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THE NOVEL AS CHRONICLE: A STUDY OF THE
BARSETSHIRE AND PALLISER NOVELS OF ANTHONY
TROLLOPE.
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I am grateful for the abundant knowledge of Trollope and the cordial help and criticism of Professor James R. Kincaid.
VITA

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Anthony Trollope's Autobiography, that diffuse record of childhood suffering, Civil Service experiences, dealings with publishers, and novel theory and criticism, contains among its most urgent statements the author's wish that his two large novel series, the Barsetshire and Palliser novels, be recognized as chronicles, rather than isolated works. The Barsetshire novels had already gained some recognition of this sort, to the extent, in fact, that they irritated such readers as the two clergymen whose conversation Trollope overheard at the Athanaeum Club:

"Here," said one, "is that archdeacon whom we have had in every novel he has ever written." "And here," said the other, "is the old duke whom he has talked about till everybody is tired of him. If I could not invent new characters I would not write novels at all."

In spite of this indication that contemporary readers perceived, sometimes with displeasure, the continuity of the Barsetshire series, Trollope hoped for a more permanent and tangible reminder of its integrity. "I have sometimes wished," he says, "to see during my lifetime a combined republication of those tales which are concerned with the fictitious county of Barsetshire," and when the difficulties
involving copyrights which had stood in the way of this project were resolved and the collected edition finally appeared, he expressed his pleasure with the enterprise. Because he has observed that "few novels written in continuation, one of another, had been successful," he has attempted to make the plots of the Barsetshire novels, with the exception of The Warden and Barchester Towers, independent of one another, "in order that no intending reader might be deterred by the necessity of going back to learn what had occurred before." He is no longer satisfied, however, to have the sequential nature of the novels be perceived "only in the Author's mind":

But now, when these are all old stories,-- not, perhaps, as yet quite forgotten by the readers of the day, and to my memory fresh as when they were written,-- I have a not unnatural desire to see them together, so that my records of a little bit of England which I have myself created may be brought into one set, and that some possible future reader may be enabled to study in a complete form the

CHRONICLES OF BARSETSHIRE

Trollope was equally emphatic that the later Parliamentary, or Palliser, novels constituted an integrated whole, but he was less hopeful that readers would regard them as such:

To carry out my scheme I have had to spread my picture over so wide a canvas that I cannot expect that any lover of such art should trouble himself to look at it as a whole. Who will read Can You Forgive Her?, Phineas Finn, Phineas Redux, and The Prime Minister consecutively, in order that he may understand the characters of the Duke of Omnium, of Plantagenet Palliser and Lady Glencora? Who will even know that they should be so read?
His desire that his two series be read and appreciated in their entirety is due in part, no doubt, to the affection with which he came to regard the characters and settings of the twelve novels after living with them imaginatively for so long. Barsetshire to him was a "dear country": "[T]o go back to it and write about it again and again have been one of the delights of my life." In *The Last Chronicle of Barset* Trollope defends his repeated use of the Barsetshire setting on the grounds of "my love of old friendships, and . . . the sweetness of old faces" (84), and in the *Autobiography* he mentions his deep affection for the first of the Palliser novels, *Can You Forgive Her?*, in spite of the fact that it was not a success with the public:

... I do not know that of itself it did very much to increase my reputation . . . . But that which endears the book to me is the first presentation which I made in it of Plantagenet Palliser with his wife, Lady Glencora. By no amount of description or asservation could I succeed in making any reader understand how much these characters with their belongings have been to me in my latter life.6

Thanks in part to the early classification efforts of Michael Sadleir, awareness of the chronicle form of Trollope's fiction has not, as the author had feared, been lost to posterity. Today Trollope is known primarily for his two large series; the thirty-five other novels, the short stories, and non-fiction works like *North America* and the recently published volume of social criticism, *The New Zealander*, are far less familiar. But posterity's interest in the unique formal characteristics of the chronicle has hardly
repaid Trollope's concern. Twentieth-century critics have had little to say about the structural details of the novel as chronicle and less about the special function of the narrator as chronicler. They have not asked why Trollope wrote series rather than individual novels or why he constructed two six-part chronicles rather than one twelve-part one. They have made comparative studies of the Barsetshire and Palliser books, but these have concentrated on thematic questions to the exclusion of formal ones and, as a result, oversimplify and misrepresent the relationship between the two series. For the most part they have dealt with individual novels, without reference to their function as part of a series, or they have treated one or the other series as a whole, as if it were a large, single novel, without consideration of how its parts, the individual novels, interact within.

There are important recent exceptions to the general neglect. J. Hillis Miller has cited the multi-volume chronicle as Trollope's contribution to a general Victorian reaction against the novel's conventional form. By refusing to end, by remaining "open," the chronicle disrupts and prevents any coherent narrative pattern. Although they do not treat the chronicle form in particular, Gordon Ray and Alice Fredman align themselves critically with Miller when they speak of the "expansiveness" of Trollope's novels. So does Ruth Roberts when she describes them as being structured according to a "Situation Aesthetics" rather than an ordinary plot. James R. Kincaid questions the "openness" of
Victorian fiction, particularly Trollope's Barsetshire novels, which, he argues, have an identifiable comic form. Although the chronicle form is one of several devices used to attack the traditional comic pattern, it "suspends," rather than prevents, its completion: the novels are "both opened and closed." In fact, the chronicle form incorporates these other devices. It changes the meaning of a novel's plot and undermines the finality of its endings. It alters the nature of the characters and makes it more difficult to cast them into typical roles. It redefines the role of the narrator, who, in the guise of chronicler, has all the more reason to scrutinize the conventions which he is using to determine whether they distort the accuracy of his account. Its numerous possibilities were fully exploited by Trollope, who discusses them in his Autobiography and throughout the novels. To examine the effect of the chronicle form on the conventional elements which are recognized as hallmarks of Trollope's fiction is the purpose of the present study. I will begin with a discussion of the compatibility of the continuing novel to Trollope's novel theory and will then demonstrate its impact on the structure of his Barsetshire and Palliser novels, the presentation of character, and the distinctive narrative techniques which he employed. In the final chapters I will demonstrate that the two chronicles have a closer thematic relationship than has been generally recognized and that the significant differences between them are differences of form.
As for the comic pattern of the Barsetshire novels, I will argue that it is used figuratively, as a symbol of the inappropriate simplicity of its major characters. By the time of the Palliser series Trollope has replaced it with other patterns supplied by the chronicle form.

There is no definitive meaning of the term "chronicle" as it pertains to novels, and it is often used loosely as a synonym for "narrative." As non-fiction the chronicle is a historical account, and the early novelist, in his efforts to win respectability for the new genre, borrowed terminology from the established non-fictional categories. Such titles as *The History of Tom Jones*, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, and *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* reflect the author's attempts to emphasize the seriousness of the novel by adopting nomenclature associated with history, biography, and travel literature. By the nineteenth century, when the novel had become an established literary form, this conventional appeal for prestige was no longer needed. Nevertheless, it was retained by Thackeray, for example, who mechanically refers to his narratives as "histories," as well as by Trollope, with his "chronicles" and his "chronicler."

In Trollope, however, the term bears a somewhat closer relationship to the corresponding historical genre. The OED specifies that a chronicle is a historical account written "in the order of time," and although chronological narration
is almost universal in the nineteenth-century novel, Trollope's use of it is unusually deliberate. Throughout the Barsetshire and Palliser novels he weighs its occasional clumsiness against its general utility. He experiments with alternative devices but rejects them as artificial, rather than artistic (DC, 9). Chronological narration is more natural, almost naturalistic. It contributes to a raw, ragged quality perceived by Hawthorne when he called Trollope's novels "as real as if some giant had hewn a great lump out of the earth and put it under a glass case, with all its inhabitants going about their daily business, and not suspecting that they were made a show of." Trollope selected his narrative techniques for their compatibility with his treatment of character, and Hawthorne is implying here that the lifelike nature of Trollope's people derives from the transparency of the narrative (effected, interestingly, in spite of a narrator of fantastic proportions). Trollope values Hawthorne's metaphor for its testimony to the success of his characterization:

. . . [T]he criticism, whether just or unjust, describes with wonderful accuracy the purport that I have ever had in view in my writing. I have always desired to "hew out some lump of the earth," and to make men and women walk upon it just as they do walk here among us . . . . 11

In particular, he wanted to show how people age, and this progressive development of character also demanded that events be presented in the order of time. Trollope's reputation as a supremely conventional novelist is surprising, in
view of his refusal to take even this standard equipment of
the novel completely for granted.

The non-fictional chronicle is often a compilation of
government documents like The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles or Han­
sard's Parliamentary Debates, and Trollope's second series,
the Parliamentary novels, is to an extent a fictionalized
version of the latter. Other fictional chronicles, following
in the tradition of the Scandinavian sagas, trace the lives
of a family or people through a number of generations.
Faulkner's Snopes trilogy is one such, and so are Trollope's
novels, which treat the histories of several prominent Bar­
setshire families and, in the later series, of the Dukes of
Omnium.

Although Trollope's fiction combines the elements of
both of these types of histories, however, the author himself
considered the material chronicled as secondary in importance
to the formal qualities of the chronicle. As non-fiction
both the chronicle and the saga are open-ended forms, presum­
ably continuing through volume after volume, and Trollope's
novels retain this multi-volume development. Trollope prized
both the open-endedness and the paradoxical limitations of
character, subject-matter, setting, and narrative method
which are built into the novel sequence. It is in the se­
quential nature of the novels he writes— in the fact that
they are novel series— that the significance of Trollope's
use of the chronicle form lies. The parliamentary or
genealogical record or county chronicle serves as an excuse for the construction of a novel series, rather than the novel series serving as a vehicle for the treatment of historical material.

TROLLOPE AND THE CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

Trollope's autobiography makes it clear that he did not employ the chronicle form for his fiction merely because a sentimental attachment to his scenes and characters made him reluctant to stop writing about them. That the significance of his novels as chronicles was virtually ignored by his critics for so long, in spite of his own enthusiasm for the subject, must be attributed in part to a refusal to take this testimony seriously. Trollope's accounts of his theory and practice of novel-writing frequently have been received with confusion or contempt: Robert Adams and Alice Fredman have charged him with inaccuracy in the assessment of his own work, and James Pope Hennessy and Bradford Booth have found his novel theory conventional and perfunctory.12

Most damning of all, however, was the seemingly Philistine approach to novel-writing revealed in the Autobiography. He struck many of his readers as mercenary because of the minute records of the payment he received for his work, his evident relish of the steadily increasing sums, and his frank confession that "my first object in taking to literature as a profession was that . . . I wished to make an income on which I and those belonging to me may live in comfort." A
further source of irritation was his insistence that novel-
writing is a mere craft, not unlike shoemaking, and that the
approaches to the two occupations should be the same:

There are those . . . who think that a man who
works with his imagination should allow himself to
wait till— inspiration moves him. When I have
heard such a doctrine preached I have hardly been
able to repress my scorn. To me it would not be
more absurd if the shoemaker were to wait for in-
spiration or the tallow chandler for the divine
moment of melting.

Finally, there was the notoriously frantic pace at which
Trollope wrote his novels and crowded them onto the market.
George Saintsbury accused him of "hack-work"; James com-
plained that he "sacrificed quality to quantity" and that
"Trollope's fertility was gross, importunate." Undeterred
by fear of this kind of criticism, he records in the Autobio-
graphy, with evident pride, that "While I was in Egypt, I
finished Doctor Thorne, and on the following day began The
Bertrams. I was moved now by a determination to excel, if
not in quality, at any rate in quantity."14

To any reader not looking for evidence of a vulgar com-
mercialism it is clear that such boasting tells only half the
story of Trollope's attitude toward his work. In contrast to
the complacency of his accounts of haggling with his publish-
ers, or of the number of pages he produced each day, his re-
sponse to the creative experience itself is striking in its
genuineness and intensity. This response, expressed in the
Autobiography and elsewhere, is actually far more central to
an appreciation of his fiction than are the comparisons of
writing to shoemaking. His discussion of the creative process demonstrates Trollope to be a compulsive writer to whom the continuous creation of fictional worlds is profoundly important.

For Johnny Eames, the hobbledehoy of *The Small House at Allington* who is generally considered to be a version of Trollope in his youth, daydreaming is a means of creating a life which is far more satisfactory than his real life, as well as a self which is more estimable than his real self: "He would carry on the same story in his imagination from month to month, almost contenting himself with such ideal happiness. Had it not been for the possession of this power, what comfort could there have been to him in his life?" (52).

During his unhappy childhood and his early years in London, Trollope himself compensated for drudgery, loneliness, and an aching sense of personal insignificance by constructing elaborate daydreams, with himself as the hero. The following passage, in which he describes the weaving of these dreams, has important implications for his fiction:

> I was always going about with some castle in the air built firmly within my mind. Nor were these efforts in architecture spasmodic, or subject to . . . change from day to day. For weeks, for months, if I remember rightly, from year to year, I would bind myself down to certain proportions, and proprieties, and unities. Nothing impossible was ever introduced,— nor even anything which, from outward circumstances, would seem to be violently improbable. I myself was of course my own hero . . . .

The unmistakeable connection between this process of castle-building and that of novel-writing is made by Trollope
himself when he adds, "In after years I have done the same,—
with this difference, that I have discarded the hero of my
early dreams, and have been able to lay my own identity
aside."

He experienced a comfort and happiness while writing his
novels similar to that which he had derived from his youthful
daydreams. "As long as I can write books, even though they
be not published, I think that I can be happy," he wrote to
his son Henry two years before his death. And in a letter to
Alfred Austin in 1871 he said, "I cannot believe the Old
Testament because labour is spoken of as the evil consequence
of the Fall of Man. My only doubt as to finding a heaven for
myself at last arises from the fear that the disembodied and
beatified spirits will not want novels."

Thus, although he was unashamedly gratified by the fi-
nancial rewards of his work (money and status, he argues rea-
sonably in his novels, "are, doubtless, intended to be
dear"), he also attached to novel writing an emotional sig-
nificance which amounted almost to a compulsion. Similarly,
although he celebrates the speed of his writing and the size
of his output, he regards these quantitative factors primari-
ly as means of measuring the richness of his imaginative ex-
perience:

When my work has been quickest done . . . the rap-
idity has been achieved by hot pressure, not in
the conception, but in the telling of the
story. . . . At such times I have been able to
imbue myself thoroughly with the characters I have
had in hand. I have wandered alone among the
rocks and woods, crying at their grief, laughing at their absurdities, and thoroughly enjoying their joy. I have been impregnated with my own creations till it has been my only excitement to sit with the pen in my hand, and drive my team before me at as quick a pace as I could make them travel.

The celerity of composition which he has achieved is the result of diligence in the preliminary work of "observation and reception," which "should be going on not only when [the writer] is at his desk, but in all his walks abroad, in all his movements through the world, in all his intercourse with his fellow creatures . . . . [T]his has not been done without labour, even when the labour has been unconscious."¹⁵

Hearty, forthright, sceptical of mystery or heightened emotion of any sort, Trollope would surely have scoffed at Beatrice Curtis Brown's description of him as an "automatic writer."¹⁶ But in view of his own allusions to unconscious receptive powers, to becoming "imbued" and "impregnated" with his subject and then spilling out his words onto paper as fast as he could do so, Brown's suggestion does have validity, if only as analogy. The words with which he describes a good style— "lucid," "pellucid," "efficient"— connote transparency. They reflect Trollope's belief that a writer's style, instead of being used to shape or transform what he called "the rough work of the author's own brain," should serve as the transparent medium through which this "rough work" is seen without distortion. It is not to be labored over. His insistence that a writer's language "must come from him as music comes from the rapid touch of the great
performer's fingers, . . . as letters fly from the fingers of the trained compositor," are worthy of an automatic writer. Although he deprecates the idea of waiting for inspiration, therefore, he makes it clear that something very close to inspiration was central to his own creative experience.

This view of Trollope as an artist intensely absorbed in his art is not, finally, incompatible with the more traditional notion of the Trollope who counted the words he wrote each day. He judges that "the work which has been done quickest has been done best," because it is the result of the strongest imaginative conception, and he insists that in his whirlwind production of novel after novel he was not guilty of the compromise of quality of which James was to accuse him. "It is not on my conscience," he can say, "that I have scamped my work."¹⁷ If he was unable to sympathize with his more dilatory contemporaries in their failure to meet the deadlines imposed by the serial publication of novels, it is because, as James perceived almost in spite of himself, Trollope's own imaginative powers were accessible to him to an unusual degree.¹⁸

For a writer with this kind of urge toward constant creativity the chronicle provides the ideal form. When Trollope turned his attention from his youthful daydreams to novel-writing, he attained his earliest success, after two or three failures, with the initial work of the first series. He was occupied with one or the other of the sequences, off and on,
for the greater part of his literary career. Sharing with the "castles in the air" of his young manhood the convention of open-endedness, the chronicle also allows for a continuing story, of which the individual novel becomes a self-contained (or, as we will see, not so self-contained) installment. The battle for ecclesiastical power in Barchester is carried on in all of the Barsetshire novels except Doctor Thorne, and even here the Proudies appear briefly. In the later series Trollope indulges his interest in politics by placing his characters in Parliament and observing their performance, for six novels, in an arena which in many respects mirrors the British House of Commons during the latter half of the nineteenth century.19

He is concerned less with the "official" historical matter of the county chronicles of Barsetshire or the legislative history of Parliament than with the personal stories of his characters, and these, too, are continued throughout the two chronicles. Mr. Harding's graceful aging is traced from The Warden through Barchester Towers, The Small House at Allington, and The Last Chronicle of Barset. Mr. Crawley, who in Barchester Towers is the unnamed Cornish curate who counsels Francis Arabin through a period of spiritual crisis, struggles through difficulties of his own in Framley Parsonage and The Last Chronicle. In the Palliser series the careers of Phineas Finn, Lady Laura Kennedy and her husband, Alice Vavasor, Lizzie Eustace, and Quintus Slide are
continued from novel to novel. But the series is prized by Trollope primarily as a portrait of Plantagenet and Glencora Palliser, who were first introduced in the Barsetshire novel, *The Small House at Allington*. The same principle at work within the chronicles cuts across them: the end of one series presents him with irresistible temptations to begin another. By incorporating the stories of his favorite characters into the chronicles of Barsetshire or of the British House of Commons, he was able to extend his treatment of them through as many volumes as his prolific imagination required.

The narrator, too, labors under a self-imposed sentence of perpetual novel-writing. The spacious Victorian three-decker seems to him cramped and stingy. It cuts him off in mid-narrative, demanding that he drop his leisurely examination of character and fill his last pages with "sweetmeats and sugar-plums" (*BT*, 53). The more generous chronicle allows him to continue indefinitely, and he soon learns how to exploit its formal characteristics, pointedly alluding to the earlier works of a series and tantalizing the reader with hints of what will happen to its characters in the next. Once he has gained this confidence in his control over the form, he begins to threaten, as did Trollope in his speculations about heaven, never to stop writing novels at all.

Although it permits the continuing expansion of a story, however, the chronicle form also imposes limitations. In the *Chronicles of Barset* these are geographic. The characters
must be such as would naturally inhabit a rural shire, or visit it, and the action must be confined within the county (or, in the case of The Small House at Allington, the adjacent county), except for trips to London dictated by the requirements of business or the enticements of the social season. The spatial limitation also serves to control the plot of the novels, in that the descriptions of Barsetshire which open The Warden, Doctor Thorne, and The Small House at Allington make explicit reference to the old values which still prevail there in tension with the forces of change. Bar­chester is "more remarkable for the beauty of its cathedral and the antiquity of its monuments than for any commercial prosperity"; the medieval trappings on the gates at Greshamsbury are "still lovely and fit to be loved," but by now they are only "symbols."

We have only to think of characters like Madeline Stanhope or plots like the Bayswater Romance to understand that these restrictions do not really exclude very much. Although the Barsetshire novels begin, as James Kincaid argues, within the pastoral tradition,\textsuperscript{20} they do not remain there. They document a period of transition, and the shape of the series is not cyclical, but linear. From The Warden on, a chronicle of local events will record the presence of more and more outsiders, and the saga of Barsetshire characters will move out of the countryside toward London with increasing frequency. Mr. Harding, worn down at home by the attacks of the
Archdeacon, is refreshed and strengthened in his purpose at a remarkable urban oasis (TW, 16). Lily Dale goes to town and sheds her crippling illusions about Crösbie. Even Mr. Crawley is not so addled that he doesn't know where to look for help. Crawley is saved not by the pastoral values of his Barsetshire neighbors, but by what Robert Polhemus calls the "materialistic credo" of Lawyer Toogood, of London. The chronicle form brings coherence to the series by providing a common starting point for the six novels, rather than by controlling their tone.

Although Trollope speaks of "binding myself to certain proportions, proprieties, and unities," as though he felt it necessary to place his runaway creativity under control, evidence of restraint in his novels is slight. The Palliser series is even broader in scope than the Barsetshire books. There is a limitation: only the people who would have been likely to have contact—either professional or social—with the Pallisers or with their acquaintances are introduced. Because of the incorrigible indiscreteness of the Duchess, though, this group is not as select as it might be. Objections have been made to Glencora's friendship with Ferdinand Lopez in The Prime Minister, and her patronage of Lizzie Eustace is almost as bad. But Glencora cannot be blamed for the presence of the most bizarre characters in the series: they are her husband's political friends or the beneficiaries of his political programs. The real coherence of the chronicle derives from Palliser's Liberalism, with all of
its built-in contradictions. The tension which had existed in Barsetshire between the gentry and the middle classes, between feudalism and mercantilism, is internalized here in the aristocratic statesman whose goal is to make the monetary system of the country more sensible.

Finally, Trollope said of his "castle-building" that "Nothing impossible was ever introduced,— or even anything which, from outward circumstances, would seem to be violently improbable." To indicate that he applied these principles to his novel-writing would be superfluous. Probability has always been granted by his readers, to the extent that contemporaries often mistook his fiction for photography. Realism was central to Trollope's fictional method, and he did not need the chronicle's convention of pseudo-historic accuracy to help him maintain it, as he may have relied on the inherent unities of the form to confine the scope of the novels. Nevertheless, the format of the novel series, in which the physical barrier of the book cover is interposed between one novel and the next, provides opportunities for realistic treatment which an individual novel does not offer. The element of temporal progression which permits him to develop his characters over a period of many years, instead of squeezing them into traditional roles was particularly appealing to Trollope and will be discussed in Chapter 3. The conventional endings which the Trollopian narrator accepts as inevitable but frequently deplores as unrealistic are effectively
undercut when the same stories are picked up again in later novels (see Chapter 2).

For Michael Sadleir Trollope's realism is a product of the "absorbing interest of normal occupations" created in his novels.24 But surely it is Jane Austen's novels which insist on the vital importance of daily routines. There the ordinary pastimes themselves present the problematic situations which the characters encounter: Emma is defined by her drawing, and Marianne Dashwood's penchant for solitary walks is a defect in her character. But Trollope's characters are busier than Austen's.25 Preoccupied with external problems, they have little time for music or walking, and on a rare outing to St. Ewold's in *Barchester Towers* the Archdeacon, all business, spoils the fun (21). Here is where the sheer size of the chronicle, with its opportunities for repetition and contrast, comes into play. Almost swallowed up in the bustle of the individual novels, such moments of normalcy as the arrival of the daily mail or the period of forced inactivity before dinner acquire meaning in the chronicle as a whole, where they quietly accumulate. Trollope's realism rests to a degree on the formal characteristics of the novel series, which react against extraordinary activity and reflect what James calls a "complete appreciation of the usual."26
NOTES


3Autobiography, p. 184. Trollope had not yet written The Duke's Children. He had written The Eustace Diamonds but omits it from this list of Palliser novels.

4The Chronicles of Barset, p. xxxix.

5Since there is as yet no definitive edition of Trollope's works, and since so many editions of the more popular novels are available, the practice here will be to identify quotations from the Barsetshire and Palliser novels by chapter reference in parenthesis, rather than by page reference to a specific edition. The following title abbreviations will be used in these references: TW, The Warden; BT, Barchester Towers; DT, Doctor Thorne; FP, Framley Parsonage; SHA, The Small House at Allington; LCB, The Last Chronicle of Barset; CYFH, Can You Forgive Her?; PF, Phineas Finn; ED, The Eustace Diamonds; PR, Phineas Redux; PM, The Prime Minister; and DC, The Duke's Children.


10This passage, which originated in a letter to Hawthorne's friend James Fields, is quoted by Trollope in the Autobiography, p. 145.

11Autobiography, p. 145.
NOTES


18 James, p. 49.


20 Kincaid, pp. 92-97.


NOTES


25 See pp. 169-170, below.

26 James, p. 50.
"I have never troubled myself much about the construc­
tion of plots," Trollope airily confessed; "I am not sure
that the construction of a perfected plot has been at any
time within my power."¹ This deficiency of his art quickly
became proverbial. Although a few of his critics have made
claims of careful plotting on behalf of individual novels
(Maude Houston for The Warden, for example, or D. S. Chamber­
lain for Can You Forgive Her?²), more of them have agreed
with Trollope's own assessment. There is dissatisfaction
with the resolution of some of his plots, and Hugh Walpole
complains that the love conflict in Framley Parsonage is un­
convincing, since Lady Lufton would not have resisted her.
son's marriage to Lucy Robarts.³ The most frequent objection
is to "extraneous" or inappropriate subplots like the Ulla­
thorne chapters of Barchester Towers, the Bayswater Romance
in The Last Chronicle of Barset, and the Widow Greenow court­
ship in Can You Forgive Her?⁴ Gradually, however, the criti­
cal emphasis has shifted from Trollope's difficulty with his
plots to his indifference to them. Ruth apRoberts and Brad­
ford Booth, among others, have perceived that the skillfully
prearranged chain of events which constitutes "plot" in the sense that Trollope used the word was not amenable to the kind of fiction which he wished to write. 5

One of those who differentiated between the elements of "plot" and "character" in a novel, Trollope took consistently greater pains with the latter. His usual practice, he says, was to begin his novels "with nothing settled in my brain as to the final development of events, with no capability of settling anything, but with a most distinct conception of some character or characters." The Eustace Diamonds, for instance, evolved from the image of "a cunning little woman of pseudo-fashion," whereas the plot, involving the theft of Lizzie's diamond necklace, was produced without premeditation: "I had no idea," says Trollope, "of setting thieves after the bauble till I had got my heroine to bed in the inn at Carlisle; nor of the disappointment of the thieves, till Lizzie had been wakened in the morning with the news that her door had been broken open." 6

Although Trollope was pleased with the plot of The Eustace Diamonds, the result of such spontaneous tale-spinning was not always gratifying: he condemns in particular the plots of The Bertrams and The Last Chronicle of Barset. Nor was he heedless of the attractiveness to readers of a well-constructed plot. The Eustace Diamonds, he noted, was his most successful work since The Small House at Allington nine years earlier. The equally well-plotted Doctor Thorne, whose
main series of events Trollope borrowed from his brother Tom, had had the largest sale of all his novels at the time that the Autobiography was written. Nevertheless, he continues to insist that the plot is "the most insignificant part of a tale" and that "the highest merit which a novel can have consists in perfect delineation of character, rather than in plot, or humor, or pathos." On the basis of this conviction he names The Last Chronicle of Barset, with its portrait of Mr. Crawley, as his finest novel, in spite of the fact that he could "not quite make myself believe" the story of the loss of the check, and he ranks The Small House at Allington and Can You Forgive Her? as among his best work, even though "I . . . have created better plots" than those of these two novels.  

THE REJECTION OF PLOT

Trollope distrusted the very concept of plot, which he saw as a contrived pattern of action superimposed on human lives. It is the plot, with its inherent conflict, which dictates the depiction of characters in such conventional roles as "female angel" and "female devil," as he calls them in Barchester Towers (26). It is the plot, as well, which, having engaged the sympathies of the reader on behalf of the hero and heroine, makes a resolution of the conflict in their favor necessary to his satisfaction. Throughout his novels Trollope carefully enumerates the limitations of these conventions of the hero, the villain, and the happy ending and
emphasizes the tendency of his fiction to dispense with such unrealistic plot elements. The reader may regard either Frank Gresham or the doctor as the hero, says the narrator in the opening chapter of Doctor Thorne, thus deflating the importance of the hero in that novel. He describes the conclusion of several stories, in practically identical words, as a modest process of "collecting together the ends of the thread of our narrative, and tying them into a simple knot, so that there may be no unravelling" (PR, ch. 80). That is to say, he is providing as little as he can get away with in the way of an ending, and even this little would have been omitted, were it not for "the custom of the thing" (TW, 21).

In these minimal endings he avoids, to the greatest extent possible, both a final resolution of the plot and the customary predictions of future bliss which strengthen the impression of completeness. The end of Phineas Redux, for example, affords no real solution to the vocational crisis through which the hero has struggled for two consecutive novels. For the second time a disillusioned Phineas Finn declines political office, and the useful period of government service which the narrator declares to be necessary to his happiness (80) is deferred until the middle of the following novel. Similarly, The Prime Minister ends with the failure of Plantagenet Palliser's coalition government and the retirement from public life of that dedicated statesman. When a happy ending cannot be avoided, the narrator at least
underscores its conventional, contrived nature. The last chapter of *Framley Parsonage* is entitled "How They Were All Married, Had Two Children, and Lived Happy Ever After" and begins: "Dear, affectionate, sympathetic readers, we have four couple of sighing lovers with whom to deal in this our last chapter . . . . [W]e will take them chronologically, giving precedence to those who first approached the hymeneal altar."

Other nineteenth-century writers were dissatisfied with the traditional formula of a hero engaged against a villain in a conflict that is certain to be happily resolved. Thackeray's "Novel without a Hero" is a famous case in point, and Thackeray also objects to the inevitable treatment of marriage as a "happy ending":

As his hero and heroine pass the matrimonial barrier, the novelist generally drops the curtain, as if the drama were over then: the doubts and struggles of life ended: as if, once landed in the marriage country, all were green and pleasant there: and wife and husband had nothing but to link each other's arms together, and wander gently down towards old age in happy and perfect fruition.

The narrator of *Middlemarch*, in the final chapter, also reminds the reader that "Marriage, which has been the bourne of so many narratives, is still a great beginning, as it was to Adam and Eve, who kept their honeymoon in Eden, but had their first little one among the thorns and thistles of the wilderness." Trollope's own objection to traditional plot materials, however, goes further than the recognition that they are unrealistic. R. S. Crane has attributed the critical
tendency to deprecate plot with what he considers a facile equating of plot with action. Facile or not, this is precisely the equation which Trollope made, and his uneasiness about plots reflects a basic aversion to action of any kind as the organizing principle of a novel. Throughout his novels he evinces a strong preference of reticence, serenity, and repose to activity and excitement, which he suspects of being vulgar and false. This bias, which is partly aesthetic, partly ethical, and partly emotional, extends itself to almost all phases of life: politics, the pursuit of one's career, manners and deportment, and even personal appearance.

Time after time in the Palliser novels is the idea articulated, sometimes by the petty, self-seeking politicians like Ratler and Roby, but often by characters whose integrity we have come to admire, that there is never really "anything to be done" in Parliament (PF, 13; PM, 11 & 72). The function of a ministry, we learn, is administrative: to "carry on the Queen's Government" (PM, 72 & 80), rather than to formulate bold new policies or enact important legislation. The bills which are passed are successful, not because members have been persuaded of their merits in the course of parliamentary debates-- a procedure which Trollope repeatedly satirizes for its insincerity and futility-- but because public opinion has slowly adjusted itself to the point that the country demands the proposed measure (PF, 2; PR, 5). Plantagenet Palliser, as Prime Minister, is oppressed both by the
"absence of real work, and the quantity of mock work" connected with his office. He is troubled by political colleagues with spurious "policies" like that of Sir Orlando Drought, whose real motive Palliser accurately pinpoints:

"It is not that he wants any special thing to be done, but he thinks I should get up some special thing in order that Parliament may be satisfied" (PM, 27).

In *Can You Forgive Her?* Alice Vavasor, influenced, we are told, by the feminist movement of the day, makes the same error of longing for something particular to be done. The narrator's prescription of marriage and two children reflects not so much a conviction that a woman is unfit for anything else as an opinion that the question of "what to do" is relatively immaterial:

A woman's life is important to her,— as is that of a man to him,— not chiefly in regard to that which she shall do with it. The chief thing for her to look to is the manner in which that something shall be done . . . . [If] she shall have recognized the necessity of truth and honesty for the purposes of her life, I do not know that she need ask herself many questions as to what she will do with it [11].

Alice's anxious preoccupation with the question, "What should a woman do with her life?" has a paralyzing effect. It prevents her from following the course of action most conducive to her happiness. The Duchess of Omnium, on the other hand, suffers from no such scrupulous hesitation about the thing to be done when her husband becomes Prime Minister. Already an innovative leader of fashionable society, she impetuously
takes up politics herself and devises a scheme to strengthen his ministry by means of costly and indiscriminate hospitality. It is the lavish scale of her entertainments which spoils them, causing Palliser to accuse her of "vulgarity" and the ungrateful public to ridicule her, saying, as Captain Gunner reports, "that you were like Martha, busying yourself about many things." The Duchess knows that there is truth in these assertions: "She was herself quite alive to the fact that she . . . was wanting in dignity, and that with all the means at her disposal, with all her courage and all her talent, she did not quite play the part of the really great lady" (PM, 19 & 37).

She is aware that, by contrast, her husband's uncle the late Duke, who never "did" anything, was revered by the public for his inutility. His friend Madame Max Goesler (herself a worker who makes annual business trips to Vienna) concludes that "no man should dare to live idly as the Duke had lived" (PR, 25), but she cannot help admiring the "graceful, faineant nobility which had always distinguished him." The attraction, as she explains it to Phineas Finn, is an aesthetic one:

You believe only in motion, Mr. Finn;-- and not at all in quiescence. An express train at full speed is grander to you than a mountain with heaps of snow. I own that to me there is something glorious in the dignity of a man too high to do anything,-- if only he knows how to carry that dignity with a proper grace. I think that there should be breasts made to carry stars [PF, 64].
Other people besides Glencora Palliser are criticized for ostentatious or improperly motivated entertaining, but at the same time there are men and women in the novels who give parties out of simple good nature and a desire to see their neighbors happy. Some of these latter affairs are far from successful from a fashionable point of view. Mr. Harding's guests fail to appreciate the music which is the highlight of his tea party, and Monica Thorne's deride her Elizabethan games. In social, as well as political, undertakings, however, it is the intention and attitude of the host, rather than the outcome, which the narrator judges; indeed, he goes so far as to establish a correlation between good intentions and poor results and vice versa. One of the most explicit statements of this principle is his comparison of Lord de Guest's and Lady de Courcy's respective gatherings in *The Small House at Allington*:

The dinner-party at Guestwick Manor . . . was not very bright, and yet the earl had done all in his power to make his guests happy. But gaiety did not come naturally to his house, which . . . was an abode very unlike in its nature to that of the other earl at Courcy Castle. Lady de Courcy at any rate understood how to receive and entertain a houseful of people, though the practice of doing so might give rise to difficult questions in the privacy of her domestic relations. Lady Julia did not understand it; but then Lady Julia was never called upon to answer for the expense of extra servants. . . . As regards Lord de Guest and the Lady Julia themselves, I think they had the best of it; but I am bound to admit, with reference to chance guests, that the house was dull [53].

The praise of the countess's entertaining skill functions as a condemnation of her attempts to achieve a social éclat.
which is beyond her financial means, whereas the ostensible criticism of the De Guests' hospitality is actually a tribute to their genuineness and simplicity.

On the most rudimentary level is physical action, and Trollope was a keen observer of gestures, postures, and stances. Most of these he regarded as overdone and ludicrous and often revealing as to the characters who use them: Mrs. Proudie, for example, striking the table "with almost more than feminine vigour" (BT, 26) or Dr. Fillgrave "seem[ing] to grow out of his boots, so suddenly did he take upon himself sundry modes of expansive altitude" when his dignity is affronted (DT, 12). Even gestures expressing elemental emotions like grief seem to the narrator to require an apology, as in the account of Lady Scatcherd's behavior after the death of her son, Sir Louis:

The table was covered with all those implements which become so frequent about a house when severe illness is an inhabitant there. . . . But in the middle of the debris stood one black bottle, with head erect, unsuited to the companionship in which it was found.

"There," said she, rising up and seizing this in a manner that would have been ridiculous had it not been so truly tragic. "There, that has robbed me of everything--of all that I ever possessed; of husband and child . . . ." And she let the bottle drop from her hand as though it were too heavy for her [DT, 44].

Dramatic posturing is relegated to the use of the mad and the bereaved; perpetual movement in others is distasteful to the narrator, who values composure and dignity in personal appearance and manners. Falseness is projected by the
extravagant motion which mars Lizzie Eustace's otherwise perfect beauty:

If it had a fault it was this— that it had in it too much of movement. There were some who said that she was almost snake-like in her rapid bendings and the almost too easy gestures of her body; for she was much given to action, and to the expression of her thought by the motion of her limbs. She might certainly have made her way as an actress, had fortune called upon her to earn her bread in that fashion [ED, 2].

The reference to acting in this passage implies that Lizzie's bodily movements are extreme enough to be appropriate to a stage performance, and therefore inappropriate to a drawing room. It is the earliest of many instances in which her dishonesty and artificiality are asserted by means of praise of her acting talent. Equally distasteful, it is true, is the statue-like composure of Lady Dumbello, formerly Griselda Grantly, who causes such a sensation at Courcy Castle, although she says nothing and is motionless and expressionless, "smiling here and smiling there; but still with very faint smiles" (SHA, 17). The heroines of Trollope's love plots are spirited girls, as far removed from the frigidity of Lady Dumbello as they are from the litheness of Lizzie Eustace. Lucy Robarts, for example, is contrasted favorably with Griselda in the companion chapters "Non-Impulsive" and "Impulsive" in Framley Parsonage. A physical alertness which reflects health, cheerfulness, and an intelligent interest in the world constitutes, for Trollope, the ideal of feminine beauty. The posturing of Lizzie Eustace, on the other
hand, is a false vitality, a manifestation of the "fast vulgarity" (PM, 54) which she embraces in compensation for the emptiness of her life, and it is as unnatural and unwholesome as the deathlike stillness of Lady Dumbello.

This aversion to excessive action is the emotional stimulus for Trollope's rejection of plot in a novel. In life and in novels action is showy and pretentious, compelling by its very loudness that attention which should be directed toward the more relevant scrutiny of character. Crucial events and periods of excitement and conflict, after all, are rare in the lives of such people as Lady Lufton, Plantagenet Palliser, Mary Thorne, and even Archdeacon Grantly, who certainly never shies away from conflict and is even ready to create it. And yet, it is difficult for a novelist to relegate the action which does occur to the subordinate place in the novel which it deserves. The comparatively static elements of character must, to Trollope's infinite disgust, give way in the final chapters to a resolution of the plot. The summary of antecedent action in the opening pages not only threatens to bore the reader but also gives to the action of the novel an immediate prominence which it does not warrant, as the narrator complains in *The Eustace Diamonds*:

Although the first two chapters of this new history have been devoted to the fortunes and personal attributes of Lady Eustace, the historian begs his readers not to believe that that opulent and aristocratic Becky Sharp is to assume the dignity of heroine in the forthcoming pages . . . . She did so many things, made so many efforts, caused so much suffering to others, and suffered so much herself throughout the scenes with which we are about
to deal, that the story can hardly be told without
giving her that prominence of place which has been
assigned to her in the last two chapters [3].

Throughout the novels Trollope retains his sense that
the conflicts, misunderstandings, and suspense generated in
the course of the story are aberrations from the customary
placid tenor of life: aberrations caused by what he calls
"the cross-grainedness of men" (LCB, 58). He regards much of
the action in his novels as inordinate and narrates it mock-
heroically (as when he describes Plantagenet Palliser as a
"financial Hercules") or hyperbolically (witness the ubiqui-
tous use of the word "internecine" in both series to charac-
terize plot conflicts). Dramatic activity can become a meas-
urement of moral shortcoming, and the narrator often seems to
share Lady Lufton's preference for "cheerful, quiet, well-to-
do people, who loved their Church, their country, and their
Queen, and who were not too anxious to make a noise in the
world" (FP, 2). John Wildman perceives the negative, even
destructive quality inherent in the typical Trollope plot
when he defines it as "the introduction of disharmony into
harmony, and the eventual restoration of order." 13

This is not to say that striking plot developments are
absent from his novels. For a writer whose work was long
considered serene and idyllic, Trollope supplies a surprising
amount of melodramatic and even violent action. Sir Roger
Scatcherd and his son Louis drink themselves to death in the
course of Doctor Thorne. Mario Praz cites Trollope's
fondness for a good fight scene, with a scoundrel like Moffat or Crosbie or Vavasor "getting what he deserves." Lady Laura Kennedy (PF) and Lady Alexandrina Crosbie (SHA) separate themselves from their husbands, and Lucinda Roanoke (ED) jilts her fiancé the morning of the wedding, after a stormy courtship pervaded with intimations of sexual revulsion. A duel is fought in Phineas Finn, and a race is fixed in The Duke's Children. Murder attempts are made against John Grey and Phineas Finn, and Mr. Emilius, a bigamist, does murder Mr. Bonteen. Garrotters attack Robert Kennedy (PF) and Everett Wharton (PM) in the streets, and Ferdinand Lopez (PM) commits suicide.

And yet, there is often a tentative, unreal quality about the action in a Trollope novel. The robbery at Lizzie's room at Carlisle is a major "event" in The Eustace Diamonds, but it is a hollow and meaningless one. Not only do the thieves fail to obtain the diamonds, but, as the learned barrister, Mr. Dove, points out, the diamonds are things of no real value (72). The whole detective plot occupies only a few chapters, and Henry Milley argues plausibly that it is a parody of The Moonstone, whose author Trollope criticized for constructing artificially intricate plots. Similarly, the appointment of Mr. Proudie as Bishop of Barchester initially appears to the Tory clergymen to be a portentous event. They fear that the decorum and comfort of their way of life will be destroyed by "a new man . . . carrying out new measures
and carting away the useless rubbish of past centuries" (BT, 12). But although some reforms, such as the curtailment of the Archdeacon's hitherto excessive authority and the decline of card-playing as a clerical pursuit, do result, the Proudies' overall effect on the balance of power in the diocese is strangely neutral. The Sunday trains which are doctrinally offensive to Mrs. Proudie continue to run. Eleanor Bold does not marry Mr. Slope, who, failing also to become Dean of Barchester, is forced to relinquish his foothold in the town. And when his wife abruptly dies some years later, the Bishop alone is left, the most ineffectual of the Proudie forces.

This neutrality, amounting almost to a negation of the action, is a common feature in Trollope's novels and is particularly apparent in comparison to other novels of the period in which action remains central to the meaning. In Tess of the d'Urbervilles a letter that misses its destination tragically reverses the outcome of the story (ch. 33); in Can You Forgive Her? Glencora's attempts to show Burgo Fitzgerald's letter to Alice Vavasor are twice thwarted by circumstances (43 & 48), and these failures to obtain her cousin's moral influence appear to pave the way for her elopement with Burgo. The danger proves to be illusory, however, when at the critical moment she resists Burgo's proposition on the strength of her own will. The impulse which makes her resolve to seek Alice's guidance also renders that guidance unnecessary, so the accidents which prevent her from obtaining
it cannot be fatal. In *Vanity Fair* Becky Sharp shows Amelia George's love letter to herself, and this simple gesture breaks down the obstacles to Amelia's remarriage which Dobbin's years of devotion had been unable to remove. A similar scene occurs in *Barchester Towers*, where Madeline Stanhope, "with singular disinterestedness," informs Eleanor Bold of Arabin's love for her (45). The scene, like the one in *Vanity Fair*, purports to be an unravelling of misunderstandings, and Eleanor and Arabin, like Dobbin and Amelia, are married shortly thereafter. The interview, however, has had no real effect on this outcome— and for the same reason that (as the narrator assures us in Chapter 15) Slope's and Bertie's wooing of Eleanor can have no effect on it. The marriage grows out of the nature of the characters themselves and is determined at the moment, in Chapter 20, when Arabin first admits to himself his desire for a wife and for the attendant comforts of life. All the other action in the courtship plot becomes irrelevant and ludicrous: a satire on competition in love, as the main plot is a satire on competition in religion.

In spite of his ethical and aesthetic reservations about action in novels, Trollope reluctantly admitted that "There must be a story." It serves as a "vehicle" for the treatment of character, and it contributes to the retention of the reader's interest, which he acknowledged to be one of the novelist's most challenging responsibilities. But he is determined that action play a minimal part in his works. This
determination can be measured by his efforts to define a new structural principle which is compatible with his fictional method.

PLOTS VS. "PLOTINGS"

The impatience with which Trollope regarded plots did not extend to formal concerns in general. That he was acutely interested in the structure of his novels is evident in a periodical essay of 1870, in which he sets forth the "rules of construction" which he applies in his own novel writing. He reduces his fiction to its basic structural unit, which is smaller than the plot, and more important. "Plotlings," as he calls them, are the "minute ramifications of tale-telling," the "filling in with living touches and true colours those daubs and blotches on [the writer's] canvas which have been easily scribbled with a rough hand." It is toward the creation of these plotlings, rather than toward "any great effort of construction" that he has directed his conscious efforts as a novelist. "[I]t is not often the entire plot of a novel-- the plot of a novel as a whole-- that exercises the mind," he explains. Trollope illustrates his definition with examples of appropriate subject matter: how this young lady should be made to behave herself with that young gentleman; how this mother or that father would be affected by the ill-conduct or the good of a son or daughter; how these words or those other would be most appropriate and true to nature if used on some special occasion."17
The novel theory of "A Walk in a Wood," with its metaphorical language and its definition by example, is far from precise. Trollope's emphasis on the minute, the detailed, the specific, however, indicates that he is referring to individual scenes, as opposed to larger patterns of action. To the extent that they do exist, these larger patterns are "rough" and "easily scribbled": the more intensely realized scene becomes the significant structural unit, and the sketchily outlined plot is presumably flexible enough to change if developments within the smaller narratives require it. The result is an inductive approach to structure in which the scene, isolated to a degree from the rest of the novel, acquires an autonomy which formerly belonged to the plot. The plotling could be defined as a scene which controls the shape of the plot, rather than conforming to a preconceived plan of action.

In its most radical form the plotling is an extraneous scene interjected into a novel. Mr. Harding's games of cat's cradle with Posy and chats with the housekeeper in The Last Chronicle of Barset are examples. The reader, especially the reader of the earlier Barsetshire novels, senses that the story of the stolen check has been subordinated for a moment to something outside of it. Another category is the brief subplot which is only tenuously related to the main plot. The flirtation of Plantagenet Palliser and Lady Dumbello in The Small House at Allington is the most noteworthy instance
since it is the source of the entire Palliser chronicle. Plotlings, finally, can be found within the main plot of a novel and involve its central characters. Their purpose is the evocation of character, rather than the advancement of the action. In conversations with Fanny throughout Framley Parsonage Lucy Robarts reveals the rare combination of passionate feeling and comic detachment which makes her the general favorite among Barsetshire heroines. On the one hand, she betrays a painful and seemingly fruitless love for Lord Lufton, and on the other— the standard comparison is to Rosalind— she laughs at the vehemence of her attachment to "this young popinjay lord": "What is it that I feel, Fanny? . . . Why can I not keep my mind on a book for one moment? Why can I not write two sentences together? Why should every mouthful that I eat stick in my throat? Oh, Fanny, is it his legs, think you, or is it his title?" (26). In the Palliser novels this type of plotling often takes the form of a lengthy analysis of a plot development by a character, the narrator, or both. The action becomes important chiefly for what it reveals about the character.

Other salient characteristics of the plotling can be inferred from Trollope's essay. As the emphasis on "conduct" and "behavior" indicates, it is an examination of a character's moral nature. The dinner given by the Duke of Omnium for the landowning and professional men of Barsetshire (DT, 19) illuminates the character of Frank Gresham, who is one of
Gresham, who has never met the Duke, looks forward to the occasion as the beginning of a social relationship between himself and his important neighbor, but to his surprise the Duke neither greets his guests on their arrival nor speaks to them during the evening. Frank becomes increasingly resentful of his host's discourtesy and especially of his fellow guests' evident satisfaction with their reception. His refusal to feel grateful for favors which are ungracefully dispensed bespeaks the heartiness which is one of his most admirable qualities. At the same time, however, it reflects an inexperience with the ways of the world which prevents him from recognizing the comfort and utility of occasional entertainments such as this one. His indignation moves his older companion, Mr. Athill, to remonstrance: "My dear Mr. Gresham, see the world on all sides... if you have an opportunity; and, believe me, a good dinner now and then is a very good thing." Frank's reaction to the Duke's dinner is oversimplified, because it fails to take into account the "good things" of life. This mistake is common among the younger characters in Trollope's novels and never fails to provoke the derision of the worldly-wise narrator, who in this instance describes Frank as leaving the festivities early, "having... given vent to his feelings in somewhat high-flown language."

The scene is pertinent to the larger story of Frank's courtship of Mary Thorne. In this situation, too, he behaves
with attractive forthrightness, easily choosing Mary over the Greshamsbury estate, which will certainly be lost unless he marries a rich woman. But again his attitude is simplistic: he overlooks the fact that the position of a country squire, like a good dinner, is "a very good thing." The oversight leads him into self-conscious posturing, to declarations that he hates the estate (29) and that all theories as to good blood and high birth are "humbug" (39). His friend, the sensible Harry Baker, diagnoses Frank's trouble precisely: "[T]here are two sides to every question; and, as I take it, fellows are so apt to go wrong because they are so fond of one side, they won't look at the other" (44). The repeated glimpses into Frank's state of mind amount to a kind of moral pulse-taking. Each scene examines what effect time, intervening events, and parental and social pressures have had on one aspect of his character: his naive scorn for rank and wealth.

To the extent that Trollope blurred the traditional categories of hero, heroine, villain, blocking characters, and so forth, he freed his characters from conventional ethical positions determined by their role in the plot. He is then able to create personages in whom attractive and unattractive qualities are perplexingly blended. But if the combination is exasperating in life, it can be devastating in art, where, Trollope knows, we are accustomed to the treatment of good and evil as absolutes. (For a discussion of the reader's
expectations about character see, in particular, *The Eustace Diamonds*, 35.) Early encounters with his characters are likely to produce a sense of disorientation. Glencora Palliser is delightful and engaging, obviously dear to the narrator and to her bemused husband, and remarkably acute in her detection and punishment of pretentiousness. Periodically, however, she lapses into "vulgarity." Vulgarity in nineteenth-century fiction (particularly Austen, whose fiction Trollope admired and to whom he has been compared) is not only distasteful but dangerous, and the reader must make adjustments in his assumptions in order to credit Trollope with having intentionally endowed one of his favorite characters with such a trait. More than one critic has failed to perceive that he did so: hence the objections to Glencora's more outrageous behavior as "out of character." The apparent inconsistency actually reflects Trollope's efforts to create realistic characters by emphasizing their moral complexity.

This emphasis, in turn, suggests that Trollope's approach to his plotlings is tentative and experimental. His own examples stress the problematic nature of such scenes. Each one begins with a question: "how this lady should be made to behave herself with that young gentleman," or "how these words or those other would be most true to nature ... on some special occasion." The imaginative work of the novel consists in "the minute ramifications of tale-telling," that is, in answering these small, specific questions. The
creation of each scene requires the suspension of preconceptions about the character which might have been fostered by the plot, although it can incorporate any information about him which has been established in the course of earlier scenes. When the old Duke of Omnium dies in *Phineas Redux* and leaves his collection of jewels to Madame Max Goesler, the bequest surprises Glencora, who expected to receive them herself. Her reaction is compounded of qualities familiar to the reader: generosity and good will toward her friend, on the one hand, and, on the other, an appreciation of what is due to her in her aristocratic position which she first revealed during the Duke's courtship of Madame Goesler in *Phineas Finn* (60). Strengthening the latter tendency in this case is a delight in pretty things evident from her earliest appearance in *Can You Forgive Her?* (22). The loss of the jewels raises the question of what will happen when these character traits come into conflict, when the generous friendship clashes with the longing for the pearls. The result is "a roughness about the Duchess of which she was herself conscious, but which she could not restrain, though she knew that it betrayed her chagrin" (26). Although we have seen her awkward and unsure in earlier attempts to protect her interests, this is the first time that we have seen Glencora "rough." It is the experimental attitude with which the narrator begins such scenes as these, his willingness to set aside the rest of the novel and discover what the
fragment of narrative before him will yield that lends to the plotlings their distinctive, isolated quality.

Although, as Sheila Smith asserts, the action in Trollope's fiction "springs from the character's moral nature," the character's moral nature, in turn, requires a context of action, for its delineation. Frank Gresham must have fallen in love with Mary Thorne, and the Greshamsbury property must have become embarrassed, before he can be placed in the position of having to choose between love and money. Besides posing problems, the plot incidents can afford a character the leisure he needs in order to ponder them. The typical plotling involving Doctor Thorne is the long horseback ride home after visiting his patients (in the case of calls to nearby Greshamsbury, the ride is replaced by a walk). He habitually fills these periods of solitude with a consideration of the difficult ethical questions which confront him. The rides and walks (11, 23, 29, 40, 45, & 46) contribute a rhythm to the novel, becoming more frequent, hurried, and fatiguing as the action nears a climax and Thorne's moral responsibilities become more demanding.

Trollope repeatedly stresses the meaninglessness of ethical theory in isolation from social practice. The moral imperative of fidelity in love, for instance, is acknowledged in principle by Adolphus Crosbie, Lily Dale, John Eames, Henry Grantly, Alice Vavasor, Lord Fawn, and Frank Tregear, but it means different things to each of them. Plantagenet
Palliser's political creed, which maintains that disparities between the rich and the poor should be eliminated, is an empty oversimplification until we see to what extent it operates, and to what extent he disregards it, in his own life. The question is not one of simple hypocrisy; rather, it reflects Trollope's awareness that ethical codes are only one factor in the determination of what a given character, possessing certain traits of personality, temperament, and intellect, and confronted with a specific situation, will ultimately do. The most important function of action in Trollope's novels is to provide the circumstances which will test a character's moral position.

In many cases the larger conflict seems to have been invented for the sake of the smaller situation. Thus the scene in *The Eustace Diamonds* which deals with Lizzie's discovery of the robbery and the whole complex of reactions which prevents her from admitting that the diamonds are still in her possession has all the vitality which the detective plot lacks. And although the reign of the Proudies fails to produce either the radicalization of Barsetshire or the triumph of the Tory clergymen over the intruders, it does contribute to the flowering of Archdeacon Grantly, who, having been described in *The Warden* as a "fitting impersonation of the church militant here on earth: . . . ready to fight if need be for her defense" (5), is here confronted with an opponent worthy of his zeal. At the end of *The Warden* the narrator is
not yet satisfied with his portrayal of Grantly. "We fear," he says, "that he has been represented in these pages as being worse than he is, but we have had to do with his foibles and not with his virtues . . . . [T]t is matter of regret to us that the course of our narrative has required that we should see more of his weakness than his strength" (20).

There is irony in this statement, because the Archdeacon continues throughout the Barsetshire series to be seen primarily in terms of his "foibles," which are of a loud, obtrusive nature. It does raise the suggestion, however, that the plot of *Barchester Towers* was devised to offer a fuller, if not radically different, view of him: particularly in the opening scene of the novel, Grantly's vigil by his father's bedside, where he experiences a rare moment of gentleness and humility. The power struggle yields other plotlines, as well: the "Morning Visit" (5) to the Proudies at the Palace, where he had once exercised so much power, and his various interviews and consultations with Mrs. Grantly, Mr. Harding, Mr. Arabin, Eleanor, and his ecclesiastical allies of the Chapter, by which his character is evoked. The competitive spirit, the tendency to bully, the "overbearing assurance of the virtues and claims of his order" (*TW,* 2) are qualified by his remorse for them in the opening scene, but these elements are as predominant as ever once the scene is over. Eleanor's marriage at the end of the novel, however, gives Grantly a new opportunity to display the heartiness and open-handedness
which are also basic to his nature, but which are obscured by the hostilities in which he finds himself embroiled throughout *The Warden* and *Barchester Towers*.

Not all characters, however, are best revealed in connection with the larger plot conflicts, and the ones who are by no means the characters we admire most. The situations of other characters are explored in separate scenes, many of them only peripherally related to the plot. Trollope uses a variety of techniques to emphasize the dichotomy between these plotlings and the plot. Often the scenes depict the character in a period of quiet introspection which contrasts favorably with the dramatic conflict of the plot. In such cases there is established not merely a double focus, but conflicting centers of interest: on the one hand the larger struggles generated by the plot, and on the other the inner struggles of individuals who play only a minor role in the plot, or whose function in it, though major, is accidental and unrepresentative of their essential character.

Mr. Harding, for example, is central to the plot of *The Warden* only because of his position at Hiram's Hospital, which is the subject of dispute between Archdeacon Grantly and Sir Abraham Haphazard and their antagonists John Bold and Tom Towers. Harding's own stance is one of strict neutrality: "I can give you no assistance, neither will I offer you any obstacle," he tells Bold (3), and he is accused of cowardice by his son-in-law the Archdeacon for refusing to take
a more active role in the defense of his order (9). In the meantime, however, Mr. Harding must combat his own weakness and dread of discomfort, his fear of the Archdeacon, and his inability to resist Grantly's authority, even when it is his duty to do so. Most significantly, he must debate within his own conscience his right to the life of comfortable indolence in which he is supported by money intended for charity. It is in these scenes of pondering and doubt, and other scenes in which he confides his worries to the kind old bishop and to his daughter, that Harding's character is established, rather than in the confrontations of adversaries and the formulation of legal strategy.

A further means by which Trollope stressed the importance of the plotlings, at the expense of the plot, was to devise brief, sketchily developed subplots in which to present interesting characters or situations whose connection with the plots is incidental. Some of them, like the Ullathorne sections of Barchester Towers, however, are thematically related to the main plot and provide valuable commentary on it. The Thornes of Ullathorne represent the old, traditional England whose continued existence is a subject of concern among Barchester clergymen threatened with Mr. Slope's "rubbish cart" (13). Similarly, the metaphor used to explain the Duke of Omnium's attraction to Madame Goesler— that she is his "top brick of the chimney," whose very inaccessibility heightens his desire for her (PF, 57)— is picked up from
the main plot, where it is used by Lady Laura Kennedy to explain Phineas Finn's love for Violet Effingham (56).

Toward the end of *Framley Parsonage*, when Nathaniel Sowerby has lost his power of further injuring other people and has brought down upon himself that punishment which the narrator has predicted—when, in other words, he has completed his plot assignment as villain of the novel—the narrator begins to develop him more fully as a realistic character. Sympathy for him is elicited in a number of plotlings, especially those demonstrating his belated recognition of the value of a graceful old estate like Chaldicotes:

> [T]o have squandered the acres which have descended from generation to generation; to be the member of one's family that has ruined that family...! It seems to me that the misfortunes of this world can hardly go beyond that! Mr. Sowerby, in spite of that dare-devil gaiety which he knew so well how to wear and use, felt all this as keenly as any man could feel it [27].

This fascination with self-imposed disaster continues in the next Barsetshire novel, *The Small House at Allington*, where another villain repents too late. But Crosbie, too, learns to prize what he has lost, and this susceptibility to remorse is a first redeeming sign of gentlemanly instincts. After his marriage to Lady Alexandrina de Courcy he evolves from a type character, the villain of the *Lily Dale* story, into a complex character in his own right. He doubts himself, errs, grows stout and bald, experiences loneliness. When James Pope Hennessy calls this evolution an instance of "Trollope's characters taking over the plot,"20 what he is acknowledging
is the tendency of Trollope's fiction to be dominated not by plots but by plotlings.

For the Chronicles of Barsetshire Trollope invented fully developed, conventional plots which run the length of the work and are neatly concluded in the last chapter. In these early novels the narrator complains about plots but does not do much about them, and his use of plotlings is still cautious and experimental. Only a few scenes treat Crosbie's bleak life with Lady Alexandrina, although, like the description of the cold street corner in St. John's Wood where his in-laws the Gazebees live (SHA, 40), these can be powerful. From the beginning of the Palliser chronicle, on the other hand, Trollope's avowed purpose was to present a continuing portrait of Plantagenet and Glencora Palliser and a number of associated characters. Convinced of the effectiveness of the plotling in the treatment of character, he now begins to rely on it more boldly as a structural unit, as well. The plots of Phineas Finn, The Eustace Diamonds, Phineas Redux, and The Prime Minister serve as a showcase for the Pallisers, who are irrelevant to these stories except insofar as they are the narrator's favorite characters. Glencora barges into these narratives every so often on the strength of an enthusiastic but misplaced interest in the fortunes of the adventuress Lizzie Eustace or of down-and-out politicians like Phineas Finn and Ferdinand Lopez. In the same novels we catch glimpses of Plantagenet Palliser striving mildly and
ineffectually to curb his wife's excesses, plodding laboriously through the intricacies of his decimal coinage proposal, and developing as a dedicated, honest, and fretful Liberal politician.

Trollope uses various means of subordinating his plots to these brief plotlings. One of these is the introduction of Parliament as a device for institutionalizing conflict and thus rendering it ritualistic and harmless. The partisan bickering between Liberals and Conservatives, though venomous, is confined within the framework of Parliamentary debates, which Trollope portrays as essentially dishonest. Members who rail at each other on the floor of the House can meet afterwards on terms as congenial as before, whereas words spoken by one politician in praise of another usually signal an impending breach between the two. Because members vote blindly along party lines, debate fails to influence the passage or defeat of a bill, and throughout the series oratorical skill is treated as unnecessary (Palliser does not possess it) and even suspect. The government which Palliser heads in The Prime Minister is a coalition: an arrangement defined by the narrator as bearing within it the seeds of its own destruction (8 & 12). Since we know from the beginning of the novel that this ministry will not last, there is no suspense as to how Palliser will fight his political battles. Throughout the chronicle political conflicts seem divorced from reality, and the reader finds meaning instead in the
private attempts of people like Phineas Finn, Madame Goesler, Lady Laura Standish, and Palliser himself to establish positions of integrity for themselves amid the social and political confusion of London.

In The Eustace Diamonds, the least political of the novels, Trollope sets the plot in a context of public opinion, a technique which he had previously used in The Last Chronicle of Barset. While Lady Eustace strives to win a respectable place in the fashionable world, the fashionable world is dividing itself into "Lizzieite" and "anti-Lizzieite" factions. The young widow is the favorite subject of gossip during the London season, and when she wears her diamonds to a ball in Carleton Terrace, Lady Glencora's guests cannot disguise their curiosity. By the time the Pallisers have retired to their country home, Matching Priory, interest in Lady Eustace and her diamonds, which are now believed to have been stolen, has become almost a mania. Daily letters and telegrams broadcast the latest details, and the Duke of Omnium's senile delight with the scandal is only slightly more intense than that of Glencora herself and the majority of her visitors. The boredom and pettiness which pervade this society mock Lizzie's aspirations to belong to it.

The beginning and the end of the novel, which have been praised for their economy, place the narrative in a framework of gossip which dehumanizes Lizzie and minimizes the importance of the plot of which she is the central figure.
The opening sentence reflects a grudging admiration by her inelegant early acquaintances of the success of her "efforts" to obtain rank and wealth. By the last chapter she has attracted the notice of one of the highest-ranking noblemen in the country and received visits from a future duchess, but now her luck is on the decline, and so is the interest of her aristocratic friends. For the amusement of the dying Duke, her adventures have been a "godsend" (80), but even he knows that the mystery has been unraveled and the story is over, and he cheerfully relegates her to the social purgatory which awaits her. "I'm afraid, you know, that your friend hasn't what you call a good time before her, Glencora," the Duke pronounces. With this final assessment of her position the novel comes full circle. Her adventures no longer have the power to entertain, and she passes out of the consciousness of those who had whispered about her so eagerly. The events of the plot are reduced to the status of a rumor which has gone out of fashion.

A. O. J. Cockshut argues, moreover, that even before the London socialites abandon Lizzie, the plot has been subverted by Thomas "Turtle" Dove, to whom the Eustace family solicitor appeals for help in recovering the diamonds.22 Late in the novel Dove submits his opinion on the necklace: "It is, upon the whole, well for the world, that property so fictitious as diamonds should be subject to the risk of such annihilation" (72). The symbol of wealth which has caused such strife
among all the parties in the plot and such feverish interest among the public is thus exposed as meaningless and artificial. In the process, the plot which was constructed around it is exposed as artificial, as well.

THE PLOTLING-STRUCTURED CHRONICLE

Trollope's attack on plot serves to locate the values of a novel outside the turmoil of the action, as it does in the Barsetshire series, or to challenge the action as superficial and false, as it does in the Palliser books. In an individual novel the result is sometimes a confusing tension between plot and plotling: we do not know quite what to make of the almost gallant Nathaniel Sowerby who emerges at the end of *Framley Parsonage* after several hundred pages of villainy. Not until the middle of the Palliser series, when plots become vestigial, does the plotling take its place as the dominant structural device in the individual novel. It is the plotling all along, however, which gives shape, meaning, and unity to the novel series as a whole, making each chronicle in its entirety greater than the sum of the six novels which comprise it.

In her discussion of Trollope's casuistic philosophical stance, Ruth apRoberts observes that the "Situation Ethics" which prevails in his fiction is established by means of a corresponding situation structure. The individual scene, in other words, is typically a special or unique "case" which calls general moral principles into question.23 Such a
structure is particularly flexible: novels and novel series alike develop by association, rather than in accordance with any logical process, and the only narrative "order" which the reader can confidently expect is the order of time implied by the term "chronicle." At times the work seems to be structured according to the narrator's musings, as though instead of reading a novel, we are sharing one of Trollope's "castles-in-the-air." Bound by certain loose spatial and temporal restrictions, the narrator otherwise indulges his imagination as it moves from the old, familiar characters to new ones, and back again, as the characters from an early work repeat their experiences later under slightly different circumstances, as a sentence from one novel evolves into a new novel.

One can often trace the workings of the narrator's mind during this process. In *Barchester Towers* Josiah Crawley is the unnamed friend who helps Francis Arabin through a spiritual crisis touched off by Newman's conversion to Catholicism. The character of Mr. Crawley as it appears in *Framley Parsonage* and *The Last Chronicle of Barset* is the result of the narrator's wonder over this Cornish curate. What kind of clergyman would be contented to labor humbly in such an isolated location and yet zealous enough to debate theological matters with Arabin and skillful and persuasive enough to influence his final decision? In *Doctor Thorne* Frank's engagement to Mary Thorne is opposed by his parents partly on the
grounds of her illegitimacy, but primarily because she lacks the money which Frank will need when he marries. When Mary unexpectedly becomes the heiress to all the Scatcherd wealth, the Greshams enthusiastically welcome her as Frank's prospective bride. But this Cinderella plot, composed of borrowed materials, is uncharacteristic of Trollope. What would happen if, as is more likely, there were no inheritance? Should Frank remain loyal to an unsuitable attachment, or should he form a more prudent one? The "minute ramifications" of such a situation are explored in the Mary Flood Jones-Phineas Finn-Lady Laura triangle in Phineas Finn and in Frank Greystock's hesitation between Lucy Morris and Lizzie Eustace in The Eustace Diamonds.

"Moral consciousness" is the term Trollope gives to his passion for creating new characters and fresh situations for the examination of old characters. Speculations by Norris Hoyt regarding the origins of the Palliser chronicle are intriguing for the light they shed on this process. Hoyt cites several parallels, as well as several striking contrasts, between elements in the Palliser series and a work entitled The Statesman, an Ironical Treatise on the Art of Succeeding, which was written in 1836 by an acquaintance of Trollope, Sir Henry Taylor. The Statesman outlines the domestic and professional requirements of a good public figure: he must, first, be a drudge; his laboriousness, however, must at some time during his bachelorhood be interrupted by a seizure of
"misplaced or ill-timed love"; he must not marry the subject of this first passion, and when he does marry, it must be to a rich woman; his wife should be possessed of "a clear understanding, cheerfulness, and alacrity of mind, rather than gaiety or brilliancy" and "a gentle tenderness of disposition in preference to an impassioned nature"; finally, the statesman himself should possess "a strong conscience," rather than "a tender conscience." 26

It is easy to see the effect of these criteria on Trollope's curiosity as he tries them out on his favorite characters, Glencora and Plantagenet Palliser, sometimes assigning them the qualities specified by Taylor, sometimes pointedly denying them these characteristics. What would be the nature of the romantic indiscretion which Taylor requires of his politician? Palliser's first appearance in The Small House at Allington is Trollope's response to that question. What if the statesman should not follow Taylor's guidelines for selecting a wife, or should lack the qualities of temperament deemed by him to be desirable? The exercise of Trollope's imagination on these hypothetical situations results in the two strands, political and conjugal, of the Palliser novels. Trollope's fascination with testing general rules by applying them in particular cases can be seen here behind the creation of a whole novel series.

Critics have described the effect of Trollope's novels as cumulative, rather than climactic and have observed that
they yield the pleasure of recognition, rather than the pleasure of suspense. Both of these qualities stem from the construction of his novels by means of situations, rather than by means of plots. Individually, Trollope said, his plotlings were "numerous and unimportant as the grains of the seashore," but the repetition, comparison, and contrast to which they are subjected throughout the chronicles give them a structural significance.

The chief means by which this cumulative effect is achieved is the repetition of plotlings. Almost everything in Trollope happens twice. Mr. Crawley walks to Barchester and defies the authority of Bishop and Mrs. Proudie; then he walks to Silverbridge and does the same thing to the rural dean. Mark Robarts makes two visits to Hogglestock to persuade Crawley to hire a lawyer. In Can You Forgive Her? Palliser unjustly blames Alice Vavasor for two separate indiscretions on the part of his wife, and in The Duke's Children Lord Silverbridge, having been expelled from Oxford, becomes partly responsible for his brother's dismissal from Cambridge, as well.

Plotlings are repeated, moreover, from one novel to another and even across the two chronicles. Mortimer Gagebee, in Doctor Thorne, and Adolphus Crosbie, in The Small House at Allington, both succumb to the matrimonial lures of Courcy Castle, as had Frank Gresham, senior, before them. Mr. Harding resigns the wardenship of Hiram's Hospital in The Warden
and relinquishes it again in *Barchester Towers*, where he also refuses the deanship of Barchester. In *The Last Chronicle of Barset* this process of renunciation is intensified as he sees old age rob him of his humblest duties and pleasures: the precentorship, his cello playing, and finally even attendance at the cathedral.

The plotlings take on new significance as they are repeated. Lily Dale's rejection of Crosbie's renewed suit early in *The Last Chronicle of Barset* is not the same as her rejection of it after their accidental meeting in London, because that meeting destroys illusions about him which had remained with her until then. Similarly, her rejection of John Eames after the confrontation with Crosbie is more meaningful than her many earlier refusals, which had reflected her love for Crosbie. This one is based, more relevantly, on her inability to love Eames. Alice Vavasor's second visit to the balcony at Basle in the company of the Pallisers is a painful reminder of the first. The romance and freedom represented by the swimmers in the Rhine are less appealing to her since her injudicious exercise of freedom in becoming re-engaged to her cousin George.

In the case of a short work like *The Warden*, the development of the initial situation constitutes the entire novel. Once the original circumstances of the narrative (Mr. Harding's character, his comfortable position as warden of the hospital, and John Bold's challenge of the propriety of such
a position) are established and the implications of the dispute have been explored in a number of interviews and conversations (Harding with Eleanor, Bishop Grantly, the Archdeacon, and Sir Abraham Haphazard; Grantly with his wife and with the bedesmen), the novel is over. Some of Trollope's later novels, An Eye for an Eye and An Old Man's Love, for example, are essentially one-situation works.

Longer novels treat the situations of a number of characters. Framley Parsonage was Trollope's first attempt within the Barsetshire novels to deal with a large number of plotlings, and several of these, like the courtship of Martha Dunstable and Dr. Thorne, are unconnected with the main plot. Toward the end of the chronicle even the subplots (Cradell's flirtation with Mrs. Lupex, the Bayswater Romance) become increasingly dissociated from the plots. In the first of the Palliser novels the connection between plot and plotlings is somewhat closer, Alice Vavasor being related both to Glencora Palliser and to Mrs. Greenow; in the later Palliser books, as noted earlier, they are farther apart.

Within the individual novels this disparity between plot and plotling conveys a sense of one kind of reality: the diversity and multiplicity of life. Once John Eames is established as a "Barsetshire" character, all of his London experience become eligible for inclusion in the novel, as well. Once his friendship with the popular painter Conway Dalrymple has been established as part of this experience, the
narrative expands to include Dalrymple's friends the Brough­
tons and Clara Van Siever. Russell Fraser complains of "the lack of a sorting intelligence" amid all this diversity, but Trollope wants his novels to be "unsorted" representations of one's experience of life. The tension between plot and plotling which originally resulted from Trollope's diss­atisfaction with conventional narrative methods thus ulti­mately contributes to the realism of his novels.

Within the larger framework of the chronicle, the accum­ulation of details from the six component novels conveys the sense of another kind of reality: the recurrence, amid the rich variety of life, of certain prototypical situations, symbols, and types of people. Tricks of altered appearance give a social advantage to Mrs. Lookaloft in her low-cut gown at Miss Thorne's party (BT, 36) and to John Eames in his so­ber frock coat (LCB, 48). Mrs. Greenow in Can You Forgive Her? and Emily Lopez in The Prime Minister grieve extravaga­ntly after the deaths of unloved husbands, although for different reasons. Foxes are chased in novel after novel, and the hunt illuminates in some way the lives of the hunters.

Certain formal qualities inherent in the chronicle con­tribute to the formation of these loose patterns from the same data that remains unsifted in the individual works. The spatial expansiveness of the chronicle has an effect. The closing of one cover and the opening of the next creates a division in the reader's mind. When repetition occurs across
this divide, it assumes a particular authority and significance. Hunting accidents take place so often (to Burgo Fitzgerald in Can You Forgive Her?, Lord Chiltern in Phineas Finn, Lucinda Roanoke in The Eustace Diamonds, and Frank Tregear in The Duke's Children) that they become touchstones for assessing the behavior of those involved.

Similarly, the chronological progression—the treatment in successive novels of successive generations of characters—produces a sense of continuity, of history repeating itself. Toward the end of the Palliser series Arthur Fletcher is preparing to defend himself against the threatened attack of Ferdinand Lopez, when Frank Gresham, mellower and more seasoned than when he horse-whipped Mr. Moffat decades earlier, alerts the police, who prevent the fight. During his own affair, the narrator reminds us, he had regarded a similar intervention by police as an injustice. Trollope's selection of Gresham as Fletcher's sponsor is deliberate, and the change which the years have made in his attitude is symbolic of the irreconcilable difference between the impetuosity of youth and the moderation and prudence of middle age.

To a degree, this impression of cyclical recurrence can be conveyed within a single novel, which can reach to sufficient length to include several generations of characters. War and Peace, with its exploration of the laws governing history, yields this sense of continuity, as does Wuthering Heights, where the love between Cathy and Hareton ends the
novel on a note of reconciliation. Given the special purposes of Trollope's fiction, however, it is to his advantage to extend the parallels in his plotlings beyond the covers of the individual work. In doing so, he establishes the universal significance of his plotlings and gains the opportunity to examine the characters from one novel under the new circumstances operating in a later one. Both accomplishments demonstrate Trollope's successful circumvention of the demands of the conventional plot.
NOTES

1 Autobiography, p. 232.


6 Autobiography, pp. 175, 344.


10 The characters who are criticized include Mrs. Proudie (FP, 17), the old Duke of Omnium (DT, 19), Lady Monk (CYFH, 48), Mrs. Montacute Jones (DC, 28), and even the usually unpretentious Miss Dunstable (FP, 29). Characters whose hospitality is approved include Mr. Harding (TW, 6), Miss Thorne (qualified approval: BT, 35), and Lady Lufton with her constant dinners.

11 The italics are mine. A similar treatment of gesture occurs in Phineas Redux, where Robert Kennedy complains of his wrongs to Phineas:

"Not that Lough Linter can be comfortable now to any one. How can a man, whose wife has deserted him, entertain his guests? I am ashamed even to look a friend in the face, Mr. Finn." As he said this he stretched forth his open hand as if to
hide his countenance, and Phineas hardly knew whether the absurdity of the movement or the tragedy of the feeling struck him more forcibly [10].

12See also the descriptions of Lucy Morris (ED, 3) and Isabel Boncassen (DC, 28).


15"The Eustace Diamonds and The Moonstone," SP, 36 (October, 1939), 651-663.

16Autobiography, p. 126.


18It is not the last. See Phineas Redux, ch. 76.


20Pope Hennessy, p. 51.

21See, for example, Pope Hennessy, p. 304.


23apRoberts, p. 52.

24Autobiography, p. 93.

25For a character sketch of Taylor and a summary of his literary and civil service career, see C. P. Snow, Anthony Trollope: His Life and Art (New York: Scribner's, 1975), pp. 45-48.


27"A Walk in a Wood."
NOTES

28 Ruth apRoberts makes essentially the same point about the structure of The Warden. See p. 36.

Trollope consistently maintained that the first criterion of good fiction is effective characterization. In an evaluation of contemporary novelists in the Autobiography he places Thackeray first, on the grounds that "[h]is knowledge of human nature was supreme, and his characters stand out with a force and a truth which has not, I think, been within the reach of any other English novelist in any period." He ranks Dickens third, after George Eliot, apologizing as he does so for running counter to the majority opinion. The reading public at large, he knows, overwhelmingly prefers Dickens:

My own particular idiosyncrasy in the matter forbids me to [rate Dickens first]. I do acknowledge that Mrs. Gamp, Micawber, Pecksniff, and others have become household words in every house, as though they were human beings; but to my judgment they are not human beings, nor are any of the characters human which Dickens has portrayed. Instead, they are "puppets": often "droll" and moving, but stagey. In contrast to Eliot's "singularly terse and graphic" characterization, Dickens' is "overdone."

To create "speaking, moving, living" characters, rather than puppets, the novelist must "live with them in the full
reality of established intimacy." Trollope attributes "whatever success I have attained" to this process:

There is a gallery of [characters], and of all in that gallery I may say that I know the tone of the voice, and the colour of the hair, every flame of the eye, and the very clothes they wear. Of each man I could assert whether he would have said these or the other words; of every woman whether she would then have smiled or so have frowned.¹

Most of the distinctive qualities of Trollope's fiction can be traced to his insistence on the primacy of character. He himself ascribes his impatience with plots to his more immediate desire to make his reader "as intimately connected" with his characters as he is.² In the first place, the conventional plot imposes an essentially deductive treatment of character in which a characterization is closely circumscribed by the larger pattern of action. These limitations defeat the purpose of the minute examination of the qualities which reveal a character's moral nature (tones of voice, smiles, frowns): in Trollope's view, that is, they defeat the purpose of the novel. They also make it difficult to present morally "mixed" characters of the sort that interested Trollope. Once Lady Arabella Gresham has revealed herself as snobbish and mercenary in her opposition to her son's marriage to Mary Thorne, the conventional reader is confused by subsequent scenes which portray her as a fond and affectionate mother.³

The second problem with plots is their dependence on conflict and action. Hugh Sykes Davies observes that the
"elaboration of remarkable incident was quite irrelevant to his main purpose--the depiction of moral character." 4 Worse, it can distort such a depiction. The definitive statement of this principle comes in The Eustace Diamonds, where the narrator tries to explain Lizzie Eustace's prominent role in the plot. She is by no means the heroine, he assures the reader: she has monopolized such a large proportion of the narrative simply because she does so many things (4). Pre-eminence in the plot can become a negative index to the moral worth of a character, as it does with Lizzie, who sinks into oblivion at the close of the novel. Similarly, M. S. Bankert suggests that Bishop Grantly can be convincingly portrayed as the ideal clergyman specifically because he does not play a "direct part" in the ecclesiastical conflict of Barchester Towers. 5

Although Trollope attributed the popularity of his novels to their presentation of character, readers have found fault with his characterization on two main grounds. His contemporaries, says David Skilton, considered his characters "superficial," because he "never penetrated to universal human nature." 6 More recently, Raymond Chapman has charged that Trollope fails to provide any "deep analysis of motivation" in his treatment of character. 7 A second objection is that his characters "are not valuable people." 8 Russell Fraser, for one, observes that "Trollope's young people are almost always small people" and that his characters in
general are "on a prosaic level—if not beneath it." In fact, these two qualities are related. The absence of heroic characters and the failure to treat character on a "universal" level both reflect Trollope's disinclination to reduce his people to general principles. More to his purpose is the detailed observation of particular characters against the background of contemporary society. He is acutely aware that only the surface of a character is revealed in such a setting: an almost routine hypocrisy and double-dealing are exposed in hundreds of scenes like the one in which Lady Lufton is informed that Griselda Grantly will not, after all, be marrying her son (FP, 30). But character does not exist in a vacuum. Trollope is suspicious of a priori characterizations like those of Dickens, which begin with a general conception of a character as good or evil: "his good poor people are so very good, his hard rich people so very hard," he says of Mr. Popular Sentiment in The Warden (15). Imperfect as it may be, the social context is the only eligible one recognized by Trollope for the treatment of character. That is why the social call or visit is in some ways the most important action in his novels and the drawing room is his favorite setting.

This context is also responsible for the "prosaic level" of his characters. Nearly all of them subscribe to the social forms and conventions, so that even Lizzie Eustace, who likes to fancy herself a bohemian, actually longs for respectability. In such a setting, there is only so much room
for the expression of individual differences: those that do exist are differences of degree, rather than kind. The result is what Russell Fraser, in a discussion of the Barsetshire girls, calls "heroines by relief": Lucy Robarts shines because "the young men and women who surround her are so very proper and dull." Similarly, Phineas Finn may be something of the "pompous politician" that the Stebbinses think him, but he wins our admiration in comparison with party hacks like Ratler and Roby and charlatans like Mr. Daubeny and Sir Timothy Beeswax. The "colorlessness" which readers often find in Trollope's younger characters is not only a demonstration of Northrop Frye's principle that "the technical hero and heroine" in a comedy "are not often very interesting people." It is also the result of the levelling tendency of society in general, as Trollope sees it.

Trollope's skillful delineation of the social surface is granted by all the critics. Though they lack "depth," his characters are seen to have "breadth," to be "round," rather than "flat." That is to say, they are not defined exclusively in terms of one controlling characteristic or humor. He is praised for his fine distinctions: for his accurate documentation of "nuances of behavior" and gradations of class. The rich particularity of his record of Victorian society is a reflection of the aims of his treatment of character.
THE INDUCTIVE APPROACH TO CHARACTER

When Trollope claims total familiarity with his characters, he is referring, as the metaphor of the "gallery" implies, to the completed characters, the ones whose stories have been told and whose portraits are framed and in their permanent places on the wall. No such certain knowledge is inherent in the "distinct conception" of a character which is the starting point of his novels, nor is it accessible to him at any moment before the story is over. This is because Trollope's intimacy with his characters is emphatically not derived from any general formulation or definition which suits them for such roles as "female angel" and "female devil." The distrust of rules, codes, and generalizations of all sorts which is conspicuous in his fiction pertains, as well, to his treatment of character. "He recorded the surface of a character with conscientious accuracy," says one contemporary, echoing the common complaint, "but his imagination was never fired to discover its guiding principle." In fact, he put little stock in "guiding principles" of any sort.

Although he concedes that there are people, whom he calls "simple entities," who "walk along lines in accordance with certain fixed instincts or principles, and are today as they were yesterday, and will be tomorrow as they are today," he maintains that the majority, "though of necessity single in body, are dual in character." This duality he translates
into moral terms, saying that in such people "not only is evil always fighting against good, but . . . evil is sometimes horribly, hideously evil, but is sometimes also not hideous at all." Even at the worst, these men and women will not stoop to the extremities of evil, but they are subject to "ambition, self-indulgence, pride, and covetousness," which "in various moods will be to them virtues instead of vices" (ED, 18). Trollope's rationale for the moral "smallness" of his people can be seen in this philosophy of the morally mixed character.

Nevertheless, it is these individuals, torn between their better and worse instincts, whom Trollope prefers among his own characters, because they are the ones who challenge that faculty for the imaginative experience of character which he termed his "moral consciousness." A typical character of this sort is Phineas Finn, who, wishing to enjoy both political and social success and the flattering love of Mary Flood Jones, likes to think of himself as having "one life in London and another life altogether different at Killaloe" (PF, 50). The clashes between honesty and dishonesty, egotism and disinterested public service which inform Phineas' character require three novels for their effective treatment. His "simple pretty Irish girl," on the other hand, is so dull that Trollope kills her off before the beginning of Phineas Redux and subsequently regards her creation as a mistake. "Simple, single" characters like Mary
are "generally safe" (ED, 18). That is, they are predictable and easily defined and, as a result, completely uninteresting.

To present the more intriguing characters who cannot be reduced to a predominant character trait, Trollope develops an inductive method of characterization. His people reveal themselves gradually under a number of varying circumstances. The situations in which they do so are the same almost hypothetical ones which constitute the subject matter of the "plotlings" ("how this young lady should be made to behave herself with that young gentleman," for example). It is from "the impressions that accumulate from these varied scenes," as Gordon Ray says, that the final portrait of the character emerges. Cumulativeness is the essential quality of Trollope's characterization: his portraits are continually evolving—not only for the reader, but for Trollope and his narrator, as well—as long as the novel continues.

Central to this organic technique are the character introductions which open his novels or accompany the appearance of a major new character. As he does with so many of the conventions of the novel which do not suit his purpose, Trollope retains the traditional summary of a character's physical appearance, past history, present circumstances, and distinguishing characteristics, but he does so impatiently, as though under duress. He concedes that it is his "business as an author" to describe his characters (DT, 3), that it is "desirable" that they "be made to stand before the reader's
eye by the aid of such portraiture as the author is able to produce" (BT, 20), but he refers to the task as "the novelist's great difficulty" (FP, 1). He envies dramatists their "delightful privilege of prefixing a list of their personages," instead of formally introducing and describing them (ED, 4). Since such a device is unavailable to the novelist, he alternately tries rushing at the introductions at once, in order to get them over with, or beginning the novel in medias res, putting off the descriptions of the characters until the story is underway. The former is his usual practice, but the narrator is painfully aware that the reader's interest is likely to wane during the "long, dull chapters full of description" (DT, 2). "The poor narrator," he sighs, "has been driven to expend his four first chapters in the mere task of introducing his characters. He regrets the length of these introductions and will now begin at once the action of his story" (ED, 4). A rare example of the second device occurs in The Small House at Allington, where Lily and Bell Dale are not described until after Lily has become engaged to Crosbie. The drawback to this approach is that "the longer the [description] is postponed the greater the difficulty becomes" (6).

The "difficulty" to which he refers is that of successfully describing a given character to the reader. Lily and Bell Dale "are fair-haired girls, very like each other, of whom I have before my mind's eye a distinct portrait, which I
fear I shall not be able to draw in any such manner as will make it distinct to others" (6). Moreover, even a reasonably accurate description of a character's physical appearance fails to tell us anything important about him, as the narrator of An Old Man's Love acknowledges after introducing his heroine: "But now, when this portion of his work is done, he feels sure that no reader of his novel will have the slightest idea of what Mary Lawrie was like" (3).22 "Her mind and inner qualities are more clearly distinct to my brain than her outward form and features," the narrator says of Mary in Doctor Thorne (3).

On the other hand, his attempts to present directly in summary a character's "mind and inner qualities" are even less satisfactory. In Barchester Towers he toys with the idea that "a mental method of daguerreotype or photography . . . by which the characters of men can be reduced to writing" would solve his problems, but a moment's reflection convinces him that such a device would be ineffective:

And yet such mechanical descriptive skill would hardly give more satisfaction to the reader than the skill of the photographer does to the anxious mother desirous to possess an absolute duplicate of her beloved child. The likeness is indeed true, but it is a dull, dead, unfeeling, inauspicious likeness [20].

The photographic likeness, though identical, is inadequate because it is static. By the same token, a general summary of a character's predominant moral qualities, even though accurate, is "dull, dead, unfeeling," because it lacks the context
of specific circumstances required for their lifelike realization. The lament over unsuccessful descriptions is the shorthand by which the narrator indicates that the moral nature of the character in question is too vital and organic to be contained in a list. He requires, instead, to be developed one scene at a time, with general conclusions about his character subject to modification by other scenes presented both earlier and later in the work. Whenever possible, therefore, the narrator evades the futile attempt to define his characters and moves directly into the narrative, where the particular situations necessary for their development occur. After sketching the antecedent action necessary to explain Mark Robarts' presence at Framley Parsonage, he turns to the question of Robarts' character:

But little has as yet been said, personally, as to our hero himself, and perhaps it may not be necessary to say much. Let us hope that by degrees he may come forth upon the canvas, showing to the beholder the nature of the man inwardly and outwardly. Here it may suffice to say that he was no born heaven's cherub, neither was he a born fallen devil's spirit [FP, 1].

And of the heroine of Can You Forgive Her? he says: "a few words must be said as to Alice Vavasor's person; one fact must also be told, and then, I believe, I may start upon my story. As regards her character, I will leave it to be read in the story itself" (1).

"In the story itself" character is presented inductively, in a number of plotlings which treat specific moments in the characters' lives: Mark Robarts succumbing to one
temptation or another or making a resolution about his future conduct, Alice Vavasor counseling Glencora Palliser as to the rashness of her speech and behavior or, on the other hand, giving way to the restlessness of her own temperament in her re-engagement to her cousin George. The scenes portraying each character are often few in number and spaced at some distance from each other throughout the novel, and the resulting separateness heightens the independence and integrity of the individual scene. This is especially true when the character being portrayed is on the periphery of the plot, as are Mr. Harding in *The Small House at Allington*, where his only appearance is his meeting with Adolphus Crosbie on the grounds of Hiram's Hospital, and Phineas Finn in *The Prime Minister*, where his primary function is to help clarify the easily misunderstood character of Plantagenet Palliser. Even the characters most central to the plot, however, sometimes appear only infrequently. Mr. Crawley's twenty-odd scenes in *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, for example, are interspersed with long sections dealing with the reactions of Barsetshire residents to the accusations against him, John Earms' courtship of Lily Dale, the Bayswater romance and its complications, Archdeacon Grantly's opposition to his son's marriage, and the deaths of Mr. Harding and Mrs. Proudie. Similarly, once Mark Robarts' involvement with the Chaldicotes set is established in the first nine chapters of *Framley Parsonage*, we see him again only in isolated scenes treating his
alternating aspirations to a position of wealth and social prominence, anxiety over his new debts, and remorse for his unclerical conduct.

By offering disparate views of a character, these scenes insist on the complexities of human nature. At the same time, their brevity, scarcity, and autonomy create the risk that the developing characterization may be fragmented and disunified. Readers familiar with the treatment of Lady Arabella Gresham in Doctor Thorne, Nathaniel Sowerby in Framley Parsonage, Adolphus Crosbie in The Small House at Allington, Mrs. Proudie in The Last Chronicle of Barset, and Ferdinand Lopez in The Prime Minister will be accustomed to Trollope's last-minute softening toward any characters who have been cast too strongly as "villains," but this change of heart is better assimilated into some novels than it is in others. The reassessment of Nathaniel Sowerby comes toward the end of Framley Parsonage in scenes where he faces his imminent financial ruin with dignity. Sympathy for Crosbie is also evoked rather late in The Small House at Allington, in the scenes dealing with his joyless marriage. His recognition of a better way of life, however, is established early in the novel with his proposal to Lily Dale. James Pope Hennessy's assertion that Trollope "did not intend that Adolphus Crosbie ... should emerge as far the most arresting male character in the book" is probably wrong, since the conflicting impulses which are the source of this emergence are envisioned
by Trollope from the start.

When Russell Fraser says that the moral nature of Trollope's characters is "made clear at once," he is correct in one sense: they do not yield the surprises of old Martin Chuzzlewit, or Silas Wegg, or Bulstrode. The "distinct conception of a character" with which Trollope begins his novels often comprehends the range of qualities which that character is to possess, especially in the Palliser series, where he planned from the start to treat the major figures for several volumes apiece. But to compare Trollope's character introductions, as David Aitken does, to the "decisive descriptions" of Jane Austen or to say with David Skilton that they "partake very much of the nature of definitions," is to overestimate the solidity of these original conceptions. In fact, they are tentative, rather than decisive, and serve as the starting point for gradually evolving definitions of character.

PROGRESSIVE CHANGE

With the exception of his emphasis on the nature and importance of "plotlings," his tenet that a character portrait must reflect the changes which naturally accompany the passage of time is the most expressly formulated principle of Trollope's novel theory. In the Autobiography, although he disclaims any comprehensive "rules" of novel-writing, he does offer for the benefit of inexperienced writers "one or two points" conducive to good fiction. The most specific piece
of advice which he provides is the following:

[A]s, here in the outer world, we know that men and women change,—become better or worse as temptation or conscience may guide them,—so should these creations...change, and every change should be noted by [the novelist]. On the last day of every month recorded, every person in his novel should be a month older than on the first.

He scrupulously applies this principle throughout the Palliser chronicle when treating his favorite characters:

So much of my inner life was passed in their company, that I was continually asking myself how this woman would act when this or that event had passed over her head, or how that man would carry himself when his youth had become manhood, or his manhood declined to old age. It was in regard to the old Duke of Omnium, [Plantagenet Palliser, and Lady Glencora] that I was anxious to carry out this idea; but others added themselves to my mind as I went on, and I got round me a circle of persons as to all of whom I knew not only their present characters, but how these characters were to be affected by years and circumstances.26

Trollope was proud of his concept of the gradual development of character, which he regarded as an innovation:
"...I do not think," he wrote, "that novelists have often set before themselves the state of progressive change," partly because the period of time covered in the average novel is too short to admit of such slow growth, but partly for reasons which bear more directly on Trollope's major concerns as a novelist. He finds, for example, that the courtship plot which constitutes the traditional subject matter of the novel necessarily focuses on the young hero and heroine, who change, to be sure, but whose changes are confined to "the advance in taste and manners which are [sic] common to all
boys and girls as they become men and women." His rejection of plot was motivated to a considerable extent by his reluctance to confine himself to such circumscribed characters, whose development is predetermined by their stage of life and their role in the plot.

A variety of experience has enriched the lives and either broadened or confirmed the attitudes of such figures as Doctor Thorne, Mr. Harding, and the Frank Gresham of *The Prime Minister*, beside whom the younger characters appear raw and unseasoned. The narrator's outburst against preachers in general in *Barchester Towers* is soon directed particularly against the "too self-confident" young preacher, whom he urges to present, instead of his own sermons, "some portion of those time-honoured discourses which our great divines have elaborated in the full maturity of their powers" (6). The older characters enjoy a greater affinity with their author, who has been described as "the poet of middle-aged experience." They are somewhat strongly addicted to the creature comforts, but then, it is asserted in novel after Trollope novel that the "good things" of the world are intended for people's enjoyment and that no wise man would spurn them. The decline in idealistic fervor which accompanies this growing attachment to domestic ease is itself rather desirable than otherwise, since single-minded devotion to a principle (John Bold's social reforming, Mark Robarts' vaunted independence from Lady Lufton, and some proportion of
Phineas Finn's political honesty, for instance) is in Trollope's view usually motivated by self-interest or by stupidity.

More importantly, the mature characters appear to advantage next to Trollope's hobbledehoys (tongue-tied young bunglers) and Apollos (handsome but hollow leading men) because they are not assigned heroic roles. Instead, they are depicted in brief plotlings which illuminate their predominant characteristics. They are measured, not against the standards of conduct applied to heroes, but against the requirements of their daily professional and domestic routines. In this context of everyday life, shortcomings can be more candidly acknowledged, and admiration can be claimed for unspectacular, homely virtues. Less, in short, is expected of characters like Mr. Harding and Squire Dale in *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, and the goodness which they do possess goes a long way when compared with the bustle and pretension of many of the younger characters who dominate the plot.

Whereas the faults of the younger characters are those common to young people and attributable to immaturity and inexperience, the shortcomings of middle-aged and older characters are theirs alone. As such, they are treated with tolerance and respect. Mr. Harding's timidity in the face of Archdeacon Grantly, for example, obviously stirs the author's tenderest feelings and is the subject of some of his most touching scenes. Trollope demonstrates the intrinsic
relationship between a character's faults and whatever is most worth loving in him with a success equalled only by George Eliot; he pointedly elicits love for a character precisely because of his faults. Christopher Dale is introduced in *The Last Chronicle of Barset* as having "a dry, solemn face" and (although it is Christmas morning) as "not carrying in his outward gait much of the customary jollity of Christmas" (16). He appears stiff and ungenial in his greeting to Grace Crawley, and even once this impression is corrected, we recognize him as no more than ordinarily kind. To the reader of *The Small House at Allington*, however, the attempts at hospitality which the squire forces himself to make at the Christmas dinner are significant. In the earlier novel the squire, a "hard, dry, unpleasant" man by nature (1), had neither tried to overcome his original aversion to his sister-in-law nor counterfeited fondness in order to make her residence on the Dale estate more comfortable. The grief suffered by Lily and Mrs. Dale over Lily's broken engagement first suggests to Dale the family's need for sympathy and gentleness, and the plotlings in which he appears in *The Last Chronicle* record his endeavors to demonstrate these qualities. The effort shows: a stranger like Grace Crawley immediately recognizes his gestures of affection as labored and unspontaneous. Those familiar with his essential emotional steril­ity, however, respond to his courtesy with gratitude, because only a rare devotion could have motivated it.
Although one's character, according to Trollope's theory of progressive change, is constantly being shaped and modified, certain essential traits gradually emerge as his predominant characteristics, and this emergence is sometimes out of his control. There are, he says, "but few of us who, after the lapse of ten years, will be found to have changed our chief characteristics . . . . But our manner of showing or of hiding these characteristics will be changed,— as also our power of adding to or diminishing their intensity." This emphasis allows Trollope to indulge one of his specialized interests: carrying to its logical extreme the conventional wisdom about people's becoming "set in their ways" as they age, he perceives the very old as pure embodiments of an outstanding characteristic. Archdeacon Grantly observes in Mr. Harding at the time of his death a concentration of essential character traits similar to that which he had noticed in his own father in his last years: a "mild sweetness that never could believe much evil, but that could believe less, and still less, as the weakness of age came upon them."

Struck with the contrast between this gentle goodness which he has twice personally witnessed and the popular belief that "men become heartless and unfeeling as they grow old," he decides that "the heartless and unfeeling do. As the bodily strength fails and the power of control becomes lessened, the natural aptitude of the man pronounces itself more clearly" (LCB, 78).
A less happy concentration of qualities occurs as the old Duke of Omnium declines into senility. In the Barsetshire chronicles the Duke's reputation as a libertine and a bon vivant arouses the indignation of neighbors like Lady Lufton but does not materially inconvenience him. His high rank and his aloofness protect him from serious social consequences of his conduct. As he ages in the Palliser series, however, he becomes controlled by others through the appetites which he has indulged throughout his life. His niece, Lady Glencora, who is frightened of the Duke in Can You Forgive Her?, begins to bully him in Phineas Redux and "watche[s] him narrowly" in The Eustace Diamonds (80). It is on her that he finally must depend for news of Lizzie Eustace's diamonds, the company of his friend Madame Goesler, and such creature comforts as the allowance of champagne doled out to him each day. The "faineant nobility" which had won him the admiration of the public degenerates into peevishness over the "racket of the billiard room" (ED, 80), and his nurse's attempts to give him his wine in a tumbler (PR, 25). This lapse into querulous weakness is a more accurate reflection of the shallowness of his character than his former air of magnificence, which senility has robbed him of the power to affect. Trollope's unorthodox concept of the distillation of quintessential traits establishes advancing age as one of the circumstances which modify character and which are thus appropriate to his inductive techniques of characterization.
His emphasis on progressive change is compatible, as well, with what Ruth apRoberts calls Trollope's situation ethics: his sensitivity to the compelling or mitigating effect of circumstances on an individual's conduct. His approach is to assign to each character a complex of qualities and to examine, during the course of the novel, how "years and circumstances" influence the predominance of one or the other of these characteristics. Although in his own remarks about progression in character he claims to have emphasized "the evil and the good" of his characters "and how the evil would always lead to evil, and the good produce good," the distinctions made in his novels are not really this easy. He describes the Phineas Finn books, for example, as depicting "the tragic sale which [Lady Laura Standish] made of herself in her wretched marriage,"30 but in fact the "good and evil" in her character is treated with much greater complexity than this summary indicates. Lady Laura's marriage to Kennedy is the kind of prudent match which was customary among people of their class, and one of the recurring themes of the Palliser chronicle is that such marriages usually result, in spite of themselves, in at least moderate happiness.31 Robert Kennedy, though taciturn and literal-minded, is, at the time of the engagement, highly esteemed by the political party which Laura ardently supports, and she looks forward to taking an active interest in his career. Like Alice Vavasor in Can You Forgive Her?, she is physically large and vigorous, strong
minded, and desirous of a position in which she may be politically influential; marriage to a rising member of the party, she believes, would provide her with such a position. "Circumstances" render the match even more eligible to her, in that her husband's wealth would enable her to help her brother, but Oswald's debts are certainly not the only reason for the marriage, which one critic calls "freely chosen and at least as open to adjustment as the Pallisers'." The proposal of marriage by Phineas Finn (which comes too late, since she has already accepted Kennedy's) is also a red herring, albeit one which misleads Laura herself. In fact, Phineas never becomes politically purposeful enough to have satisfied her: she invariably opposes his decisions to resign or refuse office, and her dream of the relationship the two might have had is an illusion. Laura is aware of this essential incompatibility at the moment of the proposal: only later, her marriage in ruins, does she recall with regret the love she has rejected. By this time, however, Phineas has long since come to recognize its inappropriateness.

Far from preaching the evil consequences of marrying for money, therefore, Laura's story illustrates the difficulty of distinguishing between marrying for money and marrying for "happiness." It underscores the precariousness even of judging, whether at the time a decision is being made or in retrospect, one's own motives and impulses. The conception
of Laura Standish with which the novel begins is that of an ambitious woman, and though her ambition is noble—incorporating patriotism, generosity, and loyalty—it is a fatal quality for a woman to possess. As she attempts to exercise it, she encounters circumstances which disastrously modify and finally defeat the essential traits of her character. Kennedy's domestic tyranny deforms her independence into defiance and deceitfulness; his growing madness forces her into a humiliating separation; her flight to Dresden signals a final alienation from English political circles, where she had been so happy; and, finally, the idle days of her exile encourage regrets for her "shipwreck" and fantasies about the other direction which her life could have taken. Laura is never portrayed as the innocent victim of circumstances: she is too active and strong-willed for that. She is, however, a person of initially admirable qualities who is reduced, after confronting the circumstances of her life unsuccessfully, to shrill complaining and premature old age. Once a patron to Phineas Finn and a benefactress to her brother, she has become a source of trouble to them both. Time, in her case, is destructive of character, since each successive failure further saps the energetic confidence in her ability to fashion an active, useful life for herself which is so striking at the beginning of the novel.

Although deterioration of personality of the grotesque kind suffered by Laura Standish is a subject which intrigued
Trollope, and which he studied in the portraits of George Vavasor, Lady Laura's husband Robert Kennedy, Ferdinand Lopez, and Louis Trevelyan (in *He Knew He Was Right*), as well, the alteration undergone by most of his characters is less drastic. The progressive development often consists of the interaction of two opposite or conflicting traits, with one or the other predominating, as circumstances or the will of the character dictates. Plantagenet Palliser in *The Duke's Children* exhibits the same combination of "thin-skinned" irritability and occasional chivalry which has characterized him throughout the series. The former trait, however, has been so severely aggravated by professional and personal miseries\(^3\) that the latter is now difficult for him to express. His unreasonable anger with Mrs. Finn over indiscretions actually committed by the late Duchess is reminiscent of his displeasure with Alice Vavasor on two occasions in *Can You Forgive Her?* But the misunderstandings with Alice admitted of effortless resolutions, following which he behaved toward her with renewed gallantry, whereas apology has become more painful to him by the time of his quarrel with the more formidable and more unjustly treated antagonist, Mrs. Finn.

Citing in particular her shift from a "victim" in *Can You Forgive Her?* to a "class-conscious aristocrat" in *Phineas Finn*, James Kincaid finds Glencora Palliser "a different character" from one Palliser novel to the next.\(^3\) In fact,
all the permutations of her character are prepared for, or at least allowed for, in the first novel of the series. Although she does appear in Can You Forgive Her? as a thwarted romantic, wandering about the priory ruins in the moonlight, she is also referred to repeatedly as "very young." The idealism of Trollope's young people invariably and happily softens with time into an appreciation of worldly comfort and security. The new sense of the advantages of her rank which Glencora demonstrates in Phineas Finn is the result of this very process, facilitated in her case by the improved understanding she has reached with her husband at the conclusion of Can You Forgive Her? The tension between romance and prudence established in the early novels remains as a permanent and constructive feature of her character. She seems to have repudiated the former by the time of Phineas Redux, where she advises a pair of penniless lovers not to expect marital happiness without money: "Romance and poetry are for the most part lies." The narrator, however, knows that she is blustering and analyzes her real feelings about such impulsive attachments more minutely:

The Duchess was rough, but she was very good-natured . . . . Her experiences of the world had certainly made her more alive to the material prospects than to the delicate aroma of a love adventure. She had been greatly knocked about herself, and the material prospects had come uppermost. But all that had happened to her had tended to open her hand to other people, and had enabled her to be good-natured with delight . . . . [76].

In this case, Glencora finds a spare legacy of twenty
thousand pounds from the will of the old Duke, bestows it on
the couple, and gives the wedding breakfast herself.

She encourages Frank Tregear's courtship of her daugh-
ter, aware that money will be necessary but determined, until
the realization that she is dying fills her with "fears about
her girl," that it will be forthcoming. Then, in one of the
most unsentimental deathbed scenes in literature, Glencora
engages in a final battle of wits with her unsuspecting,
grief-stricken husband. With Palliser "holding her hand, and
trying so to listen to her words, that he might collect and
remember every wish," she reminds him of the wealth which she
had brought to their marriage: 35 "'She had never,' she said,
'ven tried to remember what arrangements had been made by
the lawyers, but she hoped that Mary might be so circum-
stanced, that if her happiness depended on marrying a poor
man, want of money need not prevent it'" (DC, 2). The des-
peration of her love for Burgo Fitzgerald and her understand-
ing that poverty "is not a blessing" for lovers (PR, 69), her
fear of her husband's strength of character and her confi-
dence that her intelligence is quicker than his are all re-
lected in this last maneuver.

THE CHRONICLES AND CHARACTERIZATION

Because they reveal individual characters under specific
circumstances, plotlings can effectively convey the sense of
a character's progressive development. Such an impression is
difficult to achieve in a traditional plot, where a character
is defined primarily in terms of his relationship to a general pattern of action. Many of the Barsetshire and Palliser novels are, by themselves, traditionally plotted works, but the built-in conventions of the chronicle, by helping Trollope to circumvent plots, encourage the incidence of characterizations centered in individual scenes.

For one thing, a seemingly unlimited number of novels share the same setting. As a result, characters from one novel can be easily introduced into a later work. If he is dissatisfied with the portrait of a character central to the plot of a given novel, the chronicler can avail himself of subsequent appearances of the character to test or adjust it. The plot of the new novel bears what Trollope called the "burden of many pages"; that is to say, the plot and the characters central to it must fulfill all the customary requirements regarding the size and shape of the narrative. Characters from the earlier books, therefore, can be treated peripherally, in scenes which will serve the author's re-examination of them. The later novels of a series are repeatedly enriched by the sudden reappearance—or sometimes only the brief mention—of people like Dr. Thorne or Mr. Harding in the Barsetshire novels or the Greys or Chilterns in the Palliser chronicle. In the case of Josiah Crawley, the secondary appearance, which amounts merely to an unnamed allusion in *Barchester Towers* (20), precedes the extended treatment and can be appreciated only on a rereading of that
novel after one has completed *Framley Parsonage* and *The Last Chronicle of Barset*. Besides affording the sensation of unexpectedly encountering an old friend, these plotlings reinforce, modify, enlarge upon, or otherwise correct the distorted version of a character presented in the earlier novel.

The plotlings frequently grow out of circumstances which are the reverse of those controlling the earlier plot. This opposition suggests that the later appearances are deliberately designed to counterbalance the earlier one. Whereas many plots focus on the courtship of two young people, the subsequent treatment of the couple finds them older and more settled. The perfect, almost tedious, domesticity of the married lives of Frank and Mary Thorne Gresham (*FP*, 38 & 39), Lord and Lady Lufton (*LCB*, 10), and the Greys (in brief references throughout the later Palliser books) is more likely to yield an accurate picture of these characters than is the heightened atmosphere of courtship.

The conclusions of other kinds of plots are also modified in some of the later plotlings. Having renounced, at the end of *Framley Parsonage*, such clerical promotion as might again expose him to the allurements of fashionable life, Mark Robarts reappears in *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, lounging in his friend Lufton's stables: an activity which, as the narrator remarks, Robarts himself would have euphemistically called going "about his parish" (55). That his idleness, his taste for hunting, and his tendency to make
excuses for his behavior are as marked as ever does not ne-
gate the sincerity of his repentence at the end of the ear-
lier novel, but it does indicate that the zeal which accom-
panied his remorse has subsided, leaving in its place a def-
initely but moderately elevated standard of conduct.

In at least one instance characters are introduced into
a later novel not to correct the portrait presented in an
earlier novel, but to confirm it. The Last Chronicle of Bar-
set finds John Eames again wooing Lily Dale, who momentarily
wavers in her rejection of his suit under the influence of a
combination of unsettling experiences during her visit to
London. In the end Lily refuses Johnny, as usual, and in re-
opening the story Trollope may have been motivated by a per-
verse desire to thwart those readers who pestered him with
requests that the marriage take place. "It was because she
could not get over her troubles that they loved her," Trol-
lope said of them.37 Such readers are attracted to or bored
by a novel only on the basis of its plot, and particularly of
its plot conflicts, which must be sufficiently frightful or
heart-rending to excite their sympathy, but which must be
pleasantly resolved in the end. By reintroducing Lily in The
Last Chronicle of Barset, tantalizing his readers with the
suggestion that she will accept Eames, and then concluding
with a firm statement that she will never marry (77), Trol-
lope deliberately ruins his novel for those who delight only
in a conventional plot.
Some characters, finally, can escape the confinements of a plot altogether and be developed entirely by means of plotlings. Because of its traditional function as a continuing historical record, the chronicle necessarily encompasses a considerable time span and, in the process, becomes spatially vast. The intervals of space and time which divide the plotlings are crucial to the presentation of Martha Dunstable in the Barsetshire series, the Pallisers and Madame Goesler in the Palliser novels, and the old Duke of Omnium in both. Action having been superseded as an organizing principle, the passage of time itself becomes a quiet stimulus of change in these characters; introductory descriptions having been dismissed as arbitrary and unlifelike, the spatial separateness of the plotlings affords the reader a slowly increasing familiarity with them.

The story of the Palliser marriage, in particular, reflects several of Trollope's characteristic narrative techniques, especially the circumvention of plot. The couple is introduced after the wedding is already over, and the only preliminary to the story is the brief account in a previous chronicle (SHA, 55) of the purely practical considerations behind the arrangement of the match and the pressure applied by the families of the reluctant couple in order to effect it. The marriage, therefore, is treated independently of the courtship story which is the raison d'être of so many novels. His passion for uncovering the exception to the rule,
moreover, leads Trollope to exploit a central paradox in the Palliser marriage. Although the perfunctory courtship is over by the time of *Can You Forgive Her?*, the "love story" has not yet begun, because Trollope has chosen to focus on the rare marriage of convenience which manages to overcome its mercenary origins and the almost overwhelming incompatibility of husband and wife. This is one of those marriages which, in time, admits of a degree of mutual happiness and comfort.

It is no accident that the three characters of his own creation whom Trollope admired the most appear in his two novel series. The chronicle form subordinates plot to the interacting scenes which form configurations within and beyond the individual work. These scenes become the basis of a new structure and also of the slow, organic presentation of character which Trollope discovered in the Barsetshire series and perfected in the Palliser chronicle.
NOTES


6 Skilton, pp. 103-106.


8 West, p. 156.


10 Fraser, pp. 102-103.


16 For a full discussion of moral relativism in Trollope, see Michael Roberts, *The Moral Trollope.*
NOTES

17Cecil, p. 268.

18Autobiography, p. 93.

19Phineas Finn, Phineas Redux, and The Prime Minister. Phineas appears in The Duke's Children, but his characterization is not substantially advanced there.

20Autobiography, p. 318.

21Ray, p. 325.

22Other examples of the narrator's preoccupation with the inadequacy of his character descriptions can be found in The Eustace Diamonds ("What else can be said of her face or personal appearance that will interest a reader?" [4]) and in Framley Parsonage, where he affects not to know the color of Lucy Robarts' eyes ("Green, probably, for most eyes are green—green or grey, if green be thought uncomely for an eyecolour" [10]).

23Pope Hennessy, p. 251.

24Fraser, "Anthony Trollope's Younger Characters," p. 102.

25Skilton, p. 143.


28Adams, p. 28.


30Autobiography, p. 320.

31See especially Can You Forgive Her?, 11, for a statement of this principle.


33For an analysis of the psychological implications for Palliser of his daughter's engagement to Tregear and of his wife's approval of the courtship, see Hagan, "The Duke's Children: Trollope's Psychological Masterpiece."

34Kincaid, pp. 44-45.
NOTES

35 This is an extreme step. Glencora never mentions her own money except when her need to assert her independence is overwhelming. See, e.g., Can You Forgive Her?, 43.


37 Autobiography, p. 179.

38 Robbins estimates that the time span of the combined chronicles is forty-three years (p. 308).

Since the appearance in 1959 of Kathleen Tillotson's The Tale and the Teller and in 1961 of Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction, intrusive narration has regained some of the favor it lost with the advent of Jamesian criticism. The influence of Booth's and Tillotson's insistence that the teller has his place in the tale can be seen in recent critical assessments of Trollope's fiction. Trollope's critical reputation, indeed, stands to gain as much as anyone's from the appreciation of authorial commentary, since intrusive narration has long been recognized as one of the identifying characteristics of his novels—and often lamented as such. Henry James deplored what he called "his suicidal satisfaction in reminding the reader that the story he was telling was only, after all, a make-believe"; William Dean Howells criticized his tendency to "stand about in his scene, talking it over with his hands in his pockets, interrupting the action and spoiling the illusion in which alone the truth of art resides"; and Arthur Waugh, evaluating Trollope fifty years after his death, complained that "sometimes the machinery creaks; the stage-manager peeps out between his characters;
the event is anticipated before its hour." The narrator who steps into his story to address the Dear Reader, and to talk over with him the questions raised by the narrative, had come to be regarded with condescension as primitive and unsophisticated: a kind of literary mastadon moving clumsily through his world before his kind had evolved into a viable, modern species.

In an essay on Trollope written shortly before publication of The Rhetoric of Fiction Edd Winfield Parks generally adheres to the position of the Jamesian critics on the subject of intrusive narration:

Inevitably [authorial exegesis] weakens a novel by shifting the emphasis from a primary to a secondary consideration, thus diluting the impact; and it constantly tempts the novelist to take the lazier way of explanation, avoiding the infinitely more complex task of resolving the work of art through characters in action.3

But Parks cautiously suggests that although his novels are often "blemished" by his use of authorial exegesis, Trollope manages on the whole to make "a virtue out of a defect." By confiding in the reader, Parks says, the Trollopian narrator wins his trust and flatters his ego, thereby luring him into more active participation in the story. The apologetic, tentative tone of Parks' argument, as Wayne Booth remarks, is significant, since it indicates how firmly entrenched was the ban of exegesis.4 James himself had complimented Trollope's "honest, familiar, deliberate way of treating his readers as if he were one of them," and critics of the forties and
fifties had praised his "assured communion with his audience" and claimed that "not even Henry Fielding associated with his readers on more agreeable terms," but only after the appearance of Booth's study did critics begin to consider the importance of the narrative method to the meaning of his novels.

Since then Ruth apRoberts and Arthur Mizener have praised Trollope's use of intrusive narration for ironic effect, and P. D. Edwards has argued that the most blatantly intrusive scenes, those in which the narrator frets in print over the difficulty of novel-writing, contribute to, rather than detract from, the realism of Trollope's fiction: "By openly drawing our attention to elements in the novel's plot that are dictated by convention— that belong by tradition to novels, but do not belong to real life— he . . . implies that in most other respects the novel can be taken seriously." James Kincaid has asserted that the primary function of Trollope's narrator is to "disrupt" his narrative: by doing so he "establishes control" over the imagination of his readers and can force them to accept "unusual" values.

Although the history of Trollope criticism thus reflects the shifting critical attitudes toward intrusive narration, attention to the specific narrative techniques used in his fiction is still needed. Some of these techniques— the long opening chapters, the strictly chronological development, and the unabashedly intrusive narration— are conventional ones. These, however, Trollope never uses perfunctorily, merely
because they are "there," but deliberately, as being central to the concerns of his fiction. Other features are more radical violations of convention. These include the introduction of the "plotting" as the basic narrative unit, the frequent use of the unimportant or inconclusive conclusion, and the employment of the chronicle form. The character and personality of the narrator himself, moreover, are relevant to the meaning of the novels and to their chronicle form, in much the same way, for example, as Lockwood's character is relevant to the meaning and form of Wuthering Heights. Finally, the narrator's discussions of the novel within the novel are not the fumbling intrusions which some critics have represented them to be, but rather a considered sharing with the reader of the problems confronted in the process of telling his story and a defense of the narrative methods which he has chosen to use.

The care with which Trollope selected some traditional narrative techniques and dispensed with others can be observed in the chapters which begin and end his novels. The opening chapters are filled with conventional antecedent action and character introductions, for which the narrator apologizes in Doctor Thorne and The Eustace Diamonds, but which he defends against the more fashionable in medias res opening in Chapter Nine of The Duke's Children. Cumbersome as they are, these "glacial openings," as they have been called, are necessary to the kind of fiction which Trollope
wishes to write and particularly to the kind of characteriza-
tion which he wishes to achieve. Introductory descriptions
present comparatively raw and unfinished characters, whose
natures have been hitherto almost untouched by external pres-
sures: Mr. Harding, before political accusations have been
levelled against his administration of Hiram's Hospital;
Mark Robarts, before his idleness and self-indulgence have
been exploited by Nathaniel Sowerby and his "Chaldicotes
set"; the young Martha Dunstable, before the "vanity and
vexation" of London society have become alluring to her;
Plantagenet Palliser, while he is still busy, useful, and
satisfied with himself in his position as Chancellor of the
Exchequer. They are handy starting points for the progres-
sive development of these characters in response to the new
situations with which the plot confronts them. Since sooner
or later such background material must be supplied, the nar-
rator sees the in medias res opening as a gimmick: an arti-
ficial tinkering with natural chronological order. It lures
the superficial reader a few pages into the novel, in the
same way that suspenseful plots cajole him into completing it.

Although he makes use of standard novel beginnings in
this way, the narrator undermines the traditional ending by
means of facetious remarks and, in most cases, the continua-
tion of the story in a later novel. The rejection of this
convention also contributes to progressive development of
characters, by emphasizing their continuing susceptibility to
change.
It is the intrusiveness of Trollope's narrator which has elicited the most critical comment, much of it echoing Waugh's "stage-manager" complaint. In fact, however, although Trollope's narrator may be as apt to intervene in his story as is the narrator of *Vanity Fair*, he does so in different ways and for different reasons. Thackeray's purpose in that novel, to satirize vice and folly at all levels of English society, is well served by the narrative positions--particularly by the puppetmaster, whose conscious superior presence diminishes his characters and who is always ready "if they are silly, to laugh at them confidently in the reader's sleeve: if they are wicked and heartless to abuse them in the strongest terms which politeness admits of" (8). Nor does he confine his remarks to his characters, but attacks as well the innocent-seeming customs and cherished assumptions of society. A portrait of the Osbornes calls forth the reflection that "some few score of years afterwards, when all the parties represented are grown old, what bitter satire there is in those flaunting childish family-portraits, with their farce of sentiment and smiling lies, and innocence so self-conscious and self-satisfied" (24). Elsewhere he asserts, "Did we know what our intimates and dear relations thought of us, we should live in a world that we should be glad to quit, and in a frame of mind and a constant terror, that would be perfectly unbearable" (31).
A corresponding treatment of this latter theme in Bar-
chester Towers affords a convenient perspective from which to
contrast the two narrators. Mr. Arabin, alone at the end of
his first evening at Plumstead Episcopi, never imagines that
Archdeacon and Mrs. Grantly are vigorously discussing his
personal merits and defects, and his innocence evokes the
following commentary from the narrator:

Considering how much we are all given to discuss
the characters of others, and discuss them often
not in the strictest spirit of charity, it is sing-
ular how little we are inclined to think that oth-
ers can speak ill-naturedly of us, and how angry
and hurt we are when proof reaches us that they
have done so. It is hardly too much to say that
we all of us occasionally speak of our dearest
friends in a manner in which those dearest friends
would very little like to hear themselves men-
tioned, and that we nevertheless expect that our
dearest friends shall invariably speak of us as
though they were blind to all our faults but keen-
ly alive to every shade of our virtues [20].

Whereas Thackeray's narrator assumes that one who privately
criticizes his friend is insincere in his friendship, Trol-
lope's reminds us that we indulge in ill-natured remarks
about people whom we genuinely like and that, therefore, we
should take it for granted that we are occasionally spoken
about in similar terms, even by those who genuinely like us.
Unlike Thackeray's narrator, he readily acknowledges not only
the possibility, but the great value and comfort, of long-
standing friendships. He derides only the moral blind spot
which leads us to apply different standards of friendship to
our friends than we do to ourselves. The tone in which this
judgment is delivered is characteristically ironic, rather
than satirical.

Trollope dismisses satire as presenting a false, because oversimplified, view of life. To achieve his less didactic purpose of examining character under the stress of circumstances, he needs a narrator who is considerably more flexible than Thackeray's: one characterized by a commitment to moral complexity similar to his own. The result is a storyteller who is frank in exposing shortcomings, but whose ridicule of his characters is tempered by his sympathy with them, by his appreciation of the nuances of a situation, and by the conviction, frequently expressed, that the majority of mankind would have been at least tempted to act in a similar manner, given the circumstances.

THE NARRATOR AND THE CHRONICLES

The effectiveness of this narrator in establishing the casuistic moral stance which Trollope desired derives in part from the novel's open-ended structure. The sheer volume of the resulting narrative, as we have seen, invites a leisurely scrutiny, from multiple perspectives, of the questions raised by the plot incidents. Taking advantage of this spaciousness, the narrator, especially in the Palliser chronicle, relates the plotlings by means of which the novels progress according to a consistent pattern. The brief recounting of a new plot development is followed by lengthy passages of analysis and reaction from the point of view of both the
character and the narrator himself. Depending on the importance of the scene to the novel or chronicle in which it appears, it may be repeated—once or several times—as minute developments such as a comment on the situation by a friend or antagonist generate a rethinking of it by the character involved. This formula has satisfied some readers as a skillful balance of dramatic and intrusive narration. Its consistent use is more important, however, because it establishes a considered weighing of all sides of an issue as the habitual thought-process of the Trollopian narrator. The chronicle form thus permits the narrator's plots, which are confined within the covers of the individual novels, to be eclipsed in importance by the plotlings, his preferred narrative unit, which proliferate without restraint throughout the novel series.

Intrusive commentary is a constant in the formula just outlined, and the chronicle form of the novels also has a bearing on the reliability of this commentary. The Trollopian narrator is generally considered by critics, including Wayne Booth, to be a reliable one. He himself solicits confidence by referring to himself as a "chronicler," a term which connotes accuracy and dependability, and boasting of the candor with which he treats the reader. And it is true that he performs some of the functions of the traditional, trustworthy nineteenth-century narrator: in particular the assumption of authorial omniscience, which allows him to
transcribe the private thoughts of his characters, as well as the action of the story. In Trollope's quiet novels the liveliest drama takes place within the minds of characters who are often unable or unwilling to express themselves plainly. The reader soon becomes dependent on a narrator who affords him the key to the shifting meanings of Archdeacon Grantly's five "Good heavens!" at the end of Barchester Towers (50) or the alternative interpretations of Lady Arabella's snuffle in Doctor Thorne ("which might be taken as a not very eloquent expression of thanks for the squire's solicitude, or as an ironical jeer at his want of sincerity"; 31), or who enumerates for him the "mental memoranda" made by Plantagenet Palliser while perusing a letter from his son (DC, 56). Although he does command the trust of the reader by these means, however, Trollope's chronicler, reflecting as he does what one critic calls the "divided mind" of his author, is less straightforward and dependable than he appears.

"It is the bane of my life," says Francis Arabin in Barchester Towers (48), "that on important subjects I acquire no fixed opinion. I think, and think, and go on thinking, and yet my thoughts are running ever in different directions." Trollope's two novel series record a similar process in the mind of the narrator, whose thoughts also "run" almost uncontrollably in different directions. Trollope's narrator is notorious for his loquacity, his judgments on the characters, and his interpretations of plot events, and there is a
critical fallacy which equates this kind of conventional, intrusive narration with a conventional and simplistic morality. Critics like Louis Auchincloss who charge Trollope with "complacency" assume from such commentary as the overt expression of dislike for Mr. Slope at the beginning of Bar-chester Towers that a narrow-minded preference for gentlemen and ladies was a consistent part of the narrator's system of values. His manifest enjoyment, on the other hand, of the rich but decidedly ungentle tradespeople Martha Dunstable and Roger Scatcherd, his affection for the lawyer Thomas Toogood, who makes up in kindness what he lacks in reticence and manners, and his compassionate concern for the London landlady Mrs. Roper all point to more complex attitudes about class. So does his contempt for so many of his heroes and heroines, including the parasitical Eleanor Bold and the "cross-grained" Henry Grantly of The Last Chronicle of Bar-set. In short, Ruth apRoberts' identification of Trollope as a casuist applies as well to Trollope's narrator, who constantly exposes the inadequacy of general rules. As exceptional cases accumulate in the course of the two chronicles, the irrelevance of social and moral codes becomes apparent, and we are left with what V. S. Pritchett has described as a picture of "human nature muddling along on its own rules of thumb."12

Chief among the "muddlers" is the narrator himself, as he constructs situations in which to immerse his characters
and then, observing their behavior, attempts to sort out the genuine from the sham, the valuable from the worthless, the false from the true. Retaining the conventional omniscience with regard to his characters' thoughts and motives, he frequently intrudes with judgments on them, thus encouraging the reader to depend on him for enlightenment as to the norms of the work. Here, however, the reader's expectations are frustrated, because the commentary on which he tries to rely for guidance he soon finds to be hopelessly inconsistent and contradictory.

Ample evidence of the narrator's tendency to "run ever in different directions" can be found in his reflections on the innumerable flirtations, courtships, betrothals, and marriages which crowd the two chronicles. Although the novels inevitably end in at least one marriage and often two or more, these ceremonies do not have the oneness of meaning that they do in Jane Austen, where they represent a resolution of the misunderstandings which had sprung from the folly and egotism of the characters, or in George Eliot, where they accompany and reflect a conclusion which a character has reached about the vocational purpose of his life. In Doctor Thorne, for example, Trollope's narrator vigorously reprehends the practice of marrying for money: "We are all of us . . . looking for tails . . .," he says, alluding to the fox in Aesop's fables; "we do so too often by ways that are mean enough; but perhaps there is no tail-seeker more mean . . ."
than he who looks out to adorn his bare back with a tail by marriage" (46). Other characters, however, can improve their fortunes by marrying with the narrator's approval. He sympathizes with Lucy Robarts' hopes to marry Lord Lufton, even though they were inspired at least in part by pecuniary considerations:

That girls should not marry for money we are all agreed. . . . But a title, and an estate, and an income, are matters which will weigh in the balance with all Eve's daughters-- as they do with all Adam's sons. Pride of place, and the power of living well in front of the world's eye are dear to us all;-- are, doubtless, intended to be dear. . . .

In the same pragmatic vein, he commends Mrs. Greenow's cold-blooded marriage for money to a retired merchant as having been "altogether successful": "The nursing of old Mr. Greenow had not been very disagreeable to her, nor had it taken longer than she had anticipated. She had now got all the reward that she had ever promised herself, and she really did feel grateful to his memory," (CYFH, 47). The undeniable irony in this summary is softened by its final clause and by the previous information (7) that the late Mr. Greenow had been "the happiest old man in Lancashire" with his "pattern wife." When the Widow Greenow, in her turn, is married for her money by the gallant but financially irresponsible Captain Bellfield, the narrator is sincerely congratulatory:

He had found a wife who could forgive all his past offenses,-- and also, if necessary, some future offenses; who had money enough for all his wants, and kindness enough to gratify them, and who had, moreover, . . . . strength enough to keep from him
the power of ruining them both. Reader, let us wish a happy married life to Captain and Mrs. Bellfield!" [78].

Excessive earnestness on any subject, including marriage, is regarded by the narrator as symptomatic of either an inordinate sense of self-importance or a narrow mind; consequently, he is impatient with Alice Vavasor's hesitation to marry John Grey. He suggests that she broods too much over her prospects for happiness and usefulness in the rural isolation of Grey's home in Cambridgeshire:

... That some repent no one can doubt, but I am inclined to believe that most men and women take their lots as they find them, marrying as the birds do by force of nature, and going on with their mates with a general, though not perhaps an undisturbed satisfaction, feeling inwardly assured that Providence, if it have not done the very best for them, has done for them as well as they could do for themselves with all the thought in the world [CYFH, 11].

We find him in a different frame of mind, however, in Phineas Redux, where he seems as sensible as Alice herself had been of the precariousness of a married woman's position. "[S]he, knowing nothing, takes a monstrous leap in the dark, in which everything is to be changed, and in which everything is trusted to chance," and he is moved by this observation to wonder at "the facility,— it may almost be said audacity with which women make up their minds to marry at all" (PR, 18).

The narrator, or implied author, of the novels merges at times with the real author, sharing some of his interests, pet peeves, and character traits. In the Autobiography
Trollope styles himself politically as "an advanced, but still a Conservative-Liberal," and this confused label could be applied with equal accuracy to his narrator. Trollope claims that being an "advanced, Conservative-Liberal" is a "rational and consistent phase of political existence." However that may be, the narrator's commentary on the extensive political activity in the two chronicles is ambiguous and contradictory.

The predominant "action" in the Barsetshire novels is a gradual but steady loss of power and influence by the long-established Tory squires and their High Church allies at Barchester Cathedral to a succession of newcomers to the county, only loosely allied at best, but all possessing liberal political inclinations. The reformer John Bold and, later, the latitudinarian Proudies force the discontinuance of certain comfortable church patronage arrangements, and the blood of the old families is diluted as sons and daughters of the De Courcys, Greshams, and Luftons marry the children of tradesmen. In the western division of Barsetshire a new coalition of Whigs, led by the Duke of Omnium, becomes increasingly more prominent, both socially and politically.

For the most part, the narrator's sympathies lie with the landowners and the clergy, because they are the custodians of the antiquity which has made Barsetshire "very dear to those who know it well." He speaks with affection of the lovely old Tudor homes, with their "rich colouring of years.
crowding themselves on years" and of such vestiges of chivalric times as the columns bearing the Gresham family motto (TW, 1; DT, 1; BT, 22). Those who seek to destroy "time-honoured practices" he regards as irresponsible and not to be trusted. "It would be well," he says of John Bold, "... if he could be brought to believe that old customs need not necessarily be evil, and that changes may possibly be dangerous" (TW, 2). Among the more caustic discourses of the usually even-tempered narrator is his indignant response to Mr. Slope's "Rubbish Cart" speech to Mr. Harding in Barchester Towers:

"New men are carrying out new measures, and are carting away the useless rubbish of past centuries!" What cruel words these had been; and how often are they used with all the cruelty of a Slope! A man is sufficiently condemned if it can be shown that either in politics or religion he does not belong to some new school established in the last score of years. He may then regard himself as rubbish and expect to be carted away [13].

But not all of his commentary is devoted to a defense of what is left of the old order. Other passages point just as clearly to doubts regarding the workability and even the desirability of some of the ancient institutions and traditions. The "caricature" of Monica Thorne, with her enthusiasm for Elizabethan sports and games, her dissatisfaction with even the "antiquated" grate on the Ullathorne hearth as too new-fangled, and her "dear, unmentioned wish for the restoration of some exiled Stuart" is a first, comic debunking of a nostalgia which is common among conservatives in both chronicles.
The narrator finds this longing for the past not only futile, but based on an erroneous conception of the earlier society, as well. "She imagined that a purity had existed which was now gone," he concludes of Miss Thorne; "that a piety had adorned our pastors and a simple docility our people, for which it may be feared history gave her little true warrant" (BT, 22).

In Framley Parsonage he takes a more serious look at "time-honoured practices" as potentially dangerous and destructive. In question is the distribution of church revenues, and the narrator's remarks follow the description of the poverty of the Crawleys' life at Hogglestock. In his parody of Past and Present in The Warden (15) the narrator had ridiculed what he considers a simplistic and emotional attachment to the past on Carlyle's part. Now, in exposing an abuse perpetuated from the early days of the English church to the present, he again adopts characteristics of Carlyle's style: the angry sarcasm, the archaic language, the strings of catch-phrases like "time-honoured," "gentlemanlike," "English," and "picturesque":

On what principle the remuneration of our parish clergymen was settled when the original settlement was made, no deepest, keenest lover of middle-aged, ecclesiastical black letter learning can, I take it, now say. . . . Our present arrangement of parochial incomes is beloved as being time-honoured, gentlemanlike, English, and picturesque. We would fain adhere to it closely as long as we can, but we know that we do so by the force of our prejudices, and not by that of our judgment. A time-honoured, gentlemanlike, English, picturesque arrangement is
so far very delightful. But are there not other attributes very desirable— nay, absolutely necessary— in respect to which this time-honoured, picturesque arrangement is so very deficient? [4].

The narrator's own instinctive susceptibility to the appeal of the past, that is to say, is countered by his impatience with the excessive nostalgia of so many others and by his consciousness of the injustice incorporated into many of the traditional institutions.

Compounding his distrust of nostalgia is the political maneuvering practiced by its organized embodiment— the Tory, later the Conservative, party. One of the favorite tactics by which the leaders of this faction extend their usually brief periods in office is to embrace unexpectedly a policy which the Liberals are on record as supporting but have failed to pass during their own terms in power, because it is as yet too radical for the general populace to accept. When the same measure, however, is sponsored by the Tories, it wins the support of reluctant conservatives, who want their party to remain in power, of independents and some independently minded Liberals, who believe that the reform is needed and don't care which party takes credit for achieving it, and of the people, who tend not to suspect the Conservatives of doing anything too extreme. Repeal of the Corn Laws (referred to in *Barchester Towers*) and the proposed proliferation of Bishops (in *Framley Parsonage*) are two examples of this classic ploy; a third is Prime Minister Daubeney's sudden appropriation of a proposal for Church disestablishment.
which, when offered earlier by the Liberals, had been denounced by Daubeny and his adherents as wicked and unthink- able. As the vote on this question approaches, Trollope's narrator revels in the irony of Liberals voting against their own brainchild and, conversely, of Conservatives disconsol- ately endorsing a bill which is abhorrent to them on relig- ious grounds:

Six months ago not a country gentleman in England would have listened to such a proposition without loud protests as to its revolutionary wickedness. And now, under the sole pressure of one man's au- thority, the subject had become so common that men were assured that the thing would be done even though of all things that could be done it were the worst [PR, 34].

Partisan chicanery of this sort contributes to a duality in the narrator's attitude, not only toward the Conservative party, but toward politicians in general. This passage from Phineas Redux is characteristic of his numerous comments regard- ing the dishonesty and unscrupulousness of the average Member of Parliament. Even apparent manifestations of pol- itical honesty he always views skeptically. When Phineas Finn's opponent in the Parliamentary election at Tankerville, already disqualified because of bribery from taking his seat, is brought to trial on the bribery charges, the court offic- ials and the public at large know him to be guilty. No one, however, wishes him to be punished for such a commonplace of- fense, and he is acquitted. Phineas alone is offended by the whitewash, but instead of praising him for his integrity, which the reader knows to be at least superior to that of
most other politicians, the narrator construes his dissatisfaction as personal pique. "Phineas Finn," he concludes, "who was very sore and unhappy at this time, and who consequently was much in love with purity and anxious for severity, felt himself personally aggrieved by the acquittal" (PR, 44).

But in spite of the narrator's well-documented awareness of the meanness and duplicity of all too many politicians, the British Parliamentary system is at other times capable of evoking such expressions of fervent admiration as the following from Can You Forgive Her?: "... [T]hough England does not send thither none but her best men, the best of her commoners do find their way there. It is the highest and most legitimate pride of an Englishman to have the letters M. P. written after his name" (45). Trollope had every opportunity, during his own unsuccessful campaign for a seat in Parliament, to observe the shabbiness of practical politics. His account of the experience testifies to the degradation of canvassing the electorate for votes, and campaign irregularities by his opponent ultimately led to the disfranchisement of the borough. Yet he echoes the sentiments of his narrator when he writes, "I have always thought that to sit in the British Parliament should be the highest object of ambition to every educated Englishman."14 The narrator speaks for him still when he says of the members' entrance to the House of Commons that it is "the only gate before which I have stood.
filled with envy,—sorrowing to think that my steps might never pass under it" (CYFH, 45).

The selected commentary examined above reflects the ur­banity and the homey wisdom which readers often admire in Trollope's work. The passages which describe the desire for material comforts as universal and only natural pinpoint a discrepancy between the moral and religious precepts in which his characters and readers have been educated and actual human experience. Those which argue that even people who marry thoughtlessly are in most cases reasonably satisfied with their husbands and wives attack a long literary tradition of romantic love. Such remarks have the ring of shrewd observation and plain good sense. The narrator's skill at instinctively hitting on what is relevant or true in a given situa­tion moved Robert Adams to praise Trollope's novels as "good microscopically." Their absence of coherent norms, however, led him to add that they are "bad telescopically." Every observation by the narrator which strikes us as apt, that is to say, is contradicted by some other observation elsewhere in the series.

What Adams' objection overlooks is that it is not Trol­lopes' purpose to present comprehensive, "telescopic" views at all. He does not wish to prescribe the exact proportions of love and prudence which should go into a marriage proposal or the acceptance of one, or to conclude from all the evi­dence for and against the British political system the
precise mixture of contempt and reverence one should feel towards it. Rather, he presents isolated glimpses—keen but fragmentary—which are not intended to encompass the whole of the subject scrutinized and which are all the fresher for not being ready-made pieces in a prefabricated moral scheme. His speculation that marriage can be thought about too much is a spontaneous expression of his view at that moment, as is his subsequent surprise that people make up their minds as quickly as they do to take part in such a risky enterprise. With regard to the conflicting opinions of different characters on a given subject, Cockshut notes that the narrator generally avoids taking sides with any one of them and that "each view of the question is allowed to react with the other." The same is true of the conflicting views of the narrator himself. He treats a subject by letting all of his commentary merely accumulate, with no attempt to impose an order or meaning on it. The meaning which it does acquire evolves gradually and is subject to constant modification as new judgments by the narrator are added.

The narrator's restless switching from one side of an issue to the other, coupled with a cheerful tone which is studiously free of solemnity, may give the impression of a capricious or cavalier attitude towards his subject. Such a reading of the novels would be mistaken. The inconsistency of the commentary notwithstanding, his obsessive return to such themes as attitudes towards wealth, the difficulty of
heroic action, or the excessiveness of displays of grief reflect a genuine enthusiasm for the complexities of a subject. Nor do we suspect him of deliberately misleading the reader with his frequent contradictions the way Tristram Shandy, for example, does throughout the narrative of his "life and opinions." When in Framley Parsonage Trollope's narrator characterizes young people as thoughtless and flighty, especially in the conduct of romantic affairs ("Young men in such matters are so often without any fixed thoughts! They are such absolute moths" [20].), we do not doubt that such is his opinion at the time. When in the very next novel of the Barsetshire series, The Small House at Allington, he expresses the opposite viewpoint ("We constantly talk of the thoughtlessness of youth. I do not know whether we might not more appropriately speak of its thoughtfulness" [14].), we realize that he is scrutinizing this general principle more closely. The unreliability of the Trollopian narrator, therefore, stems not from a desire to deceive, but rather from his faculty of looking at a question from multiple perspectives. It is his delight in exposing the fallacious social custom or public opinion or discovering the exceptional, special case which James described as Trollope's "great taste for the moral question." It is also the quality which imparts to Trollope's fiction, in which the more sensational "events" appear melodramatic and in poor taste, its characteristic excitement.
To an extent the switching from one viewpoint to another can be accomplished within a single novel. John Hagan, for example, enumerates flagrant inconsistencies in the treatment of class and money in *Doctor Thorne*. Lady Arabella Gresham is condemned by the narrator for her attempts to manipulate her son into marrying for money, but when Frank finally chooses his bride, the narrator exults in the couple's unexpected discovery that she is an heiress. Furthermore, Hagan protests that aristocrats in *Doctor Thorne* are reproached "both for self-deceptive and hypocritical clinging to old-blood formulae and for selling out to bourgeoise values." Fiction which poses a moral problem and neglects to resolve it, either explicitly in the commentary of the narrator or implicitly in the rewards and punishments ultimately meted out to the characters, is provoking to readers who are accustomed to reliable narrators and conventional plots. David Skilton's survey of contemporary critical response to Trollope demonstrates that he was often charged with "moral irresponsibility," because readers "did not find any moral, religious, or philosophical 'point of stability' in his work." That Trollope himself was sensitive to demands for at least a degree of consistency is evident in his autobiographical remarks about *The Warden*, which, he says, he conceived as a response to "two opposite evils," the abuse of church revenues and the undue harshness of reformers and reform newspapers in castigating the recipients of these
revenues. This double perspective, he says now, had been ill-advised:

. . . I was altogether wrong in supposing that the two things could be combined. Any writer in advocating a cause must do so after the fashion of an advocate,—or his writing will be ineffective. He should take up one side and cling to that, and then he may be powerful. There should be no scruples of conscience. Such scruples make a man impotent for such work.  

Whether or not Bradford Booth is correct in sensing in this passage "an ironic touch that is rare in Trollope's criticism," it is certainly true that the doctrine stated in it is completely at variance with the method of his fiction.

For a novelist faced with this dilemma— an instinctive desire to examine all sides of an issue in conflict with a literary convention which requires that he assume an identifiable moral stance— the chronicle form is an ideal solution. By permitting the narrator to express one reasonably coherent viewpoint in one novel and its opposite in a later one, this form affords a compromise between consistency and casuistry pleasing to author and conventional reader alike. Thus in Phineas Finn the narrator concludes that the best recourse for the honest politician affronted by the unscrupulousness of his colleagues is retreat from the political arena. Deeply as he feels both the loss of personal prestige and the contrast between the elegance of London and the tedium of Dublin, Phineas is pronounced by the narrator to be "as happy as he had ever been at any moment of his life" during the engagement to Mary Flood Jones which symbolizes his
return to private life (76). In the later Phineas Redux, however, when Phineas' second entry into Parliament likewise ends in a resignation and an engagement, the narrator expresses himself as dissatisfied, apparently having decided that involvement, after all, is better than provincial seclusion: "Of Phineas every one says that of all living men he has been the most fortunate. The present writer will not think so unless he shall soon turn his hand to some useful task" (80).

This contradiction in the narrator's moral position is thus distributed over two novels, the second and fourth of the Palliser series. As a result, its disunifying effect is diminished. Readers of only one of these works will sense no discrepancy in the treatment of this subject at all; those of both books will find it less obtrusive than if it had occurred within the covers of a single novel. Only the reader of the entire chronicle recognizes the range of diverse narrative commentary which it contains, and such a reader is likely to share the narrator's relish for the continuing, minute scrutiny of intricate moral questions. Otherwise, he will rebel against the repetition in the series (as did the Athenaeum Club member responsible for the demise of Mrs. Proudie) and will not read it to its conclusion.

THE NARRATOR AS CHARACTER

The narrator of Vanity Fair is more self-conscious than that of Barry Lyndon, and the fog scene at the beginning of
Bleak House was not written by the genial narrator of Pickwick Papers. The narrative voice in Trollope's novels, on the other hand, is remarkably consistent. The term "chronicle" implies by definition that the same narrator, or at least a similar narrative stance, will prevail in all its volumes, but even novels like Orley Farm, The Belton Estate, and An Old Man's Love, which do not belong to a sequence, reflect the familiar techniques of the chronicles of Barsetshire and of the Pallisers: minimal plots, complaints against the necessity of describing the appearance of his young female characters, and the repeated defense of older characters cast in the role of lovers. Within the two series themselves, the narrator's allusions to his earlier or later chronicles establishes him as the same "person" from novel to novel (FP, 14; ED, 79; PR, 2). His presence is crucial to the reader trying to make his way through the confounding inconsistencies of the successive books, even though it is his own antithetical treatment of similar situations which has been responsible for the perplexity in the first place.

His chronicles include, in addition to the recording of marriages, births, deaths, and other historical data concerning English families and counties, insights into the ordinary experience of his people which convince the reader of his wisdom and encourage a reliance on his commentary. One basis for these insights is his persistently moderate view of human nature. That we are all prone to pettiness and meanness is
the theme of numerous obiter dicta in which he extends a judgment on one of his characters to include mankind in general. We are more likely to be piqued than pleased by the worldly successes of our fellows (PR, 32; FP, 31). We are given to unseemly enjoyment of the acrimony of a personal quarrel (PM, 34). We are often shockingly obstinate: "The cross-grainedness of men is so great that things will often be forced to go wrong, even when they have the strongest possible natural tendency of their own to go right" (LCB, 63). He denies, on the other hand, that such frailty is incompatible with an essential decency of conduct, asserting that people generally act on "that half-prudential, half-unconscious knowledge of what is fitting, useful, and best under the circumstances" with which most of us are endowed (CYFH, 50) and stating his conviction that the "reputed sinners" of the world "are much more numerous than the sinners" (SHA, 43).

He understands instinctively the nuances of comportment by which one person achieves power over another. Numerous characters cultivate the benefits to be gained merely from standing while an antagonist is seated before him, an advantage analyzed by the narrator as follows:

It is generally considered an offensive thing for a gentleman to keep his seat while another is kept standing before him. . . . [B]ut we are inclined to say that it never produces half the discomfort or half the feeling of implied inferiority that is shown by a great man who desires his visitor to be seated while he himself speaks from his legs. Such a solecism in good breeding, when construed into English, means this: "The accepted rules of
courtesy in the world require that I should offer you a seat. If I did not do so, you would bring a charge against me... of being arrogant and ill-mannered; I will obey the world; but, nevertheless, I will not put myself on an equality with you. Sit, therefore, at my bidding, and I'll stand and talk at you!" [BT, 26].

This tactic is used skillfully by Mrs. Proudie during her interview with Mrs. Quiverful, but less so by her husband the bishop against Josiah Crawley, who leaps to his feet each time the bishop himself rises (LCB, 18). Whenever possible, Lady Lufton conducts her little power struggles in her private office at Framley, where an aura of potency and administrative efficiency is created by the very furnishings, such as the businesslike cane-bottomed chair in which she sits "bolt upright" while at work in the chamber. But the narrator knows that "there was another arm chair, an easy, cozy chair, which stood by the fireside; and for those who had caught Lady Lufton napping in that chair of an afternoon, some of this awe had perhaps been dissipated" (FP, 35).

He shows us how Lily Dale, jilted by Adolphus Crosbie, and Emily Lopez, humiliated by her husband's failure and suicide, capitalize on their grief as a means of increasing their influence over family and friends (SHA, 57; PM, 75). Even the accident of physical form and features helps to determine one's standing among his associates. Contemplating the dominance of one member of an Oxfordshire hunting club over another, who is at least his equal in class, intellect, and sportsmanship, the narrator finally attributes the
unevenness of the relationship to differences of appearance:

I think it had come from the outward look of the men, from the form of each, from the gait and visage, which in one was good and in the other insignificant. The nature of such dominion of man over man is very singular, but this is certain that when once obtained in manhood it may be easily held [CYFH, 16].

When the exigencies of story-telling permit, he likes nothing better than to bring his own extensive experience to bear on the problematic social situations confronted by his characters. The result is a considerable body of analytical commentary, which includes his minute classification schemes touching a number of practical matters: varieties of waiters at a country inn (LCB, 42), techniques of asking a friend for money (LCB, 44), and methods of obtaining a seat at a crowded courtroom trial (PR, 61). It includes as well an abundance of sagacious sounding axioms ("It is seldom that a bad person expects to be accounted good," ED, 9), homely proverbs ("... the man well spoken of may steal a horse, while he who is of evil repute may not look over a hedge," PF, 11), and analogies like that between broaching a disagreeable subject of conversation and stepping into a cold shower: "It is better to pull the string at once when you are in the shower-bath, and not to stand shivering, thinking of the inevitable shock which you can only postpone for a few minutes. Lady Mac Leod had in this case pulled the string, and thus reaped the advantage of her alacrity" (CYFH, 15). Such observations, with their ring of folksy, traditional wisdom, add an
authority and stability to the individual plotlings which they accompany. At the same time, like all proverbs, they serve not to articulate an issue in its entirety, but only to present one possible viewpoint concerning it, and as such they lend themselves to the contradictory treatment of the issue throughout the chronicle.

In the course of these observations the storyteller emerges as a character in his own right, a genial volubility and digressiveness being the salient attributes of his personality. It is generally agreed that he is a friendly fellow, a pleasant guide through the vast expanse of the chronicles. Given his considerable impatience with what he deems the perverse conventionality of his readers, this view of him as an intimate friend should be qualified more carefully than it usually has been, but it is essentially correct. The hobby horses, obiter dicta, and characteristic expressions ("To give him his due . . ."; "He taught himself to think . . .") and even single words (one thinks immediately of "interne-cine") are unifying elements in the two novel series, countering the inconsistency of many of his judgments.

Pages are devoted to his pet subjects. The intricacies of the postal system are a favorite preoccupation, and he is particularly intrigued by the unexpected complications which retard the delivery of letters (FP, 5; DT, 43) and by the circumstances which cause them to be delivered, day after day, precisely at breakfast time, so that, as he puts it in
The Last Chronicle of Barset, the letters almost "formed a part of the morning meal." He repeatedly depicts a lady's receiving an agitating or important letter at the breakfast table and stresses the delicacy of this situation: the recipient's desire to peruse and consider her letter as opposed to her wish to retain her composure before her companions, and her companions' combined curiosity as to the contents of the letter and desire to spare the feelings of their friend (LCB, 23, 33, 36; CYFH, 31; ED, 15). These peculiarities of the British post have no thematic significance and only a perfunctory function in the plot, but the allusions to them throughout the novels are always welcome, because they represent the return to familiar and enjoyable material. Amid the welter of conflicting data in the two chronicles the narrator's interest in and consistent stance regarding the arrival of the daily mail is gratifying and leads the reader into intimacy with him.

The hunting scene is also frequently present in Trollope's novels: too frequently for critics like Chauncey Tinker, who finds the hunting sections "a weariness to the mind." Trollope testifies in his autobiography to his love for fox-hunting and his delight in sneaking a "hunting chapter" into as many novels as possible. Contrary to what we might be led by such a declaration to expect, the hunting scene in Trollope's fiction is often germane to its context, and at other times it contributes to the portrait of the way
of life of the leisure class. There are instances, however— notably the episode of 'Nappie's grey horse' in The Eustace Diamonds (38) -- in which the hunting story seems to have been inserted simply for the narrator's and the reader's enjoyment. Such episodes are immaterial to the story in progress, as is the joke told in Doctor Thorne about the young heir who, upon succeeding to his estate, scratches out the epitaph Resurgam on his father's tombstone and substitutes the motto Requiescat in pace. They do, however, establish the narrator as a gentlemanly sort whose education has included Latin, whose passionate interest is hunting, and whose conversation is that of a Londoner telling anecdotes at his club or of a country squire swapping stories over a glass of wine after dinner. The sprinkling of Latin phrases, the digressive episodes, and the hunting scenes contribute much to the characteristically hearty, masculine tone detected in Trollope's novels by Henry James.

In personality and character, in short, he does conform to Howells' characterization of him as the loquacious narrator intruding into his narrative and "talking it over with his hands in his pockets." But what he has to say about it is often, as we have seen, erratic, contradictory, deliberately confused, in marked contrast to the unambiguous, occasionally didactic commentary of the typical eighteenth- and nineteenth-century narrators. This discrepancy suggests that the narrator who actually emerges in Trollope's novels is a parody of
the conventional storyteller, the congenial character having been retained, but the reliable judgments on his narrative having given way to conflicting, unreliable ones. The benefits which Trollope can derive from such a parody are two-fold. First, the narrator's frank and friendly tone is reassuring to the reader and makes him better able to tolerate the inconsistencies in the commentary. The coherence of the narrator as character counteracts the incoherence of his morality, thereby making the moral relativity of Trollope's fiction workable.

Secondly, the moralizing which he does in his role as intrusive commentator on the action of the novel can be used to reinforce Trollope's concerns as a novelist. His recognition of human susceptibility to little vices and infirmities is in harmony with Trollope's repudiation of traditional character types. It posits a fundamental sameness among people, rather than classifying them as "good" or "bad." George Vavasor must make an effort in order to be attractive and agreeable to his traveling companions, not because he, as the villain of Can You Forgive Her?, is worse than the average person, but because "... men and women, when they show themselves at their best, seldom do so without an effort. If the object be near the heart, the effort will be pleasant to him who makes it ...; but, not the less, will the effort be there" (5). His judgments of aggressive characters like Mrs. Proudie and Archdeacon Grantly encourage the reader to
pay less heed to the large actions of the plot and more to the introspective passages of the plotlings, where the real work of characterization is done. As he does with conventional plot endings, Trollope maintains the character of the conventional narrator but distorts it and uses it for his own purposes.

THE NARRATOR AS SELF-CONSCIOUS FICTIONIST

Trollope's concerns as a novelist, moreover, are his narrator's as well, for to the traditional character of the narrator as storyteller and commentator he joins that of the narrator as author, or story creator. In this third avatar, that of self-conscious fictionist, he incorporates a theory of the novel directly into the text of the chronicles. Although narrators in the fiction of some of his contemporaries, notably Thackeray and Eliot, remark occasionally on the limitations of the conventional plot,26 Trollope's conducts the most comprehensive discussion of the novel form since the introductory chapters of Tom Jones. "When he interrupts . . .," as one critic puts it, "he is not as Thackeray. . . . He is as Fielding, who discusses with his readers whether he is using the best technical devices for conveying to them the truth as it is his individual discovery."27

Specifically, he is conscious of the distortions which occur in the "story" during its transcription to the page and desirous of easing the difficulties which they pose for the reader. "The scene in the bishop's study took longer in the
acting than in the telling," he will remind us (BT, 26), or, realizing that two of the facts of his narrative appear to contradict one another, he conscientiously moves to "explain away this little discrepancy" (CYFH, 1). He recognizes the limitations of a strictly chronological narration, to the extent that he flirts with the "in medias res" technique in The Duke's Children, but he remains generally committed to chronological order, nonetheless, because of its greater utility. Deviations from it are usually accompanied by formal explanations, such as the following from The Small House at Allington:

As I would wish those who are interested in Mr. Palliser's fortunes to know the ultimate result of this adventure, and as we shall not have space to return to his affairs in this little history, I may, perhaps, be allowed to press somewhat forward, and tell what Fortune did for him before the close of that London season [55].

Epistolary narration he finds to be a more successful means of achieving immediacy in his story than in medias res. Besides preserving chronological order, this form, which he adopts for one chapter of Doctor Thorne and brief passages of other novels, "enables the author to tell his story, or some portion of his story, with more natural trust than any other" (DT, 38). It also permits the narrator to gratify himself and the reader with samples of one of his favorite literary forms, the personal letter.

As a practitioner of the art of novel writing, the narrator ranges in his moods from jocularity to despair. At
times, confidently in control of his story, he will share a joke about the narrative with his privileged companion, the reader:

   It would be useless here [he says of a marital dispute between Bishop and Mrs. Proudie] to repeat the arguments that were used on each side, and needless to record the result. Those who are married will understand very well how the battle was lost and won, and those who are single will never understand it till they learn the lesson which experience alone can give [BT, 25].

At other times he appears almost overwhelmed by the difficulties of his craft. The opening of Doctor Thorne finds him struggling with a formidable amount of background information, without presenting which, however, he realizes that he cannot "make poor Mr. Gresham hem and haw and turn himself in his arm chair in a natural manner" or "bring in my doctor speaking his mind freely among the big-wigs" (2). He is impatient with such requisite elements of the novel as character descriptions and the dovetailing of the narrative to fill a predetermined number of pages and volumes. From time to time there is a mock admission of failure, such as his sudden recognition at the end of Doctor Thorne that "I have not one page-- not half a page-- for the wedding dress. But what matters? Will it not be all found written in the columns of the Morning Post?" (47).

   Every facet of storytelling has its pitfalls. He knows, for example, that the transition to a subplot which has last been treated several chapters back can be awkward, particularly when the characters being reintroduced are minor ones.
"The reader, no doubt, has forgotten all he ever knew of Mr. Jones, the pugilistic tailor," he laments in *Can You Forgive Her?* (72). And he is chagrined at his own inaccuracies as a narrator:

The poor fictionist very frequently finds himself to have been wrong in his description of things in general. . . . He catches salmon in October; or shoots his partridges in March. His dahlias bloom in June, and his birds sing in the autumn. He opens the opera-houses before Easter, and makes Parliament sit on a Wednesday evening. And then those terrible meshes of the Law! [PF, 29].

As a partial solution to this latter difficulty, he endorses the proposal that "the modern English writers of fiction should among them keep a barrister, in order that they may be set right on such points as will arise in their own narratives" (DT, 45).28

If, as Howells complained, commentary like this destroys the illusion of reality in a novel, it also attacks the notion of the inspired writer which Trollope dismisses with such contempt in the *Autobiography*. The novelist, these passages remind us, practices a difficult and demanding craft. He is faced with a choice of techniques for telling his story, with problems of proportion and clarity, and with the danger of inaccuracy. To believe that the story tells itself is to misunderstand the method and therefore the meaning of the novel. Such passages, however, can also be misleading. In them the narrator appears as an earnest, sometimes almost bumbling type, who worries about his ability to handle the responsibilities of authorship. At other times he is more
aggressive, and the ultimate target of his attacks is the reader.

Whereas Fielding had been concerned primarily with the defense of his "new Province," the novel, Trollope's narrator often criticizes the features which, since Tom Jones, had become part of the standard equipment of the genre. In addition to the conventions of heroes, villains, and happy endings, discussed above, he attacks the sensationalism and sentimentality by which some authors retain the interest of readers. He accuses Dickens of using "glaring colours" (TW, 15) and compares Parliament at its most rancorous to a "sensational novel" (CYFH, 42). He repeatedly objects to a favorite tool of the sensationalist, suspense, which he regards as a particularly shabby means of inducing the reader to finish the novel. Both he and his characters (Mary Thorne, for instance, in Doctor Thorne, 46) ridicule Mrs. Radcliffe's mysteries, and his refusal to demean his own narratives with such base appeals to reader interest is the subject of some of his more vehement commentary.

Perhaps the most widely quoted passage in Trollope's vast canon is that in the fifteenth chapter of Barchester Towers where the narrator "ventures to reprobate that system which goes so far to violate all proper confidence between the author and his readers by maintaining nearly to the end of the third volume a mystery as to the fate of their favourite personage." The determination to always "tell the truth
honestly and at once," as he puts it (SHA, 12), reflects the conviction that both the appeal and the importance of fiction derive from the gradual depiction of the motives and conduct of characters, not from the narration of suspenseful action. He defies the reader to apply this standard to his own novel: "Nay, take the third volume if you please— learn from the last pages all the results of our troubled story, and the story shall have lost none of its interest, if indeed there be any interest to lose."

His precept that "the author and the reader should move along together in full confidence with each other" he observes faithfully in his own practice. He quickly allays any fears that Eleanor Harding will accept either of her objectionable suitors, stating flatly, "I would not for the value of this chapter have it believed by a single reader that my Eleanor could bring herself to marry Mr. Slope, or that she should be sacrificed to a Bertie Stanhope." When Lizzie Eustace's diamonds are "stolen" for the second time, he confides to the reader the location of the jewels— a fact known to none of the principals in the novel. "The chronicler states this at once," he explains, "as he scorns to keep from his reader any secret that is known to himself" (ED, 52).

Occasionally, however, when the guilt or innocence of a central character is in question, he submits to temptation and allows suspense to build for some time before abruptly solving the mystery. When this happens, he is likely to deny
that there has been any suspense at all. "I venture to think
. . . that Lady Mason's confession at the end of the last
chapter will not have taken anybody by surprise," he says af­
ter her admission in Orley Farm (44) that she has committed
forgery and perjury. In Phineas Redux after Mr. Boncassen
has been murdered and Phineas has been accused of the crime,
he expresses a similar assumption:

The reader has probably perceived, from the first
moment of the discovery of the body on the steps
at the end of the passage, that Mr. Bonteen had
been killed by that ingenious gentleman, the Rev.
Mr. Emilius, who found it to be worth his while to
take the step with the view of suppressing his ene­
my's evidence as to his former marriage [49].

The truth is, however, that the reader is surprised both at
the fact of Lady Mason's guilt and at the unorthodox revela­
tion of it halfway through the novel, and although he un­
doubtedly is convinced of Phineas' innocence, he certainly
has not "perceived" Mr. Emilius' guilt until informed of it
by the narrator. In Orley Farm the concealment of Lady
Mason's guilt serves other purposes of the narrator, such as
winning the reader's tolerance for imperfect characters.

Well aware of the limitations of the reader's knowledge, the
narrator could not hope for these protestations about the
transparency of the plot to be taken literally. It is more
likely that they are expressive of a wishful thinking on his
part. Convinced that suspense is sensationalistic and unaes­
thetic, he attempts to disclaim his use of it even for a
chapter or two. His assumed confidence that the reader has
unraveled the mystery on his own is a measure of his relucrance to have his own narrative regarded as suspenseful.

The narrator divides the responsibility for the offending novel conventions among a number of parties. Longman's, the publisher of *Barchester Towers*, is chided for a rigid insistence on the fashionable three-volume format, when the novel requires "a fourth" for its development (43). Best-selling novelists are accused of "absurdly strong colouring" (TW, 15) to make their fiction attractive to the general public. When he finds himself perpetuating in practice a novelistic tradition which he has rejected in theory, he accentuates the convention in an elaborate manner, as if to chastise himself publicly for indulging in it. Suddenly aware, in the final chapter of *Framley Parsonage*, that he has just contrived the typical "happy ending," he gamely entitles the chapter "How They Were All Married, Had Two Children, and Lived Happy Ever After" and begins it with the announcement that "we have four couple of sighing lovers with whom to deal in this our last chapter. . . ." When the conflict in the love plot of *Barchester Towers* is prolonged, he ingenuously admits that he is deliberately maintaining suspense:

Had she given way and sobbed aloud . . . , he would have melted at her feet and declared his love. Everything would have been explained, and Eleanor would have gone back to Barchester with a contented mind. . . . But then where would have been my novel? She did not cry, and Mr. Arabin did not melt [30].

Critics he regards as merely annoying in their literal
attention to details (DT, 45; PF, 29): he does not hold them accountable for cultivating in the reading public a taste for conventional plots and character types. Instead, it is for the reader himself, whose stubbornly traditional literary expectations sustain these elements, that the bulk of his criticism is reserved.

His irritation with the reader manifests itself in needling remarks, some of them quite gratuitous. "The careful reader, if such there be, will not require the summary which is to follow of the facts of the Bonteen case," he says (PR, 67), strongly implying that there is no such careful reader. Nostalgia in readers is exposed in the person of Miss Diana de Midellage (BT, 22) and their pettiness in the quarrel between Kitty and Susan over the conclusion of a fashionable novel (BT, 15). Any pretension to intelligence on the part of the reader is rudely deflated in the Dale family's discussion of novel reading, the upshot of which is that "... so many readers are fools... And yet they get something out of their reading" (SHA, 44).

Most of his complaints to and about readers, however, are more pertinent to the central points of his theory of the novel. At the conclusion of Framley Parsonage, where the "four couple of sighing lovers" are waiting to approach the altar, he addresses his audience as "Dear, affectionate, sympathetic readers" to emphasize the sentimentality underlying their insistence on romantically happy endings. Determined
to thwart this expectation at last, he denies his readers a marriage in his next novel, *The Small House at Allington*, where Lily Dale refuses John Eames to the end. In *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, the final novel of the series, he goes so far as to deliberately reopen this courtship, changing the circumstances to raise Eames in Lily's esteem and thus make the marriage appear likely to the reader, before resolving it for good with a last "no" from Lily and the following admonition from himself: "I can only ask the reader to believe that she was in earnest, and express my own opinion, in this last word that I shall ever write respecting her, that she will live and die as Lily Dale" (77).

It is the reader's habit of classifying characters as pure types-- as either uniformly virtuous or uniformly villainous-- which the narrator protests most strenuously, as destructive of the moral complexity and the unconventional structure which he wishes to preserve in his narratives. He finds it difficult to arouse sympathy for the antagonists of the main characters: for people like Mrs. Proudie, Nathaniel Sowerby, and Ferdinand Lopez. He attempts to combat the stereotype of the villain in terms the conventional reader can understand:

It is ordained that all novels should have a male and a female angel and a male and a female devil. If it be considered that this rule is obeyed in these pages, the latter character must be supposed to have fallen to the lot of Mrs. Proudie. But she was not all devil. There was a heart inside that stiff-ribbed bodice. . . [BT, 26].
A more serious result of this traditional attitude toward character is that readers impose heroic standards of conduct on the decidedly unheroic men and women who are the main characters in his narratives. Time after time he breaks into the story to defend the imperfections of Septimus Harding, Frank Gresham, Ludovic Lufton, John Eames, Henry Grantly, Phineas Finn, and Lord Silverbridge against what he knows will be an indignant reaction by readers hungry for valor and gallantry in their heroes. Nor is his tone in such commentary always defensive. Implicit in the following passage is the accusation that readers who carp at the faults of the characters dear to the narrator are ill-natured and unduly censorious:

And now it is to be feared that every well-bred reader of these pages will lay down the book with disgust, feeling after all, the heroine is unworthy of sympathy [he interjects after Eleanor Harding boxes Mr. Slope's ears]. She is a hoyden, one will say. At any rate she is not a lady, another will exclaim. I have suspected her all through, a third will declare; she has no idea of the dignity of a matron, or of the peculiar propriety which her position demands [BT, 40].

It is a chapter entitled "Too Bad for Sympathy" in The Eustace Diamonds (35) which contains the soberest and most detailed commentary in the two chronicles on the subject of the flawed character. "But why should one tell the story of creatures so base?" he has the reader ask of Frank Greystock, who is unfaithful in love; "One does not willingly grovel in gutters, or breathe fetid atmospheres, or live upon garbage."
He proceeds to answer the reader's objections, arguing first that in life people frequently violate precepts regarding fidelity, often with apparent justification, and then raising the question of whether men and women should be depicted in literature as they exist in life or according to an idealized conception. To do the latter, he says, illustrating his point with allusions to Tennyson's King Arthur and Raphael's Madonnas, is relatively easy, but the merits of such "untrue portraiture" are doubtful: "There may be made for us a pretty thing to look at, no doubt;-- but we know that the pretty thing is not really visaged as the mistress whom we serve."

The discussion ends with an important passage, the only explicit statement of its kind in the two chronicles, in which the narrator places the rejection of conventional character types into the larger context of the didactic purpose of his fiction:

To make [our friends] and ourselves somewhat better-- not by one spring heavenwards to perfection, because we cannot so use our legs-- but by slow climbing, is, we may presume, the object of all teachers, leaders, legislators, spiritual pastors, and masters. He who writes tales such as this, probably also has, very humbly, some such object distantly before him. . . . The true picture of life as it is, if it could be adequately painted, would show men what they are, and how they might rise, not, indeed, to perfection, but one step first, and then another on the ladder.

The intrusive Trollopian narrator, we have noted, is frequently a spokesman for Trollope himself, reflecting his "divided mind" on political and social issues, sharing his personal interest in hunting and the post, and treasuring a
knowledge of Latin as the mark of a gentleman. In the pas-
sages of novel theory just examined the narrator or implied
author specifically poses as the real author, frequently re-
ferring to himself as "the novelist." Here, too, he echoes
the opinions of Anthony Trollope, who speaks in the Autobiog-
graphy of the "high nature" of the novelist's work in "teach-
ing" the reader valuable "lessons":

. . .[T]he novelist, if he have a conscience, must
preach his sermons with the same purpose as the
clergyman, and must have his own system of ethics.
If he can do this efficiently, if he can make vir-
tue alluring and vice ugly, while he charms his
readers instead of wearying them, then I think Mr
Carlyle need not call him distressed . . . nor
question whether he be or not one of the most fool-
ish of existing mortals.29

Whereas the autobiographical passage, however, is writ-
ten in a tone of conviction, the commentary in the novel is
modest. The novelist's goal of "making people better" is de-
scribed there as vague and "distant," and the discussion is
highly qualified. Just how seriously to regard these state-
ments of didactic purpose is one of the unsettled questions
of Trollope criticism: preaching sermons seems to be the
last thing on Trollope's mind. The clear delineation between
"vice" and "virtue" in the autobiographical passage, at any
rate, is certainly irrelevant to his art, which rejects such
extremes. More convincing is the passage from the novel,
where "the picture of life as it is" becomes the primary ob-
jective, and any moral conclusions must evolve naturally from
this picture. The work of fiction here seems to describe
Trollope's approach more truthfully than the non-fiction work. The narrator, confronting the problems of novel-writing first-hand in the narrative, can give us a better accounting of the author's purpose than the author himself.
NOTES


4Wayne Booth, p. 27.


7Kincaid, p. 34.

8Bradford Booth, p. 169.

9Mizener, p. 170.


NOTES

15 Adams, p. 28.
16 Cockshut, p. 148.
17 James, p. 53.
19 Skilton, pp. 58-78.
20 Autobiography, p. 95.
21 Bradford Booth, p. 35.
22 Tinker, p. 427.
23 Autobiography, p. 64.
24 For a discussion of the comic function served by hunting scenes in Trollope, see Kincaid, pp. 59-60, 236-240.
25 James, p. 51.
26 See p. 28 above.
27 West, p. 137.
29 Autobiography, p. 223.
CHAPTER 5

THE TWO CHRONICLES: THE CHRONICLES OF BARSETSHIRE

Mark Schorer has defined the social setting of Jane Austen's novels as a conflict between "a feudalistic order that does not know that it is dying and a bourgeois order that is not yet confident that it is quite alive." Although the former way of life was ultimately to give way to the latter, says Schorer, "in the exact time that she was writing and from her country perspective, Jane Austen can hardly be expected to tell us this in so many words." Trollope, whose first novel series is written from the same "country perspective" but forty years later than Austen's works, does document the beginnings of this change "in so many words." The large financial reserves of aristocratic and landowning families like the De Courcys and the Greshams are beginning to shrink; the power of the established church is threatened by reformers; continental influences, symbolized in Barsetshire by the Italianate Stanhope family, scandalize the complacent, provincial Britons. As Schorer implies, however, such changes were more dramatically evident in London, and it is in the second chronicle, where the city is the predominant setting, that the economic and social evolution is more strikingly advanced. Now the old families like the
Standishes, the Eustaces, and the Whartons, vitiated by age and self-indulgence, are helpless against the initiatives of their social inferiors and, in some cases, against their own dissipation. Foreigners like Madame Max Goesler fight their way to an established position in London society, and a majority of legislators in the House of Commons acknowledge the eventual inevitability of church disestablishment.

Preferences for one of Trollope's chronicles over the other traditionally have been founded on the supposed position of each vis-a-vis the theme of change. Skilton cites contemporary critical opinion to demonstrate that during his lifetime Trollope "remained the author of The Chronicles of Barsetshire, whose other novels all fell short of that series." The reason for the popularity of the earlier chronicle, he suggests, is that the clerical society of Barsetshire provides the "perfect form" for the depiction of incipient social transformation: "... safe yet racy, pricking the pomposity of individuals without threatening the institution, and showing a calmly secluded life in tension with the forces of change in the metropolis." The critical commonplace that this "calmly secluded life" has nostalgic appeal is fostered by Trollopians like Msgr. Ronald Knox and Spencer von Nichols, who were sentimentally attached to Barsetshire and given to charting maps of the county.

Gradually, however, the Parliamentary novels have replaced the Barsetshire books in the favor of readers and
critics. The most recent manifestation of this shift in the relative popularity of the two chronicles is the twenty-six-part BBC serialization of the Palliser novels, which also ran on American television. And despite Henry James' complaint that the political novels were so dull as to be unreadable, the entire series has now been published for the mass market in Oxford Paperback editions. The revision of Trollope criticism began in 1955, when A. O. J. Cockshut argued that Trollope's later novels, with their social and political upheaval, had been wrongly neglected. He also did them the estimable service of labeling them "pessimistic," thereby helping to dispel the stereotype of quaint irrelevance which the Barsetshire novels (or rather, the misreading of them) had lent to all of Trollope's other work. Cockshut's premise that the gloom of the later novels is attributable to Trollope's own growing pessimism has been successfully refuted by a number of critics, but his study did increase interest in Trollope's later work and stood him in good stead during recent years when the "dark" novels of Dickens and other nineteenth-century novelists received considerable critical attention. Furthermore, Cockshut's description of Trollope's fictional techniques, especially in The Eustace Diamonds, constitutes the first significant twentieth-century criticism of the Palliser novels.

In fact, however, these two critical positions— a preference for the Barsetshire novels because they present a
"nostalgic" glimpse of a stable, secure world and a partiality for the political novels because they reflect a more contemporary malaise—are equally fallacious and distort both of the chronicles. It is true that the period during which the two series were written was a time of accelerating change in Britain and that the Barsetshire and Palliser novels record the gradual dissolution of an old way of life and its replacement by another. However, to regard the two series as virtual opposites, one of them depicting the old way of life and the other the breakdown of it, is to oversimplify the relationship between them.

The two chronicles, each of them exploring the theme of change, are actually similar in more ways than they are different. It is true that the grace of living declines during the course of the Palliser novels: there are no more purely ornamental dukes after the death of the old Duke of Omnium in Phineas Redux. It is true that the "villains" from the rising classes (Lizzie Greystock and Ferdinand Lopez) are doubly destructive because their victims from the old, established families like the Eustaces and the Whartons are by now too enervated to defend themselves. These circumstances, however, are only the culmination of changes which have been underway since the beginning of the Barsetshire series, where the "elysium" of Hiram's Hospital is invaded by the reformer John Bold, his lawyer Finney, and his advocate, the Jupiter. Clashes between the old and the new continue throughout the
chronicles of Barsetshire: church reformers soon capture the deanery; Barsetshire families like the De Courcys and Greshams become increasingly indebted to capitalists like Roger Scatcherd and marry their children to other successful tradesmen in order to restore their wealth; Lady Lufton struggles against the growing influence of the Barsetshire Whigs and low churchmen and against her son's desire to marry the "insignificant" daughter of a London physician.

The center of social change is London, the political and commercial capital of the country, whose influence is gradually expanding with the continuing infiltration of the countryside by Londoners like Bold, the Proudies and Mr. Slope, Moffat, Gagebee, Miss Dunstable, and Crosbie. Another agency of accelerating change in Barsetshire is its residents' increasingly frequent visits to the metropolis. In the first half of the chronicle the only occasion which will take a Barsetshire clergyman or Tory squire to the city is a consultation with his lawyer, but beginning with Framley Parsonage, Barsetshire-bred people spend much more time there. Lady Lufton does not enjoy her brief annual residence there during the season, but she believes that her position requires it; Mrs. Grantly usually does not visit London during the season, but her husband's professional aspirations and her daughter's marital prospects lead her to do so this year; and Lucy Robarts, after her marriage, soon learns to be at ease amid the sophisticated society there.
The Johnny Eames story of *The Small House at Allington* is the first subplot to be set in London; it is continued in *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, where Lily Dale briefly joins Eames and Crosbie in London, and another only tenuously related narrative, the Bayswater romance, is also added. The Barsetshire series, then, is not the pastoral idyll which some readers have considered it; rather, it reflects from the outset a preoccupation with change and with the seat of that change, London. Although the transformation of society is further advanced by the time of the Palliser novels, the difference between the two chronicles in this respect is one of degree, rather than of kind.

Nor is the evolution from the old way of life to the new a wholly destructive trend, despite the narrator's lament throughout the Barsetshire series of the passing of the gentle old bishop, the Chase of Chaldicotes, the 1820 port, and other "old symbols." For he knows, as well, that much of what has passed was not gracious: the dissoluteness of such aristocrats as the De Courcys and the old Duke of Omnium, the abuses of ecclesiastical power, the obstinate clinging to romantic notions and obsolete values of which Monica Thorne and Lily Dale, in different ways, are guilty. In *The Warden*, where Trollope's aim is to expose "two opposite evils," the narrator maintains a resolute impartiality, pronouncing harsh judgments against partisans on both sides of the Hiram's Hospital controversy. John Bold he condemns as arrogant;
Archdeacon Grantly, as overbearing and excessively ambitious; the editor of The Jupiter, as heartless and hypocritical.

The dissatisfaction with this approach which Trollope expresses in the Autobiography has caused confusion among his readers, who know that he retains an impartial narrator throughout the remaining Barsetshire novels and the Palliser chronicle, as well. Certainly, though, it is not the unbiased narrator that Trollope is renouncing here, but rather the technique used in The Warden of continually alternating the scenes told from Harding's point of view with those told from Eleanor's, John Bold's, Grantly's, and the old bedesmen's. The result is a balanced treatment of the Hiram's Hospital controversy, but none of the sustained treatment of character which is Trollope's first concern as a novelist. The Archdeacon, in particular, suffers so from this kind of truncated development that the narrator apologizes for the one-dimensional quality of the characterization.

In the Barsetshire novels after The Warden Trollope dispenses with the "two opposite evils" approach to the subject of reform and tells his tale from the perspective of the Tory clergy and gentry. That he does so does not in itself indicate a conservative bias. Historical accuracy demands that these characters be the more numerous, given the setting of rural England in the 1850's, and it is natural enough that the conflict in this first chronicle be presented from their point of view. Thus the narrator summarizes Lady Lufton's
opinions of the "Chaldicotes set," rather than theirs of her, and filters Mr. Slope's maiden sermon at Barchester Cathedral through the ears of his horrified listeners, the old clergy-men of Barchester's ecclesiastical establishment. Throughout the chronicle, as a result, most of the attractive characters are Barsetshire Tories-- the Hardings, Grantlys, and Greshams, Lady Lufton and her "Framley set," the Dales and De Guests, and the Crawleys-- who are made to suffer at the hands of intrusive Londoners and Barsetshire Whigs. The narrator, as well, enters into the conservative point of view, describing Mr. Slope as a loathsome, "clammy" individual with whom he "never could endure to shake hands" (BT, 4) and qualifying the unflattering portraits of Mrs. Proudie and Nathaniel Sowerby only after they have lost their power to oppose the Grantly-Lufton alliance any longer (FP, 36; LCB, 66). At the same time he remains sufficiently detached to expose the shortcomings of Barsetshire's elitist, protectionist society: he derides Mr. Thorne's horror at the repeal of the Corn Laws (BT, 22) and condemns inequities in the distribution of church revenues (FP, 14). At the conclusion of Barchester Towers he appears to affiliate himself explicitly with the "High and Dry" faction, asserting that, "If it be essentially and absolutely necessary to choose between the two [high church ritual and "Mr. Slope's dirty surplices and ceremonial Sabbaths"], we are inclined to agree with Mrs. Grantly that the bell, book, and candle are the lesser evil of the two."
But the disclaimer which immediately follows ("Let it however be understood that no such necessity is admitted in these pages," [53]) demonstrates that his bias is only a tentative one, assumed to ensure that the conservative position gets a full and fair hearing in this first chronicle.

With the beginning of the Palliser novels the scene moves to London, and there is a corresponding shift in the prevailing attitudes regarding social change. Whereas in the Barsetshire novels a representative character was a Tory squire or a clergyman of the old school, in the Palliser series he is a Liberal MP like Barrington Erle, Lawrence Fitzgibbon, Phineas Finn, Mr. Monk, the Duke of St. Bungay, and Plantagenet Palliser himself. There are Conservatives in Parliament, too, of course, and the majority of votes fluctuates from one party to the other, but in spite of a brief "Conservative reaction in the country" in *The Duke's Children* (21), it is agreed on all sides that Liberalism is the policy of the future. In the earlier series, furthermore, the antagonists of the established country families were almost always aligned with the political opposition: their antagonism, indeed, is purely political. In the "political" novels, on the other hand, even the "villains"—social climbers like Lizzie Eustace, Quintus Slide, George Vavasor, and Ferdinand Lopez—are Liberals, as well as the protagonists. The result is that the tension between Conservatives and Liberals has all but disappeared. Even the Parliamentary opposition
is arbitrary and perfunctory: both parties easily abandon their traditional philosophies in attempts to acquire and maintain power. As Ronald Knox puts it, "In the political novels politics are only a game; in the 'clerical' novels all is in deadly earnest. . . ." The average character in the Palliser books is, like Trollope himself, an "advanced, Conservative-Liberal," dedicated to a reduction of the inequalities between people, but sufficiently satisfied with the existing state of things to be grateful to the Conservative element in Parliament for imposing "safeguards" and "repressive actions" which slow the pace of social change. Conservatives and Liberals are partners in more ways than they are antagonists, each recognizing the usefulness of the other's function and even assisting the other to its turn at power, from time to time. Diehard Conservatives like Abel Wharton and the mature Frank Gresham are generally portrayed as curious relics of a bygone age, no longer powerful enough to pose a threat to the Liberal majority.

As in the Barsetshire novels the narrator tests the Tory point of view by adopting it himself, so in the Palliser series he tentatively assumes the Liberal perspective. This is not to say that he immediately rids himself of all conservative inclinations. He retains many of the prejudices with which he began the Chronicles of Barsetshire: his mistrust of unorthodox financial dealings, for example, and a distaste for the Slopelike Quintus Slide and Mr. Emilius. He has
always, however, admired the energy and hearty good feeling of people like Martha Dunstable and Mr. Toogood, and now, in the Palliser novels, he affords his bourgeoisie a more prominent role in the plot and a much broader scope of action. To a passionate observer of society like himself the manners of the various representatives of this rising mercantile class could not fail to be a source of interest, whether of delight, amusement, or disgust. Like his characters, he has gradually become accustomed to both liberal politics and the increasingly flexible society of London, and his purpose now is not to argue the relative merits of conservative and liberal philosophies, but to sift what is worthy and valuable in the increasing liberalism of the country from what is dangerous, or sordid, or merely expedient.

Finally, although both chronicles thus depict a society in the midst of change, with the balance of power tilting, during the second series, from the old to the new, the specific historical changes which are taking place (the reform of the church, the passage of political reform bills) are not of primary concern to Trollope. His real focus is the general phenomenon of social change and its effect on the characters in his novels.

The situations which set in motion the numerous plot-nings in the two chronicles almost always involve some kind of change. The moral complexities for which Trollope's fiction has come to be noted derive specifically from this
condition of change, the introduction into the characters' lives of circumstances which their present codes of behavior are not broad enough to encompass. The progressive social change which he traces over the course of the two series is significant primarily as a catalyst of the kind of "progressive change" of characters which Trollope considered so important to his art.

Although a rare character, a Josiah Crawley, for instance, is depicted almost entirely in private terms, most characters are affected to some degree by the changes going on around them and are portrayed at least in part in terms of their response to these changes. Mr. Harding is a classic victim of impatient reformers with their "rubbish cart": kindly, guileless, and unambitious, he is forced to relinquish the wardenship of Hiram's Hospital because he is too old to adjust to the proposed changes in its administration. He submits to this loss with the same gentle resignation that he is later to exhibit in the face of the painful "bereavements" occasioned by age and infirmity (LCB, 49), and the consistency of these reactions identifies him as one of the few Trollope characters whose private and public selves are so closely integrated as to be indistinguishable. John Bold, the "Barchester Brutus," on the other hand, is originally presented in terms of his role as a reformer, but scenes involving him focus on the conflict between political principle—always regarded by Trollope as suspect—and personal
attachments. And no character is defined more exclusively in relation to the process of social change than Marie Goesler, who teeters precariously between acceptance by advanced hostesses like Lady Glencora Palliser and ruin at the hands of women like Lady Laura Standish, who resent her threat to their power. Even when her charm and wit have won her the friendship of the Duchess of Omnium and marriage to the man of her choice, she finds herself vulnerable to unjust accusations by the powerful Duke of Omnium regarding her conduct as companion to the Duke's daughter (DC). The widow of an Austrian Jew from the merchant class, Madame Goesler must be even more circumspect than other women in order to survive in the confined society of Victorian England. To condemn her for this cautious shrewdness, as Rebecca West does, calling her "one of the most repulsive characters in fiction,"¹⁰ is to overlook the continual struggle between passion and restraint which informs Trollope's characterization of her.

A narrow factionalism is the greatest folly of which Trollope's characters can be guilty, and those who rise above it, or make an honest attempt to do so, redeem themselves with this one virtue from any number of idiosyncracies and shortcomings. Trollope is then free to probe Crawley's pride, Harding's diffidence, and Palliser's "thin skin" without forfeiting the reader's affection for these characters, until a blatant fault, indulged in with maddening yet amusing perversity, becomes a sure mark of a Trollope favorite. As
Palliser's struggle in *The Duke's Children* indicates, however, there is a natural attachment to one's own social order which limits a character's ability to broaden his experience and opinions. The narrator's capacity to do so, on the other hand, is considerable, and it is his superiority in this respect which accounts for the detachment which he maintains from his characters.

**SETTING AND CHARACTER IN THE BARSETSHIRE NOVELS**

The most striking difference between Trollope's two chronicles is their settings. Barsetshire, as defined by the narrator, is the virtual opposite of crowded, busy London, with its easy accommodation of new trends and new people:

... Barchester is a quiet town in the west of England, more remarkable for the beauty of its cathedral and the antiquity of its monuments than for any commercial prosperity. ... [*TW*, 1].

Barsetshire, taken altogether, is a pleasant green tree-becrowded country, with large bosky hedges, pretty damp deep lanes, and roads with broad grass margins running along them [*FP*, 14].

In spite of easy access by railway, the metropolis remains remote, a legal and social mecca to which gentlemen (Harding, Gresham, Thorne, Sowerby, and Crawley) make infrequent pilgrimmages to consult with lawyers more worldly than Walker and Winthrop of Silverbridge and ladies (Arabella Gresham, Lady Lufton, Mrs. Proudie) to participate in the parties and visits which comprise the "season." Lady Lufton, in fact, sees these London sojourns as a means of "import[ing] back with her into the country something of the passing
civilization of the times" and, therefore, part of her duty as a member of the rural aristocracy (FP, 16), but this is the extent of the metropolitan influence desired by most of the Barsetshire folk.

Little critical attention has been paid to scenic description in Trollope's fiction. As D. S. Bland suggests, it may seem merely "utilitarian": one of the routine preliminaries without which the Trollopian narrator cannot comfortably begin a novel. Yet, as he tells us in the Autobiography, the quiet rural setting is central to Trollope's conception of the Barsetshire series: "I had it all in my mind,— its roads and railroads, its towns and parishes, its members of Parliament, and the different hunts which rode over it. I knew all the great lords and their castles, the squires and their parks, the rectors and their churches." The narrator is concerned that the reader form an accurate impression of the country and muses in Framley Parsonage that "I almost fear that it will become necessary . . . to provide a map of Barsetshire for the due explanation of these localities" (14).

Throughout the Chronicles of Barsetshire each significant shift in locale is accompanied by a description of setting which, like that of Barchester cited above, is also a statement of the theme of the series: the changes imminent in the feudal way of life instilled in the people of Barsetshire from so distant a time that they can conceive of no other. Of the medieval trappings, the family crest and motto
adorning the large gates at Greshamsbury House the narrator
remarks, "... the old symbols remained, and may such sym-
bols long remain among us; they are still lovely and fit to
be loved" (DT, 1). The Chase of Chaldicotes, which abuts
against Nathaniel Sowerby's estate in the western division of
the county, is Crown property, and people still make long
journeys to see the "aged hollow oaks, centuries old," which
signify for them "old associations and rural beauty" (FP, 3).
And the site of the Great House at Allington ("much too near
the road for purposes of grandeur") is appropriate to its
function as the seat of a feudal lord conscious alike of his
obligations and his privileges:

To be near the village, so as in some way to afford
comfort, protection, and patronage, and perhaps al-
so with some view to the pleasantness of the neigh-
bourhood for its own inmates, seemed to be the ob-
ject of a gentleman when building his house in the
old days [SHA, 1].

The setting of the Barsetshire novels influences the
characterization in them, a connection which R. H. Hutton's
comparison between Trollope's characters and those of Jane
Austen helps to clarify:

The inner portions of Trollope's characters are in-
vaded by the outside world, while Jane Austen's
people are themselves alone. Everybody is what he
is by the natural force of his own nature and
tastes. You hardly see the crush of the world on
any one. The vain man's vanity sedately flowers;
the dull man's dullness runs to seed; ... even
the fidgettiness of the fidgetty persons seems to
come from within, not from the irritation of ex-
ternal pressures. ... Turn to Mr. Trollope, and
everything is changed. The atmosphere of affairs
is always permanent. The Church or the world, or
the flesh or the devil, seem always at work to
Hutton's distinction can be carried a step further. If social pressure and the consequent deterioration of personality are more pronounced in Trollope than in Austen, they are more pronounced in the Palliser novels, which are set in rapidly changing London, than they are in the Barsetshire books, where social change is only incipient and is vigorously opposed by the conservatives in control of the society. The progression "from a sunswept English landscape to the turbulence of inner realities" which Alice Fredman observes in the two chronicles demonstrates Trollope's appreciation of the influence of environment on the integrity of character.

In quiet, unhurried Barsetshire, human development has long been a leisurely, unhurried process. All of the Barsetshire people belong, more or less, to the personality type which the narrator calls "hobbledehoys": people who, free from social pressures, mature slowly. He compares them to fruit which is allowed to ripen naturally, "on which the sun operates in its own time," as opposed to fruit ripened quickly by artificial means, and he praises this fruit "of slower growth, as to which nature works without assistance" as being the more distinctive and fuller-flavored (SHA, 4). Now, in the face of mounting pressures from the outside, the residents of Barsetshire resort to a variety of tactics that will
let them preserve the individuality resulting from such leisurely organic growth. One of these is to retreat before irresistible opposition, rather than strike disagreeable compromises with the opponents. Nathaniel Sowerby "vanishes" from Barsetshire, rather than remain at Chaldicotes, his ancestral estate, on the charity of its new owner, Martha Dunstable Thorne. Once it is clear that he has been "checkmated" by Mrs. Proudie in the contest for control of the diocese, Mr. Slope also chooses to leave Barchester and seek preferment elsewhere, rather than moderate his personal ambition. This strategy is deemed effective by the narrator, who remarks that "the family of the Slopes will never starve: they will always fall on their feet, like cats, and let them fall where they will, they live on the fat of the land" (BT, 51). The fictional world of Barsetshire, in other words, is a spacious one, affording opportunities to the enterprising and alternatives for those who feel themselves confined.

Confinement itself-- a voluntary narrowing of an individual's social sphere to one over which he can exert an assured control-- is the response to change preferred by some embattled Barsetshire conservatives. Monica Thorne, thwarted in her longing to restore England to a state of Saxon purity, shuts herself within the walls of Ullathorne, the small domain where she can still enforce the preservation of Tudor architecture, the practice of medieval entertainments, and the application of ancient medical remedies. Mr. Harding
resigns his controversial position as warden of Hiram's Hospital, reducing his range of influence to the Cathedral, where he is still precentor, and his family circle. Although Harding has been forced by the pressure of reform to examine his professional attitudes for the first time, his long meditations on the question of ecclesiastical incomes and appointments prove inconclusive. In his letter of resignation to the bishop he affirms that he will continue to regard the wardenship as "a clerical situation of the highest respectability" and attributes his resignation to the diffidence which has always been a main ingredient of his character. Harding's "fidgettiness," like that of the Austen characters described by Hutton, "seems to come from within, not from the irritation of external pressures." His lifelong conviction as to the worthiness of the established church and its priests remains unchanged in the face of the reform movement. In these early novels "the crush of the world" has had little effect on the distinctive characters of the people of Barsetshire.

It is true that a barely perceptible progression from innocence toward awareness is underway in this first chronicle. People are confronted with unpleasant realities and forced to make some kind of accommodation with them. Barsetshire becomes more and more crowded with Londoners, and this gradual reduction of "breathing room" is symbolic of the intensification of external social pressures, which become
increasingly more difficult to control or evade. A new row of "genteel villas" is erected on the outskirts of Barchester as a lucrative investment for the reformer John Bold, the bishop's palace falls into the hands of the Proudies, and the acres of Greshamsbury are whittled away by the acquisitive capitalist Roger Scatcherd. And even before the Sowerby estate of Chaldicotes has been usurped by the daughter of a London patent medicine manufacturer, the family has begun to feel the pinch of a new, utilitarian economics. Traditionally rangers of the adjoining Chase of Chaldicotes, the Sowerbys will now lose this source of revenue and power, because the Chase is about to be deforested: "The giants of past ages [the old elms and beeches] are to give way to wheat and turnips; a ruthless Chancellor of the Exchequer . . . requires money returns from the lands; and the Chase of Chaldicotes is to vanish from the earth's surface" (FP, 3).

For the most part, however, the naive response to change which characterizes the people of Barsetshire at the beginning of the chronicle prevails throughout it. This is not to say that they are oblivious to the threat posed to their order by liberal clergymen and politicians: they are obsessively aware of it and react, depending on the individual, with defiance or despair. But they fail to grasp the significance of this opposition, never perceiving that some of the proposed changes are justified by evils in the established society or that, at any rate, they are irreversible and destined to alter
that society permanently. Their attitude toward the reformers in their midst is that of a haughty imperial power toward its restive subjects, dismissing as petulance the rumblings of discontent which signal the approach of a revolution.

There is innocence, too, in their clannishness and earnest partisanship. Convinced that their friends are morally irreproachable and their enemies irredeemable, they regard the latter with a venomous and fanatical dislike. Lady Luf- ton thinks of the Duke of Omnium, a Whig and a libertine, as "the personification of Lucifer upon earth," Nathaniel Sower- by and his Chaldicotes friends as "children of the Lost One," and even the Bishop of Barsetshire as "no better than he ought to be" (FP, 2), and Archdeacon Grantly publicly terms Mrs. Proudie a "she-Beelzebub" (LCB, 10). This exaggerated passion points up weaknesses in the Barsetshire Tories: a vulnerability to pressure and a lack of urbanity and sophistication. Their opponents, especially Mrs. Proudie, are equally blind in their factional hatred and equally self-righteous. Full of ideological fervor, the Slopes and Proudies and Bolds cannot understand "that old customs need not necessarily be evil and that changes may possibly be dangerous" (TW, 2). The Barsetshire novels record the very beginning of the age of transition: a period of limbo, during which, as Schorer said with regard to Austen's fiction, the feudal order "does not yet know that it is dying" and the new bourgeois order is not yet fully aware of its own strength.
Trollope's characters are as innocent as Austen's of the implications of the struggle. The reformers are indifferent to the things "fit to be loved" which will be destroyed in the course of their reforms. The defenders of the status quo--Trollope's main focus in this early series--are unable to conceive of a more durable social system than the one which has blessed them for so long.

Perpetuating the complacency of the old Barsetshire families is the series of happy accidents by which the damage inflicted on established authority by the forces of reform is minimized. Inescapable signs of change proliferate throughout the county, but windfalls of one kind or another permit the main characters of the chronicle, after a period of anxiety, to resume their illusion of normalcy and security. The early novels find the Proudies at the palace, the lowly Quiverfuls at Hiram's Hospital, Mr. Slope eyeing both the vacant deanery and the fortune of the widowed Eleanor Bold, and the conservative church party, led by Archdeacon Grantly, stunned by the sudden, unexpectedly successful assaults by these newcomers. The apotheosis of the Rubbish Cart seems imminent. Then, just as abruptly, the balance of power begins to shift back again to the right. Mr. Slope quarrels with Mrs. Proudie, with Eleanor, and with Madeline Stanhope and leaves Barchester for good. Francis Arabin, whom the Archdeacon has brought to town to counter Slope, proves to be an exceptionally accomplished and devoted churchman. Remaining in town
after his adversary is gone, he elevates the Barchester ecclesiastical establishment by his presence. The Proudies remain, as well, to the chagrin of many of their neighbors, but the hostilities between the two factions subside into a long stalemate, with the Grantly party continuing to hold its own. The scandal of Crawley and the check finally rouses Mrs. Proudie into active combat once again, but it also kills her, and her death makes her husband's tenure as bishop more palatable to his subordinates. Proudie's appearance soon afterwards at the funeral of Mr. Harding appears to signal a new era of amity and cooperation among the Barsetshire clergy.

In the secular sphere, as well, the inevitable decline of the traditionally prominent and powerful is fortuitously postponed. The sudden extinction of the Scatcherd family in *Doctor Thorne* frees Squire Gresham from his most rapacious creditor. The even more startling discovery that the penniless and illegitimate Mary Thorne is Scatcherd's heir turns Frank Gresham's determination to marry her into a blessing for the family, rather than a catastrophe. Lady Lufton in *Framley Parsonage* and Archdeacon Grantly in *The Last Chronicle of Barset* are also angry and fearful when their sons propose to marry women of inferior social standing who, the parents believe, will degrade their families. Lady Lufton initially regards her grudging consent to Ludovic's marriage to Lucy Robarts as "kissing the dust," but she is surprised to discover that she takes "great joy in the new daughter whom
her son had brought into the house" (LCB, 57). That the gentry cannot prevent the rise to social prominence of members of the lower classes is evidence of their growing weakness, but in these three cases the elders' alarm at the general trend is obscured for the time in their joy at the suitability of the particular marriage.

Once the immediate danger is past, in other words, the Barsetshire characters revert to type. Although Lady Lufton conscientiously refers to her new daughter-in-law as the mistress of her son's house, "it is well known to every one at Framley that old Lady Lufton still reigns paramount in the parish" (FP, 48). As soon as he has recognized Grace Crawley as an acceptable wife for his son, the Archdeacon resumes his characteristic openhandedness, presenting a pony carriage to Grace, (just as years before he had given one to Eleanor Bold on the occasion of her marriage to Mr. Arabin) and a volume of his father's sermons, with manuscript notes, to Mr. Crawley.

Such integrity of character in the face of social change is possible, first, because the changes are only recent disturbances in a setting with long undisturbed traditions and mores. Such men as Squire Gresham or Nathaniel Sowerby, though by no means immune to financial worries, are so accustomed to prosperity that the former can receive gracefully, almost casually, his last-minute salvation at the hands of Mary Thorne, and the latter is able, out of sheer force of
habit, to live luxuriously even on the brink of ruin. Secondly, just as the gentry seem about to cave in before the difficulties confronting them, these difficulties unaccountably recede. Enemies die, or are won over, or prove to be ladies and gentlemen, after all, until the social structure of Barsetshire at the end of The Last Chronicle is comparable to that at the beginning of The Warden. Such stability is remarkable in the light of the efforts to the contrary of John Bold, Mr. Slope, Sir Roger Scatchet, Moffat and Gagebee, the Duke of Omnium, and Mrs. Proudie in the course of the intervening novels. Nor, as the Liberal triumphs of the Palliser series demonstrate, is there any historical justification for these repeated strokes of good fortune. Threats have been beaten back by accident, not by virtue of the potency of the local clergy and squirearchy, and their power at the end of the chronicle is therefore misleading. Why would a novelist like Trollope, whose treatment of social and political trends has been praised for its accuracy by historians of the period, deliberately falsify the conclusions of his novels in this way?

He may do so, first, in conformity with the generic convention of the happy ending of which the narrator, as we have seen, is fretfully aware. But the narrow escapes enjoyed by the Barsetshire characters have a positive function, as well. Trollope's goal in this first chronicle is to delineate an age of innocence in which the old order, its power on the
wane, is not yet fully sensible of the inexorable advance of the new. By rigging the outcome of his plots, so that little permanent harm is done to the Barsetshire families, he is able to extend this narrow perspective throughout the whole series. The artificially happy resolution of the Greshams' financial difficulties and the unexpected success of the Luftons, Grantlys, and Arabins in the Crawley case confirm these characters in the habitual complacency which it is Trollope's object to depict.

A final stabilizing influence which Barsetshire affords its inhabitants is the year-round contact with nature which is not shared, for example, by the legislators of the Palliser series. Tedious journeys on muddy or dusty roads test the mettle of such characters as Dr. Thorne (DT, 8-11) and Josiah Crawley (LCB, 17) or deflate the pretensions of a Mr. Thumble (LCB, 54, 63, 66). Critics have observed that Lucy Robarts' progression from suffering to fulfillment in Framley Parsonage corresponds to the seasonal progression in that novel from winter to summer. In the same novel Fanny Robarts rejoices at the coming of spring, partly because the London season empties Barsetshire of various dangerous and oppressive individuals, and partly because of the inspiriting effects of the season itself. "All things were sweet and pretty," and the Robarts family instinctively responds to the "bright colours" and the "soft and genial" breezes. Fanny is particularly gratified now because "Her husband was always a
better parson when the warm months came than he had been during the winter. . . . At such period he was a pattern parson and a pattern husband, atoning to his own conscience for past shortcomings by present zeal" (FP, 21).

Thus the rural setting has a beneficent effect on most of the Barsetshire characters, the hobbledehoys of Trollope's fiction. In the quiet towns and countrysides they have had the time to flourish as unique specimens and to acquire their own distinctive flavor. The changes which are beginning to confront these characters confuse and alarm them but cannot immediately modify deeply ingrained patterns of thought and behavior. In spite of his general preference for this slow, natural growth, however, the narrator knows that not all the fruit which results will be wholesome. There will be specimens, he acknowledges, on which the sun "perhaps never operates if some ungenial shade has been allowed to interpose itself" (SHA, 4). Among the characters of the Barsetshire novels there is some such damaged fruit: mutants, seemingly, from their healthy parent stock. Their deformity is evidence of imperfections in the social order which produced them, its sun failing to nurture all the life depending on it to the same degree.

In the midst of Barsetshire's wealthy, comfortable ecclesiastical establishment, Mr. Quiverful and Mr. Crawley labor in poverty. Quiverful is rescued from the vicarage at Puddingdale during one of the earliest victories of the
reformers, but the enduring hardships of his curacies in Cornwall and at Hogglestock drive Crawley to periods of madness and despair. And as the condition of its poorer clergy exposes the shortcomings of the established church as a temporal institution, the Stanhope family of *Barchester Towers* reflects its occasional failure as a religious community. In spite of their strong secular interests, the major clerical figures in the Barsetshire series possess a genuine faith. Spurred by the admonitions of the intensely devout Crawley, Mark Robarts meditates on the weakness of his character, and even the worldly Archdeacon, at his most ambitious moment, can remember to pray for humility (*BT*, 1). The Stanhopes, on the other hand, are classic studies of religious despair. The narrator calls them good natured but heartless: their easy cheerfulness is compatible with a perfect lack of commitment. Mr. Stanhope is the most conspicuous of Bar­chester's absentee clergymen, who, drawing enough money from handsome preferments, can pay curates to perform their professional duties and idle away their own time in luxurious settings like the Stanhopes' villa at Lake Como. Not only do they remain neutral in the factional battle raging within the Church of England; they are also lackadaisical in their larger religious affiliation, witness the son Bertie's careless "I was a Jew myself once," and his sister Charlotte's description of herself as a free thinker. The youngest daughter's marriage to a violent, dissolute, and "oily"
mannered Italian argues a similar promiscuity. Madeline's maimed leg and her grotesque trappings—the exotic finery, the elaborately contrived name, the sofa and attendants—mock her otherwise extraordinary beauty and suggest a corresponding moral crippling, as well.

Spiritually impoverished themselves, the Stanhope sisters revel in the religious doubts of others. "To have shaken what remained of [her father's] Church of England faith," says the narrator of Charlotte, "would have pleased her much" (BT, 9). The more beautiful and ambitious Signora aims to corrupt all the men she meets from their rightful pursuits, and, a clergyman's calling being particularly lofty, she is pleased to find herself back in Barchester, where she can do so much harm. Madeline takes it as her theme that parsons "are much the same as other men, if you strip them of their black coats," and, singling out the impressionable Mr. Slope as a case in point, easily infatuates him. Slope is a "true believer," but Madeline interprets his lust for her and for other earthly pleasures as proof of apostasy. "You preach a doctrine which you know you don't believe," she triumphantly asserts. "It is the way with you all" (27).

Finally, there are the early casualties of social change in Barsetshire, the few first victims of a conflict from which their more fortunate neighbors emerged unscathed. Squire Gresham is saved from crushing financial obligations by his creditor's death, but there is no such "lucky dodge,"
as the narrator calls it, for Nathaniel Sowerby, who loses his ancestral home and his Parliamentary seat and exiles himself from Barsetshire. More visible to the reader are the sufferings of Lily Dale, whose jilting by Adolphus Crosbie symbolizes, on one level, an attack on the landed gentry by the mercantile class. Like the hobbledehoys defined in the same novel, Lily is characterized in terms of fragile natural phenomena: a "wondrous flower" during the happy days of her love for Crosbie (SHA, 9), she becomes a "wounded fawn" once he has abandoned her (31) and, permanently damaged by this blow, a "shattered tree" (LCB, 77). She is an early version of the sexually aberrant Lucinda Roanoke in The Eustace Diamonds. But the frigidity which prevents Lily from yielding to John Eames results specifically from Crosbie's betrayal of the love she had spontaneously offered him.

The Small House at Allington begins with a statement that Lily Dale is intended to be "very dear" to the reader (2). A degree of sympathy is due to her, in that nothing in her secluded life has prepared her for exposure to someone like Crosbie, but her continued adherence to romantic notions after Crosbie is gone for good— to the exclusion of a happy marriage to John Eames— leads Trollope to dismiss her at last as a "prig." 19 Throughout the novel the characters who emerge as the most interesting are those who are not as single-mindedly committed to old values and who, in trying to live without them, face temptations, make compromises, and
fall into error. These characters are Eames, Crosbie, and Plantagenet Palliser, and it is no coincidence that all three reside in London, where the transformation of British society is more advanced than it is in Barsetshire. Nor is it a coincidence that this novel lacks the happy ending which is characteristic of the chronicle as a whole. For *The Small House at Allington* signals a shift in Trollope's interest from a brief period of innocence to a more contemporary period in which accelerating social change, unwelcome as it may be, is confronted with sophistication and resourcefulness by the men and women living through it.

**THE STRUCTURE OF THE BARSETSHIRE NOVELS**

Prepared by the end of *The Small House at Allington* to leave Barsetshire, the germ of his next novel series already committed to the page, Trollope nevertheless adds one more volume to his county chronicles. *The Last Chronicle of Barset* is particularly noteworthy for its structural function, because it represents one of two formal attempts to draw the six Barsetshire novels into a unified whole.

Trollope tells us that with the exception of *Barchester Towers*, a sequel to *The Warden*, the Barsetshire books were conceived independently of each other and evolved into the *Chronicles of Barsetshire* without premeditation. Unlike the Palliser novels which follow, they lack a single character who appears in every novel or one who could be identified as the moral center of the series. Archdeacon Grantly is
censured by the narrator for his pride and quarrelsomeness, Mr. Crawley is an outsider among the Barsetshire clergy and is not mentioned in half of the six novels, and Mr. Harding, although admired throughout, becomes less central once he has retreated from the political conflict which has engulfed the county.

The series begins with what seems to be a unifying professional context, the "high and dry" faction of the Church of England. The "clerical scenes" in The Warden, Barchester Towers, and The Last Chronicle are numerous and integrally related to the themes of these works. The character sketch of Caleb Oriel as the very high churchman in Doctor Thorne, however, is gratuitous. The Thornes and Greshams of that novel are not influenced in any demonstrable way by their clerical neighbor. Similarly, if the brief encounter between Crosbie and Mr. Harding on the grounds of Hiram's Hospital in The Small House at Allington (16) is pertinent at all, it is so, as Cockshut suggests, only in its failure to influence Crosbie at a crucial moment of his life.21

Throughout the series the landed gentry and the clergy do share a dominant concern: the defense of an established society against a new coalition of enemies who either oppose it or (equally destructive in the eyes of its supporters) claim respectable places within it for themselves. As if to emphasize the confusion of this period, however, and the tentativeness of the defensive efforts of the people of
Barsetshire, the narrator incorporates into his chronicle a number of disparate narrative styles. The Warden utilizes elements of the creation myth in tracing the invasion of the "elysium" of Hiram's Hospital by the forces of reform, including John Bold's lawyer Finney in the role of the serpent, "asking sly questions" of the hospital residents (4). Doctor Thorne adopts the mode of the romance, with Frank as the hero banished for a year and a day, Lady Arabella as the wicked stepmother (she is a surrogate mother to Mary, whose education in the Greshamsbury nursery she oversees), and Thorne himself as the wise and kindly helper to the hero. The Small House at Allington begins, at least, as a pastoral idyll, a celebration of "Beautiful Days" (6, title). Abundant gardens and hothouses surround the heroine's cottage, as does a luxuriant lawn, where croquet, dancing, and, Lady de Courcy insists, syllabubs are enjoyed. And Josiah Crawley in The Last Chronicle associates the degrading poverty and near madness which undermine his powerful intellect with the suffering endured by the legendary blind heroes: Oedipus, Samson, Polyphemus, Milton, and St. Paul (8, 17, & 62).

It is the mock heroic style which appears the most frequently, from Mr. Harding's tea party (TW, 6) to the disastrous conclusion of Mrs. Proudie's reception in Barchester Towers ("As Juno may have looked at Paris on Mt. Ida, so did Mrs. Proudie look on Ethelbert Stanhope when he pushed the leg of the sofa into her lace train," 11) to the perception
of the struggle between the Whigs and Tories as a war between the Gods and Giants of Greek myth (FP, 23) to the numerous short classical references usually applied to aggressive characters like Mrs. Proudie, Archdeacon Grantly, Mrs. Quiverful, and Adolphus Crosbie.

All of these narrative elements deriving from genres considerably older than the novel (the Bible, the epic, the romance), their anachronistic quality corresponds to that of the protectionist society of Barsetshire, which is on the verge of extinction. The mock heroic form, especially, deflates the pretensions of these characters, who view themselves as valiant combatants in the cause of absolute right, and reinforces our impression of their vulnerability and naiveté. At the same time these fragments of narration, with their stock character types and pretentious imitation of mythic and epic patterns, clash with the low-keyed narration which comprises the bulk of the Barsetshire chronicle. Crude, unwieldy, and diffuse, they contribute to the essential disunity of the series.

At two points in the chronicle, however, the unrelated character and plot elements from previous novels suddenly and pointedly converge. One of these is Framley Parsonage, where the story of the Luftons and the Robartses is supplemented with elements from the Warden-Barchester Towers sequence (the appearance of Mr. Harding and Mrs. Proudie; the growing ambition of the Grantlys—father and daughter) and from
Doctor Thorne (the doctor's engagement to Miss Dunstable; the marital felicity of Mary and Frank Gresham). The other is The Last Chronicle, where these themes, and plots and characters from The Small House at Allington, as well, are incorporated into the story of Mr. Crawley and the check. Here characters whose lives have hitherto been separate meet. Henry Grantly falls in love with Grace Crawley, who has also established a friendship with Lily Dale. The Dales from The Small House at Allington are about to become connected by marriage with Martha Dunstable Thorne from Doctor Thorne and Framley Parsonage. John Eames, as we now learn, is related to the Crawleys, for whom he performs valuable services in this novel. Mrs. Proudie and Mr. Crawley meet and clash for the first time (a confrontation, one can imagine, which Trollope had long savored in his imagination), as do Crawley and Archdeacon Grantly. There begin to be frequent allusions to the earlier stories, and the designation of the work as the "last" chronicle is actually the first explicit instruction to regard the six Barsetshire books as a unified whole.

This structure, of originally independent narratives merging in a common conclusion, is well suited to Trollope's purpose in the Chronicles of Barset. The abrupt combination and interaction of lives which were once separate is an apt metaphor for the changes which have been underway since the beginning of the series. Isolation becomes difficult as the arrival of outsiders makes the county more crowded, and
improbable marriages take place as people from different classes get to know each other for the first time. In the face of the newcomers' increasing power, isolation becomes unwise, as well, and closer alliances are formed among such established families as the Dales and the De Guests. Whereas Mr. Harding's sorrow over the Hiram's Hospital dispute is so intensely personal that he can hardly bring himself to share it with his favorite daughter (TW, 10), the private lives of characters in The Last Chronicle become matters of public concern. Old friends and even new acquaintances of Lily Dale urge a marriage to John Eames as a chance to live down her unhappy romance with Crosbie. The story of Mr. Crawley and the twenty-pound check is repeated again and again in Silverbridge, at Framley, and even in London, by people who believe that if Crawley did appropriate Mr. Soames' money for his own use, it was only after his sanity had been impaired by the hardships of his position. Convinced that he is innocent by virtue of these extenuating circumstances, they work together to shield him from the wrath of Mrs. Proudie and from punishment under the law.

Trollope, however, does not pursue this new awareness of social problems and responsibilities to its logical conclusion. Instead, the questions raised in the course of the narrative are dismissed in a happy ending reminiscent of the early novels of the series. The mood of good feeling with which The Last Chronicle ends does not signal a satisfactory
resolution of the preceding conflicts. Archdeacon Grantly's hearty welcome of the Crawleys into his family and patronage is unconvincing, given his own ambition, his delight in his daughter Griselda's lofty rank, and his earlier view of the family from Hogglestock as "disgraced people" (56). Much more characteristic had been his refusal in The Warden even to attend the wedding of Eleanor Harding when the marriage was one of which he disapproved. Another implausible stroke of good fortune is the truce struck between the Proudie and Grantly parties after the death of Mrs. Proudie. This easy reconciliation reduces the controversies on ecclesiastical matters which have raged throughout the chronicle to a clash of personalities, minimizing the differences of religious and social philosophy which are at the root of the hostility.

The narrator has long regarded happy endings as unreasonable promises of "superhuman happiness," as pages tinted artificially with "couleur de rose" (BT, 51). He nevertheless perceives a connection between this convention of the novel and the similarly rose-colored view of life shared by the people of Barsetshire. Lily Dale's susceptibility to a man like Crosbie is due, as she herself comes to realize, to an excessive romanticism: an emotional weakness for "moonlight, poetry, and love" (SHA, 9). "I have dreamed of such things . . . more perhaps than other girls, more than I should have done," she acknowledges (LCB, 35). Lily's taste in literature corresponds to her attitudes about love and
marriage. Whereas her practical sister Bell dislikes popular novels because their endings are "too sweet," Lily enjoys them for that very reason: "because they are so sweet." The "real life" which Bell looks for in her reading is rejected by Lily as "too painful" (SHA, 42). By the time of The Last Chronicle of Barset, therefore, the happy ending has become explicitly associated with the innocence which is typical of the major Barsetshire characters, and it is thus an appropriate conclusion to this early chronicle.

In the novels preceding The Last Chronicle, the narrator has deliberately undercut his happy endings, chiding his readers and publishers for demanding them and himself for supplying them, and laughing at the inevitable weddings in Doctor Thorne and Framley Parsonage. Such raillery is an index of his curiosity about Barsetshire, an attempt to test the conventional outlook of its people against the realities of a changing world. It is missing, however, from the conclusion of The Last Chronicle, and in its place is the nostalgic farewell to "the towers of Barchester . . . the country lanes . . . the too well-wooded fields . . . the sweetness of old faces." The unwonted sentimentality of this leavetaking cannot conceal a shift of interest, which has been developing in the course of the last two novels, away from the provincial Barsetshire characters, with their unyielding opposition to change. Having, he says, "wandered among them too long" (64), he is now anxious to examine the
more receptive attitude toward change evinced by a few of the Barsetshire characters: John Eames and Adolphus Crosbie, both London civil servants, and especially Plantagenet Palliser.
NOTES


2. Skilton, p. 85.


9. See *Phineas Redux*, ch. 1:

   Let a man be of what side he may in politics, . . . he will think it well that there should be some equity of division in the bestowal of crumbs of comfort. Can even any old Whig wish that every Lord Lieutenant of a county should be an old Whig? Can it be good for the administration of the law that none but Liberal lawyers should become Attorney Generals . . . ? Should no Conservative Peer ever represent the majesty of England in India, in Canada, or at St. Petersburg? So arguing, moderate Liberals had been glad to give Mr. Daubeney and his merry men a chance.


NOTES


13 For the ambiguity of the narrator's treatment of Greshamsbury, see Kincaid, pp. 114-115.

14 R. H. Hutton, "From Miss Austen to Mr. Trollope," Spectator, 55 (December 16, 1882), 1609-1611. For the attribution to Hutton, see Skilton, p. 160.

15 Fredman, p. 45.

16 See p. 22, note 19.


18 This is a minority opinion. Polhemus admires the "iconoclastic wit" with which Madeline "makes fun of social rank and class" (p. 41). Kincaid sees her as possessing an "absolutely sure moral instinct" and credits her with "arranging almost single-handedly the final disposition of the novel" by encouraging the marriage of Eleanor and Arabin (pp. 108-109), but see p. 39 above. W. David Shaw ("Moral Drama in Barchester Towers," NCF, 19 [1964-1965]) praises her management of the courtships in the novel as "Beatrice-like" (p. 49), a comparison which would have more validity if Madeline were susceptible to love herself. Polhemus offers a compromise: Trollope "both loves and despises Madeline" (p. 43). The narrator clearly regards her appearance as frightening (she is a "basilisk," ch. 9) and her taste, as expressed in her marriage and in her child's dress, as revolting.

19 Autobiography, p. 178.

20 In fact, Trollope had written Can You Forgive Her?, the first of the Palliser novels, before he began The Last Chronicle of Barsetshire.

21 Cockshut, pp. 152-153.
THE STRUCTURE OF THE PALLISER NOVELS

Whereas the Barsetshire novels are independently conceived works which merge completely only in The Last Chronicle of Barset, the Palliser series was designed as such from the start and is structured as a single massive work. Like its predecessor, it contains a wide range of subject matter. The amorous adventures of such characters as Mrs. Greenow and Lizzie Eustace are chronicled alongside the Parliamentary debates of Mr. Gresham and Mr. Daubeny. The Palliser novels, however, assimilate this varied material more completely than do the Barsetshire books, which sometimes divide themselves into the exclusively "clerical" or the exclusively "social." Political scenes appear in all six of the novels, and parallels between them and other, apolitical characters and situations provide continuity throughout the chronicle. The rivalry between Mr. Cheesacre and Captain Bellfield for the hand of Mrs. Greenow in Can You Forgive Her? is, according to D. S. Chamberlain, a version of the same debate over the relative merits of public and private life which the Palliser and Vavasor-Grey plots explore. The fixing of the Leger by one of his race course friends contributes to the education of
the young Lord Silverbridge, one of the country's future aristocrats and political leaders.

The series takes its popular designation, moreover, from the name of the character who appears in all six of its parts. Palliser's gradual development as the central consciousness of this second chronicle is unparalleled in the Barsetshire novels. After *Can You Forgive Her?*, roughly half of which is devoted to the stormy early period of their marriage, the next two novels afford only fleeting glimpses of Palliser and his wife Glencora. This reduction in the number of pages allotted to them does not signal a decline in their importance as the unifying characters of the chronicle. Rather, it is an expression of the temporary understanding which the two have reached at the conclusion of *Can You Forgive Her?*, Palliser having demonstrated his love for his wife by suspending his Parliamentary career and Glencora having responded to his new tenderness. After this, brief plotlings in *Phineas Finn* and *The Eustace Diamonds*, showing Palliser establishing himself as a capable Chancellor of the Exchequer and Glencora winning a reputation as an audacious London hostess, suffice to document the continuing equilibrium.

When the Duke of Omnium dies in *Phineas Redux* and Palliser is elevated to his place, this stability is destroyed. The number of plotlings concerning Palliser abruptly increases again as he tries to adjust to the loss of the job which he prefers to any other and as his wife confronts a new
position which restricts her freedom without offering her any
greater prestige than she has previously enjoyed (26). Pal-
liser continues to dominate an ever-greater proportion of The
Prime Minister and The Duke's Children, as he struggles with
two new problems: guiding a Coalition government until such
time as one of the established parties can again command a
majority in Parliament and, after his wife's death, seeing
his children through the delicate and important period of
courtship and marriage.

The six component novels of the series blend and, occa-
sionally, overlap. Frank Robbins' schematization of the
chronology of the Palliser novels has Phineas Finn following
Can You Forgive Her? immediately, the election which returns
the Liberals to power and puts Palliser into the Chancellor-
ship of the Exchequer being the same one that brings Phineas
into the House of Commons for the first time. The Eustace
Diamonds, in turn, actually overlaps Phineas Finn, with Lord
Fawn proposing to Lizzie Eustace three months before Phineas
accepts the inspectorship of the Poor Houses in Dublin.3

More usually, an interval of time separates one novel
and the next, and sometimes this gap encompasses notable
events, such as the death of Glencora Palliser between The
Prime Minister and The Duke's Children, but even then there
is considerable continuity between novels. Their beginning
and ending points become blurred and with them their separate
identities. Each of the Barsetshire novels except Barchester
Towers (a sequel to The Warden) and The Last Chronicle of Barset contains the kind of lengthy, ponderous introduction for which the narrator apologized in Doctor Thorne. Each of them ends with a series of "leavetakings," as he calls them, in which the situation of the major characters is defined and, sometimes, the narrator's final judgments on them are recorded. Although standard beginnings and endings like these sometimes occur in the Palliser chronicle, as well, frequently they are abandoned in favor of techniques which emphasize the relatedness of the separate novels. Phineas Finn opens with the hero already about to join the ranks of the Liberal politicians whom the reader knows from Can You Forgive Her? Phineas Redux, besides returning to the plots and characters of Phineas Finn, begins with an account of "the general election of 18__," which again places the story of Phineas and his friends in the larger context of Liberal party politics. Finally, Plantagenet Palliser is referred to in the opening sentence of The Duke's Children as "our old friend," a designation which immediately subordinates this single novel to a larger whole.

The final scene of most of the Palliser novels (all but Phineas Finn) is set at one of the Palliser residences. Can You Forgive Her? ends "In the Halls of the Duke of Omnium" (the final chapter title) at Gatherum Castle; The Eustace Diamonds, The Prime Minister, and The Duke's Children, at Matching Priory. Phineas Redux is the only novel of the
series to conclude with a chapterful of announcements as to the fate of its main characters, but the climactic scene in the preceding chapter, Phineas' proposal to Marie Goesler, likewise takes place at Matching. The effect of ending the novels—even those in which the Pallisers' role has been a small one—in one of their homes is to link the stories of Alice Vavasor, Phineas, Lizzie Eustace, Lord and Lady Chiltern, and even the peripheral Maules with the ongoing story of Plantagenet Palliser, and thus to increase the coherence of the series.

Replacing the plots of the individual novels as the dominant structural unit is the individual scene, whose brevity and flexibility afford a cohesiveness even amid the rich diversity of action, character, and scene in this second chronicle. RuthapRoberts praises the economy of this narrative technique, observing that succeeding scenes "comment on one another, and together constitute a cogent form for the novel." Trollope's plotlings do double duty, serving a different function within a single novel than they do in the context of the chronicle as a whole, where they invite comparison with others on the same theme. The brief scenes involving the Pallisers—at parties, in political discussion, or at home at Matching Priory with a group of friends around them—may seem extraneous to the plots of Phineas Finn and The Eustace Diamonds. In Phineas Finn, for example, the old Duke of Omnium's infatuation with Madame Max Goesler is an
element in the plot which seems to advance the characterization of the novel's hero and to have less to do with the history of the Pallisers. Although he fancies himself in love with Violet Effingham at the time, Phineas is conscious of an ambition to "cut out" the Duke of Omnium in the estimation of Madame Max Goesler (48). His reaction is one more symptom of the emotional immaturity which he is destined not to overcome until after the ordeal of his murder trial two novels later. When, after all, Madame Goesler declines the Duke's offer of marriage, partly on the slim chance of marrying the unappreciative Phineas himself, her devotion speaks more highly of him than anything else we have yet read about him.

In the larger perspective of the Palliser chronicle, however, this episode is more significant for what it tells us about Lady Glencora Palliser, who is the first member of the Duke's family to sense his special interest in Madame Goesler and who takes active steps to prevent a marriage. Whereas in Can You Forgive Her? she had been, as the fulsome Mr. Bott accurately described her, "very young," the Lady Glencora of this second novel is shrewd and adult. Desperately unhappy in her marriage during the earlier novel, she now derives satisfaction from it, partly because of happy discoveries which she has made about her husband's character, but partly because of a new appreciation—so often lacking in Trollope's younger characters—of the power and other
worldly advantages which such a marriage gives her (PF, 62). In *Can You Forgive Her?* she has not yet learned her own strength; she can express anger and dissatisfaction only by pouting at her husband and taunting or snubbing his guests. In short, she is courageous, but too inexperienced to know how to direct that courage effectively.

Her visit to Park Lane to confront Madame Goesler regarding the Duke's proposal has some of the earmarks of the undisciplined outburst so characteristic of her in *Can You Forgive Her?*:

"I think, Madame Goesler, that I had better hurry on to my subject at once," said Lady Glencora, almost hesitating as she spoke, and feeling that the colour was rushing up to her cheeks and covering her brow. "Of course I shall offend you. And yet I do not mean it" [61].

Glencora herself, evaluating this maneuver once she has left Madame Max, realizes that she has been indiscreet. "All her feelings had been too violent, and it might well have been that she should have driven this woman to do the very thing that she was so anxious to avoid" (62).

Although her style would benefit from greater refinement, however, Glencora has shown herself in this encounter to be a formidable opponent. She is fearless and calculating: "At the present moment I have only one doubt--" she tells her husband, "whether to act upon him or upon her. . . . I will think of it." She is self-reliant:

Then Lady Glencora left her husband, and did not consult him afterwards as to the course she would
pursue. He had his budget to manage, and his speeches to make. The little affair of the Duke and Madame Goesler, she thought it best to take into her own hands without any assistance from him [61].

She is resourceful and has learned to respect her own strength:

When Lady Glencora left Madame Goesler she went at once to the Duke's house. . . . She must now make her attempt upon the Duke. . . . The Duke no doubt might persevere and marry whom he pleased,—if he were strong enough. But it requires much personal strength,—that standing alone against the well-armed batteries of all one's friends [62].

The clash with Madame Goesler is thus ideally designed to illustrate in Glencora the "consistency" but also the "changes which time always produces" which it is the goal of Trollope's characterization to depict. Such a portrait, relying even on facts about her which emerge only after her death, requires the entire chronicle for its development.

This process by which the plotlings from one novel interact with those of another is at work throughout the chronicle. The Duke of Omnium's decision to marry Madame Goesler belongs both to the story of Phineas Finn and to the larger story of the Pallisers. Lord Chiltern's protest that he is "sick" of Lizzie Eustace and her necklace (ED, 80) contributes to Lizzie's story one of the many judgments passed against her by the general public, and also to the ongoing portrait of Chiltern himself as a hot-headed but honest and unpretentious nobleman: one of the class of maverick aristocrats which also includes Earl de Guest of the Barsetshire
novels and Lord Earlybird, who is surprised to find himself named a Knight of the Garter during Palliser's tenure as Prime Minister. Phineas Finn's spirited defense in the House of Commons of Palliser's conduct as leader of the coalition government (PM, 57) belongs, of course, to Palliser's story, but it is even more pertinent to the characterization of Phineas. At the end of the previous novel, where he has given up his seat in Parliament in the aftermath of his murder trial, the narrator pronounces his situation to be unsatisfactory, "unless he shall soon turn his hand to some useful task" (PR, 80). This scene shows Phineas hard at work again, and liking it.

Trollope had experimented with the plotling structure in the Barsetshire novels, where more aggressive characters meet gentle Mr. Harding and where Archdeacon Grantly's hopes for a bishopric are twice abruptly raised and each time abruptly dashed. As in the Palliser books, their function is to develop a characterization which began elsewhere in the series. Grantly's excitement over the proposed proliferation of bishops in Framley Parsonage, for example, extends the portrait of his character begun in The Warden and Barchester Towers. In this first chronicle, however, the plot still bears the main burden of the novel's meaning, and the plotlings are, at best, only tangentially related to the plots of the novels in which they occur. The political maneuvering which controls Grantly's chances for a higher office are a digression in
Framley Parsonage, the story of the Luftons and their friends in confrontation with the Whigs from the western division of Barsetshire. Their meeting with Mr. Harding produces no effect on Mrs. Proudie and Adolphus Crosbie (FP, 6; SHA, 16). And Grantly's fleeting consciousness of his excessive pride in the opening plotting of Barchester Towers actually runs counter to the novel's plot, which is a struggle for ecclesiastical power and place. Commentary by the narrator, it is true, repeatedly suggests that the qualities of gentleness, humility, and scrupulous integrity possessed by Harding and glimpsed momentarily in plotlings concerning the more ambitious characters, are of greater value than the large, loud actions of the plot. Nevertheless, Trollope retains the traditional plot throughout the chronicle, and surely more purposefully than he indicates in the Autobiography with his careless "There must . . . be a story." It is more likely that he considers the structural convention of the plot an appropriate metaphor for the unbecoming combativeness of the Barsetshire characters. The quieter bits of narrative, the plotlings, are obscured by the suspense and conflict of the plot in the same way as the quieter moments of the characters—Grantly's prayer at his father's bedside or his wife's recognition (SHA, 55; LCB, 3) of the bitter consequences of her worldliness—are obscured by the din of their own quarrels.
Finally, the significance of the situations treated in the plotlings is often further undercut by the gratuitous happy endings of the Barsetshire novels. Grantly's stinging disappointment at losing his bishopric yet again as a result of growing liberal challenges to the Tory party is lost in the picture of perfect amity between the aristocratic and middle classes, represented by Lady Lufton and Lucy Robarts, at the conclusion of the novel.

In the second chronicle the reverse is true. Though the Palliser novels are all big books, their plots are often skimpy. Compared to Framley Parsonage, with its domestic conflicts; social, clerical, and political power struggles; and courtships fraught with an unusual number of perils, Phineas Redux, for example, is thinly plotted. Phineas returns to London after the death of his wife and his re-election to Parliament, but he fails to attain political office even with his party in power. Mr. Daubeney masterminds a stunning political victory with his endorsement of Church Disestablishment, but the narrator easily exposes both his stand and that of his Liberal opponents as hypocritical and self-serving. Phineas' arrest for the murder of Mr. Bonteen seems an action of devastating significance, but it is quickly undercut by its absurdity in the eyes of the reader, who "need hardly be told that, as regards this great offence, Phineas Finn was as white as snow" (49), combined with the strong sentiment among the characters of the novel that
Phineas should not be convicted of the crime even if he did commit it. Many chapters of this novel are filled with the disestablishment debate and with the murder trial, both of which conflicts are shams.

The memorable scenes of *Phineas Redux* are those in which characters react to developments in the plot, revealing themselves more fully in the process. Glencora's appeal to the leaders of the Liberal party fails to produce a place for Phineas, but it does produce the ironic spectacle of politician after powerful politician solemnly assuring the Duchess that in such matters of patronage, "I never interfere" (37).

If the murder-trial plot is sensational, Mr. Maule's attempt to propose to a distracted Marie Goesler moments after she hears of Phineas' arrest is a classic comic deflation of pretensions. A decaying old dandy, Maule wants to marry Madame Goesler only for her large fortune, which would make his expensive habits easier to maintain. To make himself more attractive to her, he resorts to a number of cosmetic deceptions: dyeing his hair, padding his coat, and, on the day of his visit to Park Lane, resting at home until late in the day in order to avoid "those ordinary labours of the morning which might have robbed him of any remaining spark of his juvenility" (48). This latter includes staying away from his club, where on any other day he would have heard the story of the Bonteen murder. As it is, he is ignorant of the important news and easily thrown off his intended course of
action:

Madame Goesler met him more than half across the room as he entered it. 'What have you heard?' said she. Mr. Maule wore his sweetest smile, but he had heard nothing. He could only press her hand, and look blank,— understanding that there was something which he ought to have heard [48].

After a confused fragment of conversation, in which Maule tries in vain to learn what has happened and Madame Goesler becomes angered at his failure to understand, she dismisses him and, to make his humiliation complete, "forgot to ring the bell," leaving him to find his own way out.

There is satire in the first of these plottings, where the hypocrisy of politicians appears particularly blatant when juxtaposed with the impulsive candor of Glencora Palliser. There is poetic justice in the second, where Mr. Maule's discomfiture and frustration are the direct result of his own disingenuousness, which keeps him at home all morning, cut off from his normal channels of communication. It is in these scenes and others like them that the important moral questions of the Palliser chronicle are explored. The major plot events of the individual novels— the disappearance of Lizzie Eustace's jewels, the suicide of Ferdinand Lopez— are significant less for their own sake than as a vehicle for the individual plotlings: Lady Glencora's ill-judged visits to Lady Eustace and Emily Lopez. One can easily imagine that Trollope made Palliser a Prime Minister in order to see what kind of extravagant entertainment Glencora will undertake, and he certainly let her die (in a remarkably
offhand manner) in order to confront her husband with the supervision of three children whose characters and temperaments resemble their mother's more closely than his own. As plotlings like these proliferate throughout the chronicle, interacting with earlier plotlings treating similar characters and related themes, a kind of fiction emerges which is very different from the plot-dominated Barsetshire novels. It is, as the developing character portraits of the Pallisers, the Finns, and the Chilterns demonstrate, a supple and organic narrative capable of responding to minute variations in the circumstances of a situation. As such, the plotling structure, as we shall see, is also well suited to the treatment of the theme of change in the Palliser chronicle.

CHARACTER IN THE PALLISER NOVELS

The heroes of the Barsetshire novels are conservatives who resist change, and the villains are liberals like John Bold, the Proudies, the Duke of Omnium, and the Chaldicotes set, who favor it. Attempts by the narrator to make these conventional categories more flexible are thwarted by the demands of the plot, which is still the prevailing structural device in the first chronicle:

Mrs. Proudie has not been portrayed in these pages as an agreeable or amiable lady. There has been no intention to impress the reader much in her favour. It is ordained that all novels should have a male and a female angel and a male and a female devil... [I]n these pages, the latter character must be supposed to have fallen to the lot of Mrs. Proudie [BT, 26].
In the Palliser novels ideological conflict is much less conspicuous. The main characters are Liberals, but their opponents on the Conservative benches of the House of Commons, as we have seen, are no longer powerful enough to rank as serious antagonists of these characters. Instead, the most potent adversaries of Plantagenet Palliser and Lady Laura Kennedy and Phineas Finn are other Liberals who threaten their power within their own party or social circles and even their control over their private lives.

Moreover, although a majority of characters in the Palliser chronicle have adjusted to a climate of rapid social change, their attitude is more complex, more subtly motivated than the corresponding horror of reform in the Barsetshire novels. Liberal political philosophy is committed to improved conditions of life for the common man, but Trollope's are among the most unphilosophical characters in fiction. Only Plantagenet Palliser thinks to weigh his views as a practical politician against his party's political creed, and when he does so he recognizes limits to his own liberalism (PM, 68). Phineas Finn's endorsement of Irish Tenant Right, which his party opposes, forces him to relinquish the salaried office that alone enables him to maintain his cherished seat in the House of Commons. It is the only sacrifice made in the Palliser chronicle in the name of political conviction.

Palliser and Finn's more typical colleagues have espoused Liberalism out of family tradition, or self-interest,
or both. The former, like the St. Bungays, the Standishes, and the Pallisers themselves, Trollope admires for the skill in governing which they have acquired in their years of experience and for the sense which the best of them entertain that they owe their country disinterested service in return for their privileged place in the aristocracy. At the same time, however, they have turned their liberalism to their personal advantage: supporting popular reforms wins them, in turn, the support of the populace and thus becomes a means of acquiring or solidifying power. The narrator never tires of the paradox of Liberals, committed in principle to a reduction of the differences between rich and poor, complacently enjoying their wealth and rank. Asked as to his success in a recent general election, Palliser replies "with something like disdain in his voice as to the possibility of anybody having stood with a chance of success against him in his own family borough," leaving the narrator to observe, "For a full appreciation of the advantages of a private seat in the House of Commons let us always go to those great Whig families who were mainly instrumental in carrying the Reform Bill" (CYFH, 69).

This readiness to profit from their politics puts the noblest statesmen of the chronicle in nearly the same category with the less estimable politicians: party hacks like Barrington Erle and Laurence Fitzgibbon, who invariably support Liberal programs, regardless of their merits, and are
rewarded with remunerative government positions when their party is in power; blatant opportunists like Ferdinand Lopez, who believes that a seat in Parliament will assist him in his business ventures; and their Conservative opponents, who periodically abandon their personal convictions in favor of popular reform measures sponsored by their party in order to put themselves into office. Phineas Finn, who is more earnestly committed to liberal principles than most of his associates, nevertheless has been persuaded by arguments of political expediency to become the Parliamentary representative of Loughshane, the pocket borough of the Earl of Brentford. Unlike the Barsetshire novels, where the narrator, however reluctantly, pronounces the "bell, book, and candle" of the conservative High and Dry Church party morally superior to the "dirty surplices and ceremonial Sabbaths" of the Low-Church liberals (BT, 53), the Palliser books are peopled with characters who differ not so much in kind as in degree.

Throughout the chronicle change is gradual and limited. The two parties work together to ensure that this is so, and Palliser reflects with satisfaction that Matching Priory, the beloved symbol of his own aristocratic position, is not threatened by his party's reforms (PM, 68). More than in the Barsetshire novels, however, where the impact of the unwelcome changes is unexpectedly softened by happy surprises, the changes that do occur are permanent and significant. Boroughs like Loughshane are being disfranchised slowly but
irretrievably. Pressures which had been strong enough to coerce the young Glencora into marriage are powerless when applied to her children a generation later. The gentle transformation of institutions and attitudes is often imperceptible to the characters living through it, and some events in the chronicle are important chiefly as dramatic reminders of how much times have changed. The death of the old Duke of Omnium, for example, jolts the public, who now recognize the end of the era of faineant nobility. "They all go in for something now," one wistful club member remarks, and the general opinion that Plantagenet Palliser, his heir, "... may be very good at figures, but he isn't fit to fill his uncle's shoes" (PR, 24), derives not so much from a respect for Omnium as from nostalgia for an extinct class of Englishman.

Gradual though they are, these changes can exert real and serious pressures on people experiencing them. Among the Barsetshire characters, as we have seen, were grotesque figures who suffered distortions of personality as a result of too single-minded a devotion to the past (Monica Thorne) or of exclusion from the privileged traditional society (Josiah Crawley), or of the intrusion into this society of new and threatening elements against which they are unable to defend themselves (Lily Dale). The Palliser chronicle, too, has its damaged fruit, the deformed products of accelerating change in British society.
Nor is this injury confined to staunchly Conservative characters, whose opposition to the changes they see around them is destined to be ineffectual. In fact, there is a paradoxical contentment about old Tories like the Dean of Bobsonborough, who "thought that things were going from bad to worse, but was able to live happily in spite of his anticipations." Although such characters "feel among themselves that everything that is being done is bad," they are so cozily situated that they never suffer personally from the reforms which they deplore. "A huge, living, daily increasing grievance that does one no palpable harm," the narrator concludes with amusement from his observations of the Conservative state of mind, "is the happiest possession a man can have" (ED, 4).

Instead, the first to experience the harmful effects of change are those characters who stand to gain the most from it. Many of them are people of obscure birth who enjoy new opportunities for advancement in this era of social tolerance and political flexibility. George Vavasor and Robert Kennedy win seats in the House of Commons, and the latter is honored with a place in the cabinet. Lucinda Roanoke, an impoverished American, is about to marry an English baronet. Another outsider, the Portuguese Ferdinand Lopez, marries into the rich, conservative old Wharton family and is befriended by the Duchess of Omnium, who encourages him to stand for Parliament at the Palliser family's borough of
Silverbridge. Contributing to their success are exceptional personal qualities: Roanoke's spiritedness and brutal honesty and the courage, intelligence, and handsome appearance which Vavasor and Lopez possess.

All the circumstances in their favor notwithstanding, these characters are doomed to failure, often because of fatal deficiencies in their education. Kennedy's joyless religion is responsible for the rigidity and lack of moral imagination which destroy his marriage and, finally, his sanity. Lopez is ignorant of the customs of English social and business life. As a result, he repeatedly misjudges the people he deals with and their reactions to himself, and his schemes become increasingly divorced from reality. Others permit their inherent virtues to be corrupted in a search for the wealth which has become more accessible to people of their class. Vavasor abandons sedate, reputable modes of business in favor of speculative enterprises, including the political career which he cannot afford. "His ambition had betrayed him," the narrator concludes (CYFH, 71) as Vavasor's Parliamentary term, his engagement with his cousin Alice, and his access to her fortune end simultaneously. Alarmed by her dwindling fortune and pressed relentlessly by her mercenary aunt Mrs. Carbuncle, Lucinda tries to repress her horror at her engagement and accustom herself to the idea of a loveless marriage.
Trapped, finally, in intolerable situations, these characters deteriorate before our eyes. They brood over their failure, Vavasor and Lopez imagining themselves to be persecuted by others and Kennedy accusing his wife of adultery when she decides to leave him. All three men meditate revenge, Vavasor and Kennedy attempt murder, and Lopez commits suicide. Lucinda struggles to resign herself to her approaching marriage, but despair overcomes her on the eve of the wedding, when she quietly goes mad.

Throughout his novels Trollope freely exposes the shortcomings of people of high rank: the dissoluteness of Earl de Courcy, the idleness and licentiousness of the old Duke of Omnium. At the same time he admires the many aristocrats who are responsible custodians of the nation's power and wealth, those who are rich enough that they can "afford to learn to be a statesman" and who have "the industry wanted for such training." Such people are England's proudest resource (CYFH, 24), because "There are places in life which can hardly be well filled except by gentlemen." Now, however, political and economic reforms have granted unprecedented advantages to people who have not been educated to their proper use. Some, like Martha Dunstable, Marie Goesler, and Phineas Finn, wear their new wealth gracefully and exercise their power judiciously, but others struggling through this period of transition are at a hopeless disadvantage. They are invited for the first time to the homes of the elite, whose
ways, however, they do not understand. They know that there is money to be earned, but they have had no time to learn that the slow, gradual sources of income are the surest. Mrs. Sexty Parker accurately pinpoints the cause of Lopez' downfall. "He wants to get rich too quick," she says (PM, 46). They are aware that more and more people of their class are finding seats in Parliament, but they are unaware of the difficulties facing the MP with no independent source of funds: the necessity of obtaining some salaried government office—inevitably at the expense of his political independence, the long spells when his party is out of power and he has no income at all, and the repeated expense of re-election. By placing them in complex situations which they lack the experience to resolve successfully, social change has contributed to the destruction of Vavasor, Lopez, Kennedy, and Roanoke.

It is a basic tenet of Trollope's novel theory that heroes and villains are unrealistic character types. It is appropriate, in the light of this conviction, that Vavasor, Lopez, and Kennedy, the "villains" of the Palliser novels, are victims, as well: caught and destroyed in the moral confusion which accompanies the transition from one kind of society to another. Nor are they the only people to suffer the deleterious effects of change. The main characters of the chronicle, as we have seen, have a sophisticated attitude toward change, seeing in it benefits for the country at large, as well as new opportunities for themselves. In spite of
their urbanity, however, they are plagued with the self-doubt which makes Mr. Harding such an anomaly in Barsetshire and with the relentless anxiety which produced the disintegration of personality in their antagonists.

Contemporary feminism compounds Alice Vavasor's restlessness and fear of marriage by posing questions about a woman's role in society: raising doubts to which her enthusiasm for Radical politics makes her particularly susceptible. Lady Laura Standish and Emily Wharton are attracted, for different reasons, to men of humble birth and appear to overcome the class prejudices shared by their family and friends. Only after their marriages do they learn how ruinous to self-esteem the incompatibility of manners and tastes can be. Then they spend hours in bitter introspection, castigating themselves for what they both call their "shipwreck" until they are no longer recognizable as the strong-minded, energetic women they once were. Although Lady Laura, at the conclusion of Phineas Redux, was "young in years her features were hard and worn with care. She . . . had become an old woman" (70). Abel Wharton is alarmed to see his daughter so "unlike her usual self" as she becomes soon after her marriage with Lopez. "It had not been her nature," he reflects, "to kneel and ask for pardon, or to be timid and submissive" (PM, 48). Alice is more fortunate, having detected her cousin's flaws in time to renew her engagement with John Grey, but she has "sinned" in having broken it in the first place.
It is this sin which the title of the novel rhetorically asks the reader to forgive her, but only because she condemns herself so harshly: "I think that she may be forgiven," the narrator reasons, "in that she had never brought herself to think lightly of her fault" (CYFH, 70).

Few characters in the Palliser novels do bring themselves to think lightly, even of small faults. Phineas Finn "blushes" at his awkwardness in bringing a servant with him on his visit to Loughlinter, and Alice is angered by her uneasiness among the aristocratic guests at Matching Priory. More serious transgressions occasion long, remorseful meditations like the young Glencora Palliser's as she crouches over the fire after Lady Monk's party, convinced of her own worthlessness. Even a man like Lopez can feel the "disgrace" of having exposed himself to rejection and ridicule by Lizzie Eustace (PM, 58). In the final novel of the series such guilt feelings assume a structural importance. Sorrow at having hurt each other outweighs the characters' adherence to principle, moves both Palliser and Silverbridge to make concessions, and eventually leads to a resolution of the differences between the Duke and his children.

These stressful situations and the anxiety that they produce are often the direct outgrowth of what Walter Houghton calls the "dynamic, free-wheeling society" of the mid-Victorian age, the period which is reflected in the Palliser chronicle. Middle-class characters especially are
disoriented by the rapid change, perplexed by the widening scope of action available to them, and wary lest they come to ruin in trying to realize their new opportunities. In the heady early days of his Parliamentary career and his friendship with Lady Laura Standish, Phineas is often sobered by a consideration of the risks he is running: "He expected to be blown into fragments,— to sheep-skinning in Australia, or packing preserved meats on the plains of Paraguay . . . ." (PF, 5).

Subjected in this way to the same pressures as their antagonists, the main characters, despite generally higher moral principles, make the same kinds of compromises. Phineas, like George Vavasor, is a member of Parliament with no independent fortune and no significant political support. Each new election is a threat to Finn's career, as well as Vavasor's; to retain their seats both men violate their own ethical standards and then try to rationalize their conduct. Vavasor accepts the use of his cousin's money on the grounds that, as his future wife, she has an interest in his career. Phineas accepts the Earl of Brentford's influence with the voters of Loughshane on the spurious pretext that he can better serve the reform movement as the representative of a pocket borough than he can with no Parliamentary seat at all.

The Pallisers' troubled marriage, the sensitivity to criticism which makes the Duke miserable during his tenure as Prime Minister, and the father-son conflict in The Duke's
Children are individual or universal, rather than contemporary problems. The latter, though, is exacerbated by the continuing democratization of society, as young aristocrats enjoy more frequent contact with people like the Boncassens and the Tregears and form attachments which inevitably displease titled parents. The issue goes beyond the individual marriages of Lady Mary and Lord Silverbridge to the role of the aristocracy in a liberal society, a subject on which Palliser entertains ambivalent views:

He believed himself thoroughly in his order; but if his order, or many of his order, should become as was now Lord Grex [a corrupt nobleman in The Duke's Children], then, he thought, that his order not only must go to the wall, but that, in the cause of humanity, it had better do so. With all this daily, hourly, always in his mind, this matter of the choice of a wife for his heir was to him of solemn importance [72].

Palliser knows that the aristocracy will not "go to the wall" in his lifetime. "Equality is a dream," he tells Phineas Finn; "... there is no danger that Matching will fly from me in a dream" (PM, 68). Neither, however, is his class spared the uncertainty and anxiety which dog the untitled characters throughout the series. The one significant respect in which the aristocracy and the middle classes do approach equality in this chronicle is their common susceptibility to these new, damaging pressures.

It is the essential likeness of the characters in the Palliser series, rather than the preponderance of Liberals, which especially distinguishes them from the people of
Barsetshire. The narrator of the earlier chronicle can identify the "angels" and "devils" of a story, if only ironically and with strong qualification, but the distinction between Vavasor and Palliser in *Can You Forgive Her?* is a subtler one. In the debate over the relative merits of public and private life which extends throughout the novel, both men opt for Parliamentary service, as opposed to John Grey's advocacy of a life of seclusion and study. The qualities which led the narrator to applaud statesmen like Palliser as England's proudest resource are also inherent in Vavasor, much as he may have corrupted these talents by having "taught himself amiss":

He was a man capable of feeling such pride [in being a member of Parliament] as it should be felt, capable, in certain dreamy moments, of looking at the thing with pure and almost noble eyes; of understanding the ambition of serving with truth so great a nation as that which fate had made his own. Nature, I think, had so fashioned George Vavasor, that he might have been a good, and perhaps a great man... [45].

The two men never meet, but when Vavasor enters the House of Commons for the first time he is escorted by Palliser's aide, Mr. Bott, "not because there had been any old friendship between them, but Mr. Bott was on the look-out for followers, and Vavasor was on the look-out for a party." Although the aristocrats at the helm of the Liberal party, the descendants of old Whig families, seem superior to party hacks like Rattler, Mr. Bonteen, and Barrington Erle, idlers like Laurence Fitzgibbon, and dangerous seekers after power like
Vavasor and Robert Kennedy, this important scene suggests that there is actually a symbiotic relationship between them. The former depends on the latter for the support which maintains him in office, and when Mildmay rewards Kennedy with a Cabinet seat and Palliser, through the agency of Mr. Bott, seeks to take men like Vavasor (later Sir Timothy Beeswax) under his political patronage, they become implicated in the chicanery and corruption of such followers.

There are similarities, as well, between the Pallisers and a character who contributes to their growing discomfort in *The Prime Minister*, Ferdinand Lopez. Lopez's showy dinner party, with its French dishes furnished by Messrs. Stewam and Sugarscraps, is reminiscent of Glencora's "vulgar" entertainments at Gatherum Castle (19, 48). Lopez, moreover, suffers from a persecution complex which calls to mind the "thin skin" which afflicts Palliser. He believes that he has lost the Silverbridge election because of a "preconcerted" effort against him on the part of the Duke's people (43), that he has been "grievously wronged" by his wife (54), that his business failures were due to the timidity of his partner (54). When the San Juan Mining Association fires him as their representative in Guatemala, he exclaims, "You have ruined me among you" (58). He broods over his imaginary "grievous injuries" (42) as Palliser broods over opposition within his Coalition government, over his wife's parties, and over attacks made on him in unfriendly newspapers until he is
"nearly maddened . . . with anger and grief" (41, 50, 51, 56). Worlds apart in character, Lopez and Palliser are alike in temperament. 8

To create these parallels in the situations of the central characters in the chronicle and their disturbed antagonists, Kennedy, Vavasor, and Lopez, is a final contribution of the plotling to the Palliser series. The levelling of characters is achieved by a "levelling" of the action, so that all the scenes of a novel, whether or not they belong to the main plot, are of equal autonomy and importance. As the conventional plot is an appropriate metaphor for the conservative society of Barsetshire, so the flexible plotling structure, affording a multiplicity of perspectives, is an appropriate metaphor for the complex, evolving society of the Palliser chronicle.

CONCLUSION: THE EXPANDING CHRONICLE

The Palliser chronicle, however, was not written in direct opposition to the Barsetshire books. Rather, the second series grows out of the first. The differences between the two chronicles discussed above—the narrative styles, the characters' attitudes toward change, and the nature of the conflict in the individual novels—must be considered in the light of the larger relationship between them, and the key to this relationship is the precise nature of the Palliser novels' evolution from the Chronicles of Barsetshire.
The Palliser chronicle is conceived in a subplot of The Small House at Allington, in which Plantagenet Palliser, then a novice politician, twenty-five years of age, dull and industrious, and subject to the authority of his uncle, the Duke of Omnium, entertains a brief, bloodless infatuation for Lady Dumbello, better known to readers of Barchester Towers and Framley Parsonage as Griselda Grantly. Confined to three chapters of The Small House, (23, 43, & 55), the episode is a good illustration of the contribution of the plotling to the conventionally plotted Barsetshire novels. First, it develops character portraits begun earlier in the series. Griselda, in her dalliance with Palliser, her relationship with her husband, and her response to her mother's passionate letter, is even more heartless and manipulative than during her courtship in Framley Parsonage. Lady de Courcy and Mrs. Clantantram (now elevated to Lady Clandidlem) have become friends since their display of bad manners at Monica Thorne's fete champetre (BT, 36, 37), and they now exercise their malice and their penchant for gossip by monitoring the behavior of Palliser and Griselda and eagerly predicting an elopement. The reader's old friends Susan Grantly, Eleanor Arabin (who, true to form, uses "half-hidden words" to communicate to her sister the rumors about Griselda), and Mrs. Proudie are all further characterized by their reaction to the supposed scandal, as is the Duke himself, who in Doctor Thorne and Framley Parsonage is portrayed primarily in terms of his silence, but
now is shown in all his power when he condescends to speak a few words.

More than most plotlings in this chronicle, secondly, the episode complements the main plot by taking place at Courcy Castle just as Crosbie, newly engaged to Lily Dale, arrives for a visit. The idle, jaded De Courcy set, so eager to imagine a guilty liaison between Palliser and Lady Dumbello, never believe in the worldly Crosbie's Allington romance. They suspect at once that it was a mere pastoral diversion: along with the croquet and "syllabubs on the lawn" imagined by the Countess, a pleasant way for a London civil servant to spend a summer month. This time their suspicions are correct, and Crosbie's enjoyment of the catty, cynical society at Courcy strengthens the regret with which he has already begun to view his engagement.

At the same time, the plotting marks the as yet unofficial beginning of the Palliser series. It is an appropriate turning point, because The Small House at Allington is the bitterest of the Barsetshire novels, depicting the nadir of the traditional social order. Although the description of the Great House at Allington emphasizes the close ties enjoyed by the original Squire Dale and his tenants, such harmony has broken down by the time this novel begins. There is ill feeling between Christopher Dale and his dependents, ranging from Mrs. Hearn's complaints about the upkeep of her cottage to Mrs. Dale's more profound sorrow at the stiff,
unloving nature of his generosity to herself and her daughters. Dale himself is a morose figure, ever disappointed in his relationships with others. Together with the other characters of *The Small House* (Mrs. Crump, the surly postmistress; timorous Mrs. Eames and her son Johnny, the hobbledehoy; Bernard Dale, the squire's heir, whose unimpassioned courtship of his cousin Bell shows him to be as dry and aloof as his uncle; the De Courcys with their family hatreds), these represent the largest population of the hapless, the spiteful, and the unloved in any of the Barsetshire novels.

Deteriorating relationships among Allington residents are a symptom of the larger decline of the once vigorous feudal system. Even when a direct threat to their way of life, Lily's abandonment by Crosbie, frightens them into a concerted defense of their order, their efforts are ineffectual. Lady Julia's valiant confrontation with Crosbie at Courcy Castle in an attempt to force him to acknowledge publicly his engagement with Lily, the squire's pursuit of him to London, Johnny Eames' punishment of him at Paddington station all have the effect of creating a sense of community among them, but they cannot mitigate the harm done to Lily. Of all the assaults by Londoners on Barsetshire society, Crosbie's meets with the weakest resistance. The idyllic setting of the novel is anachronistic, given the political reality. The picturesque cottages, lawns, stiles, and rustic wooden bridges seem to mock the obsolete economic order of which they are
the graceful relics.

The setbacks suffered by the Barsetshire characters throughout the chronicle must be attributed more to the growing impracticability of this order than to the inherent strength of their antagonists. The villains of the Barsetshire novels, those who so alarm gentle Mr. Harding or Lady Lufton or Archdeacon Grantly by attacking traditional institutions, are for the most part vulgar and clumsy and fail to concentrate much power in their own hands. John Bold's revolutionary zeal quickly mellows under the influence of his love for Eleanor, and their own ineptitude overtakes characters like Slope, the Scatcherds, and Crosbie. Even Mrs. Proudie is done in by a heart condition aggravated, we infer, by her malice and her obsessive quest for power. The decline of the old order thus creates a power vacuum which the outsiders try to fill but cannot. This is the political situation from the time of Mr. Harding's resignation as warden of Hiram's Hospital throughout the chronicle until the Palliser plotting in The Small House at Allington provides the first hint, in the character sketch of Palliser himself, of the nature of the evolving new society. Palliser has Liberal political inclinations, but he has refused to commit himself prematurely to any party affiliation. He is "willing to devote all his youth to work, in order that in old age he might be allowed to sit among the Councillors of State" (23). The most important fact about Palliser, however, is that he is a product of Barsetshire,
heir to one of the county's richest estates, and fully appre­ciative of the value of this position. Thus the pages of The Small House at Allington, which record Barsetshire's darkest hours, also contain the first suggestion of con­structive change emanating, at least to a degree, from within the county and effected through the agency of one of its own people, instead of a calamitous destruction at the hands of outsiders of a cherished way of life.

The twelve Barsetshire and Palliser novels could easily have been combined as one large series. The chronicle form, by virtue of its open-endedness, can accommodate progressive social change, just as it can accommodate progressive change in character. The series share the same two settings, al­though in inverse proportions: the Barsetshire characters occasionally travelling to London, and the legislators of the Palliser novels retreating to country homes like Gatherum Castle in Barsetshire to hunt, plot political strategy, and complete courtships which were cut short by the close of Par­liament. As if to stress the relatedness of the two chron­icles, moreover, Trollope carries over into the Palliser novels a number of characters from the earlier series. Besides Palliser himself, there is Griselda Grantly Dumbello, now the Marchioness of Hartletop, who is as mute as ever, but still fond of parties (CYFH, 49). There is the mature Frank Gresh­am, who prevents a row between Arthur Fletcher and Ferdinand Lopez during the Silverbridge election, thereby amusing the
narrator, who recalls Gresham's horsewhipping of Mr. Moffat in his earlier years (PM, 34). There is Lady Rosina de Courcy, now an elderly spinster living simply on a small income, whose conversation on practical, homely themes such as the usefulness of cork soles, soothes Palliser during his unhappy days as Prime Minister (PM, 27). Finally, there is the Bishop of Barchester, who testifies as a character witness during Phineas Finn's trial for the murder of Mr. Bonteen. The Bishop is unnamed, but any reader of the Barsetshire chronicle will supply the name of Proudie, and this detail once again hints at a close relationship between the characters of the two series.

Nevertheless, Trollope consciously determines, beginning with The Small House at Allington, to bring the Barsetshire series to a formal close and undertake a new narrative set in London. He does so in order to examine the changes which have shaken the Barsetshire countryside from the perspective of the politicians who effect these changes, the parliamentary process by which they do so, and those middle-class individuals discussed above whose social and economic power is significantly increased by it. The shift, in other words, is necessary to the accurate treatment of the transformation of British society for which Trollope's fiction is noted. It is also, however, a continuation of the process of expansion which has been underway throughout the chronicle, from the moment at the end of The Warden when the narrator expresses
his dissatisfaction with the characterization of the Archdeacon. A whole sequel is written to correct this portrait.

This expansiveness, as we have seen, is a function of the narrator as character. The same moral curiosity which in the Barsetshire novels compelled him to devise brief meetings between Mr. Harding and worldly characters like Mrs. Proudie, his granddaughter Griselda, and Adolphus Crosbie, just to see what will happen in such encounters, leads him in the second chronicle to create a new fictional world, in which he can pursue questions raised in the earlier one. Of all the characters in the two series who undergo progressive change, he is the most resilient, overcoming his emotional attachment to the antiquity of Barsetshire and the "sweetness of old faces" and approaching the complex metropolitan society of London without prejudice and often with enthusiasm.

So the creation of two separate but related chronicles is significant chiefly as one more manifestation of the tendency toward expansiveness which is the dominant aesthetic principle in Trollope's fiction. It reflects his compulsion to explore every circumstance and every consequence of a situation, just as the abundant length of his novels and the near duplication of such plotlings as Palliser's unjust anger at Alice Vavasor and Marie Goesler Finn reflect it. As Faulkner in *Absalom, Absalom!* juxtaposes alternative versions of a story as a means of arriving at its essential truth, so Trollope depends on alternative versions of a typical
situation in order to grasp its moral implications. So intense does his urge to expand, to continue, become that by the time of the Palliser chronicle he tries to avoid ending the novels at all. In the last chapter of *Can You Forgive Her?* Alice Vavasor's story is spoken of as being at "its close," even though it actually is to continue, in very brief installments, throughout the next four novels. The endings of the remaining Palliser novels, however, sound less and less "final." The narrator leaves Lizzie Eustace at the conclusion of *The Eustace Diamonds* with a promise that there is more to come: "The writer of the present story may . . . declare that the future fate of this lady shall not be left altogether in obscurity" (79). Nor has the story of Phineas Finn, he tells us in the last chapter of *Phineas Redux*, been satisfactorily concluded: "Of Phineas every one says that of all living men he has been the most fortunate. The present writer will not think so unless he shall soon turn his hand to some useful task." *The Prime Minister* ends with Palliser in retirement, but only temporarily: "For a few years I would prefer to remain out of office," he says in the closing sentences of the novel. "But I will endeavour to look forward to a time when I may again perhaps be of some humble use."

Finally, an intriguing suggestion regarding the conclusion of *The Duke's Children* is made by Chauncey Tinker in his preface to the Oxford Paperback edition. The last paragraph
of the manuscript, which does not appear in published versions of the novel, has Palliser's youngest son Gerald, soon after the marriages of his brother and sister, saying, "It will be my turn next." Tinker reads this passage as a promise of "yet another chronicle of Barset," which would follow the loves of Lord Gerald Palliser and the married lives of Silverbridge and Lady Mary. "It would be strange indeed," says Tinker, "if some such story were not taking form in the fertile imagination of Anthony Trollope." He attributes the excision of the paragraph to Trollope's realization that at sixty-six years of age he could not expect to see a third chronicle to its conclusion. The impulse to expand perpetually his fictional world, however, remains as strong as it had been in his "castle-building" days when "For weeks, for months . . ., from year to year," he would carry out the same tale within his mind.

Both products of the same ongoing creative process, the two chronicles are companion pieces, inviting comparison at a hundred points. The Chronicles of Barset are Trollope's songs of innocence; the Palliser chronicles are his songs of experience: together they probe the unsettling phenomenon of social change and the wide range of human responses to it. Dominating the whole are the brooding figures of Septimus Harding, Josiah Crawley, and Plantagenet Palliser, their anxious thoughts filling chapters. At times these characters seem to merge. Mr. Crawley, who has always loved his
children better than they have loved him, shares this fate with Palliser. When Palliser, in the midst of an argument with his son, is suddenly touched by the boy's affection, he is like Harding when, after his suffering has separated him for a time from his daughter Eleanor, he finds relief from it in an exchange of renewed tenderness. The struggles of these characters, due though they may be to humorlessness and hypersensitivity, prove finally to be a source of dignity in a society full of partisan feuds and petty self-interest. The political and social instability in the two chronicles provides a novel and useful context for the observation of the frailties, foibles, and redeeming qualities of his characters which remains the first object of Trollope's fiction.
NOTES


4. apRoberts, pp. 49-51.


8. For other parallels between the Lopezes and the Pallisers see Mizener, p. 163.

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The following abbreviations are used in the listings below:

HLQ Huntington Library Quarterly
MLQ Modern Language Quarterly
NCF Nineteenth-Century Fiction
SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900
SP Studies in Philology
VS Victorian Studies

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