

The Election of Lord Salisbury as Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 1869

By J. F. A. MASON

CANCELLARIAL elections at Oxford and Cambridge have a special flavour of their own. Many years often elapse between elections, and candidates seldom appear more than once; the leaders of University opinion, unless peculiarly long-lived, usually have but one opportunity of showing their paces in this particular form of exercise; the issues at one election usually differ greatly from those at the preceding and succeeding ones; there are peculiar rules and conventions. No 19th-century Oxford cancellarial election has yet been described in full; the papers of the third Marquess of Salisbury provide material for an attempt to describe that of 1869.¹ Salisbury's election in that year did not see a serious poll or even a vigorous contest; but it is well-documented (the election of 1809 is more notable in both respects); it occurred at an important juncture in the University's history; it is of considerable biographical interest, and throws some light on the standing of public men half-way through Queen Victoria's reign; while the office itself, in the midst of a period of university reform, had not only dignity but some importance.² (Salisbury himself was later, in 1891, to describe the Chancellorship to Lady John Manners as 'an office which is often disagreeable and has no compensations'; but it is doubtful if that was his considered view.)

When in March 1868 the 14th Earl of Derby resigned the Premiership, there were Liberal-inspired rumours in Oxford that he was about to resign the Chancellorship of the University as well. These rumours Derby took great

¹ I am most grateful to the present Lord Salisbury for permission to cite extracts from his grandfather's papers, now deposited at Christ Church; and to those (especially Mr. Robert Blake, Dr. Henry Chadwick, Dr. Perry Curtis, and Mr. Geoffrey Bill) who have helped me with valuable comments. The Governing Body of Christ Church College has generously paid for the publication of this article.

² Lady G. Cecil, *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury* (London 1921), II, 5, and A. L. Kennedy, *Salisbury* (London 1953), 69, merely record the 1869 election, which seems to go unmentioned in the *Annual Register* for 1869. W. R. Ward, *Victorian Oxford* (London 1965), 258, gives an excellent summary.

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pleasure in denying;³ but a new election was soon necessary. Derby made his last speech in the House of Lords on 17 June 1869, on the subject of the Irish Church Bill, and at the end of the session retired to Knowsley, where he was soon attacked, and now for the last time, by his old enemy, gout.⁴ He lingered on hopelessly for many weeks, until his death on 23 October.

It was widely known that Derby's illness would prove fatal, and it would have been strange indeed if thoughts in Oxford had not turned in advance to the vacancy about to be created. The first written approach to Derby's eventual successor seems to have been made about mid-October when the Rev. William Scott (1813-72), a graduate of Queen's, Vicar of St. Olave's, Jewry, and an advanced High Churchman, sent a note to Salisbury from Albany. The letter is not dated but was filed at Hatfield with those of October 1869:

'Derby's state of health makes one turn very anxious thoughts to Oxford—and its Chancellorship. May I confidentially ask you if you know of any movement which would bring you forward as his successor? . . . My connexion with residents is reduced to nothing; but I am sounding some friends on the subject in London. The *immediate* object with which I write is to ask whether you are aware of any such intention, and if so with whom it would be desirable to put oneself in communication. I need not say that I shall not say that I have written to you on the subject. . . .'⁵

Scott's acquaintance with Salisbury had arisen from the fact that Scott had since its foundation in 1855 been a leading contributor to *The Saturday Review*, to which Salisbury, as Lord Robert Cecil, had himself between the end of 1856 and March 1866 contributed over 600 reviews and articles.⁶ Scott was a

³ Derby to President Wynter of St. John's College (the Chancellor's secretary since 1861), Knowsley, 5 March 1868: 'My Liberal friends in Oxford and elsewhere are extremely considerate in making early arrangements for the Election of my successor in the Chancellorship. I am extremely sorry to disappoint them by the announcement that their deliberations are somewhat premature—for you have my authority for informing them, and all else whom it may concern, that I neither have, nor ever have had, the slightest idea of relinquishing the distinguished post to which the University has done me the honour of electing me. In consequence of the state of my health, I have been compelled to withdraw from the labours and anxieties of official life—but the duties attaching to the office of Chancellor are not of such a nature as to call for any extraordinary strain upon my physical and mental powers—and I confess that I should feel the deepest reluctance to sever the honourable link which connects me with the University to which I am so greatly indebted!': Bodl. MS. dep. d. 4, ff. 518-20. The Liberals probably had Gladstone in mind: *The Times*, 25 October 1869, p. 10.

⁴ Derby attributed an attack of gout in June to 'deep anxiety' on the subject of the Irish Church Bill: Derby to Wynter, 22 June 1869, Bodl. MS. dep. d. 4, f. 524—Derby's last letter to his Oxford Secretary.

⁵ Reference numbers cannot yet be assigned to all extracts from the Salisbury Papers; an alphabetical index of correspondents is being compiled.

⁶ Scott's connexion with *The Saturday Review* is described by the *D.N.B.*; by Goldwin Smith, *Reminiscences* (New York 1910), 162 ff.; and by M. M. Bevington, *The Saturday Review* (New York 1941), pp. 17, etc., and pp. 371-3 (list of contributions); and Salisbury's by Cecil, i. 82-3, and Bevington, pp. 27, 36, 66, 266, 337 (incomplete list of contributions). For details see J. F. A. Mason, 'The Third Marquess of Salisbury and *The Saturday Review*', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xxxiv (1961), 36-54.

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'special ally' of another advanced High Churchman, the founder of *The Saturday Review*, A. J. Beresford-Hope,⁷ who was Salisbury's brother-in-law and had introduced him to the *Review's* editor Cook. Scott's relations with Salisbury had already extended from journalism into politics: in the Oxford University election of 1868 he had been deputed to invite the Marquess to become a vice-chairman of Roundell Palmer's London Committee.⁸

Salisbury did not meet Scott but he wrote to him, presumably advocating Lord Carnarvon's claims, for Scott wrote again on the 18th to give the names of three other possible candidates:

'I ought to have thanked you for your kind letter. It would be uncandid were I not to say that I find from inquiries that a good many influential persons both resident and non-resident would very much prefer you to Lord Carnarvon, and somehow I am under the impression that with their views of their duty to the University they will endeavour to place before you their wish that you should be their Chancellor.

'From what I can learn it is possible that on the one hand you would prevent the Tories from bringing forward the Duke of Marlborough (which is talked of)—and on the other you would put an end to a vague wish which in some liberal quarters is entertained for Lord Granville.

'In other words, you will I know excuse me, if I say that I do not think that you have heard the last of it—and however highly we may think of your chivalrous feeling towards Lord Carnarvon that a good many folk must think of Oxford first.⁹

'It may be known to you that the Vice-Chancellor strongly prefers you to Lord C . . .'

(Another non-resident to make a prophecy of 'something like general consent' to Salisbury's candidature among resident members of the University was Salisbury's old Christ Church tutor, Osborne Gordon, who wrote briskly from his Rectory at Easthampstead on 25 October:

'Nobody can have a higher sense of Lord Derby's services to the University than myself. But it has pleased God that they should not continue any longer . . .')

Scott was a friend of leading Liberals—he voted for Gladstone at Oxford until the end, and supported Palmer there in 1868—and his support foreshadowed that later obtained by Salisbury from the Liberal side. Scott had great influence in London, but (as he himself realized) he had no influence in Oxford itself and in an election which required and still requires personal

⁷ Goldwin Smith, p. 164.

⁸ Scott to Salisbury, 30 October 1868.

⁹ One non-resident who expressed this preference was Francis Faber, who wrote to Roundell Palmer from Saunderton Rectory on 23 October 1869: 'The moment I heard of Lord Derby's illness, I saw that Lord Salisbury was the only man. There is indeed no other; for Lord Carnarvon would be much inferior': Selborne Papers at Lambeth Palace Library, consulted by kindness of the Librarian.

voting¹⁰ it was the attitude of the resident members of Convocation which would be decisive. (The University has never made it possible to vote by post or proxy at cancellarial elections.) The resident members were, of course, already at work, but in that decent obscurity cultivated by all skilful and sensible University politicians; it was left to another non-resident to bring forward Salisbury's name in public before Derby was dead. *The Guardian* for 20 October had contained a most indiscreet letter. Alexander Forbes (1817-75), a well-known Tractarian, a graduate of Brasenose and now Bishop of Brechin, a friend of Gladstone (who had first suggested his elevation), and also of Pusey (with whom he always stayed in Oxford), wrote to the editor from Dundee on the 18th as follows:

'The critical state of Lord Derby makes it proper, without any breach of decency, to speculate on his successor in the office of Chancellor of Oxford. There is one man who, from every point of view, is indicated as the proper occupant of that dignified position. In the Marquis of Salisbury the University has a most distinguished son, who combines all the necessary qualifications. As a successful alumnus of Oxford, as a man of letters practised in the periodical literature of the times, as an orator and debater of no ordinary power, as an enlightened high-principled statesman, and, best of all, as an earnest and devout Christian, Lord Salisbury stands in the most dignified attitude before his countrymen. He will unite the suffrages of divers schools of thought. He will prove an efficient protector of the interest of the University both in the House of Lords and at the bar of public opinion, and he will mediate successfully between the advocates of progress and reaction in the internal legislation of the body of which he will be the head. . .'¹¹

Forbes might think such a letter 'proper', but he had forgotten one thing: 'our manners in Oxford will not bear any open interference before the vacancy', as the Bishop of St. Asaph had remarked to Lord Grenville exactly sixty years earlier.¹² However, he escaped without public castigation, though Salisbury himself did receive a terse and pointed letter from N. G. M. Lawrence, Vicar of Forebridge (Staffs.), an old Queen's man who was indignant at 'a serious breach of delicacy towards a great dying statesman', and anxious to know whether Salisbury had any foreknowledge of Forbes's letter.¹³ That the residents were indeed early at work seems to be proved by Dean Burgon's

¹⁰ L. L. Shadwell, *Enactments in Parliament*, III (O.H.S. 1912), 159; L. H. D. Buxton and S. Gibson, *Oxford University Ceremonies* (Oxford 1935), 64-5, describe the procedure.

¹¹ *The Guardian*, 1869, p. 1165. Forbes had written to Salisbury on 5 May 1869, about the Scottish Education Bill, in terms which show that the two men were already acquainted.

¹² *Hist. MSS. Comm. Fortescue MSS*, IX (1915), 345 (20 October 1809); cf. Holland to Grenville, and Grenville to Sidmouth: *ibid.* 350, 351. Perhaps Lord Eldon was thinking of a canvass conducted before Portland was dead when he wrote the letter printed in H. Twiss, *Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon* (London 1844), II, 109.

¹³ Lawrence to Salisbury, Dollar, 23 October 1869. The assurance which Salisbury gave drew from Lawrence on the 27th a handsome apology, barbed with references to Forbes's 'sudden freak of eccentric vanity' and 'hyper-courtierlike enthusiasm'.

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remark, in a congratulatory letter to Salisbury on 13 November, that he had 'enjoyed the satisfaction of ascertaining that this result [i.e. Salisbury's election] was probable some days before anyone in *The Guardian* had the indecency to make the matter public'.

On the 23rd two Oxford Heads of Houses hastened to assure Salisbury of their support. Edward Hawkins, Provost of Oriel, possibly still ignorant of Derby's death, wrote :

'Having a very grateful recollection of your kindness to me in the matter of the Oriel College Bill,¹⁴ I hope that you will not consider it a mere impertinence if I mention that I no sooner heard of Lord Derby's fatal illness than your Lordship's name occurred to me as that of the person best qualified, on public and on academical grounds, to repair our great loss.

'And it gave me very great satisfaction to learn from the Vice-Chancellor, that my view was also that of many others, and most likely to be generally entertained. I trust it will be so . . .'

More important was a letter from the Vice-Chancellor himself. From 1866 to 1870 this was F. K. Leighton, the Warden of All Souls College, of which Salisbury had been a Fellow. Leighton wrote to ascertain privately whether Salisbury was willing to be put in nomination :

'I have been wishing to write to you for some days past, but have been restrained by considerations from which Lord Derby's death has now unhappily released me. First let me say that I write privately and on my own responsibility only, not in concert with any one else—but under the strong conviction that if your name could be put forward with the certainty of your being willing to act upon it, the proposal that you should be our future Chancellor would meet with general acceptance in Oxford. May I therefore ask you in strict confidence whether your friends here may rely upon your willingness to be proposed for the vacant Chancellorship? As Vice-Chancellor I should feel some difficulty in taking an active part in the Election if contested, tho' as Head of your College I am most anxious to promote your return—but I have been already consulted upon the subject and I have reason to think (tho' of this I cannot of course be sure) that you would be returned without a contest if matters are properly managed. Other names have been mentioned but none except your own with such concurrence as would justify the hope of this result—which is on every account most earnestly to be desired.

'May I ask you to consider this as a private communication—the more formal request would follow in due time, if your answer to this private inquiry is such as to encourage your friends to proceed.'

¹⁴ On 20 June 1870 Hawkins wrote to Gladstone that in connexion with this Bill 'I had occasion to see several noble lords and I thought Lord Salisbury the best person to succeed Lord Derby. So I was very glad to hear your high estimate of his character and powers . . .': B.M. Add. MS. 44206, 286. (Gladstone had written: 'I congratulate you on having in your (our) new Chancellor a model of political integrity, as well as a most high-minded, and most able man': *ibid.* f. 289a.)

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Salisbury's draft reply shows his somewhat despondent Toryism at this time:

'Your very kind letter is embarrassing to me because I think that Carnarvon is in every way much fitter for the post than I am—and because I have not the gifts required by a high ceremonial office of this kind. But I would not for any personal feelings risk a Liberal being elected, and put the University to needless trouble. I will therefore leave myself simply in your hands to decide what course is best for the University and for its objects. You have my consent therefore if you think fit to use it—but if you select some other person I shall heartily applaud your wisdom.¹⁵ Bear in mind that I did not take or go up for honours—and have never taken any prize of any sort—except the fellowship at All Souls. While saying this do not suppose that I am insensible to your kindness towards me in writing as you have done.'

This draft is undated, but Salisbury's reply was presumably sent off on the 24th, for the resident members of All Souls were able to meet on the 25th and pass two resolutions which they forwarded to Salisbury:

'That it is desirable that the Marquis of Salisbury should be brought forward for the Chancellorship of the University by this College.

'That the Warden be requested to ascertain whether Lord Salisbury if put in nomination would receive the support of Christ Church as the College of which he was formerly a member.'

In accordance with the custom of the time, Salisbury on his migration to All Souls from Christ Church in 1853 had taken his name off the books of the latter College. Sixty years earlier the Bishop of St. Asaph had remarked that 'All Souls must always be *distributed individually*'¹⁶—but that was certainly not the case in 1869. As to the attitude of Christ Church, on 6 November Salisbury wrote to the then Senior Censor (C. W. Sandford) of his pleasure that 'so cordial a welcome' had been given there to the proposal of his name—though one may doubt if that welcome was unanimous.

During this same week-end Salisbury had been sounded by the representative of quite another section of Oxford opinion. Henry Wall of Balliol came to see him on behalf of the University Conservatives. Probably they met on Sunday, 24 October, or on the following afternoon—Wall was scheduled to lecture at 10 a.m. on Mondays. Salisbury seems to have spoken to Wall in much the same spirit as that in which he had written to Scott and Leighton; at any rate, Wall wrote to him from Oxford on Tuesday, 26 October, as follows:

'As you were kind enough to allow me to speak with you and know

¹⁵ Thus Salisbury wrote to Pusey on 24 May 1870: 'Although highly honoured by the choice that was made, I was well aware of my unfitness in many respects for the office, and I was anxious that the selection should have been made from among the many fitter men who were available': Salisbury Papers, C/5/26.

¹⁶ *H.M.C. Fortescue MSS.* ix. 345.

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your mind on the subject of the Chancellorship of Oxford, and to place yourself at the service of the Conservatives for the office, I take the liberty of writing to tell your Lordship, what I rejoice to be able to say, that there will be no contest. This I am assured of on various and good authorities. The leading Liberals here acknowledge that opposition to your Lordship would be hopeless: although I have reason to believe that they would oppose any other candidate. Max Müller *has*, I know, felt his way for the Prince; but the discouragement he has met with has been very decisive. We have not had any formal meeting yet. I hope to get some leading Conservatives from different Colleges together tomorrow or Thursday. But it will be a mere form—the matter is already settled. You will no doubt hear from other quarters what took place at All Souls yesterday.

'Your Lordship must allow me to say in vindication of what I urged against your feeling and opinion in the interview which you granted me, that I hope you will admit the acceptance of your name to be a proof that I was right in the estimation of your fitness for the Chancellorship.'

The promised meeting of University Conservatives took place at Wall's house on the 27th (Wednesday), and unanimously resolved that Salisbury's name be submitted to Convocation as Derby's successor; the same day Wall forwarded a copy of the resolution to Salisbury, requesting the latter's formal consent to be put in nomination before the 29th, to which date Wall's friends had adjourned. Wall tactfully added an assurance that his friends' proceedings would not be made public before Derby's funeral. Those present at the meeting on the 27th were: Warden of Merton (R. B. Marsham); Provost of Oriel (E. Hawkins); Provost of Worcester (R. L. Cotton); Provost of Queen's (W. Jackson); Master of Pembroke (E. Evans); Principal of Magdalen Hall (R. Michell); Principal of New Inn Hall (H. H. Cornish); Professor Wall, Balliol; Professor Burrows, All Souls; Rev. T. Short, Trinity; Rev. W. Ince, Exeter; Rev. L. Gilbertson, Jesus; W. H. Cooke, Q.C., Brasenose; Rev. W. W. West, Lincoln; Rev. C. L. Wingfield, All Souls (Senior Proctor); Rev. W. Jackson, Worcester; Rev. G. Petch, Trinity; T. F. Dallin, Queen's.

The following were unable to be present but announced by letter their intention to support Lord Salisbury: Rev. J. W. Burgon (Oriel); Rev. R. Faussett (Christ Church); Rev. T. Vere Bayne (Christ Church); President of St. John's (P. Wynter); Rev. E. T. Turner (Brasenose); Rev. T. Sheppard (Exeter); Dean of St. Paul's (H. L. Mansel, Christ Church); Rev. J. B. Gray (St. John's).

The indefatigable Wall had not yet finished his day's work: before the day was out he wrote again to Salisbury to announce the adhesion to Salisbury's supporters of the President of Magdalen, Frederic Bulley. Wall and his friends met again on the 29th (Friday), the day of Derby's funeral, to receive Salisbury's formal consent to be put in nomination.

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The right of nearly all the 27 men who supported Salisbury on the 27th to speak for Oxford University Conservatives is clear enough from their positions in the Parliamentary elections of 1865 and 1868. In 1865 Gathorne Hardy had been returned for the University as a Conservative together with Sir William Heathcote, and Gladstone had at long last been ousted; 1,307 votes had been split between Gladstone and Heathcote, but 1,886 between Hardy and Heathcote. Of Salisbury's leading supporters in 1869, only Ince had not voted in 1865; three (Hawkins, Cornish and Burgon) had 'split' between Heathcote and Gladstone; but the remaining 23 had voted solidly for Heathcote and Hardy. Of the eight secretaries of Hardy's 1865 Oxford Committee, seven appear among Salisbury's supporters in 1869. But no doubt a better comparison may be found with the election of 1868, when (Gladstone's disturbing presence being removed) party affiliations were clearer. There was no poll, as Palmer retired in favour of Hardy and Hardy's new Conservative colleague, Mowbray. Mowbray's and Hardy's committee was a joint one: its three vice-chairmen were Mansel, Michell, and Wall; seven of its nine secretaries were Turner, Sheppard, Faussett, Vere Bayne, Petch, Wingfield, and Dallin; and among its other members were Wynter, Provost Jackson, Marsham, Evans, Cotton, Burrows, Cornish, Gilbertson, Gray, Ince Short, Turner and West. Cooke was a member of Hardy's and Mowbray's London Committee; Jackson of Worcester supported Palmer.¹⁷ This leaves unaccounted for only Hawkins and Burgon. It is impossible and unnecessary to enlarge on the Conservatism of the majority of those who declared themselves for Salisbury: Dr. V. H. H. Green has recently brought to light that fine 'arch-tory who collected 23 votes', Washbourne West of Lincoln; for the rest, perhaps Sir Charles Oman is sufficient testimony to Montague Burrows's Conservatism, and Burrows himself to Mansel's.¹⁸ Further, Derby himself, under the system then obtaining, had named Provost Cotton (Dr. Pusey's brother-in-law) in 1859, and Michell and Cornish had been nominated to the Headships of their respective Halls by Lord Derby—Cornish in 1866 after a 'long and satisfactory conversation' with the Chancellor.¹⁹

However, another account exists of what passed at the meeting on the 27th at Wall's house and at the adjourned meeting on the 29th. A letter to

¹⁷ Bodleian Library, Oxon. c. 84, nos. 507, 515. Wynter might have been chairman of Hardy's Committee in 1865; but Derby advised him against taking the position: Bodl. MS. dep. d. 4, f. 488.

¹⁸ V. H. H. Green, *Oxford Common Room* (London 1957), esp. pp. 134, 271; C. W. C. Oman, *Memories of Victorian Oxford* (London 1941), 259; M. Burrows in *Church Quarterly Review*, v (1877-78), 4.

¹⁹ Derby to Wynter, 12 February 1866: Bodleian MS. dep. d. 4, f. 500; Cornish's claims were 'about equal', on political grounds, to those of Highton, the other main candidate (f. 499). The change to election of the Provost of Worcester by the Fellows followed the recommendation of the Second Commission on the state of Oxford (and was opposed by Salisbury).

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Salisbury from Provost Hawkins of 1 November shows that Wall exaggerated the smoothness and unanimity of the proceedings:

'After some consideration I think it may be right that I should mention some circumstances to your Lordship with which you ought to be acquainted.

'Having a very clear opinion that your Lordship would be the fittest person to succeed our late lamented Chancellor I readily, tho' perhaps incautiously, assented to an invitation to attend a meeting of persons who were anxious that you should be nominated to the Chancellorship. But the Chancellor is the chief officer and Head of the University at large, and ought to be, as far as possible, the elect of the whole body, not of any particular party within it; and least of all ought he, in my opinion, to be in any way pledged to particular opinions or a particular course of action. Indeed I feel that your Lordship would scarcely condescend to give any such pledges.

'I was therefore concerned to find that when all the persons present (or all but one), (and there were, I think, persons present from every College, except Magdalen) had agreed to express their opinions in your favour, there was yet some attempt to make the nomination appear to be that of a party, and to obtain what I should call something like *party pledges* from your Lordship.

'Nothing of the kind, however, was actually done at that meeting; and the meeting itself was adjourned until the afternoon of Friday last, when Lord Derby's funeral, it was understood, would have taken place.

'At this second meeting there was a much smaller attendance, and a much more decided endeavour, not indeed to seek any pledges from your Lordship, but to make it *appear* as if you were brought forward by a party. I was indeed placed in the chair, tho' every one knew I did not act as a party man (perhaps no party would altogether own me), and that I was altogether opposed to any attempt to identify your Lordship, or your election to the Chancellorship, with any one party.

'Something of the kind, however, was carried by the majority of the meeting, against my wishes and those of some three or four other persons (against some eight or ten), not indeed of a very marked character, but still of a kind calculated to affront your College, as it seemed to take the nomination out of their hands, and calculated also to give the idea of your being brought forward by one party. For non-resident members were invited to signify their assent to your election, by letter addressed to 5 Gentlemen, very good men indeed, but too much of one party, and with no All Souls man among them.²⁰

'Under these circumstances I have taken the liberty, not without hesitation, to state to your Lordship what has occurred, and how it has occurred.

'You will judge much better than I can, whether anything need be done or said under these circumstances. I see no necessity for doing or saying anything, but I thought at least you *ought to know them*. You ought to know, if anything wrong has been done, that it was done *by a very small meeting, and by no means approved of by all who were present*.

'My hope is that your College will not resent the proceeding, at least

²⁰ I have not been able to trace any of these circular letters.

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permanently, but take the matter again into their own hands. And that the University at large will not be provoked, but will *concur generally* (as I think they were before disposed to do) in your Lordship's election, without any contest . . .

'P.S. The reason why no person was present at the first meeting from Magdalen College was that Sir R. Palmer had been thought of by some of the Fellows; but that idea was immediately abandoned, and notice sent, I think the same day, that they joined in desiring your Lordship's election. And this I trust will be the general feeling throughout the University.'

This letter throws some light on University etiquette in its stress on the desirability of action by a candidate's own college; and it says enough to throw doubt on the strict veracity of Wall's statement that Salisbury had put himself 'at the service of the Conservatives for the office'. In view of Salisbury's objections to a Liberal Chancellor as expressed to Warden Leighton, and his letter to Acland cited later, probably the Marquess had expressed a readiness to stand in order to keep out a Liberal and to avoid a contest rather than to aid the Oxford Conservatives. In any event, he would surely (as Hawkins said) never have given anything in the nature of party 'pledges' and as his supporters could never oust him once elected, such pledges were of limited value. Perhaps Wall was smarting at his defeat in the elections to Hebdomadal Council on the 20th.

We may now turn from the Salisbury Papers to the Press. The Oxford weekly newspapers are helpful; but the election did not attract that degree of attention in the ecclesiastical Press which at another time it might have merited. Space was short, for two other matters of higher ecclesiastical significance were in train at the same time: Samuel Wilberforce was about to move from Oxford to Winchester;²¹ and, far more important, the Dean and Chapter of Exeter were being variously exhorted either to elect Frederick Temple as Bishop of Exeter, or to break the law, according to the stand-point of their self-appointed advisers. Clerical controversialists—notably Dr. Pusey and Dean Burgon—were too busy lacerating their opponents in the matter of that 'election' to devote much of their time to the less important (if considerably more open) election shortly to be effected by the Convocation of the University of Oxford. The ecclesiastical journals found room for only brief reports of the progress of affairs at Oxford.

On 27 October *The Guardian*, with Alexander Forbes's letter in mind, thought Salisbury 'certainly the most obvious' candidate, and his unopposed election probable.²² *The Guardian* was High Church and Gladstonian; next day,

²¹ Wilberforce's impending move probably prevented him from playing in 1869 the important part he had played in the cancellarial election of 1852: R. G. Wilberforce, *Life of Samuel Wilberforce*, (London 1882), II. 150-1.

²² *The Guardian*, 1869, p. 1181.

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The English Churchman, being High Church and anti-Gladstonian, was scornful of a rumour that Gladstone himself was to be put in opposition to Salisbury:

'if Mr. Gladstone's friends could not return him as representative of the University in Parliament, it is hardly probable that they would court defeat by proposing him as Chancellor.'²³

On 3 November *The Guardian* regarded Salisbury's unopposed election as beyond doubt, but it regretted that 'instead of being allowed to appear as the spontaneous choice of the University, he has been placed, by a partisan movement which was plainly uncalled for, in the inferior position of the mere nominee of a party; a proceeding which degrades the office and is unfair to the man'.²⁴ This comment is explained by the Provost of Oriel's disclosure to Salisbury and by *The Guardian's* resentment against those who, like Salisbury, had secured Gladstone's defeat in 1865. No other Press report of the discussions which went on needs comment, except that *The Oxford Journal* and *The Oxford University Herald* both hint, like Hawkins, at the need for decisive action by All Souls as Salisbury's College.²⁵ In fact, however, the initiative by All Souls seems to have petered out.

Altogether the names of nine other possible candidates have been noticed. The full list appears to be (in descending order of status): the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Marlborough, the Earl of Carnarvon, the Earl of Harrowby, Earl Granville, Earl Stanhope, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Roundell Palmer, and Mr. Gladstone.²⁶ Of these, Harrowby, Stanhope and Northcote are only mentioned as candidates in the Press. It is hard to believe that all these were serious candidates: fortunately a man does not become a contestant for high office simply because he is mentioned over the port. Northcote chose, of all days, 22 October, the day before Derby's death, to sail from Falmouth to attend the opening of the Suez Canal²⁷—the timing, though unavoidable, was somehow typical of the man. Roundell Palmer states that he himself 'was among the first to declare for Lord Salisbury' as Derby's successor:²⁸ the two men were firm friends, and for a time had been neighbours in Hampshire during recesses, while Salisbury had supported Palmer's candidature at Oxford in

²³ *English Churchman*, 1869, p. 529.

²⁴ *The Guardian*, 1869, p. 1209.

²⁵ *Oxford Journal* and *Oxford University Herald*, both of 30 October 1869.

²⁶ Ambition for the office formed young. When up at Christ Church Lord Sandon (later 2nd Earl of Harrowby) wrote to his sister, Susan Ryder, on 26 October 1816: 'Tichfield [*sic*] is good-natured and not deficient; a popular person, they say he is looking to the Chancellorship of Oxford at a future day': cited by R. H. Dundas, 'Christ Church: 1956' (Oxford 1957), p. 20. 'Tichfield' was grandson of the Duke of Portland (Chancellor 1792-1809); but died in 1824 before his father.

²⁷ *Diaries of First Earl of Iddesleigh* (London 1907), pp. 2 ff.

²⁸ Lord Selborne, *Memorials*, Part II, I (London 1898), 130.

1868.²⁹ Carnarvon shared the last Chancellor's taste for classical literature and was a distinct possibility as a candidate, but according to his biographer he 'not only refused to compete, but begged his friends at Oxford to understand that he threw his whole weight' behind Salisbury's election;³⁰ again, he and Salisbury had been friends since their days at Christ Church. Both Palmer and Carnarvon, incidentally, had within the last few years acted as god-father to one of Salisbury's sons. About some of these candidatures, if such they were, little or nothing can be discovered: there is very little in the Gladstone Papers at the British Museum on the subject, and apparently nothing in the Harrowby Papers.³¹

How was it that Salisbury was preferred to any of these other candidates, the most important two of whom themselves preferred him? On the face of things, the starters were a poor field. *The Oxford Journal* of 6 November rightly remarked that 'in the absence of overwhelmingly great men, like the last two Chancellors, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Derby, the choice between a number of persons with nearly equal claims is by no means easy or self-evident'. The fact was that the last five vacancies—i.e. all those since 1772—had resulted in the election of Chancellors who were either (like North in 1772 or Derby in 1852) Prime Ministers at the time of their election, or (like Portland in 1792, Grenville in 1809, and Wellington in 1834) former Prime Ministers. But there was no such candidate available in 1869; Gladstone who was then Prime Minister was (as will be seen) unacceptable as a candidate; the two living former Prime Ministers, Russell and Disraeli, were both ineligible and unthinkable.

If we omit the Prince from our calculations as being no more than Max Müller's personal candidate,³² Salisbury may be compared—not always to his own advantage—with the other eight. He shared with Marlborough, Carnarvon, Harrowby, Granville, and Stanhope the important if not essential qualification that he was a peer—and Lord North was the only man not a member of the House of Lords at the time of his election who had held the office since Richard Cromwell. Salisbury shared with Carnarvon, Harrowby, Granville, Stanhope and Gladstone the useful asset that he had been an under-

²⁹ *Memorials*, Part II. i. 8-9, 103. (Palmer would perhaps have been the only Chancellor who had recited a congratulatory ode at the installation of a predecessor—for his not altogether happy lines in 1834, cf. *Oxford Prize Poems* (Oxford 1839), p. 279.)

³⁰ A. Hardinge, *Life of Lord Carnarvon* (Oxford 1925), III. 13.

³¹ I am grateful to the 6th Earl of Harrowby for this information. Sir Philip Magnus (who rightly comments on the pleasure which the Chancellorship would have given Gladstone) kindly tells me that he believes that there is nothing in the Gladstone MSS. remaining at Hawarden on the 1869 Chancellorship.

³² Max Müller condemns himself as a politician very effectively in *My Autobiography* (London 1901), 301-2; he mentions a whist-playing encounter with the Prince when the latter was an undergraduate in *Auld Lang Syne* (London 1898), p. 241.

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graduate of Christ Church: three of the four Chancellors between 1792 and 1869 had been Christ Church men, while Wellington had had Christ Church connexions. (Marlborough, Northcote and Palmer were undergraduates respectively at Oriel, Balliol, and Trinity.) The voting strength of Christ Church (38 of 274 residents, with a corresponding preponderance among non-residents) was greater than that of any other single College, and had partly been responsible for the College's successful claim³³ to one of the University's two Parliamentary seats. Again, Salisbury was a Conservative; but so were Marlborough, Carnarvon, Harrowby, and Northcote. Their party had returned two Conservatives for the University in 1868, but in November 1869 Salisbury himself had no official position in the party in the House of Lords, while he had certainly not been giving the party his full support in his own county of Hertfordshire. As for University honours, which Salisbury himself in his letter to Warden Leighton seems to have thought of some importance, he had no prize to show, and no more than an honorary Fourth Class in Mathematics, whereas Carnarvon, Harrowby, Northcote, Palmer and Gladstone had all obtained their Firsts, and Palmer's was an especially distinguished academic record. Finally, Salisbury was a High Churchman (an essential attribute), but so were others of those named, notably Gladstone himself.

Gladstone had been at Christ Church, had gained a Double First, and was the most eminent politician among contemporary Oxford men; but he had not been able to carry his own election as Burgess for the University in 1865,³⁴ he was not a peer,³⁵ his recent sponsorship of the Irish Church Bill and his nomination of Dr. Temple to Exeter³⁶ had not made him any more acceptable than before to the Conservative Churchmen of Oxford, and he would not, probably, have been sponsored by a united Christ Church—a point of some importance in view of the convention already mentioned. True, Gladstone had not been brought in for the University as 'a Christ Church member' in 1847 only because Christ Church already possessed one member in his colleague

³³ Described by J. Morley, *Life of Gladstone* (London 1903), i. 330, 336; Sir J. R. Mowbray, *Seventy Years at Westminster* (Edinburgh 1900), 244.

³⁴ H. P. Liddon's hope, several years later (1878), that Gladstone might be elected for Oxford at the next general election, seems unrealistic: Liddon to E. A. Freeman, in J. O. Johnstone, *Life and Letters of H. P. Liddon* (London 1904), 246-7.

³⁵ *The Oxford Journal* (6 November 1869) went so far as to say (with some ingratitude) that 'It is easy to imagine a commoner having achieved such a position as to out-weigh all other considerations, but certainly no one of that sort presents himself before us just now; and it would be ominous to reverse, in favour of Mr. Gladstone, the precedents of two hundred years, for the two Cromwells, father and son, were the last commoners on the roll of Oxford Chancellors, and the University had enough of the breed then to last for many a year.' (In 1903 it was even to be implied that the claim of a first holder of a peerage was weak: *Oxford Magazine*, xxii (1903-4), 3.)

³⁶ It was on this last that Pusey broke with him, a few days before Derby's death: H. P. Liddon, *Life of E. B. Pusey*, iv (London, 1897), 206-8; B.M. Add. MS. 44281, f. 565.

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Inglis;³⁷ but the 1865 poll-book, and the known attitudes of certain Students of Christ Church towards him, suggest that his college could not have united behind Gladstone for the Chancellorship.³⁸ The attitude of Gladstone's supporters towards his chances is illustrated by two letters. On 9 November the Rev. John Lockhart Ross, another London parish priest, and an Oriel contemporary, wrote sadly to him that 'To have seen you Premier and head of the *real Conservative Party* would have been my highest ambition: and to have hailed and aided you in becoming Chancellor of our much loved University would have given me, as one of your earliest contemporaries and College friends, the *highest satisfaction*'.³⁹ Roundell Palmer's brother Edwin, writing to Salisbury six days later, was more brief and realistic: Palmer would have desired Gladstone if it had been possible that he should be elected; as it was, there was 'no member of the Upper House—whatever his politics' against whom Edwin Palmer would not 'very heartily' have supported Salisbury. If Gladstone had had any chance, *The Guardian* would surely have pressed it.

As a Liberal Minister, Granville was associated with Gladstone. Palmer and Northcote had obtained Firsts, but were not peers; Palmer was, no doubt, the Liberal most likely to command Conservative support by reason of his recent opposition to disendowment of the Irish Church, and he had kept up a close connexion with his old University: he had once been Counsel to the University and Carnarvon's Deputy as High Steward, he had been among the framers of the Christ Church Ordinances of 1867, and his candidature for the University in 1868 had left behind none of the bitterness associated with Gladstone's in 1865.⁴⁰ During the 1868 contest *The Times* (on 22 October) had gone so far as to call Palmer 'next to Mr. Gladstone and Lord Derby, the most illustrious living son of Oxford'. (Over twenty years later, being by now a Liberal Unionist, he was named by Salisbury to succeed Carnarvon as High Steward.) Marlborough, a Tory ex-Minister, had his local honorary position

³⁷ Morley, I. 330, 336; Mowbray, p. 248.

³⁸ In 1865 the Dean of Christ Church (H. G. Liddell) had nominated and worked hard for Gladstone at Oxford; he wrote from the Sheldonian Theatre after his defeat that 'It is very vexatious, the University is disgraced': H. L. Thompson, *H. G. Liddell* (London 1899), p. 262. In the 1868 Parliamentary election the Dean, one Canon, the Senior Censor (Sandford, Secretary of Palmer's Committee) and six other Students supported Palmer; but three Canons and four Students supported Hardy and Mowbray: Bodleian Library, Oxon. c. 84, nos. 507, 515. Two of the leading Students of the House (Faussett, then Treasurer and Steward, and Bayne, then Junior Censor) were among Salisbury's supporters in 1869. In January 1866 the Senior Students of Christ Church had thought Salisbury (then Lord Cranborne) a possible Commissioner to settle their differences with the Dean and Chapter: Ch. Ch. Library MS. 449, f. 30.

³⁹ B.M. Add. MS. 44423, f. 66v.

⁴⁰ Mowbray wrote six days before Palmer's withdrawal (p. 246): 'There was bitter feeling against Gladstone. There is none against Palmer.' The 1868 election is described in *Memorials*, pt. II. I. 100-14.

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as Steward of the City and Lord-Lieutenant of the County as dubious recommendations for a similar position in the University.

On paper the three Christ Church peers other than Salisbury (Carnarvon, Harrowby, and Stanhope) look the obvious candidates; the first two had won First Classes, the last was a well-known literary figure. All three had some connexion with the University: Harrowby had been a Commissioner under the Act of 1854, Stanhope had taken a leading part in the establishment of historical studies in Oxford, and Carnarvon had been High Steward since his appointment to that dignified if sinecure office in 1859 by Lord Derby. Lords Westmorland and Litchfield, two mid-18th-century Chancellors, had been High Stewards before their elections to the higher office, and though Lord Eldon's tenure of the High Stewardship had not prevented his defeat in the contest of 1809 his successor (Lord Devon) had been thought of as a candidate for the Chancellorship in 1852.⁴¹ However, Stanhope had never been prominent in politics; at 71 Harrowby could only have been a stop-gap Chancellor, and, worse still, he was a Low Churchman. (He might have had a chance of success in 1852 had Derby declined.⁴²) As for Carnarvon, according to his biographer his chances would in any case have been diminished because 'the clergy were bitter about his speech on Irish Church disestablishment', which had contained strictures on the Irish Church for which Salisbury's own approach to that issue had afforded no occasion.⁴³

But several objections could be urged against Salisbury himself. He was comparatively young (just under 40), and not since 1688, when the second Duke of Ormonde had for special reasons been elected at the age of 23,⁴⁴ had a younger Chancellor been elected—nor, indeed, has one been elected since; North had been just over 40 when elected in 1772, but the four Chancellors since North had all been over 50 when elected. More important, Salisbury was commonly thought to be unreliable—for as yet he was, of course, very far from being regarded as that massive symbol of common sense and reliability which he later became. In 1867, for instance, the future first Earl of Lytton doubted if Cranborne (as Salisbury then was) 'will ever be a great man'; only a few weeks after some complimentary remarks on Salisbury's election as Chancellor, *The English Churchman* thought him 'too headstrong and reckless

⁴¹ *The Guardian*, 1852, p. 629.

⁴² Archdeacon Clerke wrote to him after Derby's acceptance that an offer would have been made had Derby refused: ex inf. 6th E. of Harrowby. I have noticed no reference in 1869 to another elderly survivor of those suggested in 1852, Lord Shaftesbury, whose election Dr. Pusey had so much dreaded that he had been prepared to accept Lord Harrowby instead: Pusey Papers consulted by kindness of the Governors of Pusey House.

⁴³ Hardinge, III, 13; cf. *Hansard*, 3rd series, vol. 196, 1720; 197, 82.

⁴⁴ A. Wood, *Life and Times* (O.H.S. 1894), 272. (But in 1762 Lord Suffolk had been thought too young at 22: W. R. Ward, *Georgian Oxford*... (Oxford 1958), 220.)

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a man to be the efficient general of a great political army';⁴⁵ and other examples could be quoted. As a politician he seemed to some to have no prospects at least for some time to come; back in April 1867 he was 'not looking forward to any political career for myself';⁴⁶ towards the end of 1868 he was regarded by some as a possible Governor-General of India,⁴⁷ and not till early in 1870 did he take a seat on the Opposition Front Bench in the Lords. No one could tell how long his breach with Disraeli would endure, or what might happen before the breach was healed or Disraeli died.

Why, then, did the University choose this young and apparently brash politician of uncertain prospects? The choice seems at first sight a surprising one—though it was probably not a complete surprise at any rate to Lady Salisbury, for the possibility had been mentioned to her at Hatfield the previous winter by her husband's old Hatfield tutor, Arthur Starkey, Fellow of St. John's.⁴⁸ There appear to have been two main reasons for Salisbury's success. Firstly, there was, it seems, a general desire to avoid a contest—there had been no contest in 1834 or 1852, though more than one name had been mentioned on each occasion—and Salisbury's recent record made him the Conservative most acceptable to the other side in politics. He had quitted a Conservative Government in 1867 on a point of principle on which many Whigs agreed with him; in 1868 he had been an open supporter of Roundell Palmer in the latter's attempt on the Oxford University seat lost three years before by Gladstone; in June 1869 he had been one of the 36 Conservative peers who voted for the crucial Second Reading of Gladstone's Irish Church Bill, though only after a long speech explaining that in his view the Lords must reluctantly accept the nation's verdict.⁴⁹ There had even been speculations—very ill-informed ones—that he might join the Liberals,⁵⁰ and he was certainly for the present outside the official councils of the Conservatives. (His correspondence at this time contains exhortations from both acquaintances and strangers to form a third party.) It must have been a recommendation to disquieted Tories and Whigs alike that in 1867 he had refused to be a rebel⁵¹

⁴⁵ *Letters of Robert First Earl of Lytton* (1906), ed. Lady B. Balfour, i. 218; *English Churchman*, 2 December 1869, p. 589; cf. the comment by J. R. Green in the *S.R.*, 4 December, xxviii. 721, on the Conservative leadership in the Lords: 'it may be doubted whether his followers could be brought to believe that Lord Salisbury would be as safe as they could wish', even if the mutual aversion between Salisbury and Disraeli could be overcome.

⁴⁶ Cecil, i. 264.

⁴⁷ e.g. Lord Ellenborough to Lady Dorothy Nevill, 23 August 1868, *Reminiscences of Lady Dorothy Nevill* (London 1906), 122; Lord Granville to Mr. Gladstone, 28 September 1868, in Lord E. Fitzmaurice, *Life of Granville* (2nd ed. London 1905), i. 541; Northcote to Disraeli, 7 June 1868: B.M. Add. MS. 50,016, f. 30v.

⁴⁸ Starkey to Salisbury, 27 October 1869.

⁴⁹ Cecil, ii. 24-5.

⁵⁰ Fitzmaurice, i. 540.

⁵¹ Cecil, i. 249-51.

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and that in the current issue of *The Quarterly Review* (October 1869) he once again pleaded that the Tory party 'devote its energies simply to the one task of strengthening the hands of the least Radical section of its opponents', even though the resultant exile from the sweets of office should be a long one.⁵² Any election would have been fought on party lines: Salisbury's name was the one most likely to attract supporters from each camp. Carnarvon stood in something approaching the same position on the Conservative, and Roundell Palmer on the Liberal side;⁵³ but each was a personal friend and unwilling to stand. Obviously much had happened since Oxford Liberals had hoped to elect a successor to Derby in March 1868.

In the second place, Salisbury was the leading lay opponent of the move for the abolition of the remaining University Tests, a move which aroused much (though by no means universal) opposition in Oxford itself. His connexion with and interest in Oxford had certainly not ceased with his entry into Parliament back in 1853: in January 1854, at the early age of 23, he had been seriously considered as a candidate for the Oxford University Parliamentary seat then vacant, and in 1867 his name seems to have been mentioned in the same connexion. His maiden speech in 1854 had concerned University Reform (which he naturally opposed). He had worked against Gladstone in the Oxford election of 1865 and had been concerned in that of 1868.⁵⁴ He was involved in the foundation of Keble College. Now, in 1869 he was closely involved in the question of the remaining Tests, and it was this matter which was then uppermost at Oxford. The current phase of this agitation⁵⁵ had begun in 1863, when Salisbury (then Lord Robert Cecil) had come out strongly against the removal of the remaining Tests during the course of a debate on a petition signed by various Oxford Heads and Fellows calling for the abolition of the need to subscribe to the 39 Articles and the three articles of the 36th Canon on taking the degree of M.A. and higher degrees.⁵⁶ (The Act of 1854 had abolished oaths and declarations only at Matriculation and for Bachelors' degrees.) In 1864 Lord Robert had spoken in the Committee stage and on the Third Reading of Dodson's Tests Abolition (Oxford) Bill (narrowly defeated on the Third Reading), which would have substituted for the Tests a

⁵² 'The Past and the Future of Conservative Policy', *Quarterly Review*, CXXVII (1869), 559.

⁵³ Thus on 11 October 1868 Thomas Collins, jun., a Conservative candidate, wrote to Salisbury that he was 'inclined to think that under all the circumstances Palmer is a better man than Mowbray to succeed [Heathcote at Oxford] . . . Palmer deserves something for calling Gladstone's Irish scheme confiscation.'

⁵⁴ Cecil, I, 39-40, 264, 47, 185.

⁵⁵ A. I. Tillyard, *A History of University Reform* (Cambridge 1913), 198-203; A. D. Elliot, *Life of . . . First Viscount Goschen* (London 1911), I, 60-4; C. E. Mallet, *History of the University of Oxford* (London 1927), III, 330-2; Morley, II, 313-14; Cecil, I, 325-8 (with quotations).

⁵⁶ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 172, 1379.

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declaration of bona fide membership of the Church of England.⁵⁷ In 1865 Cecil had moved the rejection of a similar Bill moved by Goschen: he had no objection to the 'Cambridge compromise', whereby non-Anglicans could enjoy the 'literary dignity' of an M.A., but wished to exclude non-Anglicans from any share in the government of the University.⁵⁸ Goschen's Bill was eventually withdrawn, but in 1866 a similar one was moved by J. D. Coleridge, and Cecil (now Viscount Cranborne) made what was probably his most forthright speech in denunciation of the proposal: the Bill, he maintained (and not unreasonably), was 'really a Bill for the abolition of religious education in the Universities'; he had 'a very great objection to the introduction of large measures on the pretext that they would only affect infinitesimal results' (the proponents of the Bill alleging that only a few Dissenters would be admitted by it); and he attacked in vigorous terms the concept and practice of 'unsectarian religion'.⁵⁹ He spoke again in Committee, objecting to the admission of large numbers of Dissenters, to the period of religious controversy which their admission would cause, and to the state of unbelief in the points at stake in the controversy which would eventually result, just as it had resulted from the disputes of Tractarian days.⁶⁰ This Bill was also withdrawn; another was brought in, again by Coleridge, in 1867. Lord Cranborne took no active part against this Bill, which passed the Commons but was rejected by the Lords on Second Reading by 46 votes to 74. Cranborne's interest in the subject was, however, far from dead: in March 1868, as the spokesman of the Anglican laity, he had been a prominent member of the Oxford deputation which had presented to the Primate at Lambeth an address against Coleridge's and E. P. Bouverie's current Bill for the abolition of the remaining Tests.⁶¹ To some, of course, Salisbury's interest in the foundation of Keble College was further evidence of his stand on the Tests. There is no explicit reference to the Lambeth deputation in the correspondence on the Chancellorship in the Salisbury Papers, but certainly some of Salisbury's associates in March 1868 were his supporters in October 1869: for instance the President of St. John's was the deputation's senior resident member, Wall was a signatory of the address, and Burrows conducted the necessary correspondence with Salisbury.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 175. 1029 (where Cecil's recent speech against abolition in Oxford is mentioned); 176. 670.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 180. 210. Salisbury's article, 'The Church in her Relations to Political Parties', in *Q.R.* cxviii (1865), was occasioned by this debate; he had earlier expressed his views on comprehension in 'The Bi-centenary', *Q.R.* cxii (1862).

⁵⁹ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 182. 706. Salisbury castigates 'unsectarian religion' in 'Four Years of a Reforming Administration', *Q.R.* cxiii (1862), 266-7.

⁶⁰ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 184. 331.

⁶¹ *The Times*, 12 March 1868 (between the First and Second Readings). 'The Oxford Protest' is criticized (as being far too vehement and exaggerated in tone) by J. R. Green in *S.R.* xxv (1868), 304-5, and was described as 'most strange and wild' by Coleridge on the Bill's Second Reading (13 May 1868, *Hansard*, 3rd series, 192. 214). The Bill was withdrawn on 22 July.

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Other later supporters of Salisbury's candidature for the Chancellorship appear among the opponents of abolition.⁶² The deputation appears to have played a large part in bringing Salisbury forward as the University's lay champion against abolition of the Tests; others among the names mentioned for the Chancellorship had also opposed the proposed change in Parliament—but they had taken no part in the deputation. Gladstone's attitude was equivocal: he had come out in principle for changes in the Tests in 1865 and had been roundly attacked by Salisbury in the *Quarterly* as a result,⁶³ but had generally objected to past Bills for abolition on the grounds that piecemeal reform was undesirable, and in 1870 was still to feel that this particular task was not for him.⁶⁴ In any case, Bishop Temple, not the Tests, ruined any chance of the Chancellorship which Gladstone might have had. Palmer was unsound on the Tests,⁶⁵ and Carnarvon, though he signed the 1868 petition, had opposed the 1867 Bill on grounds rather like Gladstone's, and can have given opponents of abolition little encouragement by his speech on the Second Reading of Coleridge's, Bouverie's and Duff's 1869 Bill.⁶⁶ Northcote had regularly been a teller against the successive Bills for abolition; Marlborough had moved the rejection of Coleridge's Bill in the Lords in 1867, Stanhope was against that Bill 'without any hesitation'.⁶⁷ (Granville had voted for the 1867 and 1869 Bills, Harrowby had voted against the 1869 one but had not spoken on either.⁶⁸)

It is a leader of 6 November in the usually well-informed *Oxford Journal* which testifies to the combination in Salisbury's favour of University Tests⁶⁹ and of Liberal support:

'Lord Salisbury has been pointed out for the office, not so much by the distinguished position he holds in the House of Lords, as by the fact of his having taken so hearty and effective a part in defending the Christian

⁶² Cf. the signatures to the 1868 protest, and to the memorial forwarded to Gladstone by Provost Hawkins early in 1870: B.M. Add. MS. 44206, ff. 281-2v. Only one (Hawkins) of the seven Heads who supported Salisbury in 1869 had not signed with him in 1868. At least 22 of Salisbury's 27 supporters on 27 October 1869 signed the 1870 memorial.

⁶³ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 180. 221; *Q.R.* cxviii (1865), 213: 'Since . . . 1859, there is no subject upon which he [Gladstone] has given to the Church an effective and genuine support'; and p. 221: 'Mr. Gladstone's Church championship is an advantage that may be surrendered without any serious misgiving.' This attack was preparatory to the Oxford election of 1865.

⁶⁴ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 184. 321; Morley, II. 313-14.

⁶⁵ *Memorials*, pt. II. I. 125.

⁶⁶ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 189. 63; 198. 127. Salisbury did not speak on the 1869 Bill.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 189. 47, 69.

⁶⁸ Harrowby appears to have been remiss in answering letters on the subject of the 1868 deputation: Burrows to Salisbury, 10 March 1868; but he was a regular correspondent of Salisbury when the Tests were abolished in 1871.

⁶⁹ The Tests had been the subject, appropriately enough, of the last paragraph of Derby's last letter to his Secretary: n. 4 above. The importance of the Test question to Pusey in 1868 is illustrated by *Memorials*, pt. II. I. 105.

character of the University the year before last⁷⁰ [*sic*] when an address, signed by 2,500 members of Convocation, was presented to the late Archbishop of Canterbury against Mr. Coleridge's Bill by a deputation from Oxford. The unswerving loyalty his Lordship then showed to *Alma Mater* and her highest interests has not been forgotten. The Chancellorship is the reward. There is a general feeling that amidst the struggles which are about to take place over the Church and Universities, the great cause could not be confided to one more likely to prove honest and faithful, as well as efficient, and less likely to submit to some base shuffle into which the exigencies of mere party conflict might tempt a less trusty man. At the same time that the great majority of Oxford Convocation selects his Lordship on these grounds, he is also acceptable to the more moderate Liberals, from his independence of character and loftiness of purpose. A grumbling whine was heard for a moment—from the extreme left—"Why cannot we have Mr. Gladstone, or some such leading Radical?" But it was merely for a moment. Such a notion was immediately seen to be ridiculous, especially when the idol of the Radicals had just made himself detestable to the vast mass of English Churchmen by the appointment of Dr. Temple to the Bishopric of Exeter. And so Lord Salisbury walks over the course.'

The Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, the Duke of Devonshire, had voted 'most cordially' for the 1867 Bill;⁷¹ it was no wonder that the Oxford opponents of the abolition of Tests wished to make sure of a champion in the Lords, where the fight for any such later Bill would clearly be crucial. Moreover, whereas opinion among Oxford residents was divided on the Tests, such a champion would certainly secure the votes, in a contested election, of the majority of the non-residents.

The Oxford Journal summarily dismissed Carnarvon's candidature:

'Lord Carnarvon has also had many supporters, but his political position is not nearly the same as Lord Salisbury's, and his reputation is so much inferior, though he gained the highest University honours, that his name has not been seriously pushed. As High Steward he will be found in full accord with his friend; and so, especially as the head of the Conservative party will probably be for the future in the House of Lords,⁷² there is as much hope for the preservation of the institutions so dear to all Englishmen as in these evil times can be expected.'

For all its Toryism, however, *The Oxford Journal* thought that an even better choice than Lord Salisbury might have been made in Lord Stanhope:

'While we rejoice in this conclusion, and feel sure our readers will be thankful that the University has secured so staunch a champion for the cause of religion and Constitutional rights, we cannot, however, but regret the

⁷⁰ Burrows wrote to Salisbury on 9 March 1868: 'I suspect we shall have to rely upon you very much to represent the laity, the most important point of all.'

⁷¹ *Hansard*, 3rd series, 189. 58.

⁷² *The Oxford Journal* did not necessarily mean to suggest, of course, that that head would be either Salisbury or Carnarvon.

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necessity which has caused so obvious a candidate for this great honour as Lord Stanhope to be passed over. Though, like Lord Salisbury, he gained no academical honours, he has for a whole generation stood nearly at the head of English literary men, and has placed Oxford under especial obligations by accepting the post of Examiner in her Schools and founding an Historical prize. His calm and wise statesmanship would also have commended itself to the great mass of Oxford men; while his courteous manners and chivalrous character would have endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. But his name is not so prominent in the political strife of the day as Lord Salisbury's, nor has he taken the same distinguished part in defence of the privileges of his University. None the less will he be found on the same side as the Chancellor when the struggle commences, for he is far above the petty jealousies of ordinary men.'

The election itself took place on 12 November. (The day before, Bishop Wilberforce had given his 1½ hour farewell charge in Christ Church Cathedral and Frederick Temple had been elected to the Bishopric of Exeter.) According to the rules then in force in uncontested elections, the poll was kept open for 45 minutes, during which 38 votes were recorded. Something went slightly awry, for one vote was given for Carnarvon, by whom appears to be unknown; Salisbury received 37 votes, and was duly elected.⁷³ The names of his sponsors have not been discovered. One comment made after the election is not without interest: to the somewhat uncharitable mind of a writer in *The Oxford Undergraduates' Journal*, Salisbury's election might,

'for different reasons, be a satisfaction both to Conservatives and to Liberals. The former may naturally rejoice at having placed in office one with whom the love of the *status quo* is a powerful principle. The latter have also their reasons for content. Many hostile critics have remarked upon the contrast between the conduct of the Marquis when in office and his political procedure when out of office. They have accused the latter of wildness, inaccuracy, and want of foresight; they admit that the former exhibited real labour, vigour and impartiality. They may therefore believe that the election of the Marquis of Salisbury to the Chancellorship will impart to his treatment of University subjects a judicious moderation which it might otherwise have lacked. Meanwhile the solitary gentleman who recorded his vote for the Earl of Carnarvon may console himself with the reflections, first that the object of his choice is already connected with the government of the University, and secondly, that our High Steward does not stand in need of any weight of office to moderate a conduct which is always directed by a conscience at once sensitive and informed.'⁷⁴

⁷³ *O.U. Herald*, 13 and 20 November 1869. (Nevertheless, the draft, in University Archives W.P.7., 3(5), consulted by kindness of Dr. W. A. Pantin, avers that Salisbury was elected *unanimi consensu*.) The voting papers were afterwards burnt, as required by Statute. The notice summoning Convocation is in the Bodleian, Oxon. c. 85, f. 329. Pusey was one of Salisbury's voters, to judge from a letter he wrote to Salisbury next year.

⁷⁴ *Oxford Undergraduates' Journal*, no. 50, 18 November 1869.

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Salisbury received a thin trickle of more private felicitations than those expressed in the Long Gallery at Hatfield on the well-known occasion of his installation on 23 November.⁷⁵ (Hard on the heels of the congratulations came the requests for subscriptions.) A letter at this time from his friend and doctor, Henry Acland, drew from Salisbury a reply which has long been in print, but so completely devoid of its context as to be almost meaningless.⁷⁶ The story given here explains why Salisbury should have looked back on his election as he did:

'My dear Acland,

'Many thanks for your kind expressions. I value them much more than I do the Chancellorship.

'I am sorry that I have been in any way a cause of discord, but it is no fault of mine. I not only did not seek the post, but sought to decline it: feeling with you, that the holder of it should be less of a partisan, and more of a scholar. I allowed myself to be nominated only on receiving from several independent authorities the assurance that by so doing I should spare the University a contest, as my candidature was less likely to excite hostility than any other at this moment practicable. It was only natural that those who agree with my general opinions should be forward to support me. But I do not think any party demonstration was intended. I quite agree with you that a University should be governed, both by its nominal and its real chiefs, without reference to the political struggles of the day.

'But an Ethiopian cannot change his skin—nor can I put off my "Toryism"—my deep distrust of the changes which are succeeding each other so rapidly. Numbers of men support them who are not of the spirit that bred them; but that spirit is essentially a pagan spirit, discarding the supernatural, and worshipping not God but man. It is creeping over Europe rapidly: and I can not put off the conviction that it is dissolving every cement that holds society together.

'I have given you enough and too much of my gloomy thoughts. They have been excited by reading in a Liberal paper "that learning is too high and sacred a thing to be sectarian". Bah!'

The story of Salisbury's election may admit of a few final reflections. As to methods, we may note the absence in 1869, at least in the sources consulted, of any reference to a meeting of resident members of Convocation as such, or of Heads of Houses.⁷⁷ The Conservative caucus was obviously active, but not the residents or the Heads *en bloc*. So far as personalities are concerned, the fact that no Anglican prelate appears to have been thought of, even over the

⁷⁵ Described by Cecil, II, 5; and Mowbray, pp. 252-3. The Oxford delegation was well chosen—it included Salisbury's doctor (Acland), his tutor (Osborne Gordon), and his chief Conservative supporter (Wall).

⁷⁶ J. B. Atlay, *Sir Henry Wentworth Acland* (London 1903), 347; cf. pp. 345-6 for comments by Salisbury to Acland on Coleridge's Tests Abolition Bill which explains his general attitude on the issue.

⁷⁷ In 1852 (Wilberforce, II, 150) Bishop Wilberforce presided at 'a meeting of the resident members of Convocation'—but the details show that the definite article was tendentious.

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port, may itself be taken as a sign of Oxford's plight in the matter of the Tests. In the 17th century there had been two clerical Chancellors; in 1759 the Bishop of Durham had gone to the poll against Lord Westmorland; Archbishop Howley had been thought of by Keble and Newman in 1834, Howley or the Bishop of Salisbury had been thought of in 1840 when there were rumours that Wellington's health was failing; the Bishop of Exeter had been thought of in 1852; but in 1869, in this last attempt to hold back the tide, it was to a layman that the University had to turn for defence against abolition of the Tests. (After all, the bishops themselves were divided on the question.) Again, the election did call forth from Salisbury some forthright private expressions of his Toryism at a time when the Marquess's future in or outside the official Conservative party was still open to some doubt; but at the same time his success was partly due to that ability to rally Liberal support which was later to maintain him in a higher office. Lastly the election has some interest as a hint of Salisbury's future eminence:⁷⁸ one of the reasons for his election—the situation regarding the Tests—was of purely temporary application, for oddly enough in choosing Goschen as Salisbury's successor in 1903 Oxford was to choose the very man who in the 1860s had taken the lead against the Tests; and few would have asserted without some hesitation that in 1869 the University had picked a Chancellor who like his predecessors would also be Prime Minister. The Masters of Arts of the University of Oxford in the 19th century did from time to time some curious things—not without provocation; but petty politics must affect great men, and in 1869, partly for ephemeral reasons, and in the face of conflicting evidence, the University picked for its Chancellor a future Leader of the Conservative party and a future Prime Minister. But even Salisbury could not preserve the remaining Tests, and an election which so many, both inside and outside Oxford, thought important had no effect on the controversy which determined the choice made.

⁷⁸ On 29 October 1869 Gathorne Hardy seems to have viewed Salisbury's election as a factor in Salisbury's political re-emergence, *Gathorne Hardy, First E. of Cranbrook* (1910) (ed. A. E. Gathorne Hardy), 1. 294.