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## ABSTRACT

This thesis takes the form of an investigation into the amount and type of contemporary material which Trollope incorporated into two of the novels in the Parliamentary series: Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux. The connexion between the historical and political events of the mid-nineteenth century and the events in the novels is demonstrated, particularly with regard to the difficulties of forming governments. Trollope's awareness of the nature of political change and the effect this had on his contemporaries is noted. It is also shown that Trollope took two contemporary events - the passing of the Second Reform Bill of 1867 and the Disestablishment of the Irish Church - as the basic political material for the two novels, but that he adapted these events for his own purposes. Trollope's accurate observation of the political society of his time, <sup>of</sup> the difficulties which an 'outsider' (in this case an Irishman) had in penetrating it, and <sup>of</sup> the role which it forced women to play is discussed. Finally, it is shown that Trollope did, on occasion, use certain characteristics of living politicians, particularly Disraeli, Gladstone and Bright, as the model for his own politicians.

"The Historical and Social Background of Anthony Trollope's  
Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux."

By

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A Thesis submitted for the degree of M.A.

University of Durham.

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October 1977.

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Note on References

Abbreviations.

<u>Autobiography</u>	Anthony Trollope, <u>An Autobiography</u> , The World's Classics, London, 1953.
<u>Letters</u>	<u>The Letters of Anthony Trollope</u> , ed. Bradford A. Booth, London, 1951.
<u>NCF</u>	<u>Nineteenth Century Fiction</u> .
<u>VS</u>	<u>Victorian Studies</u> .

Quotations from Phineas Finn (PF) and Phineas Redux (PR) are from the Oxford World's Classics editions of 1969 and 1970. As these contain two volumes in one cover the reference which follows each quotation is to volume and page number. Quotations from other novels by Trollope are in the Oxford World's Classics edition except where otherwise indicated.

## INTRODUCTION

Phineas Finn (1869) and Phineas Redux (1876) are typically "Trollopian" novels in the sense that the centre of interest of both is the love entanglements of the central character or group of characters. The novels, however, are part of the "political" series - political because they deal with a group of people involved in the government of the country. As Bradford A. Booth says about Phineas Finn, "politics is as incidental in this novel as was religion in Barchester Towers."<sup>(1)</sup> He is right in that the novelist's eyes are always fixed firmly on his characters and their behaviour. Yet politics - particularly that associated with Reform and Church Disestablishment - is all-pervasive in these two novels. But although Trollope was not concerned with political theory in anything but a minor way, his treatment of politics, and particularly of the historical events which were occurring during the writing of the novel, demonstrates a very strong interest in political behaviour.

This study sets out to investigate what sort of historical events Trollope chose from his times to incorporate into his novels and to discuss the use he put this material to. As politics is interesting to Trollope because of the motives and ambitions of men it is also necessary to look at the society from which Trollope took his characters. It will be seen that although Trollope occasionally uses the novels as a platform for his own views, generally the politics, and his analysis of mid-Victorian political society, are used to further his purely novelistic aims. With certain material at his disposal, Trollope chose carefully and consistently and with imagination, with his main aims almost constantly in view.

Chapter 1 looks at the broad historical background to the novels and shows to what extent they, and particularly Phineas Finn, reflect the changing times and how the more cynical tone of Phineas Redux is due, in part, to Trollope's own feelings of disillusionment. In Chapter 2 Trollope's treatment of Reform and of Church Disestablishment in the two novels is considered. The chapter shows how Trollope utilised the events and feelings surrounding the passage of the Second Reform Bill of 1867 and, to a lesser extent, of the Bill to disestablish the Irish Church. Chapter 3 looks at the society in which his characters live and demonstrates how important to the over-all

conception of the novels was Trollope's accurate view of its inter-related and exclusive nature. It also considers the difficulties which faced the woman of society in the mid-1860s and shows both how Trollope's treatment of women contributes to his analysis of the problem of behaviour within society and of how closely connected, in Trollope's view, were the world of politics and society. Finally, in Chapter 4, the vexing question of "literary originals" is discussed and it is shown that although Trollope frequently did model his characters on real people, or even on real "types", he did so usually because it furthered his literary aim.

#### Notes for Introduction

- (1) Bradford A. Booth, Anthony Trollope: Aspects of His Life and Art (London, 1958), p.86.



## CHAPTER ONE

### The Historical setting

For in this queer sense of the absorbing interest of normal occupations lies the true realism of Trollope. He can reproduce the fascination of the successive happenings of the daily round, in the absence of which the human spirit would perish or go mad. Existence is made up of an infinite number of tiny fragments of excitement, interest and provocation, which carry men on from day to day, ever expectant, ever occupied. It is the second part of Trollope's claim to be a novelist that, by building up from just such multifarious trivialities the big absorptions that are his books, he gives the illusion that is of all illusions the most difficult to create - the illusion of ordinary life.<sup>(1)</sup>

The first part of Trollope's claim to be a novelist, Michael Sadleir suggests, echoing James's "great appreciation of the usual", is his "acceptance and his profound understanding of ordinary daily life."<sup>(2)</sup> These judgements of Trollope's art have been repeated, in various forms, by most succeeding critics. "He was a realist", writes David Cecil bluntly,<sup>(3)</sup> while Asa Briggs comments: "The two writers who most surely described the essentials of life in the late fifties and sixties were Trollope and Bagehot."<sup>(4)</sup> Kenneth Graham calls Trollope the "High Priest of Victorian Realism, in theory as in practice."<sup>(5)</sup> David Skilton has devoted a section of his book<sup>(6)</sup> to a discussion of 'Trollopian Realism'. Sensibly he warns against the danger of losing sight of the art in Trollope's novels by considering them, as Hawthorne did, as great lumps of earth put on display; considering them, that is, purely in terms of their intimate relationship with the real world. We are continually being reminded of the real world in Trollope's novels because, as Skilton has shown, he incorporates all the data we, as readers, need to interpret the moral dilemmas of his characters. Trollope's characters move in a world with a social code which, by and large, has passed away, yet there is no special need to study nineteenth-century social history in order to understand their predicaments. This explains why Trollope's novels have so frequently been mined by sociologists and social historians for information about the mid-Victorian period on the assumption that they accurately report the conventions of the time.<sup>(7)</sup> The truth of this is well

illustrated in Beatrice Curtis Brown's short book on the novels of Trollope.<sup>(8)</sup> Mrs. Brown thinks that by making ourselves aware, albeit superficially, of the social conditions of the time we will be in a better condition to appreciate the books. She gives a brief account of the main influences on Victorian thought and Trollope's relation to it. At the end of the summary she tells us that there is one point concerning the society of the time which should be borne in mind: that until the Married Women's Property Acts a man often made his own fortune by marrying well while a woman was dependent on a man for her own financial well-being, and, unless a special settlement was made prior to a marriage, her own wealth devolved upon her husband. But a simple knowledge of only a few of Trollope's novels makes this information from outside superfluous. This situation is admirably documented in, to name only a few, The Eustace Diamonds, Doctor Thorne and Phineas Finn. Similarly when Mrs. Brown tells us that "in order to enter parliament, it was necessary to have an independent income",<sup>(9)</sup> we find that the careers of Ontario Moggs, Ferdinand Lopez and Phineas Finn have admirably illustrated this fact. The conventions, particularly concerning money, are spelt out for us in the novels without it being necessary for us to repair to independent sources for our information.

A study of the background - and particularly the political background - can, however, be very useful for elucidating Trollope's method and purpose. His use of contemporary history, for instance, familiar enough to a mid-nineteenth-century readership, will not be immediately apparent to a twentieth-century reader. Yet these novels are deeply rooted in the events of the mid sixties, and while Trollope was too good a novelist to write in such a manner that his books should require nowadays to be studded with explanatory footnotes, a knowledge of the historical events which inspired his novelistic ones can be very revealing. In this chapter, therefore, I shall consider the genesis of the two novels and show how they sprang to a large extent from Trollope's interest in contemporary politics. His concern with politics did not, however, lead him to write bare political history, and it will be seen that an appreciation of the close connexion between the social and political in the novels, and the varying emphasis that Trollope puts on each, leads to a clearer understanding of Trollope's purpose. Similarly, in looking at the relationship of the novels to

their broad historical background and then in closer detail at two particular historical events, certain preoccupations of the novelist begin to emerge. What will become clear, I hope, is that in setting the novels in a firmly realised historical period and in a society which is a clear reflection of that of the 1860s, he clearly shows that the difficulties which beset the hero are very real ones. In seeing the constraints which Trollope's fictional society put on one individual we also recognise the difficulties which would face any person in mid-nineteenth-century society. This is not to say that the books represent a critique of society. Trollope certainly does not deny its imperfections as he saw them, but he is more interested in showing us the difficulties of behaving in a correct or 'decent' way in a society whose moral code is often more honoured in the breach than otherwise. (10)

## II

Phineas Finn (1867) - and its sequel Phineas Redux (1871) - are the most directly political novels in the so-called 'Palliser' series: Can You Forgive Her? (1864), Phineas Finn (1869), The Eustace Diamonds (1873), Phineas Redux (1876), The Prime Minister (1876), The Duke's Children (1880). Taken as a whole, as Trollope wished them to be, the series is a major tour de force and Trollope, as we know from his autobiography, was particularly fond of these literary offspring. (11) It is, indeed, the 'Palliser' series and not the 'Political' one, if only because in it Trollope traces the progress over a number of years of his favourite characters, Plantagenet Palliser and Lady Glencora. (12) We meet them first as a young and somewhat mismatched couple in Can You Forgive Her? although Palliser has already made a brief appearance in Framley Parsonage (1861), and we follow their progress through many years of changing circumstance until, finally, the proud, unhappy Duke is left alone after the death of his wife to struggle with the increasingly complex sexual problems of his children. It is a remarkable series not merely because of the host of finely drawn characters who populate Trollope's world, but because it chronicles, in convincing detail, a whole era of social and political life; and it is indeed as R.M. Polhemus has called it, a changing world. (13) The world which the ageing Duke of Omnium tries vainly to come to terms with in The Duke's Children is utterly different from that pre-Reform world of Can You Forgive Her? In his youth men with wealth and rank found suitable mates in women with similar wealth and rank but now he finds that the heir to the first dukedom in England must be allowed to marry an

American of no rank. Unlike Trollope, who understands the nature of change - both in character and society - the Duke is confused and unhappy.

Phineas Finn was written in a period of great political change and upheaval. The facts of Trollope's life make it seem almost inevitable that it and its successor should be, in part, his own history of the events of the mid-sixties and early seventies. We know from his autobiography that Trollope had long entertained political aspirations of his own. "I have always thought", he wrote, "that to sit in the British Parliament should be the highest object of ambition of every educated Englishman."<sup>(14)</sup> His interest in politics, however, was not new and his second Irish novel was, in Sadleir's words, "as much a pamphlet in fictional guise as was its predecessor, being equally a product of Trollope's absorption in the Irish question."<sup>(15)</sup> By 1866, with some twenty novels behind him, Trollope was much more likely to reconcile his interest in political questions with his knowledge of what constituted a readable novel.

The writing of Phineas Finn was preceded by a serious study of contemporary politics, of close reading of political books and papers, and by two months in the strangers' gallery of the House of Commons. The most immediate results of this work were threefold: the novel itself, Trollope's attempt to enter parliament via the constituency of Beverley, and a monograph on Lord Palmerston which was not, however, published until 1882.<sup>(16)</sup> We can be certain that the political sections of his novels at this time were in part the result of a need to represent and comment upon current political events. Consider first his words on the genesis of the Palliser novels: "As I was debarred from expressing my opinions in the House of Commons, I took this method of declaring myself."<sup>(17)</sup> Earlier in the Autobiography he writes about how frequently he used the characters of Plantagenet Palliser and Lady Glencora "for the expression of my political and social convictions. They have been as real to me as free trade was to Mr. Cobden, or the dominion of party to Mr. Disraeli; and as I have not been able to speak from the benches of the House of Commons, or to thunder from platforms, or to be efficacious as a lecturer, they have served me as safety-valves by which to deliver my soul."<sup>(18)</sup>

The circumstances of the novel's first publication point to a similar concern with the political. Phineas Finn first appeared in serial form in the new magazine Saint Paul's from October 1867 to May

1869. The magazine was at this time edited by Trollope himself. It was a political magazine, as Trollope pointed out in his first editorial introduction. "He and his friends who work with him intend to be political - thinking that of all the studies to which men and women can attach themselves, that of politics is the first and finest."<sup>(19)</sup> In the same editorial he writes of Phineas Finn that he will "warble forth from month to month, - a ditty not indeed composed wholly of love-strains; a slight story in which the author has attempted to describe how love and ambition between them may cause the heart of a man to vacillate and make his conduct unsteady."<sup>(20)</sup> It is not indeed composed wholly of love-strains and its choice for the main fare of this political magazine is significant. From all this we are lucky, perhaps, not to have been left with a political manifesto. But Trollope knew his trade too well for that. Phineas Finn is a novel which has at its centre an interest in people and how they behave in society, and this study of behaviour is set within a world of densely and concretely realised social and political detail. There is a passage in Trollope's Life of Lord Palmerston which, I think, provides a good demonstration of the angle from which he viewed political events and figures. In the first chapter he relates an anecdote concerning a rather unsuccessful shooting trip made by Palmerston and four friends on Palmerston's estate in Ireland and how five guns had killed only sixteen pheasants because of the lack of care by a game-keeper. Trollope writes, "But Mr. Thrasher, the keeper in fault, probably thought that a man so greatly occupied with foreign affairs as his master, could not want so many pheasants."<sup>(21)</sup> This is the insight of the novelist not the political biographer, and it is emblematic of Trollope's concern with the characters within politics rather than with isolated political theory. Trollope's interest throughout this book is, in fact, confined to this sort of anecdotal, general level. We find him a little later on, for instance, quoting with hearty approval a letter from Palmerston to his brother - echoes of which we find in more than one novel:

The truth is that English interests continue the same let who will be in office, and that upon leading principles and great measures men of both sides, when they come to act dispassionately and with responsibility upon them, will be found acting very much alike.<sup>(22)</sup>

Trollope is not, in fact, concerned with politics per se, in the sense for instance that Disraeli is in his novels, and if we look carefully at the 'political' novels, including Ralph the Heir, we find that there is very little political theory in them. It is sometimes the case that Trollope will make a political question a symbol of some more complex activity, but by treating them in this way he is able to refer again and again to the thing that it stands for without being obliged to enter into details. Perhaps the best example of this is to be found in Plantagenet Palliser's preoccupation with decimal coinage. First as Chancellor of the Exchequer and then as President of the Board of Trade, this becomes 'Planty Pall's' hobbyhorse, the measure for which he is working night and day and for which he suffers so much castigation at the hands of Lady Glencora. We are given very few details about what is involved and the idea was eccentric enough at this time to require very little authorial comment. We know, however, that there must have been more than this one subject on the mind of the Chancellor although there is little indication of such in the books. It is as a symbol that this device works, standing in itself for all the work with which Palliser is involved. It has enough of dryness and obscurity about it to suit the character of the man and, with little chance of the measure ever passing through Parliament, it can be carried in its vague way from book to book. The question of the Ballot (in Phineas Finn) and Church Disestablishment (in Phineas Redux) are treated in like manner. Naturally, we are given more detail about these two measures as they were reflections of important contemporary political measures, but a reader of the two books would be very hard put to describe in any substantial way what these measures involved. Trollope, simply, is more interested in the people who deal with political measures than with the measures themselves, but by using this method he is able to suggest convincingly that his characters really work at something concrete.

The action of Phineas Finn spans five years, from the moment when Phineas is invited to sit in parliament to the time when he opposes the government on the subject of Tenant-Right and resigns his place in order to return to Ireland with his newly acquired wife. Like many Victorian novels the book has a gigantic structure and teems with sub-plots and minor characters. In this case, though, it would be incorrect to label any of the book 'sub-plot', as all the action is so

closely associated to form one coherent structure to which all the elements contribute with varying degrees of success. The main unifying factor in the novel is the figure of Phineas himself. We see almost everything through his eyes and even the action in which he is not directly involved concerns him to a large extent - the domestic tragedy concerning Lady Laura and Mr. Kennedy, for instance, or the attempt by the Duke of Omnium to marry Marie Goesler. In this connection Skilton has pointed to what he calls "a central paradox in [Trollope's] novels."<sup>(23)</sup> The paradox which he sees is in the fact that Trollope's novels are all social in that they depend on the interaction of sets of persons and create a convincing picture of a fictional community, "and yet ... an examination of any of the novels will show how very significant a proportion of the books concerns the situation of a single character, alone, so that such portions must either be irrelevant to the rest of the novel, or much of the action must take place at the level of the individual and not society."<sup>(24)</sup> This, in fact, is not true of Phineas Finn. Certainly most of the action in this novel concerns a single character alone (for Phineas is never completely assimilated into society), and this action takes place at the level of the individual. Nevertheless, Phineas's personal problems and dilemmas are caused purely by the necessity of living in a particular society at a particular time and we are never shown any of the deeper doubts and uncertainties which we can only assume troubled the mind of this intelligent young Victorian. Phineas's problems are those inherent in living within a particular society: should he accept a parliamentary seat from a family he knows he is eventually going to offend? Should he marry for money in order to sustain his career? Should he involve himself in the private quarrels of a married couple with whom he is intimately connected, or should he sever the relationship completely in order to save his career? Trollope applies himself firmly to the question which Phineas is made to work out; how does one behave in society, and in particular in political society, so that one's private conscience and also the external (code) of behaviour are both satisfied?

Phineas Finn can be divided, very roughly, into three sections. The first deals with Phineas's introduction into London political society and the immense difficulties which the political leaders have of forming a workable administration in those days of gross political instability. Once a relatively stable government has been formed the question of the Ballot and Reform come to the forefront. These

questions, in their turn, gradually fade from the picture and are replaced at the end of the novel by the concerns which force Phineas to abandon his place in government: Tenant-Right and Ireland. These are the main political concerns of the novel and taken on their own would make pretty dry reading. But most readers would undoubtedly agree that the dominant impression of the book is that its subject matter is almost wholly Phineas's career set against a convincing, but vague, background of political activity. The reason for this is that whenever a political event appears to be reaching a climax Trollope overshadows it with what we might term a 'social' event. We can take as example of this the section of Phineas Finn which deals with the question of the Ballot: Chapters XX to XXIX. The government has decided, in order to forestall opposition later to its Reform Bill, to introduce a separate Ballot Bill for which Mr. Turnbull, the radical M.P., is asking. We come to the chapter dealing with the first reading of the Bill expecting to find a chapter of politics when in fact the question of the Ballot is completely overshadowed by the vivid description of Phineas's confusion and embarrassment when attempting to make his maiden speech. The second reading of the Ballot Bill is treated in a similar manner. Phineas returns to London from a hunting trip with Lord Chiltern to find the town in turmoil over the Ballot and Reform questions. The riot which takes place during the second reading of the Bill is made particularly vivid for us because we are taken into the thick of it in the amiable company of that respectable agitator Mr. Bunce, whose arrest provides the spring-board for the next piece of action. Excitement about the Ballot is at its height, but so is our interest in Phineas, for it is during the next debate that he actually manages his maiden speech. Now Trollope has dealt with the problem of the Ballot in some detail, but our interest has not been in the dry fabric of politics, in the events themselves, but in the events as seen in the light of Bunce's or Turnbull's or Phineas's behaviour.

The passing of the Liberal Reform Bill is the central political act in Phineas Finn, but there is good reason, bearing in mind the date of composition, why Trollope's interest in the question appears to decline as the novel progresses. The book was written during the passing of the Conservative's Reform Bill which must have been a source of some embarrassment to him. John Sutherland has suggested that the treatment of specific issues in the novel is "occasionally muffled" mainly because of the close relationship between the real events and



the events in the book. (25) "1867", he writes, "was a bad time to back political horses." Although this point is undoubtedly true, Trollope's treatment of Reform is consistent with his novelistic aims and the 'muffled treatment' is, I think, due mainly to this. It is therefore significant that at the point in the novel when the pressure for Reform has resulted in the introduction of a Bill, at the point indeed where Trollope includes a rare section concerned purely with political theory (Monk's letter to Phineas in Chapter XXXV), Phineas's career is dangerously threatened by the challenge to a duel and this completely overshadows the political events. We are kept continually aware of the progress of the Reform Bill, but only by the incidental sentence here and there. In a section concerned primarily with the movements of Lady Laura we read that "February was far advanced and the new Reform Bill had already been brought forward, before Lady Laura Kennedy came up to town..."; and later: "The debate on the second reading of the bill was to be commenced on the 1st of March, and two days before that Lady Laura arrived in Grosvenor Place." At one of the most critical moments for the Bill, during the debate on the second reading, Phineas is in Blankenburg fighting with Lord Chiltern.

Understanding Trollope's view of an interwoven society in which the political and social continually act and reflect upon each other enables us to see a more coherent design in his work. It is entirely due, for instance, to Phineas's 'social' success in London that he is able to find a seat in parliament. If he had not been 'taken up' by the Whigs in society - and more specifically by their women - it is unlikely that this Irish Roman Catholic adventurer would have long remained a legislator. We see the interaction of the political and social particularly well after the introduction of the character of Mme. Max Goesler in Chapter XL. She is described as a widow, possibly Jewish in origin - and certainly with all the disadvantages consequent on being thought Jewish - attempting to become a social success in London. She has a peculiarly difficult task, particularly as she is alone and the 'set' to which she is trying to gain admittance, the highest rank of English society, was notoriously exclusive. Her cleverness and subtlety are emphasized: her dinners were much sought after in London and she frequently increased their rarity value by closing her door to callers when she would much rather have opened it. She is not such a figure as Wilde's Mrs. Erlynne though, for gentlemen

and their wives regularly dined at her little house in Park Lane. We begin to see that Mme. Goesler's story is an important parallel to Phineas's, that her story is, in fact, 'political' in that it is an account of her attempt to win social acceptability within a society which is as difficult to enter as the political world. She reaches her peak when she induces the greatest nobleman in England to be a regular caller and is then confronted by what turns out to be the central problem of the book: the conflict between political (or social) success and real, or honourable, success - perhaps 'private satisfaction'. It is a problem which Lady Laura has to face and which Phineas, too, faces. In Mme. Goesler's case she has to weigh in the balance her desire <sup>to</sup> marry the Duke of Omnium and become the first Duchess in the land - satisfying once and for all her social ambition - or of marrying the man she really loves and supporting him in his political career. She chooses, of course, to forgo the coronet and is rewarded for her sacrifice with the man she loves, in Phineas Redux.

The view of politics in Phineas Finn is the view of the man who has not been directly involved himself; Phineas Redux, however, was written after Trollope's own attempts to enter politics in 1868. His method in the later novel is similar to that in Phineas Finn although the structure of the novel itself is not so firm as in the earlier one. R.W. Chapman, in his introduction to Phineas Redux, calls both novels "lounging" and "sprawling" narratives, <sup>(26)</sup> and this is particularly true of the later novel. Although it deals with the same hero and contains most of the characters we have met in Phineas Finn, the structure and the tone are different in several significant ways. Perhaps the one thing that gives this novel more 'sprawl' than its precursor is the sub-plot concerning Mr. Maule senior's attempts to win Mme. Max and Mr. Maule junior's to win Adelaide Palliser, which Trollope unhappily introduced. It is not a particularly interesting story, and being almost entirely unconnected with the main plot, unlike the 'sub-plots' of Phineas Finn, it interferes considerably with the unfolding of events. This aside, though, we notice a new tone of cynicism in the discussion of political events especially in the scenes which deal with elections. Times have changed, as Trollope frequently points out; this is now the post-Reform world and the 'vital' issue which sent Phineas back to Ireland in the first book has now been quietly dealt with in the intervening years. The sentiments which Phineas expresses to Lady Laura after his trial for the murder of

Mr. Bonteen are in accord with the new view which Trollope seems to have of politics: "What does it matter who sits in parliament? The fight goes on just the same. The same falsehoods are acted. The same mock truths are spoken. The same wrong reasons are given. The same personal motives are at work." (PR ii. p.306.) As the view of politics in Phineas Redux is very much that of Phineas himself, his disillusionment informs the whole work. Trollope's changed view of politics is no doubt due primarily to his experiences at Beverley in 1868. The experience was not a pleasant one, and it evidently gave him a loathing for corrupt election procedure which we find reflected in Ralph the Heir (1871) and Phineas Redux; it also put an end to his political ambitions which must have been very strong during the composition of Phineas Finn.

The political setting of Phineas Redux is sketched in early: a Reform Bill has been passed; Tenant-Right has become a reality in Ireland, and now the Liberals want to remove the Conservatives from power - the old game is to begin again. But it is not quite the old game; things have changed a little from the 'old days' of Phineas Finn: "But Loughton and Loughshane [the two pocket boroughs] were gone, with so many other comfortable things of old days." (PR i. p.37.) thinks Phineas to himself, while a few pages later a new note is struck with the transcription of the 'old' Duke's thoughts: "He too liked his party and was fond of loyal men; but he had learned at least that loyalty must be built on a basis of self-advantage." (p.47) Even the major political event which provides the setting for all the parliamentary scenes, Church Disestablishment, is the result of a trick by the place-grabbing premier, Daubeney. We do not, however, find out as much about this great political event as we did about Reform in the first novel. Although the same sort of technique is employed, inasmuch as we are continually aware of the gradual passage of the Bill for Disestablishment, it is always very much in the background, the foreground being taken up with the Maule/Adelaide Palliser plot, Lady Laura and Mr. Kennedy and, ultimately, Phineas's trial. In Phineas Finn the political activity was overshadowed by the concerns of the hero; in Phineas Redux political activity is actually brought to a halt by the crisis in the hero's life when he is put on trial.

It is clear, then, that Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux are 'political' novels in only a very special sense and that Trollope's main concern in writing them was not to provide a commentary on contemporary politics. His eye is firmly on his protagonists and his

interest is clearly in them as social beings. This, of course, is nothing unusual in a novelist, although the remark attributed to the author of perhaps the finest analysis of men and women living within the constraints of society, George Eliot in Middlemarch, suggests that the pains that Trollope took to create a real society were unusual. "I am not at all sure", she said to <sup>Mrs</sup> Lynn Linton, "that but for A.T. I should ever have planned my studies on so extensive a scale for Middlemarch, or that I should through all its episodes have persevered with it to the close."<sup>(27)</sup> It is precisely because we are taken by Trollope from realistic portrayals of historical events to the personal problems of Phineas that we are able to understand the very real constraints on his actions. That the historical events are accurately realised and believable will be demonstrated in the following section.

### III

The first reviewers of Trollope's novels considered the writer as realistic or 'truthful', and indeed it was generally for this aspect of his work that he was most praised or criticised. The reviewer of Phineas Finn and He Knew He Was Right in Harper's Magazine wrote: "Both of them possess the characteristic feature of Mr. Trollope's writings - truth. Perhaps no author gives the American reader a more correct picture of English society in its average aspect."<sup>(28)</sup> The Dublin Review of 1869 carried a piece which praised Trollope for his accurate and 'perhaps prophetic' view, although this time his accuracy was in his depiction of Ireland.<sup>(29)</sup> J. Herbert Stack, in a general article on Trollope's novels in the Fortnightly Review, complains of the reception currently given to "painters who paint pictures of railway stations", and he continues, "We almost fear that many of Mr. Trollope's admirers think best of him because he manages to invest with interest such incidents of everyday life."<sup>(30)</sup> (In this case he is referring to the verbal report of a breach of promise case.) Edith Simcox, in a review of Phineas Redux writes, "The only objection that can be made to the practice which is gaining ground amongst novelists, of reproducing current political events in a slight disguise, or parodying the famous trials of the day, is that the resource is equally open to everyone, and that it is tiresome to have to read about the same thing more than twice."<sup>(31)</sup>

All these views of Trollope's realism tend to deny, implicitly, the working in any significant way of the imagination. As David Skilton notes,<sup>(32)</sup> the chief of the opponents of realism was the Saturday Review

which objected to art which it considered 'unimaginative' and denounced Trollope's fiction as 'monstrously prosaic'. Trollope recognised this charge himself and did not wholly agree with it: "There are sensational novels and anti-sensational, sensational novelists and anti-sensational; sensational readers and anti-sensational. The novelists who are considered to be anti-sensational are generally called realistic. I am realistic. My friend Wilkie Collins is generally supposed to be sensational. The readers who prefer the one are supposed to take a delight in the elucidation of character. They who hold by the other are charmed by the construction and gradual development of a plot."<sup>(33)</sup> This distinction Trollope felt to be the result of a mistake arising out of the "inability of the imperfect artist to be at the same time realistic and sensational. A good novel should be both, and both in the highest degree. If a novel fails in either, there is a failure in art." Trollope himself, it is clear, has combined a high degree of realism, particularly in the sense in which he used the word to refer specifically to characterisation, with 'sensational' writing. The events narrated in Phineas Redux are as sensational as anything in Wilkie Collins, yet they take place against a fully realised background of political activity, a background indeed which even in the sixties and seventies was regarded as accurate. A close look at the relationship of the novels to their historical setting will demonstrate the nature of Trollope's accuracy.

It is almost impossible to construct anything like an accurate time-scale for Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux, although John Sutherland has made the attempt with the earlier of the two books.<sup>(34)</sup> He suggests that the novel opens in 1864, which would place the events at the end of the book, which occur after the fictional Reform Bill has been passed, in 1869 - two years after the passing of the Second Reform Bill. These dates seem to provide a broad historical framework for the action of the novel, although the internal details do not fit this scheme at all points. Trollope was not a political historian, but he certainly intended, as he put it in the Autobiography, to have "that fling at the political doings of the day which every man likes to take if not in one fashion then in another."<sup>(35)</sup> That the 'political doings of the day' are, on the whole, contemporary with the writing of the novel is fairly clear both from the point of view of the larger events as well as the minor details. As Sutherland rightly notes, "Fenianism,

the Adullamite Cave, new Government buildings, Mill's feminist Bill, the expected trial of Jefferson Davis, the Hyde Park Riots and, arching over all, the reform issue"<sup>(36)</sup> all set Phineas Finn and its sequel in the present or immediate past. Very early in Phineas Finn we find in one sentence a reference to three major issues of the 1860s, only one of which is developed in any way in this novel. Barrington Erle, the party organiser, requires that the new Roman Catholic Irishman who they wish to be elected at Loughshane, should be a safe man, "not a cantankerous, red-hot semi-Fenian, running about to meetings at the Rotunda, and suchlike, with views of his own about tenant-right and the Irish Church." (p.7) Fenianism was not in itself a new thing, but the years 1866 and 1867 (when there was a Fenian attack on Canada) witnessed a new degree of heat from the Irish malcontents. As the Annual Register (of) 1866 put it, "A smouldering insurrection in Ireland, repressed to all appearance for a time, but breaking out again at intervals, and indicating a chronic state of disaffection and insecurity in that country, gave cause of painful reflection to all thoughtful politicians."<sup>(37)</sup> Phineas's blushing reply to Erle, "But I have views of my own", becomes more than the words of naive political idealism, for what thinking Irishman would not have views on the two issues most generally considered to be the cause of the Irish problems? This short section introduces what will become, in fact, one of the central themes in Phineas Finn - the independence of an individual within society. Society, in acting upon the individual in so many subtle ways, constricts individual action so that morality often becomes a matter of following the most socially acceptable, or even fashionable path. Phineas is constricted by his reliance on patronage for his seat in parliament as well as by the fairly rigidly defined code of gentlemanly behaviour. He is restricted, too, by the changes which have occurred in politics so that although, in a sense, the period was the 'golden age' of the independent member of parliament, the rise of party managers was beginning successfully to curb their freedom of action. Here we find Trollope recording exactly a moment of change, a moment when one system is being replaced by another. Trollope refers, in a casual manner, to Erle's distaste for "parliamentary hermits, and dwellers in political caves", a phrase which conjures up Bright's reference to the clique who defeated the 1866 Reform Bill as men who lived within the

Cave of Adullam. That this distaste of Erle's had a basis in the ideas of the time may be seen from the attitude which Sir James Graham, the Peelite leader, took to Bright's suggestion that their combined course would be to support "a good government, acting honestly and doing well" while remaining independent of any particular party. Graham said that "it is a most unsound principle that men who so greatly influence opinion should not bear a portion of the responsibilities of the executive Government..."<sup>(38)</sup> It is an attitude with which Mr. Monk would disagree, yet it demonstrates a deeper appreciation of the morality of political behaviour than Erle has, whose allegiance is based mainly on family feeling (he is a Whig and related to the leader of the Liberals) and whose support is for his leader rather than his policies. Trollope sets out the problem of the individual within a more rigid party system than the past in terms suitable for a novel, yet the political activity which he describes is remarkably similar to that of his own times. Phineas's attempt to retain some degree of independence from the party line is, in fact, historically unjustifiable. To see why this is so it is necessary to look at the political situation as it is described at the beginning of Phineas Finn. "Lord de Terrier, the Conservative Prime Minister, who had now been in office for the almost unprecedentedly long period of fifteen months, had found that he could not face continued majorities against him in the House of Commons, and had dissolved the House." (PF i. p.5.) A general election follows, though we are told that de Terrier would rather have handed over the government [into] other hands and retired to the opposition benches himself. The probable results of this election are discussed by Laurence Fitzgibbon and Phineas, and from this conversation we gain further insight into the political setting. "According to my idea, nothing can justify them in trying to live against a majority," says Phineas with reference to the possibility of the Conservatives returning yet again to power. "That's gammon," replies Fitzgibbon. "When the thing is so equal, anything is fair. But you see they don't like it. Of course there are those among them as hungry as we are; and Dubby would give his toes and fingers to remain in. ..." Phineas, however, is not convinced, and wails: "But the country gets nothing done by a Tory government..." "As to that, it's six of one and half a dozen of the other. I never knew a government yet that wanted to do anything. Give a government a real strong majority, as the Tories used to have half a century since,

and as a matter of course it will do nothing." (PF i. pp.30-31)

Later we are told the reason for the Conservatives' remaining in power when they could only command a minority. The Liberals had a majority of nearly thirty when the Conservatives came in, and yet were unable to overthrow their opponents because, as Erle puts it, "For aught we know, some score of them might have chosen to support Lord de Terrier." They were unable to control their men.

In these scenes, Trollope is describing the political instability which was the norm after the 1832 Reform Bill when independent action was frequently taken by M.P.s. After the Bill there were two major parties in parliament, but with the repeal of the Corn Laws the Conservative party was split into two. The larger section was led by Derby and Disraeli but was not sufficient to obtain a majority.<sup>(39)</sup> The Liberal party was disunited and Lord Derby's second administration, formed in 1858, was sustained mainly by the discordance of the opposition.<sup>(40)</sup> Bearing in mind Fitzgibbon's remarks about Lord de Terrier, it is interesting to note that Herbert Paul, a contemporary of Trollope writing in 1904, states that Lord Derby, too, was reluctant to accept office in 1858, but agreed to do so only under pressure from the Queen. The general temper of the 1850s is characterised by F.B. Smith in his book on the Second Reform Bill, and he might well be writing about the politics in Phineas Finn: "In the absence of a real party conflict and pressure from the country, the development of policy and the formation of ministries, more than any other period in the century, became the outcome of factional struggle and short-term expediency in parliament itself. ... [The] cabinets aimed at little beyond producing policies which might stabilise a majority, and avoiding legislation which might alienate the uncommitted."<sup>(41)</sup>

Between 1846 and the Reform Bill of 1867 there were nine different administrations, while between 1846 and 1852; 1858 and 1859, and 1866 and 1868 no ministry had a stable majority in parliament.<sup>(42)</sup> It will be seen that the parallel between the real and the fictional is further reinforced as we look at the manner in which the two Conservative ministries were dismissed. In Chapter VI of Phineas Finn Trollope begins his description of the opening of the new parliament: "It is not very often that so strong a fury rages between party and party at the commencement of the session that a division is taken upon the address." (p.58) The Liberals then prove that they are, by now, unified as a political party, and the Conservatives are defeated by a majority



of 19. In 1859, too, the Liberals were displaying a newly discovered unity, and they too succeeded in defeating the government (after its dissolution) on an amendment to the Queen's speech. As in the novel this defeat forces the government to resign. Trollope rightly states, "It is not very often ... that a division is taken upon the address." Although the Liberals have been united enough to defeat the government, forming a new one of their own proves no easy task. Confusion reigns for some time: "Mr. Gresham was not willing to serve with the Duke and with Mr. Palliser. Now, everybody who knew anything knew that the Duke and Mr. Palliser were indispensable to Mr. Mildmay. And a Liberal government, with Mr. Gresham in the opposition, could not half live through a session." (PF i. p.102.) At last there is deadlock: "Nobody could form a government." Although this situation is speedily resolved, there is a marked similarity between the difficulties faced by Trollope's Liberals and the problems facing the parties in 1859, as we see from this description by Greville: "But if the Government is weak, and their position very precarious, the state of the opposition is at least as deplorable, for there is no union or agreement amongst them, and Granville acknowledged to me last night that if Derby should fail on the second reading, and Palmerston be sent for, as it may be expected he would be, by the Queen, it is impossible to see how another Government could be formed."<sup>(43)</sup>

It is upon the rigidity of party politics that Trollope concentrates his full powers of ridicule. There is a fine example of what he actually thought of party politics to be found in the recently published The New Zealander,<sup>(44)</sup> which incidentally also demonstrates that Trollope's critical arrows were far more likely to find their mark through his novels than in any other form of writing:

Who ever cares to listen to any debate in the House of Commons that has not arisen from some party accusation and that is not carried on with gladiatorial skill and internecine malignity? Indeed there are no other debates. It is true that a long evening may be consumed by a diffuse exposition of financial matters; or once or twice in a session a minister may produce and explain some new plan for the government of a colony or the management of criminals. But the House of Commons debates of which we hear so much, which we read so often, never arise from dull matters like these. No, they are personal conflicts,

in which the Achilles of opposition is anxious only to damage the reputation of Agamemnon, caring nothing whether Troy shall stand or fall.

In the novels party politics are all important. The excitement of politics relies entirely on the [internecine] strife between the two major parties, and one suspects that Trollope, Liberal-Conservative as he was, fully felt this excitement, his political position being less independent than its terminology would seem to suggest.<sup>(45)</sup> In Phineas Finn parliamentary majorities become narrower and narrower, and the overwhelming question of the hour is whether a majority will be of nineteen or twenty. Trollope ridicules this obsessive concern with small majorities, rather as Disraeli does in Sybil<sup>(46)</sup>, by showing the Liberals bringing the gouty Sir Everard Powell up to Westminster in order to increase the government majority. In all this Trollope was only reflecting the parliamentary activity of his time, as we see from this description in Morley's Life of W.E. Gladstone:

In 1841 Peel had turned out the Whigs by a majority of 1. Lord John Russell was displaced in 1852 by 9. The Derby government was thrown out in December 1852 by 19. The same government was again thrown out seven years later by 13. Palmerston was beaten in 1857 by 14, and the next year by 19. In 1864 Palmerston's majority on the Danish question was only 18. The second reading of the Franchise bill of 1866 was only carried by 5, and ministers were afterwards beaten upon it by 11.<sup>(47)</sup>

With this sort of situation in parliament, it is not surprising that men like Erle should despise an M.P. who wished to support measures rather than men and Phineas's desire to do just this was entirely inappropriate at this time, when the party system, weak as it was, was beginning to grow stronger after the confusion which had existed before 1859 when there were two additional parties in parliament - the Peelites and an independent Irish party - and discipline within parties was weak.<sup>(48)</sup>

Trollope makes great play in both Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux of the state of party politics. They provide the background, in fact, to two of the central incidents in the books. In the first the question of Tenant-Right for Irish farmers is raised by the radical Mr. Monk, who is followed enthusiastically by Phineas. It is a subject which the Liberal government of the time is not prepared to back officially, although nobody doubts the justice of the Irish claim. Phineas, in supporting Monk's bill, is forced to resign his government

place and lays himself open to charges by the more dedicated party men, like Erle, of 'scuttling the ship.' He has taken what he considers to be the more honourable method of voting as his conscience dictated even though this meant voting against the government. Trollope recognises, however, that the issue is more complicated than he seemed to appreciate in the more didactic The New Zealander,<sup>and</sup> that independent action by an M.P., while it may seem right to the individual, may do harm to the party, and without a strong party - and therefore government - no political action can be taken. Monk, one of Trollope's political heroes, appreciates this, and although he does not follow the precept himself, he advises his young friend to steer clear of the question of Tenant-Right. Just how ineffective is the action of one person is demonstrated in Phineas Redux where the measure over which Phineas had been forced to leave political life "had since been carried by those very men from whom he had been obliged on this account to divide himself." (PR i. p.5.)

The second instance where Trollope accurately reflects the contemporary state of party politics is to be found in Phineas Redux where the subject is treated with more satire than is apparent in Phineas Finn. The opening of Phineas Redux sets the scene of political instability - the coming and going of ministers - with a precariously balanced Conservative party facing dismissal by the once more united Liberals. The Conservatives, who are in a minority, are in danger of losing their places not because their politics are particularly disliked by the Liberals, but because the Liberals think that their opponents have had control of the political 'cake' of patronage for too long, and it is now their turn: "Let a man be of what side he may in politics, - unless he be more of a partisan than a patriot, - 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 country should be an old Whig?" (PR i. p.1.) The Conservatives have had their share; now it is the Liberals' turn. Things are not, however, as easy as that, and in order to stay in power the devious Mr. Daubeny introduces a measure to Disestablish the Church of England. The absurdity of the situation, as Trollope sees it, (and) which arises purely out of the rivalry between parties, is that the measure itself is one which the Liberals would have been only too pleased to have introduced themselves, and their opposition to the bill is based on the admitted principle of 'men not measures'. Before all this has

taken place, however, Phineas has put himself into another of those awkward situations for which he shows so much talent. His election has been fought on just this Church Disestablishment subject, Phineas calling for a separation between the Church and State, and his corrupt Conservative opponent supporting the old establishment. As soon as the official party position has been made clear Phineas's position becomes dangerously like his earlier one when he 'scuttled the ship.'

In The New Zealander Trollope's opinion of men who vote against their feelings or the facts is unequivocal: "If Mr. Smith out of the House states that Black is White he will lose his credit for veracity, and men will gradually know him for a liar. But if he merely votes Black to be White within the House, no one on that account accuses him of untruth. Did he not do so, he would be as a public man impractical, unmanageable, useless, and utterly unfit for any public service."<sup>(49)</sup>

In Phineas Redux the position is spelt out by Barrington Erle: "... what man in his senses can think of running counter to the party which he believes to be right in its general views. A man so burthened with scruples as to be unable to act in this way should keep himself aloof from public life." (PR i. p.214.) Trollope seems more prepared in Phineas Redux than in The New Zealander to accept the exigencies of party government, and in the event, Phineas votes, with a relatively easy conscience, against his stated views.

Trollope demonstrates that he is well aware that the power of the parties is now supreme and that it is this fact which enables government to be carried on. Mr. Daubeny pushes his bill forward in the face of his own party, most of the members of which are entirely opposed to Church reforms. Such is the power of the party, through the agencies of the political clubs and the whips, that the members are powerless to vote against him, for if they do they will lose the joys of office and the power to distribute the 'crumbs' of the political cake. Trollope's view of the pettiness of party politics, for all its cynicism, was widely shared and is well-expressed by Froude in his biography of Disraeli: "... independent of particular measures each party proceeds on the principle that the tenure of office by its opponents is an evil in itself, and that no legitimate opportunity of displacing them ought to be neglected. ... if they are to share the powers of the State they must share its patronage, to draw talent into their ranks."<sup>(50)</sup>

Trollope clearly saw the necessity for the party system of his own age, yet he also recognised the hypocrisy or even dishonesty which it

might create in individuals. Its importance in the novels, however, is that it provides a very real background to throw into relief the central problem faced by Phineas. Phineas sees himself as a free man with no constraints and certainly no family to fetter him, yet he is very restricted and is forced to rely on others. His individuality is severely tested by the debts which he owes Lady Laura and her set and by the exigencies of party government. It is only at the end of the second novel that it is hinted that he will finally come to some sort of acceptance of the situation. And this meets with the hearty approval of his creator, because above all Trollope's aim in the novels was to show accurately politics in action, politics which, while being far from ideal, have the great merit that they actually work.

#### IV

In dealing with the broader themes of Victorian political life we may feel that, as Frank E. Robbins has said, "the parallelism between fiction and reality in Phineas Finn is not so much in events as in subjects."<sup>(51)</sup> Trollope did, however, incorporate into Phineas Finn two relatively minor 'subjects', the first of which is particularly interesting as it seems to have paradoxically very little relevance to the movement of the novel as a whole. It is often the small, seemingly insignificant detail which gives this novel its sense of density, so much so that an early commentator could see little else in Phineas Finn to make it worthy as a historic record of any importance: "The future historian", wrote a critic in the Saturday Review<sup>(52)</sup>, "may refer to Phineas Finn to discover what was the material of which Mr. Bright's waistcoats were made, and what was the bearing of the other Liberal leaders of the time in society . . ." but, we sense, there will be little else of any interest to the historian. Trollope (of course) was a novelist and not a historian, and his use of contemporary detail was not intended for the future student of the period but for his own aims as a novelist. This is well illustrated in the section in Phineas Finn where Trollope gives a host of details about the building of a Canadian railway. (Chapter LIII, "Showing how Phineas bore the blow.") Morton Bloomfield has concentrated on this section in order to show the pains which the novelist took over details.<sup>(53)</sup> Despite the fact that Bloomfield is handicapped by his belief that Trollope was writing the novel as it was serialised (i.e. from 1867 to 1869), he has connected several of the references in this chapter with real events. The main description of

the events concerned with the Canadian railway is as follows:

He was sitting at his desk with a heap of papers before him referring to a contemplated railway from Halifax, in Nova Scotia, to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. It had become his business to get up on the subject, and then to discuss with his principal, Lord Cantrip, the expediency of advising the government to lend the company five million of money, in order that the railway might be made. It was a big subject, and the contemplation of it gratified him. ... What was the chance of these colonies being swallowed up by those other regions, - once colonies - of which the map that hung in the corner told so eloquent a tale? ... Lord Cantrip had especially asked him to get up this matter, - and he was getting it up sedulously. Once in nine years the harbour of Halifax was blocked up by ice. ... (PF ii. p.160)

Bloomfield shows how this particular reference to a Canadian railway had its origins in the plans for an Inter-Colonial Railway which would link Halifax and the Maritimes with Quebec and Montreal. "The £3,000,000 loan for the railroad which was so difficult to negotiate and for which the guarantee of the British Government was sought, the hesitancy of the imperial government, the tie-up of the I.C.R. with the problem of confederation, all made for confusion down to 1868 at least." Trollope's version has, of course, changed £3,000,000 to £5,000,000, and he runs his railway all the way to the Red River which he "inexactly places at the foot of the Rockies." Further references in Phineas Finn give us more details about the railway scheme, most of which are slightly distorted from reality.<sup>(54)</sup> Bloomfield suggests that the facts are distorted because of "a general policy designed to cover up exact details", but it seems more likely that Trollope was not consciously altering the facts but merely that his material, which he felt was necessary to create an air of reality surrounding Phineas's success in government, was based on some half-remembered details from his own travels. The introduction of these facts, irrelevant as they are to the progression of the plot, strikes no discordant note, but rather adds depth to a narrative which is continually being treated in a similar manner. We are made to feel, for instance, that Phineas's love for Violet Effingham (the cause of the 'blow' which Phineas is constrained to bear) is not so intense that he is unable, as he does later, to give his mind to more mundane matters. The introduction of such concrete

material at a point in the novel which is intended to represent an intense personal crisis for Phineas is consistent with Trollope's general technique of weaving the personal and historical into one fabric, of demonstrating again and again that the operation of politics and society depends on the individual and that the motives which make for action in these spheres are not always the highest. We see this point borne out in Trollope's use of the Tenant-Right controversy as it affected Ireland, where once again Trollope introduces small amounts of accurate detail in order to make more convincing the hero's dilemma at the end of the novel.

It has been suggested by Sutherland that Trollope intended Phineas Finn to be, in part, a social novel dealing with the problems of Ireland.<sup>(55)</sup> This may have been the case, although he had already, unsuccessfully, attempted this sort of thing with his earlier The Kellys and the O'Kellys: or Landlords and Tenants (1848), but the version that Trollope actually left contains little direct material on Ireland. Phineas himself is Irish and he returns home, reluctantly, on several occasions, but his nationality appears to have little bearing on the plot. It is only at the end of the novel when his position in public life seems relatively secure that his Irish background really begins to cause him trouble as he prepares to support Mr. Monk's Tenant-Right Bill. It is in some respects surprising that Trollope devoted so little space to a problem which is only sketched in when we consider his own affinities with and knowledge of Ireland. He was in Ireland, in fact, during the worst period of the famine and considered himself something of an expert on Irish affairs.<sup>(56)</sup> Nevertheless, the question of Ireland and Tenant-Right had achieved an immense importance in the 1860s and even a bare mention of Irish affairs in a novel would call forth a whole wealth of responses which have been lost today. Upon the question of Tenant-Right Trollope has pinned the problem of the effectiveness and indeed the propriety of individual political action. Phineas has proved himself useful to the government so that his desire to throw over everything in order to support what seems like a barren measure shocks all his friends. The question resolves itself into one with two distinct sides, with Barrington Erle putting forward the party line which we are by now familiar with and Phineas rather lamely suggesting that he has 'convictions': "I don't see how a fellow is to help himself," said Phineas. "When a fellow begins to meddle with politics they will come." † "Why can't you grow into them gradually as your betters and

elders have done before you? It ought to be enough for any man, when he begins, to know that he's a Liberal. He understands which side of the House he's to vote, and who is to lead him. What's the meaning of having a leader to a party, if it's not that?" (PF ii. p.332)

It becomes apparent that Trollope is not so much concerned with the Irish question itself but rather with Phineas's response to the challenge which it poses and with the whole question of political independence. It is helpful, however, to be aware of the historical position of the Tenant-Right agitation both because it will give some indication of how the nineteenth-century reader would have received this section of the novel and because it will give us further insight into the way Trollope uses the events of his day for purely novelistic purposes and not, as he put it elsewhere, to have a 'fling' at any particular party.

In the 1860s the troubles in Ireland were fast approaching crisis point, making it necessary for successive governments to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, a drastic measure indeed, particularly in those days when the liberty of the individual was, theoretically, so cherished. Much of the agitation had been, it was thought, the result of two basic factors: the establishment of a Protestant church in a basically Catholic country and the very bad relationship, fostered by the laws, which existed between landlord and tenant. In this latter case the complaint was relatively simple. The Irish peasant farmer, in order to make something of a living from his land, was compelled to make some capital expenditure. Having done this he had no guarantee against eviction and little chance of receiving compensation for any improvements he may have made to the farm. In practice of course the system tended to reduce any incentive the tenant farmer might have had to exert himself in making any improvements and it was highly unlikely that a landlord, often absentee, would take any interest in his estate. Furthermore, the system gave rise to innumerable 'sharp' practices, especially in the frequent cases when the landlord handed over the administration of his estate to 'middlemen' who exploited the tenants unmercifully. These tenants were frequently compelled to farm such small units of land that their standard of living was barely up to subsistence level.

In 1845 a Royal Commission, under the Earl of Devon, reported that "the principal cause of Irish misery was the bad relations between landlord and tenant. Ireland was a conquered country, the Irish tenant a dispossessed man, his landlord an alien conqueror." (57) A few months



after this report came the great famine which Trollope, who lived through it, mentions briefly in the Autobiography, and which caused so much misery and ultimately depopulated the country by an almost incredible number when we consider the amount of resources actually available in England to lessen the misery. After 1850 a Tenant Rights League was formed having as its basis four main objects: "the determination of a fair rent by valuation, security from disturbance so long as this rent was paid, the right of the tenant to sell his interest, and a provision of relief for arrears of rent that had accumulated with the famine."<sup>(58)</sup>

By the middle sixties, with the increase in Fenian activity, agitation in favour of Tenant-Right had increased, although the government of the time was not prepared to legislate on the subject. This is the situation in Phineas Finn where the official government position is that, while recognising that some action will become necessary, it is not felt that the matter must be dealt with at once. During the period of the writing of the novel the Habeas Corpus Act was once again suspended in Ireland, and, although Chichester Fortescue, the Secretary for Ireland, attempted to introduce a bill to deal with the question of compensation for the tenant, it was eventually dropped because of a change in government. In 1867 three separate bills were introduced respectively by Lord Naas, the Marquis of Clanricarde and Sir Colman O'Loughlen, but all three were eventually dropped.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Phineas should concern himself with a subject which was, as Trollope writes, "beginning to loom very large." (PF ii. p.287.) That so little detail is given about the problems or about the measure which Mr. Monk intends to introduce is due to the concerns of the novelist in elucidating character rather than describing history. We are told that Phineas went with Monk to Ireland where the subject of debate was Tenant-Rights: ".... - could anything be done to make it profitable for men of capital to put their capital into Irish land? The fertility of the soil was questioned by no one, - nor the sufficiency of external circumstances, such as railroads and the like; - nor the abundance of labour; - nor even security for the wealth to be produced. The only difficulty was in this, that the men who were to produce the wealth had no guarantee that it would be theirs when it was created." (PF ii. p.323.) So the subject is introduced. Monk speaks on it and, "of course Phineas spoke also," but not as we would expect because of his 'convictions'

on the subject, but because "it was impossible that he should be silent when his friend and leader was pouring out eloquence." Trollope continues revealingly, "Something like the pleasures of the debating society returned to him, as standing upon a platform before a listening multitude, he gave full vent to his words." We begin to see that Phineas, never a very heroic character in the traditional sense, is to be forced to resign his government position over a measure, important as he can see it to be, for which he feels very little. But his act of resignation to which he holds firmly despite very persuasive words from his friends, including Monk, is the act of strength for which Trollope wishes us to admire his hero. Phineas has finally made his independent stand and has refused to to the party line. Admirable as we may find this we must also sense the futility of it, partly, as Trollope seems to suggest, because independent thinking is no longer required by M.P.s and partly because the cause itself, as far as the novel is concerned, is so trivial. It is for this reason that Trollope deliberately plays down the details of Tenant-Right - these have no place in the novel. What further removes Phineas's stand from the area of effective political action is the knowledge that a Tenant-Right Bill will be passed in the government's own time. This Bill, which is clearly the same as that passed in 1870, the great Irish Land Bill introduced by Gladstone, is as un-defined in Phineas Redux as Monk's earlier provision and merely serves to suggest that in these days party politics, and men like Erle, have replaced the heroics of an earlier time.

Trollope's position, as far as the political doings of his day are concerned, is decidedly equivocal, despite his words on the nobility of entering parliament. What comes most clearly from these novels is Trollope's appreciation of the nature of the change which is taking place in political life. But still the novels are not purely documentary records of a phase of English history. The details - whether of party politics, the concerns of the colonial office or Irish affairs - are accurate, but as we have seen they are made subordinate to the other concerns of the novelist. Trollope is far more interested in the behaviour of people in society and his control of his medium is such that the real historical events of the day serve frequently to give a substantial background to the characters who are set before it, and to make more real and complex the decisions which they have to make. Trollope's selection of material is always careful and consistent with his dominant aim. Of course, it is clear that at times he had an axe

to grind, as his treatment of bribery and elections, which will be dealt with in the following chapter, shows; and his view of politics, though occasionally naive, is not purely idealistic. It would be too easy to see Trollope's 'realism' as the mere insertion into a novel of manners of random chunks of real history in order to give bulk to the stories. As we have seen, what Trollope does include from contemporary history serves to substantiate the dilemma of the hero, caught as he is between two worlds and struggling to do the right thing always. That Trollope rarely deviates from his main aim will be seen in his treatment of Reform and Church Disestablishment.

Notes to Chapter One

1. Michael Sadleir, Trollope: A Commentary (1927; rpt. London, Crown Constable, 1933), pp. 368-369.
2. Sadleir, p.366.
3. David Cecil, Early Victorian Novelists (1934; rpt. London: Fontana, 1964), p.189.
4. Asa Briggs, Victorian People (1954; rpt. London: Pelican Books, 1965), p.95.
5. Kenneth Graham, English Criticism of the Novel (Oxford, 1965), p.21.
6. David Skilton, Anthony Trollope and his Contemporaries: A Study in the theory and conventions of mid-Victorian fiction (London, 1972).
7. See, for instance, Margaret Hewitt, "Anthony Trollope: Historian and sociologist", British Journal of Sociology, ~~xxx~~ 14 (1963), 226 and J.A. Banks, "The Way they lived then: Anthony Trollope and the 1870s", VS 12 (1968), 177.
8. Beatrice Curtis Brown, Anthony Trollope, (2nd ed. (London, 1969).
9. Brown, p.23.
10. See Anthony Trollope, Thackeray (London, 1879), p.109: "The object of a novel should be to instruct in morals while it amuses."
11. "I look upon this string of characters, - carried sometimes into other novels than just named, - as the best work of my life." Autobiography, p.159.
12. "By no amount of description or asservation could I succeed in making any reader understood how much these characters with their belongings have been to me in later life." Autobiography, p.155.
13. R.M. Polhemus, The Changing World of Anthony Trollope (London, 1968), 39.
14. Autobiography, p.250.
- cl. 2 15. Sadleir, Trollope, p.139.
16. Anthony Trollope, English Political Leaders: Lord Palmerston (London, 1882).
17. Autobiography, p.272.
18. Autobiography, p.155.
19. Saint Paul's, 1, (Oct. 1867), 4.
20. Saint Paul's, 1, p.6.
21. Lord Palmerston, p.13.
22. Lord Palmerston, p.63. See also PF 1. p.200: "After all, it matters very little who are the ministers." "That is what I have already declared," said Mr. Monk. <sup>l</sup>
23. Skilton, p.138.
24. Skilton, pp. 138-139.
25. Anthony Trollope, Phineas Finn (London: Penguin Books, 1972), p.11. <sup>Intro Juchow</sup>
26. Phineas Redux (London: World's Classics, 1970), p.v. <sup>Intro Juchow</sup>
27. T.H.S. Escott, Anthony Trollope, His Life, Associates and Literary Originals (London, 1913), p.257. <sup>confusion?</sup>

28. Harper's Magazine, 38, (May 1869), 854.
29. Dublin Review, NS. XIII, 65, (1869), 361-377.
30. Fortnightly Review, NS. 5, (1869), 188.
31. Academy, 5, (February 1874), 143.
32. Skilton, p.53.
33. Autobiography, p.194.
34. Sutherland, ed. Phineas Finn, p.727.
35. Autobiography, p.159.
36. Phineas Finn, p.36.
37. Annual Register, 1, (1867), 182.
38. G.M. Trevelyan, John Bright (London, 1913), p.208.
39. G. Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England. (Cambridge, 1962), p.46.
40. Herbert Paul, A History of Modern England (London, 1904), p.155. What Vol.?
41. F.B. Smith, The Making of the Second Reform Bill (Cambridge, 1966), p.28.
42. E.L. Woodward, The Age of Reform, (1815-1870) (London, 1938) p.154.
43. The Greville Memoirs: A Journal of the Reigns of King George IV, King William IV, and Queen Victoria, ed. Henry Reeve. (New ed. London, 1888). March 3, 1859. p.231.
44. Anthony Trollope, The New Zealander (London, 1972), p.118. This hitherto unpublished work was written and revised between 1855 and 1856.
45. See D.E.D. Beales, "Parliamentary Parties and the 'Independent' Member, 1810-1860," Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain, Essays in honour of George Kitson Clark, ed. Robert Robson, (London, 1967), p.13.
46. "... The Whigs contrived to pull Lord Grubminster in a wheeled chair; he was unconscious, but had heard as much of the debate as a good many." Benjamin Disraeli, Sybil, or The Two Nations, (1845; World's Classics ed. London, 1970), p.214.
47. John Morley, Life of W.E. Gladstone, 1809-1872. (London, 1903), pp. 898-899.
48. D.E.D. Beales, From Castlereagh to Gladstone, 1815-1885. (London, 1969) pp.198-199.
49. The New Zealander, p.122.
50. J.A. Froude, The Earl of Beaconsfield (London, 1890), p.153.
51. Frank E. Robbins, "Chronology and History in Trollope's Barset and Parliamentary Novels." NCF, 5, (1951), 312.
52. Saturday Review, March 27, 1869, p.432.
53. Morton W. Bloomfield, "Canadian History in Phineas Finn, (1867-1869)", NCF, 5, (1950-~~1~~), 67.
54. For instance he gives the population of Manitoba as 7,000 instead of the correct 12,000.

55. Sutherland, ed. Phineas Finn, p.16.
56. Autobiography, p.71.
57. Cecil Woodham-Smith, The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-9 (London, 1962) p.21. My description is based mainly on this work.
58. J.L. Hammond, Gladstone and the Irish Nation. (London, 1938), p.25.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Reform and Disestablishment

Two important contemporary events form the basis for the major political action in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux: the passing of the Second Reform Bill in 1867 and the Disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1869. In some respects Phineas Finn was written at an awkward time as far as the Reform question is concerned, for the book was substantially complete before it became clear that the Conservatives would take their 'leap in the dark' and push through what Trollope would consider to be substantially a Liberal Bill. On the other hand, Phineas Redux was written after the passing of the Irish Disestablishment Bill and Trollope was able, with the advantages of hindsight, to modify and enliven the passage of his own fictional bill. The real Bill of 1869 was introduced and carried by a government with a large majority and it met with little substantial opposition in the commons and was passed by a majority of 114. Trollope, however, creates interest for his bill by making it one for the Disestablishment of the Church of England while retaining many of the circumstances surrounding the passage of the 1869 Irish Bill. He also, as we shall see, has the fling which was largely denied him in Phineas Finn, at Disraeli and his 'conjurings' with Reform.

The problem of Reform was perennial and aroused considerable interest throughout the nineteenth century. Because the franchise and electoral procedure lay at the very heart of the constitution, any move to change the manner of elections concerned not only those whose business was government but also those who were governed. Although the movement for Reform had little mass support in the period immediately before 1867 it was a topic which concerned all but the very lowest strata of society and perhaps because of this it was particularly interesting to Trollope. The subject aroused the passions of men while it also provided, or was thought to provide, certain criteria for defining the two major political parties. Shades of belief and their motivations were immensely interesting to Trollope and we find, in the sections in Phineas Finn which deal with Reform, the novelist's near intuitive understanding of the difficult position of the aristocratic Liberal pledged by the very nature of his liberal beliefs to work towards something which would utterly destroy his position in society.

Once again in these novels it will be seen that, although Trollope bases his account of the political action very much on contemporary

events, the material is frequently used to highlight the many problems which Phineas himself faces as he progresses through the political world and in particular the problem of personal responsibility in a society where so frequently independent action leads to disastrous results.

The primary aim of this chapter will be to demonstrate the close connection between the events surrounding the passing of the fictional Reform and Disestablishment Bills and the real Bills of 1867 and 1869 and to show how Trollope reconciled his strong interest in politics with his unerring sense of what was appropriate in a novel. Before dealing with the Bills themselves, however, I shall look at how Trollope has utilised one subject closely connected with Reform at any period and one subject very much bound up with the 1866 Reform movement: elections and the Hyde Park Riots. With both these subjects Trollope relies heavily on contemporary detail which he manipulates for his own novelistic purpose.

## II

Trollope, like many of his contemporaries, was well aware of how elections were run and he had been particularly unfortunate himself at Beverley in 1868, an experience which he recorded in Ralph the Heir (1871). Corruption and violence were accepted by-products of most elections, despite the provisions of the 1832 Reform Act, and Trollope's pre-1868 novels accept the facts with little comment. In 1866, however, the subject of pocket boroughs and bribery at elections was receiving a public airing in the columns of The Times. In a report of a speech made by John Bright in Birmingham, the writer of one article touches on an election scandal at Great Yarmouth where bribery is more than ordinarily rife.<sup>(1)</sup> The next day he gives additional details and brings to notice a further scandal at Totnes where bribery seems to be the town's single most important industry. Bills and mortgages are paid off from the proceeds and men, says the writer in The Times, are even taking houses, and so qualifying as electors, with the sole object of lining their pockets at election time. Now, in Phineas Finn, bribery nowhere reaches these proportions, yet undoubtedly Trollope was utilising a contemporary evil in order to make some ironic points about the 'liberalism' of his characters. Phineas, despite his radical tendencies, is forced by circumstances to sit for two 'rotten' boroughs - one 'belonging' to a Conservative, the other to a Liberal minister. Neither Lord Brentford, the minister,



nor his daughter Lady Laura, is able to appreciate the irony of their positions as reforming Liberals. As we see from the conversation given below<sup>(2)</sup> between Phineas and Lord Brentford, this Liberal felt very uncomfortable if Loughton were actually referred to as 'his' seat - yet this was undoubtedly how he, along with many other landowners of his time, thought about it. It was almost standard practice for local magnates to have a seat for their sons and heirs and by this logic, of course, the seat which Phineas obtains belongs by right to Lord Brentford's son, Lord Chiltern. Chiltern's position with regard to politics is in fact just one further cause of the estrangement between him and his father and this attitude, expressed in a conversation with Phineas, was such as to make it impossible for him to accept the family patronage. Politics, he says, "Is the meanest trade going I think, and I'm sure it's the most dishonest." (PF i. p.93.) It is significant that when Lord Brentford offers Phineas the seat he has become very close to the family and clearly the lord is, in a sense, adopting Phineas as a substitute and more satisfactory son. In the long run, however, there is no substitute for blood and H.J. Hanham gives an example from the by-election of 1867 which demonstrates one of the arguments used to make this position respectable. A Liberal wrote then: "I frequently stated that, had the Marquis of Worcester [the Duke's eldest son] been in the field, I should not have voted against him, as I think it desirable that our future hereditary legislators should have an opportunity of learning their duties in the Lower House."<sup>(3)</sup> Phineas's difficult position with regard to Loughton is apparent from his relationship with the Brentford family. Having been compelled to return his former Irish seat of Loughshane to its 'owner', he is told by Lady Laura of a plan of her father's which is clearly intended as a partial reward for Phineas's prompt action in saving Mr. Kennedy from the hands of garroters:

"... Old Mr. Standish is going to give up Loughton, and Papa wants you to come and try your luck there."

"Lady Laura!"

"It isn't quite a certainty, you know, but I suppose it's as near a certainty as anything left." And this came from a strong Radical Reformer! (PF i. p.354)

Phineas is at first reluctant to accept, but he is told: "I think it has always been felt that any politician may accept such an offer as that when it is made to him, but that no politician should ask for it."

The situation is made clearer when she tells Phineas that "It is not probable that papa would have gone to a perfect stranger." The irony inherent in this situation is clear: Lord Brentford and Lady Laura, who are Liberals, are presented as having in reality very little liberal feeling at all. Under normal circumstances Lord Brentford will not openly speak about 'his' borough, as we see in the passage describing his interview with Phineas after the latter's promotion to a Treasury post. He advises him to write to the election agents at Loughton, as he himself has already done, adding, "Of course you will not mention my name." And the Earl looked very grave as he uttered this caution. (PF ii. p.56.)

Later, however, Phineas is openly reproached by both Lord Chiltern and Lord Brentford for his behaviour after he has been sitting for the borough. Chiltern angrily tells him: "You have been chosen by my father to sit for our family borough, while I am an outcast from his house." (PF i. p.427.) Lord Brentford says in amazement: "I cannot conceive how you can have come to my house as a guest, and stood upon my interest for my borough, when you at the time were doing your very best to interpose yourself between Chiltern and the lady whom you so well knew I wished to become his wife." Trollope comments upon these words of the patron: "Phineas was aware that the Earl must have been very much moved indeed when he thus permitted himself to speak of 'his' borough." (PF ii. p.235.)

As far as the novel as a whole is concerned, Trollope is using this very common situation to comment upon the notion of political freedom and political honesty. We have already seen, in Chapter One, how acute this problem could be for Phineas faced with the practical realities of politics where independent action even for a just, and indeed 'Liberal', cause worked against the best interests of party management. His honesty is again tested with the offer of the seat at Loughton, and once again he attempts to reconcile his real feeling with his sense of practical political action. When Phineas has first been offered the seat he reflects upon the nature of the favour: ".... when he came to think of it, there appeared to him to be no valid reason why he should not sit for Loughton. The favour was of a kind that had prevailed from time out of mind in England, between the most respectable of the great land magnates, and young rising liberal politicians." (PF i. p.355.) Later, after Phineas's acceptance of a government position, he again reviews his position: "Was he not

himself false to his principles in sitting for such a borough as Loughton?" But now he has consented to join the government. "He could no longer be a free agent, or even a free thinker. He had been quite aware of this, and had taught himself to understand that members of Parliament in the direct service of the Government were absolved from the necessity of free-thinking." (PF ii. p.57.) But Phineas's thoughts here are not tending towards a complete understanding of his anomalous position, but rather a justification for the fact that he will vote with the government for the retention of a number of rotten boroughs, Loughton included.

Trollope has earlier explored the nature of Phineas's freedom in the chapter headed, "Was he Honest?" Phineas finds himself in a very awkward position when he wishes to propose to Violet Effingham, the girl who has several times rejected Lord Chiltern, the 'rightful' heir to Loughton. The title of the chapter refers specifically to Phineas's rather dubious manoeuvrings with Violet in Chiltern's absence. But it must surely also be pointed to the choice irony inherent in the politically 'pure' Phineas's position. If he is unable to act freely in his private life because of the manner in which he has gained his seat, what chance has he in political life?

Trollope pushes his ironic treatment of his subject even further with his characterisation of the obnoxious social climber and 'reformer' (turned Conservative in Phineas Redux) Quintus Slide, of the People's Banner. Slide feels righteously indignant at Phineas's election at Loughton and writes a vicious article about the need for a supplement to the Reform Bill of 1832 to prevent cabinet ministers with sinecures from putting into the House "such a stick as Phineas Finn." Of course he is right: there is a need for further reform; but equally, Trollope clearly wishes us to see that Slide is utterly the wrong person to help to carry through the reform or, indeed, to sit for Loughton himself. Once again we see Trollope here bringing what could so easily be regarded as a totally theoretical controversy down to the level of the human beings who are involved in it. He afforded the same treatment to a different subject in The Warden where Septimus Harding, who was clearly wrong in holding his sinecure, was so much better and purer than his critics. The controversy is no longer purely a theoretical one and cannot be seen in the black and white terms of the journalists in that novel. So, in the political novels Trollope demonstrates the complexity of the forces which make for political

action by frequently giving the wrong people the right attitudes for ✓  
the wrong motives. The actors in Trollope's political arena, we see,  
are very much ordinary men and women with at least their fair share  
of ordinary human failings.

In Phineas Finn Trollope showed more tolerance towards elections  
and electioneering than he was to <sup>do</sup> after 1868 and his own attempt to  
enter parliament. In fact, contemporary accounts of elections seem  
to point to the fact that Phineas has been endowed with an almost  
incredible amount of good luck. Ireland was particularly noted for  
its corruption at election time and H.J. Hanham quotes T.P. O'Connor  
to show that all too frequently in Ireland it was the financial  
standing of the candidate that attracted the votes and not his political  
beliefs. A respectable Protestant tradesman was reported as saying:  
*in context* "I am a Protestant ... and my father was a Protestant, and his father  
before him; but the man I want to see returned for Athlone is the man  
that leaves the money in the town." (4) This view of political  
corruption, particularly at a local level, is much more evident in  
Phineas Redux than in Phineas Finn.

It is clear that Trollope's bitterness about political matters had  
a great deal to do with his failure to achieve election at Beverley in  
1868. This one event, indeed, appears three times in Trollope's own  
writings with very little 'fictionalisation'. He writes about the  
experience in the Autobiography: (5)

"so," said he [Trollope's election manager], "you are going to  
stand for Beverley?" I replied gravely that I was thinking  
of doing so. "You don't expect to get in?" he said. Again  
I was grave. I would not, I said be sanguine, but nevertheless  
I was disposed to hope for the best. "Oh no!" continued he,  
with good-humoured raillery, "you won't get in. I don't  
suppose you really expect it. But there's a fine career  
open to you. You will spend £1000, and lose the election.  
Then you will petition, and spend another £1000. You will  
throw out the elected members. There will be a commission,  
and the borough will be disfranchised. For a beginner, that  
will be a great success."

And this is almost exactly what happened. This experience is recreated  
in very similar terms in Ralph the Heir. Writing about the borough of  
Percycross in Chapter 20, Trollope says:

There was one learned pundit in those parts, a pundit very

learned in political matters, who thus prophesied to one of the proposed candidates :-

"You'll spend a thousand pounds in the election. You won't get in, of course, but you'll succeed there and disfranchise the borough. It will be a great matter, and no doubt you'll find it satisfactory."

In Phineas Finn the hero returns to England from political obscurity in Ireland to find his luck thinning, for he is not immediately presented with a pocket borough. Times have changed; the new Reform Bill of 1867 has done away with many of the rotten boroughs (including Loughton) and Phineas must try his luck in the borough of Tankerville, another thinly disguised version of Beverley and Percycross. The long arm of parliament seems not to have touched this place yet and Browborough, the established candidate, intends to fight the seat in the way that he has always done. Phineas, with the optimism that Trollope himself must once have shown, is determined to contest the seat without bribery. It is, after all, the only seat that he will ever seriously have fought for. Phineas is instructed by his agent: "...He will be elected. You'll petition. He'll lose his seat. There will be a commission. And then the borough will be disfranchised. It's a fine career, but expensive; and then there is no reward beyond the self-satisfaction arising from a good action. However Ruddles will do the best he can for you, and it certainly is possible that you may creep through." (PR i. pp.15-16.) And in the event Phineas does 'creep through', after the election result has been contested. But it is the beginning of Phineas's disillusionment. At Browborough's trial he is aware that most people are on the side of the briber, that they recognise his right to buy his seat at an election, much as the aristocratic function of patronizing boroughs was considered right, and Phineas is consequently thought of as something of an interloper. This trial is later contrasted with Phineas's own trial for murder when, with only circumstantial evidence to go on, men generally consider Phineas guilty of the crime. Despite this, however, it becomes increasingly clear that, as Browborough was not convicted of his crimes, so Phineas, while being generally recognised as a murderer, will be found 'not guilty' because of his personal charm and because of the favour he has found with the ladies. Thus the political world and the 'social' world come together. By the time of writing Phineas Redux elections have become for Trollope a symbol of the general malaise affecting

political life and in this novel particularly Trollope's treatment of them reinforces his general theme of the difficulty of behaving honestly in political society. To call this society 'corrupt' is clearly not Trollope's intention; it is merely, the way of the world. Phineas, however, and this is one of his redeeming traits, is sensitive enough to feel the situation deeply. What Trollope has been doing with his description of elections is to prepare the way for his treatment of Reform. We see political behaviour at its lowest level here, the level at which there is no room for idealism. Later, in his treatment of the general Reform question, we can see how theory is put into practice; how, in fact, the ideals which lay behind the impulse for Reform are tempered by the exigencies of politics in a practical world.

### III

There is a documentary quality about Phineas Finn, and to a lesser extent about Phineas Redux, which has only in part been created by the use of contemporary history. To a large extent the sense of actuality in the novels is created by Trollope's ability to capture the more intangible qualities of real life: conversation, social behaviour and so on. In actual fact contemporary references are not so frequent as we might suppose, and often they are slipped in so unobtrusively that only an informed (contemporary) reader could hope to identify them all. References like the one to the "new offices in Downing Street, already half built" (PF i. p.78.) which were under construction in 1866<sup>(6)</sup> help to build up the density of the novel and place it firmly in a particular part of the nineteenth century, but in themselves they do not make a novel realistic. However, there is one relatively important event, the Hyde Park Riots, occurring in 1866, which Trollope has incorporated into Phineas Finn and by looking closely at the use he has made of it we may learn much about the way he adapted his material and his reasons for doing so.

The riots which took place on July 23, 1866 - the so-called 'Hyde Park Riots' - were basically the result of an attempt by the Reform League to put pressure on the government to bring in a new Reform Bill. In fact, they turned out to be a demonstration of working-class independence, since once the populace had been officially banned from Hyde Park, it became a matter of principle to stay. Trollope's 'riot', which is described in Chapter XXV, is a result of a more practical and limited aim. It was to be "a gathering of the people in favour of the ballot", although the same principle of working-class independence is

apparent behind the description and is later symbolised in Mr. Bunce's stand for liberty. The relevant passage describing the initial stages and cause of the disturbances occurs at the beginning of Chapter XXV:

When Phineas got back to London, a day after his time, he found that there was already a great political commotion in the metropolis. He had known that on Easter Monday and Tuesday there was to be a gathering of the people in favour of the ballot, and that on Wednesday there was to be a procession with a petition which Mr. Turnbull was to receive from the hands of the people on Primrose Hill. It had been at first intended that Mr. Turnbull should receive the petition at the door of Westminster Hall on the Thursday; but he had been requested by the Home Secretary to put aside this intention, and he had complied with the request made to him. Mr. Mildmay was to move the second reading of his Reform Bill on that day, the preliminary steps having been taken without any special notice; but the bill of course included no clause in favour of the ballot; and this petition was the consequence of that omission. Mr. Turnbull had predicted evil consequences, both in the House and out of it, and was now doing the best in his power to bring about the verification of his own prophecies. ... Though Mr. Turnbull had yielded to the Government as to receiving the petition, the crowd was resolved that they would see the petition carried into the House. It was argued that the government would have done better to have refrained from interfering as to the previously intended arrangement. (PF i. pp.275-276)

There are a number of points in Trollope's narrative which closely resemble the events of 1866, although it is clear that he has used not so much the specific facts surrounding the Hyde Park Riots as the general tendencies of which those riots were indicative.

First, and perhaps most important, is that those riots reflected steadily growing popular interest in the subject of Reform. At the beginning of Phineas Finn Reform is regarded as something which must inevitably form part of any government's policies; we are given no indication that there is any pressure from the public for a bill, but we sense that the subject, wearying though it is, must necessarily form part of any government's concern. "I suppose", says Phineas, "We are to have a Reform Bill". "That is a matter of course," answers

Barrington Erle. (PF i. p.184.) At this stage in the novel the political attitude is that there must be a continuous tendency towards equality, a belief which lies behind nineteenth-century Liberalism and which will necessarily bring forth practical fruit in the form of a Reform Bill. As J.A.R. Marriott put it, "The question of parliamentary reform was, in the 'fifties and 'sixties, almost entirely academic. It was raised by the a priori speculations of philosophical liberalism, rather than by democratic demand."<sup>(7)</sup> Up until about 1865 public apathy towards Reform had been notorious. John Bright had tried unsuccessfully in 1858 to stir up feelings for Reform in Birmingham and even after Lord Derby had pledged the government to introduce a bill, Bright was unable to get anything but lukewarm response from the working classes.<sup>(8)</sup> A Liberal Reform Bill, introduced in 1860, petered out, according to F.B. Smith<sup>(9)</sup>, as a result of public apathy, and even by 1866 Herbert Paul points out the apathy of the public in the South, though showing at the same time that feeling was excited in the North.<sup>(10)</sup> In fact, feelings on the subject were being stimulated from the top down - from the leaders of the party to the intelligent working men and thence to the mob. At any rate, the movement did not begin with the working-class. In 1867 Lord Houghton wrote in the Fortnightly Review, "... if we will not teach them political wisdom, they will teach us political disaster."<sup>(11)</sup> In 1858 the Duchess of Manchester received a letter which put the case quite clearly:

...Mr. Bright goes on preaching & audiences who flock to hear him as they would to Dr. Spurgeon, or to see a bullfight without agreeing in his doctrines & he has hitherto made no deep impression ... One cannot expect half-informed people to remain indifferent to benefits wh[ich] in glowing language they are told are unjustly withheld from them but wh[ich] are within their reach if they are determined upon having them & I shall therefore not be surprised if a great deal of steam is got up by the time that Parliament meets notwithstanding the apathy that has been exhibited & the little real wish for Reform in consequence of the smallness of the grievances wh[ich] require to be redressed ...<sup>(12)</sup>

This is, in fact, the situation as Trollope describes it in Phineas Finn. In Chapter XXXV he writes:

At this time the world was talking much about Reform, though Mr. Mildmay had become placidly patient. The feeling was



growing, and Mr. Turnbull, with his friends was doing all he could to make it grow fast. There was a certain amount of excitement on the subject: but the excitement had grown downwards from the leaders to the people, - from the self-instituted leaders of popular politics down, by means of the press, to the ranks of working men, instead of growing upwards, from the dissatisfaction of the masses, till it expressed itself by this mouthpiece and that, chosen by the people themselves. There was no strong throb through the country, making men feel that safety was to be had by Reform and could not be had without Reform. (PF i. p.404.)

Although the Hyde Park Riots and Trollope's fictional riots were largely the result of agitation by political leaders like Bright (the model for Turnbull, as I shall show in a later chapter) and Edmund Beales, the former disturbance was a demonstration in favour of manhood suffrage and the Ballot,<sup>(13)</sup> the latter was concerned chiefly with the Ballot. Even here however Trollope was echoing reality, for although the idea of voting by secret Ballot was still considered extreme in 1866 it had long formed one of the demands of popular agitators and it had been, of course, one of the points of the People's Charter. The arguments which had been put forward in 1832 for and against the Ballot were still valid in 1866 although circumstances had changed considerably.<sup>(14)</sup> Perhaps the most important view, and one which is expressed by Monk in Phineas Finn,<sup>(15)</sup> is that given by Lord William Russell to John Russell in 1838: "What pitiful figures we should cut sneaking up to the ballot box and dropping in our paper the contents of which we are afraid or ashamed to acknowledge."<sup>(16)</sup> By 1865 however the subject of the ballot had become one for derision and would not have been treated with the seriousness that we find in Phineas Finn. A leader from The Times of 1866 makes this clear. "On Friday night," it reads, "Mr. Berkeley's annual motion on the Ballot met its normal fate, and the speaker himself excited, as usual, the laughter of the House."<sup>(17)</sup> The rest of the leader is devoted to a dismissal of the arguments for the Ballot, calling it merely "a machinery for enabling a man to tell a lie without being found out."

In Trollope's account of the agitation in favour of the secret Ballot, the riots last for several days, as they did in 1866, although then the main disturbance occurred in Hyde Park, while in Phineas Finn, after an initial gathering on Primrose Hill, which was broken up by

police, Trollope's rioters move in procession to Westminster where the troops are forced to intervene. One of the major criticisms levelled against the government's handling of the whole affair in 1866 is echoed in a modified way by Trollope. In 1866 the Reform League had given notice of their intention to hold a meeting in Hyde Park on July 25. The authorities, however, announced that the gates of the park would be shut at 5 p.m. on that day - a perfectly legal measure as the park was the property of the crown. This decision evoked much criticism, partly for reasons expressed by Herbert Paul: "The Park was a far more convenient meeting-place than Trafalgar Square; [where the majority of the demonstrators ended up] and when a large class of sober decent citizens believe that they have a grievance, no wise statesman will wantonly give them another;"<sup>(18)</sup> and partly because, as the Annual Register for 1866 put it, "The power of the authorities being quite insufficient to carry out their resolve of excluding the demonstration from the Park, the result was somewhat humiliating on the Government."<sup>(19)</sup>

In Trollope's account of the disturbances, London is "in a state of ferment for three days" and the riot which he describes, and which corresponds to that of July 23, 1866, occurs at the end of a week of trouble. It had originally been intended that Mr. Turnbull should receive a petition (an echo of the earlier Chartist disturbances, perhaps) at the door of Westminster House, "but he had been requested by the Home Secretary to put aside this intention, and he had complied with the request made to him." (PF i. p.276.) This is a direct parallel with the Home Secretary's decision in 1866 to close the gates of Hyde Park; and the results are similar. In 1866 it is resolved to test the government's decision by going up to the gates of the Park, with the inevitable result that the rougher elements in the crowd storm the railings and cause a considerable disturbance in the Park itself, and this despite instructions from the 'Democratic Committee' "to proceed by way of Grosvenor-Place, Victoria-Street, and Past the Houses of Parliament to Trafalgar-Square"<sup>(20)</sup> and to show by peaceable and orderly conduct that they were determined to have manhood suffrage and the ballot. In Trollope's account the crowd is determined to test the decision against them, and they were "resolved that they would see the petition carried into the House." Trollope's criticism of the government's action echoes that of Paul's quoted above: "It was argued, "writes Trollope, "that the government would have done better to have refrained from interfering as to the previously intended

arrangement. It would have been far easier to deal with a procession than with a mob of men gathered without any semblance of form."

(PF i. p.276.)

Trollope also uses the subject of the demonstration to score yet another point off the [unfortunate] Radical M.P. Mr. Turnbull - but here too his criticisms, like those of his contemporaries echo the words and actions of Mr. Bright. It has already been noted above that during the 'fifties and 'sixties John Bright was actively campaigning in support of Reform. In July 1866 a letter of his was published in The Times, copies of which were widely circulated on the day of the demonstration, in which he added his support to the Reform meeting in Hyde Park while stating that he would be unable to attend himself.<sup>(21)</sup> For this, and for the fact that, like Turnbull in Chapter XXV of Phineas Finn, he made sure of his own personal safety and comfort, he was criticised by a member of the House of Commons: "Mr. B. Cochrane censured severely (exciting loud cheers) Mr. Bright's letter, which was directly provocative of a breach of the peace; and, referring to his recent absence from the House, made some sarcastic observations on the care of his own personal safety which accompanied his licence of language."<sup>(22)</sup> Trollope writes briefly, but in similar terms, about Mr. Turnbull: "Mr. Turnbull had predicted evil consequences, both in the House and out of it, and was now doing the best in his power to bring about the verification of his own prophecies." (PF i. p.276.) Laurence Fitzgibbon later echoes Cochrane's words on Bright in his opinion of Turnbull: "He understands all about it," said Laurence. "He had a good meal at three, before he left home, and you'd find sandwiches and sherry in plenty if you were to search his carriage. He knows how to remedy the costs of mob popularity."

It is hardly surprising that Trollope should have made use of the events of July 1866 in his narrative. Both in fact and fiction the riots had provided a demonstration of a new mass support for Reform, a support which had hitherto been singularly lacking. The dramatic qualities of the Reform demonstrations, giving as they did a tangible form to a viewpoint which, before public opinion polls became fashionable, would have had no expression, were not lost on Trollope. The riots in Phineas Finn occur after a particularly non-political section (the hunting of foxes and young maidens at Willingford) and bring us back with something of a jolt to politics, not in a theoretical or party sense but in its most practical form. It is a simple matter

then to turn the events of the riot to good use in Phineas's maiden speech where he makes his ill-advised attempt to support Mr. Bunce against the outrages of the police and magistrates.

The section dealing with the demonstration also provides us with another example of Trollope's technique of embodying in a practical form relatively complex political ideas. It is probable that Trollope himself disapproved of the use of a secret ballot at elections, and his two 'heroes' in Phineas Finn - Phineas himself and Mr. Monk - both speak out against the measure. Yet the treatment of the demonstration in favour of the ballot is by no means partisan. It was much commented upon in 1866 that although there were many 'roughs' engaged in causing trouble, there were also many respectable people abroad with no intention of causing a serious disturbance.<sup>(23)</sup> Mr. Bunce is presented by Trollope as the 'honest artisan' - the intelligent though possibly misguided working-man. Mr. Bunce disapproves of most M.P.s and all ministers, and we often notice Phineas's uncomfortable position when he is accused by Bunce of such 'crimes' as sitting for pocket boroughs. Phineas frequently manages to justify his conduct to himself - or have it justified for him by Lady Laura and others - but he is helpless before the straight-talking Bunce. It is not difficult, for instance, to see who is occupying the stronger position in the exchange given below between Bunce and Phineas. Phineas attempts to persuade Bunce to stay at home on the day of the demonstration:

"What good do you expect to do, Mr. Bunce?" he said, with perhaps some little tone of authority in his voice.

"To carry my point," said Bunce.

"And what is your point?"

"My present point is the ballot, as a part of the Government measure."

"And you expect to carry that by going out into the streets with all the roughs of London, and putting yourself in direct opposition to the authority of the magistrates? Do you really believe that the ballot will become the law of the land any sooner because you incur this danger and inconvenience?"

"Look here, Mr. Finn; I don't believe the sea will become any fuller because the Piddle runs into it out of the Devonshire fields; but I do believe that the waters from all the countries is what makes the ocean. I shall help; and it's my duty to help."

"It's your duty as a respectable citizen with a wife and

family, to stay at home."

"If everybody with a wife and family was to stay so, there'd be none there but roughs, and then where should we be? What would the Government people say to us then? If every man with a wife and family was to show himself in the streets tonight we should have the ballot before parliament breaks up, and if none of 'em won't do it, we shall never have the ballot.

Ain't that so?" Phineas, who intended to be honest, was not prepared to dispute the assertion on the spur of the moment.

(PF i. pp.280-1.)

Our view of the ballot question, which has originally been coloured by the theories of Mr. Monk, becomes a little more complex when seen in the light of the proposed action by Bunce. Once again theoretical political ideas are brought down to the level of the people who try to act on them. In using the events of July 1866 Trollope is both showing an awareness of the broader movement of the time towards Reform and of the fact that political views can never be defined in black and white terms because the individuals who hold them are motivated by many different forces: jealousy, greed, ignorance, hypocrisy or even (tradition!). On a more personal level, the problem that Phineas so frequently has to face - that of deciding how to act in the most honest way in a complex society - is further reinforced. The events of July 1866 provided Trollope with the very human view of politics which he consistently demonstrates in the political novels; his treatment of the passage of an actual Reform Bill is inevitably on a different scale.

#### IV

It is hardly surprising that there should be a number of parallels between the passing of the Reform Bill of 1867, its antecedent Liberal Bill of 1866, and Trollope's fictional Bill as described in Phineas Finn. The question of Reform, as already noted, was one of the major political topics of the 'fifties and 'sixties, although the apathy of the people not directly involved in politics was notorious. Reform Bills had been introduced in 1852, 1854, 1859 and 1860,<sup>(24)</sup> the last one, a Liberal Bill, failing chiefly because of public apathy.<sup>(25)</sup> Nevertheless, the need for some sort of Reform Bill was increasingly being recognised and by the time Trollope was writing Phineas Finn public demonstrations left no doubt on the matter.

Trollope combines two distinct periods of contemporary history in his selection of details. The first is the period of Palmerston's ascendancy - or 'Indian Summer' as F.B. Smith calls it,<sup>(26)</sup> when there was little to be done in terms of parliamentary activity and when the Tories were in no state to form an administration. The subject of Reform scarcely crops up at the beginning of the novel. Here the centre of interest is the difficulty of forming an administration with the Tories in a minority and the Liberals disunited. Once, however, everything has settled down, and the Liberals, now re-organised, have formed an administration, there is little political excitement. Nothing occurred, Trollope writes, "which would serve by the magnitude of its interest to divide the Liberal side of the House into factions." (PF i. p.180.)

The action of Phineas Finn, however, spans a period of five years, and Trollope skilfully turns the background political action towards the Reform question echoing the real-life situation after the death of Palmerston when Russell assumed the premiership: "an old man in a hurry," as Southgate puts it<sup>(27)</sup> - in a hurry to carry through his own bill before he died. The most significant divergence from fact in Phineas Finn as regards the Reform Bill, is that instead of the Liberals passing the Bill as Trollope would have liked, the Conservatives remained in power and pushed through their own Bill in 1867. A glance at the dates of composition of Phineas Finn compared with the dates of the political action of 1866/67 will demonstrate the difficulties Trollope had in moulding his events to those of real life and explain why, as John Sutherland points out,<sup>(28)</sup> scornful references to the weakness of the Conservatives diminish throughout the novel as it becomes apparent that they will not, in real life, be ousted by the Liberals.

Trollope began his novel on November 17, 1866 and completed it on May 15, 1867.<sup>(29)</sup> During most of the composition of the novel parliament was not sitting, having been prorogued in August 1866 and not re-opening until February 1867. Before Trollope began writing, then, the Liberals had introduced their own Reform Bill (March 1866) on which they had been defeated, and the Tories, under Lord Derby, had formed an administration (July 1866). It is clear that at the beginning of the novel Trollope is under the impression that the Tories, under their reluctant leader, will be too weak to continue in government and will be replaced by a newly united Liberal party.

He reckoned, however, without Disraeli. References like the following, which occur at the beginning of the book, demonstrates Trollope's conviction that there will be a Liberal come-back: "Lord de Terrier", he writes, "the Conservative Prime Minister, who had now been in office for the almost unprecedentedly long period of fifteen months, had found that he could not face continued majorities against him in the House of Commons, and had dissolved the House." (PF i. p.5.) In a subsequent chapter he writes, "and Conservative governments in this country are especially prone to die." (PF i. p.46.)

Trollope presumably recognised that the Conservative administration which took over from the Liberals in June 1866 was only a 'stop-gap' administration, surviving, as F.B. Smith puts it, "in an interval of civil war in the Liberal party ..." (30) As Barrington Erle says in the chapter entitled "Lord Brentford's Dinner", "We could not command our men, and were bound to get out." (PF i. p.65.) What Trollope did not see was that the 'temporary' administration would last until the passing of an extreme Reform Bill.

It is possible to chart roughly Trollope's progress with his novel through the months from November 1866 to May 1867 and to match contemporary events with those that appear in the novel. From the Autobiography we learn that it was Trollope's habit to average 40 pages of writing a week, with an average of 250 words per page. (31) Using this as our guide, we are able to see that he had written something in the region of 33 chapters (up to "Mr. Slide's Grievance") by the time that parliament re-opened in February 1867. Consequently if Trollope were relying on recent parliamentary events on which to base his Reform sections, it would, up to about Chapter 33, be those surrounding the Liberal Bill of 1866.

There are, of course, many points of contact between the Liberals' proposed Reform Bills of 1866 and Trollope's Bills in Phineas Finn. Trollope was not writing a novel about Reform, his main interest being in the people involved in politics, so it would have been quite natural for him to use what material he needed from the most recent attempts at Reform. What he wanted to create was a background of authenticity and not a concise Reform programme of his own and we receive from the novels a rather hazy impression of the details of his Bills, which is in itself an authentic reproduction of the feeling of the time, the confusion of the public <sup>over</sup> to the successive Bills of the 'sixties being extreme.

Two Reform Bills are dealt with in Phineas Finn, the first one being introduced when Trollope thought that the Liberals would regain office in real-life and the second, as far as we can judge, after parliament had re-opened in February 1867 and the Tory Bill was being framed. The details of the historical Bills do not concern us much as we are given very little information about Trollope's imaginary Bills.

Trollope's first Bill is introduced by the Liberals under Mr. Mildmay after having, they hoped, disposed of the question of the Ballot in a separate Bill. The second reading of the Reform Bill takes place against a background of public protest and opposition to it comes most effectively from the Liberals themselves, particularly in the form of Mr. Turnbull who argues that any bill will be worthless without a clause dealing with the Ballot question. It is clear that the Liberals are still dis-united and that Turnbull's opposition will almost certainly defeat the Bill, which is virtually what happens, for on a division the votes are equal and with the speaker's vote the government majority is only one.

So far there is much in the novel which has its counterpart in the events of 1866. The disunity of the Liberals was an historical fact and the Liberal Franchise Bill, which was introduced by Russell, was carried by a majority of only five, being almost defeated by the group of Liberal M.P.s surrounding Robert Lowe and dubbed by John Bright the 'Adullamites.'<sup>(32)</sup> Ironically, in the novel it is the Bright-figure - Turnbull - who opposes the Bill which in real-life he supported<sup>(33)</sup> (but with the same sort of reservations which Turnbull made in the novel), and his opposition is materially useful to the Conservatives who do not have the numbers to defeat the Bill. Although this portrait of Turnbull is consistent with the hostile picture that Trollope is drawing, there was a basis in reality for the view that Trollope described of the radical assisting the Tories. Trollope writes: "With great dignity Mr. Daubeny had kept aloof from Mr. Turnbull and from Mr. Turnbull's tactics; but he was not the less alive to the fact that Mr. Turnbull, with his mob and his big petition, might be of considerable assistance to him in his present duel between himself and Mr. Mildmay." (PF i. p.283.)

In a well-known passage from Bright's Diary, the radical refers, while writing of a meeting between himself and Disraeli, to an attitude which the public held as to his relationship with that man. "I told



him the people said that he and I always fought with gloves on." (34)

After the virtual defeat of Mr. Mildmay's Reform Bill there is some confusion and much doubt as to the continuance of the Liberals in office. A cabinet meeting is described by Trollope in which the Liberals decide to resign, and Mr. Mildmay tenders his resignation to the Queen. After much coming and going, however, the old men, as Trollope puts it, "held their seats.... Lord de Terrier with his followers having declined to take affairs into their hands." The retention of office is only temporary, however, "only upon further trial" and the main reason for it is to allow the routine work of parliament to be completed before a dissolution, particularly in view of the difficulties which it is expected that de Terrier would have in forming an administration backed only by a minority in parliament.

This ends the section dealing with the first Reform Bill in Phineas Finn, but once again there are parallels with the situation in 1866. After the government had narrowly avoided defeat on the second reading of Russell's Reform Bill it considered resignation. (35) Two months only remained of the session, but the Queen was preoccupied with foreign affairs - notably the Austro-Hungarian war - and she wished the government to continue in order to deal with the foreign crisis. Although in practice Russell and Gladstone seized the opportunity to remain in office to try and push through their Reform Bill, their doing so depended chiefly upon the disunity of the opposition and the desire not to disrupt the business of running the country, an echo of which we find in Mildmay's words to his cabinet when he has suggested its resignation:

"Of course it may be possible that my Lord de Terrier may foresee difficulties, or may find difficulties which will oblige him, either at once, or after an attempt has been made, to decline the task which her majesty will probably commit to him. All of us, no doubt, know that the arrangement of a government is not the most easy task in the world; and that it is not made the more easy by an absence of a majority in the House of Commons." (PF i. pp.333-4.)

The fictional Liberals have, at any rate, failed in their first attempt to pass a Reform Bill, a not uncommon occurrence in the 1860s. After new elections the Liberals once again form an administration and a new Reform Bill is introduced. We get the impression that Trollope himself did not see the need for radical reform, and his views may

have been strengthened by the fact that the Tories were at this time, (February 1867), introducing their own Bill. In the chapter "Mr. Monk upon Reform", he writes:

At this time the world was talking much about Reform, though Mr. Mildmay had become placidly patient. ... There was no strong throb through the country, making men feel that safety was to be had by Reform, and could not be had without Reform. ... That Reform was in itself odious to many of those who spoke of it freely, who offered themselves willingly to be its promoters, was acknowledged. It was not only odious to Lord de Terrier and to most of those who worked with him, but was equally so to many of Mr. Mildmay's most constant supporters. (PF i. pp.404-405.)

These pages are undoubtedly influenced by the introduction of the Tory Bill and although there may be a hint of what Sutherland calls "cautious optimism"<sup>(36)</sup> in Trollope's approach, a Reform Bill from the Tories would have been anathema to Trollope, particularly when it emanated from Disraeli whom Trollope distrusted and disliked.<sup>(37)</sup> The Bill was beginning to take on radical qualities which in itself would hardly have appealed to Trollope's basically conservative feelings, but also, and much more important to Trollope, he recognised the hypocrisy which informed the actions of many members and this was something against which he wrote with fervour in more than one novel. Trollope's Bill finds its support in men who deep down find the concept of Reform odious and in men who are compelled by threats of dissolution or by appeals to party loyalty to vote against their consciences. These are the grounds of the pessimism which we find in the latter sections of Phineas Finn, and it is pessimism which Trollope caught directly from the events of 1867. He took an interest in, and was close to, the political events of the time; indeed, we find him still at this time attending parliament,<sup>(38)</sup> and it is natural that he should echo the feelings of men caught helpless by the sudden changes of the time. F.B. Smith puts the situation clearly: "The Reform Bill of 1867 survived because a majority of the members of both Houses of Parliament dared not throw it out. They did not want it, they did not like it, they feared what it might do, but they passed it."<sup>(39)</sup> Asa Briggs quotes the words of Lord Shaftesbury on the Bill: "The gross hypocrisy. ... With the exception of a very few advanced Democrats, they all detest and fear the measure. But it is a sensual

and self-seeking age, they hate trouble, they hate responsibility, they hate to look evil in the face."<sup>(40)</sup>

From Chapter XXV on we find a new attitude to the Reform question. On the one hand we recognise the new force impelling reform: "There was a certain amount of excitement on the subject ..." and on the other, the subject, once it is firmly in hand, gradually fades further and further into the background, presumably as Trollope began to see the lengths of the Conservative 'betrayal'. Certainly in the period when Trollope was writing this section the public pressure for Reform had increased and even the Conservatives in the Upper House and on the back-benches were "eager for settlement".<sup>(41)</sup> Disraeli had intended, up until January 1867, to play a passive role on the reform question, but "his change of mind came when he appreciated the extent of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary support for a new reform bill."<sup>(42)</sup>

It is significant that Chapter XXV contains the only passages in the novel which deal with any degree of seriousness with political theory. In the letter which Mr. Monk writes to Phineas a persuasive argument is put forward in favour of a moderate amount of reform in order that parliament might become not a mirror of the people but its miniature. (PF i. p.409.) It is an argument for a Reform Bill which will maintain the status quo - something that the Liberal Bills had attempted and which Disraeli's Bill finally did not. Contemporary arguments are utilised and dismissed, as when Monk writes, "One great authority told us the other day that the sole object of legislation on this subject should be to get together the best possible 658 members of Parliament. That to me would be a most repulsive idea if it were not that by its very vagueness it becomes inoperative." (PF i. p.408.) The 'great authority' was probably Bagehot, a man holding similar political beliefs to Trollope, who wrote in answer to a suggested arrangement by J.S. Mill that his system would "often entirely sacrifice what is the second, if not the first, purpose of the representative system - viz., to secure the selection of the wisest and ablest and fittest men in the nation to be its legislators, and not merely those who most accurately mirror the average mind of the nation."<sup>(43)</sup> As Monk continues in his letter to Phineas, "Who shall say what is best; or what characteristic constitutes excellence in a member of parliament?"

At the end of his letter Monk demonstrates his dislike of a view of the working-classes which had become current, particularly since

the words of the right-wing Robert Lowe in 1866. Lowe had said to parliament: "If you want venality, if you want ignorance, if you want drunkenness, and facility for being intimidated; or if ... you want impulsive, unreflecting and violent people ... Do you go to the top or to the bottom?"<sup>(44)</sup>

Monk writes: "With population vice has increased, and those politicians, with ears but no eyes, hear of drunkenness and sin and ignorance. And then they declare to themselves that this wicked, half-barbarous, idle people should be controlled and not represented." (PF i. p.410.)

But it is not Trollope's intention to deal particularly with political theory and we feel that he has already dealt with the question of the 'venality' of the working-class in his own way with the portrayal of the words and actions of Mr. Bunce.

Having had his say about the contemporary situation, in which well-known attitudes of the day are blended into the realistic fabric of the novel, Trollope presses on with his new Reform Bill to a laboured and finally unsatisfactory conclusion. It is expected that the Bill will be so altered in committee that "its own parents will not know it" and that Mr. Mildmay will abandon its custody to Mr. Gresham - which he eventually does - much as in 1866 Gladstone was virtually responsible on his own for the handling of the Liberal Bill. We are given some information as to the nature of the Bill, although still the details are lacking. Despite this, Trollope manages to give the impression of complexity and he captures the sort of objections which were made to earlier real Bills: "But there was much room for cavil, - as all men knew would be the case. Who shall say what is a town or where shall be its limits? Bits of counties might be borrowed, so as to lessen the Conservatism of the county without endangering the Liberalism of the boroughs. ... In the discussion of any such arrangement how easy is the picking of holes; how impossible the fabrication of a garment that shall be impervious to such pickings!" (PF i. p.420.)

But the Bill survives and is sent into committee on a small majority. There are endless divisions, and Gresham, who is now handling the details, gives way over two clauses to such an extent that it seems unlikely that the Act, when passed, will bear much relation to the original intentions of the government.

It has already been noted, in Chapter One, that the 'muffled treatment' of the reform question is partly due to the awkward time

that Trollope chose to write a novel on this subject, and partly to the novelist's aim to present a society in which the political and social concerns are inextricably interwoven. (45) Trollope's fictional Reform Bill has faded very much into the background, although it is never entirely lost sight of. At the height of the interest in Reform Phineas himself is becoming entangled in a quarrel with Lord Chiltern; and during the middle of the crucial debate he is fighting a duel in Blankenburg. Naturally our interest is chiefly in Phineas's activities but close attention to the novel will show that the progress of the Reform Bill is still being followed. It is one more example of Trollope's method whereby political happenings are eclipsed by crises affecting the hero himself.

It is not until Chapter XLVII that the Reform Bill comes to the forefront again and it does so because its provisions begin to become critical for Phineas himself. Phineas finds that once again he has to face the difficult question about honest action in a context where the following of one's individual conscience begins to seem like fatuous idealism. A redistribution clause must be introduced, despite the weariness of the members of parliament, but the clause which the government produces does not satisfy Mr. Turnbull who introduces his own clause designed, among other things, to deprive the borough of Loughton, for which Phineas now sits, of its M.P. Phineas has by now been given a minor government post and is therefore precluded from voting against the government on this issue. He feels keenly that boroughs such as Loughton (in the 'pocket' of Lord Brentford) cannot be justified, and he wishes to resign his post and vote for Turnbull's clause. He is firmly spoken to by Mr. Monk, and in the words he uses to Phineas we may perceive the voice of Trollope, not convinced of the argument but perhaps displaying a little of the same sort of feeling which Phineas felt when he thought of a man like Quintus Slide 'invading' the borough of Loughton. Strong principles are all very well, but in real life: "There must be compromises," [says Monk] "and you should trust to others who have studied the matter more thoroughly than you, to say how far compromise should go at the present moment." (PF ii.p.90) The dilemma which Phineas finds himself in is the old one between theory and practice; the dilemma which Mme. Max Goesler, who does not have political responsibility, puts so eloquently: "Politically I should want to out-Turnbull Mr. Turnbull, to vote for everything that

could be voted for, - ballot, manhood suffrage, womanhood suffrage, unlimited right of striking, tenant right, education of everybody, and the abolition of at least the bench of bishops." (PF ii. pp.32-33.)  
But, she adds,

"I don't at all want to put down ladies and gentlemen. ... I don't want anything to go, - that is, as far as real life is concerned. There's that dear old Bishop of Abingdon is the best friend I have in the world, - and as for the Bishop of Dorchester, I'd walk from here to there to hear him preach. And I'd sooner hem aprons for them all myself than that they should want those pretty decorations. But then, Mr. Finn, there is such a difference between life and theory; - is there not?" (PF ii. p.33.)

This is one of the central problems of the book and is put into dramatic form by many of the characters. Even Lady Glencora Palliser demonstrates the wide gulf between thinking and doing when she displays her extreme 'socialist' theories for the entertainment of her dinner guests.

The manner in which Mildmay's Reform Bill is finally passed in its mutilated form no doubt reflects Trollope's despair of ever seeing a truly Liberal measure progress through parliament. He could have had no confidence in the increasingly radical measure which was at that moment bemusing parliament, and the fact that the success of the Bill relied to a large extent on political opportunism would have been no recommendation to Trollope. He has his fling at the complicated and barely understood proposals which were being made public in his comments on the completion of Mr. Mildmay's Bill: "After two months of hard work, all questions of franchise had been settled, rating and renting, new and new-fangled, fancy franchises and those which no one fancied, franchises for boroughs and franchises for counties, franchises single, dual, three-cornered, and four-sided." (PF ii. p.93.)

And then comes redistribution. Like the earlier part of the Bill, the redistribution section has its counterpart in the events of 1866. In March of that year Disraeli hoped to force Lord Russell to complete his Bill by introducing an amendment to the second reading calling for a redistribution of seats. This was done by Lord Grosvenor, who, in his motion, suggested that this would complete the Reform Bill<sup>(46)</sup> in much the same way as Turnbull in Chapter XLVII suggests that Mildmay's Bill will not be a Bill without redistribution. In 1866 the government was forced to introduce its own redistribution Bill, much as Mildmay's

government in Phineas Finn does; unlike the novelistic version, however, a certain amount of bungling coupled with the lack of a majority by the opposition allowed the real-life Bill to pass.

The conditions in which both the earlier Bill of 1866 and the later one of 1867 were discussed were far from ideal and it is typical of Trollope that he should have made use of certain practical considerations of the time in order to demonstrate the mood which prevailed during the passing of the Reform Bill. A contemporary account of a late sitting brings out the physical problems which M.P.s had to face:

London, April 28, 1866. Fred [Cavendish] came to bed at  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 in the morning, announcing a majority of 5 for the second reading. One didn't expect more. It is impossible, I suppose, for the poor Bill to survive committee and pass the Lords. Dizzy spoke for near 3 hours, and was dull, they say, wishing to exhaust the House as well he might, the atmosphere being frightful in the heat of the weather. Uncle W. [Gladstone] got up at one and spoke for two hours magnificently, so as to poke up great enthusiasm even at that time of night, and after the endless debates. (47)

At the beginning of Phineas Finn Daubeny, in a speech on the Amendment to the Address (upon which the government is narrowly defeated) does not finish until 3 o'clock. Many infirm M.P.s have been brought to the House for this crucial debate, and Trollope comments: "I do not think that there was any truth in the allegation made at the time, that he continued on his legs an hour longer than the necessities of his speech required in order that five or six very ancient Whigs might be wearied out and shrink to their beds." (r)

It is a House heartily sick of the subject which finally passes Trollope's Liberal Bill, a House which is sweating in the notorious conditions of a protracted Summer sitting. Herbert Paul writes: "To wind up the business of the session as soon as possible was naturally the object of a government which came into office in the month of July" (48) and F.B. Smith, writes of the situation of May 1867: "It was oppressively hot, the effluvium of the Thames wafted through the House, many, including Gladstone, slept through the speeches." (49) Trollope makes fine comedy with his picture of the over-worked House of Commons perspiring under the fiery oratory of Mr. Turnbull who was as "instant, as oratorical, as hostile, as indignant about redistribution as he had been about the franchise."

(PF ii. p.94.) Even the energetic Mr. Ratler expostulates against the protracted sittings: "... and the river stinking like, - like the very mischief." (PF ii. p.99.)

It is in a subdued atmosphere reeking of defeat that Mildmay's Bill eventually becomes law. The atmosphere can be accounted for on two levels. First, politically, it is virtually a defeat for the Liberals. Their Bill has been mutilated almost beyond recognition, and to cap it all they have been forced into the position of destroying one of the last bastions of aristocratic privilege in the form of pocket boroughs. Symbolically this represents the end of a particular era - the era of the Standishes, or in real life, the Russells, Cavendishes and other High Whigs. The alternative which Trollope seems to suggest as inevitable is embodied in the form of Quintus Slide, and while Trollope does not provide any answer to the political questions he poses, we sense a feeling of regret on his part for the passing order of things. Trollope's own feelings on the matter were undoubtedly affected by the sight of the arch-conjuror Disraeli manipulating parliament for his own ends.

Second, on a more personal level, there is defeat for the hero Phineas. He has begun to sense the emptiness of parliamentary success which seems to compel dishonest behaviour, when even by voting against the dictates of his own conscience, as he does when he votes for the retention of Loughton and other 'rotten' boroughs, he loses his seat in parliament. We remember also, of course, that he has lost Lady Laura and Violet Effingham too.

It is a significant pointer to the kind of novel that Trollope was writing that our final memory of the fictional Reform Bill and the events surrounding it should not be of the details of the Act itself but of the feelings of the House towards it. Trollope was not a political novelist in the strict sense; he did not have the interest in politics of a man like Disraeli who wrote from the inside. Trollope's politicians are, indeed, not so very different from his clergymen, being impelled by the same sort of motives: greed, ambition, or even the desire for a quiet untroubled life. It is part of the general design therefore that we should remember only the features of Reform which are central to the novel as a whole: the political wrangling which it produced; the hypocrisy of many of the reformers; the weariness of the members and, finally, the personal problems of Phineas.



Phineas Redux is above all a novel about political honesty. We see this theme in the motives of the politicians and in those of the small men on the outskirts of party politics. It is a fairly liberal 'way of the world' kind of honesty which Trollope is describing, an honesty which is best seen in the attitudes to the two trials which take place in the book: that of Browborough and, later, of Phineas. The hypocrisy which Phineas sees in these trials disgusts him, and we may be sure that this emotion is a reflection of Trollope's general disgust and bitterness at this time. This feeling was no doubt engendered primarily by his own defeat at Beverley in 1868 and by the passing of the Conservative Reform Bill. To Trollope at this time there can have appeared little honesty in the political world. Loyalty, as the Duke of St. Bungay admits to himself, "must be built on a basis of self-advantage", and this, to Trollope, must have been eminently borne out by the behaviour of the Tories over the Reform Bill. Although the major political events in Phineas Redux concern the passing, by the Conservatives under their leader Daubeny, of a Bill to Disestablish the Church of England, in Trollope's hands they become a not-very thinly disguised version of the passing of the Conservative Reform Bill as seen through rather jaundiced liberal-conservative eyes. Because the writing of Phineas Finn was substantially over before Trollope became aware that it would be the Conservatives and not the Liberals who would pass the Reform Bill he was unable to alter his own Bill in order to take account of real events. He took his opportunity in Phineas Redux, however, to vent the disgust which he felt with the behaviour of the Conservatives under Disraeli.

Phineas Redux opens with an accurate description of the political situation of 1867-68:

Mr. Gresham had been Prime Minister of England, as representative of the Liberal party in politics. There had come to be a split among those who should have been his followers on the terribly vexed question of the Ballot. Then Mr. Daubeny for twelve months had sat upon the throne distributing the good things of the Crown amidst Conservative birdlings, with beaks wide open and craving maws, who certainly for some years previous had not received their share of State honours or State emoluments. And Mr. Daubeny was still so sitting, to the infinite dismay of the Liberals, every man of whom felt that

his party was entitled by numerical strength to keep the management of the Government within his own hands. (PR i. p.1.)

The 'split' referred to is of course that of the Adullamites who successfully weakened the power of the Liberals over the question of Reform (the Ballot, in Phineas Redux). In real life the Conservatives sat in a minority in 1867, sustained, as in Phineas Redux, by the disunity of the Liberals. The Conservatives were in a very weak position, remaining in office, as Robert Blake has shown, only "on sufferance. Their opponents when united had a majority of over seventy."<sup>(50)</sup>

But, as Blake goes on to point out, even a leader of a minority government has some powers, and these consist chiefly in the distribution of honours. This indeed is the point on which Trollope focuses at the beginning of Phineas Redux. "Let a man be of what he may in politics, - unless he be much more of a partisan than a patriot, - he will think it well that there should be some equity of division in the bestowal of crumbs of comfort." (PR i. p.1.) The implication that this is the chief motive for forming an administration is clear. The Liberals, Trollope says, have been very tolerant, but it is now their turn - by right of numbers - to slice the political cake. It is at this moment in the novel that the Liberals effect a dramatic reconciliation among their ranks and decide that it is time "the weak receiving the reward of strength, should be brought to an end." (PR i. p.2.) Trollope hints at "a great fight", but gives no details except to say that the Conservatives were beaten on various motions, including one on decimal coinage - which puts them into a minority of 37. As soon as the Conservatives realise that their days are numbered the distribution of political favours reaches something of a peak: "...Lord-lieutenancies were arranged; very ancient judges retired upon pensions; vice-royal Governors were sent out in the last gasp of the failing battle; great places were filled by tens, and little places by twenties; private secretaries were established here and there; and the hay was still made even after the sun had gone down." (PR i. p.3.)

As Trollope builds up his own case against the Tories, he illuminates one of the aspects of the Conservative administration of 1868 against which the Liberals loudly protested. Disraeli's government, like Daubeny's, had suffered several defeats in parliament, particularly with the passage of the Scottish Reform Bill when they lost two amendments.<sup>(51)</sup> Nevertheless, Disraeli still managed to exercise his fast-failing powers of patronage in a way which was not pleasing to

the Liberals. A Lord Lieutenancy was conferred on the Duke of Buckingham, causing no objections from the opposition, but there was a great deal of protest when Disraeli offered the vacant Governor-Generalship of Canada to Sir John Young, and the Vice-Royalty of India to Lord Mayo. It was felt that these appointments should have been left vacant until a new government had been formed, the press particularly criticizing the appointment of Mayo<sup>(52)</sup> and the Liberals threatening to exercise their right of veto if they won the next election.<sup>(53)</sup>

In Phineas Redux it is Mr. Palliser's motion on decimal currency which defeats the government; in 1868 it was Gladstone's motion for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. The historical Bill was introduced by a series of resolutions, and an amendment proposed by the Conservative Lord Stanley which would have deferred consideration of a bill until a new parliament had been called, was roundly defeated by a Liberal majority of 60. The effect of this Liberal victory was, as Herbert Paul notes, once more to reunite the Liberal party after two years as the dormant majority.<sup>(54)</sup>

The similarities between the situation in 1868 and that in Phineas Redux become more apparent when we look at the manner in which the two governments - the fictional and the historical - finally left office. After the government's defeat in Phineas Redux Daubeny dissolves the House rather than resign outright. This immediately raises a storm of protest from the opposition: "He had been treated with manifest forbearance; the cake had been left in his hands for twelve months; the House was barely two years old; he had no 'cry' with which to meet the country; this dissolution was factious, dishonest, and unconstitutional." (PR i. p.4.)

Resignation would have allowed the Liberals to form a government of their own; dissolution would force every member of parliament to return, at great personal expense, to the hustings. It is no wonder that their protest extends so far as to call the dissolution 'unconstitutional'!

Trollope has clearly used the general circumstances surrounding the downfall of Disraeli's government in November 1868 as a model for the events in Phineas Redux. After Disraeli's final defeat (by a majority of 65) on Gladstone's resolution, the government had, like Daubeny's, two alternatives: resignation or dissolution. It was generally felt that the government should resign because, as Herbert Paul points out, "an immediate dissolution would have been a farce;

for, as the law then stood, the new electors could not have voted before the 1st of January 1869."<sup>(55)</sup> Disraeli, however, went to Osborne, and although he tendered his resignation he also advised the Queen that a dissolution would be preferable.<sup>(56)</sup> Accordingly, the Queen gave Disraeli authority to dissolve parliament "as soon as the public business would permit."<sup>(57)</sup> Not surprisingly there was strong opposition to this and it was couched in language very similar to that found in Phineas Redux. Gladstone, the arch-enemy, protested against "Disraeli's unconstitutional doctrine that every Minister carried in his pocket a right to dissolve a Parliament not elected under his influence."<sup>(58)</sup> Disraeli was also accused of asking Parliament to give a ten months' lease of office to a government which neither trusted it nor was trusted by it and of using the Queen's name improperly while attempting to threaten the House with dissolution.<sup>(59)</sup>

Trollope's adaptation of these events captures much of the resentment felt against the Tories, but it differs in one significant fact. In 1868 Disraeli's 'ten months' lease' had no ulterior purpose beyond a desire to hold on to office for as long as possible; in Phineas Redux the scheming Daubeny has a plan - "some sharp trick of political conjuring, some hocus-pocus presto sleight of hand, by which he might be able to retain power, ..." (PR i. p.4.) And the rich irony which Trollope employs in order to have his fling at the Tories for their passing of the Second Reform Bill stems from his making Daubeny the instigator of the Bill to Disestablish the Church of England. From this point on Trollope relies less for a model on the passing of the Irish Church Disestablishment Bill, which was then going through parliament, than on the passing of the earlier Second Reform Bill and on an earlier phase of Tory behaviour. Undoubtedly it is more than mere coincidence that the chief political event in Phineas Redux should be a disestablishment bill when at the time of writing the Irish Church was being disestablished, but Gladstone's Irish Bill passed easily through parliament and Daubeny's fictional Bill faces the hostility of both sides.

In order to appreciate the irony of the situation in which a Conservative Prime Minister attempts to disestablish the Church of England it is necessary to understand the traditional position of the Conservative party in relation to the Church. The Conservatives had long been of course the 'Church party' and Disraeli more than once made clear his own position and that of the party he came to lead.

In the General Preface to the 1870 edition of his works he wrote:

"The writer and those acting with him looked, then, upon the Anglican Church as a main machinery by which these results [the building of a society upon the principles of loyalty and religious reverence] might be realised. There were few great things left in England and the Church was one of them."<sup>(60)</sup> Disestablishment, he thought, "would be a mistake for the state and the Church. By the side of the State in England there has gradually arisen a majestic corporation - wealthy, proud, and independent - with the sanctity of a long tradition, yet sympathising with authority, and full of conciliation, even deference to the civil power. Broadly and deeply planted in the land, mixed up with all our manners and customs ... one of the prime securities of our common liberties, the Church of England is part of our history, part of our life, part of England itself."

A disestablished Church would "subside into a fastidious, not to say finical congregation."<sup>(61)</sup>

It would have been inconceivable, therefore, that such a man as Disraeli should contemplate disestablishment of the English Church - inconceivable, that is, to anyone not convinced as Trollope was of the treachery of the Conservative leader. He describes Daubeny's position in Chapter V: "His utterances had been confusing, mysterious, and perhaps purposely unintelligible; but that was matter of little moment so long as he was prepared to defend the establishment of the Church of England as an institution adapted for English purposes. On that point it was believed that he was sound. To that mast it was supposed he had nailed his own colours and those of his party. In defending that fortress it was thought that he would be ready to fall, should the defence of it require a fall." (PR i. p.57.)

Put more mildly the behaviour of Daubeny, who is clearly modelled on Disraeli,<sup>(62)</sup> is political opportunism at its worst, but is consistent with the view of party politics which Trollope has incorporated into his two novels. It is perhaps significant that even Disraeli's biographer agreed with Trollope's general view of his subject:

"Unfortunately political leaders have ceased to think of what is good for the nation, or of their own consistency, or even what in the long run may be best for themselves. Their business is the immediate campaign, in which they are to outmanoeuvre and defeat their enemies."<sup>(63)</sup> So, Froude goes on, Disraeli decided on the 'leap in the dark' (Reform)

and does not hide from himself that he too, like Peel before, was "stealing the Whigs' clothes while they were bathing."<sup>(64)</sup> Froude was writing about the Reform period of 1866-67, and so, basically, is Trollope. He is no longer hampered by the changing facts of the moment: Reform of the franchise is an accomplished deed. But the technique of remaining in power by any means, including renegeing on old promises, is the same. As with the Reform Bill Daubeny intends to introduce what many people would regard as essentially a Liberal measure, a measure which, in fact, many Liberal M.P.s feel bound to support. We note, too, that in 1867 many Conservatives were thoroughly opposed to Reform but they were persuaded to vote against their consciences for reasons of political expediency.<sup>(65)</sup> This, at any rate, was Trollope's interpretation of the feelings of the time and he carries it over with increased vigour to his interpretation of Conservative feeling when faced with Church Disestablishment: "His own party, to a man, - without a single exception, - were certainly opposed to the measure in their minds. It must be so. It could not but be certain that they should hate it. ... But such private opinions and inward wailings need not, and probably would not, guide the body." (PR i. p.81.)

Trollope goes on to point out that the Conservatives were quite used to voting against their consciences - had they not, he says, already swallowed the bitter pills of Free Trade and Household Suffrage? It is ironic, of course, and Trollope undoubtedly expected contemporary readers to feel the irony, that at the time of Gladstone's introduction of the Irish Disestablishment Bill, Disraeli was pleading strongly for the Church establishment. "The vision of Church and State was a symbol that Government recognised its responsibility to the Divine Power. If the Irish Church was disestablished it would be the thin end of the wedge for England and Wales."<sup>(66)</sup>

The reference which Trollope has made to Free Trade gives us another pointer to a parallel between the fictional situation and an earlier historical one. Trollope has in mind another occasion of Conservative 'betrayal' and Church Disestablishment becomes, in his hands, the hypothetical climax to a whole series of dishonest political acts. The volte face which Daubeny seems to be effecting over the Church establishment must have brought vividly to mind the similar change of heart of Peel in 1846 on the Corn Laws. Peel had been in almost exactly the same situation as Daubeny in attempting to lead

his party in opposition to something which it had long supported. Peel himself had been honest enough (some would have said too honest), but the motives of his followers were as self-seeking as Trollope's Conservatives'. In the words of a contemporary, most Tories "would have seen him [Peel] at the Devil rather than support free trade in corn as they did, had they not expected that thereby they secured to themselves their continuance in office."<sup>(67)</sup> It is significant that Disraeli at this time led the opposition to his old chief, accusing Peel of doing very much what Daubeny sets out to do in Phineas Redux.

Daubeny's tactics ultimately fail, and the Conservatives are defeated by a Liberal majority of 72. It is the Liberals who eventually carry the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church of England. We are made to feel however that their motives for wishing to come into power are little better than the Tories'. "But", Trollope writes in the section immediately preceding Daubeny's 'throwing in of the sponge', "from among Mr. Gresham's friends there had arisen a noise which sounded very like a clamour for place ..." (PR i. p.421.)

As in Phineas Finn, the political action which had been prominent at the beginning of the book gradually fades into the background and the Disestablishment Bill is passed rather quietly at the end of the novel. The political events are overshadowed by the personal accident which befalls Phineas, the trial providing the focus for both Phineas's and Trollope's disillusion about politics.

The world has changed a great deal for Phineas since he first came over from Ireland to make his way in politics. He has seen corruption at work - seen indeed a man who has blatantly flouted the law being returned to parliament. He has been forced by circumstances, and not too unwillingly it must be confessed, to make flexible his conscience and to realise that in politics power and position are everything.

The book deals with the practical machinations of political life and not with political ideology. It is with consummate skill that Trollope, as he engages our sympathy for Phineas, points out the harsher facts of political life which also tend to work against the hero. Thus we see an overworked Prime Minister being convinced purely by second-hand gossip of the unreliability of Phineas and of the usefulness of the place-seeking Mr. Bonteen; and then, after the ladies, headed by Lady Glencora have taken a hand, the same Prime Minister reversing his judgement on Bonteen and depriving him of the

promised Chancellorship of the Exchequer. That the world begins to think less of Phineas than it had formerly is owing to no fault of his own but merely to the fact that the world always despises the under-dog - and after the Browborough trial that is exactly what he is. After the trial at Durham Phineas says to Lady Laura: "'We were both on trial, - he and I.' 'Everybody knows that he bribed and that you did not.' 'Yes; - and everybody despises me and pats him on the back. I am sick of the whole thing. There is no honesty in the life we lead.'" (PR ii. p.45.) Mr. Gresham the Prime Minister on the other hand is more realistic in his appraisal of the trial; a conviction, he says: "'Would have created ill blood, and our own hands in this matter are not a bit cleaner than those of our adversaries. We can't afford to pull their houses to pieces before we have put our own in order. The thing will be done; but it must, I fear, be done slowly, - as is the case with all reforms from within.'" (PR ii. p.42.)

The final defeat comes for Phineas at his own trial for the murder of Bonteen. Ironically, the same forces which were at work in the first trial in Browborough's favour operate again now - in Phineas's favour. As his guilt becomes increasingly apparent, so his popularity grows. Finally, after his acquittal, Phineas is assured of the seat at Tankerville, his notoriety having, apparently, completely eclipsed Browborough's.

Our final impression of the political world as seen through Trollope's eyes is not that it is deeply corrupt but that it is, to use words which Trollope himself might have found, no better than it should be. Phineas's journey from the early days when he aspired to great things to his final feelings of disillusion at the end of Phineas Redux is a journey from innocence towards experience. Disgust is not his final emotion, as we note from the later books in the series - and neither is it Trollope's. His point of view, critical and perceptive as it is, is essentially that which can be made from those bastions of cynicism, the club rooms of the metropolis. It is a view of politics which all the books in the political series promulgate: that individual motives may not always be admirable but the general tendency is towards the good. It is no doubt because Trollope's interest as a novelist centred on the motives which inspired his characters and moved society that the novels as a whole do not echo Phineas's own cynicism - a cynicism which is the result of a rather



too abrupt awakening into experience. Trollope then is the chronicler of politics in an imperfect world - the politics of the possible.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. The Times, September 3, 1866, p.6.
2. p 40.
3. Manchester Guardian, November 11, 1868. Quoted by H.J. Hanham, Elections and Party Management: Politics in the time of Disraeli and Gladstone (London, 1959), p.22.
4. T.P. O'Connor, The Parnell Movement (London, 1866), pp.134-5. Quoted by H.J. Hanham, op. cit. p.65.
5. Autobiography, pp.257-258.
6. John Sutherland has shown that these buildings were under construction in 1868. Sutherland, Phineas Finn, p.728.
7. J.A.R. Marriott, England Since Waterloo (London, 1913), p.343. h5?
8. Herbert Paul, History, p.23. vs ?
9. F.B. Smith, The Making of the Second Reform Bill, p.56.
10. Paul, p.23.
11. Lord Houghton, Essays on Reform, 1867. Quoted by Donald Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs, 1832 - 1886 (London, 1962), p.305.
12. A.L. Kennedy, ed., My Dear Duchess: Social and Political Letters to the Duchess of Manchester, 1858-1869 (London, 1956), p.37.
13. Paul, p.52.
14. See Norman Gash, Politics in the Age of Peel (London, 1953), p.21.
15. "My idea is ... that every man possessed of the franchise should dare to have and to express a political opinion of his own; that otherwise the franchise is not worth having; and that men will learn that when all so dare, no evil can come from such daring." (PF i. p.222.)
16. Quoted by Gash, p.21.
17. The Times, June 19, 1865, p.7.
18. Paul, p.52.
19. Annual Register, II, (1866), 98.
20. The Times, July 24, 1866, p.9.
21. The Times, July 23, 1866, p.9.
22. The Times, July 25, 1866, p.7.
23. Annual Register, II, (1866), 101.
24. Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs, p.300.
25. Smith, p.56.
26. Ibid., p.47.
27. Southgate, p.300.
28. Phineas Finn, p.35.
29. Sadleir, Commentary, p.408.
30. Smith, p.121.
31. Autobiography, p.103.

32. This group of over forty included Lord Elcho, Lord Grosvenor and Mr. Horsman and was called by Bright a cabal which sat in the cave of Adullam where they collected "every one that was in distress and every one that was discontented." Briggs, Victorian People, p.245.
33. "Mr. Bright was willing to give a hearty support to the Bill, because he believed that, although not perfect, it would settle the question of Reform for a time.... Had he been consulted by the framers of the Bill, he would not have given it his sanction, or, had he been a Minister of the Crown he would not have prepared it, because he did not consider it went far enough." Annual Register, I, (1866), 287.
34. Quoted by Briggs, p.287.
35. Smith, p.90.
36. Sutherland, Phineas Finn, p.36. Sutherland is referring to Monk's words, "I may truly say that I would as lief have a good measure from Lord de Terrier as from Mr. Milmay." (PF i. p.407).
37. See, for instance, his judgement of Disraeli the novelist in the Autobiography, pp.222-4.
38. Letters, p.197.
39. Smith, p.229.
40. Briggs, p.299.
41. Smith, p.147.
42. Briggs, p.277.
43. Norman St. John Stevas, ed., The Collected Works of Walter Bagehot, (9 vols. London, 1968), vol. III, p.546.
44. Smith, p.80.
45. Chapter 1, p.14.
46. Smith, p.84.
47. John Bailey, ed., The Diary of Lady Frederick Cavendish (2 vols. London, 1927), vol.I, p.305.
48. Paul, p.56.
49. Smith, p.192.
50. Robert Blake, Disraeli (London, 1966), p.451. *See Disraeli*
51. Paul, p.129.
52. Paul, p.149.
53. Blake, Disraeli, p.494.
54. Paul, p.135.
55. Ibid.
56. Paul, p.136.
57. Francis Culling Cass-Gomm, Handbook of Administrations of Great Britain During the Nineteenth Century, 1801-1900 rev. ed. (London, 1901), p.185.
58. Annual Register, I, (1868), 85.

59. Ibid., p.86.
60. Quoted by Blake, p.208.
61. Quoted by D.C. Somervell, Disraeli and Gladstone (London, 1925), p.130.
62. As Trollope himself admitted. See Letters, p.355. John Sutherland has also shown that in the manuscript of Phineas Finn Trollope on one occasion (PF p.30) inadvertantly used the real nick-name of Disraeli, "Dizzy", instead of his invented one, "Dubby", for Daubeny. (Sutherland, Phineas Finn, p.727).
63. J.A. Froude, The Earl of Beaconsfield (London, 1890), p.192.
64. Froude, p.193.
65. See above, pp.56-57.
66. Blake, p.500.
67. The words of Lord Campbell in 1846, quoted by G.M. Trevelyan, John Bright (London, 1913), p.146.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Social Setting

Anthony Trollope I knew well. I knew the world in which he lived, I saw the scenes, the characters, the life he paints, day by day in the same clubs, in the same rooms, and under the same conditions as he saw them. To re-read some of his best stories, as I have just done, is to me like looking through a photographic album of my acquaintances, companions and familiar reminiscences of some thirty years ago.<sup>(1)</sup>

So wrote Frederick Harrison in 1895 looking back to the 1860s when Trollope was at the height of his fame. It was precisely for this type of 'photographic' realism that Trollope was for so long valued, a realism which Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote was "as if some giant had hewn a great lump out of the earth and put it under glass, with all its inhabitants going about their daily business, and not suspecting that they were being made a show of."<sup>(2)</sup> But this sort of comment tends to ignore the selecting and shaping that Trollope, like any novelist, had to do, and it assumes, too, that Trollope was merely attempting to record society for its own sake, which is demonstrably not so. It has already been shown in earlier chapters how Trollope utilised actual historical events for his depiction of the political situation of his time, but it has also been seen that these events were selected and altered by his imagination for his own purposes as a novelist. The society from which the politicians and their acts sprang is equally 'real' in the sense that it is an accurate reflection of a particular section of mid-Victorian society, but what is represented has also been selected, and therefore provides a commentary on, and indeed a criticism of, that society. In this connexion a more acceptable definition of the quality of Trollope's novels has been given by Professor Mizener, who writes that they "may ... be said to represent nature by representing manners, provided that we understand the word manners in its most inclusive sense, the sense in which it is used to refer to the expressive habits of behaviour of all kinds and classes of people."<sup>(3)</sup> And Trollope is the supremely successful recorder of the manners of nineteenth century England, the often seemingly insignificant "gestures and modes of behaviour established by a society for the expression of moral attitudes."<sup>(4)</sup>

Trollope's representation of social life among mid-Victorian

middle- and upper-class families is accurate, and it is also fundamental to the fabric of the novels; his nice appreciation of the finer points of polite behaviour gives the books a subtle complexity and reinforces the faintly ironic view of that society. But his study of society is important only because of the importance of the people who live within and are so frequently constrained to act because of the restrictions of that society. As C.P. Snow has written recently, "Society, or a fraction of society, was useful to him on the way towards the central point, because human beings have to make choices and those choices are sometimes uniquely their own ... but more often conditioned by what society makes them do."<sup>(5)</sup>

In this chapter I shall consider Trollope's treatment of society in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux firstly in relation to the difficulties which Phineas, as an Irish Roman Catholic, faces in trying to enter an exclusive world dominated by the very close-knit and inter-related High Whigs. Secondly, I shall look at the position of women within that rigid and constraining society to see the extent to which our understanding of that society contributes to our understanding of the characters.

## II

In his autobiography Trollope claims that it was a 'blunder' to make Phineas Finn an Irishman, but he was led into it by "the circumstances that I created the scheme of the book during a visit to Ireland."<sup>(6)</sup> It is curious that he should have made Phineas Irish, particularly, as he notes, since it was difficult to obtain "sympathy and affection for a politician belonging to a nationality whose politics are not respected in England."<sup>(7)</sup> Trollope himself, of course, had great sympathy for the Irish,<sup>(8)</sup> and it is not difficult to see why he should have been attracted to the idea of making an Irishman the hero of his first political novel. He had lived in Ireland himself from 1841 to 1851 and, according to his autobiography, these were happy days indeed, especially when contrasted with his wretched time in London as a Post Office clerk. "It was altogether a very jolly life that I led in Ireland," he wrote in 1876.<sup>(9)</sup> It was a time, too, of Trollope's initial interest in politics, a subject which he could hardly have ignored, living as he did through the dreadful years of the famine. His career as a novelist began in Ireland with two Irish novels (both failures) and he seems never to have been able to break completely with the country in his fiction, Castle Richmond appearing in 1860 and The Landleaguers being published posthumously in 1883.

Whatever the reasons for Trollope's initial choice of an Irish

Roman Catholic as hero, it certainly does not appear now as a blunder, for Phineas's particularly delicate position in English society depends to a large extent on his nationality. Phineas is something of an adventurer, who enters English social and political life with none of the advantages of his English contemporaries, such as wealth or background, and he is consequently never completely assimilated into that society. He remains an outsider with two separate and distinct lives: "He felt that he had two identities, - that he was, as it were, two separate persons, - and that he could, without any real faithlessness, be very much in love with Violet Effingham in his position of man of fashion and a member of Parliament in England, and also warmly attached to dear little Mary Flood Jones as an Irishman of Killaloe." (PF i. p.401.) Trollope was well aware of the difficulties which faced an Irish politician in the London of the 1860s and Phineas's feelings that he was walking 'over volcanoes' is no doubt the result of his appreciation of the suspicion of the Irish which must have made failure a commonplace to that nationality. "He had already known many members of Parliament to whom no outward respect or sign of honour was ever given by any one," Trollope writes of Phineas, "and it seemed to him as he thought over it, that Irish members of Parliament were generally treated with more indifference than any others. There were O'B- and O'C and O'D for whom no one cared a straw, who could hardly get men to dine with them at the club, and yet they were genuine members of Parliament." (PF i. p.28.) There were many good reasons why the Irish in England were regarded with suspicion, and bearing these in mind it is not difficult to understand why both Ratler (the party manager) and Barrington Erle (the Prime Minister's private secretary) should have so little faith in the new member Phineas.

The 'marriage' between England and Ireland had been a strained affair since the start. The English were disliked in Ireland and the threat of revolution from the Irish gave England grave cause for fear. Furthermore, the Catholicism of most of the Irish, (including Phineas), was disliked in England, mainly because of its foreign connexions, and the Irish Catholics hated the established church to which they were compelled to contribute. After the famine and its consequences in the 1840s thousands of destitute Irish fled to England and "confirmed the British dislike of the Irish. The middle-classes despised a country without a respectable middle-class. The professional men scorned a nation without an intelligentsia."<sup>(10)</sup> The feeling that

Roman Catholics were socially inferior was produced mainly because in the 1850s and 1860s the Catholics in London were, for the most part, poor, unskilled labourers. "'The pauper Irish' lived in the worst tenements and courts and in such conditions that their living areas became notorious."<sup>(11)</sup> The problem was intensified by the large influx of Irish-speaking immigrant poor.<sup>(12)</sup>

In Ireland itself the agitation in favour of Tenant Right was increasing under the leadership of Gavan Duffy. It was on this subject of course that Phineas 'scuttled the ship' and lost his place in the Liberal government. The movement for Tenant Right began in the 1850s and, much to the dismay of the British Government, gained wide support both from both Catholics and Protestants. Violence and disunity returned to the Irish scene after Lord Russell's letter to the Bishop of Durham and the passing of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill in 1851 which limited the rights of Catholic Bishops. By 1865 revolution in Ireland seemed possible; the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood was at its greatest strength and highest morale.<sup>(13)</sup> But in the next year, when Trollope was writing Phineas Finn, (begun in November 1866), Fenianism was on the defensive. Government spies were operating in many areas and several arrests of prominent people were made.<sup>(14)</sup> The Times in March of that year quoted a letter from Cork which demonstrates the scale of the problem. It stated that the gaols were so packed that the crown was not to proceed against those who had unlicensed arms and those who administered the Fenian oath but was to hold them under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act.<sup>(15)</sup> The year 1866 saw, too, the abortive Fenian raid on Canada from the U.S.A.

Laurence Fitzgibbon, Phineas's Irish colleague, and himself not renowned for hard work in government office, does not hold Irish M.P.s in high esteem. "'As to our own men," he says to Phineas on one occasion, "'there are so many of them one can hardly trust.'" (PF i. p.136.) And in mid-Victorian England this was a sentiment which would have been echoed by many. Much of the ill-feeling against Irish politicians stemmed from the actions of John Sadleir who, it has been suggested, provided one of the models for Phineas,<sup>(16)</sup> and his associates. The Times of 1852 reflects the popular feeling: "We have never been great admirers of the collective body of Irish members ... [In London] they have been regarded with an evil eye - not because they were Irishmen, but as the natural consequence of their own words and acts."<sup>(17)</sup> Another writer of the same date did not think highly of



Irish M.P.s: "As silly, as broguey, as useless as ever," a Radical called them after the election of 1852. "Mr. Duffy, Mr. Moore and their little party have two Irish reforms to effect - first to make the Irish Catholic members honest, next to make them respectable."<sup>(18)</sup>

There were three members in particular who did much to bring Irish Catholic members into disrepute: William Keogh, John Sadleir and Edmund O'Flaherty. After the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill had been passed, Keogh and Sadleir set themselves up as the defenders of the Catholic religion and opposed the Bill in the House. The members who were associated with this opposition came to be known as the 'Irish Brigade', or 'The Pope's Brass Band'. Keogh and Sadleir both pledged themselves to the Tenant Righters that they would support no party unless it "comes into power prepared to carry the measures which universal popular Ireland demands",<sup>(19)</sup> and they both swore that they would not accept office in any government. In December 1852, however, Disraeli's ministry was forced to resign and the Liberal ministry was sustained by the Irish members who, instead of pressing their advantage to push through Irish reforms, accepted positions in the government, Sadleir becoming Lord of the Treasury, Keogh Irish Solicitor-General and O'Flaherty Commissioner of Income Tax. Trollope may well have been thinking of this 'betrayal' when he put Phineas into a similar position over the question of Tenant Right, although instead of going against his conscience Phineas preferred to relinquish his government position. It would certainly seem likely that Trollope had this particular period in mind when he was writing the book because of the prominence which he gives to the Tenant Right question, while a brief reference in The Three Clerks (1858) to "the roguery of the Sadleirs and Camerons ... of the present day"<sup>(20)</sup> makes it clear that he was aware of the reputation of this particular Irishman.

The ensuing careers of the three Irish members did little to restore confidence in the Irish M.P.s as a body. O'Flaherty was forced, eventually, to flee the country in order to escape British justice; Keogh, on attaining the bench "came as near as any judge has done to having passed against him the parliamentary addresses which are the legal prerequisite for the removal of a judge;"<sup>(21)</sup> Sadleir was caught up in a scandal involving his brother's bank, and in a number of corrupt elections. It is interesting to note in a report from The Times of 1852 on the activities of Sadleir, that the

corrupt nature of Irish boroughs is taken for granted. The report is entitled, "The Way to Win an Irish Borough": "The subjoined extraordinary proceedings, which came off yesterday in the Queen's Bench Chamber, before Mr. Justice Crampton, present a new phase in the Machinery of Irish elections, and show that 'influence' other than spiritual or territorial can be brought efficiently to bear upon the consciences of voters who presume to call their consciences their own."<sup>(22)</sup> There follows a report of a case in which a man was thrown into gaol on the day of nomination of candidates for the representation of the borough of Carlow for which Sadleir was elected. He had been arrested "under an execution issued upon a bond and judgement passed by the defendant, as he swore, to the plaintiff, not for the purpose of securing a legal debt of any kind, but in the strictest confidence with the view of protecting his property from the Tipperary jointstock Bank [the bank, which eventually failed, belonging to the brother of John Sadleir] which held bills of his to the amount of about 800l or 900l. The defendant further swore that he believed he would not have been arrested had he promised to vote for Mr. Sadleir." / Sadleir was forced to resign his government post after this incident and in 1856, after the failure of the Tipperary Bank, and a scandal involving fraud, he committed suicide on Hampstead Heath.

Certainly, Trollope did not model the events in Phineas Finn on those of 1852, but it must be assumed, although we have no direct evidence of this, that he was well aware of the ill-feeling that they caused as he had only the year before returned to England from Ireland. He knew, as we see in Phineas Finn, of the cause of the Tenant Righters, and it is surely no accident that it is on this subject that Phineas, like Sadleir in 1852, voted against the government.

Trollope, not surprisingly, does not emphasize Phineas's nationality beyond showing that it made for a precarious existence. We are fully aware that Phineas is a visitor to English society and that he may at any moment disappear into Irish obscurity - as he does at the end of the first novel. Trollope undoubtedly sympathised with his hero, sharing as he did many of his problems. The creator like the created was also an 'outsider' in society, struggling to gain a position which neither background nor wealth could give him as a right, and relying purely on his own gifts. Phineas's Irish background could not help him in his career, but the very nature of the political society which he tried to enter also contained its own safeguards against interlopers.

The House of Commons of the mid-1860s when Trollope observed it was a very exclusive club indeed, as F.B. Smith has shown:<sup>(23)</sup>

In the Commons that assembled after the General Election of 1865 there were 37 peers or elder sons of peers, 64 younger sons and 15 grandsons, making a total of 116 members. There were also 71 baronets, 11 elder sons, 19 younger sons and 8 grandsons, giving the baronetage 109, and the peerage and baronetage together, 225 members. In addition, there were 100 commoners in the House who were connected with the peerage by marriage or descent. Thus the aristocratic element in the Commons amounted to at least 326 members or half the House ... At least one member had 30 other sitting members related to him by birth or marriage. In the 1859 House, 31 families had supplied 110 members.

The particular political set to which Phineas becomes attached - typified by Lord Brentford and Lady Laura - is that of the old Whigs, that branch of the Liberal party which "was to replace the rule of the aristocracy."<sup>(24)</sup> The major Whig families were so closely inter-related that they had earned for themselves the name 'Sacred Circle of the Great Grandmotherhood.'<sup>(25)</sup> These families of landed aristocrats were so linked by marriage that, as Thompson says, "they have been likened to tribes. The family interest and family reputation were normally superior to the claims of any individual within it."<sup>(26)</sup>

The extraordinary nature of Phineas's position is immediately apparent. So, too, is the dilemma which Lady Laura finds herself in over conflicting loyalties for Phineas and her brother in the fight for Violet Effingham's hand. Of course, Phineas's acceptance by Lord Brentford as the candidate for 'his' borough is mainly the result of Lady Laura's influence, but had he not exemplified many of the qualities of Liberalism such as manliness<sup>(27)</sup> (to be dealt with below,) he would certainly not have been found suitable.

Trollope's imaginary High Whigs are clearly modelled on those of real life as we see from Phineas's thoughts as he meditates on the advantages to himself of a liaison with Lady Laura:

And then he remembered that Lady Laura was related to almost everybody who was anybody among the high Whigs. She was, he knew, second cousin to Mr. Mildmay, who for years had been the leader of the Whigs, and was third cousin to Barrington Erle. The late President of the council, the Duke of St. Bungay,

and Lord Brentford had married sisters, and the St. Bungay people and the Mildmay people, and the Brentford people had all some sort of connection with the Palliser people, of whom the heir and coming chief, Plantagenet Palliser, would certainly be Chancellor of the Exchequer in the next government. (PF i. pp.46-47.)

There is, however, one very significant reason why Phineas's success is ultimately so substantial in the political world, and in noticing this we see once again Trollope's skill and perception in representing a society in the midst of change. By the middle of the 1860s the Whigs, though still politically important, were beginning to lose some of their power. Their days had probably by this time ended, although this cannot have been apparent to everyone in that society. The days of aristocratic government had been prolonged artificially during Palmerston's administration, as Southgate has noted.<sup>(28)</sup> In 1857 Palmerston had given, for instance, the post of Under-Secretary of War to Sir John Ramsden, then aged 25 - a "wealthy baronet closely related to Fitzwilliam and Zetland and brother-in-law to Chief Secretary Horsman." His career lasted less than a year. "It would not be any exaggeration", continues Southgate, "to say that Palmerston blithely defied the demand for less aristocratic government."<sup>(29)</sup> By the middle of the sixties, however, the break had come, and after Palmerston's death, "the great salons of Lady Palmerston, Lady Molesworth and Lady Waldegrave, with their connections with the great quarterlies, The Morning Post, The Times and the Holland House litterateurs, lost their political centrality."<sup>(30)</sup> Morley, writing of the same period, says: "The great families still held ostensibly the predominance in the Liberal Party which they had earned by their stout and persistent fidelity to parliamentary reform. Their days of leadership, however, were drawing towards an end, though the process has not been rapid."<sup>(31)</sup>

It was the gradual break up of the Great-Grandmotherhood which allowed men of talent like Phineas into the Liberal ranks and which made room for both Mr. Monk and Mr. Bright in the party - and which also, to Lord Brentford's disgust - allowed a man like Quintus Slide to stand for a very old Liberal pocket borough. Although the influence of the great families is still strong in Phineas Finn, there is one ideal which Phineas the Irish outsider embodies and which allows him to penetrate so far into the Whig stronghold. It is something which

even a cursory reading of Trollope's novels and letters will reveal as one of his most admired qualities, and that is the concept of the 'Gentleman', with its predominant trait 'manliness'.

### III

There is a reticence about Trollope which can best be exemplified in his refusal to reveal the personal details of his life in the Autobiography, and the lack of anything remotely akin to the personal - unless the humorous reference to a boil on his forehead is an exception - in his published letters. Phineas, too, does not tell any of his friends in London about his past life in Ireland or of the problems of his financial situation, and even on the one occasion when he is forced to admit to Lady Laura that he is unable to accompany Lord Chiltern abroad because he cannot afford it, he recognises the shame which he thinks this admission will bring him. The horror which he feels when he hears of the help which Lady Glencora and her friends intend to give him in Phineas Finn reflects his reticence and self-reliance which are among the qualities which a perceptive traveller <sup>in</sup> and mid-Victorian England noted as belonging to those of a 'gentleman'. (Hypolyte Taine, writing of the sixties and seventies, lists some of the qualities of the English 'gentleman': "Complete self-mastery, constantly maintained sang-froid, perseverance in adversity, the avoidance of all affectation or swaggering."<sup>(32)</sup> In reality, of course, these qualities formed only part of the unwritten rules governing behaviour in polite society, but that Phineas possessed many of the qualities of the gentleman can be seen from this description of him by Violet Effingham: "'In the first place he is a gentleman,' continued Violet. 'Then he is a man of spirit. And then he has not too much spirit; - not that kind of spirit which makes some men think that they are the finest things going. His manners are perfect; - not Chesterfieldian, and yet never offensive. He never browbeats any one, and never toadies any one. He knows how to live easily with men of all ranks, without any appearance of claiming a special status for himself.'" (PF i. pp.308-309.) Not long after this eulogy Phineas indulges in one of his periodic bouts of self-recrimination. He thinks of himself as an imposter, a cheat, "that he was going about the world under false pretences ... What was his income?" he asks, "What his birth? What his proper station?" Yet he vindicates his position and rises above his background by virtue of his essentially honest and manly behaviour. Laurence Fitzgibbon puts his meteoric rise in society down to luck - which undoubtedly plays a

large part - but he recognises the significance of Phineas's invitation to the 'political gathering' at Loughlinter: "'I don't suppose he [Mr. Kennedy] ever had an Irishman in his house before.'" (PF i. p.137.)

Phineas owes his position entirely to his awareness of how to behave in political and 'drawing room' society. As he himself realises, "Of those who knew him intimately, not one in twenty were aware from whence he came, what was his parentage, or what his means of living." (PF i. p.244.) - yet his easy manners make him a more acceptable companion at Loughlinter to Mr. Palliser and Mr. Monk than either Mr. Bonteen or Mr. Ratler. The 'manner' - that is, the outward bearing - of a character were supremely important to Trollope, and because he observed so accurately and was able to describe the subtleties and nuances of behaviour in polite society they become important to the reader, too. Johnny Eames, in The Small House at Allington, increases immeasurably in stature once he has lost his youthful awkwardness and is able to deal with society in a manly, self-confident way - when in fact he has achieved, un-selfconsciously, the trappings of the gentleman. For Phineas, however, the problem is greater. He is an outsider whose many questions concerning behaviour have to be answered with a conscious effort - and yet, almost paradoxically, his place in political society is achieved because of his natural grace and his fundamental ability always to behave in the 'correct' manner. It is through the dramatisation of his conscious efforts, however, that we are made aware both of the subtleties which operate to exclude the mere social climber from the higher ranks of society, and of the changing nature of that society itself.

In Chapter XIV of Phineas Finn, Phineas is troubled by a question of behaviour which he feels he cannot ask anyone directly about. Should he take his own manservant to Loughlinter with him or rely on the servants there? When he shows his uncertainty in the matter to his travelling companion on the journey he is effectively snubbed: "'It is one of those points', says Phineas, 'as to which a man never quite makes up his mind. If you bring a fellow, you wish you hadn't brought him; and if you don't, you wish you had.' 'I'm a great deal more decided in my ways than that', said Mr. Ratler." (PF i. p.145.) The position which Phineas gains for himself at Loughlinter in the semi-aristocratic political gathering - a position which is higher than either Ratler's or Bonteen's - is not the result of this sort of conscious effort at 'correct' behaviour. We are told that "without any effort on his part, - he had fallen into an easy pleasant way with

these men [Palliser, Gresham and Monk] which was very delightful to him." (PF i. p.156.)

There can be no doubt that Trollope intended his readers to see embodied in Phineas many of the qualities of the simple, unaffected gentleman, and that his success in political life was almost entirely due to these qualities. The traits which, as Trollope might have put it, are generally supposed to belong to a gentleman, were very important to him, perhaps because of his own struggle to achieve the state, and all his heroes possess them. Even Adolphus Crosbie appears gentlemanly, and yet another 'outsider' to London society, Ferdinand Lopez, is regarded, because of his reticence and self-possession, as a gentleman. (The Prime Minister, p.3) But, in describing Lopez, Trollope recognises the complexity inherent in the use of the term. It is possible, Trollope implies, to present to the world all the characteristics of the gentleman and be accepted as such, and yet finally fail, as Lopez does, because the qualities are assumed. It is the basis of all Phineas's success that the qualities which he presents to the world are a real part of his nature and Trollope clearly intended that his readers should be fully aware of this.

It has been noted that it is when Phineas is least conscious of his personal qualities that he is most successful. One characteristic which Trollope's villains never possess, even when they show all the external trappings of the gentleman, is that of the Victorian ideal of 'manliness'. This was an ideal which clearly appealed to Trollope and we see it stated in various forms throughout his works but particularly in his letters and Autobiography. It is characterised by a certain bluff and rather aggressive honesty, by a tendency to see moral problems in terms of black and white, and by a "stiff upper lip" attitude which entails, among other things, keeping one's feelings to oneself. Leslie Stephen, writing of Macaulay, captures this attitude: "...his combativeness is allied to a genuine love of fair play. When he hates a man, he calls him knave or fool with unflinching frankness, but he never uses a base weapon.... His patriotism may be narrow, but it implies faith in the really good qualities, the manliness, the spirit of justice, and the strong moral sense of his country." (33)

In Phineas these qualities are considerably toned down by his sensitivity; he lacks the self-confidence to present this bluff exterior to the world. But the basic qualities are there. Taine noticed this necessity for manliness in the English character and, taking his examples from the

jokes in Punch, he noted that one should never cry or show any signs of weakness. "The English custom of reserve leads to a kind of stoicism. There is no confiding, no letting go, even with one's nearest and dearest. In a family which has just lost a near relation, a father or a son, there is never an outburst of grief, no noisy crying or loud mourning."<sup>(34)</sup> No doubt many of these attitudes sprang from the cult of 'muscular Christianity', so well exemplified, as Walter E. Houghton has demonstrated, by Charles Kingsley who preached "a healthful and manly Christianity, one which does not exalt the feminine virtues to the exclusion of the masculine"<sup>(35)</sup> and made popular by Thomas Hughes in Tom Brown's Schooldays (1856): "After all, what would life be without fighting, I should like to know? From the cradle to the grave, fighting, rightly understood, is the business, the real, highest, honestest business of every son of man."<sup>(36)</sup>

It is during the scenes of Phineas's trial for murder that Trollope, with his acute perception of manners in society, analyses in some detail this trait of manliness. Phineas stands stiffly in the dock during the trial, and, to the admiration of all his friends, he displays little of the emotion which we know is cowing him mentally. Only after the trial does he show just how much of a strain it has been, and he is reluctant to go on living as if nothing had happened, to show, in fact, just that quality of stoicism which Taine thought so necessary to the character of the English gentleman. Lord Chiltern is almost driven to call Phineas womanly for being so subdued by his experiences, but Trollope himself is very much aware of the subtleties of the situation, aware that 'manliness' can exist in other forms than that of Tom Brown - or Chiltern himself: "The Master of the Brake hounds himself was a man less gifted than Phineas Finn, and therefore hardly capable of understanding the exaggerated feelings of the man who had recently been tried for his life." (PR ii. p.301.) His old friends Mr. and Mrs. Low also think that Phineas is showing weakness, Mrs. Low putting it quite bluntly to her husband: "'I thought he would have been more manly.'" Trollope, however, thinks decidedly otherwise, and nowhere do we see his acute sense of the intricacies of Victorian social behaviour better exemplified than in this defence of Phineas's manliness:

The property of manliness in a man is a great possession, but perhaps there is none that is less understood, - which is more generally accorded where it does not exist, or more frequently



disallowed where it prevails. There are not many who ever make up their minds as to what constitutes manliness, or even inquire within themselves upon the subject. The woman's error, occasioned by her natural desire for a master, leads her to look for a certain outward magnificance of demeanour, a pretended indifference to stings and little torments, a would-be superiority to the bread-and-butter side of life, an unreal assumption of personal grandeur. ... A composure of the eye, which has been studied, a reticence as to the little things of life, a certain slowness of speech unless the occasion calls for passion, an indifference to small surroundings, these, - joined, of course, with personal bravery, - are supposed to constitute manliness. That personal bravery is required in the composition of manliness must be conceded, though of all the ingredients needed, it is the lowest in value. But the first requirement of all must be described by a negative. Manliness is not compatible with affectation. ... An affected man ... may be honest, may be generous, may be pious; - but surely he cannot be manly. ... Before the man can be manly, the gifts which make him so must be there, collected by him slowly, unconsciously, as are his bones, his flesh, and his blood. (PR ii. pp.302-3.)

This is indeed an altogether more subtle definition of 'manliness' than one might expect from a Victorian writer, very much at variance with Kingsley's ideas as expressed, as Houghton has shown, in his 'Thoughts on Shelley and Byron'. "Shelley's nature", wrote Kingsley, "is utterly womanish", while Byron was a "sturdy peer proud of his bull neck and his boxing, who kept bears and bull-dogs, drilled Greek ruffians at Missolonghi, and had no objection to a pot of beer"; and who might, if he had reformed, have made a gallant English gentleman."<sup>(37)</sup> Phineas's nature is sensitive, but, Trollope would maintain, not womanly. The concept of manliness, however difficult to define, could still be regarded as part of a rule of behaviour and one which Phineas, however unwillingly, always follows. After his trial he is reluctant to return to the House of Commons. "If a man's grandmother dies he is held to be exempted," he says to Mr. Monk. "But your grandmother has not died and your sorrow is not of the kind that requires or is supposed to require retirement." Monk replies. (PR ii. p.353.) The operative word here is 'supposed': the rule exists, and despite Phineas's

genuine horror of exposing himself to the congratulations of the House he finally agrees to play the manly role and return there with Monk.

For Phineas, as we have already seen, the problem of following the delicate path of 'correct' behaviour, despite his inherent qualities, was even more acute than for many of Trollope's other characters. Apart from his nationality and parentage, which provided potential barriers to his entry to the higher reaches of polite society, his lack of any substantial income might well have caused much of the mud which Quintus Slide and his allies threw to stick. As Norman Gash wrote of the politics of the 1830s, describing a situation which had changed little by the 1860s: "In an age which was still sensitive to the cry of 'placeman' and 'pensioner', the politician who had only his official salary to live on was in an uncomfortable position. In fact there was widespread agreement that no man could pursue a political career with integrity unless he had a competence of his own."<sup>(38)</sup> Disraeli, we know, felt obliged to marry money in order to maintain his political standing, so although Phineas's delicacy forbade his allowing Violet Effingham's fortune too much weight in his decision to fall in love with her, his recognition of the possible interpretation which might have been put upon his decision to support Mr. Gresham and his happy and useful alliance with the Brentford family, forced on him the need to behave in all things in an exemplary fashion. As it was, there were many people hostile to Phineas who assumed that he only followed Gresham in the hope of being rewarded with a government sinecure.

It is perhaps for reasons such as these that Phineas considers so consciously the 'right' course to take when he decides, in the chapter significantly titled "Was he Honest?", to propose to Violet. Here he relies not, as usual, on his natural instincts to tell him what is right but consciously considers what the unwritten code of gentlemanly behaviour requires of him. In this case, however, it is rather the letter than the spirit of the code which he follows when he leaves London for Saulsby, where Violet is staying, on the weakest of excuses in order to propose to Violet while Lord Chiltern is away. Phineas senses that his actions are 'cheap', but tries to reconcile his conscience with his actions by saying, weakly, "In love and war all things are fair." (PF i. p.392.) Then, in order, as he thinks, to avoid the charge of 'falseness' which he believes Chiltern will bring against him if he proposes to Violet, Phineas writes him a letter in

which he tells him the truth. "In no other way could he carry out his project and satisfy his own idea of what was honest." (PF i. p.392.) Lord Chiltern's apparently irrational rage after he has learnt of Phineas's actions draw our sympathies, while the question of Phineas's honesty is by no means answered unambiguously. Trollope has so far imbued the novel with a standard by which we can judge what is correct behaviour for men and women of Phineas's class that we are unable to accept completely Phineas's protestations to Lord Chiltern when finally they meet. "I have done nothing unworthy," (he says - and yet in the scene describing "The Rough Encounter" it is Lord Chiltern, with all his impetuous irrationality, who emerges as the finer figure of the two. In one sense, of course, we are being presented with two rather different views of manliness, and they are not mutually exclusive. The encounter ends in a manner which would have appealed to Kingsley, but which poses yet another vexing question of behaviour for Phineas to face: "What I require of you", [says Lord Chiltern] 'is that you shall meet me. Will you do that?' 'You mean, - to fight?' 'Yes, - to fight; to fight; to fight. For what other purpose do you suppose that I can wish to meet you?'" (PF i. p.429.) Two objections immediately occur to Phineas: first, that duelling would make him appear foolish, and second, that a duel between him and Lord Brentford's son would separate him from those he loved and would effectively foil his political ambitions. Within the social framework of mid-Victorian England depicted in the novel, the problem for Phineas - so delicately balanced on the tightrope of respectability as he is - becomes critical. On the one hand the code of behaviour had to be followed, and duelling had for centuries been the prerogative of the gentleman; on the other, he had at all costs to retain his position in society without appearing foolish. Because the rules of behaviour were perforce unwritten, they were constantly changing and it would have been impossible at any one time to have codified them. Was it then incumbent upon him to fight Lord Chiltern, or could he honourably withdraw? Certainly, as Trollope says, "Few Englishmen fight duels in these days. They who do so are always reckoned to be fools." (PF i. p.429.) Trollope rather understates the position, relying, no doubt, on his readers' knowledge to appreciate the concept of a duel taking place between two English gentlemen in 1867. It is, however, a decision which Phineas has to take consciously without relying on his natural instincts. Duels were

an absolute rarity by the time of Phineas Finn. Writing even about 1846 Herbert Paul was able to state that "duelling in England had practically ceased,"<sup>(39)</sup> and by 1852 a duel between two men could be reported in The Times in a vein of pure satire: "Colonel Romilly and the Hon. G. Smythe have contrived to entertain the town at a moment when entertainment was much needed."<sup>(40)</sup> By 1865 the only duels mentioned in this newspaper took place in Belgium or France and did not involve Englishmen.<sup>(41)</sup> As W.L. Burn has stated, "with the end of duelling the concept of the English gentleman began to change", more weight now being given to virtue, education and a sense of social obligation.<sup>(42)</sup> We have already seen this changed ideal of the 'gentleman' exemplified in Phineas, and also in such characters as the 'new' Duke of Omnium.

However, it is not any consideration of the absurdity of the situation which finally forces Phineas to accept the duel as a necessity. Initially, it is a sense on his part that he has, perhaps, been less than honest with Lord Chiltern. The latter's charges had been after all that Phineas had been "'false to me, - damnably false,'" - and Phineas partially accepts this. Thus, when Laurence Fitzgibbon shows his surprise at the revelation of an impending duel, and himself sees no way of avoiding it, Phineas rationalises it into an acceptable form. "By this time Phineas had come to think that the duel was in very truth the best way out of the difficulty. It was a bad way out, but then it was a way, - and he could not see any other." (PF i. p.435.) So Phineas, the natural but sensitive 'gentleman' of the new school, is ironically forced to play the slightly outmoded 'Tom Brown' role of aggressive manliness.

*Is this a sign of duelling?*

We can see from Trollope's treatment of his chief character that his main interest lies in man as a social animal. His analysis of character is not deep but his view of society is very clear. He deals, therefore, not with the more heroic of man's actions but with those that allow a man to live without disgrace in the eyes of his peers. Phineas's manliness is not, Trollope insists, an outstanding characteristic; nevertheless we are fully aware, because we see the pressures of society, of the difficulties of behaving in an acceptable way and of being honest with oneself. It is this basic honesty - or at least desire to be honest - that we see exemplified in the 'heroic' characters in the two novels: Phineas himself, Monk and Palliser. These heroes are rarely men of excessively high ideals - though

Palliser is, perhaps, an exception - but they strive merely to do what, in their own way, they believe to be right.

One of Trollope's great achievements in Phineas Finn is his presentation of a complex society governed by, controlled, and to a degree kept stable, by a host of unwritten rules. The problems which women faced in this society were probably greater than Phineas's, and through Trollope's detailed observation of this restrictive society we meet characters of great sensibility who either cope triumphantly with the system - like Lady Glencora, and of course Phineas himself - or are smothered by it like Lady Laura. Phineas, we feel, never has to face quite the moral dilemmas which confront Lady Laura; most of his problems resolve themselves without too much activity on his part. We see the problems which are inherent in society through the character of Phineas, but it is a society founded and sustained by men and consequently Phineas is never forced to suffer. Our understanding of the world of Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux is immeasurably increased when we look at that society from the stand point of the women in the novels, for it is then that we see it in its full complexity and its cruelty.

#### IV

We are told in the Autobiography of the importance which Trollope placed on character in his novels at the expense of plot: The novelist, he writes; "...desires to make his readers so intimately acquainted with his characters that the creatures of his brain should be to them speaking, moving, living, human creatures. This he can never do unless he know these fictitious personages himself, and he can never know them unless he can live with them in the full reality of established intimacy."<sup>(43)</sup> There can be no doubt that Trollope's ability to create living people in his novels and to capture the nuances of speech, both external and internal,<sup>(44)</sup> was great. One of Trollope's motives for writing novels, which he also explains in the Autobiography, was didactic<sup>(45)</sup>; his stories of love were in part intended to provide a fairly safe set of experiences-at-a-distance for the cloistered young ladies who read his books within the shelter of their homes,<sup>(46)</sup> and perhaps because of this his female characters are among the best remembered, as they were an important ingredient in Trollope's novelistic recipe for success. But the mid-nineteenth century was a period of historical and social change, and the established role of women within society, so long the unquestioned subject of preconceptions was,

like the teachings of the Church, beginning to be questioned, by Mill and others. We find reflected in Trollope's novels, then, not only the traditional conceptions of women - particularly those of the middle-class - but also a new element which is the result of the subtle changes which were taking place beneath the surface of Victorian society.

A reading of Trollope's novels will give a fairly well-defined picture of the role which Victorian society expected its women to play. With this aspect of the representation of contemporary life, as with many others, we can agree with most commentators that Trollope was "the supremely faithful mirror of the Victorian age."<sup>(47)</sup> It is not surprising that his view was, perhaps, rose-coloured and partial, for it was a view which he shared with most of his middle-class contemporaries, but it nevertheless took into account many of the problems which beset women at this time with an honesty which we would not find in, for instance, Dickens.

It is with the subject of marriage that the problems of the mid-Victorian woman began. Despite the example of such early feminists as Florence Nightingale, marriage was still, by the 1860s, regarded as the only true ambition for a woman, being as Mill wrote in 1869: "...the destination appointed by society for women, the prospect they are brought up to, and the object which it is intended should be sought by all of them, except those who are too little attractive to be chosen by any man as his companion."<sup>(48)</sup> This position is accepted by all of Trollope's heroines including Lady Laura, who, like George Eliot's Dorothea, has ideals beyond (those of) her potential husband's. But the 'typical' Trollopien heroine follows this path quite happily and would have scorned the objections of Mill had she come across his work. And yet it was because marriage was of such fundamental importance to a girl, and indeed to society as a whole, that the problems associated with it could be so intense. Firstly, of course, a woman had no rights in marriage, this classic statement of the position, written in 1765, being exactly what Mill was opposing in the 1860s: "'By marriage ... the very being or legal existence of a woman is suspended, or at least it is incorporated or consolidated into that of the husband, under whose wing, protection and cover she performs everything, and she is therefore called in our law a femme covert."<sup>(49)</sup> Unless some sort of settlement had been made before marriage, which would remove the control of an inheritance from the hands of a husband without placing it in those of the wife, a woman had no control over her money, property

or even her children. As W.L. Burn has shown, the family unit, upon which the Victorians placed so much emphasis, was hierarchical.<sup>(50)</sup>

The wife had to submit herself to her husband in much the same way that the servants or children did, and although there were undoubtedly exceptions to the rule, where the wife like Mrs. Proudie was dominant, the husband had the full protection of the law to support his conjugal rights. There was little a wife could do if she were unhappy with her situation or, indeed, if she were badly treated by her husband. The easiest way out of marriage, as described by Burn, was not one likely to commend itself to such a person as Lady Laura Kennedy: "As drink was said to be the shortest way out of Manchester, so the chemist's shop may have been the shortest way out of some unhappy marriages and the Arsenic Act a necessary piece of legislation."<sup>(51)</sup>

The situation in extreme cases of some married women was bad; and for many unmarried women of the middle-class it could be a good deal worse. A woman was commonly regarded as being the daughter or the brother or the husband of some man, but it is small wonder that the "sisters and daughters of England" should wish to alter their titles as soon as possible. As Constance Rover in her book on the Women's Suffrage movement has shown, the plight of many unmarried middle-class women could be desperate.<sup>(52)</sup> If they left or lost the protection of home there were few occupations to which they could turn their hands to earn a living. A young lady could, like a new class of fictional heroines who appeared in the middle of the century, become a governess, or she could take to seamstresship, or, in exceptional cases, authorship. Certainly, unless she wished to risk social ostracism and ridicule and take up women's rights, she had no independence within the rigid middle-class social system, her only hope of achieving anything being, as both Lady Laura and Violet Effingham realise, through a husband. If a woman, like Madame Max Goesler, had money of her own, she could conceivably maintain an independent position, but she risked, like Aspasia Fitzgibbon in Phineas Finn, being the subject of ridicule. Marriage, as even the feminists agreed, was better than a career,<sup>(53)</sup> but, as the 1851 census showed, with 42% of women of marriagable age being spinsters,<sup>(54)</sup> it was not a goal easily obtained.

It is not difficult to see how this state of affairs gave considerable importance to what Trollope self-effacingly called "the love interest" of his novels. Where the whole social structure of society and the maintenance of property rests on the institution of marriage, the relatively simple act of falling in love and marrying

takes on, as we know from many of Trollope's novels, all the aspects of a commercial transaction. The buying and selling in the ballrooms and drawing-rooms of fashionable London were undoubtedly every bit as important as the transactions which took place in the City, and it became usual to "play the marriage market during the five or six months of the London season between January and July."<sup>(55)</sup> The helpful suggestion of an aunt which Lord Monson urged on his son in 1850 finds a clear echo in the de Courcy family's advice to Frank Gresham in Doctor Thorne (1858). The aunt, wrote Lord Monson, "I would like to see you married to a nice girl with a good fortune ... and she says Miss Clara Thornhill who is about just coming out promised to be a very nice girl and has nine thousand a year (that would do, eh!)"<sup>(56)</sup>

Trollope, as we might expect, accepts most of the conventions of his time about women, although as I shall show, in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux he is very much aware of the problems which these conventions forced upon his characters. His comments on women which we find throughout his work form, as David Aitken has noticed, "a coherent argument, as elaborate and arbitrary as those of any of his contemporaries."<sup>(57)</sup> Trollope accepted, for instance, that it was the woman's role in life to marry. In a letter written in 1862 to his American friend Kate Field he wrote, "I had some talk with Eliot about you. 'Let her marry a husband,' said he. 'It is the best career for a woman.' I agreed with him - and therefore bid you in his name as well as my own, to go & marry a husband."<sup>(58)</sup> His position is made clearer in another letter written in 1879 to Adrian H. Joline where he demonstrates his fundamental acceptance of the convention: "You cannot, by Act of Congress or Parliament make the woman's arm as strong as the man's or deprive her of her position as the bearer of children. We may trouble ourselves much by debating a question which superior power has settled for us, but we cannot alter the law. ... The necessity of the supremacy of man is as certain to me as the eternity of the soul."<sup>(59)</sup>

The 'typical' Trollopian heroine follows a pattern of behaviour which in its most extreme form we find epitomised in Lily Dale in The Small House at Allington (1864) and The Last Chronicle of Barset, (1867). Her constancy to her first love, even when Crosbie her lover has shown himself to be false, finds an echo in many other novels. Alice Vavasour in Can You Forgive Her? (1864) is made of similar, if weaker, stuff, while the pride and obstinacy which both these girls display is shared



by Lucy Robarts (Framley Parsonage, 1861) and Grace Crawley in The Last Chronicle of Barset. They are usually not outstandingly beautiful, though like Grace Crawley, they radiate a quality which becomes apparent to the discerning gentleman. Their pride in their loves is balanced by a humility which becomes almost pathological when it is hinted that their marriages might bring disgrace on their husbands or even ruin them. Like Lucy Robarts or Kate Woodward in The Three Clerks (1858) they will sometimes be prepared to sacrifice themselves and deny their emotions in a manner which Mario Praz considers comes close to the masochistic.<sup>(60)</sup> Perhaps the dominant trait of the traditional Trollopian heroine is her submissiveness, although this is hardly an apt description of the major female characters in the Phineas novels. But, as Mario Praz puts it, "They are all proud, these young women, and later become mild as doves, as soon as they are vanquished and won."<sup>(61)</sup> Trollope gives us a more explicit indication of his ideal girl in the Autobiography: "a girl will be loved as she is pure, and sweet, and unselfish."<sup>(62)</sup> Trollope's heroines usually fall in love only once, and their determination not to be shaken from this love, despite external pressures, either has disastrous results, as with Lily Dale or Emily Wharton in The Prime Ministers, or wins them their just reward as in the case of Lady Mary Palliser in The Duke's Children. It is also necessary for Trollope's heroines not only to love their husbands - or future husbands, for there are very few studies in the pages of his novels of young married life - but to worship them. It is for this reason that Lily Dale is unable to love John Eames in the way that he requires, having presumably spent her capacity for hero-worship on the worthless Adolphus Crosbie.

Trollope, then, accepts and endorses the Victorian convention of the submissive wife. He would, no doubt, have accepted Mill's words on the subject: "She can do no act whatever but by his permission, at least tacit. She can acquire no property but for him; the instant it becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it becomes ipso facto his."<sup>(63)</sup> But while Mill saw only the tyranny that this could produce, Trollope took the meliorist view that the tendency of the situation was towards the good and that in a marriage in which two good people loved each other the man's superiority was right and natural. Of course, he suggests, all was not perfect, but in an imperfect world the system worked, on the whole, very well.

Yet in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux Trollope represented a number of female characters who do not quite fit into the Lily Dale/Grace Crawley mould of submissiveness. Lady Laura, Violet Effingham and Madame Max are far more independent, initially, than the traditional Trollopian heroine; they are more intelligent and ambitious and they have wide social and political interests. Only the faintly insipid Mary Flood Jones corresponds to the Trollopian 'ideal' and she is by no means a major figure in the novel.

Of all the women in the novels, Mary's background comes closest to matching those of the 'typical' heroines. Lily Dale and the Woodward girls live quiet, domestic and sheltered lives with their mothers, and even Mary Thorne, Doctor Thorne's 'niece', lives a parochial and innocent existence, despite her contact with the Gresham family and their very practical views on marriage and property. Mary Flood Jones lives placidly with her mother, a widow, and thinks as little of herself as the most conventional of Trollope's girls. Trollope's first description of her is almost a parody of many other similar descriptions: "Mary Flood Jones was a little girl about twenty years of age, with the softest hair in the world, of a colour varying between brown and auburn, - for sometimes you would swear it was the one and sometimes the other; and she was as pretty as ever she could be." (PF i. p.22.) In outward appearance, therefore, she must have been rather similar to Grace Crawley: "There were those who said that, in spite of her poverty, her shabby outward apparel, and a certain, unfledged, unrounded form of person, a want of fulness in the lines of her figure, she was the prettiest girl in that part of the world." (The Last Chronicle of Barset, 1867, Penguin Ed. p.36) Mary also displays some of the characteristics of the 'little' heroines, in particular their humility, devotion and patience. At her first appearance in the book she is claiming, perhaps a trifle ironically, that she is now too much below Phineas for there to be any attachment between them: "'There has never been anything between me and Phineas, - your brother I mean,'" she says to Phineas's sister. "'And I feel quite sure there never will be. Why should there? He'll go out among great people and be a great man; ... A man in parliament, you know, may look up to anybody,' said Miss Mary Flood Jones. 'I want Phin to look up to you, my dear.' 'That wouldn't be looking up. Placed as he is now, that would be looking down; and he is so proud that he'll never do that.'" (PF i. p.22.)

Later in the novel she admits to herself that she is quite prepared to wait for Phineas, "Oh, for ever, if he would only ask her," and in the end she receives her reward for her patience when Phineas finally admits defeat in the 'other', more exciting world of London society. This ending is unconvincing, and Trollope himself admitted that he was wrong "to marry him to a simple pretty Irish girl, who could only be felt an encumbrance on such return."<sup>(64)</sup> If Mary had been given a more prominent place in the book and been more fully developed as a character the ending might have been more acceptable, but as it is she is so insubstantial a character and has so little interest for us that she is utterly incapable of competing with Violet Effingham or Madame Max for our sympathies. We recognise her, in fact, only through her predecessors who had been more fully drawn in earlier books.

Whilst Mary Flood Jones could have made an unobtrusive appearance in any of Trollope's novels, Lady Laura Brentford is a real and living figure of the 1860s and is utterly individual. Through her Trollope shows that he was acutely aware of the difficulties which faced young, intelligent women of a certain class when they came into conflict with the conventions of the age. But it is not as a result of this that she ruins her life; as Trollope demonstrates, her tragedy, though partly the result of circumstances, is primarily self-inflicted.

It is useful to bear in mind that at the time that Trollope was writing Phineas Finn the women's suffrage movement was making greater headway in England than it had ever done before. In his election address of 1865 John Stuart Mill included the statement that he favoured votes for women,<sup>(65)</sup> while a year later, during the Reform debate of 1866, Disraeli, who in this as in most other areas was hardly likely to appeal to Trollope, said the following:

I say that in a country governed by a woman - where you allow women to form part of the other estate of the realm - peeresses in their own right for example - where you allow a woman not only to hold land but to be a lady of the manor and hold legal courts - where a woman by law may be a churchwarden and overseer of the poor - I do not see, when she has so much to do with the state and Church, on what reasoning, if you come to right, she has no right to vote.<sup>(66)</sup>

But whereas the country was beginning to recognise the political potential of women, the female characters in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux show no interest at all in women's rights. The two references

to Mill in Phineas Finn, for example, are intended simply to ridicule the movement. (67)

Lady Laura, however, has intense political interests - she is, after all, a member of one of the great Whig families and has strong ties with many of the leading politicians of her day. She is able, without having to take up women's rights, to play an active part in politics behind the scenes, and even, as Phineas regretfully suspects, to have a hand in the selection of candidates for election. Her virtual independence, when Phineas first meets her, is assured because of her position in her father's household: "The point in Lord Brentford's character which had more than any other struck our hero, was the unlimited confidence which he seemed to place in his daughter. Lady Laura seemed to have perfect power of doing what she pleased. She was much more mistress of herself than if she had been the wife instead of the daughter of the Earl of Brentford, - and she seemed to be quite as much mistress of the house." (PF i. pp.38-39.) She has, then, a great deal more independence, within the restrictions of the conventions of society, than many young ladies of her class and time, while her political interests, which had they been carried to extremes might have attracted some censure, were natural enough for a woman in her position. (68)

She is poles apart from the (typical) Trollopian heroine as we see from the first description of her: "She was ... about five feet seven in height, and she carried her height well. There was something of nobility in her gait, and she seemed thus to be taller than her inches. Her hair was in truth red, - of a deep thorough redness ... Her face was fair, though it lacked that softness which we all love in women." (PF i. p.39.) If this description seems to imply a lack of femininity, it is reinforced a page later where it is stated that she "would lean forward when sitting, as a man does...", and later still one of the causes of her dissatisfaction with her life is made clear: "'I envy you men your clubs' [she says to Phineas] 'more than I do the House; - though I feel that a woman's life is only half a life, as she cannot have a seat in parliament.'" (PF i. p.70.) She does not advocate women's rights, however, and her position is made clear in Chapter 10: "It was her ambition to be brought as near to political action as was possible for a woman without surrendering any of the privileges of feminine inaction. That women should ever wish to have votes at parliamentary elections was to her abominable, and the cause of the Rights of Women generally was odious to her; but, nevertheless, for

herself, she delighted in hoping that she too might be useful, - in thinking that she too was perhaps, in some degree politically powerful." (PF i. p.108.) Her hopes are not, however, realised. Her brief period as mistress of Lord Brentford's household must come to an end, as she herself realises, and she must follow the convention of the time and marry - that is if she wishes to maintain some effective position in the world. Like Dorothea in Middlemarch, (1872) who possesses many of Lady Laura's characteristics, she realises that there is only one way to achieve the potential that she feels is within her. "'And yet what can a woman become if she remain single?'" she asks <sup>Violet</sup> after her marriage to Mr. Kennedy, adding in her new-found bitterness, "'The curse is to be a woman at all.'" (PF ii. p.143.) She marries because she must; she marries Mr. Kennedy because she has lent her money to her brother and cannot afford to marry the impecunious Phineas. It is in this, as far as Trollope is concerned, that her great sin lies: in marrying one man while she is in love with another and thereby subduing her nature - and she is a passionate woman, as we notice particularly in Phineas Redux. Her 'tragic misery' is the result, as Trollope says, of "the sale she made of herself in her wretched marriage."<sup>(69)</sup> "'I tried to blaze into power by a marriage and I failed, - because I was a woman...'" she says in Phineas Redux (i. p.127.) but her failure did not lie only in the fact of her being a woman: Lady Glencora had managed to "blaze into power" because she knew how to manage a man; Lady Laura was too unbending, too like a man herself to be able to do the same. There is an interesting passage in one of Carlyle's letters to Jane Welsh in which he puts forward the conventional view of a man's position in a marriage, a view which is strikingly close to Mr. Kennedy's:

I must not and I cannot live in a house of which I am not head. ... It is the nature of a man that if he be controlled by anything but his own reason, he feels himself degraded, and incited, be it justly or not, to rebellion and discord. It is the nature of a woman again (for she is essentially passive not active) to cling to the man for support and direction ...; to reverence while she loves him, to conquer him not by her force but by her weakness, and perhaps (the cunning gypsy!) after all to command him by obeying him.<sup>(70)</sup>

Have we  
[?] been?

Mr. Kennedy also wants "maistrie" in marriage, but his ways are drier even than Carlyle's and a woman's weakness was hardly likely to conquer him. Lady Laura wants "to meddle with politics, to discuss reform bills, to assist in putting up Mr. This and in putting down my Lord That", and so, realising that she is more intelligent than her husband, she tries to lead him - "and found that he was as stiff-necked as an ox." ( )

Since most of the women in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux play strong parts in the political life of the day the machinations which go on in the drawing rooms reflect and comment upon those that take place in the corridors of the House of Commons or the clubs. But the women who survive in this area of social life are those who recognise that they must play a woman's part in the a man's world, like Lady Glencora or Madame Max Goesler. Lady Laura does not, and in trying to "use the world as men use it, and not as women do" Trollope clearly intends to show us that she is in the wrong. Obviously Lady Laura's masculine interest in politics is of a different order from the other women's interests in the novels, and to some extent she is representative of a whole new breed of 'political' women who were to find part of their fulfilment in the suffragette movement. Trollope would not have been sympathetic to this movement, but further, Lady Laura is shown to be wrong in the world to which she belongs because she requires not only the power of the men but also the privileges of the women. His attitude, however, to the problem of women's role within the conventions of middle-class society is ambivalent. He is fully aware of the disastrous consequences for a woman who is conscious of her position and responsibilities within society of an unhappy marriage. Lady Laura is trapped and can only escape by fleeing the country while Kennedy is left in full possession of her fortune with the law and the sympathies of many people on his side. Trollope would not have agreed with Mill, though, that this situation was justification for a change in the law. In his representation, both Lady Laura and Mr. Kennedy are at fault. He had no sympathy with extreme opinion where religion was concerned - and he has none for Kennedy's unbending puritanical approach to marriage. But the distress which Lady Laura suffers is of her own creation, for she has married without love. This, as W.R. Greg wrote, was "a sin against delicacy - against purity even - against justice, against kindness against truth. ... It makes the whole of life a weary, difficult, degrading, unrewarded lie. ... For woman, in very truth, this is the sin

against the Holy Ghost - 'the sin unto death' - the sin which casts a terrible darkness over both worlds."<sup>(71)</sup> Lady Laura tries, in her marriage, to usurp the position of a man without entirely foregoing her privileges as a woman and she expects to be able to subdue her passionate and sensuous nature, as men conventionally are able to in Trollope. She thus adds to her misery by failing to know herself. Further, in not submitting to her husband, in attempting to play the man's part, she compounds her sin. In Trollope's universe, when the traditional roles are reversed and the social conventions are broken, chaos ensues. We see this particularly with Mrs. Proudie's usurpation of the Bishop's role, while Trevelyan in He Knew He Was Right (1869) like Kennedy in Phineas Redux is driven mad by a contemplation of his wife's disobedience. Trollope, like Carlyle, knew how a woman should live in her marriage. If she were going to control she should do it cunningly without force, like Mrs. Grantly, who operates on the Archdeacon's will in the privacy of the bedroom, or Lady Glencora, who is easily able to charm her husband into giving her her own way. *Don't mention!*

In many respects Lady Glencora's early life parallels Lady Laura's. She begins her adult career as a potential casualty of society's rigid views on marriage and is forced into a contract which will unite her enormous wealth with that of the heir to the foremost dukedom in England. Initially she had fought hard against the contract but she finally capitulates entirely when she gets to understand Palliser better and to realise that he is capable of great affection. In accepting the forceful advice of her elders and in rejecting the purely romantic attachment to Burgo Fitzgerald she submits to the practicalities of life; and the result, as so often in Trollope's world, is a resounding success. Had she been wilful and married the man she thought she was in love with, like Emily Wharton in The Prime Minister, one suspects that the result would have been equally disastrous. Trollope, in his treatment of Lady Glencora, is not departing from the criticism which he made of Lady Laura for marrying without love. In the Autobiography he says that Lady Glencora "had received a great wrong, - having been made when little more than a child, to marry a man for whom she cared nothing; - when, moreover, though she was little more than a child, her love had been given elsewhere."<sup>(72)</sup> Lady Glencora's saving quality is that these "heavy troubles ... did not overcome her."<sup>(73)</sup> In other words she was stronger in character than Lady Laura and in submitting to her husband *Don't (S) say?*

she came to love him. One great irony in the parallel between Lady Laura and Lady Glencora is that whereas Lady Glencora initially has no great interest in politics she eventually creates for herself a strong, and sometimes dangerous influence on the political life of the day; while Lady Laura, whose interest is much stronger, is expected by her husband to take a course in improving reading and to busy herself with the household accounts. Although it would probably be incorrect to credit Trollope with a consistent plan in his representation of the marriage of Lady Glencora, it does at any rate provide the vindication of the 'system'. He is saying, in effect, it is possible for two people to marry without love as they will come close to each other on a basis of mutual understanding and trust. Love will come later. It is not a romantic view but a practical one in those days of marriage markets and when the alternative, abhorrent to Trollope, was a race of 'liberated' blue-stockings.

As Polhemus has said, "The outstanding parallel in the novel [Phineas Finn] is of course between the political world and the feminine world of Society."<sup>(74)</sup> The parallel is most fully worked out in the case of Madame Max Goesler; Lady Glencora, however, exists at that point at which politics and 'Society' come together and she provides us with the example of a woman who, to use Philip Guedalla's words, plays "a woman's part in politics."<sup>(75)</sup> Mr. Guedalla has given us two instances of women who, like Lady Glencora, played the only parts that intelligent and active women of the 1850s and 1860s could. Lady Palmerston, and to a certain extent Mrs. Gladstone, influenced the political scene from the shelter of their husbands' households, and Lady Palmerston's parties, which Lady Glencora seems so intent on imitating, had a great effect on the political activity of her day.

Lady Glencora's position at the centre of the political and social world [both] reinforces our impression of the inter-relationship of politics and society but it also helps us to our views of the nature of political activity as seen by Trollope. It is impossible to view politics with too serious an eye when we see Lady Glencora echoing the more ponderous activities of her husband and his colleagues in a domestic environment. Just as Trollope's ironic description of a cabinet meeting (PF Chapter 29) had removed from it all airs of dignity, so Glencora's meddling in the appointment of Mr. Bonteen as Chancellor of the Exchequer, which results in his being relegated to the Board of Trade, shows just how lacking in dignity politics is for those most directly involved in it. The real indictment of the system lies in



the fact that the Duchess, as she now is, decides to act against Mr. Bonteen for purely personal and very trivial motives. She is upset because Mr. Bonteen has suggested to her husband that Phineas Finn, whom she barely knows, is not worthy of promotion, so she swears that she is not "going to be beaten by Mr. Bonteen." Consequently, in order to gain some measure of promotion for Phineas she succeeds in making many of the Liberal elder statesmen think very poorly of Mr. Bonteen, although they have not one shred of evidence for their beliefs. Finally, at dinner in Matching Priory, the Duchess singles out Mr. Bonteen "for her special attention, and in the presence of all who were there assembled he made himself an ass." (PR i. p.432.) And so the Duchess of Omnium, who does not even possess the vote, helps to re-form the ministry. We begin to see that the intrigues and machinations which take place in the men's world of politics are frequently based on the same whimsical or prejudiced motives which govern the Duchess's matchmaking or her attempts to 'bring on' political aspirants. There is more truth than we at first realise in Trollope's sardonic comment in Phineas Redux that "no old Ministry could be turned out and no new Ministry formed without the assistance of the young Duchess." (PR i. p.329.)

The great advantage which the 'political' woman has in Trollope's world; provided of course that she has money and is witty and attractive, is that she can hold extreme opinions and indeed have a measure of power without the inconvenience of having to take any real responsibility, purely because she is a woman. Lady Glencora's doctrine of liberalism, which she expresses at Loughlinter, although extreme, and put in a frivolous manner, is in fact the one which guides Mr. Monk, Phineas and Mr. Palliser. "Making men and women all equal", she says, "that I take to be the gist of our political theory." (PF i. p.154.) It is a woman's privilege that she does not have to speak with the circumspection of the politician, and her statement is taken seriously only by the foolish Mrs. Bonteen. Yet her 'creed' is echoed in more guarded and serious terms by the Duke of Omnium when he explains his political views to Phineas in The Prime Minister. (PM ii. pp.321-322.) It is ironic of course that she has more real political power than many of the politicians in the room with her, including Mr. Kennedy, whose moribund ideas are thrown into relief by Lady Glencora. Her politics "were too fast and furious for his nature." Lady Glencora represents Trollope's idea of the political woman; her effect on the novels,

however, is to bring into proper perspective the behaviour of the male politicians. Their earnestness and dignity cannot be taken too seriously with her example perpetually before us.

There is one female character in the novels who can by no means allow her politics to become "too fast and furious," and this is Madame Max Goesler. Like most of the other women in the two novels she has a forceful character, and yet unlike the others she is entirely independent. Trollope's presentation of this intriguing woman is masterly, and through it we are made more aware both of the parallel between the struggles of Phineas in the world of politics and of the delicate position in which the single woman inevitably found herself in mid-Victorian England.

Madame Goesler's main aim in settling in London is to achieve acceptability within the rigid system of English society. The task which she has set herself is very difficult, as she recognises, because "'These English are so stiff, so hard, so heavy!'" (PF ii. p.168.) and yet there is no other country in which she cares to succeed. The path which she must tread between propriety and impropriety is an excessively narrow one and it requires a delicate eye to see it. Her mere presence in London as a widow without a past is enough to arouse the suspicions of society. Her only chance of success is carefully to woo the more prominent individuals who make up this society - the Lady Glencoras and Mrs. Bonteens - to show them that her aims and her house are respectable. She works hard and patiently towards her one end and,

By degrees ... the thing was done. Her prudence equalled her wit, and even suspicious people had come to acknowledge that they could not put their fingers on anything wrong. When Lady Glencora Palliser had once dined at the cottage in Park Lane, Madame Max Goesler had told herself that henceforth she did not care what the suspicious said. Since that the Duke of Omnium had almost promised that he would come. If she could only entertain the Duke of Omnium she would have done everything. (PF ii. p.168.)

When the Duke does eventually call he is captivated by Madame Max's charm and attempts to persuade her to become his mistress in Italy. Significantly, the proposal in itself does not shock or offend her; it is her 'position' only which she is thinking of when she says to the Duke: "'You would have me lose all that I have gained by steady years of sober work for

the sake of a week or two of dalliance such as that!"

She has achieved her object, despite the Duke's suggestion, and forged for herself a place in English society - she has, in a sense, made a success of her chosen 'career'. But she is a woman, and women in Trollope's world can never be satisfied with careers. Trollope has been called outstanding among the class of reactionary novelists who condemn careers for women,<sup>(76)</sup> and so Madame Max is not content with her achievement. At one point in the novel she echoes, without however the same conviction, Lady Laura's complaint about the position of women: "'The one great drawback to the life of a woman is that they cannot act in politics.'" (PF ii. p.32.) In fact, this expresses her lack of satisfaction with her achievement, a lack of satisfaction which in two other places in the novel she attempts to define. "What was her definite object, - or had she any?" she asks herself when the possibility of having the Duke of Omnium as caller has become a reality. "In what way could she make herself happy? She could not say that she was happy yet. The hours with her were too long and the days too easy." (PF ii. p.183.) At the height of her achievement she thinks, "What was it all, to have a duke and to have lords dining with her, to dine with lords or with a duke itself, if life were dull with her, and the hours hung heavy!" (PF ii. p.250.) Her position has become, in fact, similar to Lady Laura's: she is a woman of action trapped within a feminine role of inactivity. Her dissatisfaction is expressed ironically to Phinzas when he has asked her why she does not go to the House to hear Mr. Daubeny speak:

"A poor woman, shut up in a cage, feels there more acutely than anywhere else how insignificant a position she fills in the world."

"You don't advocate the rights of women, Madame Goesler."

"Oh, no. Knowing our inferiority I submit without a grumble; but I am not sure that I care to go and listen to the squabbles of my masters. You may arrange it all among you, and I will accept it be it good or bad, - as I must; but I cannot take so much interest in the proceedings as to spend my time in listening where I cannot speak and looking when I cannot be seen." (PR i. p.348.)

As we have already seen with Lady Laura, the alternative, for Trollope, to a woman's taking to women's rights in order to fulfil herself is marriage, and this is ultimately what comes to fill Madame Max's growing

sense of emptiness. As Phineas's <sup>wife</sup> husband she passes, like many another Trollopian heroine, into graceful obscurity. There is something oversimplified, of course, in this acceptance of marriage as the universal panacea, particularly when the initial frustration which leads to the feeling of impotence is so strongly felt by the women concerned. It is, however, the only answer that Trollope can provide for these strong women, and is, perhaps, the result of the over-riding importance which the "love-interest" comes to play in his novels.

It is of course significant that Madame Goesler should eventually marry Phineas because their two careers in London are so similar. The parallel between the two characters is quite obvious, so the point will not be laboured beyond mentioning its salient features. Both Madame Max Goesler and Phineas enter London society from the obscurity of foreign backgrounds; that is, neither has inherent social advantages with which to conquer London and they therefore have to rely on native wit and, in Madame Max's case, money. Phineas's aim is to climb in the political world while Madame Max attempts a similar rise in the social world. That these two 'worlds' are inter-dependent becomes particularly clear in Chapter 60, "Madame Goesler's Politics", where the ambitions of the woman come so close to fulfillment and her position in the highest rank of English society is virtually assured. The title of the chapter, of course, suggests a parallel with the political world, but it is interesting to note that Madame Max's metaphors are often political in character, as when she suggests to the old Duke of Omnium that the alternative in life to sitting in repose is to "take a leap in the dark." (PF ii. p.254.) There is a certain recklessness in Madame Max's character which is hinted at in this phrase and which is shown more fully in her energetic defence of Phineas during his trial. Phineas, too, is leading a reckless life as he admits to himself on a number of occasions. "There were many questions about himself which he usually answered by telling himself that it was his fate to walk over volcanoes. 'Of course, I shall be blown into atoms some fine day,' he would say; 'but after all, that is better than being slowly boiled down into pulp.'" (PF i. p.37.)

The parallel between these two people, so close in many respects, works often to the disadvantage of Phineas. Madame Max's rise is entirely consequent on her nice calculations, while Phineas's is more often than not the result of accident. Phineas's ideas of recklessness become, for him, something of a defence mechanism: there is always

the feeling that if he fails he can return to obscurity in Ireland and nothing will be lost. His throwing up of a Government place over the subject of Tenant Right is paralleled by Madame Max's rejection of the Duke of Omnium; but, somehow, we feel that her sacrifice is more deeply felt than his, particularly as hers is the result of her constancy to Phineas, which in itself throws into relief Phineas's own relationship with the women in the novels.

There is a seriousness apparent in the presentation of Madame Max and her aims which is lacking in that of Phineas. Her role in life is more difficult and requires more single-mindedness than Phineas's, and in this we see a reflection of Trollope's recognition that the 'games' that a woman plays in society are more intensely serious than a man's; that a woman cannot afford to make a slip while a man's pre-marital behaviour was subject to little scrutiny and less censure, provided that he kept within the broad bounds of respectability. Phineas himself shows that he is aware of this convention when he tells himself that were he to break his promise to the patient Mary Flood Jones in order to marry Madame Max and make use of her fortune he would be subject to more praise than blame in the eyes of the world.

While Madame Max for the most part only semi-consciously works towards marriage as the fulfillment of her life, for Violet Effingham, the third of the 'strong' women in the novels, marriage is the consciously recognised and inevitable goal of her 'career' in society. But her dilemma is, in its own way, as acute as that of Lady Laura's or Madame Max's. It rests on the single, irrefutable fact that a woman in her position can do nothing without either marrying or forsaking society altogether. On one occasion Violet talks light-heartedly to Lady Laura about not marrying at all. "I shall knock under to Mr. Mill, and go in for women's rights, and look forward to stand for some female borough. Matrimony never seemed to me very charming, and upon my word it does not become more alluring by what I find at Loughlinter." (PF ii. p.145.) There is a seriousness behind this little speech which underlines the difficulties that she faces in her life. Her chief object in life being to marry, she knows very well that one mistake could prove disastrous to her, in the same way, as she notes, that Lady Laura's marriage has brought nothing but unhappiness. And she knows, despite her flippant speech, that she must marry:

Though she could talk about remaining unmarried, she knew that that was practically impossible. All those around her, - those

of the Baldock as well as those of the Brentford faction, - would make such a life impossible to her. Besides, in such a case what could she do? It was all very well to talk of disregarding the world and of setting up a house for herself; - but she was quite aware that that project could not be used further than for the purpose of scaring her amiable aunt.

(PF ii. p.146.)

It is a measure of Trollope's achievement that he is able to convey the intensity of a single girl's dilemma in what can only have been a commonplace situation. By making Violet an intelligent and sensitive woman who is almost cynically aware of her invidious position, Trollope has translated what could so easily have become a trivial adjunct to the 'love interest' section of the novel onto a higher plane and the problem has become a much more fundamental one of human behaviour.

The scene in which Violet explains to Lady Laura that she must marry soon in order to escape from the custody of her guardians is very revealing of her personal situation, while there is an under-current of deadly seriousness beneath her description of how to obtain a husband which reflects the stark reality of the game of love as it was played in middle-class Victorian England: "'After all, a husband is very much like a house or a horse. You don't take your house because it's the best house in the world, but because just then you want a house. You go and see a house, and if it's very nasty you don't take it. But if you think it will suit pretty well, and if you are tired of looking about for houses, you do take it. That's the way one buys one's horses, - and one's husbands.'" (PF i. p.114.)

Both Lady Laura and Madame Max Goesler bemoan the fact that a woman on her own can have no significant place in life; Violet Effingham, in a conversation with Phineas, reflects a very similar sentiment: "'... a woman must be content to be nothing, - unless Mr. Mill can pull us through!'" (PF ii. p.243.) Yet, once she has accepted Lady Laura's advice to "'Marry Oswald [Chiltern] and be your own mistress,'" she sinks into her submissive role in marriage with as little murmur of protest as the most typical Trollopian heroine of the Grace Crawley class. After her marriage, Lady Chiltern, as she has now become, voices, ironically in view of her own situation, Trollope's own, finally inconsistent, impression of marriage: "'...men expect that women shall put on altogether new characters when they are married, and girls think that they can do so. ... Girls will accept men simply because

they think it ill-natured to return the compliment of an offer with a hearty "No!" ( )

Finally, even the strong and independent women in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux succumb to convention, marry husbands and are content to see their lives as merely extensions of their husbands' lives and their interests as subordinate to their husbands'. In other words, Lady Glencora, partially, and Violet Effingham and Madame Max find in marriage exactly the same sort of fulfillment as Grace Crawley, Mary Thorne and, one supposes, Mary Flood Jones. If this is difficult for the modern reader to accept, it is at least understandable, given the position of women in mid-Victorian society, that Trollope should have seen it as something of an ideal. For all their final submissiveness Trollope's women in the two novels do reflect the changes which were taking place in mid-Victorian society in the position of women, even if Trollope's traditional preconceptions led him eventually to subordinate their roles. There can be no doubt, however, that their central position illuminates the main themes and brings out strongly the parallel between politics and society.

We can see from Trollope's treatment of his chief character that his main interest lies in man as a social animal. His analysis of character is not deep but his view of society is very clear. He deals not with the more heroic of man's actions but with those that allow a man to live without disgrace in the eyes of his peers. Phineas's manliness is not, Trollope insists, an outstanding characteristic; nevertheless, we are fully aware, because we see the pressures of society, of the difficulties of behaving in an acceptable way and of being honest with oneself. It is this basic honesty - or at least desire to be honest - that we see exemplified in the 'heroic' characters in the two novels: Phineas, Monk and Palliser. These heroes are rarely men of excessively high ideals, although Palliser is, perhaps, an exception, but they strive merely to do what, in their own ways, they believe to be right. This apparently very ordinary quality is, for Trollope, one of the highest. It is especially important in the society he was chronicling where the social and political are interwoven and the temptations of public life are great.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. Frederick Harrison, Studies in Victorian Literature (London, 1895), p.201.
2. Quoted by Trollope, Autobiography, p.125. *Primary source?*
3. A. Mizener, "Trollope: The Palliser Novels," in From Jane Austen to Joseph Conrad, ed. R.C. Rathburn and M. Steinmann (Minneapolis, 1958), p.17.
4. Mizener, p.18.
5. C.P. Snow, Trollope: His Life and Art (London, 1975), p.11.
6. Autobiography, p.272.
7. Ibid.
8. See, for instance, Trollope's short story The Turkish Bath (1869), in which the narrator is easily tricked by a madman into conversation and into parting with his money because he suspects that his companion is Irish, and "is there anyone so likely to prove himself agreeable as a well-informed, travelled Irishman?" John Hampden ed., Novels and Stories by Anthony Trollope (London, 1946), p.436.
9. Autobiography, p.55.
10. Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs, p.186.
11. K.G.T. McDonnell, "Roman Catholics in London, 1850-1865," in Studies in London History Presented to Philip Edmund Jones, ed. A.E.J. Hollaender and W. Kellaway, (London, 1969), p.433.
12. McDonnell, p.434.
13. T.W. Moody, The Fenian Movement (Cork, 1968), p.23.
14. Moody, p.24.
15. The Times, March 9, 1866, p.9. *reference not clear*
16. Suggested by Sir Shane Leslie, Phineas Finn, p.v. See also below, p.138.
17. The Times, August 10, 1852, p.5.
18. Whitby, History of the Session, 1852-3. Quoted by Southgate, p.18.
19. T.P. O'Connor, Memoirs of an Old Parliamentarian (London, 1929), p.383.
20. The Three Clerks (Oxford [University Press], 1907), p.355.
21. Southgate, p.192.
22. The Times, August 25, 1852, p.5.
23. Smith, The Making of the Second Reform Bill, p.15.
24. John Vincent, The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857-1868 (London, 1966), p.xiv.
25. Southgate, p.76.
26. F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1963), p.17.
27. See Vincent, p.xiv.
28. Southgate, p.286.
29. Ibid.



30. Vincent, pp.21-22.
31. Morley, Life of Gladstone, p.756.
32. Hippolyte Taine, Notes on England, trans. Edward Hyams (London, 1957), p.145.
33. "Macaulay", Hours in a Library, 11, pp.374-6, quoted by W.E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind (Yale, 1957), p.196. 11 ?
34. Taine, p.206.
35. Kingsley, Letters and Memoirs, quoted by Houghton, p.204.
36. Houghton, p.203.
37. Houghton, p.202.
38. Norman Gash, Politics in the Age of Peel, p.107.
39. Paul, History, p.7.
40. The Times, May 25, 1852, p.5.
41. The Times, April 10, 1865, p.9, and November 3, 1865, p.4.
42. W.L. Burn, The Age of Equipoise (London, 1964), p.260.
43. Autobiography, pp.199-200.
44. See C.P. Snow, "Trollope: The Psychological Stream", in On the Novel, ed. B.S. Benedikz (London, 1971), p.15.
45. Autobiography, p.190: "The writer of stories must please, or he will be nothing. And he must teach whether he wish to teach or no."  
Autobiography, p.188: "A vast proportion of the teaching of the day . . . comes from these books, which are in the hands of all readers."
46. Autobiography, pp.188-9: "It is from them that girls learn what is expected from them, and what they are to expect when lovers come."
47. Mario Praz, The Hero in Eclipse in Victorian Fiction (London, 1956), p.261.
48. J.S. Mill, The Subjection of Women (2nd ed., 1869), p.53.
49. Sir William Blackstone, Commentary on the Laws of England, quoted by Ray Strachey, The Cause: A short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain (London, 1928), p.15.
50. Burn, p.250.
51. Ibid.
52. Constance Rover, Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain, 1866-1914 (London, 1967), p.14.
53. Patricia Thompson, The Victorian Heroine - A Changing Ideal, 1837-1873 (London, 1956), p.77.
54. Rover, p.14.
55. F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society, p.99.
56. Quoted by Thompson, *ibid.*
57. David Aitken, "Anthony Trollope on 'the genus girl'" NCF, 28, (1974) 417-434.
58. Letters, p.108.
59. Letters, No.740, quoted by Aitken, pp.417-418.

60. Praz, p.309.
61. Praz, p.308.
62. Autobiography, p.126.
63. Mill, The Subjection of Women, p.55.
64. Autobiography, p.273.
65. Roger Fulford, Votes for Women: The Story of a Struggle (London, 1967), p.48.
66. Fulford, p.48.
67. See Phineas Finn, ii. p.145 and ii. p.243.
68. Note, for instance, the words of Lady Frederick Cavendish in 1865: "I foresee that I shall become desperately political, but I don't think that must necessarily make me an odious woman!" The Diary of Lady Frederick Cavendish, p.261.
69. Autobiography, p.274.
70. Quoted by Philip Guedalla, Bonnet and Shawl (London, 1928) p.35.
71. Quoted by Burn, p.253.
72. Autobiography, p.156.
73. Ibid.
74. Polhemus, The Changing World of Anthony Trollope, p.155.
75. Guedalla, p.156.
76. Thompson, Victorian Heroine, p.83.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Originals

It has been shown in earlier chapters that Trollope used, in a suitably adapted form, many of the political events of his day and it might therefore be assumed that the major political figures who are involved in these events are also taken from real life. If this is so, it might further be thought that there would be general agreement, at least among Trollope's contemporaries, as to who the originals for these characters are. In fact no such agreement exists even though there is an obvious value in being able positively to identify the real-life models for the fictional politicians, both because this will help us to understand Trollope's method of writing fiction and because it will increase our knowledge of his aims in the political novels.

A.O.J. Cockshut, in an appendix to his study of Trollope's novels, writes: "It has usually been assumed that Trollope's political novels are romans à clef",<sup>(1)</sup> while Michael Sadleir states that "the two chronicles of Phineas (and The Prime Minister also) can only with difficulty be treated as romans à clé."<sup>(2)</sup> Cockshut, in his argument against treating the novels in this way, cites Frederic Harrison and Trollope himself ("a byword for frankness") who, he says, both denied a correspondence between real characters and the novelistic creations. Frederic Harrison, indeed, claimed an intimate knowledge of the politics and politicians of the fifties and sixties and, after having, he says, taken the precaution of consulting other survivors of those times, wrote, in 1911, "Now, I feel satisfied that there are in Phineas Finn no deliberate portraits of political personages - nothing at all like Thackeray's Marquis of Steyne."<sup>(3)</sup> Although his final verdict is that there are no positive portraits of well-known persons, even he is tempted into a little speculation on possible originals when he claims to see touches of "a once famous Lord Stafford" in Lord Chiltern. Trollope himself, as Cockshut rightly says, wrote a strong letter of protest to the Daily Telegraph in 1869 which had previously published an article identifying, among others, Turnbull with Bright. "I depicted Mr. Bright neither in his private nor his public character", he wrote<sup>(4)</sup>, "and I cannot imagine how any likeness justifying such a charge against me can be found." In a letter to his friend Mary Holmes written on 15th June 1876, he shows that he did not avoid in principle using real models for his political characters: "My first purpose is

to say in reference to the PM. that though in former novels certain well-known political characters, such as Disraeli and Gladstone, have been taken as models for such fictitious personages as Daubeny and Gresham, it has only been as to their particular tenets. There is nothing of personal characteristic here."<sup>(5)</sup>

It will be appreciated that in the area of 'original hunting' there are many potential pitfalls, and even the wisest of commentators may fall into them. Notes and Queries of 1907 carried this question above a list of all the major political characters in Phineas Finn and their cabinet positions: "I shall be indebted to any one who will furnish a key to the political characters who figure in Phineas Finn." The editor's reply was: "If Trollope had inserted photographs of real people, he would not have been Trollope. His charm is that he made them, and made them well. Mr. Monk is Bright, as he is only 'spoken of'. The Pallisers, and Finn are great creations, but they are of Trollope's making."<sup>(6)</sup>

Bright, however, as we have seen, has been claimed by other commentators to be a model for Turnbull. Although there is disagreement among critics, it is possible, in some cases, to make positive identifications. But it would be wrong to forget Trollope's own advice to aspiring novelists which he gives in his autobiography: "He [the novelist] desires to make his readers so intimately acquainted with his characters that the creations of his brain should be to them speaking, moving, living human creations. This he can never do unless he know those fictitious personages himself, and he can never know them well unless he can live with them in the full reality of established intimacy."<sup>(7)</sup> Although it will be possible to demonstrate quite convincingly that some of Trollope's creations have their originals in real people, most of the characters we see in the novels are finally the result of Trollope's early habit of "going about with some castle in the air firmly built within my mind."<sup>(8)</sup>

The object of this chapter will be to discover to what extent Trollope did use real people of his day as models for some of his characters - and particularly the political figures. The real interest of this will come from discovering what traits of the historical figures Trollope chose to use for his fictitious creations, and it will be seen that, with rare exceptions, he used only those which contributed to the themes of the novels. It is one more demonstration that for all Trollope's accuracy as a social and political historian we would be

unwise to read him merely as if he were a photographer of the fifties and sixties. This would be to ignore Trollope's tremendous imaginative powers, especially in the field of character creation. No matter how many 'originals' might be found for Lady Glencora or Lady Laura, it would be absurd to suggest that they did not spring primarily from Trollope's sympathetic imagination and his close observation and understanding of people. And so with many others in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux.

## II

In his autobiography Trollope writes about the genesis of his first successful novel, The Warden:

I have been often asked in what period of my early life I had lived so long in a cathedral city as to have become intimate with the ways of a close. I never lived in any cathedral city - except London, never knew anything of any close, and at that time had enjoyed no peculiar intimacy with any clergyman. My archdeacon, who has been said to be lifelike, and for whom I confess that I have all a parent's fond affection, was, I think, the simple result of an effort of my moral consciousness.<sup>(9)</sup>

If Trollope was able to produce an archdeacon "who has been declared by competent authorities to be a real archdeacon down to the very ground",<sup>(10)</sup> it is surely conceivable that his political characters may have sprung entirely from his 'moral consciousness'. But, in fact, by the time he came to write Phineas Finn Trollope had spent some time studying the workings of the House of Commons and had also met many politicians socially so that he no longer had to rely purely on his imagination for his picture of them. His chief source of knowledge of politicians and society was, as Frederic Harrison tells us, his clubs,<sup>(11)</sup> and mainly the little club in Charles Street, Mayfair, called The Cosmopolitan which Trollope thought 'delightful'. "A strong political element", he wrote in the Autobiography, "thoroughly well mixed, gave a certain spirit to the place."<sup>(12)</sup> It is the Cosmopolitan which Harrison supposed Trollope introduced into Phineas Redux under the name of The Universe Club, although the exclusive and rather dull fictional club bears little resemblance to its real-life counterpart aside from the slight similarity in name and the fact that they both opened only twice a week.

In the 1870s when The Cosmopolitan Club was at its zenith, "Anthony

Trollope's rather loud but genial laugh was constantly to be heard there."<sup>(13)</sup> Escott thought the club was very important to Trollope for his political background, and mentions several prominent members of Trollope's time, including Lord Barrington (one of Disraeli's secretaries), Frederick Leveson-Gower, and Robert G.W. Herbert who was, possibly significantly in view of Phineas's political career, permanent under secretary at the Colonial Office. "All were conspicuous," Escott writes,<sup>(14)</sup> "in the little group of which Trollope formed one in the tobacco parlaments of the little Mayfair caravanserai." Perhaps it was listening to the political figures at this club, who "used to whisper the secrets of Parliament with free tongues",<sup>(15)</sup> that gave Trollope's reporting of the language of politics its air of convincing reality.

While Trollope was beginning work on his political series of novels he was also helping to found the Fortnightly Review, the first number of which appeared on 15th May 1865, and at the same time was meeting many influential men of the day.<sup>(16)</sup> The conferences which preceded each publication of the Fortnightly "took him for the first time in his life behind the political scenes and brought him into close quarters with men from whom he afterwards drew the political figures that flit through his later novels."<sup>(17)</sup> Certainly, if Trollope did base any of his characters on the people he met at this time, they played only minor roles in his novels and it is clearly impossible from this point in time to make any positive identifications. The atmosphere of these meetings was no doubt very important to Trollope, and it was probably here, too, that he first heard the political conversation which we find so convincing in the political novels. But to find out to what extent Trollope relied on real models for his characters we must look at the major public figures in the novels, and particularly those whom Trollope admitted were taken from life.

The two characters whom Trollope, as we have seen, did concede were modelled on real-life originals are Mr. Daubeny, the leader of the Tory party in Phineas Redux and Mr. Gresham, his Liberal counterpart. Despite Trollope's admission, A.O.J. Cockshut, in answering a detailed case put forward by R.W. Chapman,<sup>(18)</sup> doubts that Daubeny was modelled on Disraeli because there is not, as Chapman tried to suggest, a close enough coincidence of dates. As an example he gives The Duke's Children, which began to appear in 1879 "when Disraeli was still Prime Minister, but Daubeny had given way to Lord Drummond. Even in The Prime Minister

(1875-6) Daubeny sat for a time below the gangway."<sup>(19)</sup> He goes on to suggest that because the similarity between the names Daubeny/Disraeli and Gresham/Gladstone does not hold good for other probable correspondences between real and fictitious characters, it is not significant enough to build a case on.<sup>(20)</sup> While admitting a similarity between Daubeny and Disraeli, Cockshut puts it down merely to a too-well assimilated knowledge of the ways of contemporary politicians. "Disraeli, who afflicted Trollope with the fascination of horror, naturally had the strongest unconscious influence."<sup>(21)</sup> Most of Cockshut's points have been effectively answered by J.W. Dinwiddy,<sup>(22)</sup> who demonstrates convincingly that there is more than a mere 'unconscious' influence from Disraeli on the character of Daubeny. He points out that the absurdity of allowing a Disraeli-figure to carry a bill for the disestablishment of the Church of England is quite intentional. As already demonstrated, Trollope partly identified this fictional measure with the Tory Reform Bill of 1867, and, if we allow for the exaggeration of satire, was demonstrating his belief that a man like Disraeli was quite capable of reversing his own [cherished] policies for the sake of political expediency. Cockshut's expectation that Trollope would be consistent in his use of names is quite unfounded as we can see if we look at Framley Parsonage where the caricature of Disraeli is called Sidonia. By the time of Phineas Finn Trollope has had no compunction in changing the name to Daubeny. What really convinces us of a strong and deliberate parallel between the two is the hostile portrait of the fictional leader of the Conservative party - so consistent with Trollope's view of Disraeli - and the fact that Disraeli occupied very much the same position in government as Trollope's creation.

In the novels dealing with the Reform Bill we are told about a Conservative Prime Minister, Lord de Terrier, who sits in the House of Lords while his 'deputy', Mr. Daubeny, represented the ministry in the House of Commons. (PF i. p.59.) We are given very little information about de Terrier, although we are led to understand that he is not a man of great energy. "Rumour declared that he would have much preferred to resign and betake himself once again to the easy glories of opposition." (PF i. p.5.) In this impulse to take the easy course, he is contrasted by the Liberals with Mr. Daubeny. After a crucial vote, Barrington Erle says: "'They must go, with such a majority

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against them.' ... 'Of course they must', said Mr. Ratler. 'Lord de Terrier wants nothing better, but it is rather hard upon poor Daubeny. I never saw such an unfortunate old Tantalus.'" (PF i. p.73.)

From 1866 until his resignation in 1868 Lord Derby was leader, from the House of Lords, of the Conservative party and Prime Minister, while Disraeli led the party from the House of Commons; on Derby's resignation Disraeli took over the leadership and became Prime Minister. In Phineas Redux, Daubeny has taken over the leadership of the Conservatives and is now Prime Minister. While Trollope certainly makes no attempt to paint a consistent portrait of Lord Derby<sup>(23)</sup> in his characterisation of Lord de Terrier, the similarities between the fictional and factual leadership of the Conservative party are certainly more than just coincidence. It leads us at any rate to suppose that the man who, in Phineas Redux, leads the Conservatives to disestablish the Church of England is Disraeli, but a Disraeli as Dr. Chapman states, "as he appeared to Liberals of Trollope's kidney."<sup>(24)</sup> Trollope certainly had no liking for Disraeli. In his autobiography Trollope devotes two pages to discussing the novels of "the present Prime Minister". As literary criticism it is a little thin, but as a measure of Trollope's feelings for the man it is most revealing. His main objection to the novels concerns their gaudy unreality - almost, one might say, their theatricality. He feels, too, very strongly against their 'commonness': "The wit has been the wit of hairdressers ...."<sup>(25)</sup>

Of Lothair he writes: "Here that flavour of hair-oil, that feeling of false jewels, that remembrance of tailors comes out stronger than in all the others."<sup>(26)</sup> Trollope's reported remark to John Blackwood comes as no surprise: "Confess, Blackwood, that you think about Dizzy exactly as I do. You'd be delighted to hear he had been caught shop-lifting."<sup>(27)</sup>

To Trollope, as to many others, Disraeli represented a kind of statesmanship which he detested. We know of Trollope's view of parliament: "I have always thought that to sit in the British Parliament should be the highest object of ambition to every educated Englishman. ... To serve one's country without pay is the grandest work that a man can do."<sup>(28)</sup> And yet, here was a man of uncertain background, even of mystery, for whom, as Herbert Paul says, "the supreme test of human affairs was success."<sup>(29)</sup> It is as a man hungry for power that Trollope sees Disraeli, and as such presents him in Phineas Redux: "Could it really be the case that the man intended to perform so audacious a trick of legerdemain as this for the preservation of power ...?" (PR i. p.49.)



which is a view strikingly similar to that expressed by Lord Cranbourne after the passing of the Second Reform Bill: "You practically banish all honourable men from the political arena, and you will find in the long run that the time will come when your statesmen will become nothing but political adventurers, and professions of opinion will be looked upon only as so many political manoeuvres for the purpose of obtaining office."<sup>(30)</sup> Trollope portrays Daubeny as a trickster, a man who by sleights of hand and conjuring tricks achieves his ends at the expense of the dignity of his high office. At the beginning of Phineas Redux Daubeny has dissolved the House for no apparent reason. "There were clever men", writes Trollope, "who suggested that Mr. Daubeny had a scheme in his head - some sharp trick of political conjuring, some 'hocus-pocus presto' sleight of hand, by which he might be able to retain power ..." (PR i. p.4.) Later, Trollope refers to the supporters of Daubeny who feel, once the threat of Church Disestablishment is apparent, that he "had ever been mysterious, unintelligible, dangerous, and given to feats of conjuring." (PR i. p.56.) He sees him in the role of an older conjuror and refers twice to him as 'Cagliostro', (PR i. pp.136 and 419.), on the second occasion devoting a whole chapter to the theme. In Chapter 39 the portrait of the man is intensely hostile, his actions, as Trollope relates them, being those of a clever but unscrupulous actor. In this chapter, too, is expressed the sense of betrayal which many of Daubeny's supporters felt, and which echoes the same feeling of Disraeli's supporters after 1867. "They had been betrayed; - but as a body were unable to accuse the traitor. As regarded most of them they had accepted the treachery and bowed their heads beneath it, by means of their votes." (PR i. p.420.) We find this view of Disraeli echoed by Carlyle - himself no friend of Trollope. Carlyle's poor opinion of Disraeli had been confirmed by the Second Reform Bill, and he wrote of "a superlative Hebrew conjuror spell-binding all the great lords, great parties, great interests of England to his hand in this manner, and leading them by the nose like helpless mesmerised somnambulist cattle to such issue!"<sup>(31)</sup> To many Liberals, and a substantial number of Tories too, Disraeli's behaviour during the passing of the Second Reform Bill amounted to a betrayal of all that the Conservative party claimed to stand for. According to Disraeli's biographer, Froude, Disraeli had in the past pronounced against Reform and had once said that public men should be true to their convictions.<sup>(32)</sup> "Unfortunately political leaders have ceased to think of what is good

for the nation, or of their own consistency, or even of what in the long run may be best for themselves. Their business is the immediate campaign, in which they are to out-manoeuve and defeat their enemies."<sup>(33)</sup>

This, in fact, is exactly what Daubeny does in Phineas Redux, where we find a curious blending of real history and adapted history - where the Disraeli-figure does what in real life Disraeli could never have done and yet at the same time is invested with the real history of Disraeli. In Chapter Five, for instance, there is a direct reference to the Tory Reform Bill and an indirect reference to Disraeli himself. "Mr. Ratler", Trollope writes, "had been nearly broken hearted when household suffrage had become the law of the land while a Conservative Cabinet and a Conservative Government were in possession of dominion in Israel." A little later in the same chapter, the identification between Daubeny and Disraeli is made even more explicit when Gresham says: "Daubeny has once been very audacious, and he succeeded. But he had two things to help him, - a leader, who, though thoroughly trusted, was very idle, and an ill-defined question. When he had won his leader he had won his party. He has no such tower of strength now." (PR i. p.53.) This is clearly a reference to the 1867 Reform Bill and to the parts Lord Derby and Disraeli played in making it acceptable to the Conservative party.

Trollope clearly felt so strongly about Disraeli's duplicity that he depicts Daubeny as the prime mover for the Bill to disestablish the Church of England in much the same way that Disraeli, Trollope supposed, had introduced his Reform Bill which had occurred, historically, too late in the writing of Phineas Finn to be satirised. Because Daubeny, invested with much of the real background of Disraeli, has already tapped "a Conservative element by reducing the suffrage," (PR i. p.53.), Trollope had to invent a new measure for his version of the Conservative leader to push through the House. By suggesting that Disraeli could be false enough to introduce a Disestablishment Bill, and that by very adroit tactics he could carry many reluctant Tories with him (as he did in 1867), Trollope's satire is that much keener, and the thrust, absurd as it seems to Cockshut, certainly finds its target.

There can be no doubt that Daubeny represents Trollope's portrait of the Disraeli of the Second Reform Bill. Although inspired by a personal dislike of the man and his novels the figure of Daubeny is more than merely a focus for Trollope's pique at the supposed treachery of the Conservatives in 1867. He represents, too, an aspect of politics which Trollope found increasingly common and which he contrasts in the

political novels with figures who stand for an altogether more noble position: Mr. Monk and Plantagenet Palliser. Mr. Daubeny is, for Trollope, a more powerful version of the opportunist Quintus Slide, who changes his political beliefs to suit the occasion, and as such represents much that is wrong with politics. Throughout Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux Trollope contrasts the practical politicians and party managers whose main preoccupations are with party politics with those politicians who, he thought, represented an older and more gentlemanly school. But the final view is ambiguous: if Daubeny tried to retain power under any circumstances, Gresham and his followers could also be accused of creating a noise "which sounded like a clamour for place" (PR i. p.421.); and if the Conservatives were prepared, however reluctantly, to pass 'Liberal' measures, influential men like Barrington Erle were prepared to oppose them merely on grounds of expediency. It is [in] this world, dominated by men like Daubeny, Ratler and Bonteen (who, significantly enough, find Daubeny's last audacious speech before resignation "very great") that Phineas, with all his idealism, tries to come to terms with. But the disillusion which Phineas feels with all the fervour of his youth is balanced by the wiser words of Mr. Monk who, one presumes like Trollope, sees in politics a general tendency towards the good and whose final words, which echo Carlyle's, on Daubeny show a degree of optimism: "It is essential that such a one should be found out and known to be a conjuror, - and I hope that such knowledge may have been communicated to some men this afternoon." (PR i. p.428.)

With the other major political figures in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux it is by no means as easy to make positive identifications of their originals. Although Trollope admitted in the letter to Mary Holmes that Gresham, like Daubeny, was based on a real politician, the Gresham/Gladstone parallel is not as striking as that between Daubeny and Disraeli. Escott believed that there was no similarity between the two men when he wrote that "the politician pitted against Daubeny bears scarcely a remote resemblance to Disraeli's arch antagonist,"<sup>(34)</sup> but most commentators, including A.O.J. Cockshut, see at least a similarity between the fictional character and the Liberal Prime Minister, although Cockshut suggests that the sort of qualities with which Trollope invests Gresham could equally well apply to any number of other politicians!<sup>(35)</sup> J.R. Dinwiddy, in answering Cockshut's arguments, makes out a very strong case for assuming that Gresham was based on Gladstone.<sup>(36)</sup> He

suggests that the portrait of Gresham as a man of 'brilliant intellect', oratorical powers and a radical reputation, but with a tendency to be 'imprudent' and 'unconciliatory' is an unmistakable portrait of the Gladstone of the later 1860s. There is much truth in this and there is no denying that the portrait of Gresham in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux contains many of the traits for which Gladstone was famous. First of all there is a parallel between the situations of the two men. In Phineas Finn Gresham takes over the management of the early Reform Bill from an ailing and unenthusiastic Mildmay. Gresham, unlike Mildmay, is in earnest about reform, as was Gladstone, and one is reminded of the situation after Palmerston's death when Gladstone came to power. In Morley's words: "After a long era of torpor a powerful party thus once more came into being. The cause was excellent, but more potent than the cause was the sight of a leader with a resolute will, an unresting spirit of reform, and the genius of political action."<sup>(37)</sup> It was said of Gresham that it was on his shoulders that "the mantle of Mr. Mildmay would fall, - to be worn, however, quite otherwise than Mr. Mildmay had worn it." (PF i. p.330.)

It must be stressed again, however, that Trollope was not attempting to write a political history of the 1860s, and that while his political figures are often recognisable, their characters are normally constructed to fit into the overall patterns of the novels. Trollope, was, in a sense, satirising politics and politicians, but with one or two exceptions, was not aiming his darts at individuals. We notice, therefore, that no reference is made to Gresham's foreign policies - although he has been foreign minister - because this does not fall within the scope of the novels which deal primarily with "men not measures." Similarly, Gladstone's radicalism and broadly based popularity - particularly after 1859 - is only faintly echoed in the character of Gresham. John Vincent writes of Gladstone that "he was a minister given by the people to the party."<sup>(38)</sup> There is a hint in the early stages of Phineas Finn that Gresham, like Gladstone, is a man to be feared and that his alliances are with the more radical elements of the party. Lady Glencora, referring to the lack of activity by the Mildmay government, says to the Earl of Brentford, "... if you don't take care he [Palliser] and Mr. Monk and Mr. Gresham will arise and shake themselves, and turn you all out." (PF i. p.141.) There is an awareness that the old order is changing, as there was to many people after Palmerston's death, and that the new leaders will introduce many changes. This, indeed, was a source of

concern to the Whiggish Earl of Brentford,<sup>(39)</sup> and the thought of Gresham as the leader of the party also worried Barrington Erle - another politician with Whig allegiances. Erle would have preferred the Duke of St. Bungay as Prime Minister "had it been possible to set Mr. Gresham aside. But Mr. Gresham was too strong to be set aside; and Erle and the Duke, with all their brethren, were minded to be thoroughly loyal to their leader. ... But occasionally they feared that the man would carry them whither they did not desire to go."

(PR i. p.46.)

Gladstone, too, began to worry the more traditional elements of his party after 1868, mainly because of the contrast which he seemed to present to the part after Palmerston, the last years of whose leadership were characterised by a kind of peaceful non-activity. "If ever there was a statesman ... in whom the spirit of improvement is incarnate, and in whose career as a minister the characteristic feature has been to seek out things that require or admit of improvement, instead of waiting to be pressed or driven to do them, Mr. Gladstone deserves that signal honour."<sup>(40)</sup>

Lord Shaftesbury in 1868 showed more concern: "His [Palmerston's] successor, Gladstone, will bring with him the Manchester School for colleagues and supporters, a hot tractarian Chancellor, and the Bishop of Oxford for ecclesiastical adviser. He will succumb to every pressure, except the pressure of a constitutional and conservative policy."<sup>(41)</sup>

Gresham shares another characteristic with Gladstone, but one which we might expect to find in any leader of a major political party: oratory.

James Bryce, in his short study of Gladstone, suggests that it was by his oratory that Gladstone rose as a statesman,<sup>(42)</sup> while Gresham is "said to be the greatest orator in Europe." It would seem, too, that the style of Gresham's oratory was the result of the same "heat and vehemence"<sup>(43)</sup> that informed many of Gladstone's actions and speeches.

"Mr. Gresham began with a calmness of tone which seemed almost to be affected, but which arose from a struggle on his own part to repress that superabundant energy of which he was only too conscious. But the calmness soon gave place to warmth, which heated itself into violence before he had been a quarter of an hour upon his legs." (PR i. p.363.)

Dean Church wrote of Gladstone in 1868, "He is fierce sometimes and wrathful and easily irritated,"<sup>(44)</sup> and Bryce adds, "To anyone with less power of self-control such intensity of emotion as he frequently showed would have been dangerous."<sup>(45)</sup> But even this self-control was

not enough, on occasion, to stop him from "words and actions which a cooler judgement would have disapproved."<sup>(46)</sup> This was a characteristic which Gresham shared and one which the Tories on one occasion tried to turn to their advantage.<sup>(47)</sup>

Despite these qualities - or perhaps because of them - Gladstone was generally regarded as a sincere and earnest man<sup>(48)</sup> and Trollope himself wrote to William Blackwood in 1880: "Say anything you like about Gladstone, not touching his personal character. Say that he is rash, unstatesmanlike, dangerous, foolish - the last man in England to govern the country. But don't say that he [is] insincere or unpatriotic."<sup>(49)</sup> Gresham, too, is generally respected by his party for "earnestness and sincerity," (PR i. p.355.) and his speeches in the House, which are the result of deep feeling and little craft, are contrasted with Daubeny's artful invective. (PR i. p.363.)

One characteristic which both the fictional and the real Prime Ministers share is undoubtedly the result of more than mere coincidence. It was well known that Gladstone was a reticent man, little given to mixing socially with the members of his party, or, indeed, on occasion, of letting them know what he was planning. As Bryce puts it, "many of the pursuits and most of the pleasures, which attract ordinary men had no interest for him, so that much of the common ground on which men meet was closed to him."<sup>(50)</sup> He was, in fact, criticised by his followers in the late 1860s for his tendency to isolate himself. It was felt that he cared too much for Homer and religious controversy and that he did not listen enough to others. This criticism was relayed to Gladstone by Sir Thomas Acland in January 1868, and in his letter, he begged Gladstone to cultivate the strong, rising men of the party and even to drop into the smoking room and make himself agreeable "to the small fry."<sup>(51)</sup> In Phineas Redux Gresham is criticised by Mr. Bonteen over his management - or apparent lack of it - of the opposition to Daubeny's Church Bill. "If he were all a little less in the abstract, and a little more in the concrete, it would be better for us." (PR i. p.86.)<sup>(52)</sup> Trollope comments, "When Parliament met, Mr. Gresham, the leader of the Liberal party, had not as yet expressed any desire to his general followers." (PR i. p.85.) After a particularly hot-headed speech by Gresham, in which it is assumed that he has lost his temper and been indiscreet, he compounds his sin by "retreating within his shell," and further, "... he went among no congregation of Liberals and asked for no support." (PR i. p.90.) Later in Phineas Redux,

Phineas feels insulted by the apparent lack of interest taken in him by his leader, even though he has just made a very successful speech in the House. "During the whole evening he exchanged not a syllable with Mr. Gresham, - who indeed was not much given to converse with those around him in the House." (PR i. p.392.)

Like Gladstone, Gresham was misunderstood by many of his own party. Monk, defending Gresham to Phineas, towards the end of Phineas Redux, says: "'With a finer intellect than either [Brock or Mildmay] and a sense of patriotism quite as keen, he has a self-consciousness which makes him sore at every point. He knows the frailty of his temper, and yet cannot control it. And he does not understand men as did these others. Every word from an enemy is a wound to him. Every slight from a friend is a dagger in his side. But I fancy that self-accusations make the cross on which he is really crucified.'" (PR ii. p.409.) This is quite a close description of Gladstone. Bryce writes: "He was, in reality, a shy man; not shy, stiff and extremely cold like Peel, but revealing his deepest thoughts only to a few intimate friends, and treating others with a courteous kindness which though it put them at their ease, did not encourage them to approach nearer." (53)

Bright, in defending Gladstone's tendency to be carried away by his temper, said: "Think of the difference between a great cart horse and the highest bred most sensitive horse you can imagine, and then, under the lashings of a whip, think of the difference between them." (54)

One thing which contributed to Gladstone's vehemence in debate was his utter dislike and contempt for Disraeli. "Gladstone's loathing for his rival's brilliant tactics was so strong that he often became more heated in debate than was good for either his reputation or his health. On 26 March [1867] Disraeli raised a loud laugh against Gladstone by congratulating those on the Government front bench on the security which they derived from the presence of 'a good broad piece of furniture' between themselves and the leader of the Opposition." (55) The rivalry between the two leading politicians of the day had existed from at least 1852 when Gladstone had, while still a Conservative, demolished Disraeli's budget. The speech he had made at that time, according to a recent biographer of Disraeli, was "the beginning of the great parliamentary duel which for twenty-eight years was to be a feature of English public life and to dominate it for the last twelve of them." (56) In Phineas Redux we find a faint echo of the rivalry in the conflict which develops between Gresham and Daubeny. After

Gresham had moved his amendment to the Queen's Speech on the Church Disestablishment question, Daubeny "moved his hat from his brow and rose to his legs [and] began by expressing his thankfulness that he had not been made a victim to the personal violence of the right honourable gentleman." (PR i. p.89.) On another occasion, in the chapter appropriately called "Political Venom", Gresham insolently waves Daubeny down when he attempts to interrupt him. Trollope comments: "At home Mr. Daubeny might have been waved at, and forgotten it; but men who saw the scene in the House of Commons knew that he would never forgive Mr. Gresham. As for Mr. Gresham himself, he triumphed at the moment and exalted in his triumph." (PR i. p.385.) Later in the novel Daubeny, during a speech, gives the impression - deliberately, it is said - that he has finished and Gresham immediately stands up to reply. Daubeny uses this action to mock the Opposition's apparent hunger for office, and the two men stand high-lighted in their hatred: "Unless they were angels these two men must at that moment have hated each other; - and it is supposed that they were no more than human." (PR i. p.423.)

It is clear, I think, that in many respects the characters of Daubeny and Gresham are intended to be recognised as Disraeli and Gladstone. Trollope used, however, only those aspects of character which were necessary for his view of politics in action. With Daubeny and Gresham we see only the 'public' men; the question posed by Ratler about Daubeny, "I wonder what he did when he got home" (PR i. p.428.) remains unanswered. We might even regard Trollope's treatment of these two men as caricature. He continually selects those details, such as Daubeny's 'conjuring' or Gresham's 'passion', which can serve as a kind of short hand for differentiating the characters. The conflict which we then see developing between these two great figures comes to be recognised as an intensely personal one and this point, important for an understanding of the way in which politics is treated in the two novels, is underlined by the fact that we never hear of an argument between Daubeny and Gresham on matters of policy. It is significant that the main reason for disagreement lies in the fact that the Tory party attempts to pass 'Liberal' bills. This method successfully does for politicians what Trollope had earlier done for the upper echelons of the Anglican Church. While Daubeny and Gresham are styled 'gladiators' and are characterised as the two great political opponents of the day, Trollope is concerned to show us that



they are, in fact, very normal human beings and that their assumed status is by no means matched by the loftiness of their quarrels. Daubeny and Gresham begin to emerge as great performers, their positions being assured by the continued interest of other politicians and the public in their quarrels. But even this limited role is qualified by Trollope:

On the next morning [after the 'great debate' on the Church question] it was generally considered that Mr. Daubeny had been too long and Mr. Gresham too passionate. There were some who declared that Mr. Gresham had never been finer than when he described the privileges of the House of Commons; and others who thought that Mr. Daubeny's lucidity had been marvellous; but in this case, as in most others, the speeches of the day were generally thought to have been inferior to the great efforts of the past. (PR i. p.366.)

Their role is finally devalued to that of entertainers: "The chance, - perhaps the hope, - of some such encounter as that of the former day, [between Daubeny and Gresham] brought members into their seats, and filled the gallery with strangers. ... the prospect of an explanation, - or otherwise a fight, - between two leading politicians will fill the House; ... An aptitude for such encounters is almost a necessary qualification for a popular leader in parliament. ... (PR i. p.389.)

One politician who fully understood the behaviour expected from a 'popular' politician is Mr. Turnbull, the 'people's leader' - the Tribune who follows no party line and professes no particular loyalties. The most prominent politician of this type during the mid-1860s was John Bright, and it has often been supposed that it is on him that Trollope modelled his character of Turnbull, the radical manufacturer of the Manchester School. The Daily Telegraph of 1869 first raised the question of Turnbull's 'original' and Trollope vehemently repudiated the accusation that he had invaded Bright's privacy in the creation of his own character. The Dublin Review of 1869 echoed the generally accepted idea that Turnbull was modelled on Bright, but suggested that Mr. Monk was "much nearer to the character of the tribune turned minister."<sup>(57)</sup> A.O.J. Cockshut thinks that the similarities between Bright and Turnbull are inherent in Trollope's decision to write about a "Quaker Temperance Reformer,"<sup>(58)</sup> and that they are not sufficient to show that Turnbull was consciously modelled on Bright. J.R. Dinwiddy provides much information to demonstrate that

"the resemblance is a good deal more striking than Cockshut allows."<sup>(59)</sup> In fact, the similarities are very striking, and the explanation may lie in part in Trollope's need to introduce a type of popular politician of which he disapproved as a contrast to the figures of Palliser and Monk, who between them show the highest and best motives for political activity. Turnbull is a disrupting force in the political life of London and is a representative of the kind of unscrupulous politics which, to Trollope's mind, seemed to be replacing the older and more gentlemanly style of the Whigs. However, apart from this, having already introduced into his novels the two leading politicians of the mid 1860s, it is unreasonable to suppose that Trollope would hesitate before introducing another well-known politician, particularly as he had had such an important role in the passing of the Second Reform Bill.

As J.R. Dinwiddy writes, "the resemblance between Turnbull and Bright (as seen through the eyes of an opponent) is obvious." The portrait is not flattering. Mr. Turnbull is "the great Radical of the day, - the man who was supposed to represent what may be called the Manchester School of politics ..." (PF i. p.186.) He was regarded by some (including Phineas) as "a demagogue and at heart a rebel ... un-English, false and very dangerous" (PF i. p.187.) The picture which emerges of Turnbull is, in fact, very similar to the one of Bright as depicted by Asa Briggs.<sup>(60)</sup> The aims of the fictitious Turnbull include: "Progressive reform in the franchise, of which manhood suffrage should be the acknowledged and not far distant end, equal electoral districts, ballot, tenant right for England as well as Ireland, reduction of the standing army ... utter disregard for all political movements in Europe, an almost idolatrous admiration for all political movements in America, free trade in everything except malt, and an absolute extinction of a state Church." (PF i. pp.198-199.) Bright's similar political programme included: "an extension of free trade, a reduction of taxation, changes in the law relating to the holding of land ('free trade in land,' he called it), a cheaper foreign policy, and an extension of the suffrage to increase the power of the large populous districts at the expense of the countryside."<sup>(61)</sup> Bright also stood for "household suffrage, the ballot, triennial parliaments, and a more equal distribution of seats."<sup>(62)</sup> Turnbull's admiration for "all political movements in America" is, perhaps, an exaggerated version of Bright's statement that there was no political constitution in existence "in the preservation of which the human race

is so deeply interested" as the American constitution. (63)

A.O.J. Cockshut gives as an example of "the passion for identification" (running riot the discrepancy which he found between Trollope's description of the physical appearance of Turnbull and the DNB's of Bright. The DNB states that Bright was five foot seven inches in height, while Turnbull was "nearly six feet." Cockshut's objection can be seen to have little foundation if we go to another source for a description of Bright and compare it with Trollope's description of Turnbull.

His [Bright's] hair even then [1866] was grey, though abundant, the complexion florid, and the rather irregular but powerful features gave you at first sight an impression of singular force and firmness of character. So did the whole man. The broad shoulders, the bulk of the figure, the solid massiveness of his masterful individuality, the immovable grasp of his feet upon the firm earth, his uprightness of bearing, the body knit to the head as closely as capital to column - all together made the least careful observer feel that here was one in whose armour the flaws were few. (64)

Trollope writes: "Mr. Turnbull was a good-looking man about sixty, with long grey hair and a red complexion, with hard eyes, a well-cut nose, and full lips. He was nearly six feet high, stood quite upright, and always wore a black swallow-tail coat, black trousers and a black silk waistcoat." (PF i. p.196.)

Making allowances for the difference between an admiring description and one which is hostile (a "florid" complexion as opposed to a "red" complexion) it is clear that both men are describing the same person.

Like Bright, Turnbull is a dissenter (PR i. p.94.) and both men are still in business. Turnbull is called "a rich man" and makes "thirty-thousand a year". In reality, Bright's circumstances, as John Vincent has shown, (65) were occasionally rather straitened. Trollope's portrait, however, is hostile and the inconsistency of a leading Radical earning thirty-thousand pounds a year fits neatly in with his general view of the hypocrisy of much of political life.

Trollope's Turnbull resolutely turns his back on government office, but unlike Bright, who, until 1868, did this for conscientious reasons, Turnbull uses his position of independent leader to powerful ends in the House. Both men demonstrate a higher regard for the public than for parliament. Bright believed that "parliament had no more

power than the smallest vestry until public opinion had been convinced,"<sup>(66)</sup> and Turnbull stated that "in no possible circumstances would he serve the crown. 'I serve the people,' he had said, 'and much as I respect the servants of the Crown, I think that my own office is the higher.'" (PF i. p. 198.) Bright's was a deeply felt aversion to office<sup>(67)</sup>, while to Trollope, Turnbull's position was the result of a certain intellectual abdication. "Being free from responsibilities, he was not called upon either to study details or to master even great facts. It was his business to inveigh against existing evils, and perhaps there is no easier business when once the privilege of an audience has been attained." (PF i. p.199.)

Trollope clearly disliked any politician who, while exerting a strong negative influence, took no responsibility for the effects of his words. Mr. Monk, the other 'tribune' with many of Bright's characteristics, is made to suffer many torments for allowing himself to get into very much the same position, and this genuine concern for political decision making with its attendant sympathy for those who accept responsibility, removes him from being the butt of the sort of criticism which is levelled at Turnbull. There is some inconsistency here, for later in Phineas Finn Monk offers a rationale for the independent politician and suggests that office is only offered to a popular politician in order to clip his wings (PF ii. p.311.) Perhaps part of the explanation lies in the fact that Bright stands behind both the creations of Monk and Turnbull, the latter appearing as Trollope actually saw Bright, while the former representing Trollope's ideal of popular leader, that is, Bright as he should have been.

Turnbull exerts a strong influence in the House. After the initial introductions of the Reform Bill in Phineas Finn, Turnbull lends it no support - and consequently it is lost. "Mr. Mildmay had no doubt felt that he could not go on with his bill from the moment in which Mr. Turnbull had declared his opposition; but he could not with propriety withdraw it in deference to Mr. Turnbull's opinion." (PF i. p.414.) In Phineas Redux, once Turnbull has risen to his feet to support Daubeny's Disestablishment Bill, "the Ratlers knew that the game was lost." As the Saturday Review wrote of Bright in 1866, "Mr. Bright governs although he does not reign."<sup>(68)</sup> The Fortnightly Review had this to say about Bright in 1866: "... Mr. Bright's position in the House, next to Mr. Gladstone's, is by far the most remarkable. He has exhibited a decided disposition to lead - not to say dictate."<sup>(69)</sup>

Like Turnbull, who in the Disestablishment debate, "was sure to make himself disagreeable to those who sat near him in the House," (PR i. p.367.),<sup>67</sup> Bright spoke frequently and with effect, but "not always a pleasant effect."<sup>(70)</sup> The end, wrote the commentator, is obvious: the government "must approximate very closely to Mr. Bright's programme, or he will turn as fiercely on them as he now does on their and his opponents."<sup>(71)</sup>

In the two novels, Trollope uses Turnbull as a moral touchstone in his debate on proper political behaviour. To Trollope, like Monk, the motives of the men introducing the measures are as important as the measures themselves - although he fully appreciated the artificiality of the conflict which sometimes resulted from this attitude - while to Turnbull the means are well justified by the ends. Much of the life that we sense in Trollope's descriptions of political activity springs from the moral dilemmas faced by the most sympathetic characters, Finn, Monk and Palliser, and to this end, Turnbull's role, which is as much the result of his arrogance as his lack of feeling, is necessary. While there is some inconsistency in Trollope's presentation of his version of Bright, it springs from his belief that politics is properly the profession for gentlemen - with all that that entails as regards fine feeling - and Finn, Monk and Palliser are gentlemen while Turnbull (Bright) is not.

While there is little doubt that to a contemporary reader the resemblance between Bright and Turnbull was clear,<sup>(72)</sup> the degree to which Trollope modelled the other politicians in the novels on real men is less obvious. It is certainly no accident that both the fictional and real leaders of the Conservative party were in the Upper House while the party was led vigorously by a commoner in the Lower House and it seems likely that Lord de Terrier is loosely based on Lord Derby. Lord de Terrier, we are told, would have rather been in opposition than in power (PF i. p.5.), and we know from Greville's memoirs that Lord Russell, in 1856, thought that Derby had no wish to form another government, but "would prefer to go on as he is now, leader of a large party of Peers who are willing to follow him and to make the House of Lords one of the scenes and instruments of his amusement as usual."<sup>(73)</sup> References such as these suggest that Trollope had in mind the major political figures of his day when he wrote, although in many cases it is impossible to determine whether he intended a deliberate parallel to be drawn. It would, however, be surprising if,

in what can be called 'The Age of Palmerston', that impressive figure did not have some influence on Trollope's character creation. In fact, J.R. Dinwiddy, following Robbins, has suggested that the Lord Brock of Framley Parsonage and Can You Forgive Her? is based on Palmerston, partly because of the coincidence of dates (Can You Forgive Her? was written in 1863 - and both Brock and Palmerston are only memories by the end of 1865, the time of Phineas Finn) and partly because Brock stands in "exactly the same relationship to the historical events of the time of the late 1850s as Palmerston did."<sup>(74)</sup> There are certainly similarities between Brock and Palmerston, but more so, there is a resemblance between the character of Mildmay, the Liberal Prime Minister in Phineas Finn, and Palmerston. This, coupled with the fact that Palmerston himself is mentioned twice by name in the political novels, lends support to the suggestion that Trollope used real political figures as models only because there were there to be copied and not, apart from the examples of Daubeny and Turnbull, for consistent purposes of satire. The similarities between Mildmay and Palmerston are strong. Mildmay is referred to in terms of his great age and position in the party. He is "the great Whig Prime Minister," (PF i. p.4.) and "an old man nearly worn out in the service of his country" (PF i. p.282) and "the veteran leader of the liberal side of the House." (PF i. p.59.) There is no doubt about his honesty and patriotism. (PF i. p.64; i. p.406.) His period in office, though lengthy, has not been remarkable for any great political actions and there is a suggestion, as there was a feeling at the end of Palmerston's life, that a change will come after his death. The beginning of Phineas Finn is characterised by a period of political instability, with Mildmay appearing as the only possible person to be Prime Minister. The last few years of Palmerston's life have been called his "Indian Summer, when everyone was waiting for him to die, knowing that things would never be the same again; for, like Melbourne before him, this leader of the Liberal forces left no obvious successor."<sup>(75)</sup> In the novel, after Mildmay's resignation or death there would be, according to Laurence Fitzgibbon, only three figures who could form a ministry on their own - the Duke of St. Bungay, "the most incompetent man in England," Mr. Monk, "the most unfit" and Mr. Gresham, "the most unpopular." Furthermore, Fitzgibbon continues, although all three are unsuitable to lead the country, "the country affords no other." (PF i. p.85.)

Mildmay, as his name suggests, is a man of little action who has

never created anything. (PF i. p.64.) Although this could not, perhaps, be said of Palmerston, there is a close parallel between the situation at the end of his life and the last years of Mildmay's ministry. The Fortnightly Review, on the anniversary of Palmerston's death, wrote that "he endorsed Russell's axiom 'to rest and be thankful', and the nation did rest during the whole period of his premiership."<sup>(76)</sup> We may also compare Palmerston's well-known words, spoken in 1864, with the general view held of Mildmay in Phineas Finn. Palmerston, when asked about domestic affairs and legislation, replied: "'Oh, there is really nothing to be done. We cannot go on adding to the statute book ad infinitum. Perhaps we may have a little law reform or bankruptcy reform: but we cannot go on legislating forever.'"<sup>(77)</sup> On one occasion the Earl of Brentford defends the inactivity of Mildmay's government after it has been criticised by Lady Glencora: "'It has been the great fault of our politicians that they have all wanted to do something.'" "'Mr. Mildmay is at any rate innocent of that charge', said Lady Glencora." (PF i. p.141.)

There is one interesting characteristic of Palmerston which Trollope may well have borrowed for his character of Mildmay, and it well illustrates the sort of detail of behaviour which Trollope found interesting as a novelist. G.M. Trevelyan, in his biography of Bright, writes on one occasion, that "what, if anything, Lord Palmerston felt was concealed as usual beneath his tilted hat."<sup>(78)</sup> This is a favourite trick of Mildmay, particularly when he wishes to hide his vexed feelings. During a speech by Daubeny in which he reviews Mildmay's career, the latter was "sitting with his hat low over his eyes, and many men said that he did not like it." (PF i. p.60.) Later, after another attack by Daubeny, Mildmay repeats this trick, and earns this comment from Trollope - which might well have been applied to Palmerston: "Mr. Mildmay was an impassive man who rarely spoke of his own feelings, and no doubt sat with his hat low down over his eyes in order that no man might judge of them on that occasion by the impression on his features." (PF i. p.73.)

Trollope's introduction of a faint echo of the figure of Palmerston into the novels provides firmer evidence that he consciously set his political novels within an easily recognisable period and that we are to take them as, in part, one man's interpretation of the political activity of the mid 1860s, but in a general way only. He had certain things to say about the way politicians behaved and the

motives which seemed to him to impel such behaviour and these observations, which are very much at the level of the personal, could in no way be aided by a discussion of the relative merits of, say, Palmerston's foreign policies in however disguised a form. It is enough that we recognise the general period in which the action is set.

Objection can be made, on similar grounds, to the suggestion, put forward with good argument by Blair G. Kenney,<sup>(79)</sup> that Trollope based his character of Plantagenet Palliser on Lord John Russell. Mr. Kenney bases his comparison between the two men on three points. Firstly, he demonstrates Trollope's own admiration for Russell as declared in a review of R.H. Hutton's Studies in Parliament, which he wrote for the Fortnightly Review in 1866. Secondly, he shows a similarity between the circumstances of the two men. Finally, he suggests that there is a strong similarity between their characters.

That Trollope should have admired Lord Russell is, perhaps, not surprising. But that he should have deliberately modelled his favourite character on him might be open to some doubt. Indeed, in the autobiography Trollope writes of Palliser in terms which suggest that he sprang entirely from his inner consciousness and further, that he, with his wife Lady Glencora, had been used for "the expression of my political and social convictions ... and as I have not been able to speak from the benches of the House of Commons, or to thunder from platforms, or to be efficacious as a lecturer, they have served me as safety-valves by which to deliver my soul."<sup>(80)</sup> That Trollope should have used a well-known politician as a mouth piece for his own strongly held convictions is extremely unlikely. Nevertheless, there is, as Mr. Kenney points out, some resemblance between the circumstances of Lord Russell and those of Plantagenet Palliser.

Both Lord Russell and Mr. Palliser came from wealthy Whig families and they both married young, lively wives - Russell, however, on his second marriage. Kenney suggests that the letter which Fanny Russell wrote to her husband before his first ministry might well have been written by Lady Glencora: "My mind is made up ... My ambition is that you should be the head of the most moral and religious government the country has ever had."<sup>(81)</sup> The general sentiment, it is true, might have been expressed by Lady Glencora, but hardly the reference to the "moral and religious government."

As further evidence of similarities between the two men, Kenney points to the fact that they both served in coalition governments and



that they were both reluctant to accept peerages. It should be noted however that the fainéant government which Palliser leads and which so significantly lacks the firm guidance of a ruthless politician contributed to the necessary situation for developing Trollope's theme of the difficulties which men of sensitivity experience in politics. While Trollope may have looked back to the Aberdeen coalition of 1852 for his model, there is no reason to suppose, as Kenney does, that he placed a Russell-figure at the head of this coalition government.

There is more reason to suppose a parallel between Russell and Palliser when we look at the similarities between their characters. Kenney shows that both men were regarded as cold and dry, referring to the Memoir by Desmond McCarthy and Agatha Russell which mentions Russell's "shyness and reserve which often caused him to be misunderstood."<sup>(82)</sup> Palliser figures little in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux, but our dominant impression of him is of a conscientious, hard-working and shy man - with the pride of the man who knows his place and value. On Palliser's accession to the peerage Barrington Erle says of him: "He's so shy, he hardly knows how to speak to you..." (PR i. p.330.) Certainly, this shy and retiring nature was Palliser's, but the description which the second Earl of Russell, quoted by John Vincent, gives of Lord Russell's home could hardly be applied to Matching Priory under the rule of Lady Glencora. "The atmosphere at his home, Pembroke Lodge, has been described as 'timid, shrinking, that of a snail withdrawing into its shell, full of high principle and religious feeling.'"<sup>(83)</sup>

With the case of Plantagenet Palliser it is safe to take Trollope's word for his origins. When he introduces personal characteristics into a character, he wrote to Mary Holmes "as in all the Palliser people, - the old Duke, the new Duke and Lady Glencora, there has been no distant idea in my own mind of any living person. They are pure creations; and (as I think) the best I ever made."<sup>(84)</sup> Palliser, like Monk, represents an ideal in politics, and provides a fitting contrast with such utilitarian politicians as Daubeny and Turnbull. Clearly Trollope had his own ideas on how men should behave in the political world, and central place is given in the novels, through the characterisation of Phineas, to the problems which politicians must face. It is quite reasonable, therefore, to suppose that Palliser did spring almost entirely from Trollope's mind, but that with the example of contemporary politicians perpetually in front of him that he should reflect certain characteristics of real people, particularly those whom Trollope admired.

Finally, all the characters in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux who owe something to contemporary politicians occupy relatively minor positions and are not "seen from the inside." Plantagenet Palliser is a central figure in the political novels and is as fully drawn as any of Trollope's major creations. If he owes something in his make-up to Lord Russell, or others, he owes far more to Trollope's own creative talent.

Much the same as this can be said about the characters who live more in the world of society than politics. Madame Max Goesler is an intriguing character and we might, perhaps, expect to find that she was based on a real contemporary of Trollope. Indeed, Escott, in comparing her disadvantageously with Lady Glencora, writes: "Mrs. [sic] Max was a real figure in the society of Trollope's day, and the Duchess of Omnium was an abstraction."<sup>(85)</sup> Unfortunately, however, Escott is tantalisingly silent on the subject of who the mystery woman was. Sir Shane Leslie is more explicit in his identification when he suggests that "Madame Goesler recalls Madame de Lieven, the brilliant foreigner mixing her continental sense of amours in honest British politics."<sup>(86)</sup> and indeed, there are many superficial resemblances. Madame de Lieven, who at the beginning of the century was the wife of the Russian ambassador, came to play a large part in the political and social life of London. She was a great intriguer<sup>(87)</sup> who entranced many who met her, and like Madame Max in company with Lady Glencora, had some influence on the politics of the time. She helped Palmerston, for instance, to a position in the Foreign Office,<sup>(88)</sup> but her influential role in Europe, with her close connexions with Metternich and Guizot,<sup>(89)</sup> place her in an entirely different league from that of Madame Max.

There can be no doubt that Trollope is reflecting accurately one of the influences on political decision-making - certainly during the age of Palmerston - in his picture of Lady Glencora and her drawing-room cliques. Her meddling in politics is much more in evidence in The Prime Minister (1876) than it is in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux, yet Trollope leaves us in no doubt of the importance of her influence on her husband and of her ability to affect major decisions taken by the Prime Minister.<sup>(90)</sup> Frequently, however, her influence on politics amounts merely to meddling (we remember both her attempt to influence an election and the charge made against her by her husband of 'vulgarity' in The Prime Minister) and we may feel inclined to agree with Lady Baldock's assessment of her: "She always seems to me to be like a great schoolgirl who has been allowed too much of her own way." (PF i. p.330.) Despite this, her influence on her husband, and to a

certain extent on society, is strong and may well be a pale echo of Lady Palmerston's similar influence earlier in the century. Philip Guedalla refers to Lady Palmerston as "the very greatest hostess of her age and married to its most English statesman,"<sup>(91)</sup> and speaks of her parties as "almost legendary affairs, with all the world in its best clothes."<sup>(92)</sup> Lady Palmerston's influence on politics was certainly great. "Her unrivalled management of parties gave [Palmerston] a unique advantage over all other public men. All shades in politics met on the staircase at Cambridge House; an awkward interview with Mr. Cobden could end in a civil murmur that 'Lady Palmerston receives tomorrow evening at ten.'"<sup>(93)</sup> But not for Trollope semi-mythical figures of great influence and power. The power wielded by men and women in politics and society interests him, but only to the extent of discovering the degree of that power and the sort of people wielding it. If Lady Glencora reflects Lady Palmerston, and Madame Max Princess Lieven, it is a clear demonstration of Trollope's method of character drawing. As with Daubeny and Gresham, he has taken the public image of politicians - an image less tarnished than today's - and shown its real worth. Lady Glencora, Mr. Daubeny, Mr. Gresham - all wield power of a sort, but all, in Trollope's eyes, are very much human beings with ordinary failings. His treatment of Lady Glencora also reflects Trollope's awareness of change, as does his description of the advent of the 'new' Duke, Plantagenet Palliser. In refusing to accept an apparently unmerited Garter, in not taking a traditional interest in the duties of a landowner (with regard, for instance, to the preservation of foxes) and in accepting subordinate position in government because that would allow him to be of service to his country, he is seen in marked contrast to the idle, but immeasurably dignified old Duke of Omnium. Politics, too, had changed by the sixties and the drawing-room influence was significantly weakened because so many participants, like Monk and Turnbull, did not regard it as an elegant game with the best club facilities in England. Lady Glencora, unlike her husband, is unable to appreciate the change in society and politics and tries to continue in much the same way as Lady Palmerston had, with the result that she ultimately appears rather foolish, like a charming child among adults.

Finally we come to Phineas himself. That we would seriously expect to find Trollope modelling the central character of two novels on a recognisable living person is, no doubt, absurd. Although many names

have been suggested as supposed originals, the truth is that Phineas probably represented many hopeful young men of the fifties and sixties and it would take no great imagination to single out their shared characteristics.

The first commentator to suggest an original for Phineas was T.H. Escott, who stated that he had a dual inspiration: in his good looks he resembled Colonel King-Harman whom Trollope met at the Arts Club, "but at all other points Trollope's Irish member, by his fine presence, winning manners and return to St. Stephens after an interval of absence, suggests Sir John Pope Hennessy ... during the pre-Household Suffrage portion of the Victorian Age."<sup>(94)</sup> Michael Sadleir, following an article by T.P.O'Connor, in T.P. and Cassell's Weekly, suggests, apart from Pope-Hennessy, a London journalist called Joe Parkinson who began life as a civil servant, and then turned his hand to journalism.<sup>(95)</sup> "In his youth Parkinson was a strikingly handsome man, with large fine dark eyes, a very well-chiselled nose, fine height and great breadth of shoulders, and I suppose many ladies were in love with him."<sup>(96)</sup> Like Phineas, Joe Parkinson married well, but unlike his supposed literary descendant he spent the rest of his life as a wealthy director of his father-in-law's companies.

John Pope Hennessy, "a young and brilliant Cork man who had come from much the same sort of dim, unpromising middle-class background as Phineas himself," according to his grandson and recent biographer of Trollope,<sup>(97)</sup> also started life as a civil servant, but soon gave up his position to stand for an Irish borough as a Tory and supporter of Disraeli.<sup>(98)</sup> He was a firm friend of Disraeli and finished his life as a colonial governor. One final original for Phineas has been confidently suggested by Sir Shane Leslie: John Sadleir, the political adventurer, who has already been mentioned in an earlier chapter.<sup>(99)</sup> Sadleir, the infamous Member of Parliament for Carlow, was one of the leaders of "a group of dishonest men among the Irish Members of Parliament"<sup>(100)</sup> who agitated for Tenant Right in Ireland, and then against the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, causing the Protestants to leave the Land Movement and being rewarded for their actions with government office. Sadleir was made a Junior Lord of the Treasury, but finally committed suicide after the collapse of his brother's bank and after it had been disclosed that he had been a swindler.<sup>(101)</sup>

It is clearly impossible to suggest that any one of these men provided the model for Phineas. Trollope required a good-looking young

man for the hero of the two novels - but he had created many good-looking young men before Phineas. He required an outsider to London society, and having conceived the novels in Ireland, what better place to bring him from than that country? It is hardly likely, with his feelings against Disraeli, that he would have modelled his hero on one of that man's greatest supporters. He may well have had John Sadleir in mind when he made Phineas an advocate of Tenant Right and a junior minister in the government, but clearly the rest of Sadleir's career was hardly the model for the conscientious and honest Phineas. Phineas, in all his essential aspects, is purely the product of Trollope's imagination as his central role in the novels would suggest. He owes a great deal, (of course, to Trollope's preconceptions about how a gentleman should behave - and in this respect shares many characteristics with other Trollopian heroes - and perhaps we might also tentatively suggest that Trollope saw in the career of this lucky adventurer something of the career he himself would have liked in politics, projecting onto Phineas the self-confidence which Trollope signally lacked as a young man.

It is clear that Trollope did base some of the characters in Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux on living politicians and to some extent it is easy to understand why. By setting his novels in a recognisable period - in fact contemporary with their writing - it was inevitable that the chief politicians of the day should figure prominently in the action. It would, of course, have been more difficult to have invented completely fictional characters to carry out legislation which was introduced by real people. To this extent, therefore, Trollope's method of creating his fictional politicians is consistent with his treatment of the historical events of the period. By using real events fictionalised and real politicians fictionalised he builds up a convincingly 'realistic' background before which the actions of the novels take place. Of course, the mere fact of using real events and people in a novel does not make them appear so to a modern reader who lacks the basic knowledge which Trollope could have assumed in a mid-nineteenth century reader. Trollope's particular brand of realism stems from his treatment of his politicians, and from his method of describing the public figures from the outside, allowing us, in fact, no more information about them than we could easily have gleaned from newspapers or journals. We do not know how Daubeny behaves at home; but Trollope insists that we be aware all the time that he is only describing one side of the man. "I

wonder what he did when he got home." Ratler says after one of Daubeny's fiery displays. "Had some gruel and went to bed," said Bonteen. "They say these scenes in the House never disturb him at home." (PR i. p.428.) Turnbull, too, is treated in the same way. Although it is a hostile portrait of Bright there is nothing 'personal' in it, as Trollope himself was quick to insist. We know that during the riots over the ballot, which Turnbull has engineered, that the great radical has taken care of his own personal comfort. But we are given this knowledge only indirectly and are no more privileged than the reader of a leader in the Times of the period. "He understands all about it," said Laurence. He had a good meal at three, before he left home, and you'd find sandwiches and sherry in plenty if you were to search his carriage. He knows how to remedy the costs of mob popularity." (PF i. p.285.)

Had Trollope been intent only on writing a 'fictionalised history' of the mid-1860s this explanation of his treatment of real politicians would be simple and satisfactory. But his aims were deeper and wider than this. Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux are very much books about political honesty and the dangers and difficulties inherent in political action. Most of the 'fictionalised' politicians in the novels - most obviously Daubeny, Turnbull, Gresham and Mildmay - fail in significant ways to provide an ideal of political behaviour. This is no doubt Trollope's view of the politicians he saw in the House of Commons, his clubs and the offices of the Fortnightly. But in the details which he chooses from his real-life models he consistently brings out those which emphasise the politicians' human failings and, often, hypocrisy. Set against these 'real' characters, and this would have been very clear to a contemporary reader, are Trollope's pure creations, the most important of whom - Monk, Palliser and, to a large extent Finn, who is learning - represent that commitment which Trollope thought so necessary in politics. There is nothing grand in their behaviour; they are honest working men who see in politics not the game which it so often seemed but a job to be done in the best way that they knew how. If this seems to apply more to Palliser than to Monk or Finn we must remember that Monk's genuine idealism, which is contrasted with Turnbull's falseness, is tempered with the knowledge that in politics change occurs only slowly. Finn, too, after his disillusionment at the end of Phineas Redux turns into a good working politician in later novels.

Phineas Finn and Phineas Redux are not purely, or even primarily, political novels, but an understanding of his treatment of politicians in the books must add much to our appreciation of their complexity. Our knowledge of Trollope's use of 'originals' highlights his understanding of society in a continual state of change and his appreciation of the individuals who contribute to the moulding of that society.

Notes to Chapter Four

1. Cockshut, Anthony Trollope, p.241.
2. Sadleir, Trollope, p.416.
3. Frederick Harrison, introduction to Phineas Fim (London, 1911), p.ii.
4. Daily Telegraph, April 1, 1869, p.3.
5. Letters, p.355.
6. Notes and Queries, 8 (1907), 349.
7. Autobiography, p.199.
8. Ibid., p.36.
9. Ibid., p.80.
10. Ibid.
11. Harrison, p.ii.
12. Autobiography, p.137.
13. Algernon West, "The Cosmopolitan Club," Cornhill Magazine, NS 15 (1902), 170.
14. Escott, Anthony Trollope, p.154.
15. Autobiography, p.138.
16. Escott, pp. 174-5.
17. Escott, p.175.
18. R.W. Chapman, "Personal Names in Trollope's Political Novels," in Essays Mainly in the Nineteenth Century Presented to Sir Humphry Milford (London, 1948), pp.72-81.
19. Cockshut, Anthony Trollope, p.243.
20. Cockshut, p.248.
21. Ibid.
22. J.W. Dinwiddy, "Who's Who in Trollope's Political Novels," NCF 22 (1967-8), 31-46.
23. But see below, p.131.
24. Chapman, p.75.
25. Autobiography, p.223.
26. Ibid.
27. Sadleir, p.330.
28. Autobiography, p.250.
29. Quoted by Briggs, Victorian People, p.274.
30. Quoted by Briggs, p.299.
31. Quoted by Froude, The Earl of Beaconsfield, p.2.
32. Froude, p.191.
33. Ibid., p.193.
34. Escott, p.54.
35. Cockshut, p.246.



36. Dinwiddy, pp.35-38.
37. Morley, Life of Gladstone, pp.885-6.
38. Vincent, Formation of the Liberal Party, p.227.
39. "It has been the great fault of our politicians that they have all wanted to do something" PF i. p.141.
40. J.S. Mill in 1864, quoted by Morley, p.757.
41. Quoted by Morley, p.805.
42. James Bryce, Studies in Contemporary Biography (London, 1904), p.426.
43. Bryce, p.402.
44. Quoted by Dinwiddy, p.36.
45. Bryce, p.405.
46. Ibid.
47. See Phineas Redux i. p.356.
48. Dinwiddy, p.36.
49. Letters, p.433, quoted by Dinwiddy, p.36.
50. Bryce, p.422.
51. Philip Magnus, Gladstone (London, 1954), p.176.
52. This, incidentally, is one of the more specific references to Gladstone himself as Sutherland, in the notes to his edition of Phineas Finn, has shown.(p.745). It appears to refer to Gladstone's speech to the House of Commons in 1864 in which he said that "every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or of political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution." The Saturday Review of March 1864 refers to Gladstone's "saying about the abstract right of all humanity to the franchise." (Sutherland, Ibid.)
53. Bryce, p.476.
54. Quoted by Dinwiddy, p.36.
55. Magnus, Gladstone, p.186.
56. Blake, Disraeli, p.346.
57. "Mr. Trollope's Last Irish Novel," Dublin Review, 65 (October 1869), 361-367.
58. Cockshut, p.244.
59. Dinwiddy, p.45.
60. Briggs, "John Bright and the Creed of Reform," pp.205-239.
61. Briggs, p.217.
62. Briggs, p.229.
63. Quoted by Briggs, p.209.
64. Quoted by Briggs, p.206. The eyewitness was the American journalist, George W. Smalley.
65. Vincent, p.165.
66. Quoted by Briggs, p.206.

67. "Gladstone often described how, after the 1868 election, he wrestled with Bright from eleven o'clock until past midnight, striving to overcome his repugnance to office." Morley, p.888.
68. Quoted by Trevelyan, John Bright, p.346.
69. Fortnightly Review 4 (February 1866), 238.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. See Saturday Review 27 (March 1869), 431-432, quoted by Donald Smalley, Trollope: The Critical Heritage (London, 1969), pp.315-317.
73. The Greville Memoirs, p.43.
74. Dinwiddy, p.34.
75. Donald Southgate, The Most English Minister (London, 1966), p.527.
76. Fortnightly Review 6 (October 1866), 620.
77. Quoted by Southgate, The Most English Minister, p.528.
78. Trevelyan, Bright, p.239.
79. Blair G. Kenney, "Trollope's Ideal Statesman: Plantagenet Palliser and Lord John Russell," NCJ 20 (December 1965), 281-285.
80. Autobiography, p.155.
81. Kenney, p.282.
82. Kenney, p.283.
83. Vincent, p.141.
84. Letters, p.355.
85. Escott, p.265.
86. Introduction to Phineas Finn, p.vii.
87. She was "in manners insolent or entrancing as her interests dictated, a superb intriguer who was to build up an astonishing social and political influence in English life." Michaël Joyce, My Friend H. John Gam Hobhouse (London, 1948), p.50.
88. L.G. Robinson, ed., Princess Lieven, Letters (London, 1902), p.94.
89. Peter Quennell, ed., The Private Letters of Princess Lieven to Prince Metternich, 1820-1826 (London, 1937), pp. xi and xvi.
90. See Chapter 3 above, p.p.102-103.
91. Guedalla, Bonnet and Shawl, pp.157-158.
92. Ibid., p.158.
93. Ibid., p.175.
94. Escott, p.264.
95. Sadleir, p.264.
96. T.P. O'Connor, T.P. & Cassell's Weekly, June 5, 1926, p.199.
97. James Pope Hennessy, Anthony Trollope (London, 1971), p.280.
98. O'Connor, T.P. & Cassell's Weekly, p.200.

99. See Chapter 3, above pp.79-80.
100. John Devoy, Recollections of an Irish Rebel (London, 1929), p.11.
101. Devoy, p.12.

## CONCLUSION

Perhaps Trollope's basic rule for novel-writing is that which he expressed in a lecture on English prose fiction. Criticising the Gothic Mysteries of Udolpho, he says, "it lacks that which we all demand. It is unreal and unlife-like. It is not true. ... The realistic tendencies of a people will cause them to be furnished with works of art which are life-like."<sup>(1)</sup> This insistence on realism - in his terms, the representation of ordinary, everyday events without distortion - was partly the result of his belief that novels are written to teach, and to teach about love particularly. Later in the same lecture he says that novels "not only contain love stories, but they are written for the sake of the love stories."<sup>(2)</sup> They must therefore be a close enough reflection of the times to be a practical guide to contemporary youth.

We have been especially concerned with the political, historical and social themes which run through these two novels of Trollope and it has, I hope, become clear that while Trollope's aims were many, one of the lessons which he intended his readers to take concerned that of political honesty. This theme is apparent in his treatment of historical and political events especially when those events are mirroring those of the 1850s and 1860s. It is not usually the events themselves which Trollope found important but what they tell us about the men involved in them. Thus the confusion attendant on forming a government tells us of Trollope's belief that most politicians want power for less than noble reasons; his treatment of Reform and Disestablishment shows us that, for him, party politics were unimportant and that either side, once they had won the 'game' would behave in the same way. Of course there are villains - usually the Tories or Radicals - but in Trollope's political world most men of whatever political hue behave in a way which, while not ideal, at least reflects their very real human weaknesses. This goes some way to explain Arthur Pollard's view that "Trollope recognised that politics are not perpetually involved with large issues and important ideas."<sup>(3)</sup>

Despite Trollope's views the didactic element is not strong in these books. Certainly theoretical problems concerning, for instance, the behaviour of a married woman within a certain section of society, are dealt with. But Trollope's answer, far from being purely the result of a desire to teach a moral lesson, comes from a depth of understanding both of human nature and of society. Lady Laura's

problems stem from her belonging to a particular caste, but Trollope's sympathetic treatment of them comes from his understanding of the pressures of society as well as from a perception of human psychology. Similarly, Trollope understands the changing nature of society so that his portrait of Lord Brentford, which exposes all the hypocrisy of a class, is full of sympathy.

Nothing in the novels is allowed to get too big or grandiose. The greatest political event in Phineas Finn - Reform - degenerates into petty squabbling, and while this may accurately echo the real event it is further evidence that Trollope was concerned with politics at a human level. Because of this our final and strongest memories of the books are of the relatively lowly problems of such people as Phineas, Lady Laura or Lord Brentford. Lowly, that is, in comparison with the events which are taking place in the real corridors of power. But Trollope has skilfully shown us that, important as these events may be in changing the face of the country, they are created by men of often mediocre minds and ambitions. In a society in which political necessity has come to replace idealism the difficulties of finding the correct mode of behaviour - of behaving in an honest way - are great. This, then, is the lesson which Trollope's clear observation of mid-nineteenth century society led him to teach.

#### Notes for Conclusion

1. M.L. Parrish, ed., Anthony Trollope: Four Lectures (London, 1938), p.104.
2. Parrish, p.108.
3. Arthur Pollard, Trollope's Political Novels (University of Hull Inaugural Lecture, 1968), p.24.

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