Lord Salisbury (1830–1903) is now a subject of intense historical attention. This important new study moves away from conventional biography and presents an original portrait of the mental world inhabited by late-Victorian Conservatives at the time when their world-view was coming under severe strain.

At the centre of the picture is the third Marquis of Salisbury, but *Lord Salisbury’s World* does not simply tell the story of his life and politics. Instead, it asks sensitive questions about how the political, intellectual and religious environments of the late-Victorian period seemed to one of its sharpest intellects, and it situates Salisbury and his immediate entourage in a wide landscape of relationships, perceptions and problems.

Its starting points are two: that politics is a situational activity, and that situations reside in the minds of the beholders. For that reason Professor Bentley draws the reader into Conservative assumptions about time and space, property and society, religion and the state, the past and the future – the very language in which they expressed themselves. His book will therefore be required reading for all those interested in British political ideas.

Michael Bentley is Professor of Modern History at the University of St Andrews. His many publications include *Politics without Democracy, 1815–1914* (second edn, 1996) in the Fontana History of England. He was also editor of *Public and Private Doctrine: Essays in British History presented to Maurice Cowling* (Cambridge, 1993).
LORD SALISBURY’S WORLD

Conservative Environments in Late-Victorian Britain

MICHAEL BENTLEY
Contents

Acknowledgements  page vi
List of abbreviations viii

Introduction: situations vacant 1
1 Time 8
2 Space 33
3 Society 65
4 Property 94
5 Thought 125
6 The state 159
7 The church 188
8 The empire 220
9 The party 251
10 The legacy 295

Sources and further reading 322
Index 327
Acknowledgements

I wish to thank H.M. The Queen for gracious permission to consult and quote from material in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle and to express my gratitude to the staff there for their helpfulness. I owe a special debt, likewise, to the libraries of Hatfield House, Christ Church, Oxford, the Manuscripts Department of the British Library, the National Library of Scotland and Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, Cambridge University Library and St Andrews University Library. In preparing a study of some eclecticism debts have accrued to a far wider collection of archivists, the staff of county record offices and to individuals with manuscripts in their care. The contribution of such people can never have more than a word of acknowledgement but without their support and readiness to co-operate the enterprise could not begin. A list of all collections and repositories that have been visited in carrying out the research for this book is included in the sources and further reading at the end of the volume and I hope that their custodians will accept this very inadequate word of thanks.

To the British Academy more than a word of gratitude is required for their support in making it possible to carry out part of the research on which this book is based and for providing a semester’s relief from teaching duties to expedite the writing. In modern conditions of academic life such help is a *sine qua non* for serious historical work.

No writer works alone and the way has been smoothed in this case by four people in particular who have read and commented on the entire text and helped eradicate some of its more glaring *bêtes*, though they are hardly to blame if the author has persisted in his misjudgements and mistakes. Professor Paul Smith and Professor John Vincent vastly improved the original manuscript through their criticisms. Dr Sarah Foot helped improve the skills of the world’s
Acknowledgements

wivet proof-reader. Dr Andrew Jones long ago gave up hopes of improving the author but supplied reassurance that Conservative environments still exist.

St Andrews
March 2001

Note on the Text

Capital letters have been reduced to the minimum and stripped from political offices (prime minister, foreign secretary) and general references to institutions (parliament, the church); they have been retained for titles (Church of England, Foreign Office). I have ignored this rule when the result looked odd (archbishop of Canterbury, chancellor of the Exchequer). I have also retained ‘Marquis’ as opposed to the more usual ‘Marquess’ because it was the usage preferred by the Salisbury family.

M. B.
Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hansard</td>
<td><em>Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates</em> (third series before 1892, fourth series from 9 February 1892)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Royal Archives – papers and journals of Queen Victoria, Windsor Castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury-Balfour Correspondence</td>
<td>Robin Harcourt Williams (ed.), <em>Salisbury-Balfour Correspondence: Letters Exchanged between the Third Marquis of Salisbury and his Nephew Arthur James Balfour</em> 1869-1892 (Ware, 1988)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>