



Anthony Trollope
The Way We Live Now

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815–82) was born in London and grew up in Harrow, where his father, a barrister, ruined himself in an unsuccessful attempt to be a gentleman-farmer. After miserable schooldays at Winchester and Harrow, Anthony became an unsatisfactory clerk in the Post Office. Though his mother, Frances Trollope, restored the family fortunes with a late-flowering career as a novelist and travel-writer, it was not until 1841, when he went to work for the Post Office in Ireland, that Anthony found his feet. Thereafter he combined success as a public official with a remarkable career as a writer, publishing 47 novels and numerous books of other kinds between 1847 and 1884, some of them posthumously. In the words of Gordon N. Ray, Trollope produced ‘more novels of lasting value than any other writer in English’, including the perennially popular *Chronicles of Barssetshire* (1855–67) and his ‘Palliser’ series of political novels (1864–80). His satire *The Way We Live Now* (1875) was not initially admired, but became after the middle of the twentieth century one of the most widely celebrated of all Victorian fictions.

FRANCIS O’GORMAN has edited John Ruskin’s *Praeterita* and Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Sylvia’s Lovers*, and co-edited Anthony Trollope’s *Framley Parsonage* and *The Duke’s Children*, all for Oxford World’s Classics. His most recent publications include *Worrying: A Literary and Cultural History* (Bloomsbury, 2015), *The Cambridge Companion to John Ruskin* (2015), and the Oxford Twenty-First Century Authors *Algernon Charles Swinburne* (2016). He is a Professor in the School of English at the University of Leeds.

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics have brought readers closer to the world's great literature. Now with over 700 titles—from the 4,000-year-old myths of Mesopotamia to the twentieth century's greatest novels—the series makes available lesser-known as well as celebrated writing.

The pocket-sized hardbacks of the early years contained introductions by Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, and other literary figures which enriched the experience of reading.

Today the series is recognized for its fine scholarship and reliability in texts that span world literature, drama and poetry, religion, philosophy, and politics. Each edition includes perceptive commentary and essential background information to meet the changing needs of readers.

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



ANTHONY TROLLOPE

The Way We Live Now



Edited with an Introduction and Notes by

FRANCIS O'GORMAN

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

Introduction, Note on the Text, Select Bibliography, Explanatory Notes
© Francis O'Gorman 2016

Biographical Preface, Chronology © Katherine Mullin and Francis O'Gorman 2011
Appendix 1 © John Sutherland 1982

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First published by Oxford University Press 1941 in two volumes

First issued as a World's Classics paperback 1982

Reissued as an Oxford World's Classics paperback 1999, 2008

New edition 2016

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015949833

ISBN 978-0-19-870503-1

Printed in Great Britain by
Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and
for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials
contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to Nicholas Shrimpton for his advice on Trollope, particularly on politics and finance, and for much discussion of the publishing arrangements of *The Way We Live Now*, reflected here. I am also very grateful to Kate Williams for her advice on the law and London, likewise reflected. I thank previous editors of this novel, Sir Frank Kermode (Penguin) and John Sutherland (Oxford World's Classics), and am grateful for discussions about Trollope to the following colleagues: the late Simon Dentith, and to Dinah Birch, John Bowen, Kate Flint, Elisabeth Jay, Clare Pettitt, Helen Small, Gill Sutherland, James Williams, and Jane Wright. I thank Judith Luna at OUP, and librarians at the Berg Collection, New York Public Library; the Bodleian Library, Oxford; the British Library, St Pancras; and the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds.

CONTENTS

<i>Biographical Preface</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i>	xiii
<i>Note on the Text</i>	xxx
<i>Select Bibliography</i>	xxxiii
<i>A Chronology of Anthony Trollope</i>	xxxvii
THE WAY WE LIVE NOW	I
<i>Appendix 1: Trollope's Working Materials for The Way We Live Now</i>	755
<i>Appendix 2: Dates in the Novel</i>	761
<i>Explanatory Notes</i>	762

BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE

ANTHONY TROLLOPE was born on 24 April 1815 in London. He was the fourth surviving child of a failing barrister and gentleman farmer, Thomas Anthony Trollope, and his wife Frances (née Milton), who became a successful novelist and travel writer. Trollope's childhood was dominated by uncongenial schooling. He was sent to Harrow, the boys' public school in north London, as a day boy, then to Sunbury, Surrey, while awaiting a place at his father's former school, Winchester College. Trollope was admitted to Winchester in 1827, but his father's embarrassing inability to pay the fees became known to fellow pupils. He was moved back from Winchester to Harrow in 1830 for two further years, which he later described as 'the worst period of my life'.¹ Unsurprisingly, he did not shine academically, and when, in 1834, the whole family fled to Bruges in Belgium to avoid imprisonment for debt, he obtained a clerkship in the London headquarters of the newly-created Post Office through his mother's connections.

The beginning of Trollope's long Post Office career was not encouraging. He soon became known for unpunctuality, and was, by his own account, 'always on the eve of being dismissed'.² His scanty salary led him into debt, and travails with money-lenders would later inform the scrapes of many fictional characters. Trollope was sustained by a habit of imagination that was first acquired during his unhappy adolescence. Daydreaming not only allowed him 'to live in a world altogether outside the world of my own material life':³ it served as an apprenticeship for fiction. Yet it took a change of scene from London to rural Ireland to persuade Trollope to express his imagination in writing.

In July 1841, aged 26, Trollope was appointed deputy postal surveyor's clerk, based in Banagher, King's County (now Co. Offaly). His new-found professional success helped him to grow in social confidence. Ireland prompted his lifelong enthusiasm for hunting with hounds, too. That enthusiasm was never far from his writing, and sometimes it made life difficult for him at work, not least because hounds and horses were an expensive pastime. Within a year, he became engaged to Rose Heseltine, the daughter of a Rotherham banker who was holidaying in what is now Dun Laoghaire. Trollope proposed after barely a fortnight's acquaintance. The wedding was, for

¹ Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography* (Oxford: OUP, 2014), ch. 1.

² *Ibid.* ch. 3.

³ *Ibid.* ch. 3.

financial reasons, postponed for two years until 11 June 1844. Marriage and the birth of two sons, Henry Merivale in 1846 and Frederick James Anthony in 1847, helped Trollope to find what he called the 'vigour necessary to prosecute two professions at the same lime'.⁴ His first novel, *The Macdermots of Ballycloran* (1847), sold far fewer than the 400 copies printed. But it was favourably reviewed and was followed by a second Irish tale, *The Kellys and the O'Kellys* (1848). Both kept an uneasy silence on the Famine, to which Trollope was a horrified witness, but his recollections of the famine years would inform the later *Castle Richmond* (1860). The failure of *La Vendée* (1850), on the French Revolution, together with the increasing demands of his Post Office career, conspired to deflect Trollope from fiction for some years.

In 1851, he was sent to the south-west of England to investigate ways of expanding the rural postal system. His successful development of the pillar box, which he first tried out in St Helier in the Channel Islands in 1852, led to the spread of post boxes throughout the UK. The project won Trollope promotion to the surveyorship of the north of Ireland in 1854, and his family settled in Donnybrook. During these years, he composed the first novel to bring him real recognition, *The Warden* (1855). The first of six 'Chronicles of Barsetshire', *The Warden* was set, like its successors, in a fictional county, based on the south-west England Trollope knew. Although they dramatized changes in the ecclesiastical world, the 'Chronicles' were also secular in their interests. While *The Warden* brought him less than £10, Trollope 'soon felt it had not failed as the others had failed',⁵ and began work on *Barchester Towers* (1857). It was warmly reviewed. But it was not until the publication of *Dr Thorne* (1858) that he met with unmixed success. The novels following—*Framley Parsonage* (1861), *The Small House at Allington* (1864), and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867)—established his reputation, his popularity, and his fortune.

During the twelve years between *The Warden* and *The Last Chronicle*, Trollope published seventeen novels, numerous short stories, and several collections of travel writing. This extraordinary scale of production was sustained by his habit of rising at five each morning to allow three hours of writing—250 words each quarter of an hour, he boasted in *An Autobiography*—before leaving for the office at nine. Other celebrated writers have written to a similar schedule, but Trollope's pride in his achievement has never been entirely admired by critics. His schedule made him an invaluable contributor to the *Cornhill Magazine*, founded in 1859 by the novelist, William Makepeace Thackeray. The

⁴ Trollope, *An Autobiography*, ch. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.* ch. 5.

serialization of *Framley Parsonage* in the *Cornhill's* first issues did much to secure the magazine's and Trollope's reputation. Through the *Cornhill*, he made lasting friendships with major literary and artistic figures. By 1859, he was living in the north London suburb of Waltham Cross, after a promotion to Post Office surveyor of the eastern district. He was soon elected to the Garrick and Athenaeum Clubs, and became a stalwart of the Royal Literary Fund. These were marks of serious literary success. He also, in 1860, met a young American woman, Kate Field, with whom he fell in love. The nature of *that* relationship is known almost as little as Trollope's relationship with Rose. But Kate mattered to him—and would do till the end of his life.

Trollope concluded the *Barsetshire Chronicles* on a high note, considering *The Last Chronicle of Barset* to be his best novel. Following the model of Honoré de Balzac's *Comédie humaine*, Trollope saw realist fiction as capable of depicting a complex culture through a multi-volume series. The Palliser volumes, beginning with *Can You Forgive Her?* (1865) and ending with *The Duke's Children* (1880), were his other major sequence. These novels, like the *Barsetshire Chronicles*, could be read separately and in different orders without irrecoverable loss—but they formed a continuous whole all the same. In the story of the Pallisers, Trollope developed one of his strongest themes—the difficult marriage and its negotiations. He also explored great political issues, including the 1867 Reform Bill and the disestablishment of the Irish Church, while inviting readers to map the Conservative leader Daubeny onto Disraeli, and the Liberal Gresham onto Gladstone. His portrayal of democratic politics has remained consequential for generations. The novels' political appeal, nonetheless, was carefully balanced against other enticements: 'If I wrote politics for my own sake, I must put in love and intrigue, social incidents, a dash of sport, for the sake of my readers',⁶ he said, with characteristic pragmatism.

Trollope resigned from the Post Office in 1867. His earnings from writing had long outstripped his salary. The following year, feeling that 'to sit in the British Parliament should be the highest object of ambition to every educated Englishman',⁷ he stood as the Liberal candidate for Beverley in the 1868 General Election. He was unsuccessful. That failure haunted his fiction as it must have haunted his private life. Trollope interspersed the Palliser series with other novels and studies. He was by this stage a professional writer whose commitment was broken significantly only by field sports and travel. Trollope's international voyages included Australia, where Frederick, his younger son, was a sheep

⁶ *Ibid.* ch. 17.

⁷ *Ibid.* ch. 16.

farmer: *Australia and New Zealand* (1873) was a result. Trollope and Rose left London in 1880 for South Harting in Sussex, hoping country air would ease his persistent asthma. This was no retirement: the last two years of his life saw a further six books, including *Mr Scarborough's Family* (1883), a study of parental domination, and the unfinished *The Landleaguers*, a return to Irish matters (published posthumously, 1883).

In early November 1882, Trollope suffered a stroke, and, on 6 December, he died in London at the age of 67. He had written forty-seven novels, five volumes of short stories, four travel books, three biographies, an autobiography, and two translations from the classics, together with uncollected pieces of journalism. His prodigious output included a biography of Thackeray, and a study of Cicero whose political judiciousness was often a silent model behind his admirable fictional politicians. Few who knew Trollope could avoid commenting on his loud and bluff persona in public: at 5 ft 10 in., and around 16 stones, he struck those who met him as burly—a man of bodily appetites. It was difficult for many to imagine him dissecting the emotional complexities of his characters with such delicacy and sympathy.

Trollope's posthumous *An Autobiography* (1883) startled a large number of readers. Its dry discussion of how much money his fiction made denied any Romantic model of authorship. Here was no account of the creative flash of inspiration. Writing fiction was more like a trade, the result of well-applied skill and labour. But, knowing at first hand the cost of his father's failure, it was important to Trollope to demonstrate to his family, if to no one else, that he had made such a success of his life. He had no university degree, and was without the much-coveted honour of a seat in Parliament. He wished to demonstrate too, in a culture less familiar with the notion of a professional writer than ours, that writing could indeed be a life. His estate was valued at the huge sum of £25,892 19s. 3d.

Biographies of Trollope are always to some degree doomed to follow the sparse facts laid out in *An Autobiography*. The nature of his marriage, his feelings for Kate Field, his relationship with his sons, let alone the secrets of his inner life, are among the topics on which it is impossible to write with certainty. Trollope had no commitment to privacy—but private he remains. Declining to reveal himself in correspondence, he is, perhaps, only glimpsed in the astonishingly fertile novels about human lives, desires, and choices, which were his enduring bequest to English literature.

Katherine Mullin
Francis O'Gorman

INTRODUCTION

[*Readers who are unfamiliar with the plot may prefer to treat the Introduction as an Afterword.*]

‘Could he get at the truth of that story?’
(p. 288)

WHAT is the meaning of a name? The central figure of *The Way We Live Now*, the swindler Augustus Melmotte, might be called, with one letter changed, after a character in Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s melodrama *The Lady of Lyons; or, Love and Pride* (1838). In that piece, by a writer Trollope admired,¹ Claude Melnotte is the son of a gardener, but his ambitions are on a far grander scale. He tricks the grand Pauline Deschappelles into marrying him by disguising himself as a foreign prince. Melnotte is a fake, and he has no intention of being loyal. Melmotte is a fake too, though few notice. Only a handful of people he meets at the beginning of the novel suspect that he is not a gentleman. Pauline mistakes her lover. Almost everyone for a time in Trollope’s story mistakes the financier.

It is impossible to be sure who Melmotte is, let alone what exactly he has done. *The Way We Live Now* is a novel of circulating rumours. We have a number of suggestions about Melmotte’s origins. In Trollope’s preparatory notes, Melmotte is first described as ‘~~the great American~~ French swindler’ (see Appendix 1, p. 757). The novelist was not sure of his scoundrel’s identity when he started his story. Yet no reader is sure by the end. Across the text, Melmotte’s nationality and ethnicity are persistently debatable, unlike the account books of his railway company, which we never see so cannot debate. Melmotte’s origins in this respect are as obscure as those of the editor and journalist Mr Alf (see p. 13) whose name might be ‘half’ broken up. This is a hint of the fractions of knowledge, the half-perceived, which feature throughout Trollope’s text. Melmotte, like Alf, might be Jewish. Certainly, this is a novel interested in the roots and postures of anti-Semitism, exposing cultural assumptions about what Jews look like and how they behave. But then again Melmotte might not be Jewish at all. In the end, we

¹ See Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography* (1883), ed. with an introduction by Nicholas Shrimpton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 156–7 [hereafter *AA*].

are told some seemingly hard facts. We are informed that Melmotte is American–Irish (p. 735), his father having escaped—no doubt during or after the Great Famine (1846–9)—to New York. But by this stage in *The Way We Live Now*, it is hard to believe a word we read.

That problem, the lack of certainty, mischievously encourages readers to speculate (in a novel deeply fretful about what kinds of mess financial speculation can cause). In the absence of unambiguous evidence, a reader can feel licensed to wonder, to make imaginative associations in a text full of leaps of faith and leaping over of facts. Readers can imaginatively join characters who believe things but do not know them: whether Felix Carbury is in love with Marie or no; whether Mrs Hurtle divorced, abandoned, or shot her husband; whether Paul Montague did or did not behave unforgivably to Roger Carbury.

So we could, for instance, believe (though not be certain) that Melmotte's Irish–New York origins suggest that his father, and even Melmotte himself, was a member of the United States Fenian Brotherhood. Other New York Irishmen of the 1860s certainly were. They had formed themselves into a political organization in the New World after the Famine, requiring independence for Ireland through both moral argument and eventually physical force.² Trollope would still be writing about Fenianism and its implications in his final, unfinished novel, *The Landleaguers* (1883). If Melmotte were a crypto-Fenian, it would certainly be an apt imaginative association in a novel that works with so many hints and half-clues. Melmotte plans an outrage on the British establishment as the Fenians planned theirs (the 1867 Clerkenwell Outrage, a Fenian act, is alluded to in *The Way We Live Now*).³ Melmotte is, figuratively speaking, a barrel of gunpowder waiting to go off that will cause havoc (a real barrel of explosives had been deployed at Clerkenwell to blow up a prison wall). The Great Financier penetrates to the heart of the state, reaching even inside the Houses of Parliament. It would not be till 24 January 1885 that a genuine Fenian bomber would manage that. Both Irish nationalists and Melmotte threaten the Westminster establishment. Melmotte the

² For a relevant British assessment, see Lord Tenterden, *The Fenian Brotherhood: An Account of the Irish American Revolutionary Societies in the United States, from 1848 to 1870* (London: Foreign Office, 1871).

³ See note to p. 791. In chapter 36 of *The Eustace Diamonds* (1871–3), Lord George de Bruce Carruthers, a man of mysterious means, 'was suspected even of republican sentiments, and ignorant young men about London hinted that he was the grand centre of the British Fenians'. (Here and in the Explanatory Notes, the dates given for Trollope's works are those of first publication in serial form.)

Fenian might have been somewhere, dimly, on Trollope's mind. It is certainly plausible. But who knows?

And there, exactly, is the central thematic interest of this celebrated novel. Trollope, Stephen Wall tells us, is a novelist of character more than theme.⁴ But *The Way We Live Now* is densely thematic. In a word, or, rather, two, the preoccupations of this text are with the intellectual and aesthetic implications of asking 'Who knows?' It is a novel in which speculation is financial and everywhere. *The Way We Live Now*, despite Trollope's own view and that of some of his first readers (see p. xxv, pp. xxvi–xxvii), has come to be among his most admired. But it is exceptionally bothered by the dangers of admiring too much. This is an inquiry into the relationship between story and substance, assertion and actuality. Trollope is intrigued by how intrigues work. But he is also fascinated by the myths and untruths that acts of belief necessitate and propagate. In the layers of its unusually interrelated plotting and subplotting (unusual for Trollope, that is), *The Way We Live Now* ponders with dexterity the troublesome matter of 'What lies beneath?'

Trollope originally planned for his 'Carbury novel', as he first called it,⁵ to include a plot involving a theological problem. He started with a theme, that is to say, not only a character. Roger Carbury's loss of faith ('finds it easier to love his neighbour than his God', Trollope wrote in his preliminary notes)⁶ was to take the text, seemingly, in quite another direction from what Trollope finally published. There is hardly a trace of Roger's religious difficulties left. All we have in the novel as published is a well-meaning yet cloth-eared priest, who is a wraith from a book that was never written. Yet in *The Way We Live Now* Trollope completed something like a theological novel all the same, and of a more extensive kind than he originally intended. This text *is* about faith, and about why and when we ought to doubt. It might also be a novel—to relate it to the original idea—about people who are incapable of loving their neighbour except for personal gain. Yet the faith under pressure here is not in God. It is in words.

The first character the reader encounters is a writer of sensational

⁴ See Stephen Wall, *Trollope and Character* (London: Faber, 1988).

⁵ In his working papers for the novel, preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as MS Don c.10, fols. 12–19; see Appendix 1.

⁶ MS Don c.10, fols. 17–18. (See also 'Dramatis Personae Plan' in John Sutherland, 'Trollope at Work on *The Way We Live Now*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37 (1982), 472–93 (479).)

histories. Lady Carbury—perhaps an unsympathetic caricature of the novelist and journalist Margaret Oliphant (1828–97)—has told some entertaining stories in her book *Criminal Queens*.⁷ Many readers, perhaps, will believe those stories in the absence of knowing any better. But they are not entirely true. Unfortunately for Lady Carbury, Mr Alf does nothing by 'alves. His journal, the *Evening Pulpit*, deplores fictions masquerading as facts. The book is 'pulled . . . to pieces with almost rabid malignity', we read (p. 82). Although it seems so slight a volume, hardly worthy of attention, it is subjected to forensic scrutiny and found wanting: 'Error after error was laid bare with merciless prolixity' (p. 82). But for most of the plots in Trollope's novel, such forensic scrutiny is not possible.

There are many unidentified individuals in *The Way We Live Now*. All we know about them is that they are believers. Into Suffolk—where most of the non-London scenes are set—comes a rumour that Mr Primero, one of Roger Carbury's neighbours, is to be made a peer. He must be at the top of the pile, presumably, as his name suggests. 'To others', Trollope's narrator says, 'the rumour was incredible, but Mr Longestaffe believed it' (p. 165). Yet what are the grounds for believing or not believing? It is a question that is neither solved in this local instance nor goes away more generally in a novel that pitches assertion and belief over or against hard fact. Mr Primero's elevation is a minor matter (except for Mr Longestaffe and, presumably, Mr Primero). But far more serious things are at stake in the whirl of words that surrounds Mr Melmotte. Is he or is he not a swindler? Melmotte arrives in the novel, apparently, as a man of wealth. And on the back of that belief in his prosperity he flourishes. But no one is empirically sure. Gradually, the opinion of the largely invisible crowd, as changeful as that in *Julius Caesar*, shifts. Rumours 'of his past frauds, rumour also as to the instability of his presumed fortune', the narrator says in Chapter 55 as the tide turns, 'were as current as those which declared him to be by far the richest man in England' (416). Yet what is the basis for the rumours? Trollope is peculiarly troubled in this novel by statements that might be assertions rather than truths. It is

⁷ Oliphant had published nothing like *Criminal Queens* (her first history, *Historical Sketches of the Reign of George II*, had been issued in 1869). But her productivity might have led Trollope to deduce—unfairly—that she would write anything for money. Oliphant had good, but for some of her contemporaries controversial, relations with the periodicals (Henry James deplored this). See Elisabeth Jay's assessment in her edition of *The Autobiography of Margaret Oliphant* (Ontario: Broadview, 2002), 19–21.

a displaced, authorial anxiety about whether Trollope himself has got things right.

The Way We Live Now is a novel of letters; a text with an abundance of envelopes and signatures. This is not only because Trollope worked until 1867 for the Post Office. He invites his reader, amid all this ink, to wonder about the relationship between the pen and the fraud. Lady Carbury does not write many facts in her book. And, aptly, she sends a letter in which she confesses that she cannot believe her son has told her many facts either. In Chapter 52, Felix (it is an obviously ironic, unhappy name) tells her what he did with some of his money. What he says is partly true. But 'Lady Carbury in her letter acknowledged that she was not justified in believing it because it was told to her by her son' (p. 397). Felix, on paper as well as in person, is untrustworthy. And he is surrounded by similarly untrustworthy men and paper pledges that are not worth . . . the paper they are written on.

Felix collects IOUs, 'a considerable assortment' (p. 171), from his supposed friends in the Beargarden club. But the gambling pledges are valueless if they come, for example, from Miles Grendall, 'a man who did not pay his debts of honour, who did not even propose any arrangement for paying them' (p. 186). The scraps of paper are as precarious as the shares in Melmotte's South Central Pacific and Mexican Railway. Miles's IOUs are even as worthless, it turns out, as Felix's own name. Melmotte obliges the wayward baronet to renounce 'under his own signature his intention of marrying Marie' (p. 397). But Felix reneges on that signed pledge when he makes a half-hearted attempt to run away with her so as to secure her promised fortune. The reader cannot be certain that Felix really intended to go to New York just as, at this hectic point in the novel, we cannot be certain whether Marie has any money worth running away to New York for. But we can be certain that Felix Carbury broke his word. The only autograph he respects, it turns out, is an unwritten one. Despite pressure, he will not commit to marrying the wide-eyed real runaway, Ruby Ruggles. 'Mrs Hurtle', we read in Chapter 53, 'had given it as her decided opinion that Sir Felix would not really mean to marry Ruby Ruggles unless he showed himself willing to do so with all the formality of a written contract' (p. 528). The sole integrity Felix has is in not compounding his deceit of Ruby by committing to her on paper. This is the highest—or perhaps lowest—point of Trollope's satirical conception of *The Way We Live Now*.

Nothing or almost nothing lies in Lady Carbury's bank and she must be bailed out by a friend; nothing or almost nothing is in Sir

Felix Carbury's wallet either, and he must be banished from the novel by its end. The original plan was for him to expire. In the finished text, he is, instead, sent to eastern Europe with a Tractarian—obviously Trollope's wry conception of a fate worse than death. But the reader finally discovers that, of all people, Mr Melmotte really does have assets behind his financial adventures. Just when we had been persuaded that what we know about his debts is correct, we find that it is not. Melmotte's grand gestures of expenditure, his boasts of wealth, prove not entirely groundless. He makes his wife and daughter keep their jewels because objects are guarantees. They are hard and touchable things on which credit can be extended. But there are other hard and touchable things in Melmotte's finances. In Chapter 92, long after the collapse, it is revealed that Melmotte had 'nearly enough of property to satisfy all his proved liabilities' (p. 695). Like Bulwer-Lytton's Claude Melnotte, Augustus Melmotte turns out to ring (more or less) true in the end. We have been deceived not by Melmotte's wealth, which turns out to be real, but by his liabilities, which turn out to be covered.

It is not hard to think that *The Way We Live Now* is a novel of financial crisis. Yet what, and where, *is* the crisis? Melmotte kills himself. But Trollope does not allow us to see clearly any of those who lose money from having bought his railway shares. We see no evictions, no poverty, no suicides of the dispossessed, no meeting of angry and desperate creditors. Trollope could write about the sufferings of impoverishment: in *Castle Richmond* (1860), for instance, and in *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867). Yet *The Way We Live Now*, the novel that theoretically concerns the damage done by fraudulent capitalism, is actually the text that keeps its financial calamities either off-stage or to a small scale. There *might* be a list of real fraudsters and actual impoverishments that lie behind the imagined figure of Augustus Melmotte, though it is not certain. We cannot, here as elsewhere in the text, be sure of the extent of Trollope's genuine financial knowledge. Those real figures might have included George Hudson, York's 'Railway King'; James Sadleir, who helped to bring down the Tipperary Bank in February 1856; the politicians in the Crédit Mobilier scandal of 1872, which involved the first transcontinental railway in the United States and fed into Zola's *L'Argent* (1891); the Irish-born Jewish business promoter Albert Grant (1831–99), whose multiple fraudulent investments included Crédit Mobilier. But in *The Way We Live Now*, there is neither definiteness about who Melmotte is, nor, importantly, clarity about what his

swindles are. He is a misty transgressor, a figure without a clear starting point in the real world or exactness in the fictional.⁸

Trollope ruminates on what backs up claims, creating textures of anxiety about that which legitimates assertions. One way of thinking about this is to suggest that he is composing an imaginative meditation on the implications of a modern monetary practice. ‘As for many years past’, the narrator observes in Chapter 45, ‘we have exchanged paper instead of actual money for our commodities, so now it seemed that, under the new Melmotte régime, an exchange of words was to suffice’ (p. 340). That, though it is generalized, is an intriguing observation, which dimly registers the contested nature of paper money in the nineteenth century.⁹ And important to that contest, to the doubts about the value of paper currency, was the Bank Charter Act of 19 July 1844.¹⁰ This transformative piece of financial legislation, passed by Sir Robert Peel’s Conservative government, made the Bank of England, only a few steps away from Melmotte’s suspiciously tiny offices on Abchurch Lane, the only institution with a legal right to issue new paper money. The Act—part of a raft of attempts in the mid-1840s to manage economic and industrial activity—required new notes to be backed by gold and silver or, to a certain level, by government debt.¹¹ The notes, then, were not ‘actual money’ but a symbol of it. Behind the promise on the piece of paper was, theoretically, hard bullion, ready for the bearer to be paid on demand.¹² Trollope probably had little or no knowledge of the 1844 Act. But his momentary consideration of the status of paper money, and what value it assumes in the modern world, is nevertheless an imaginative version of some of its implications—implications that involve Trollope’s more general thematic interest in guarantees.

⁸ It is worth remembering that Melmotte’s railway was not itself ill-conceived. Indeed, it was such a good idea that the railway was about to be built in real life. The Southern Pacific Railroad and its subsidiary, the Southern Pacific Railroad of Mexico, were major forces in the construction of railway routes from the central Pacific to Mexico in the 1870s and 1880s.

⁹ See Nicholas Shrimpton, “‘Even these metallic problems have their melodramatic side’”: Money in Victorian Literature’, in Francis O’Gorman (ed.), *Victorian Literature and Finance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 17–38.

¹⁰ 7 & 8 Vict. c.32.

¹¹ The modern equivalent of suspending the requirement for bullion backing is the circulation of electronic money in so-called ‘*quantitative easing*’.

¹² The words ‘I promise to pay the bearer on demand the sum of . . .’ have appeared on banknotes from 1853, when they replaced the requirement that the three Cashiers of the Bank of England should individually sign and address each note. The ‘P’ of the original promise was one of the three Cashiers (now it is simply the Chief Cashier), acting as a representative of the Bank.

Tangible things that guarantee words for Trollope's characters surprisingly include human beings. Literally turning up can be an assurance that you meant what you said, so Felix's shameful failure to arrive in Liverpool to catch the SS *Adriatic* proves that he had not meant what he said. Mr Fisker 'was anxious that his bond should be good, and his word equally so' (p. 691). But sometimes it is necessary to confirm this in person. That happens, for instance, in Chapter 93. Paul Montague's engagement to Hetta Carbury has been broken off because Hetta doubts that Paul has told her the truth about another woman, to whom he was once pledged. This other woman is Winifred Hurtle, whose name catches a little of the breathless pace at which Trollope wrote *The Way We Live Now*. But Hetta learns, after all, that Paul has *not* behaved badly by her. He has simply found it hard to deal with Mrs Hurtle's demands (and she herself, as we find out later, has not been telling the truth). Hetta writes a letter declaring the renewal of their engagement. But the letter miscarries—always a serious matter for Trollope when he was at the Post Office—and so Paul is unaware of his lover's change of heart. The written words of desire have not exerted any purchase. So the letter is followed up with something, or rather someone, else. Acting, so to speak, as the bullion in the Bank of England behind Hetta's banknote-letter, Roger Carbury arrives in person to tell his former friend that Hetta meant what she said. As Roger tells Paul:

'She will see you. I can tell you that. And I will tell you this also;—that she wrote to you as a girl writes to the lover whom she does wish to see.'

'Is that true?' exclaimed Paul, jumping up.

'I am here especially to tell you that it is true. I should hardly come on such a message if there were a doubt. You may go to her, and need have nothing to fear[.]' (p. 703)

With love as with money, it is sometimes worth testing the nature of the security.

Musing on guarantees of value, *The Way We Live Now* scrutinizes a problem that is as familiar to the contemporary world as it was in the 1870s: the problem of the relationship, in an advanced capitalist society that is fundamentally dedicated to selling, between words and meaning. An enterprise economy, such as the Victorians were building, was filling commerce with promises of value, with words advising customers of the quality of this commodity, the transformative power of that product, the excellence of this service, the superior standard of that. Language, in such an environment, can assure us of what it

cannot deliver because its primary aim is to persuade rather than to be true. The idiom of advertising, the discourses of selling, is persistently ready to be metamorphosed into the language of over-selling, just as the terms of the prospectus issued by the wholesale bank Overend, Gurney, on which the bank's directors were tried in 1869, allegedly promised more returns than could possibly be guaranteed.¹³

Trollope the novelist was naturally concerned, as a professional writer, with the persuasive power of language. His fiction will not succeed unless he wins over his readers. Yet, looking back, in *An Autobiography* (1883), Trollope thought he had gone too far in selling words that did not entirely live up to their promise. He was bothered that in *The Way We Live Now* he had been not only fictional but false. 'The book', he said in the posthumously published story of his life, had begun as a 'satire', and therefore, he observed,

has the fault which is to be attributed to almost all satires, whether in prose or verse. The accusations are exaggerated. The vices are coloured, so as to make effect rather than to represent truth. Who, when the lash of objurgation is in his hands, can so moderate his arm as never to strike harder than justice would require? The spirit which produces the satire is honest enough, but the very desire which moves the satirist to do his work energetically makes him dishonest.¹⁴

In presenting characters involved in frauds in *The Way We Live Now*, Trollope awkwardly thought he had been somewhat fraudulent himself.

This is, in part, as Trollope rightly says, an issue of genre. Penning a new novel on his return from a long time away in Australia and New Zealand, Trollope had started something more or less fresh in his career. And he was discomfited. Satire was not his habitual territory even though it could be conceived as a bold extension of the same spirit, a development of the same practice of writing, as those ironic assessments of the Church of England, the Houses of Parliament, or the relation between marriage and property with which Trollope had already made his reputation in earlier novels (he was 58 when he started *The Way We Live Now*). But satire, for the author of *The Way We Live Now*, was more extreme. It involved less psychological attention. And it also, Trollope clearly thought, involved a precision of focus that was

¹³ The collapse of Overend, Gurney in 1866 was a significant banking scandal of the mid-decade. A wholesale bank provides discounted financial products for the financial industry, such as other banks and mortgage lenders.

¹⁴ *AA*, 219.

beyond his previous experience. He hardly knew what a cathedral close was like, but Barchester had been persuasive for readers. He had never taken a seat in the House of Commons—despite his efforts in Beverley in 1868—but the Palliser novels were a successful invention. Trollope knew little about the habits of advanced capitalism, but here, in satirical rather than realist fiction, he felt he had a different kind of problem. To write satire on financial vices, he was obliged to rely on broad-brush assertions and the vibrant energy of caricature rather than defined, carefully represented, targets.

The Way We Live Now, Robert Polhemus claimed, is ‘the most vitriolic satire of the Victorian era and one of the most powerful satires on capitalism ever written’.¹⁵ But does it know enough about capitalism to *be* so powerful? Certainly, in the face of such assertions, the reader is entitled to ask whether the great Catherine wheel of Trollope’s invention in this novel can be enjoyed as hearty general protest rather than taken over-seriously as a piece of exact political and economic analysis. Virginia Woolf, in *A Room of One’s Own* (1929), raised an ironic eyebrow over fiction that told empirical truths. ‘Fiction must stick to facts,’ she said, ‘and the truer the facts the better the fiction—so we are told.’¹⁶ The last four monosyllables undo the maxim. But truthfulness matters when the fiction is supposed to be about real things, about money and government, about laws and property, about crimes that might drive a man to suicide. Trollope’s novel, probing what is believed rather than what is true, is not difficult to believe—as a host of recent critics have demonstrated. The English journalist Robert McCrum, for example, choosing it as one of the hundred best novels ever, asserted that as ‘a savage commentary on mid-Victorian England by a marvellously addictive writer steeped in every aspect of an extraordinary society, it could hardly be bettered’.¹⁷ But is he really ‘steeped’?

It is easy to think Trollope’s text reveals the apparently unregulated, supposedly laissez-faire world of the mid-Victorian period, in which vast corruptions could almost succeed because those in charge did not care.¹⁸

¹⁵ Robert M. Polhemus, *The Changing World of Anthony Trollope* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 187.

¹⁶ Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* and *Three Guineas*, ed. Anna Snaith, Oxford World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 12.

¹⁷ ‘100 Best Novels’, Number 22, <www.theguardian.com/books/2014/feb/17/110-best-novels-way-we-live-now-trollope>, 17 February 2014, accessed 20 June 2015.

¹⁸ Trollope’s political understanding and what I perceive to be his empirically certain motives for writing this novel are discussed in Francis O’Gorman, ‘Is Trollope’s *The Way We Live Now* (1875) about the “commercial profligacy of the age”?’ *Review of English Studies*, forthcoming.

Here is, seemingly, a picture of a society in which a rogue—‘Of course he had committed forgery’, Trollope’s narrator finally reveals, ‘of course he had committed robbery’ (p. 487)—can deceive investors, voters, aristocrats, even the Prime Minister, and almost get away with it. Yet the first warning to us is that Trollope was uncertain he had got this right. If the liveliness of his satire is absorbing, the novelist was also abashed by realizing that he might have been too lively. ‘Satire,’ Trollope said in *An Autobiography*, ‘though it may exaggerate the vice it lashes, is not justified in creating it in order that it may be lashed.’¹⁹ He was, in fact, rebuking himself.

The most damning part of the novel’s portrayal of what is allegedly the *laissez-faire* world of the early 1870s—where supposedly businessmen could escape the consequences of malpractice or criminality because neither the executive nor the judiciary cared—is Trollope’s decision to make Melmotte forge signatures. This is a minor point of major significance. Trollope knows his Great Financier can no longer be sent to prison for bankruptcy (that penalty had been abolished in 1869). And so he decides that Melmotte must commit an egregious and absolutely obvious act of fraud in order to be punishable by the law and in turn have cause to swallow prussic acid. Apparently, everything else Melmotte has done—and we know for sure that he had been ‘cheating and forging and stealing all his life’ (p. 487)—is not enough to make him criminally liable.

But this is a strikingly misleading picture of England in 1873.²⁰ Trollope did not have to make Melmotte forge signatures. That is because the legal context was not *laissez-faire*. It is worth being clear about this. The central railway business of Fisker, Montague, and Montague (see Chapter 9) is based in the United States (and is not, as it happens, an ill-conceived one).²¹ But Melmotte, as we learn at the beginning of Chapter 10, is the chairman of the British branch. This branch, prosecuting its business on British soil with British investors, must operate under the Joint Stock Companies Act 1856.²² And we can assume that it is a limited liability company under the Limited Liability Act 1855²³ (this allowed limited liability for companies with

¹⁹ *AA*, 64.

²⁰ Note that the legal environment I describe relates principally to England and Wales, not to Scotland. Ireland’s criminal justice system was in some ways distinct from England’s at this point and some legislation applied specifically and only to Ireland. As it happens, the financial legislation discussed here applied to Ireland too, even if the Irish judicial system had its own traditions and modes.

²¹ See footnote 8 to p. xix. ²² 19 & 20 Vict. c.47.

²³ 18 & 19 Vict. c.133.

more than twenty-five shareholders). On this matter, Trollope is exceptionally vague. These two Acts set parameters for business regulation. Melmotte's business flouts them from the start. The Board of Directors does not see any books, no accounts are presented, no figures are clear, and no one appears to audit the company. Mr Broune, the editor of the *Morning Breakfast Table*, was, Trollope's narrator says in Chapter 36, 'in the habit of . . . auditing his daily account as he shook off sleep about noon' (p. 273). The publisher does this himself, but no one seems to do it for Melmotte. Yet as early as 1844, the Joint-Stock Companies Registration, Incorporation and Regulation Act²⁴ had defined a minimum requirement of financial disclosure, and the filing every six months of audited balance sheets with the Board of Trade. We are not told why this does not apply to Melmotte.

A group of immediately post-Crimean War Acts expressed the Palace of Westminster's desire to regulate the growing enterprise economy and define illegitimate financial activity not merely as morally unacceptable but as criminal. Then, as now, such legislation had its limits and neither could nor did stamp out fraud. But it tried. Among the legislation was the Fraudulent Trustees Act 1857,²⁵ promptly agreed by Parliament after the scandalous collapse of the Royal British Bank,²⁶ and the Larceny Act 1861,²⁷ under which the directors of Overend, Gurney were taken to court in 1869. The Larceny Act, paragraphs 81 to 85, criminalized directors of companies who did not keep accurate accounts or destroyed financial evidence or endeavoured to mislead others by issuing fraudulent statements. This Act—passed eleven years before *The Way We Live Now* was set—remained on the statute books in England and Wales until 1968 and parts of it continue in force in Ireland. This was not feeble legislation. Trollope's Melmotte, declining to open his accounts to scrutiny, and misleading his directors about the strength of the company, is almost certainly criminally liable. Case

²⁴ 7 & 8 Vict. c.110. ²⁵ 20 & 21 Vict. c.54.

²⁶ The Royal British Bank collapsed in 1856 and its surviving directors were tried in an eight-day trial that concluded on 27 February 1858; all were found guilty. The summing-up can be found in 'The Royal British Bank', *The Times*, 1 March 1858, 9. Note that the case of *Royal British Bank v. Turquand* (1856) established that outsiders were entitled to trust that a company was operating according to its articles of association even if it was not. That remained an assumption in English law till it was superseded by the Companies Act 2006. In practice, nevertheless, *Turquand's* rule remains a working assumption. This is another example of the significance and durability of mid-Victorian financial legislation.

²⁷ 24 & 25 Vict. c.96.

law from 1859 had, in addition, made clear that it was part of an auditor's responsibility to detect fraudulent misrepresentation within the accounting and disclosure practices of a limited company.²⁸

So who is auditing Melmotte's company? Of course, in one way, this is an absurd question. *The Way We Live Now* is fictional, not evidence for a criminal prosecution; it is a novel not a barrister's brief. But at another level the question is the simplest indicator of the problems of reading *The Way We Live Now* as being transparently about the way we lived then.²⁹ In historical terms, the British Board of the South Central Pacific and Mexican Railway is a straw man. It is an empty device through which to criticize what we would now call white-collar crime.³⁰ Melmotte and his directors could have been arrested long before he forges a signature. And when such a context is remembered, a new and complicated approximation to a hero emerges. It was one of the initial criticisms of the novel that there was no obvious counter to the rogues, no clear figure of probity who was sympathetic. Roger Carbury might originally have been, in Trollope's first plans, the hero. But the novel's readers both then and now struggle to warm to him. 'We look in vain', said the *Westminster Review* more generally in October 1875, 'for any nobleness of character to compensate for all the rascality against which we rub shoulders.'³¹ But in the financial plot, something telling occurs.

Paul Montague is the only director of the British branch of the railway company who strongly objects to the conduct of Melmotte's unlikely Board. He also resigns before he becomes legally liable. 'What I do say is this,' Montague declares in Chapter 37: 'That as we sit here as directors and will be held to be responsible as such by the public, we ought to know what is being done' (p. 279). It is part of his attempt to resist the obfuscation, misrepresentation, and secretiveness of Melmotte's

²⁸ See Andrew Higson, *Corporate Financial Reporting: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage, 2003), 93.

²⁹ On Trollope's title, it is worth remembering his reflection in *The Life of Cicero* (1880): "Sed quid agas? Sic vivitur!"—"What would you have me do? It is thus we live now!" This he exclaims in a letter to Caelius, written a short time before he left the province. "What would you say if you read my last letter to Appius?" You would open your eyes if you knew how I have flattered Appius—that was his meaning. "Sic vivitur!"—"It is so we live now." When I read this I feel compelled to ask whether there was an opportunity for any other way of living. Had he seen the baseness of lying as an English Christian gentleman is expected to see it, and had adhered to truth at the cost of being a martyr, his conduct would have been high though we might have known less of it; but, looking at all the circumstances of the period, have we a right to think that he could have done so? (*Life of Cicero*, ii, ch. 5)

³⁰ *OED* dates the first use of this term to 1964.

³¹ 'Belles Lettres', *Westminster Review*, 48 (October 1875), 529–45 (at 530).

murky business. This moment, however, could have unravelled the threads of Trollope's satire because Paul is so unwittingly close to the real and (partly) regulated world of 1873, where modern financial fraud was being criminalized by Acts of Parliament. Paul is present in person at the Board, as the figurative bullion to guarantee the truthfulness of his words, standing up against the misdeeds of Melmotte's improbable business. Had Trollope told us at that moment—had Trollope known—that Paul had the backing not merely of a generalized morality but of English law, this effervescent satire of a supposed culture of *laissez-faire* would have fallen apart.

In the twentieth century, with its many generalizations and assumptions about the Victorians, it has been easy to use *The Way We Live Now* to criticize an imagined version of mid-nineteenth-century society without remembering that Trollope's genre had driven him, as he recognized himself, to exaggeration. Robert McCrum, in that *Guardian* review, asserted that *The Way We Live Now* was so fully informed about the corruptions of modern commerce that it was '[no] wonder the first reviews were atrocious'.³² But we should not believe everything we read. The first reviews were not atrocious. No less august an organ than *The Times* admired the novel, declaring boldly that it represented 'a likeness of the face which society wears to-day'.³³ The *Examiner* said something similar.³⁴ But where there was criticism, it concerned not only the lack of a likeable hero but the fact that, *pace The Times*, Trollope was not entirely inside his own topic. 'We must begin', said the *Saturday Review* in July 1875,

by quarrelling with the incivility of Mr Trollope's title. 'The way *we* live!' We will not retort by requesting the author to speak for himself, for we do not for a moment suppose the picture here drawn is based upon close personal experience. The satirist has put all the vices attributed to society into a bag, shaken them together, and made a story out of them, and nothing else.³⁵

It would not be hard to think that this was merely a lazy defensiveness—the *Saturday Review* hypocritically claiming that Trollope's perception was mistaken, while knowing it was not. But in fact, once the novel has

³² '100 Best Novels', Number 22, <www.theguardian.com/books/2014/feb/17/110-best-novels-way-we-live-now-trollope>, 17 February 2014, accessed 20 June 2015.

³³ 'Recent Novels', *The Times*, 24 August 1875, 4.

³⁴ See 'Mr Trollope's Last Novel', *Examiner*, 28 August 1875, 971–2.

³⁵ 'The Way We Live Now', *Saturday Review*, 17 July 1875, 88–9 (at 88).

been placed in the context of nineteenth-century financial history, it is clear that the reviewer has a defensible point.

Trollope's tone and topic are different in *The Way We Live Now* from his many previous volumes. That, no doubt, is what Adam Gopnik meant when he said in the *New Yorker* in May 2015: "The Way We Live Now" is the Trollope novel for people who don't like Trollope novels.³⁶ If that change of direction caused the novelist some difficulties, however, it also allowed for a sequence of fresh developments in his art that remain both daring and convincing. It is these developments that properly define the imaginative achievement of this work of fiction. The closeness of the interrelation between plots and subplots is, as I have said, new. And it is also remarkable. Trollope balances finance against romance with sophistication. He compares proposed elopements with each other; maps high-society balls against fraught domestic dramas behind closed doors; he compares the cottage with the club, Mayfair with Islington. Here is a novel of shrewdly orchestrated contrasts as well as of echoes, returns, and repeats. Trollope's decision to concentrate on a rogue as his central character—which came to him while he was writing his 'Carbury' novel rather than when he was planning it—was new too. Like Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847–8), *The Way We Live Now* is a novel without a hero. But Melmotte is still unforgettable and Trollope, by the end, gives him a touch of the dignity Milton lent to Satan in *Paradise Lost* (1667). 'Melmotte is always ably, and sometimes powerfully, drawn', said the *Saturday Review* perceptively:

His is a life of fraud demanding such constant vigilance, such habits of self-control, such foresight and preparation, such self-reliance and courage, that it is almost great. It is impossible not to sympathize in a degree with a struggle so manfully maintained; not to appreciate the power implied in bearing singly the weight of a terrible secret, the strength of endurance that dispenses with help, whatever the extremity, asks no counsel, and can live alone.³⁷

Trollope's novel, written against the clock, developed also a new fictional relationship *with* the clock. This is a text attentive to sensations of time, including the feeling of time running out. *The Way We Live Now* invites its reader to think about how fiction might represent the passing of time as 'slow' or 'fast'. Trollope's narration is interested in psychological chronology and that is most strongly sensed in the

³⁶ Adam Gopnik, 'Trollope Trending', <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/05/04/trollope-trending>>, accessed 20 June 2015.

³⁷ 'The Way We Live Now', *Saturday Review*, 88.

chapters that depict Melmotte's increasing awareness of his approaching exposure. Prose, so to speak, stretches time out just as it creates a sensation of the awfulness of not having enough time left. The novel asks its reader to think—but also vicariously to experience—time's simultaneity, too. Across its different plots, so dynamically in conversation with one another, *The Way We Live Now* depicts events that are concurrent. But Trollope also encourages us, in the very experience of reading, to comprehend what it might be like to be able to read more than one chapter, more than one narrative strand, at once. Taking us backwards and forwards through time, this carefully plotted, day-by-day, hour-by-hour novel proposes a remarkable awareness of the psychological changefulness, as well as of literal, physical locomotion, of men and women going on their way, through time, all at once. *The Way We Live Now* offers a fictional glimpse of modern busy-ness, of contemporary urban multiplicity, even as it more amply hints at the incorrigible plurality of human experience as it is lived, fast and slow, side by side, simultaneously.

Trollope was right to demur over the fairness of his satire. But if he was uncertain about his own literal topic, he was also writing one of the most imaginatively and technically inventive novels of his career. It was the distinguished Trollope scholar and bibliographer Michael Sadleir who, in 1927, at the lowest fortunes of the novel's publishing history, helped to change the long-standing doubtfulness about *The Way We Live Now* with his mildly phrased but ambitious comment: 'At times one wonders whether this fierce tremendous book is not the greatest novel Trollope ever wrote.'³⁸ Whatever Trollope came to think in *An Autobiography* about that ferocity, there is no denying that *The Way We Live Now* discloses what the novelist could do when, at the height of his powers, he turned not to satire but to crime fiction. What we are *not* told about Melmotte reveals that Trollope was able to transmute authorial uncertainty into suspense, into a mystery plot that sustains fascination with the allure of a persistent question: Who *actually* knows?

Here, then, is a text peopled with characters—actually criminal or more generally simply unprincipled—for whom there is near-continual apprehension. This is a novel where a host of people are literally waiting either for the police or for some other avenging fury. Trollope tells us so much of jeopardy, of risk, that it becomes infectious. Disintegration, exposure, disgrace, and even death are just around the corner for many

³⁸ Michael Sadleir, *Trollope: A Commentary* (1927), 3rd edn. (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 401.

characters in a text imaginatively absorbed by the precarious—the metaphorical ticking bomb. *The Way We Live Now* hurtles through time and lingers agonizingly on time slowed down. In moments of apprehension about the next few hours, even the next few minutes—whether in gambling, elopement, speculation, financial peril, an election, or even a book review—the reader can comprehend two things at once: the psychological trepidation of not knowing what is about to happen and, simultaneously, the clenched hope that matters will turn out better than feared. Uniquely in Trollope's fiction, *The Way We Live Now* invites us to apprehend with luminous clarity what it might feel like to be on the brink of ruin when, as the words tick by, every second counts.

NOTE ON THE TEXT

TROLLOPE agreed a contract for *The Way We Live Now*, at this stage unnamed, with the London publishers Chapman and Hall on 28 March 1873. The contract determined that the first half of the novel would be with them by the end of October 1873; that the first part would be published on 1 January 1874; and that serial publication would be completed in August 1875. This was, by the early 1870s, an old-fashioned method of publication.¹ Payment was to be made at the rate of £150 a month. The initial dates slipped back one month. Trollope noted on the folder where he kept papers for the text (now preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford): 'Commenced 1 May 1873. Finished 22 Dec, 1873.'²

The writing period may have been divided as follows: all of May 1873 (the first fifteen chapters, followed by the writing of *Harry Heathcote*);³ 3 July to 30 July; then 11 August to 19 September, when Trollope seems to have been peculiarly conscious of time and made miscalculations of length.⁴ Trollope seems to have been reading his manuscript till 10 October, then from 11 October to 22 December he completed it.⁵

Each published 8vo part contained two sixteen-page signatures and two full-page wood-engraved plates by Lionel Grimshaw Fawkes (the engraver, unfortunately, reduced the quality of Fawkes's originals). Each part cost one shilling, so that the cost of the whole book in parts was one pound. The cover image, rather like a Dickens front cover, concentrated on scenes from the life of Melmotte. In the centre is a winged old man (with a scythe and hour-glass) in dismay. Several months before serialization was completed, the novel was available, from early June 1875, in a two-volume demy 8vo edition, with forty illustrations, at twenty-one shillings.⁶ Although sales figures for Chapman and Hall no longer survive, it does not seem likely that the individual instalments thereafter would have sold well, given that the complete novel

¹ Chapman and Hall probably decided on serialization because they had used it for the (incomplete) publication of Dickens's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, from April to September 1870.

² Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Don c.10, fol. 12.

³ See note to p. 486.

⁴ This is convincingly demonstrated in John Sutherland, 'Trollope at Work on *The Way We Live Now*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37 (1982), 472–93 (at 488–91).

⁵ Ibid. ⁶ Octavo (8vo) is 5-6¼" × 7½-10". Demy 8vo is 8¾" by 5½".

was already available (though at the more expensive price of a guinea).⁷ Trollope was paid the sum of £3,000, not a uniquely large sum in his career (*The Last Chronicle of Barset* had earned the same, and in 1864 *Can You Forgive Her?* had received £3,525) but nevertheless a very large amount.

Chapman sold the copyright of *The Way We Live Now* at some point before July 1875 to Chatto & Windus for a sequence of cheap reprints, for the sum of £300.⁸ Chatto promptly issued a one-volume edition that winter in crown 8vo (a cut-down version from the Chapman and Hall size) at the considerably cheaper price of six shillings.⁹ It was not unknown for Chapman to publish a complete novel before serialization had finished: he did it for *Phineas Redux* in December 1873, when the last instalment of the serial was due on 10 January 1874. But Chapman's peculiarly premature publication of the two-volume edition was, perhaps, an attempt to sell an expensive version of Trollope's novel before Andrew Chatto, energetically pursuing the expansion of his list, published his cheap one-volume version.

Chatto & Windus had 3,000 copies of the six shilling version prepared (though they also took possession of unsold Chapman and Hall stock, which was gradually used up piecemeal). The six shilling version sold out in just under a year. Sutherland thinks that the most this could have yielded for Chatto would have been £600.¹⁰ There was an unsuccessful 3s. 6d. issue in 1876 and some reprinting of the six shilling edition, but copies from that remained unsold in Chatto's warehouse 'until early 1882,' the Chatto archives reveal, 'when the whole series was lowered in price to 3s 6d. By July 1883, 124 copies were still unsold, at which date Chatto evidently wrote off the edition'.¹¹ From early 1879, there

⁷ On modern equivalents of monetary value, see the Explanatory Notes (and the head-note to that section). Chapman had agreed with the Boston monthly journal *Old and New* for American rights to the serialization one month in advance of its appearance in Chapman and Hall's monthly parts. But *Old and New* had an English circulation too (through Sampson Low in London). So Trollope's novel was initially available in England from *Old and New* a month in advance of the 'official' English version from Chapman and Hall. After some vexed correspondence from Trollope and some incomprehension from *Old and New* about this latest example of Chapman's bad decision-making, the two versions came into line by July 1874 and then *Old and New* dropped a month behind from February 1875 (see *The Letters of Anthony Trollope*, ed. N. John Hall with the assistance of Nina Burgis, 2 vols. (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1983), ii. 608).

⁸ The publishing history of the Chatto & Windus edition is discussed in John Sutherland's 'The Commercial Success of *The Way We Live Now*: Some New Evidence', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 40 (1986), 460-7.

⁹ Crown 8vo is 7½" by 5".

¹⁰ Sutherland, 'The Commercial Success', 465.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

was also a two shilling edition, which sold a little better. Looking at the sales figures before the novel went out of print, Sutherland concludes:

Chatto and Windus, as I estimate, sold 3,770 copies of *The Way We Live Now* at 6s over seven years; 250 at 5s over five years (1922–27); 1,932 at 3s 6d over 46 years; and 9,610 at 2s over 38 years. These are not impressive figures or rates of sale.¹²

Partly through Chapman's fault and partly because it was not enormously popular, *The Way We Live Now* did not make anyone much money—except Trollope, with his £3,000. It is noteworthy that the novel remained out of print until the two-volume World's Classics edition of 1941.

The basis for the present edition is the two-volume Chapman and Hall edition of 1875. Trollope's many inconsistencies in the spelling of names have been regularized and a few obvious errors silently corrected. Points have been removed from most contractions ('Mr' instead of 'Mr.') and chapter numbers are given in arabic rather than roman numerals.

¹² Sutherland, 'The Commercial Success', 466.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Autobiography and Letters

The Letters of Anthony Trollope, ed. N. John Hall with the assistance of Nina Burgis, 2 vols. (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1983).

Trollope, Anthony, *An Autobiography* (1883), ed. with an introduction by Nicholas Shrimpton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Biographical

Glendinning, Victoria, *Trollope*, new edn. (London: Pimlico, 2002).

Hall, N. John, *Trollope: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Mullen, Richard, *Anthony Trollope: A Victorian in His World* (London: Duckworth, 1990).

Super, R. H., *The Chronicler of Barsestshire: A Life of Anthony Trollope* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988).

Terry, R. C. (ed.), *Trollope: Interviews and Recollections* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987).

— (ed.), *Oxford Reader's Companion to Trollope* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Bibliography

[Tingay, Lance, David Skilton, Claire Connolly, and Christopher Edwards (eds.)], *Anthony Trollope: A Collector's Catalogue* (London: Trollope Society, 1992).

Olmsted, J. C., and J. E. Welch, *The Reputation of Trollope: An Annotated Bibliography, 1925–1975* (New York: Garland, 1978).

Sadleir, Michael, *Trollope: A Bibliography* (London: Constable, 1928; repr. with addenda and corrigenda, 1934).

Smith, Walter E., *Anthony Trollope: A Bibliography of His First American Editions, 1858–1884* (Los Angeles: Heritage, 2003).

See also <<http://www.jimandellen.org/trollope/handbookbiblio.html>>

Criticism and Context

apRoberts, Ruth, *Trollope: Artist and Moralist* (London: Chatto & Windus, / Athens: Ohio University Press, 1971) [published in the USA as *The Moral Trollope*].

Booth, Bradford A., *Anthony Trollope: Aspects of His Life and Work* (London: Hutton, 1958).

Cockshut, A. O. J., *Anthony Trollope: A Critical Study* (London: Collins, 1955).

Dames, Nicholas, 'Trollope and the Career: Vocational Trajectories and the Management of Ambition', *Victorian Studies*, 45 (2003), 247–78.

Dellamora, Richard, 'Stupid Trollope', *Victorian Newsletter*, 100 (2001), 22–6.

- Dever, Carolyn, and Lisa Niles (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Anthony Trollope* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- Flavin, Michael, *Gambling in the Nineteenth-Century English Novel: 'A leprosy is o'er the land'* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2014).
- Gilmour, Robin, *The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981).
- Hall, N. John, *Trollope and His Illustrators* (London: Macmillan, 1980).
- Halperin, John, *Trollope and Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977).
- Hamer, Mary, *Writing by Numbers: Trollope's Serial Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- Kincaid, James R., *The Novels of Anthony Trollope* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).
- Lansbury, Coral, *The Reasonable Man: Trollope's Legal Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).
- Letwin, Shirley, *The Gentleman in Trollope: Individuality and Moral Conduct* (London: Macmillan, 1982).
- MacDonald, Susan Peck, *Anthony Trollope* (Boston: Twayne, 1987).
- McMaster, R. D., *Trollope and the Law* (London: Macmillan, 1986).
- Malton, Sarah, *Forgery in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture: Fictions of Finance from Dickens to Wilde* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
- Miller, J. Hillis, *The Ethics of Reading: Kant, de Man, Eliot, Trollope, James, and Benjamin* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).
- Nardin, Jane, *Trollope and Victorian Moral Philosophy* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1996).
- Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37/3 (1982), special issue: *Anthony Trollope, 1882–1982*.
- Polhemus, Robert M., *The Changing World of Anthony Trollope* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968).
- Pollard, Arthur, *Anthony Trollope* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).
- Sadleir, Michael, *Trollope: A Commentary* (1927), 3rd edn. (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).
- Salmon, Richard, *The Formation of the Victorian Literary Profession*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- Shrimpton, Nicholas, "Even these metallic problems have their melodramatic side": Money in Victorian Literature', in Francis O'Gorman (ed.), *Victorian Literature and Finance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 17–38.
- Skilton, David, *Anthony Trollope and His Contemporaries: A Study in the Theory and Conventions of Mid-Victorian Fiction* (London: Longman, 1972).
- Super, R. H., *Trollope in the Post Office* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981).
- Terry, R. C., *Anthony Trollope: The Artist in Hiding* (London: Macmillan, 1977).
- Turner, Mark W., *Trollope and the Magazines: Gendered Issues in Mid-Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

- “‘Telling of my weekly doings’: The Victorian Culture of the Victorian Novel”, in Francis O’Gorman (ed.), *The Concise Companion to the Victorian Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 113–33.
- Vann, J. Don, *Victorian Novels in Serial* (New York: Modern Language Association, 1985).
- Weiss, Barbara, *The Hell of the English: Bankruptcy and the Victorian Novel* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1986).
- Wall, Stephen, *Trollope and Character* (London: Faber, 1988).

Legal and Economic

- Baskin, Jonathan Barron, and Paul J. Miranti, Jr, *A History of Corporate Finance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- Cottrell, P. L., *Industrial Finance, 1830–1914: The Finance and Organization of English Manufacturing Industry* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980).
- Higson, Andrew, *Corporate Financial Reporting: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage, 2003).
- Hilton, Boyd, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795–1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- Lee, T. A., ‘A Brief History of Company Audits’, in T. A. Lee and Robert H. Parker (eds.), *The Evolution of Corporate Financial Reporting* (1979) (London: Routledge, 2014), 153–63.
- Lester, V. Markham, *Victorian Insolvency: Bankruptcy, Imprisonment for Debt, and Company Winding-Up in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- Slapper, Gary, and Steve Tombs, *Corporate Crime* (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998).
- Taylor, James, *Creating Capitalism: Joint-Stock Enterprise in British Politics and Culture 1800–1870* (London: Royal Historical Society, 2006).
- *Boardroom Scandal: The Criminalization of Company Fraud in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- Wilson, Sarah, ‘Tort Law, Actors in the “Enterprise Economy”, and Articulations of Nineteenth-Century Capitalism with Law: The Fraudulent Trustees Act 1857 in Context’, in T. T. Arvind and Jenny Steele (eds.), *Tort Law and the Legislature: Common Law, Statute and the Dynamics of Legal Change* (Oxford: Hart, 2013), 353–82.
- *The Origins of Modern Financial Crime: Historical Foundations and Current Problems in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2014).

The Way We Live Now

- Bleicher, Elizabeth, ‘Lessons from the Gutter: Sex and Contamination in *The Way We Live Now*’, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 39 (2011), 545–62.
- Edwards, P. D., ‘The Chronology of *The Way We Live Now*’, *Notes and Queries*, 214 (1969), 214–16.
- Hornback, Bert G., ‘Anthony Trollope and the Calendar of 1872: The

- Chronology of *The Way We Live Now*', *Notes and Queries*, 208 (1963), 454–57.
- Hunt, Aeron, *Personal Business: Character and Commerce in Victorian Literature and Culture* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).
- Jumeau, Alain, 'The Way We Live Now; or, Trollope in *Vanity Fair*', *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens*, 58 (2003), 57–69.
- McGann, Tara, 'Literary Realism in the Wake of Business Cycle Theory: *The Way We Live Now* (1875)', in Francis O'Gorman (ed.), *Victorian Literature and Finance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 133–56.
- O'Gorman, Francis, 'Is Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* (1875) about the "commercial profligacy of the age"?' *Review of English Studies*, forthcoming.
- Sutherland, John, 'Trollope at Work on *The Way We Live Now*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37 (1982), 472–93.
- 'The Commercial Success of *The Way We Live Now*: Some New Evidence', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 40 (1986), 460–7.
- 'Is Melmotte Jewish?' in *Is Heathcliff a Murderer? Puzzles in Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 156–62.
- Van, Annette, 'Ambivalent Speculations: America as England's Future in *The Way We Live Now*', *Novel*, 39 (2005), 75–96.
- Voyles, Katherine, 'Trollope Through the Window-Pane', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 41 (2013), 283–96.

A CHRONOLOGY OF ANTHONY TROLLOPE

(Selected publications are noted here only; volume publication is given in all cases.)

<i>Life</i>	<i>Historical and Cultural Background</i>
1815 (24 April) AT born in London.	Battle of Waterloo and final defeat of Napoleon.
1823 Enters Harrow Boys' School.	Monroe doctrine formulated to protect American interests in relation to Europe.
1825 At school in Sunbury.	Stockton and Darlington Railway, first public railway, opens.
1827 Admitted to Winchester College.	
1830 Back at home in poverty then to Harrow School again.	Accession of William IV in Britain; in France, rioting sees overthrow of the Bourbons and accession of Louis Philippe.
1832	First Reform Act increases electorate to <i>c.</i> 700,000 men.
1834 Trollope family flee creditors to Bruges; AT takes up clerkship at London Post Office; a period of poverty and an unpromising start to work.	'New Poor Law'; Tolpuddle martyrs (early example of, in effect, trade union membership).
1839	First commercial telegraph in UK.
1841 After much misery, AT is offered the post of deputy postal surveyor's clerk at Banagher, King's county, Ireland; begins to hunt.	British occupation of Hong Kong; Robert Peel becomes Prime Minister.
1843 Begins <i>The Macdermots of Ballycloran</i> .	Wordsworth becomes Poet Laureate.
1844 Marries Rose Heseltine from Rotherham (d. 1917).	Factory Act shortens working day, increases minimum hours of schooling.
1845	Great Famine begins in Ireland (-1850).
1846 Henry Merivale Trollope born (d. 1926).	Repeal of Corn Laws, major achievement for free trade; Lord John Russell becomes Prime Minister.
1847 Frederick James Anthony Trollope born (d. 1910); <i>The Macdermots of Ballycloran</i> .	Ten Hours Factory Act (cuts working day to 10 hours for women and children).

<i>Life</i>	<i>Historical and Cultural Background</i>
1848 <i>The Kellys and the O'Kellys</i> .	European revolutions; second Chartist petition.
1850 <i>La Vendée</i> , a failure.	Tennyson becomes Poet Laureate; restoration of Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy.
1851 Working for the Post Office in England.	Great Exhibition, evidence of British dominance in trade.
1852 Suggests the new pillar box for post on the Channel Islands.	Opening of new Palace of Westminster; Earl of Derby becomes Prime Minister followed by Earl of Aberdeen.
1853	Crimean War (–1856).
1854 Post Office surveyor for the north of Ireland: family in Donnybrook.	
1855 <i>The Warden</i> , first of the 'Chronicles of Barssetshire'; thereafter, he sets himself writing targets (usually 10,000 words a week).	Abolition of final newspaper tax leads to growth of new journalism and newspaper titles; Palmerston becomes Prime Minister.
1857 <i>Barchester Towers</i> , a success.	Indian Mutiny; Matrimonial Causes Act extends availability of divorce.
1858 <i>Doctor Thorne</i> (Barssetshire).	Jewish Disabilities Act; abolition of property qualification for MPs; Earl of Derby is Prime Minister, then Palmerston again.
1860 Beginning of instalments of <i>Framley Parsonage</i> ; moves to London as Post Office surveyor; meets Kate Field, an American woman, in Florence, with whom he forms a strong attachment.	Wilberforce–Huxley debate on evolution.
1861	American Civil War begins.
1862 Elected to Garrick Club.	London Exposition; Lincoln's Emancipation proclamation.
1864 Elected to the Athenaeum. <i>The Small House at Allington</i> (Barssetshire, but introduces Plantagenet and Glencora Palliser).	
1864–5 <i>Can You Forgive Her?</i> (first of the Palliser novels; vol. 1, Sept. 1864; vol. 2, July 1865).	

<i>Life</i>	<i>Historical and Cultural Background</i>
1865	Abolition of slavery in North America; Earl Russell becomes Prime Minister.
1866	Success with commercial transatlantic cable; Earl of Derby becomes Prime Minister.
1867 <i>The Last Chronicle of Barset</i> . Resigns from the Post Office to edit <i>Saint Pauls: A Monthly Magazine</i> with illustrations by Millais.	Second Reform Act (further extension of franchise to about 2 million electors).
1868 Defeated as Liberal candidate for Beverley in the General Election.	Trades Union Congress formed; Disraeli becomes Prime Minister followed by Gladstone.
1869 <i>He Knew He Was Right; Phineas Finn</i> (Palliser).	Suez Canal opened; first issue of <i>Nature</i> .
1870 <i>The Vicar of Bullhampton</i> .	Forster's Education Act, widely extending provision of primary education; first Married Women's Property Act, granting married women the right to their own earnings and to inherit property in their own name.
1871 Travels in Australasia.	Paris Commune; legalization of Trade Unions.
1872 <i>The Eustace Diamonds</i> (Palliser).	
1873 <i>Phineas Redux</i> (Palliser); <i>Australia and New Zealand</i> .	Financial crisis begins US Long Depression.
1874	First Impressionist Exhibition (Paris); Disraeli becomes Prime Minister.
1875 <i>The Way We Live Now</i> .	Third Republic in France; Theosophical Society founded.
1876 <i>The Prime Minister</i> (Palliser).	The telephone patented.
1877 <i>The American Senator</i> .	
1878 <i>Is He Popenjoy?; South Africa</i> .	Exposition Universelle (Paris), including arts and machinery.
1879 <i>Thackeray</i> in the English Men of Letters series.	
1880 Moves to South Harting, Sussex. <i>The Duke's Children</i> (Palliser); <i>Life of Cicero</i> .	First Anglo-Boer War (–1881); Gladstone becomes Prime Minister.
1881 <i>Dr Wortle's School</i> .	Assassination of US President James Garfield.

- | | <i>Life</i> | <i>Historical and Cultural Background</i> |
|------|---|---|
| 1882 | <i>Lord Palmerston; The Fixed Period</i> , a futuristic novel. Suffers a stroke; (6 Dec.) dies in nursing home. Buried in Kensal Green (his grave reads: 'He was a loving husband, a loving father, and a true friend'); leaves estate worth £25,892 19s. 3d. | Phoenix Park Murders; Egypt now British protectorate; second Married Women's Property Act allowing married women to own and control their own property. |
| 1883 | <i>Mr Scarborough's Family; An Autobiography</i> . | Death of Richard Wagner. |
| 1887 | Publication of AT's brother, Thomas Adolphus Trollope's <i>What I Remember</i> , with alternative account of the family upbringing. | |

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

CONTENTS

VOLUME I

1	Three Editors	7
2	The Carbury Family	15
3	The Beargarden	22
4	Madame Melmotte's Ball	29
5	After the Ball	40
6	Roger Carbury and Paul Montague	43
7	Mentor	52
8	Love-Sick	60
9	The Great Railway to Vera Cruz	66
10	Mr Fisker's Success	73
11	Lady Carbury at Home	81
12	Sir Felix in His Mother's House	91
13	The Longestaffes	96
14	Carbury Manor	105
15	'You should remember that I am his mother'	112
16	The Bishop and the Priest	120
17	Marie Melmotte Hears a Love Tale	129
18	Ruby Ruggles Hears a Love Tale	139
19	Hetta Carbury Hears a Love Tale	143
20	Lady Pomona's Dinner Party	153
21	Everybody Goes to Them	157
22	Lord Nidderdale's Morality	167
23	'Yes;—I'm a baronet'	173
24	Miles Grendall's Triumph	182
25	In Grosvenor Square	190
26	Mrs Hurtle	195
27	Mrs Hurtle Goes to the Play	205
28	Dolly Longestaffe Goes into the City	213

29	Miss Melmotte's Courage	218
30	Mr Melmotte's Promise	224
31	Mr Broune Has Made Up His Mind	232
32	Lady Monogram	239
33	John Crumb	247
34	Ruby Ruggles Obeys Her Grandfather	257
35	Melmotte's Glory	261
36	Mr Broune's Perils	270
37	The Board-Room	275
38	Paul Montague's Troubles	285
39	'I do love him'	292
40	'Unanimity is the very soul of these things'	303
41	All Prepared	307
42	'Can you be ready in ten minutes?'	312
43	The City Road	321
44	The Coming Election	330
45	Mr Melmotte Is Pressed for Time	338
46	Roger Carbury and His Two Friends	345
47	Mrs Hurtle at Lowestoft	352
48	Ruby a Prisoner	362
49	Sir Felix Makes Himself Ready	367
50	The Journey to Liverpool	374

VOLUME II

51	Which Shall It Be?	383
52	The Results of Love and Wine	390
53	A Day in the City	397
54	The India Office	406
55	Clerical Charities	415
56	Father Barham Visits London	420
57	Lord Nidderdale Tries His Hand Again	428
58	Mr Squercum Is Employed	435

59	The Dinner	442
60	Miss Longestaffe's Lover	450
61	Lady Monogram Prepares for the Party	457
62	The Party	462
63	Mr Melmotte on the Day of the Election	472
64	The Election	479
65	Miss Longestaffe Writes Home	488
66	'So shall be my enmity'	494
67	Sir Felix Protects His Sister	502
68	Miss Melmotte Declares Her Purpose	508
69	Melmotte in Parliament	514
70	Sir Felix Meddles with Many Matters	524
71	John Crumb Falls into Trouble	531
72	'Ask himself'	538
73	Marie's Fortune	547
74	Melmotte Makes a Friend	553
75	In Bruton Street	561
76	Hetta and Her Lover	568
77	Another Scene in Bruton Street	577
78	Miss Longestaffe Again at Caversham	585
79	The Brehgert Correspondence	591
80	Ruby Prepares for Service	601
81	Mr Cohenlupe Leaves London	607
82	Marie's Perseverance	616
83	Melmotte Again at the House	625
84	Paul Montague's Vindication	632
85	Breakfast in Berkeley Square	639
86	The Meeting in Bruton Street	645
87	Down at Carbury	652
88	The Inquest	660
89	'The Wheel of Fortune'	666
90	Hetta's Sorrow	675

91	The Rivals	681
92	Hamilton K. Fisker Again	689
93	A True Lover	697
94	John Crumb's Victory	704
95	The Longestaffe Marriages	711
96	Where 'the wild asses quench their thirst'	718
97	Mrs Hurtle's Fate	726
98	Marie Melmotte's Fate	734
99	Lady Carbury and Mr Broune	741
100	Down in Suffolk	748

VOLUME I

CHAPTER 1

THREE EDITORS

LET the reader be introduced to Lady Carbury, upon whose character and doings much will depend of whatever interest these pages may have, as she sits at her writing-table in her own room in her own house in Welbeck Street.* Lady Carbury* spent many hours at her desk, and wrote many letters,—wrote also very much beside letters. She spoke of herself in these days as a woman devoted to Literature, always spelling the word with a big L. Something of the nature of her devotion may be learned by the perusal of three letters which on this morning she had written with a quickly running hand. Lady Carbury was rapid in everything, and in nothing more rapid than in the writing of letters. Here is Letter No. 1;—

‘Thursday, Welbeck Street.

‘DEAR FRIEND,

I have taken care that you shall have the early sheets of my two new volumes to-morrow, or Saturday at latest, so that you may, if so minded, give a poor struggler like myself a lift in your next week’s paper. Do give a poor struggler a lift. You and I have so much in common, and I have ventured to flatter myself that we are really friends! I do not flatter you when I say, that not only would aid from you help me more than from any other quarter, but also that praise from you would gratify my vanity more than any other praise. I almost think you will like my *Criminal Queens*.* The sketch of Semiramis* is at any rate spirited, though I had to twist it about a little to bring her in guilty. Cleopatra, of course, I have taken from Shakespeare. What a wench she was! I could not quite make Julia a queen; but it was impossible to pass over so piquant a character. You will recognise in the two or three ladies of the empire how faithfully I have studied my Gibbon. Poor dear old Belisarius! I have done the best I could with Joanna, but I could not bring myself to care for her. In our days she would simply have gone to Broadmore. I hope you will not think that I have been too strong in my delineations of Henry VIII. and his sinful but unfortunate Howard. I don’t care a bit about Anne Boleyne. I am afraid that

I have been tempted into too great length about the Italian Catherine; but in truth she has been my favourite. What a woman! What a devil! Pity that a second Dante could not have constructed for her a special hell. How one traces the effect of her training in the life of our Scotch Mary. I trust you will go with me in my view as to the Queen of Scots. Guilty! guilty always! Adultery, murder, treason, and all the rest of it. But recommended to mercy because she was royal. A queen bred, born and married, and with such other queens around her, how could she have escaped to be guilty? Marie Antoinette I have not quite acquitted. It would be uninteresting;—perhaps untrue. I have accused her lovingly, and have kissed when I scourged. I trust the British public will not be angry because I do not whitewash Caroline,* especially as I go along with them altogether in abusing her husband.

‘But I must not take up your time by sending you another book, though it gratifies me to think that I am writing what none but yourself will read. Do it yourself, like a dear man, and, as you are great, be merciful. Or rather, as you are a friend, be loving.

‘Yours gratefully and faithfully,

‘MATILDA CARBURY.’

‘After all how few women there are who can raise themselves above the quagmire of what we call love, and make themselves anything but playthings for men. Of almost all these royal and luxurious sinners it was the chief sin that in some phase of their lives they consented to be playthings without being wives. I have striven so hard to be proper; but when girls read everything, why should not an old woman write anything?’

This letter was addressed to Nicholas Broune, Esq., the editor of the *Morning Breakfast Table*,* a daily newspaper of high character; and, as it was the longest, so was it considered to be the most important of the three. Mr Broune was a man powerful in his profession,—and he was fond of ladies. Lady Carbury in her letter had called herself an old woman, but she was satisfied to do so by a conviction that no one else regarded her in that light. Her age shall be no secret to the reader, though to her most intimate friends, even to Mr Broune, it had never been divulged. She was forty-three, but carried her years so well, and had received such gifts from nature, that it was impossible to deny that she was still a beautiful woman. And she used her beauty not only to increase her influence,—as is natural to women who are well-favoured,—but also with a well-considered calculation that she could obtain material assistance in the procuring of bread and cheese,*

which was very necessary to her, by a prudent adaptation to her purposes of the good things with which providence had endowed her. She did not fall in love, she did not wilfully flirt, she did not commit herself; but she smiled and whispered, and made confidences, and looked out of her own eyes into men's eyes as though there might be some mysterious bond between her and them—if only mysterious circumstances would permit it. But the end of all was to induce some one to do something which would cause a publisher to give her good payment for indifferent writing, or an editor to be lenient when, upon the merits of the case, he should have been severe. Among all her literary friends, Mr Broune was the one in whom she most trusted; and Mr Broune was fond of handsome women. It may be as well to give a short record of a scene which had taken place between Lady Carbury and her friend about a month before the writing of this letter which has been produced. She had wanted him to take a series of papers for the *Morning Breakfast Table*, and to have them paid for at rate No. 1, whereas she suspected that he was rather doubtful as to their merit, and knew that, without special favour, she could not hope for remuneration above rate No. 2, or possibly even No. 3. So she had looked into his eyes, and had left her soft, plump hand for a moment in his. A man in such circumstances is so often awkward, not knowing with any accuracy when to do one thing and when another! Mr Broune, in a moment of enthusiasm, had put his arm round Lady Carbury's waist and had kissed her. To say that Lady Carbury was angry, as most women would be angry if so treated, would be to give an unjust idea of her character. It was a little accident which really carried with it no injury, unless it should be the injury of leading to a rupture between herself and a valuable ally. No feeling of delicacy was shocked. What did it matter? No unpardonable insult had been offered; no harm had been done, if only the dear susceptible old donkey could be made at once to understand that that wasn't the way to go on!

Without a flutter, and without a blush, she escaped from his arm, and then made him an excellent little speech. 'Mr Broune, how foolish, how wrong, how mistaken! Is it not so? Surely you do not wish to put an end to the friendship between us!'

'Put an end to our friendship, Lady Carbury! Oh, certainly not that.'

'Then why risk it by such an act? Think of my son and of my daughter,—both grown up. Think of the past troubles of my life;—so much suffered and so little deserved. No one knows them so well as you do. Think of my name, that has been so often slandered but never disgraced! Say that you are sorry, and it shall be forgotten.'

When a man has kissed a woman it goes against the grain with him to say the very next moment that he is sorry for what he has done. It is as much as to declare that the kiss had not answered his expectation. Mr Broune could not do this, and perhaps Lady Carbury did not quite expect it. 'You know that for worlds I would not offend you,' he said. This sufficed. Lady Carbury again looked into his eyes, and a promise was given that the articles should be printed—and with generous remuneration.

When the interview was over Lady Carbury regarded it as having been quite successful. Of course when struggles have to be made and hard work done, there will be little accidents. The lady who uses a street cab must encounter mud and dust which her richer neighbour, who has a private carriage, will escape. She would have preferred not to have been kissed;—but what did it matter? With Mr Broune the affair was more serious. 'Confound them all,' he said to himself as he left the house; 'no amount of experience enables a man to know them.' As he went away he almost thought that Lady Carbury had intended him to kiss her again, and he was almost angry with himself in that he had not done so. He had seen her three or four times since, but had not repeated the offence.

We will now go on to the other letters, both of which were addressed to the editors of other newspapers. The second was written to Mr Booker, of the *Literary Chronicle*. Mr Booker was a hard-working professor of literature, by no means without talent, by no means without influence, and by no means without a conscience. But, from the nature of the struggles in which he had been engaged, by compromises which had gradually been driven upon him by the encroachment of brother authors on the one side and by the demands on the other of employers who looked only to their profits, he had fallen into a routine of work in which it was very difficult to be scrupulous, and almost impossible to maintain the delicacies of a literary conscience. He was now a bald-headed old man of sixty, with a large family of daughters, one of whom was a widow dependent on him with two little children. He had five hundred a year* for editing the *Literary Chronicle*, which, through his energy, had become a valuable property. He wrote for magazines,* and brought out some book of his own almost annually. He kept his head above water, and was regarded by those who knew about him, but did not know him, as a successful man. He always kept up his spirits, and was able in literary circles to show that he could hold his own. But he was driven by the stress of circumstances to take such good things as came in his way, and could hardly afford to be independent. It must be

confessed that literary scruple had long departed from his mind. Letter No. 2 was as follows;—

‘Welbeck Street, 25th February, 187—.

‘DEAR MR BOOKER,

‘I have told Mr Leadham’—Mr Leadham was senior partner in the enterprising firm of publishers known as Messrs. Leadham and Loiter—‘to send you an early copy of my *Criminal Queens*.’ I have already settled with my friend Mr Broune that I am to do your *New Tale of a Tub** in the *Breakfast Table*. Indeed, I am about it now, and am taking great pains with it. If there is anything you wish to have specially said as to your view of the Protestantism of the time, let me know. I should like you to say a word as to the accuracy of my historical details, which I know you can safely do. Don’t put it off, as the sale does so much depend on early notices. I am only getting a royalty, which does not commence till the first four hundred are sold.

‘Yours sincerely,

‘MATILDA CARBURY.’

‘ALFRED BOOKER, ESQ.,

‘*Literary Chronicle* Office, Strand.’

There was nothing in this which shocked Mr Booker. He laughed inwardly, with a pleasantly reticent chuckle, as he thought of Lady Carbury dealing with his views of Protestantism,—as he thought also of the numerous historical errors into which that clever lady must inevitably fall in writing about matters of which he believed her to know nothing. But he was quite alive to the fact that a favourable notice in the *Breakfast Table* of his very thoughtful work, called the *New Tale of a Tub*, would serve him, even though written by the hand of a female literary charlatan, and he would have no compunction as to repaying the service by fulsome praise in the *Literary Chronicle*. He would not probably say that the book was accurate, but he would be able to declare that it was delightful reading, that the feminine characteristics of the queens had been touched with a masterly hand, and that the work was one which would certainly make its way into all drawing-rooms. He was an adept at this sort of work, and knew well how to review such a book as Lady Carbury’s *Criminal Queens*, without bestowing much trouble on the reading. He could almost do it without cutting the book,* so that its value for purposes of after sale might not be injured. And yet Mr Booker was an honest man, and had set his face persistently against many literary malpractices. Stretched-out type, insufficient

lines, and the French habit of meandering with a few words over an entire page,* had been rebuked by him with conscientious strength. He was supposed to be rather an Aristides* among reviewers. But circumstanced as he was he could not oppose himself altogether to the usages of the time. 'Bad; of course it is bad,' he said to a young friend who was working with him on his periodical. 'Who doubts that? How many very bad things are there that we do! But if we were to attempt to reform all our bad ways at once, we should never do any good thing. I am not strong enough to put the world straight, and I doubt if you are.' Such was Mr Booker.

Then there was letter No. 3, to Mr Ferdinand Alf. Mr Alf managed, and, as it was supposed, chiefly owned, the *Evening Pulpit*, which during the last two years had become 'quite a property,' as men connected with the press were in the habit of saying. The *Evening Pulpit* was supposed to give daily to its readers all that had been said and done up to two o'clock in the day by all the leading people in the metropolis, and to prophesy with wonderful accuracy what would be the sayings and doings of the twelve following hours. This was effected with an air of wonderful omniscience, and not unfrequently with an ignorance hardly surpassed by its arrogance. But the writing was clever. The facts, if not true, were well invented; the arguments, if not logical, were seductive. The presiding spirit of the paper had the gift, at any rate, of knowing what the people for whom he catered would like to read, and how to get his subjects handled so that the reading should be pleasant. Mr Booker's *Literary Chronicle* did not presume to entertain any special political opinions. The *Breakfast Table* was decidedly Liberal. The *Evening Pulpit* was much given to politics, but held strictly to the motto which it had assumed;—

'Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri;'—*

and consequently had at all times the invaluable privilege of abusing what was being done, whether by one side or by the other. A newspaper that wishes to make its fortune should never waste its columns and weary its readers by praising anything. Eulogy is invariably dull,—a fact that Mr Alf had discovered and had utilized.

Mr Alf had, moreover, discovered another fact. Abuse from those who occasionally praise is considered to be personally offensive, and they who give personal offence will sometimes make the world too hot to hold them. But censure from those who are always finding fault is regarded so much as a matter of course that it ceases to be objectionable. The caricaturist, who draws only caricatures, is held to be justifiable,

let him take what liberties he may with a man's face and person. It is his trade, and his business calls upon him to vilify all that he touches. But were an artist to publish a series of portraits, in which two out of a dozen were made to be hideous, he would certainly make two enemies, if not more. Mr Alf never made enemies, for he praised no one, and, as far as the expression of his newspaper went, was satisfied with nothing.

Personally, Mr Alf was a remarkable man. No one knew whence he came or what he had been. He was supposed to have been born a German Jew; and certain ladies said that they could distinguish in his tongue the slightest possible foreign accent. Nevertheless it was conceded to him that he knew England as only an Englishman can know it. During the last year or two he had 'come up' as the phrase goes, and had come up very thoroughly. He had been blackballed* at three or four clubs, but had effected an entrance at two or three others, and had learned a manner of speaking of those which had rejected him calculated to leave on the minds of hearers a conviction that the societies in question were antiquated, imbecile, and moribund. He was never weary of implying that not to know Mr Alf, not to be on good terms with Mr Alf, not to understand that let Mr Alf have been born where he might and how he might he was always to be recognized as a desirable acquaintance, was to be altogether out in the dark. And that which he so constantly asserted, or implied, men and women around him began at last to believe,—and Mr Alf became an acknowledged something in the different worlds of politics, letters, and fashion.

He was a good-looking man, about forty years old, but carrying himself as though he was much younger, spare, below the middle height, with dark brown hair which would have shown a tinge of grey but for the dyer's art, with well-cut features, with a smile constantly on his mouth the pleasantness of which was always belied by the sharp severity of his eyes. He dressed with the utmost simplicity, but also with the utmost care. He was unmarried, had a small house of his own close to Berkeley Square at which he gave remarkable dinner parties, kept four or five hunters in Northamptonshire, and was reputed to earn £6,000* a year out of the *Evening Pulpit* and to spend about half of that income. He also was intimate after his fashion with Lady Carbury, whose diligence in making and fostering useful friendships had been unwearied. Her letter to Mr Alf was as follows;—

'DEAR MR ALF,

'Do tell me who wrote the review on Fitzgerald Barker's last poem. Only I know you won't. I remember nothing done so well.

I should think the poor wretch will hardly hold his head up again before the autumn. But it was fully deserved. I have no patience with the pretensions of would-be poets who contrive by toadying and underground influences to get their volumes placed on every drawing-room table. I know no one to whom the world has been so good-natured in this way as to Fitzgerald Barker, but I have heard of no one who has extended the good nature to the length of reading his poetry.

‘Is it not singular how some men continue to obtain the reputation of popular authorship without adding a word to the literature of their country worthy of note? It is accomplished by unflagging assiduity in the system of puffing.* To puff and to get one’s self puffed have become different branches of a new profession. Alas, me! I wish I might find a class open in which lessons could be taken by such a poor tyro as myself. Much as I hate the thing from my very soul, and much as I admire the consistency with which the *Pulpit* has opposed it, I myself am so much in want of support for my own little efforts, and am struggling so hard honestly to make for myself a remunerative career, that I think, were the opportunity offered to me, I should pocket my honour, lay aside the high feeling which tells me that praise should be bought neither by money nor friendship, and descend among the low things, in order that I might one day have the pride of feeling that I had succeeded by my own work in providing for the needs of my children.

‘But I have not as yet commenced the descent downwards; and therefore I am still bold enough to tell you that I shall look, not with concern but with a deep interest, to anything which may appear in the *Pulpit* respecting my *Criminal Queens*. I venture to think that the book,—though I wrote it myself,—has an importance of its own which will secure for it some notice. That my inaccuracy will be laid bare and presumption scourged I do not in the least doubt, but I think your reviewer will be able to certify that the sketches are life-like and the portraits well considered. You will not hear me told, at any rate, that I had better sit at home and darn my stockings, as you said the other day of that poor unfortunate Mrs Effington Stubbs.

‘I have not seen you for the last three weeks. I have a few friends every Tuesday evening;—pray come next week or the week following. And pray believe that no amount of editorial or critical severity shall make me receive you otherwise than with a smile.

‘Most sincerely yours,

‘MATILDA CARBURY.’

Lady Carbury, having finished her third letter, threw herself back in her chair, and for a moment or two closed her eyes, as though about to rest. But she soon remembered that the activity of her life did not admit of such rest. She therefore seized her pen and began scribbling further notes.

CHAPTER 2

THE CARBURY FAMILY

SOMETHING of herself and condition Lady Carbury has told the reader in the letters given in the former chapter, but more must be added. She has declared she had been cruelly slandered; but she has also shown that she was not a woman whose words about herself could be taken with much confidence. If the reader does not understand so much from her letters to the three editors they have been written in vain. She has been made to say that her object in work was to provide for the need of her children, and that with that noble purpose before her she was struggling to make for herself a career in literature. Detestably false as had been her letters to the editors, absolutely and abominably foul as was the entire system by which she was endeavouring to achieve success, far away from honour and honesty as she had been carried by her ready subserviency to the dirty things among which she had lately fallen, nevertheless her statements about herself were substantially true. She had been ill-treated. She had been slandered. She was true to her children,—especially devoted to one of them—and was ready to work her nails off if by doing so she could advance their interests.

She was the widow of one Sir Patrick Carbury, who many years since had done great things as a soldier in India, and had been thereupon created a baronet. He had married a young wife late in life and, having found out when too late that he had made a mistake, had occasionally spoilt his darling and occasionally ill-used her. In doing each he had done it abundantly. Among Lady Carbury's faults had never been that of even incipient,—not even of sentimental—infidelity to her husband. When as a lovely and penniless girl of eighteen she had consented to marry a man of forty-four who had the spending of a large income, she had made up her mind to abandon all hope of that sort of love which poets describe and which young people generally desire to experience. Sir Patrick at the time of his marriage was red-faced, stout, bald, very choleric, generous in money, suspicious in temper, and intelligent. He

knew how to govern men. He could read and understand a book. There was nothing mean about him. He had his attractive qualities. He was a man who might be loved;—but he was hardly a man for love. The young Lady Carbury had understood her position and had determined to do her duty. She had resolved before she went to the altar that she would never allow herself to flirt and she had never flirted. For fifteen years things had gone tolerably well with her,—by which it is intended that the reader should understand that they had so gone that she had been able to tolerate them. They had been home in England for three or four years, and then Sir Patrick had returned with some new and higher appointment. For fifteen years, though he had been passionate, imperious, and often cruel, he had never been jealous. A boy and a girl had been born to them, to whom both father and mother had been over indulgent;—but the mother, according to her lights, had endeavoured to do her duty by them. But from the commencement of her life she had been educated in deceit, and her married life had seemed to make the practice of deceit necessary to her. Her mother had run away from her father, and she had been tossed to and fro between this and that protector, sometimes being in danger of wanting any one to care for her, till she had been made sharp, incredulous, and untrustworthy by the difficulties of her position. But she was clever, and had picked up an education and good manners amidst the difficulties of her childhood,—and had been beautiful to look at. To marry and have the command of money, to do her duty correctly, to live in a big house and be respected, had been her ambition,—and during the first fifteen years of her married life she was successful amidst great difficulties. She would smile within five minutes of violent ill-usage. Her husband would even strike her,—and the first effort of her mind would be given to conceal the fact from all the world. In latter years he drank too much, and she struggled hard first to prevent the evil, and then to prevent and to hide the ill effects of the evil. But in doing all this she schemed, and lied, and lived a life of manoeuvres. Then, at last, when she felt that she was no longer quite a young woman, she allowed herself to attempt to form friendships for herself, and among her friends was one of the other sex. If fidelity in a wife be compatible with such friendship, if the married state does not exact from a woman the necessity of debarring herself from all friendly intercourse with any man except her lord, Lady Carbury was not faithless. But Sir Carbury became jealous, spoke words which even she could not endure, did things which drove even her beyond the calculations of her prudence,—and she left him. But even this she did in so guarded a way that, as to every step she took, she could prove her

innocence. Her life at that period is of little moment to our story, except that it is essential that the reader should know in what she had been slandered. For a month or two all hard words had been said against her by her husband's friends, and even by Sir Patrick himself. But gradually the truth was known, and after a year's separation they came again together and she remained the mistress of his house till he died. She brought him home to England, but during the short period left to him of life in his old country he had been a worn-out, dying invalid. But the scandal of her great misfortune had followed her, and some people were never tired of reminding others that in the course of her married life Lady Carbury had run away from her husband, and had been taken back again by the kind-hearted old gentleman.

Sir Patrick had left behind him a moderate fortune, though by no means great wealth. To his son, who was now Sir Felix Carbury, he had left £1,000 a year; and to his widow as much, with a provision that after her death the latter sum should be divided between his son and daughter. It therefore came to pass that the young man, who had already entered the army when his father died, and upon whom devolved no necessity of keeping a house, and who in fact not unfrequently lived in his mother's house, had an income equal to that with which his mother and sister were obliged to maintain a roof over their head. Now Lady Carbury, when she was released from her thralldom at the age of forty, had no idea at all of passing her future life amidst the ordinary penances of widowhood. She had hitherto endeavoured to do her duty, knowing that in accepting her position she was bound to take the good and the bad together. She had certainly encountered hitherto much that was bad. To be scolded, watched, beaten, and sworn at by a choleric old man till she was at last driven out of her house by the violence of his ill-usage; to be taken back as a favour with the assurance that her name would for the remainder of her life be unjustly tarnished; to have her flight constantly thrown in her face; and then at last to become for a year or two the nurse of a dying debauchee, was a high price to pay for such good things as she had hitherto enjoyed. Now at length had come to her a period of relaxation—her reward, her freedom, her chance of happiness. She thought much about herself, and resolved on one or two things. The time for love had gone by, and she would have nothing to do with it. Nor would she marry again for convenience. But she would have friends,—real friends; friends who could help her,—and whom possibly she might help. She would, too, make some career for herself, so that life might not be without an interest to her. She would live in London, and would become somebody at any rate in some circle.

Accident at first rather than choice had thrown her among literary people, but that accident had, during the last two years, been supported and corroborated by the desire which had fallen upon her of earning money. She had known from the first that economy would be necessary to her,—not chiefly or perhaps not at all from a feeling that she and her daughter could not live comfortably* together on a thousand a year,—but on behalf of her son. She wanted no luxury but a house so placed that people might conceive of her that she lived in a proper part of the town. Of her daughter's prudence she was as well convinced as of her own. She could trust Henrietta in everything. But her son, Sir Felix, was not very trustworthy. And yet Sir Felix was the darling of her heart.

At the time of the writing of the three letters, at which our story is supposed to begin, she was driven very hard for money. Sir Felix was then twenty-five, had been in a fashionable regiment for four years, had already sold out,* and, to own the truth at once, had altogether wasted the property which his father had left him. So much the mother knew,—and knew, therefore, that with her limited income she must maintain not only herself and daughter, but also the baronet. She did not know, however, the amount of the baronet's obligations;—nor, indeed, did he, or any one else. A baronet, holding a commission in the Guards, and known to have had a fortune left him by his father, may go very far in getting into debt; and Sir Felix had made full use of all his privileges. His life had been in every way bad. He had become a burden on his mother so heavy,—and on his sister also,—that their life had become one of unavoidable embarrassments. But not for a moment had either of them ever quarrelled with him. Henrietta had been taught by the conduct of both father and mother that every vice might be forgiven in a man and in a son, though every virtue was expected from a woman, and especially from a daughter. The lesson had come to her so early in life that she had learned it without the feeling of any grievance. She lamented her brother's evil conduct as it affected him, but she pardoned it altogether as it affected herself. That all her interests in life should be made subservient to him was natural to her; and when she found that her little comforts were discontinued, and her moderate expenses curtailed, because he, having eaten up all that was his own, was now eating up also all that was his mother's, she never complained. Henrietta had been taught to think that men in that rank of life in which she had been born always did eat up everything.

The mother's feeling was less noble,—or perhaps, it might better be said, more open to censure. The boy, who had been beautiful as a star, had ever been the cynosure* of her eyes, the one thing on

which her heart had riveted itself. Even during the career of his folly she had hardly ventured to say a word to him with the purport of stopping him on his road to ruin. In everything she had spoilt him as a boy, and in everything she still spoilt him as a man. She was almost proud of his vices, and had taken delight in hearing of doings which if not vicious of themselves had been ruinous from their extravagance. She had so indulged him that even in her own presence he was never ashamed of his own selfishness or apparently conscious of the injustice which he did to others.

From all this it had come to pass that that dabbling in literature which had been commenced partly perhaps from a sense of pleasure in the work, partly as a passport into society, had been converted into hard work by which money if possible might be earned. So that Lady Carbury when she wrote to her friends, the editors, of her struggles was speaking the truth. Tidings had reached her of this and the other man's success, and,—coming near to her still,—of this and that other woman's earnings in literature. And it had seemed to her that, within moderate limits, she might give a wide field to her hopes. Why should she not add a thousand a year to her income, so that Felix might again live like a gentleman and marry that heiress who, in Lady Carbury's look-out into the future, was destined to make all things straight! Who was so handsome as her son? Who could make himself more agreeable? Who had more of that audacity which is the chief thing necessary to the winning of heiresses? And then he could make his wife Lady Carbury. If only enough money might be earned to tide over the present evil day, all might be well.*

The one most essential obstacle to the chance of success in all this was probably Lady Carbury's conviction that her end was to be obtained not by producing good books, but by inducing certain people to say that her books were good. She did work hard at what she wrote,—hard enough at any rate to cover her pages quickly; and was, by nature, a clever woman. She could write after a glib, commonplace, sprightly fashion, and had already acquired the knack of spreading all she knew very thin, so that it might cover a vast surface. She had no ambition to write a good book, but was painfully anxious to write a book that the critics should say was good. Had Mr Broune, in his closet, told her that her book was absolutely trash, but had undertaken at the same time to have it violently praised in the *Breakfast Table*, it may be doubted whether the critic's own opinion would have even wounded her vanity. The woman was false from head to foot, but there was much of good in her, false though she was.

Whether Sir Felix, her son, had become what he was solely by bad training, or whether he had been born bad, who shall say? It is hardly possible that he should not have been better had he been taken away as an infant and subjected to moral training by moral teachers. And yet again it is hardly possible that any training or want of training should have produced a heart so utterly incapable of feeling for others as was his. He could not even feel his own misfortunes unless they touched the outward comforts of the moment. It seemed that he lacked sufficient imagination to realise future misery though the futurity to be considered was divided from the present but by a single month, a single week,—but by a single night. He liked to be kindly treated, to be praised and petted, to be well fed and caressed; and they who so treated him were his chosen friends. He had in this the instincts of a horse, not approaching the higher sympathies of a dog. But it cannot be said of him that he had ever loved any one to the extent of denying himself a moment's gratification on that loved one's behalf. His heart was a stone. But he was beautiful to look at, ready-witted, and intelligent. He was very dark, with that soft olive complexion which so generally gives to young men an appearance of aristocratic breeding. His hair, which was never allowed to become long, was nearly black, and was soft and silky without that taint of grease which is so common with silken-headed darlings. His eyes were long, brown in colour, and were made beautiful by the perfect arch of the perfect eyebrow. But perhaps the glory of the face was due more to the finished moulding and fine symmetry of the nose and mouth than to his other features. On his short upper lip he had a moustache as well formed as his eyebrows, but he wore no other beard. The form of his chin too was perfect, but it lacked that sweetness and softness of expression, indicative of softness of heart, which a dimple conveys. He was about five feet nine in height, and was as excellent in figure as in face. It was admitted by men and clamorously asserted by women that no man had ever been more handsome than Felix Carbury, and it was admitted also that he never showed consciousness of his beauty. He had given himself airs on many scores;—on the score of his money, poor fool, while it lasted; on the score of his title; on the score of his army standing till he lost it; and especially on the score of superiority in fashionable intellect. But he had been clever enough to dress himself always with simplicity and to avoid the appearance of thought about his outward man. As yet the little world of his associates had hardly found out how callous were his affections,—or rather how devoid he was of affection. His airs and his appearance, joined with some cleverness, had carried him through even

the viciousness of his life. In one matter he had marred his name, and by a moment's weakness had injured his character among his friends more than he had done by the folly of three years. There had been a quarrel between him and a brother officer, in which he had been the aggressor; and, when the moment came in which a man's heart should have produced manly conduct, he had first threatened and had then shown the white feather.* That was now a year since, and he had partly outlived the evil;—but some men still remembered that Felix Carbury had been cowed, and had cowered.

It was now his business to marry an heiress. He was well aware that it was so, and was quite prepared to face his destiny. But he lacked something in the art of making love. He was beautiful, had the manners of a gentleman, could talk well, lacked nothing of audacity, and had no feeling of repugnance at declaring a passion which he did not feel. But he knew so little of the passion, that he could hardly make even a young girl believe that he felt it. When he talked of love, he not only thought that he was talking nonsense, but showed that he thought so. From this fault he had already failed with one young lady reputed to have £40,000,* who had refused him because, as she naively said, she knew 'he did not really care.' 'How can I show that I care more than by wishing to make you my wife?' he had asked. 'I don't know that you can, but all the same you don't care,' she said. And so that young lady escaped the pitfall. Now there was another young lady, to whom the reader shall be introduced in time, whom Sir Felix was instigated to pursue with unremitting diligence. Her wealth was not defined, as had been the £40,000 of her predecessor, but was known to be very much greater than that. It was, indeed, generally supposed to be fathomless, bottomless, endless. It was said that in regard to money for ordinary expenditure, money for houses, servants, horses, jewels, and the like, one sum was the same as another to the father of this young lady. He had great concerns;—concerns so great that the payment of ten or twenty thousand pounds upon any trifle was the same thing to him,—as to men who are comfortable in their circumstances it matters little whether they pay sixpence or ninepence* for their mutton chops. Such a man may be ruined at any time; but there was no doubt that to any one marrying his daughter during the present season of his outrageous prosperity he could give a very large fortune indeed. Lady Carbury, who had known the rock on which her son had been once wrecked, was very anxious that Sir Felix should at once make a proper use of the intimacy which he had effected in the house of this topping Cræsus* of the day.

And now there must be a few words said about Henrietta Carbury. Of course she was of infinitely less importance than her brother, who was a baronet, the head of that branch of the Carburys, and her mother's darling; and, therefore, a few words should suffice. She also was very lovely, being like her brother; but somewhat less dark and with features less absolutely regular. But she had in her countenance a full measure of that sweetness of expression which seems to imply that consideration of self is subordinated to consideration for others. This sweetness was altogether lacking to her brother. And her face was a true index of her character. Again, who shall say why the brother and sister had become so opposite to each other; whether they would have been thus different had both been taken away as infants from their father's and mother's training, or whether the girl's virtues were owing altogether to the lower place which she had held in her parents' heart? She, at any rate, had not been spoiled by a title, by the command of money, and by the temptations of too early acquaintance with the world. At the present time she was barely twenty-one years old, and had not seen much of London society. Her mother did not frequent balls, and during the last two years there had grown upon them a necessity for economy which was inimical to many gloves and costly dresses. Sir Felix went out of course, but Hetta Carbury spent most of her time at home with her mother in Welbeck Street. Occasionally the world saw her, and when the world did see her the world declared that she was a charming girl. The world was so far right.

But for Henrietta Carbury the romance of life had already commenced in real earnest. There was another branch of the Carburys, the head branch, which was now represented by one Roger Carbury, of Carbury Hall. Roger Carbury was a gentleman of whom much will have to be said, but here, at this moment, it need only be told that he was passionately in love with his cousin Henrietta. He was, however, nearly forty years old, and there was one Paul Montague whom Henrietta had seen.

CHAPTER 3

THE BEARGARDEN*

LADY CARBURY'S house in Welbeck Street was a modest house enough,—with no pretensions to be a mansion, hardly assuming even to be a residence; but, having some money in her hands when she first

took it, she had made it pretty and pleasant, and was still proud to feel that in spite of the hardness of her position she had comfortable belongings around her when her literary friends came to see her on her Tuesday evenings. Here she was now living with her son and daughter. The back drawing-room was divided from the front by doors that were permanently closed, and in this she carried on her great work. Here she wrote her books and contrived her system for the inveigling of editors and critics. Here she was rarely disturbed by her daughter, and admitted no visitors except editors and critics. But her son was controlled by no household laws, and would break in upon her privacy without remorse. She had hardly finished two galloping notes after completing her letter to Mr Ferdinand Alf, when Felix entered the room with a cigar in his mouth and threw himself upon the sofa.

‘My dear boy,’ she said, ‘pray leave your tobacco below when you come in here.’

‘What affectation it is, mother,’ he said, throwing, however, the half-smoked cigar into the fire-place. ‘Some women swear they like smoke, others say they hate it like the devil. It depends altogether on whether they wish to flatter or snub a fellow.’

‘You don’t suppose that I wish to snub you?’

‘Upon my word I don’t know. I wonder whether you can let me have twenty pounds?’

‘My dear Felix!’

‘Just so, mother;—but how about the twenty pounds?’

‘What is it for, Felix?’

‘Well;—to tell the truth, to carry on the game for the nonce till something is settled. A fellow can’t live without some money in his pocket. I do with as little as most fellows. I pay for nothing that I can help. I even get my hair cut on credit, and as long as it was possible I had a brougham,* to save cabs.’

‘What is to be the end of it, Felix?’

‘I never could see the end of anything, mother. I never could nurse* a horse when the hounds were going well in order to be in at the finish. I never could pass a dish that I liked in favour of those that were to follow. What’s the use?’ The young man did not say ‘*carpe diem*,’ but that was the philosophy which he intended to preach.

‘Have you been at the Melmottes’ to-day?’ It was now five o’clock on a winter afternoon, the hour at which ladies are drinking tea, and idle men playing whist at the clubs,—at which young idle men are sometimes allowed to flirt, and at which, as Lady Carbury thought, her son might have been paying his court to Marie Melmotte the great heiress.

'I have just come away.'

'And what do you think of her?'

'To tell the truth, mother, I have thought very little about her. She is not pretty, she is not plain; she is not clever, she is not stupid; she is neither saint nor sinner.'

'The more likely to make a good wife.'

'Perhaps so. I am at any rate quite willing to believe that as wife she would be "good enough for me."''

'What does the mother say?'

'The mother is a caution. I cannot help speculating whether, if I marry the daughter, I shall ever find out where the mother came from. Dolly Longestaffe says that somebody says that she was a Bohemian Jewess; but I think she's too fat for that.'*

'What does it matter, Felix?'

'Not in the least.'

'Is she civil to you?'

'Yes, civil enough.'

'And the father?'

'Well, he does not turn me out, or anything of that sort. Of course there are half-a-dozen after her, and I think the old fellow is bewildered among them all. He's thinking more of getting dukes to dine with him than of his daughter's lovers. Any fellow might pick her up who happened to hit her fancy.'

'And why not you?'

'Why not, mother? I am doing my best, and it's no good flogging a willing horse. Can you let me have the money?'

'Oh, Felix, I think you hardly know how poor we are. You have still got your hunters down at the place!'

'I have got two horses, if you mean that; and I haven't paid a shilling for their keep since the season began. Look here, mother; this is a risky sort of game, I grant, but I am playing it by your advice. If I can marry Miss Melmotte, I suppose all will be right. But I don't think the way to get her would be to throw up everything and let all the world know that I haven't got a copper. To do that kind of thing a man must live a little up to the mark. I've brought my hunting down to a minimum, but if I gave it up altogether there would be lots of fellows to tell them in Grosvenor Square why I had done so.'

There was an apparent truth in this argument which the poor woman was unable to answer. Before the interview was over the money demanded was forthcoming, though at the time it could be but ill afforded, and the youth went away apparently with a light heart, hardly

listening to his mother's entreaties that the affair with Marie Melmotte might, if possible, be brought to a speedy conclusion.

Felix, when he left his mother, went down to the only club to which he now belonged. Clubs are pleasant resorts in all respects but one. They require ready money or even worse than that in respect to annual payments,—money in advance; and the young baronet had been absolutely forced to restrict himself. He, as a matter of course, out of those to which he had possessed the right of entrance, chose the worst. It was called the Beargarden, and had been lately opened with the express view of combining parsimony with profligacy. Clubs were ruined, so said certain young parsimonious profligates, by providing comforts for old fogies who paid little or nothing but their subscriptions, and took out by their mere presence three times as much as they gave. This club was not to be opened till three o'clock in the afternoon, before which hour the promoters of the Beargarden thought it improbable that they and their fellows would want a club. There were to be no morning papers taken, no library, no morning-room. Dining-rooms, billiard-rooms, and card-rooms would suffice for the Beargarden. Everything was to be provided by a purveyor, so that the club should be cheated only by one man. Everything was to be luxurious, but the luxuries were to be achieved at first cost.* It had been a happy thought, and the club was said to prosper. Herr Vossner, the purveyor, was a jewel, and so carried on affairs that there was no trouble about anything. He would assist even in smoothing little difficulties as to the settling of card accounts, and had behaved with the greatest tenderness to the drawers of cheques whose bankers had harshly declared them to have 'no effects.' Herr Vossner was a jewel, and the Beargarden was a success. Perhaps no young man about town enjoyed the Beargarden more thoroughly than did Sir Felix Carbury. The club was in the close vicinity of other clubs, in a small street turning out of St James's Street,* and piqued itself on its outward quietness and sobriety. Why pay for stone-work for other people to look at;—why lay out money in marble pillars and cornices, seeing that you can neither eat such things, nor drink them, nor gamble with them? But the Beargarden had the best wines,—or thought that it had,—and the easiest chairs, and two billiard-tables than which nothing more perfect had ever been made to stand upon legs. Hither Sir Felix wended on that January afternoon as soon as he had his mother's cheque for £20 in his pocket.

He found his special friend, Dolly Longestaffe, standing on the steps with a cigar in his mouth, and gazing vacantly at the dull brick house opposite. 'Going to dine here, Dolly?' said Sir Felix.

'I suppose I shall, because it's such a lot of trouble to go anywhere else. I'm engaged somewhere, I know; but I'm not up to getting home and dressing. By George! I don't know how fellows do that kind of thing. I can't.'

'Going to hunt to-morrow?'

'Well, yes; but I don't suppose I shall. I was going to hunt every day last week, but my fellow never would get me up in time. I can't tell why it is that things are done in such a beastly way. Why shouldn't fellows begin to hunt at two or three, so that a fellow needn't get up in the middle of the night?'

'Because one can't ride by moonlight, Dolly.'

'It isn't moonlight at three. At any rate I can't get myself to Euston Square by nine. I don't think that fellow of mine likes getting up himself. He says he comes in and wakes me, but I never remember it.'

'How many horses have you got at Leighton, Dolly?'

'How many? There were five, but I think that fellow down there sold one; but then I think he bought another. I know he did something.'

'Who rides them?'

'He does, I suppose. That is, of course, I ride them myself, only I so seldom get down. Somebody told me that Grasslough was riding two of them last week. I don't think I ever told him he might. I think he tipped that fellow of mine; and I call that a low kind of thing to do. I'd ask him, only I know he'd say that I had lent them. Perhaps I did when I was tight, you know.'

'You and Grasslough were never pals.'

'I don't like him a bit. He gives himself airs because he is a lord, and is devilish ill-natured. I don't know why he should want to ride my horses.'

'To save his own.'

'He isn't hard up. Why doesn't he have his own horses? I'll tell you what, Carbury, I've made up my mind to one thing, and, by Jove, I'll stick to it. I never will lend a horse again to anybody. If fellows want horses let them buy them.'

'But some fellows haven't got any money, Dolly.'

'Then they ought to go tick.* I don't think I've paid for any of mine I've bought this season. There was somebody here yesterday——'

'What! here at the club?'

'Yes; followed me here to say he wanted to be paid for something! It was horses, I think, because of the fellow's trousers.'

'What did you say?'

'Me! Oh, I didn't say anything.'

‘And how did it end?’

‘When he’d done talking I offered him a cigar, and while he was biting off the end I went upstairs. I suppose he went away when he was tired of waiting.’

‘I’ll tell you what, Dolly; I wish you’d let me ride two of yours for a couple of days,—that is, of course, if you don’t want them yourself. You ain’t tight now, at any rate.’

‘No; I ain’t tight,’ said Dolly, with melancholy acquiescence.

‘I mean that I wouldn’t like to borrow your horses without your remembering all about it. Nobody knows as well as you do how awfully done up I am. I shall pull through at last, but it’s an awful squeeze in the meantime. There’s nobody I’d ask such a favour of except you.’

‘Well, you may have them;—that is, for two days. I don’t know whether that fellow of mine will believe you. He wouldn’t believe Grasslough, and told him so. But Grasslough took them out of the stables. That’s what somebody told me.’

‘You could write a line to your groom.’

‘Oh my dear fellow, that is such a bore; I don’t think I could do that. My fellow will believe you, because you and I have been pals. I think I’ll have a little drop of curaçoa* before dinner. Come along and try it. It’ll give us an appetite.’

It was then nearly seven o’clock. Nine hours afterwards the same two men, with two others,—of whom young Lord Grasslough, Dolly Longestaffe’s peculiar aversion, was one,—were just rising from a card-table in one of the upstairs rooms of the club. For it was understood that, though the Beargarden was not to be open before three o’clock in the afternoon, the accommodation denied during the day was to be given freely during the night. No man could get a breakfast at the Beargarden, but suppers at three o’clock in the morning were quite within the rule. Such a supper, or rather succession of suppering, there had been tonight, various devils* and broils and hot toasts having been brought up from time to time first for one and then for another. But there had been no cessation of gambling since the cards had first been opened about ten o’clock. At four in the morning Dolly Longestaffe was certainly in a condition to lend his horses and to remember nothing about it. He was quite affectionate with Lord Grasslough, as he was also with his other companions,—affection being the normal state of his mind when in that condition. He was by no means helplessly drunk, and was, perhaps, hardly more silly than when he was sober; but he was willing to play at any game whether he understood it or not, and for any stakes. When Sir Felix got up and said he would play no more, Dolly also got

up, apparently quite contented. When Lord Grasslough, with a dark scowl on his face, expressed his opinion that it was not just the thing for men to break up like that when so much money had been lost, Dolly as willingly sat down again. But Dolly's sitting down was not sufficient. 'I'm going to hunt to-morrow,' said Sir Felix,—meaning that day,—'and I shall play no more. A man must go to bed at some time.'

'I don't see it at all,' said Lord Grasslough. 'It's an understood thing that when a man has won as much as you have he should stay.'

'Stay how long?' said Sir Felix, with an angry look. 'That's nonsense; there must be an end of everything, and there's an end of this for me to-night.'

'Oh, if you choose,' said his lordship.

'I do choose. Good night, Dolly; we'll settle this next time we meet. I've got it all entered.'

The night had been one very serious in its results to Sir Felix. He had sat down to the card-table with the proceeds of his mother's cheque, a poor £20, and now he had,—he didn't at all know how much in his pockets. He also had drunk, but not so as to obscure his mind. He knew that Longestaffe owed him over £300, and he knew also that he had received more than that in ready money and cheques from Lord Grasslough and the other player. Dolly Longestaffe's money, too, would certainly be paid, though Dolly did complain of the importunity of his tradesmen. As he walked up St James's Street, looking for a cab, he presumed himself to be worth over £700.* When begging for a small sum from Lady Carbury, he had said that he could not carry on the game without some ready money, and had considered himself fortunate in fleecing his mother as he had done. Now he was in the possession of wealth,—of wealth that might, at any rate, be sufficient to aid him materially in the object he had in hand. He never for a moment thought of paying his bills. Even the large sum of which he had become so unexpectedly possessed would not have gone far with him in such a quixotic object as that; but he could now look bright, and buy presents, and be seen with money in his hands. It is hard even to make love in these days without something in your purse.

He found no cab, but in his present frame of mind was indifferent to the trouble of walking home. There was something so joyous in the feeling of the possession of all this money that it made the night air pleasant to him. Then, of a sudden, he remembered the low wail with which his mother had spoken of her poverty when he demanded assistance from her. Now he could give her back the £20. But it occurred to him sharply, with an amount of carefulness quite new to him, that

it would be foolish to do so. How soon might he want it again? And, moreover, he could not repay the money without explaining to her how he had gotten it. It would be preferable to say nothing about his money. As he let himself into the house and went up to his room he resolved that he would not say anything about it.

On that morning he was at the station at nine, and hunted down in Buckinghamshire, riding two of Dolly Longestaffe's horses,—for the use of which he paid Dolly Longestaffe's 'fellow' thirty shillings.

CHAPTER 4

MADAME MELMOTTE'S BALL

THE next night but one after that of the gambling transaction at the Beargarden, a great ball was given in Grosvenor Square.* It was a ball on a scale so magnificent that it had been talked about ever since Parliament met, now about a fortnight since. Some people had expressed an opinion that such a ball as this was intended to be could not be given successfully in February. Others declared that the money which was to be spent,—an amount which would make this affair quite new in the annals of ball-giving,—would give the thing such a character that it would certainly be successful. And much more than money had been expended. Almost incredible efforts had been made to obtain the co-operation of great people, and these efforts had at last been grandly successful. The Duchess of Stevenage had come up from Castle Albury herself to be present at it and to bring her daughters, though it has never been her Grace's wont to be in London at this inclement season. No doubt the persuasion used with the Duchess had been very strong. Her brother, Lord Alfred Grendall, was known to be in great difficulties, which,—so people said,—had been considerably modified by opportune pecuniary assistance. And then it was certain that one of the young Grendalls, Lord Alfred's second son, had been appointed to some mercantile position, for which he received a salary which his most intimate friends thought that he was hardly qualified to earn. It was certainly a fact that he went to Abchurch Lane,* in the City, four or five days a week, and that he did not occupy his time in so unaccustomed a manner for nothing. Where the Duchess of Stevenage went all the world would go. And it became known at the last moment, that is to say only the day before the party, that a prince of the blood royal was to be there. How this had been achieved nobody quite understood;

but there were rumours that a certain lady's jewels had been rescued from the pawnbroker's. Everything was done on the same scale. The Prime Minister had indeed declined to allow his name to appear on the list; but one Cabinet Minister and two or three under-secretaries had agreed to come because it was felt that the giver of the ball might before long be the master of considerable parliamentary interest. It was believed that he had an eye to politics, and it is always wise to have great wealth on one's own side. There had at one time been much solicitude about the ball. Many anxious thoughts had been given. When great attempts fail, the failure is disastrous, and may be ruinous. But this ball had now been put beyond the chance of failure.

The giver of the ball was Augustus Melmotte, Esq., the father of the girl whom Sir Felix Carbury desired to marry, and the husband of the lady who was said to have been a Bohemian Jewess. It was thus that the gentleman chose to have himself designated, though within the last two years he had arrived in London from Paris, and had at first been known as M. Melmotte.* But he had declared of himself that he had been born in England, and that he was an Englishman. He admitted that his wife was a foreigner,—an admission that was necessary as she spoke very little English. Melmotte himself spoke his 'native' language fluently, but with an accent which betrayed at least a long expatriation. Miss Melmotte,—who a very short time since had been known as Mademoiselle Marie,—spoke English well, but as a foreigner. In regard to her it was acknowledged that she had been born out of England,—some said in New York; but Madame Melmotte, who must have known, had declared that the great event had taken place in Paris.

It was at any rate an established fact that Mr Melmotte had made his wealth in France. He no doubt had had enormous dealings in other countries, as to which stories were told which must surely have been exaggerated. It was said that he had made a railway across Russia, that he provisioned the Southern army in the American civil war, that he had supplied Austria with arms, and had at one time bought up all the iron in England. He could make or mar any company by buying or selling stock, and could make money dear or cheap as he pleased. All this was said of him in his praise,—but it was also said that he was regarded in Paris as the most gigantic swindler that had ever lived; that he had made that City too hot to hold him; that he had endeavoured to establish himself in Vienna, but had been warned away by the police; and that he had at length found that British freedom would alone allow him to enjoy, without persecution, the fruits of his industry. He was now established privately in Grosvenor Square and officially in Abchurch

Lane; and it was known to all the world that a Royal Prince, a Cabinet Minister, and the very cream of duchesses were going to his wife's ball. All this had been done within twelve months.

There was but one child in the family, one heiress for all this wealth. Melmotte himself was a large man, with bushy whiskers and rough thick hair, with heavy eyebrows, and a wonderful look of power about his mouth and chin. This was so strong as to redeem his face from vulgarity; but the countenance and appearance of the man were on the whole unpleasant, and, I may say, untrustworthy. He looked as though he were purse-proud and a bully. She was fat and fair,—unlike in colour to our traditional Jewesses; but she had the Jewish nose and the Jewish contraction of the eyes. There was certainly very little in Madame Melmotte to recommend her, unless it was a readiness to spend money on any object that might be suggested to her by her new acquaintances. It sometimes seemed that she had a commission from her husband to give away presents to any who would accept them. The world had received the man as Augustus Melmotte, Esq. The world so addressed him on the very numerous letters which reached him, and so inscribed him among the directors of three dozen companies to which he belonged. But his wife was still Madame Melmotte. The daughter had been allowed to take her rank with an English title. She was now Miss Melmotte on all occasions.

Marie Melmotte had been accurately described by Felix Carbury to his mother. She was not beautiful, she was not clever, and she was not a saint. But then neither was she plain, nor stupid, nor, especially, a sinner. She was a little thing, hardly over twenty years of age, very unlike her father or mother, having no trace of the Jewess in her countenance, who seemed to be overwhelmed by the sense of her own position. With such people as the Melmottes things go fast, and it was very well known that Miss Melmotte had already had one lover who had been nearly accepted. The affair, however, had gone off. In this 'going off' no one imputed to the young lady blame or even misfortune. It was not supposed that she had either jilted or been jilted. As in royal espousals interests of State regulate their expedience with an acknowledged absence, with even a proclaimed impossibility, of personal predilections, so in this case was money allowed to have the same weight. Such a marriage would or would not be sanctioned in accordance with great pecuniary arrangements. The young Lord Nidderdale, the eldest son of the Marquis of Auld Reekie, had offered to take the girl and make her Marchioness in the process of time for half a million down. Melmotte had not objected to the sum,—so it was said,—but had proposed to

tie it up. Nidderdale had desired to have it free in his own grasp, and would not move on any other terms. Melmotte had been anxious to secure the Marquis,—very anxious to secure the Marchioness; for at that time terms had not been made with the Duchess; but at last he had lost his temper, and had asked his lordship's lawyer whether it was likely that he would entrust such a sum of money to such a man. 'You are willing to trust your only child to him,' said the lawyer. Melmotte scowled at the man for a few seconds from under his bushy eyebrows; then told him that his answer had nothing in it, and marched out of the room. So that affair was over. I doubt whether Lord Nidderdale had ever said a word of love to Marie Melmotte,—or whether the poor girl had expected it. Her destiny had no doubt been explained to her.

Others had tried and had broken down somewhat in the same fashion. Each had treated the girl as an encumbrance he was to undertake,—at a very great price. But as affairs prospered with the Melmottes, as princes and duchesses were obtained by other means,—costly no doubt, but not so ruinously costly,—the immediate disposition of Marie became less necessary, and Melmotte reduced his offers. The girl herself, too, began to have an opinion. It was said that she had absolutely rejected Lord Grasslough, whose father indeed was in a state of bankruptcy, who had no income of his own, who was ugly, vicious, ill-tempered, and without any power of recommending himself to a girl. She had had experience since Lord Nidderdale, with a half laugh, had told her that he might just as well take her for his wife, and was now tempted from time to time to contemplate her own happiness and her own condition. People around were beginning to say that if Sir Felix Carbury managed his affairs well he might be the happy man.

There was a considerable doubt whether Marie was the daughter of that Jewish-looking woman. Enquiries had been made, but not successfully, as to the date of the Melmotte marriage. There was an idea abroad that Melmotte had got his first money with his wife, and had gotten it not very long ago. Then other people said that Marie was not his daughter at all. Altogether the mystery was rather pleasant as the money was certain. Of the certainty of the money in daily use there could be no doubt. There was the house. There was the furniture. There were the carriages, the horses, the servants with the livery coats and powdered heads, and the servants with the black coats and unpowdered heads. There were the gems, and the presents, and all the nice things that money can buy. There were two dinner parties every day, one at two o'clock called lunch, and the other at eight. The tradesmen had learned enough to be quite free of doubt, and in the City

Mr Melmotte's name was worth any money,—though his character was perhaps worth but little.

The large house on the south side of Grosvenor Square was all ablaze by ten o'clock. The broad verandah had been turned into a conservatory, had been covered with boards contrived to look like trellis-work, was heated with hot air and filled with exotics at some fabulous price. A covered way had been made from the door, down across the pathway, to the road, and the police had, I fear, been bribed to frighten foot passengers into a belief that they were bound to go round. The house had been so arranged that it was impossible to know where you were, when once in it. The hall was a paradise. The staircase was fairyland. The lobbies were grottoes rich with ferns. Walls had been knocked away and arches had been constructed. The leads behind had been supported and walled in, and covered and carpeted.* The ball had possession of the ground floor and first floor, and the house seemed to be endless. 'It's to cost sixty thousand pounds,' said the Marchioness of Auld Reekie to her old friend the Countess of Mid-Lothian. The Marchioness had come in spite of her son's misfortune when she heard that the Duchess of Stevenage was to be there. 'And worse spent money never was wasted,' said the Countess. 'By all accounts it was as badly come by,' said the Marchioness. Then the two old noblewomen, one after the other, made graciously flattering speeches to the much-worn Bohemian Jewess, who was standing in fairyland to receive her guests, almost fainting under the greatness of the occasion.

The three saloons on the first or drawing-room floor had been prepared for dancing, and here Marie was stationed. The Duchess had however undertaken to see that somebody should set the dancing going, and she had commissioned her nephew Miles Grendall, the young gentleman who now frequented the City, to give directions to the band and to make himself generally useful. Indeed there had sprung up a considerable intimacy between the Grendall family,—that is Lord Alfred's branch of the Grendalls,—and the Melmottes; which was as it should be, as each could give much and each receive much. It was known that Lord Alfred had not a shilling; but his brother was a duke and his sister was a duchess, and for the last thirty years there had been one continual anxiety for poor dear Alfred, who had tumbled into an unfortunate marriage without a shilling, had spent his own moderate patrimony, had three sons and three daughters, and had lived now for a very long time entirely on the unwilling contributions of his noble relatives. Melmotte could support the whole family in affluence without feeling the burden;—and why should he not? There had once been

an idea that Miles should attempt to win the heiress, but it had soon been found expedient to abandon it. Miles had no title, no position of his own, and was hardly big enough for the place. It was in all respects better that the waters of the fountain should be allowed to irrigate mildly the whole Grendall family;—and so Miles went into the city.

The ball was opened by a quadrille* in which Lord Buntingford, the eldest son of the Duchess, stood up with Marie. Various arrangements had been made, and this among them. We may say that it had been a part of the bargain. Lord Buntingford had objected mildly, being a young man devoted to business, fond of his own order, rather shy, and not given to dancing. But he had allowed his mother to prevail. ‘Of course they are vulgar,’ the Duchess had said,—‘so much so as to be no longer distasteful because of the absurdity of the thing. I dare say he hasn’t been very honest. When men make so much money, I don’t know how they can have been honest. Of course it’s done for a purpose. It’s all very well saying that isn’t right, but what are we to do about Alfred’s children? Miles is to have £500 a-year. And then he is always about the house. And between you and me they have got up those bills of Alfred’s, and have said they can lie in their safe till it suits your uncle to pay them.’

‘They will lie there a long time,’ said Lord Buntingford.

‘Of course they expect something in return; do dance with the girl once.’ Lord Buntingford disapproved—mildly, and did as his mother asked him.

The affair went off very well. There were three or four card-tables in one of the lower rooms, and at one of them sat Lord Alfred Grendall and Mr Melmotte, with two or three other players, cutting in and out at the end of each rubber. Playing whist was Lord Alfred’s only accomplishment, and almost the only occupation of his life. He began it daily at his club at three o’clock, and continued playing till two in the morning with an interval of a couple of hours for his dinner. This he did during ten months of the year, and during the other two he frequented some watering-place at which whist prevailed. He did not gamble, never playing for more than the club stakes and bets. He gave to the matter his whole mind, and must have excelled those who were generally opposed to him. But so obdurate was fortune to Lord Alfred that he could not make money even of whist. Melmotte was very anxious to get into Lord Alfred’s club,—The Peripatetics.* It was pleasant to see the grace with which he lost his money, and the sweet intimacy with which he called his lordship Alfred. Lord Alfred had a remnant of feeling left, and would have liked to kick him. Though Melmotte was

by far the bigger man, and was also the younger, Lord Alfred would not have lacked the pluck to kick him. Lord Alfred, in spite of his habitual idleness and vapid uselessness, had still left about him a dash of vigour, and sometimes thought that he would kick Melmotte and have done with it. But there were his poor boys, and those bills in Melmotte's safe. And then Melmotte lost his points so regularly, and paid his bets with such absolute good humour! 'Come and have a glass of champagne, Alfred,' Melmotte said, as the two cut out together. Lord Alfred liked champagne, and followed his host; but as he went he almost made up his mind that on some future day he would kick the man.

Late in the evening Marie Melmotte was waltzing with Felix Carbury, and Henrietta Carbury was then standing by talking to one Mr Paul Montague. Lady Carbury was also there. She was not well inclined either to balls or to such people as the Melmottes; nor was Henrietta. But Felix had suggested that, bearing in mind his prospects as to the heiress, they had better accept the invitation which he would cause to have sent to them. They did so; and then Paul Montague also got a card, not altogether to Lady Carbury's satisfaction. Lady Carbury was very gracious to Madame Melmotte for two minutes, and then slid into a chair expecting nothing but misery for the evening. She, however, was a woman who could do her duty and endure without complaint.

'It is the first great great ball I ever was at in London,' said Hetta Carbury to Paul Montague.

'And how do you like it?'

'Not at all. How should I like it? I know nobody here. I don't understand how it is that at these parties people do know each other, or whether they all go dancing about without knowing.'

'Just that; I suppose when they are used to it they get introduced backwards and forwards, and then they can know each other as fast as they like. If you would wish to dance why don't you dance with me?'

'I have danced with you,—twice already.'

'Is there any law against dancing three times?'

'But I don't especially want to dance,' said Henrietta. 'I think I'll go and console poor mamma, who has got nobody to speak to her.' Just at this moment, however, Lady Carbury was not in that wretched condition, as an unexpected friend had come to her relief.

Sir Felix and Marie Melmotte had been spinning round and round throughout a long waltz, thoroughly enjoying the excitement of the music and the movement. To give Felix Carbury what little praise might be his due, it is necessary to say that he did not lack physical activity. He would dance, and ride, and shoot eagerly, with an animation that made

him happy for the moment. It was an affair not of thought or calculation, but of physical organisation. And Marie Melmotte had been thoroughly happy. She loved dancing with all her heart if she could only dance in a manner pleasant to herself. She had been warned especially as to some men,—that she should not dance with them. She had been almost thrown into Lord Nidderdale's arms, and had been prepared to take him at her father's bidding. But she had never had the slightest pleasure in his society, and had only not been wretched because she had not as yet recognised that she had an identity of her own in the disposition of which she herself should have a voice. She certainly had never cared to dance with Lord Nidderdale. Lord Grasslough she had absolutely hated, though at first she had hardly dared to say so. One or two others had been obnoxious to her in different ways, but they had passed on, or were passing on, out of her way. There was no one at the present moment whom she had been commanded by her father to accept should an offer be made. But she did like dancing with Sir Felix Carbury.

It was not only that the man was handsome* but that he had a power of changing the expression of his countenance, a play of face, which belied altogether his real disposition. He could seem to be hearty and true till the moment came in which he had really to expose his heart,—or to try to expose it. Then he failed, knowing nothing about it. But in the approaches to intimacy with a girl he could be very successful. He had already nearly got beyond this with Marie Melmotte; but Marie was by no means quick in discovering his deficiencies. To her he had seemed like a god. If she might be allowed to be wooed by Sir Felix Carbury, and to give herself to him, she thought that she would be contented.

'How well you dance,' said Sir Felix, as soon as he had breath for speaking.

'Do I?' She spoke with a slightly foreign accent, which gave a little prettiness to her speech. 'I was never told so. But nobody ever told me anything about myself.'

'I should like to tell you everything about yourself, from the beginning to the end.'

'Ah,—but you don't know.'

'I would find out. I think I could make some good guesses. I'll tell you what you would like best in all the world.'

'What is that?'

'Somebody that liked you best in all the world.'

'Ah,—yes; if one knew who?'

'How can you know, Miss Melmotte, but by believing?'

'That is not the way to know. If a girl told me that she liked me better than any other girl, I should not know it, just because she said so. I should have to find it out.'

'And if a gentleman told you so?'

'I shouldn't believe him a bit, and I should not care to find out. But I should like to have some girl for a friend whom I could love, oh, ten times better than myself.'

'So should I.'

'Have you no particular friend?'

'I mean a girl whom I could love,—oh, ten times better than myself.'

'Now you are laughing at me, Sir Felix,' said Miss Melmotte.

'I wonder whether that will come to anything?' said Paul Montague to Miss Carbury. They had come back into the drawing-room, and had been watching the approaches to love-making which the baronet was opening.

'You mean Felix and Miss Melmotte. I hate to think of such things, Mr Montague.'

'It would be a magnificent chance for him.'

'To marry a girl, the daughter of vulgar people, just because she will have a great deal of money? He can't care for her really,—because she is rich.'

'But he wants money so dreadfully! It seems to me that there is no other condition of things under which Felix can face the world, but by being the husband of an heiress.'

'What a dreadful thing to say!'

'But isn't it true? He has beggared himself.'

'Oh, Mr Montague.'

'And he will beggar you and your mother.'

'I don't care about myself.'

'Others do though.' As he said this he did not look at her, but spoke through his teeth, as if he were angry both with himself and her.

'I did not think you would have spoken so harshly of Felix.'

'I don't speak harshly of him, Miss Carbury. I haven't said that it was his own fault. He seems to be one of those who have been born to spend money; and as this girl will have plenty of money to spend, I think it would be a good thing if he were to marry her. If Felix had £20,000 a year, everybody would think him the finest fellow in the world.' In saying this, however, Mr Paul Montague showed himself unfit to gauge the opinion of the world. Whether Sir Felix be rich or poor, the world, evil-hearted as it is, will never think him a fine fellow.

Lady Carbury had been seated for nearly half an hour in

uncomplaining solitude under a bust, when she was delighted by the appearance of Mr Ferdinand Alf. 'You here?' she said.

'Why not? Melmotte and I are brother adventurers.'

'I should have thought you would find so little here to amuse you.'

'I have found you; and, in addition to that, duchesses and their daughters without number. They expect Prince George!'

'Do they?'

'And Legge Wilson from the India Office* is here already. I spoke to him in some jewelled bower as I made my way here, not five minutes since. It's quite a success. Don't you think it very nice, Lady Carbury?'

'I don't know whether you are joking or in earnest.'

'I never joke. I say it is very nice. These people are spending thousands upon thousands to gratify you and me and others, and all they want in return is a little countenance.'

'Do you mean to give it then?'

'I am giving it them.'

'Ah;—but the countenance of the *Evening Pulpit*. Do you mean to give them that?'

'Well; it is not in our line exactly to give a catalogue of names and to record ladies' dresses. Perhaps it may be better for our host himself that he should be kept out of the newspapers.'

'Are you going to be very severe upon poor me, Mr Alf?' said the lady after a pause.

'We are never severe upon anybody, Lady Carbury. Here's the Prince. What will they do with him now they've caught him! Oh, they're going to make him dance with the heiress. Poor heiress!'

'Poor Prince!' said Lady Carbury.

'Not at all. She's a nice little girl enough, and he'll have nothing to trouble him. But how is she, poor thing, to talk to royal blood?'

Poor thing indeed! The Prince was brought into the big room where Marie was still being talked to by Felix Carbury, and was at once made to understand that she was to stand up and dance with royalty. The introduction was managed in a very business-like manner. Miles Grendall first came in and found the female victim; the Duchess followed with the male victim. Madame Melmotte, who had been on her legs till she was ready to sink, waddled behind, but was not allowed to take any part in the affair. The band were playing a galop, but that was stopped at once, to the great confusion of the dancers. In two minutes Miles Grendall had made up a set. He stood up with his aunt, the Duchess, as vis-à-vis to Marie and the Prince, till, about the middle of the quadrille, Legge Wilson was found and made to take his place.

Lord Buntingford had gone away; but then there were still present two daughters of the Duchess who were rapidly caught. Sir Felix Carbury, being good-looking and having a name, was made to dance with one of them, and Lord Grasslough with the other. There were four other couples, all made up of titled people, as it was intended that this special dance should be chronicled, if not in the *Evening Pulpit*, in some less serious daily journal. A paid reporter was present in the house ready to rush off with the list as soon as the dance should be a realized fact. The Prince himself did not quite understand why he was there, but they who marshalled his life for him had so marshalled it for the present moment. He himself probably knew nothing about the lady's diamonds which had been rescued, or the considerable subscription to St George's Hospital* which had been extracted from Mr Melmotte as a make-weight. Poor Marie felt as though the burden of the hour would be greater than she could bear, and looked as though she would have fled had flight been possible. But the trouble passed quickly, and was not really severe. The Prince said a word or two between each figure, and did not seem to expect a reply. He made a few words go a long way, and was well trained in the work of easing the burden of his own greatness for those who were for the moment inflicted with it. When the dance was over he was allowed to escape after the ceremony of a single glass of champagne drunk in the presence of the hostess. Considerable skill was shown in keeping the presence of his royal guest a secret from the host himself till the Prince was gone. Melmotte would have desired to pour out that glass of wine with his own hands, to solace his tongue by Royal Highnesses, and would probably have been troublesome and disagreeable. Miles Grendall had understood all this and had managed the affair very well. 'Bless my soul;—his Royal Highness come and gone!' exclaimed Melmotte. 'You and my father were so fast at your whist that it was impossible to get you away,' said Miles. Melmotte was not a fool, and understood it all;—understood not only that it had been thought better that he should not speak to the Prince, but also that it might be better that it should be so. He could not have everything at once. Miles Grendall was very useful to him, and he would not quarrel with Miles, at any rate as yet.

'Have another rubber, Alfred?' he said to Miles's father as the carriages were taking away the guests.

Lord Alfred had taken sundry glasses of champagne, and for a moment forgot the bills in the safe, and the good things which his boys were receiving. 'Damn that kind of nonsense,' he said. 'Call people by their proper names.' Then he left the house without a further

word to the master of it. That night before they went to sleep Melmotte required from his weary wife an account of the ball, and especially of Marie's conduct. 'Marie,' Madame Melmotte said, 'had behaved well, but had certainly preferred "Sir Carbury" to any other of the young men.' Hitherto Mr Melmotte had heard very little of 'Sir Carbury,' except that he was a baronet. Though his eyes and ears were always open, though he attended to everything, and was a man of sharp intelligence, he did not yet quite understand the bearing and sequence of English titles.* He knew that he must get for his daughter either an eldest son, or one absolutely in possession* himself. Sir Felix, he had learned, was only a baronet; but then he was in possession. He had discovered also that Sir Felix's son would in course of time also become Sir Felix. He was not therefore at the present moment disposed to give any positive orders as to his daughter's conduct to the young baronet. He did not, however, conceive that the young baronet had as yet addressed his girl in such words as Felix had in truth used when they parted. 'You know who it is,' he whispered, 'likes you better than any one else in the world.'

'Nobody does;—don't, Sir Felix.'

'I do,' he said as he held her hand for a minute. He looked into her face and she thought it very sweet. He had studied the words as a lesson, and, repeating them as a lesson, he did it fairly well. He did it well enough at any rate to send the poor girl to bed with a sweet conviction that at last a man had spoken to her whom she could love.

CHAPTER 5

AFTER THE BALL

'It's weary work,' said Sir Felix as he got into the brougham with his mother and sister.

'What must it have been to me then, who had nothing to do?' said his mother.

'It's the having something to do that makes me call it weary work. By-the-bye, now I think of it, I'll run down to the club before I go home.' So saying he put his head out of the brougham, and stopped the driver.

'It is two o'clock, Felix,' said his mother.

'I'm afraid it is, but you see I'm hungry. You had supper, perhaps; I had none.'

‘Are you going down to the club for supper at this time in the morning?’

‘I must go to bed hungry if I don’t. Good night.’ Then he jumped out of the brougham, called a cab, and had himself driven to the Beargarden. He declared to himself that the men there would think it mean of him if he did not give them their revenge. He had renewed his play on the preceding night, and had again won. Dolly Longestaffe owed him now a considerable sum of money, and Lord Grasslough was also in his debt. He was sure that Grasslough would go to the club after the ball, and he was determined that they should not think that he had submitted to be carried home by his mother and sister. So he argued with himself; but in truth the devil of gambling was hot within his bosom; and though he feared that in losing he might lose real money, and that if he won it would be long before he was paid, yet he could not keep himself from the card-table.

Neither mother nor daughter said a word till they reached home and had got upstairs. Then the elder spoke of the trouble that was nearest to her heart at the moment. ‘Do you think he gambles?’

‘He has got no money, mamma.’

‘I fear that might not hinder him. And he has money with him, though, for him and such friends as he has, it is not much. If he gambles everything is lost.’

‘I suppose they all do play,—more or less.’

‘I have not known that he played. I am wearied too, out of all heart, by his want of consideration to me. It is not that he will not obey me. A mother perhaps should not expect obedience from a grown-up son. But my word is nothing to him. He has no respect for me. He would as soon do what is wrong before me as before the merest stranger.’

‘He has been so long his own master, mamma.’

‘Yes,—his own master! And yet I must provide for him as though he were but a child. Hetta, you spent the whole evening talking to Paul Montague.’

‘No, mamma;—that is unjust.’

‘He was always with you.’

‘I knew nobody else. I could not tell him not to speak to me. I danced with him twice.’ Her mother was seated, with both her hands up to her forehead, and shook her head. ‘If you did not want me to speak to Paul you should not have taken me there.’

‘I don’t wish to prevent your speaking to him. You know what I want.’ Henrietta came up and kissed her, and bade her good night. ‘I think I am the unhappiest woman in all London,’ she said, sobbing hysterically.

'Is it my fault, mamma?'

'You could save me from much if you would. I work like a horse, and I never spend a shilling that I can help. I want nothing for myself,—nothing for myself. Nobody has suffered as I have. But Felix never thinks of me for a moment.'

'I think of you, mamma.'

'If you did you would accept your cousin's offer. What right have you to refuse him? I believe it is all because of that young man.'

'No, mamma; it is not because of that young man. I like my cousin very much;—but that is all. Good night, mamma.' Lady Carbury just allowed herself to be kissed, and then was left alone.

At eight o'clock the next morning daybreak found four young men who had just risen from a card-table at the Beargarden. The Beargarden was so pleasant a club that there was no rule whatsoever as to its being closed,—the only law being that it should not be opened before three in the afternoon. A sort of sanction had, however, been given to the servants to demur to producing supper or drinks after six in the morning, so that, about eight, unrelieved tobacco began to be too heavy even for juvenile constitutions. The party consisted of Dolly Longestaffe, Lord Grasslough, Miles Grendall, and Felix Carbury, and the four had amused themselves during the last six hours with various innocent games. They had commenced with whist, and had culminated during the last half-hour with blind hookey.* But during the whole night Felix had won. Miles Grendall hated him, and there had been an expressed opinion between Miles and the young lord that it would be both profitable and proper to relieve Sir Felix of the winnings of the last two nights. The two men had played with the same object, and being young had shown their intention,—so that a certain feeling of hostility had been engendered. The reader is not to understand that either of them had cheated, or that the baronet had entertained any suspicion of foul play. But Felix had felt that Grendall and Grasslough were his enemies, and had thrown himself on Dolly for sympathy and friendship. Dolly, however, was very tipsy.

At eight o'clock in the morning there came a sort of settling, though no money then passed. The ready-money transactions had not lasted long through the night. Grasslough was the chief loser, and the figures and scraps of paper which had been passed over to Carbury, when counted up, amounted to nearly £2,000. His lordship contested the fact bitterly, but contested it in vain. There were his own initials and his own figures, and even Miles Grendall, who was supposed to be quite wide awake, could not reduce the amount. Then Grendall had lost over £400

to Carbury,—an amount, indeed, that mattered little, as Miles could, at present, as easily have raised £40,000. However, he gave his IOU to his opponent with an easy air. Grasslough, also, was impecunious; but he had a father,—also impecunious, indeed; but with them the matter would not be hopeless. Dolly Longestaffe was so tipsy that he could not even assist in making up his own account. That was to be left between him and Carbury for some future occasion.

‘I suppose you’ll be here to-morrow,—that is to-night,’ said Miles.

‘Certainly,—only one thing,’ answered Felix.

‘What one thing?’

‘I think these things should be squared before we play any more!’

‘What do you mean by that?’ said Grasslough angrily. ‘Do you mean to hint anything?’

‘I never hint anything, my Grassy,’ said Felix. ‘I believe when people play cards, it’s intended to be ready-money, that’s all. But I’m not going to stand on P’s and Q’s with you. I’ll give you your revenge to-night.’

‘That’s all right,’ said Miles.

‘I was speaking to Lord Grasslough,’ said Felix. ‘He is an old friend, and we know each other. You have been rather rough to-night, Mr Grendall.’

‘Rough;—what the devil do you mean by that?’

‘And I think it will be as well that our account should be settled before we begin again.’

‘A settlement once a week is the kind of thing I’m used to,’ said Grendall.

There was nothing more said; but the young men did not part on good terms. Felix, as he got himself taken home, calculated that if he could realize his spoil, he might begin the campaign again with horses, servants, and all luxuries as before. If all were paid, he would have over £3,000!*

CHAPTER 6

ROGER CARBURY AND PAUL MONTAGUE

ROGER CARBURY,* of Carbury Hall, the owner of a small property in Suffolk, was the head of the Carbury family. The Carburys had been in Suffolk a great many years,—certainly from the time of the War of the Roses,*—and had always held up their heads. But they had never held them very high. It was not known that any had risen ever to the

honour of knighthood before Sir Patrick, going higher than that, had been made a baronet. They had, however, been true to their acres and their acres true to them through the perils of civil wars, Reformation, Commonwealth, and Revolution, and the head Carbury of the day had always owned, and had always lived at, Carbury Hall. At the beginning of the present century the squire of Carbury had been a considerable man, if not in his county, at any rate in his part of the county. The income of the estate had sufficed to enable him to live plenteously and hospitably, to drink port wine, to ride a stout hunter, and to keep an old lumbering coach for his wife's use when she went avising. He had an old butler who had never lived anywhere else, and a boy from the village who was in a way apprenticed to the butler. There was a cook, not too proud to wash up her own dishes, and a couple of young women;—while the house was kept by Mrs Carbury herself, who marked and gave out her own linen, made her own preserves, and looked to the curing of her own hams. In the year 1800 the Carbury property was sufficient for the Carbury house. Since that time the Carbury property has considerably increased in value, and the rents have been raised. Even the acreage has been extended by the enclosure of commons. But the income is no longer comfortably adequate to the wants of an English gentleman's household. If a moderate estate in land be left to a man now, there arises the question whether he is not damaged unless an income also be left to him wherewith to keep up the estate. Land is a luxury, and of all luxuries is the most costly. Now the Carburys never had anything but land. Suffolk has not been made rich and great either by coal or iron. No great town had sprung up on the confines of the Carbury property. No eldest son had gone into trade or risen high in a profession so as to add to the Carbury wealth. No great heiress had been married. There had been no ruin,—no misfortune. But in the days of which we write the Squire of Carbury Hall had become a poor man simply through the wealth of others. His estate was supposed to bring him in £2,000 a year. Had he been content to let the Manor House, to live abroad, and to have an agent at home to deal with the tenants, he would undoubtedly have had enough to live luxuriously. But he lived on his own land among his own people, as all the Carburys before him had done, and was poor because he was surrounded by rich neighbours. The Longestaffes of Caversham,—of which family Dolly Longestaffe was the eldest son and hope,—had the name of great wealth, but the founder of the family had been a Lord Mayor of London and a chandler as lately as in the reign of Queen Anne. The Hepworths, who could boast good blood enough on their own side, had