in November 1906, he set out the broader basis for his objections to the practice on five main grounds: that the 'legitimate functions' of local government provided councils with 'more than enough' for them to do; that it frequently entailed an increase in municipal debt; that it increasingly involved councils in labour disputes with their own voters; that public sector managers did not have the same incentives as those in the private sector had for avoiding waste; and that it acted as 'a serious check to progress and discovery' as councils profited from technologies (such as telephones) that had been designed and

25 H.G. Wells 1907, 358.
26 Ibid., 361–2.
27 BL Add. 62684, 80.

developed in the private sector.[28] Charles Darwin's son, Leonard, was a prominent supporter of Avebury's municipal trading campaign, and had published his own book on the subject, drawing attention to cases in Australia, in which state-owned railways had incurred substantial losses, allegedly because of over-employment and wage inflation.[29] It was clearly a hot topic not only in Britain: the book soon being published in German, Italian, French, Hungarian and Japanese translations.

Although still making regular public statements, Avebury was now in his seventies, and was gradually withdrawing from many of the day-to-day aspects of public life. Certainly he was spending less time in the Lords than he had in the Commons, and had more time to entertain, both at High Elms and at Kingsgate, with guest lists that included Mark Twain, Rider Haggard and Ralph Vaughan-Williams.[30] He was able to spend time at Avebury, where he had commissioned H. St George Gray (one of the discoverers of the Glastonbury 'lake villages') to carry out an excavation across the ditch. When he visited on 22 May 1908, the excavation had gone down nine feet, the following week it was down 15 feet. The excavations were still in progress in May of the following year, and finds included deer-bone picks. No metal had been found, however, supporting Avebury's long-held opinion that the monument was of Neolithic date.[31]

There was time also to reminisce: 1908 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species*, and this was chosen as the occasion to celebrate the achievement of Darwin and Wallace in establishing a new (and, by 1908, almost universally accepted) paradigm of the biological sciences. Avebury spoke movingly of his personal relationship with Darwin:

> I am one of the thousands whom Darwin has inspired by his writings, and of the few still living who have had the inestimable privilege of his friendship. Often and often, when feeling overworked and discouraged, an hour with him has proved a wonderful cordial, and washed away the cobwebs of the imagination like a breath of sea air.[32]

Recalling the debates of half a century before, he wrote:

> Authority was mainly on one side, but truth was on the other, and when authority and truth differ, in the long run truth will prevail over authority … my reflection, when I first made myself master of the central idea of *The Origin*, was '… how extremely stupid not to have thought of that!'
>
> Well, indeed, would it be for the World, if the nations of Europe and their rulers would diminish … their enormous military and naval expenditure, and send a small part of the saving in the encouragement of scientific experiment and research.[33]

28 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1906c, 6.
29 L. Darwin 1903.
30 BL Add. 62684, 95.
31 Ibid., 92, 99.
32 U. Grant-Duff 1924b, 26.
33 RS LUA18.

For anyone in the early twentieth century who had not lived through the mid-nineteenth, it must indeed have been difficult to imagine just how differently the world had looked through the prism of the earlier age.

However odd they may seem through the very different prism of a much later age, Sir John Lubbock's self-help books had inspired and motivated the last generation of Victorians, and Avebury now set about winning the hearts and minds of the twentieth century's first generation, with a new work entitled *Peace and Happiness*. Nobody, he asserted, should hope for more than to have peace and happiness in their lives, and no one should wish for less – the question was how to find them.[34] The recipe that he came up with includes ingredients that will have been familiar to all who had read his earlier works: self-control, restraint, care of the body, cultivation of the mind and attention to duty prominent among them. Somewhat surprisingly, given his oft-stated opinions on the moral condition of 'the lower races', he now suggested that we might even have something to learn from other cultures:

> White men often look down with ignorant contempt on other races. It would be wiser to see what we could learn from them. We might well take a lesson from the Burmese detestation of war, or from the Japanese respect for Bushido.[35]

One striking aspect of *Peace and Happiness* is that it is the most explicitly Christian of all Avebury's published works:

> One of the noblest prerogatives claimed by Christ was that He had power on earth to forgive sins. In another sense, however, we all have this privilege; it is not the power, but the will that is wanting … if anyone is harsh or unkind they do you an injury in one way, but in another they confer on you the divine prerogative of forgiveness.[36]

> The Lord's Prayer contains supplications for all things that are really necessary, and has no allusion to correct views on theological or any other subjects.[37]

> Will anyone venture to suggest that our minds are capable of realising, or our language of expressing, the ineffable mystery of the universe? To deny is more reverent than to maintain such a thesis. Science has enabled us somewhat more to realise the transcendent magnitude of the mystery.[38]

The second of the above quotes is redolent of the liberal Anglicanism of Dean Stanley, whilst the third echoes Tyndall's 'pantheism', but the first reflects the straightforward (perhaps even evangelically inspired) Christianity that the young John Lubbock had learned, quite literally, on his mother's knee.

Avebury did not shrink from offering political, as well as moral and religious, guidance to his readers. Since the publication of *The Use of Life* in 1894, socialism

34 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1909a, 3.

35 Ibid., 20. Bushido is a world view based on poverty, humility, reserve, self-sacrifice and the subordination of the interests of the individual to those of the collective.

36 Ibid., 146–7.

37 Ibid., 320.

38 Ibid., 323.

had really taken form as a political creed in Britain, and he was keen to address the challenge posed by this new ideology:

> Socialists generally defend their policy by the argument that the present state of things is unsatisfactory and indefensible. But we may feel this without being socialists. Socialism is fatal to individual enterprise and to freedom … But what is worse is that it implies implicit submission to the decrees of the state … If the state is to undertake the responsibility of feeding and clothing and housing us, we must eat what is provided, wear what is supplied us, live where we are sent and do what we are told ….[39]

The timing of these comments is significant. The 1906 General Election had delivered a Liberal landslide, and the government that was formed under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was, more than any previous Liberal administration, permeated with the 'Progressive' spirit that Lubbock had confronted in the LCC. John Burns became President of the Local Government Board, Sydney Buxton Paymaster General and Herbert Gladstone (son of the former Prime Minister) Home Secretary. But the single dominating figure in the Cabinet was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd-George. Three years on from the election, Lloyd-George was ready to present to Parliament one of the most radical budgets in British history. His budget speech, delivered on 29 April 1909, was not ranked as a success: he spoke for four and a half hours, stumbling over sentences, and with a number of members commenting that they could not hear him.[40] It was only when he sat down that the full weight of what he had said began to sink in. He had introduced universal old-age pensions, laid the foundations of the modern framework of social security (including unemployment and sickness insurance), financed by increases in direct taxation, and decreed the establishment of a national network of labour exchanges. Lloyd-George himself declared it a 'War Budget', intended '… to wage implacable warfare against poverty and squalidness'.[41]

This went too far, not only for the Unionists, but even for some Liberals. Lord Rosebery was the first to describe it as 'socialistic', and he was one of 22 Liberals who rebelled, declaring it '… not a Budget, but a Revolution'.[42] Avebury was not part of the rebellion ('the cave' as it was sometimes referred to), being firmly in the Unionist camp, but he was one of the prime instigators of a meeting held in the City of London to protest against the Budget.[43]

He set out his objections to the Budget in a magazine article, insisting that it would '… fall with excessive severity on capital', discouraging investment.[44] For the first time, income tax and death duties were not merely to be increased but, along with a new supertax, graduated, so that the wealthy would pay at a higher rate. This Avebury opposed in principle, citing the authority of John Stuart Mill in viewing

39 Ibid., 86–7.
40 B. Murray 1980, 172.
41 Ibid.
42 *The Times*, 30 June 1909, 8.
43 BL Add. 62684, 100.
44 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1909b, 744.

it as '… a penalty on people for having worked harder and saved more than their neighbours … a mild form of robbery'.[45]

Capital, he believed, would go abroad, investment in American railways would, by avoiding the high graduated death duties, become more attractive than investment in British railways, and British jobs would be lost as a result. Returning to a theme explored almost 20 years previously by Huxley,[46] Avebury suggested that the Budget was based on principles that fundamentally misrepresent the relationship between capital and labour:

> Socialists profess to be indifferent, or even hostile, to capital. They regard the capitalist and the workman as having opposite interests. The very reverse is the case. How is the workman to find employment except by the aid of capital?[47]

A Liberal revolt of 22 was not large enough to see the Budget voted down in a House of Commons where the Liberal Party held 401 seats to the Unionists' 157, and could rely on the support of 29 members of the Labour Representation Committee. It was, however, roundly rejected by the Lords, where the Unionists had a strong majority. It was finally forced through in 1910 and the 'Peoples' Budget' became law. The objections to it by Liberals such as Lord Rosebery, and by former Liberal Unionists including Avebury and the Duke of Devonshire, represented the last, dying gasp of a distinctively Victorian model of Whig Liberalism. Twentieth-century general elections would indeed be arenas of class conflict, albeit of the gradual sort promoted by Sydney and Beatrice Webb rather than the revolutionary model of Marx. But it was simply no longer convincing to argue, as Avebury always had, that the interests of the various classes were not in conflict.

An era was slowly passing, and with it those people who had defined and created it. There had been a number of deaths in Avebury's immediate family: his sister Mary and one brother, Henry, in 1910, two brothers, Rolfe and Beaumont, in 1909. Alice's mother also died in 1910, as the country mourned the loss of Edward VII.[48]

Sad as these losses were, and much as they must have focussed the mind of a man of Avebury's age on the fact of his own mortality, he was determined to perform, if nothing else, one last, important, public service.

Four years earlier, in an exchange of views with Avebury, J. Ellis-Barker had made an ominous warning with regard to the future of Europe:

> Germany seems to be standing at the parting of ways, and a few years may decide the future of Europe and perhaps that of the World.[49]

At the time, Avebury had considered war to be unthinkable, concurring with Carnegie that Ellis-Barker and others were simply 'crying wolf' , but the arms race had continued apace, and it was difficult to avoid at least the fear that Europe was

45 Ibid., 751.
46 T.H. Huxley 1890.
47 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1909b, 755.
48 BL Add. 62684, 101–4.
49 J. Ellis-Barker 1906a, 542.

poised at the edge of the abyss. With his successful background in mediation, and his command of German, Avebury set out to promote greater understanding between Britain and Germany.

In April 1910 he was one of the founder members of the 'Albert Committee', seeking to draw on the nation's remembered affection for its German-born one-time Prince Consort. He wrote the preface to a pamphlet on Anglo-German relations, issued to counter the fear and misunderstanding of German intentions:

> Recent events have shown that the public mind is too easily impressed by extravagant and absurd rumours about the intentions of Germany. But this could only be the case where an ignorance of the facts leaves the field open, and had there existed even an elementary knowledge of German policy … many of the extravagances and absurdities … would have been promptly killed by ridicule.[50]

The Albert Committee was, in fact, simply a re-launch of the longer established Anglo-German Friendship Society, of which Avebury had been an active member. Within this context he had hosted a delegation of German Bürgermeisters, taking them to Buckingham Palace to be presented to the King,[51] and had later presided over a meeting at which the Kaiser spoke directly on German foreign policy.[52] For Avebury, however, it was not merely a matter of avoiding war between Britain and Germany, but of replacing war, in principle, with arbitration:

> As things now stand, any country which declares war without reference to arbitration is guilty of a great crime, and must be regarded as an enemy of the human race.[53]

In his response to the threat of war, as in his response to the 1909 Budget, Avebury was holding fast to the principles of a Whig Liberalism that were unravelling all around him, a Liberalism that no longer animated the Liberal Party, but which was intimately bound up with Avebury's belief in progress as an immutable law of nature, and with his view of science as the guiding light of policy. It was a world view that he had inherited from his parents that had guided the Liberal Party that he joined as a young man, and that had informed the whole of the X-Club project.

But only two members of the X-Club remained alive in 1910, Avebury and Sir Joseph Hooker. They remained in touch, Avebury by this stage having acquired one of the ultimate symbols of twentieth-century technological progress, a motor car, which he used to visit Hooker's country home. Evidence of technological progress was still all around them: Avebury saw an aeroplane for the first time in the summer of 1911, and had previously recorded a speech onto a gramophone disc and sent the first transatlantic wireless telegraph (to the *New York Times*).[54] Hooker and Avebury discussed these developments enthusiastically. They also discussed botany – Avebury was working on a paper on pollen, having been made aware of the presence in plant

50 *The Times*, 9 April 1910, 8.
51 BL Add. 62684, 82.
52 Ibid., 90.
53 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1911b, 589.
54 BL Add. 62684, 109; 86; 90.

and animal cells of '… solid bodies, which can be stained, and thus rendered visible, by reagents', and which had been named 'chromosomes'. Moreover, it had been noted that cells extracted from pollen and ovules contained only half the number of these bodies found in other cells, and that '… the process of fertilisation, combining these two halves, brings them up to the full number again', so that '… the qualities of the two parents are combined in the young animal or plant'.[55] It was not Avebury's discovery, but he was aware that a crucial missing piece in the Darwinian jigsaw, the mechanism of genetic variation, was falling into place. Sir Joseph, the oldest member of the X-Club, died in December 1911, leaving only Avebury, the youngest.

Avebury gave what turned out to be his last parliamentary speech on 11 December 1912. It was a minor intervention in relation to the Sheffield Corporation Bill, another unsuccessful attempt to drive a nail into the coffin of municipal trading.[56] His own health was in decline, and he had not spoken at all in the Lords either in 1910 or 1911. Since his elevation to the peerage he had successfully pursued a number of causes in the House, notably the Companies (Debentures) Act 1907, including the requirement still in force for larger companies to have accounts audited by professional accountants;[57] and the Importation of Plumage Prohibition Act 1908, preventing the import of bird of paradise, white herons and other species for the millinery trade, and which he brought in with the support of the Linnaean, Zoological and Royal Societies.[58] He had less success in relation to early closing, where, during repeated attempts, he had the support of most of the Lords Spiritual, but was vigorously opposed by Lord Salisbury,[59] and Sunday closing, where he came up against the Jewish lobby, concerned that the legislation combined with their religious observance would force them to close two days a week, whilst their Christian competitors would close for only one.[60]

Avebury continued his scientific work until the very end of his life. His book on *Marriage, Totemism and Religion* was published in 1911, a somewhat defensive work which set out to address criticisms of some of the claims in his earlier work (for example, that marriage as an exclusive relationship exists only in relatively advanced societies and that many 'savage' tribes have no sense of religion). It was a sad end to a distinguished publishing career, the more so because many of his critics, having lived and worked in Africa, Oceania or Australasia, had greater familiarity with the data than he did, and he was able to engage with them only by pitting one source against another on the basis of his personal preferences.[61]

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55 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1912b, 477–8.

56 5Hansard (Lords) 13, 161.

57 4Hansard 173, 1004–8.

58 4Hansard 189, 4–11.

59 4Hansard 83, 153–6; 862–78: 4Hansard 89, 1168–71: 4Hansard 103, 314–30: 4Hansard 107, 1305–17: 4Hansard 119, 541–57; 1342-67: 4Hansard 121, 595–611: 4Hansard 140, 353–68.

60 4Hansard 133, 1409–21: 4Hansard 142, 1334–49: 4Hansard 148, 507–16: 4Hansard 153, 750–69: 4Hansard 170, 1168–99: 4Hansard 186, 329–62; 1527–30: 4Hansard 188, 383–4.

61 J. Lubbock (Lord Avebury) 1911a.

In March 1913 he sent off the corrected proofs for a new edition of *Prehistoric Times*. In May he took to his bed, having been diagnosed as suffering from an enlarged heart. He continued working on proofs, and had a meeting to discuss University of London business early in June.[62] His granddaughter, Shiela Grant-Duff, was born on 11 June, but shortly after this he took a turn for the worse. Lady Avebury, in a desperate attempt to revive him, took him to Kingsgate. A week later, on 28 June, he died.

He was buried, as he had wished, in the woodland between High Elms and the parish church of Farnborough, close to the ponds in which he had fished for crustaceans to take to show to Darwin, and later to describe in his earliest scientific papers. He left behind a personal estate valued at £315,579[63] – almost £20 million in today's terms. His obituary in *The Times* described him as a 'Banker, Author, Man of Science and Affairs', commenting in particular on the charm, grace and accessibility of his writing style:

> Few Englishmen have lived a fuller or busier life than Lord Avebury. The range of operation of his energies was so wide and multifarious and so eminently conducive to the public weal that he won, and deserved, a higher place in the estimation of his fellow citizens than many men of greater powers of mind.

Of his contribution to the commercial world, it was his attention to detail that was singled out for comment:

> … many men … have attained a conspicuous position in regard to the great art of business, which has made them leaders in the banking and commercial world when the times were difficult and dangerous. Lord Avebury did not come within this category, but he was of great service to the business world, and especially to the banking community, in ordinary times, when many things which, though important, are not in themselves interesting, are apt to be neglected, or imperfectly performed, unless someone with a sense of public duty makes a practice of looking after them.[64]

The year after his death, the war that he had feared and worked to prevent broke out. Two of his sons, Harold and Eric, were to fall in that war. Eric was clearly his mother's favourite – she wrote and had published a book in his memory – perhaps because he had so much in common with his father:

> He was a great deal with his father, and they had much in common – he worked at botany and geology with great zest, and we have elaborate lists of all the shrubs and trees at High Elms, and all the birds he saw there, and wild flowers, mosses, grasses etc.[65]

At Eton, Eric was interested in most branches of natural history but, like his father before him, could 'derive no pleasure from Latin or Greek'. By the time he volunteered for military service, he had almost completed his first book, a contribution to botany

62 BL Add. 62684, 117.
63 C.A. Russell 1996, 515.
64 *The Times*, 29 May 1913, 9–10.
65 A. Lubbock 1918, 1.

focussing on the physiology of plants. The manuscript is in the archives of the Royal Society. His scientific career, which might have been as distinguished as his father's, shot to pieces, as so many aspirations were, in the chaos and carnage so poignantly documented in Wilfred Owen's *Anthem for Doomed Youth*:

> What passing bells for those who die as cattle?
> – Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
> Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
> Can patter out their hasty orisons.
> No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
> Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
> The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
> And bugles calling from them from sad shires.

When, five years later, the fog of war had cleared, only to be followed by a devastating influenza epidemic, which killed more people than the war itself, and which the best efforts of science were unable to stop in its tracks, the world was seen through a prism very different from that of the Victorian age. Avebury's world view: the idea of an immutable law of progress that applied equally to biological evolution and to technological progress; to the development of society over millennia and to the growth and education of a child; the notion that peaceful competition through free trade had replaced or could replace the violence of the Darwinian struggle, had not just become irrelevant, it must have appeared as a sick joke. Avebury, quite simply, was not a man for that season.

And yet, for all of this, almost a century on, he has a legacy that endures. Though his name is rarely spoken outside of a few narrow circles (prehistoric archaeology being the one that comes most readily to mind), we still enjoy his 'Bank Holidays'; our cheques still clear in line with his system; our companies continue to be governed, and ancient monuments continue to be protected, in broad accordance with laws that he steered through; the theoretical frameworks within which archaeology, anthropology, botany, entomology and geomorphology have developed since his death all still bear the hallmarks of his contribution; and the model of 'evolution' that persists in the popular, as distinct from the scientific, conscience still arguably owes more to him, and to Huxley, than it does to Darwin. Even the framework of manners and etiquette that most of us grew up with can be traced back, in some sense, to the pages of his self-help books. We are not of his age, we may not even understand it, but we have emerged from it, and been shaped by it. And while this may be immediately apparent in any one of the fields to which he contributed, whether in relation to our uniquely British way of doing politics, to our business life with its reputation for probity, or to our understanding of biology or archaeology, what is often less clear, and what comes through most strongly in relation to the work of Lord Avebury, is the extent of the interconnections between the Victorian politics, business and science which, together, helped to shape the totality of our world.

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