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Source: *Journal of Law and Economics*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Apr., 1973), pp. 179-189

Published by: The University of Chicago Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/724832>

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THE NOXIOUS INFLUENCE OF AUTHORITY: A CORRECTION OF JEVONS' CHARGE*

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I

JEVONS' well-known protest in the 1870's against the 'despotic calm' induced by the dominance of 'the orthodox Ricardian school' in British political economy, comprised two distinct allegations. One was that the writings of John Stuart Mill and some of his disciples were so widely and so exclusively used in the University study of the subject as to constitute a barrier against free enquiry.¹ The second was that this was in no small measure due to the deliberate politicking of a 'Mill faction' which 'never scrupled at putting their lecturers and examiners wherever they could'.² The role of authority in the develop-

* The comments of Professors A. W. Coats and R. D. C. Black on an earlier version of this note are gratefully acknowledged.

¹ The Noxious Influence of Authority, final section in W. Stanley Jevons, *The Theory of Political Economy* (1871, 1879).

² Letter from W. Stanley Jevons to H. S. Foxwell, November 14, 1879, in *Letters and Journal of W. Stanley Jevons* 408, 409 (Harriet A. Jevons ed., 1886). This allegation appears in the context of remarks about the use of Mill's works in logic and philosophy in University of London examinations. Immediately preceding his charge Jevons wrote: ". . . it is one thing to put forward views for rational judgement of competent readers, it is another thing to force those views upon young men by means of examinations." There are grounds for thinking, however, that Jevons did not mean to limit himself to logic and philosophy even though, in general, he was more opposed to Mill's logic than his economics (*id.* at 331, 409). In the first place, elsewhere he used almost the same form of words as just quoted, in reference to Mill and examinations in political economy: Letter from W. Stanley Jevons to J. E. Cairnes, January 14, 1872, in R. D. Collison Black, Jevons and Cairnes, 27 *Economica* 214, 228 (n.s. 1960). Moreover, when Jevons wrote to Foxwell he was in the midst of marking University of London examination papers in logic and philosophy. He may therefore have been conscious of George Croom Robertson, Professor of Philosophy of Mind and Logic at University College, London (1866-1892), a formidable man in the affairs of the University, and one who only recently had stood up for Mill when Jevons began publishing his series, *John Stuart Mill's Philosophy Tested*, 31 *Contemporary Rev.* 167, 256; 32 *id.* at 88; 36 *id.* at 521 (four pts., 1877-1879). For George Croom Robertson's defence of Mill, see 3 *Mind* 141-44, 287-89 (1878). However, had the immediate context been a recollection of his student days at University College, Jevons might have written exactly as he did, only with reference to political economy, since he blamed the prejudices of the Millian Professor Jacob Waley for his

ment of British economics has been discussed by Professor A. W. Coats in a recent article of that title, in the *Journal of Law and Economics*. Coats lists among the reasons for the stagnant condition of British economics in 1871 'a restrictive academic power structure'.³ There is undoubtedly some truth in this suggestion, especially as applied to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, where religious tests excluded from Professorial posts all but members of the Established Church.⁴ But just how far a restrictive academic power structure was present as a factor capable of stultifying the development of the science has not been defined. An examination of Jevons' charges requires data which throw some light on this issue. However, the first purpose of this note is to offer a partial test of Jevons' second allegation, through an enquiry into the behavior of Mill and his followers in relation to elections to chairs in political economy in England, Ireland and Scotland during the period 1848 to 1873.⁵ It will be argued that while Jevons' first allegation is undeniable, his second will not bear close inspection.

What is to be tested is whether Mill and his immediate disciples deliberately and concertedly sought the appointment of a candidate of their own persuasion in elections which were contested also by a candidate or candidates known to hold uncongenial views in matters of economic analysis. We shall confine ourselves to instances where Millian intervention is known to have occurred. It might have been asked simply, How often were the Millians involved? A glance at Table 1, which shows the elections which took place to chairs in political economy during our period, the method used to select the successful candidate, and whether any member of Mill's circle is known to have tried to influence the outcome, suggests not very often.⁶ This is *prima facie* evidence in the Millians' favour. However, we cannot be sure that the surviving records show the full extent of their involvement. Thus

having failed to gain first place in the political economy examination in 1860. Letter from W. Stanley Jevons to Herbert Jevons, July 25, 1860, in *Letters and Journal of W. Stanley Jevons, supra* at 152, 154.

³ A. W. Coats, *The Role of Authority in the Development of British Economics*, 7 *J. Law & Econ.* 85, 95 (1964).

⁴ See D. A. Winstanley, *Later Victorian Cambridge* 36 (1947), for an extensive discussion of the religious tests questions.

⁵ This quarter-century extends from the publication of Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* to his death. The information available on the selection of University Examiners is too slight to enable the test to be extended to this part of Jevons' allegation. It may be stated, however, that there is little to justify in him any feeling of personal frustration on this particular score. He was invited to examine at Cambridge in 1874 and 1875, while Fawcett was Professor of Political Economy, and at London University from 1869 to 1873, during Cairnes' tenure of the chair at University College, London.

⁶ Two Colleges in England where Professorships of Political Economy existed have been omitted from Table 1 as being relatively insignificant: The Queen's College, Liverpool (where Jevons was Professor in 1865-1866), and the East India College at Haileybury (where Richard Jones held the post until his death in 1855).

a blank entry under the last heading in Table 1 is not conclusive proof that they played no part in a particular contest; it may only reflect gaps in the official documents or the private papers of Mill and his closest disciples. Moreover, the wording of Jevons' allegation is such as to imply that the Millians intervened only where they thought they had a reasonable chance of determining the outcome. Non-involvement in some cases might therefore be quite consistent with Jevons' charge. On the other hand, it would strongly suggest that the Millians were innocent if it were found that, even where intervention was open to them and there was a possibility that a critic would be elected if they stood aside, they nevertheless did not automatically unite behind a candidate whom they could trust to be a spokesman for their views. These considerations have dictated the way in which our test is framed. Five cases display the necessary conditions: Trinity College, Dublin (1861); Cambridge University (1863); Owens College, Manchester (1866); The University of Edinburgh (1871); and University College, London (1872). They will be examined in turn.

Two further preliminary comments are in order. Firstly, the expressions Millians, Mill circle and 'Mill faction' are here used interchangeably. Secondly, discipleship is reckoned to be indicated by acknowledgement of Mill as mentor, and by concurrence on basic economic theory, which in this instance meant Ricardo's principles and their corollaries; while closeness of friendship is used to distinguish Mill's immediate disciples from his many admirers. According to these criteria Henry Fawcett and John Elliot Cairnes must be regarded as members of Mill's immediate circle. Cliffe Leslie also qualifies, though from about the mid-1860's, as is well known, he moved towards an independent position on economic method and the usefulness of Ricardo's deductive theorems.⁷

II

Trinity College, Dublin (1861)

In the first case, the election of a successor to Cairnes at Dublin in 1861, there is nothing to suggest a 'Mill faction' operating. Two of the candidates in the competitive examination for the post were Leonard Courtney, later

⁷ The Preface to Henry Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy* (1863) sufficiently indicates his attitude to Mill. Cairnes' deference also emerges clearly enough in his published works. It is still more evident, however, in his letters to Mill: see, for example, the letters published in John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, 3 *Collected Works*. . . app. H, at 1041-42, 1058, 1074 (1965). Cliffe Leslie's discipleship was more qualified, but he held Mill in the highest personal esteem, and set him in a class apart from what he regarded as the unhistorical, *a priori* school of Ricardo. See for example, T. E. Cliffe Leslie, *Letters to the Editor*, 27 *The Economist* 177-79 (February 13, 1869); *id.* at 688-90 (June 12, 1869), and his assessments of Mill in Thomas Edward Cliffe Leslie, *Essays in Political and Moral Philosophy* (1879), esp. at 221, 245-46.

TABLE 1
 APPOINTMENTS TO CHAIRS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY, ENGLAND, IRELAND
 AND SCOTLAND, 1848-1873

Institution	Date	Successful Candidate	Selection Procedure	Millian Involvement	
				For Appointee	For Another
Cambridge	1863	H. Fawcett	Ballot ¹	x	x
Edinburgh	1871	W. B. Hodgson	Committee ²	x	
King's College, London	1855	L. Levi	Invitation ³		
	1859	J. E. T. Rogers	Committee ⁴		x ¹¹
	1865	J. E. T. Rogers	Committee		
Oxford	1852	G. K. Rickards	Ballot ⁵		
	1857	C. Neate	Ballot		
	1862	J. E. T. Rogers	Ballot		
	1868	B. Price	Ballot		
	1872	B. Price	Ballot		
Owens College, Manchester	1854	R. C. Christie	Invitation ⁶		
	1866	W. S. Jevons	Committee ⁷	x	
Queen's College, Belfast	1849	W. N. Hancock	Committee ⁸		
	1853	T. E. C. Leslie	n.a.		
Queen's College Cork	1849	R. H. Mills	Committee ⁸		
Queen's College, Galway	1850	D. C. Heron	n.a.		
	1859	J. E. Cairnes	n.a.		x ¹²
	1870	Wm. Lupton	n.a.		
Trinity College, Dublin	1851	R. H. Walsh	Examination ⁹		
	1856	J. E. Cairnes	Examination		
	1861	A. Houston	Examination		x
	1866	J. Slattery	Examination		
	1872	R. Donnell	Examination		x ¹³
University College, London	1854	J. Waley	Invitation ¹⁰		
	1866	J. E. Cairnes	Committee		
	1872	L. H. Courtney	Committee	x	x

¹ The Cambridge Electoral Roll comprised all Masters of Arts who were resident in Cambridge and had kept their names on the books of a college.

² The Edinburgh chair was founded by the Merchant Company of Edinburgh, and its patronage was given to the Board of Curators plus the Master and Treasurer of the Merchant Company. The Board comprised three members nominated by the University Court and four by the Town Council; laymen therefore outnumbered academics by two to one. 1 Alexander Grant, *The Story of the University of Edinburgh during Its First Three Hundred Years*, 301, n. 1 (1884); 2 *id.* at 107, 149-50, 466.

³ Early in 1853 the Council of King's College, responding to popular demand, invited Leone Levi to deliver a course of lectures in commercial law. His employment was renewed, but no permanent appointment could be made until November 1855, after Levi had joined the Church of England. F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *The Centenary History of King's College, London, 1828-1928*, at 244-46 (1929).

⁴ Rogers was the first occupant of a Chair of Economic Science and Statistics, founded in honour of Thomas Tooke. The first set of applications for the post was considered jointly by a committee of the Council and the Tooke Memorial Committee (the representatives of which were John P. Boileau, William Newmarch and William Guy). Rogers was unanimously chosen. The tenure of the post was limited to five years, but the holder could offer himself for reelection. Accordingly, the chair was advertised as vacant in 1865, but Rogers made it known that he was a candidate, the advertisement apparently stating that this was "with the full consent of Mr. Newmarch". No other candidate appeared on this occasion; and Rogers retained the chair by successive re-election till 1890. *Id.* at 244; King's College Council Minutes, May 13, July 8, 1859 & January 19, 1865. Newmarch and Rogers were close friends, and it may be that Newmarch's known consent to Rogers' re-nomination was an important factor in his being unopposed for a second term.

⁵ The Drummond Professor at Oxford was elected by Convocation, or all Masters and Doctors, resident and non-resident, who kept their names on hall or college books. This meant that a large number of country clergymen were entitled to vote, and the weight of their opinion (usually on the conservative side when issues involving University or political reform were present) appears to have been decisive on those occasions when they were mobilised. W. R. Ward, *Victorian Oxford* 102, 119, 217, 265 (1965).

⁶ Christie was already Professor of Ancient and Modern History, and when the Faulkner Chair of Political Economy was established in 1854 he was simply asked to take over its duties.

⁷ A committee was formed to examine applications and recommended to the College Trustees that Jevons be appointed. There is no record that he was interviewed. Information on Owens College kindly provided by the Registrar of Manchester University.

⁸ Applications for the first chairs in the Queen's Colleges were submitted to the Colleges Board (comprising the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the Colleges), which undertook to investigate and assess the merits of the candidates. The final selection, however, rested with the Earl of Clarendon, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. I. T. W. Moody & J. C. Beckett, *Queen's Belfast, 1845-1949*, at 62-65 (1959).

⁹ The Whately Professor was chosen on the basis of a competitive (and anonymous) examination set by a committee of three economists, plus the recommendation of Archbishop Whately himself (till his death in 1863). Whately at times set additional papers, and seems on occasion also to have solicited Senior's opinion, for example, Whately to Senior, July 25, 1841, Whately Papers, Lambeth Palace Library; Trinity College Registry Book, May 1851-February 1856, at 470, and February 1856-July 1858, at 50. It is not clear, however, whether Whately's vote was ever decisive in a disagreement with the committee.

¹⁰ Waley originally put himself forward in 1852 as an instructor in political economy, to fill a gap in the studies of University College. On May 16, 1854 he wrote to the Council asking to be appointed to the long defunct chair in the subject. A committee of three (including F. W. Newman) reported favourably on his qualifications and the Council accepted their recommendation, resolving to appoint Waley without advertising the post. Letter from Waley to C. C. Atkinson, December 7, 1852; University College Senate Minutes, May 25 & June 1, 1854; University College Council Minutes, June 10, 1854 (all among University College, London, Records).

¹¹ One of the candidates in this election was Thomas Wilson Barnes, who graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1847, one year ahead of Cairnes. Barnes requested a testimonial of Cairnes, who obliged; though more—to judge from the very general nature of his remarks—out of friendship than any deep conviction about Barnes' abilities. Moreover, there is nothing to suggest that Cairnes had any knowledge of the other candidates, so his support of Barnes should not be construed as evidence that he was motivated by a desire to see a man of his own persuasion appointed. Cairnes' letter (Ms 8944 (5) in the Nat' Library of Ireland) has been drawn to my attention by Mrs. Irene Calvert.

¹² Cairnes' application for the Chair at Galway was accompanied by testimonials from Senior, Mill, Thomas Tooke and Cliffe Leslie, but also from such non-Ricardians as Archbishop Whately and Mountfort Longfield. The names of other candidates, if any, are not known. Cairnes' letter of application, and the testimonials, are among the State Papers at Dublin Castle CCSO RP 1859 9748/9. I owe this information to Mrs. Irene Calvert.

¹³ Cairnes was an examiner on this occasion, and his vote was cast for John Dockerill, whereas the other two examiners awarded Donnell the highest marks (Trinity College Registry Books, January 1871-December 1877, at 39-40). No further details are known.

to become a close friend of Cairnes, but at that time unknown to him, and Arthur Houston, a graduate of Trinity College. Courtney sympathized with Bastiat and the French tradition of treating commodity and factor pricing according to the same general laws of exchange.⁸ Houston inclined towards a modified Ricardianism.⁹ Cairnes, who was one of four examiners, was impressed by Courtney's ability, though he may have hesitated to support one whose views differed so radically from his own on the central problems of economic theory. At any rate, he awarded Houston the highest marks, but followed the paradoxical course of recommending that Courtney be appointed. In view of Houston's relatively more orthodox position, it may be held that Cairnes' marking really reflected a vote not for the man's ability but for his doctrinal soundness. But Houston was awarded the highest marks also by the other three examiners, Longfield, Isaac Butt, and W. N. Hancock, none of whom could be suspected of favouring Ricardian doctrines.¹⁰ However Cairnes' ranking of the candidates is to be accounted for, the striking fact remains that he recommended the unknown Courtney, in spite of recognized divergences of view. This action lends credence to Cairnes' later claim that "the originality of his [Courtney's] mind, his searching power of analysis, and the importance of bringing minds of this class into direct contact with the economic problems of the day" finally weighed more heavily with him than his dissent from some of Courtney's views.¹¹

Cambridge University (1863)

There *is* evidence of factionalism at work in the Cambridge election of 1863.¹² But here, even more clearly than in Dublin, Cairnes acted indepen-

⁸ This is borne out in two reviews, published anonymously: *Economistes Modernes*, 5 *The London Review* 35-37 (July 12, 1862); *id.* at 106-08 (August 2, 1862); and *Mr. Thornton on Labour*, *The [London] Times*, October 16, 1869 at 4, col. 3. See also Letter from John Elliot Cairnes to Leonard H. Courtney, May 26, 1863, in the Courtney Collection, at Brit. Library of Pol. & Econ. Sci. [hereinafter cited as Courtney Collection].

⁹ Arthur Houston's Ricardianism, on the question of wages and capital, may be discerned in a series of articles he published in *The Working Man. What Governs The Rate of Wages?*, *The Working Man*, February 10, 1866, at 88-89, *id.* February 24, 1866, at 121-22; *How the Rate of Wages may be Raised*, *id.*, March 24, 1866, at 183, *id.*, April 7, 1866, at 218, *id.* May 5, 1866, at 275. On value he departed significantly from Ricard: see R. D. Black, *Trinity College, Dublin, and the Theory of Value, 1832-1863*, 12 *Economica*, 140, 147-48 (n.s. 1945).

¹⁰ Letter from John Elliot Cairnes to a certain Mr. Munroe (also a candidate for the Whately Chair, and apparently one of Cairnes' former students), August 2, 1861, in the Nat'l Library of Ireland, MS 8942 (1); also Registry Book of Trinity College, Dublin, July 1858-April 1862, entry for August 10, 1861, at 452. For the economic views of the other examiners see R. D. Black, *supra* note 9.

¹¹ Letter from John Elliot Cairnes to Geo. Pryme, March 29, 1863, in relation to Courtney's candidacy in the Cambridge election *infra*, in Courtney Collection.

¹² To speak of a "Mill faction" here would be misleading; since Mill himself, with

dently, and, ironically, it seems likely that but for his action Mill's own preferred candidate, Fawcett, would not have succeeded. Leslie Stephen has told the story in full, and only the main details need to be outlined here. Four candidates declared themselves: Fawcett, J. B. Mayor, H. D. Macleod and Courtney. Of these the first two stood out as the candidates enjoying most support within the University. Fawcett obtained pledges of support or testimonials from most of those publicly known as economists, among them Thorold Rogers, R. H. Mills, Jacob Waley, Cliffe Leslie, William Newmarch, W. T. Thornton, Herman Merivale, George Pryme (who had just retired from the Chair at Cambridge) and Mill.¹³ Mill's valued disciple Cairnes, however, supported Courtney.¹⁴ Mayor had the powerful backing of William Whewell, the staunch opponent of Ricardo's deductive method and of his theory of rent. He could, in addition, expect support from the men of his college, St. John's, who were reputed to vote always for their own. But Courtney, too, was a Johnian, and according to Leslie Stephen's reading of an affair with which he was intimately connected, it was Courtney's persistence in standing that split the Johnian vote and gave Fawcett a narrow victory.¹⁵

Owens College, Manchester (1866)

Perhaps the most surprising case, in view of Jevons' charge, is that of his own election to the chair of Logic, Mental and Moral Philosophy and Political Economy at Owens College, Manchester, in 1866; for among the testimonials submitted on his behalf was one from John Stuart Mill. Mill had been much impressed by Jevons' *The Coal Question*, even citing it approvingly in the House of Commons. Both the method and substance of this work could not but have appealed to one who held the principle of diminishing returns to be "more important and fundamental than any other; [since] it involves the whole subject of the causes of poverty, in a rich and industrious community."¹⁶ Mill (and Cairnes) also knew of and liked Jevons'

characteristic openness, approved of Courtney's candidacy, though subsequently he wrote a testimonial for Henry Fawcett: John Stuart Mill to John Elliot Cairnes, March 25, 1863, in 55 Mill-Taylor Collection, Brit. Library of Pol. & Econ. Sci.

¹³ Leslie Stephen, *Life of Henry Fawcett* 117-18 (1885); *Autobiographic Recollections of George Pryme*, 354 (Alicia Bayne ed., 1870). Of these economists, all but Merivale and Pryme held economic views at the time generally in line with Mill's.

¹⁴ See letters from John Elliot Cairnes to Leonard H. Courtney, March 15, March 19, March 21, May 3, May 23 and May 26, 1863, (two letters); letter from John Elliot Cairnes to George Pryme, March 29, 1863, all in Courtney Collection.

¹⁵ This is confirmed by the published Poll on the election. Two Johnians voted for Fawcett, twenty for Mayor, and sixteen for Courtney.

¹⁶ John Stuart Mill, *supra* note 7, at 2 *Collected Works*. . . 173. W. Stanley Jevons, *The Coal Question* (1865) was designed to show that Britain's continued progress in the second half of the nineteenth century depended less on cheap corn imports than on

investigations on the effects of the Australian gold discoveries.¹⁷ These two enquiries are the only ones cited by Mill in his testimonial as evidence of Jevons' capacity for economic analysis.¹⁸ There is no evidence that he (or Cairnes) knew of Jevons' two papers, of 1862 and 1866, outlining his new approach to value and suggesting his novel view of the economic problem as the allocation of given resources so as to maximize utility.¹⁹ In other words, there was little or nothing in those of Jevons' writings with which Mill was familiar that might have caused him to withhold his support. Accordingly, not too much should be read into his action. Nonetheless, one would expect that Mill, had he really been concerned to secure the chair for a teacher wedded to his own views, would have taken the trouble to obtain from Jevons copies of all his publications, before writing a testimonial. That he apparently did not bother to do so surely counts against Jevons' allegation.

Edinburgh University (1871)

A Chair of Commercial and Political Economy and Commercial Law was founded at the University of Edinburgh in 1869 and instituted in 1871. The first incumbent was William Ballantyne Hodgson, educator, ex-member of the Council of University College, London, and a past examiner in political economy at London University. Hodgson was an admirer of Bastiat and an early translator of some of his writings. In connection with his applica-

the access of her industries to cheap supplies of coal. Coal being an exhaustible resource, the notion of diminishing returns permeated the book, and Jevons' prognostications took on much the same pessimistic tone as characterized John Stuart Mill's version of the Ricardian growth process. (See especially the chapter entitled *Of the Natural Law of Social Growth in The Coal Question, supra.*)

¹⁷ Jevons' empirical enquiries into the effects of the Australian gold discoveries were first published as *A Serious Fall in the Value of Gold Ascertained* (1863) and were reprinted in *Investigations in Currency and Finance* 13 (H. S. Foxwell ed. 1884). Cairnes regarded them as having verified his own (Ricardian) speculations about the likely effects of the new gold on prices. A comprehensive review of the question as seen by contemporary economists is to be found in Craufurd D. W. Goodwin, *British Economists and Australian Gold*, 30 *J. Econ. History* 405 (1970). For the exchanges between Cairnes and Jevons on the subject see R. D. Collison Black, *supra* note 2.

¹⁸ Mill's testimonial is to appear in *3 Papers and Correspondence of W. S. Jevons* (R. D. Collison Black ed., forthcoming), as Letter 256 (22). I am grateful to Professor Black for having supplied me with a copy of the testimonial.

¹⁹ Notice of a General Mathematical Theory of Political Economy, in *British Ass'n for the Advancement of Science, Report of 32nd Meeting, Notices and Abstracts* at 158-59 (Transactions of the Sections, Stat. Sci., Report: 1862); *Brief Account of a General Mathematical Theory of Political Economy*, 28 *J. Royal Stat. Soc.* 282-87 (1866). Jevons' records that his first paper was "received without a word of interest or belief." Letter from W. Stanley Jevons to Tom Jevons, December 28, 1862, in *Letters and Journal of W. Stanley Jevons, supra* note 2, at 172, 175. The second appears to have suffered much the same fate.

tion for the chair at Edinburgh he solicited testimonials from a long list of economists, among them Cairnes, Cliffe Leslie and Fawcett, each of whom wrote in rather noncommittal terms.²⁰ However, Jevons also wrote a recommendation; hence, no matter how lukewarm the support given by Mill's disciples, this obviously cannot be considered an instance in which a 'Mill faction' aligned itself against the candidate favoured by Jevons.

University College, London (1872)

Finally, in the election in 1872 at University College, London, to replace Cairnes, Mill urged the appointment of Cliffe Leslie, though Leslie had by this time gone beyond his mentor in advocating the inductive and historical method in political economy.²¹ Cairnes once more threw himself in on Courtney's behalf, and it is probable that he was responsible also for securing the support of Mill's erstwhile colleague and sympathizer W. T. Thornton.²² On this occasion Cairnes' testimony proved decisive, in Courtney's favour.²³

III

We have not been directly concerned with the question of a restrictive academic power structure. To show its relation to the present enquiry it is helpful to distinguish two aspects of what is at issue. There is, firstly, a question whether those who held the power to make appointments exercised it in such a way as to stultify the development of economic analysis. Evidence of conservatism is all that is necessary to establish this; and it has been shown elsewhere that a strong intellectual conservatism did indeed prevail in our period, both among electors and among those entrusted with the teaching of political economy in the major Universities.²⁴ It may still be asked, however, whether this exercise of power was the result of University statutes, or of some other specific influence, such as that of a 'Mill faction'.

²⁰ A printed copy of Testimonials in favour of W. B. Hodgson. . . Candidate for the Professorship of Political and Commercial Economy and Mercantile Law in the University of Edinburgh (1870) is in the Jevons Collection, Brit. Library of Pol. & Econ. Sci.

²¹ Letter from John Stuart Mill to George Croom Robertson, May 11, 1872 in Robertson Collection, University College, London.

²² Extracts from communications by Cairnes and Thornton are contained in University College, Senate Report on the applications for the Professorship of Political Economy, vacant through the resignation of Prof. Cairnes, July 4, 1872, at 17-19, 20-23 (College Records, University College, London).

²³ *Id.* at 27.

²⁴ S. G. Checkland, *Economic Opinion in England as Jevons Found It*, 19 Manchester School of Econ. & Soc. Stud. 143 (1951).

Of the University regulations affecting political economy during our period two are relevant. (1) At Oxford, Cambridge and King's College, London, Professors had to be *bona fide* members of the Church of England.²⁵ (2) At Trinity College, Dublin, the Whately Professorship of Political Economy was open even to Roman Catholics, but prior to 1866 it could be held only by a graduate of the College, or of Oxford or Cambridge. Similarly at Oxford the Drummond Chair was reserved for Oxford graduates.²⁶ As a result of statutes of the first type one might expect to find instances where a generally conservative stance, and religious orthodoxy in particular, weighed more heavily with the electors at Oxford, Cambridge and King's College, London than did scientific capacity. Such cases did occur, and it is reasonable to infer from them that one consequence was a retardation of progress in the science. For example, Leone Levi's appointment at King's College, London was delayed until he agreed to change his church membership, though the College principals acknowledged that he was the best man to fill the chair of the Principles and Practice of Commerce. Again, Thorold Rogers' defeat in the 1868 election at Oxford after one term as Drummond Professor was the direct result of a Tory-inspired campaign of defamation, based on a distortion of some of his religious and political pronouncements, and in utter disregard of his comparative ability to advance the subject of political economy.²⁷ One would expect, too, that the tendency to inbreeding at Oxford and Trinity College, Dublin, resulting from the second sort of regulation, might have caused the early orientations of economic enquiry in those places to have survived longer than they naturally would have done. At least in the case of Trinity College, Dublin, however, the early teaching was markedly against, and far ahead of, the prevailing Ricardian orthodoxy.²⁸ The influence of restrictive regulations must thus be reckoned somewhat mixed.

As to the role of the Millians, the evidence of the five cases considered above is less equivocal. There was no monolithic 'Mill faction'; factional activity, even where it can be demonstrated (as at Cambridge in 1863), did not operate in the way required to substantiate Jevons' allegation; and neither Mill nor his disciples sought to influence appointments in a manner which suggests that they placed a man's orthodoxy above every other quality.

²⁵ D. A. Winstanley, *supra* note 4, at 37-38, 47; The Oxford University Calendar 59 (1854); F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *The Centenary History of King's College, London, 1828-1928*, at 244 (1929).

²⁶ Information supplied by the Keeper of Manuscripts, Trinity College, Dublin; The Oxford University Calendar 59 (1854).

²⁷ F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *supra* note 25, at 244-46; W. R. Ward, *Victorian Oxford* 265 (1965). The 1868 election at Oxford is to be made the subject of a separate paper.

²⁸ R. D. Black, *supra* note 9.

One must conclude then that Jevons' charge against the establishment was overdrawn. His attitude is not untypical when novel ideas have elicited something less than the response anticipated by their inventor.²⁹ But the response frequently is disappointing simply because, in the nature of the case, there exists no ready-made market for new ideas. One should not therefore expect to find evidence of sabotage or conspiracy behind every instance of a good idea ignored. Jevons' case serves to remind us, rather, that the tactics employed in presenting and gaining a hearing for intellectual novelties are at least as important as the inherent quality of the ideas themselves.³⁰

²⁹ H. D. Macleod and William Lucas Sargant are two among Jevons' contemporaries who displayed much the same reaction in similar circumstances. The unfortunate Macleod enjoyed a considerable reputation on the continent, but felt that his works were given less than their due by British economists, and after several unsuccessful attempts to gain a chair publicly attacked a system in which, he held, "[E]lectors openly and avowedly pay not the slightest attention to the merits or the capacity of the Candidates" (cited by A. W. Coats, *Sociological Aspects of British Economic Thought* (CA. 1880-1930), 75 *J. Pol. Econ.* 706, 721, n. 21 (1967)). William Lucas Sargant complained in 1867 that his works were largely ignored by the reviews: "new principles are not merely condemned: they are even refused a hearing, unless they are put forth by a friend of the reviewer: personal partialities and antipathies have taken the place of discriminating justice." (cited by R. D. Collison Black, *W. S. Jevons and the Foundation of Modern Economics*, 4 *History Pol. Econ.* 364, 367 (1972)). Even Cliffe Leslie, as he moved away from Mill's position, complained of having experienced "the utmost difficulty in getting a hearing on any economic questions in this country, because there is a combination of economists and newspapers—especially Cairnes, Fawcett, Courtney, the Spectator, the Saturday Review—to put me down." Letter from T. E. Cliffe Leslie to Frederic Harrison, dated June 8, 1875, but should probably be 1873, in Harrison Papers, *Brit. Library of Pol. & Econ. Sci.*

³⁰ The point has been elaborated by George J. Stigler, *The Nature and Role of Originality in Scientific Progress*, 22 *Economica* 293 (n.s. 1955); reprinted in George J. Stigler, *Essays in the History of Economics* 1 (1965).