

## SIR JOHN LUBBOCK

**RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN LUBBOCK**, Bar't, D.C.L., P.C., M.P., Baron Avebury, eminent English scientist and parliamentarian, son of Sir John William Lubbock, was born at London, April 30, 1834, and was educated at Eton. He became by profession a banker in London, and introduced several important reforms in the banking system, and in 1865 succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father. He sat in Parliament as member for Maidstone, 1870-80, and afterwards for many years represented London University in the House of Commons. From 1886 he was a Liberal Unionist in politics. He appeared before the House frequently on questions of finance and education and procured the passage of the Bank Holidays Act. He was chairman of royal commissions on the advancement of science, on public schools, on international coinage, on education, and other important committees. In 1881, he was elected president of the British Association, and has acted as president of many other learned and scientific societies, both British and foreign. From 1872 to 1880, he was vice-chancellor of London University and president of the London University Extension Society. For twenty-five years he was secretary of the London bankers; he has been president of the London Institute of Bankers, president of the London Chamber of Commerce (1888-93) and vice-president of the London County Council. Besides holding these various positions of trust, he has been an indefatigable student of nature and popularizer of science and an industrious writer. In 1865, he published "Prehistoric Times as Illustrated by Ancient Remains," which was translated into many languages, and in 1870 he issued "The Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man." More than a quarter of a million copies, it is said, have been sold of the two parts of "The Pleasures of Life" (1887). His works besides those named include: "The Origin and Metamorphoses of Insects" (1874); "British Wild Flowers in their Relation to Insects" (1875); "Scientific Lectures" (1879); "Addresses, Political and Educational" (1879); "Fifty Years of Science" (1882); "Ants, Bees, and Wasps" (1882); "Flowers, Fruits, and Leaves" (1886); "Senses and Instincts of Animals" (1888); "The Beauties of Nature" (1893); "The Use of Life" (1894); "The Scenery of Switzerland" (1896); "Buds and Stipules" (1899), besides a hundred or more scientific memoirs in the Transactions of the Royal Society.

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## THE DUTY OF HAPPINESS

LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE HARRIS INSTITUTE, PRESTON

"If a man is unhappy, this must be his own fault; for God made all men to be happy."—Epictetus.

LIFE is a great gift, and as we reach years of discretion we most of us naturally ask ourselves what should be the main object of our existence. Even those who do not accept "the greatest good of the greatest number" as an absolute rule will yet admit that we should all endeavor to contribute as far as we may to the happiness of others.

There are many, however, who seem to doubt whether it is right that we should try to be happy ourselves. Our own happiness ought not, of course, to be our main object, nor indeed will it ever be secured if selfishly sought. We may have many pleasures in life, but must not let them have rule over us, or they will soon hand us over to sorrow; and "into what dangerous and miserable servitude doth he fall who suffereth pleasures and sorrows (two unfaithful and cruel commanders) to possess him successively?"<sup>1</sup>

I cannot, however, but think that the world would be better and brighter if our teachers would dwell on the duty of happiness as well as on the happiness of duty; for we ought to be as cheerful as we can, if only because to be happy ourselves is a most effectual contribution to the happiness of others.

Every one must have felt that a cheerful friend is like a sunny day, shedding brightness on all around; and most of us can, as we choose, make of this world either a palace or a prison.

<sup>1</sup> Seneca.

There is, no doubt, some selfish satisfaction in yielding to melancholy and fancying that we are victims of fate; in brooding over grievances, especially if more or less imaginary. To be bright and cheerful often requires an effort; there is a certain art in keeping ourselves happy: and in this respect, as in others, we require to watch over and manage ourselves almost as if we were somebody else.

Sorrow and joy, indeed, are strangely interwoven. Too often—

“ We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not:  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught;

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.”<sup>1</sup>

As a nation we are prone to melancholy. It has been said of our countrymen that they take even their pleasures sadly. But this, if it be true at all, will, I hope, prove a transitory characteristic. “Merry England” was the old saying; let us hope it may become true again. We must look to the East for real melancholy. What can be sadder than the lines with which Omar Khayyam opens his quatrains:<sup>2</sup>

“ We sojourn here for one short day or two,  
And all the gain we get is grief and woe;  
And then, leaving life's problems all unsolved  
And harassed by regrets, we have to go;”

or the Devas' song to Prince Siddârtha, in Sir Edwin Arnold's beautiful version:

“ We are the voices of the wandering wind,  
Which moan for rest, and rest can never find.  
Lo! as the wind is, so is mortal life—  
A moan, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife.”

If, indeed, this be true, if mortal life be so sad and full of suffering, no wonder that Nirvâna—the cessation of sor-

<sup>1</sup> Shelley.

<sup>2</sup> I quote from Whinfield's translation.

row—should be welcomed even at the sacrifice of consciousness.

But ought we not to place before ourselves a very different ideal—a healthier, manlier, and nobler hope?

Life is not to live merely, but to live well. There are some “who live without any design at all, and only pass in the world like straws on a river: they do not go; they are carried,”<sup>1</sup>—but, as Homer makes Ulysses say, “How dull it is to pause, to make an end, to rest unburnished; not to shine in use—as though to breathe were life!”

Goethe tells us that at thirty he resolved “to work out life no longer by halves, but in all its beauty and totality.”

“ Im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen  
Resolut zu leben.”

Life indeed must be measured by thought and action, not by time. It certainly may be, and ought to be, bright, interesting, and happy; for, according to the Italian proverb, “if all cannot live on the piazza, every one may feel the sun.”

If we do our best; if we do not magnify trifling troubles; if we look resolutely, I do not say at the bright side of things, but at things as they really are; if we avail ourselves of the manifold blessings which surround us; we cannot but feel that life is indeed a glorious inheritance.

“ More servants wait on man  
Than he'll take notice of. In every path  
He treads down that which doth befriend him  
When sickness makes him pale and wan.  
Oh mighty Love! Man is one world and hath  
Another to attend him.”<sup>2</sup>

Few of us, however, realize the wonderful privilege of living or the blessings we inherit; the glories and beauties of the Universe, which is our own if we choose to have it so; the extent to which we can make ourselves what we wish

to be; or the power we possess of securing peace, of triumphing over pain and sorrow.

Dante pointed to the neglect of opportunities as a serious fault:

"Man can do violence  
To himself and his own blessings, and for this  
He, in the second round, must aye deplore,  
With unavailing penitence, his crime.  
Who'er deprives himself of life and light  
In reckless lavishment his talent wastes,  
And sorrows then when he should dwell in joy."

Ruskin has expressed this with special allusion to the marvellous beauty of this glorious world, too often taken as a matter of course, and remembered, if at all, almost without gratitude. "Holy men," he complains, "in the recommending of the love of God to us, refer but seldom to those things in which it is most abundantly and immediately shown; though they insist much on his giving of bread, and raiment, and health (which he gives to all inferior creatures): they require us not to thank him for that glory of his works which he has permitted us alone to perceive: they tell us often to meditate in the closet, but they send us not, like Isaac, into the fields at even: they dwell on the duty of self-denial, but they exhibit not the duty of delight:" and yet, as he justly says elsewhere, "each of us, as we travel the way of life, has the choice, according to our working, of turning all the voices of Nature into one song of rejoicing; or of withering and quenching her sympathy into a fearful withdrawn silence of condemnation,—into a crying out of her stones and a shaking of her dust against us."

Must we not all admit, with Sir Henry Taylor, that "the retrospect of life swarms with lost opportunities?" "Whoever enjoys not life," says Sir T. Browne, "I count him but an apparition, though he wears about him the visible affections of flesh."

St. Bernard, indeed, goes so far as to maintain that "nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

Some heathen moralists also have taught very much the same lesson. "The gods," says Marcus Aurelius, "have put all the means in man's power to enable him not to fall into real evils. Now that which does not make a man worse, how can it make his life worse?"

Epictetus takes the same line: "If a man is unhappy, remember that his unhappiness is his own fault; for God has made all men to be happy." "I am," he elsewhere says, "always content with that which happens; for I think that what God chooses is better than what I choose." And again: "Seek not that things should happen as you wish; but wish the things which happen to be as they are, and you will have a tranquil flow of life. . . . If you wish for anything which belongs to another, you lose that which is your own."

Few, however, if any, can, I think, go as far as St. Bernard. We cannot but suffer from pain, sickness, and anxiety; from the loss, the unkindness, the faults, even the coldness of those we love. How many a day has been damped and darkened by an angry word!

Hegel is said to have calmly finished his *Phaenomenologie des Geistes* at Jena, on the 14th of October, 1806, not knowing anything whatever of the battle that was raging round him.

Matthew Arnold has suggested that we might take a lesson from the heavenly bodies.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,  
Undistracted by the sights they see,  
These demand not that the things without them  
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy."

"Bounded by themselves, and unobservant  
In what state God's other works may be,  
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,  
These attain the mighty life you see."

It is true that—

"A man is his own star;  
Our acts our angels are  
For good or ill,"

and that "rather than follow a multitude to do evil" one should "stand like Pompey's Pillar, conspicuous by one's self, and single in integrity."<sup>1</sup> But to many this isolation would be itself most painful, for the heart is "no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them."<sup>2</sup>

If we separate ourselves so much from the interests of those around us that we do not sympathize with them in their sufferings, we shut ourselves out from sharing their happiness and lose far more than we gain. If we avoid sympathy and wrap ourselves round in a cold chain armor of selfishness, we exclude ourselves from many of the greatest and purest joys of life. To render ourselves insensible to pain we must forfeit also the possibility of happiness.

Moreover, much of what we call evil is really good in disguise, and we should not "quarrel rashly with adversities not yet understood, nor overlook the mercies often bound up in them."<sup>1</sup>

Pleasure and pain are, as Plutarch says, the nails which fasten body and soul together. Pain is a signal of danger, a very necessity of existence. But for it, but for the warnings which our feelings give us, the very blessings by which we are surrounded would soon and inevitably prove fatal.

Many of those who have not studied the question are under the impression that the more deeply-seated portions of the body must be most sensitive. The very reverse is the case.

<sup>1</sup> Sir T. Browne.    <sup>2</sup> Bacon.

The skin is a continuous and ever-watchful sentinel, always on guard to give us notice of any approaching danger; while the flesh and inner organs, where pain would be without purpose, are, so long as they are in health, comparatively without sensation.

"We talk," says Helps, "of the origin of evil; . . . but what is evil? We mostly speak of sufferings and trials as good, perhaps, in their result; but we hardly admit that they may be good in themselves. Yet they are knowledge—how else to be acquired, unless by making men as gods, enabling them to understand without experience. All that men go through may be absolutely the best for them—no such thing as evil, at least in our customary meaning of the word."

Indeed, "the vale best discovereth the hill,"<sup>1</sup> and "pour sentir les grands biens il faut qu'il connoisse les petits maux."<sup>2</sup>

But even if we do not seem to get all that we should wish, many will feel, as in Leigh Hunt's beautiful translation of Filicaja's sonnet, that—

"So Providence for us, high, infinite,  
Makes our necessities its watchful task,  
Hearkens to all our prayers, helps all our wants,  
And e'en if it denies what seems our right,  
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,  
Or seems but to deny, and in denying grants."

Those, on the other hand, who do not accept the idea of continual interferences will rejoice in the belief that on the whole the laws of the universe work out for the general happiness.

And if it does come—

"Grief should be  
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate,  
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free:  
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend  
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bacon.    <sup>2</sup> "To realize our great blessings we must be acquainted with the petty trials of life."—Rousseau.    <sup>3</sup> Aubrey de Vere.

If, however, we cannot hope that life will be all happiness, we may at least secure a heavy balance on the right side; and even events which look like misfortune, if boldly faced, may often be turned to good.

Oftentimes, says Seneca, "calamity turns to our advantage, and great ruins make way for greater glories." Helmholtz dates his start in science to an attack of illness. This led to his acquisition of a microscope, which he was enabled to purchase owing to his having spent his autumn vacation of 1841 in the hospital, prostrated by typhoid fever; being a pupil, he was nursed without expense, and on his recovery he found himself in possession of the savings of his small resources.

"Savonarola," says Castelar, "would, under different circumstances, undoubtedly have been a good husband, a tender father; a man unknown to history, utterly powerless to print upon the sands of time and upon the human soul the deep trace which he has left; but misfortune came to visit him, to crush his heart, and to impart that marked melancholy which characterizes a soul in grief; and the grief that circled his brows with a crown of thorns was also that which wreathed them with the splendor of immortality. His hopes were centred in the woman he loved, his life was set upon the possession of her, and when her family finally rejected him, partly on account of his profession, and partly on account of his person, he believed that it was death that had come upon him when in truth it was immortality."

It is, however, impossible to deny the existence of evil, and the reason for it has long exercised the human intellect. The savage solves it by the supposition of evil spirits. The Greeks attributed the misfortunes of men in great measure to the antipathies and jealousies of gods and goddesses.

Others have imagined two divine principles, opposite and antagonistic—the one friendly, the other hostile, to men.

Freedom of action, however, seems to involve the existence of evil. If any power of selection be left us, much must depend on the choice we make. In the very nature of things two and two cannot make five. Epictetus imagines Jupiter addressing Man as follows: "If it had been possible to make your body and your property free from liability to injury, I would have done so. As this could not be, I have given you a small portion of myself."

This divine gift it is for us to use wisely. It is, in fact, our most valuable treasure. "The soul is a much better thing than all the others which you possess. Can you then show me in what way you have taken care of it? For it is not likely that you, who are so wise a man, inconsiderately and carelessly allow the most valuable thing that you possess to be neglected and to perish."<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, even if evil cannot be altogether avoided, it is no doubt true that not only whether the life we lead be good and useful, or evil and useless, but also whether it be happy or unhappy, is very much in our own power and depends greatly on ourselves. "Time alone relieves the foolish from sorrow, but reason the wise,"<sup>1</sup> and no one was ever yet made utterly miserable excepting by himself. We are, if not the masters, at any rate almost the creators of ourselves.

With most of us it is not so much great sorrows, disease, or death, but rather the little "daily dyings" which cloud over the sunshine of life. Many of our troubles are insignificant in themselves and might easily be avoided!

How happy home might generally be made but for foolish quarrels, or misunderstandings, as they are well named! It

<sup>1</sup> Epictetus.

is our own fault if we are querulous or ill-humored; nor need we, though this is less easy, allow ourselves to be made unhappy by the querulousness or ill-humors of others.

Much of what we suffer we have brought on ourselves, if not by actual fault, at least by ignorance or thoughtlessness. Too often we think only of the happiness of the moment, and sacrifice that of the life. Troubles comparatively seldom come to us; it is we who go to them. Many of us fritter our life away. La Bruyère says that "most men spend much of their lives in making the rest miserable;" or, as Goethe puts it:

"Careworn man has, in all ages,  
Sown vanity to reap despair."

Not only do we suffer much in the anticipation of evil, as "Noah lived many years under the affliction of a flood, and Jerusalem was taken unto Jeremy before it was besieged," but we often distress ourselves greatly in the apprehension of misfortunes which after all never happen at all. We should do our best and wait calmly the result. We often hear of people breaking down from overwork, but in nine cases out of ten they are really suffering from worry or anxiety.

"Nos maux moraux," says Rousseau, "sont tous dans l'opinion, hors un seul, qui est le crime; et celui-la dépend de nous: nos maux physiques nous détruisent, ou se détruisent. Le temps, ou la mort, sont nos remèdes."<sup>1</sup>

"Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to heaven."<sup>2</sup>

This, however, applies to the grown up. With children, of course, it is different. It is customary, but I think it is a mistake, to speak of happy childhood. Children are often

<sup>1</sup> "Our moral ills are all imaginary except one—crime; and that depends upon ourselves. Our physical ills either destroy us or are self-destructive. Time or death are our remedies."  
<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare.

over-anxious and acutely sensitive. Man ought to be man and master of his fate; but children are at the mercy of those around them. Mr. Rarey, the great horse-tamer, has told us that he has known an angry word raise the pulse of a horse ten beats in a minute. Think, then, how it must affect a child!

It is small blame to the young if they are over-anxious; but it is a danger to be striven against. "The terrors of the storm are chiefly felt in the parlor or the cabin."<sup>1</sup>

To save ourselves from imaginary, or at any rate problematical, evils, we often incur real suffering. "The man," said Epicurus, "who is not content with little is content with nothing." How often do we "labor for that which satisfieth not." More than we use is more than we need, and only a burden to the bearer.<sup>2</sup> We most of us give ourselves an immense amount of useless trouble; encumber ourselves, as it were, on the journey of life with a dead weight of unnecessary baggage; and as "a man maketh his train longer, he makes his wings shorter."<sup>3</sup> In that delightful fairy tale, "Through the Looking-Glass," the White Knight is described as having loaded himself, on starting for a journey, with a variety of odds and ends, including a mousetrap, lest he should be troubled by mice at night, and a beehive in case he came across a swarm of bees.

Hearne, in his "Journey to the Mouth of the Coppermine River," tells us that a few days after starting on his expedition he met a party of Indians who annexed a great deal of his property, and all Hearne says is, "The weight of our baggage being so much lightened, our next day's journey was much pleasanter." I ought, however, to add that the Indians

<sup>1</sup> Emerson.    <sup>2</sup> Seneca.    <sup>3</sup> Bacon.

broke up the philosophical instruments, which, no doubt, were rather an encumbrance.

When troubles do come, Marcus Aurelius wisely tells us to "remember on every occasion which leads thee to vexation to apply this principle, that this is not a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune."

Our own anger indeed does us more harm than the thing which makes us angry; and we suffer much more from the anger and vexation which we allow acts to rouse in us than we do from the acts themselves at which we are angry and vexed. How much most people, for instance, allow themselves to be distracted and disturbed by quarrels and family disputes. Yet in nine cases out of ten one ought not to suffer from being found fault with. If the condemnation is just, it should be welcome as a warning; if it is undeserved, why should we allow it to distress us?

Moreover, if misfortunes happen, we do but make them worse by grieving over them.

"I must die," again says Epictetus. "But must I then die sorrowing? I must be put in chains. Must I then also lament? I must go into exile. Can I be prevented from going with cheerfulness and contentment? But I will put you in prison. Man, what are you saying? You may put my body in prison, but my mind not even Zeus himself can overpower."

If, indeed, we cannot be happy, the fault is generally in ourselves. Socrates lived under the Thirty Tyrants. Epictetus was a poor slave, and yet how much we owe him!

"How is it possible," he says, "that a man who has nothing, who is naked, houseless, without a hearth, squalid, without a slave, without a city, can pass a life that flows easily? See, God has sent you a man to show you that it is possible.

Look at me, who am without a city, without a house, without possessions, without a slave; I sleep on the ground; I have no wife, no children, no prætorium, but only the earth and heavens and one poor cloak. And what do I want? Am I not without sorrow? Am I not without fear? Am I not free? When did any of you see me failing in the object of my desire? or ever falling into that which I would avoid? Did I ever blame God or man? Did I ever accuse any man? Did any of you ever see me with a sorrowful countenance? And how do I meet with those whom you are afraid of and admire? Do not I treat them like slaves? Who, when he sees me, does not think that he sees his king and master?"

Think how much we have to be thankful for. Few of us appreciate the number of our everyday blessings; we look on them as trifles, and yet "trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle," as Michael Angelo said. We forget them because they are always with us; and yet for each of us, as Mr. Pater well observes, "these simple gifts, and others equally trivial, bread and wine, fruit and milk, might regain that poetic and, as it were, moral significance which surely belongs to all the means of our daily life could we but break through the veil of our familiarity with things by no means vulgar in themselves."

"Let not," says Isaak Walton, "the blessings we receive daily from God make us not to value or not praise him because they be common; let us not forget to praise him for the innocent mirth and pleasure we have met with since we met together. What would a blind man give to see the pleasant rivers and meadows and flowers and fountains; and this and many other like blessings we enjoy daily."

Contentment, we have been told by Epicurus, consists not in great wealth, but in few wants. In this fortunate country,