

Autobiography of Anthony Trollope

Anthony Trollope

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Autobiography of Anthony Trollope
by Anthony Trollope
(#40 in our series by Anthony Trollope)

Copyright laws are changing all over the world. Be sure to check the copyright laws for your country before downloading or redistributing this or any other Project Gutenberg eBook.

This header should be the first thing seen when viewing this Project Gutenberg file. Please do not remove it. Do not change or edit the header without written permission.

Please read the "legal small print," and other information about the eBook and Project Gutenberg at the bottom of this file. Included is important information about your specific rights and restrictions in how the file may be used. You can also find out about how to make a donation to Project Gutenberg, and how to get involved.

****Welcome To The World of Free Plain Vanilla Electronic Texts****

****eBooks Readable By Both Humans and By Computers, Since 1971****

*******These eBooks Were Prepared By Thousands of Volunteers!*******

Title: Autobiography of Anthony Trollope

Author: Anthony Trollope

Release Date: June, 2004 [EBook #5978]
[Yes, we are more than one year ahead of schedule]
[This file was first posted on October 4, 2002]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

***** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK, AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ANTHONY TROLLOPE *****

This etext was produced by Jesse Chandler (lots_of_nature@yahoo.co.uk)

Livros Grátis

<http://www.livrosgratis.com.br>

Milhares de livros grátis para download.

Autobiography of Anthony Trollope

By Anthony Trollope

PREFACE

It may be well that I should put a short preface to this book. In the summer of 1878 my father told me that he had written a memoir of his own life. He did not speak about it at length, but said that he had written me a letter, not to be opened until after his death, containing instructions for publication.

This letter was dated 30th April, 1876. I will give here as much of it as concerns the public: "I wish you to accept as a gift from me, given you now, the accompanying pages which contain a memoir of my life. My intention is that they shall be published after my death, and be edited by you. But I leave it altogether to your discretion whether to publish or to suppress the work;--and also to your discretion whether any part or what part shall be omitted. But I would not wish that anything should be added to the memoir. If you wish to say any word as from yourself, let it be done in the shape of a preface or introductory chapter." At the end there is a postscript: "The publication, if made at all, should be effected as soon as possible after my death." My father died on the 6th of December, 1882.

It will be seen, therefore, that my duty has been merely to pass the book through the press conformably to the above instructions. I have placed headings to the right-hand pages throughout the book, and I do not conceive that I was precluded from so doing. Additions of any other sort there have been none; the few footnotes are my father's own additions or corrections. And I have made no alterations. I have suppressed some few passages, but not more than would amount to two printed pages has been omitted. My father has not given any of his own letters, nor was it his wish that any should be published.

So much I would say by way of preface. And I think I may also give in a few words the main incidents in my father's life after he completed his autobiography.

He has said that he had given up hunting; but he still kept two horses for such riding as may be had in or about the immediate neighborhood of London. He continued to ride to the end of his life: he liked the exercise, and I think it would have distressed him not to have had a horse in his stable. But he never spoke willingly on hunting matters. He had at last resolved to give up his favourite amusement, and that as far as he was concerned there should be an end of it. In the spring of 1877 he went to South Africa, and returned early in the following year with a book on the colony already written. In the summer of 1878, he was one of a party of ladies and gentlemen who made an expedition to Iceland in the "Mastiff," one of Mr. John Burns' steam-ships. The journey

lasted altogether sixteen days, and during that time Mr. and Mrs. Burns were the hospitable entertainers. When my father returned, he wrote a short account of How the "Mastiffs" went to Iceland. The book was printed, but was intended only for private circulation.

Every day, until his last illness, my father continued his work. He would not otherwise have been happy. He demanded from himself less than he had done ten years previously, but his daily task was always done. I will mention now the titles of his books that were published after the last included in the list which he himself has given at the end of the second volume:--

An Eye for an Eye, 1879
Cousin Henry, 1879
Thackeray, 1879
The Duke's Children, 1880
Life of Cicero, 1880
Ayala's Angel, 1881
Doctor Wortle's School, 1881
Frau Frohmann and other Stories, . . 1882
Lord Palmerston, 1882
The Fixed Period, 1882
Kept in the Dark, 1882
Marion Fay, 1882
Mr. Scarborough's Family, 1883

At the time of his death he had written four-fifths of an Irish story, called The Landleaguers, shortly about to be published; and he left in manuscript a completed novel, called An Old Man's Love, which will be published by Messrs. Blackwood & Sons in 1884.

In the summer of 1880 my father left London, and went to live at Harting, a village in Sussex, but on the confines of Hampshire. I think he chose that spot because he found there a house that suited him, and because of the prettiness of the neighborhood. His last long journey was a trip to Italy in the late winter and spring of 1881; but he went to Ireland twice in 1882. He went there in May of that year, and was then absent nearly a month. This journey did him much good, for he found that the softer atmosphere relieved his asthma, from which he had been suffering for nearly eighteen months. In August following he made another trip to Ireland, but from this journey he derived less benefit. He was much interested in, and was very much distressed by, the unhappy condition of the country. Few men know Ireland better than he did. He had lived there for sixteen years, and his Post Office word had taken him into every part of the island. In the summer of 1882 he began his last novel, The Landleaguers, which, as stated above, was unfinished when he died. This book was a cause of anxiety to him. He could not rid his mind of the fact that he had a story already in the course of publication, but which he had not yet completed. In no other case, except Framley Parsonage, did my father publish even the first number of any novel before he had fully completed the whole tale.

On the evening of the 3rd of November, 1882, he was seized with paralysis on the right side, accompanied by loss of speech. His mind had also failed, though at intervals his thoughts would return to him. After the first three weeks these lucid intervals became rarer, but it was always very difficult to tell how far his mind

was sound or how far astray. He died on the evening of the 6th of December following, nearly five weeks from the night of his attack.

I have been led to say these few words, not at all from a desire to supplement my father's biography of himself, but to mention the main incidents in his life after he had finished his own record. In what I have here said I do not think I have exceeded his instructions.

Henry M. Trollope.
September, 1883.

Autobiography of Anthony Trollope

CHAPTER I

MY EDUCATION

1815-1834

In writing these pages, which, for the want of a better name, I shall be fain to call the autobiography of so insignificant a person as myself, it will not be so much my intention to speak of the little details of my private life, as of what I, and perhaps others round me, have done in literature; of my failures and successes such as they have been, and their causes; and of the opening which a literary career offers to men and women for the earning of their bread. And yet the garrulity of old age, and the aptitude of a man's mind to recur to the passages of his own life, will, I know, tempt me to say something of myself;--nor, without doing so, should I know how to throw my matter into any recognised and intelligible form. That I, or any man, should tell everything of himself, I hold to be impossible. Who could endure to own the doing of a mean thing? Who is there that has done none? But this I protest:--that nothing that I say shall be untrue. I will set down naught in malice; nor will I give to myself, or others, honour which I do not believe to have been fairly won. My boyhood was, I think, as unhappy as that of a young gentleman could well be, my misfortunes arising from a mixture of poverty and gentle standing on the part of my father, and from an utter want on my part of the juvenile manhood which enables some boys to hold up their heads even among the distresses which such a position is sure to produce.

I was born in 1815, in Keppel Street, Russell Square; and while a baby, was carried down to Harrow, where my father had built a house on a large farm which, in an evil hour he took on a long lease from Lord Northwick. That farm was the grave of all my father's hopes, ambition, and prosperity, the cause of my mother's sufferings, and of those of her children, and perhaps the director of her destiny

and of ours. My father had been a Wykamist and a fellow of New College, and Winchester was the destination of my brothers and myself; but as he had friends among the masters at Harrow, and as the school offered an education almost gratuitous to children living in the parish, he, with a certain aptitude to do things differently from others, which accompanied him throughout his life, determined to use that august seminary as "t'other school" for Winchester, and sent three of us there, one after the other, at the age of seven. My father at this time was a Chancery barrister practising in London, occupying dingy, almost suicidal chambers, at No. 23 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn,--chambers which on one melancholy occasion did become absolutely suicidal. [Footnote: A pupil of his destroyed himself in the rooms.] He was, as I have been informed by those quite competent to know, an excellent and most conscientious lawyer, but plagued with so bad a temper, that he drove the attorneys from him. In his early days he was a man of some small fortune and of higher hopes. These stood so high at the time of my birth, that he was felt to be entitled to a country house, as well as to that in Keppel Street; and in order that he might build such a residence, he took the farm. This place he called Julians, and the land runs up to the foot of the hill on which the school and the church stand,--on the side towards London. Things there went much against him; the farm was ruinous, and I remember that we all regarded the Lord Northwick of those days as a cormorant who was eating us up. My father's clients deserted him. He purchased various dark gloomy chambers in and about Chancery Lane, and his purchases always went wrong. Then, as a final crushing blow, and old uncle, whose heir he was to have been, married and had a family! The house in London was let; and also the house he built at Harrow, from which he descended to a farmhouse on the land, which I have endeavoured to make known to some readers under the name of Orley Farm. This place, just as it was when we lived there, is to be seen in the frontispiece to the first edition of that novel, having the good fortune to be delineated by no less a pencil than that of John Millais.

My two elder brothers had been sent as day-boarders to Harrow School from the bigger house, and may probably have been received among the aristocratic crowd,--not on equal terms, because a day-boarder at Harrow in those days was never so received,--but at any rate as other day-boarders. I do not suppose that they were well treated, but I doubt whether they were subjected to the ignominy which I endured. I was only seven, and I think that boys at seven are now spared among their more considerate seniors. I was never spared; and was not even allowed to run to and fro between our house and the school without a daily purgatory. No doubt my appearance was against me. I remember well, when I was still the junior boy in the school, Dr. Butler, the head-master, stopping me in the street, and asking me, with all the clouds of Jove upon his brow and the thunder in his voice, whether it was possible that Harrow School was disgraced by so disreputably dirty a boy as I! Oh, what I felt at that moment! But I could not look my feelings. I do not doubt that I was dirty;--but I think that he was cruel. He must have known me had he seen me as he was wont to see me, for he was in the habit of flogging me constantly. Perhaps he did not recognise me by my face.

At this time I was three years at Harrow; and, as far as I can remember, I was the junior boy in the school when I left it.

Then I was sent to a private school at Sunbury, kept by Arthur Drury. This, I think, must have been done in accordance with the advice of Henry Drury, who was my tutor at Harrow School, and my father's friend, and who may probably have expressed an opinion that my juvenile career was not proceeding in a satisfactory manner at Harrow. To Sunbury I went, and during the two years I was there, though I never had any pocket-money, and seldom had much in the way of clothes, I lived more nearly on terms of equality with other boys than at any other period during my very prolonged school-days. Even here, I was always in disgrace. I remember well how, on one occasion, four boys were selected as having been the perpetrators of some nameless horror. What it was, to this day I cannot even guess; but I was one of the four, innocent as a babe, but adjudged to have been the guiltiest of the guilty. We each had to write out a sermon, and my sermon was the longest of the four. During the whole of one term-time we were helped last at every meal. We were not allowed to visit the playground till the sermon was finished. Mine was only done a day or two before the holidays. Mrs. Drury, when she saw us, shook her head with pitying horror. There were ever so many other punishments accumulated on our heads. It broke my heart, knowing myself to be innocent, and suffering also under the almost equally painful feeling that the other three--no doubt wicked boys--were the curled darlings of the school, who would never have selected me to share their wickedness with them. I contrived to learn, from words that fell from Mr. Drury, that he condemned me because I, having come from a public school, might be supposed to be the leader of wickedness! On the first day of the next term he whispered to me half a word that perhaps he had been wrong. With all a stupid boy's slowness, I said nothing; and he had not the courage to carry reparation further. All that was fifty years ago, and it burns me now as though it were yesterday. What lily-livered curs those boys must have been not to have told the truth!--at any rate as far as I was concerned. I remember their names well, and almost wish to write them here.

When I was twelve there came the vacancy at Winchester College which I was destined to fill. My two elder brothers had gone there, and the younger had been taken away, being already supposed to have lost his chance of New College. It had been one of the great ambitions of my father's life that his three sons, who lived to go to Winchester, should all become fellows of New College. But that suffering man was never destined to have an ambition gratified. We all lost the prize which he struggled with infinite labour to put within our reach. My eldest brother all but achieved it, and afterwards went to Oxford, taking three exhibitions from the school, though he lost the great glory of a Wykamist. He has since made himself well known to the public as a writer in connection with all Italian subjects. He is still living as I now write. But my other brother died early.

While I was at Winchester my father's affairs went from bad to worse. He gave up his practice at the bar, and, unfortunate that he was, took another farm. It is odd that a man should conceive,--and in this case a highly educated and a very clever man,--that farming should be a business in which he might make money without any special education or apprenticeship. Perhaps of all trades it is the one in which an accurate knowledge of what things should be done, and the best manner of doing them, is most necessary. And it is one also for success in which a sufficient capital is indispensable.

He had no knowledge, and, when he took this second farm, no capital. This was the last step preparatory to his final ruin.

Soon after I had been sent to Winchester my mother went to America, taking with her my brother Henry and my two sisters, who were then no more than children. This was, I think, in 1827. I have no clear knowledge of her object, or of my father's; but I believe that he had an idea that money might be made by sending goods,--little goods, such as pin-cushions, pepper-boxes, and pocket-knives,--out to the still unfurnished States; and that she conceived that an opening might be made for my brother Henry by erecting some bazaar or extended shop in one of the Western cities. Whence the money came I do not know, but the pocket-knives and the pepper-boxes were bought and the bazaar built. I have seen it since in the town of Cincinnati,--a sorry building! But I have been told that in those days it was an imposing edifice. My mother went first, with my sisters and second brother. Then my father followed them, taking my elder brother before he went to Oxford. But there was an interval of some year and a half during which he and I were in Winchester together.

Over a period of forty years, since I began my manhood at a desk in the Post Office, I and my brother, Thomas Adolphus, have been fast friends. There have been hot words between us, for perfect friendship bears and allows hot words. Few brothers have had more of brotherhood. But in those schooldays he was, of all my foes, the worst. In accordance with the practice of the college, which submits, or did then submit, much of the tuition of the younger boys from the elder, he was my tutor; and in his capacity of teacher and ruler, he had studied the theories of Draco. I remember well how he used to exact obedience after the manner of that lawgiver. Hang a little boy for stealing apples, he used to say, and other little boys will not steal apples. The doctrine was already exploded elsewhere, but he stuck to it with conservative energy. The result was that, as a part of his daily exercise, he thrashed me with a big stick. That such thrashings should have been possible at a school as a continual part of one's daily life, seems to me to argue a very ill condition of school discipline.

At this period I remember to have passed one set of holidays--the midsummer holidays--in my father's chambers in Lincoln's Inn. There was often a difficulty about the holidays,--as to what should be done with me. On this occasion my amusement consisted in wandering about among those old deserted buildings, and in reading Shakespeare out of a bi-columned edition, which is still among my books. It was not that I had chosen Shakespeare, but that there was nothing else to read.

After a while my brother left Winchester and accompanied my father to America. Then another and a different horror fell to my fate. My college bills had not been paid, and the school tradesmen who administered to the wants of the boys were told not to extend their credit to me. Boots, waistcoats, and pocket-handkerchiefs, which, with some slight surveillance, were at the command of other scholars, were closed luxuries to me. My schoolfellows of course knew that it was so, and I became a Pariah. It is the nature of boys to be cruel. I have sometimes doubted whether among each other they do usually suffer much, one from the other's cruelty; but I suffered horribly! I could make no stand against it. I had no friend

to whom I could pour out my sorrows. I was big, and awkward, and ugly, and, I have no doubt, sulked about in a most unattractive manner. Of course I was ill-dressed and dirty. But ah! how well I remember all the agonies of my young heart; how I considered whether I should always be alone; whether I could not find my way up to the top of that college tower, and from thence put an end to everything? And a worse thing came than the stoppage of the supplies from the shopkeepers. Every boy had a shilling a week pocket-money, which we called battels, and which was advanced to us out of the pocket of the second master. On one awful day the second master announced to me that my battels would be stopped. He told me the reason,--the battels for the last half-year had not been repaid; and he urged his own unwillingness to advance the money. The loss of a shilling a week would not have been much,--even though pocket-money from other sources never reached me,--but that the other boys all knew it! Every now and again, perhaps three or four times in a half-year, these weekly shillings were given to certain servants of the college, in payment, it may be presumed, for some extra services. And now, when it came to the turn of any servant, he received sixty-nine shillings instead of seventy, and the cause of the defalcation was explained to him. I never saw one of those servants without feeling I had picked his pocket.

When I had been at Winchester something over three years, my father returned to England and took me away. Whether this was done because of the expense, or because my chance of New College was supposed to have passed away, I do not know. As a fact, I should, I believe, have gained the prize, as there occurred in my year an exceptional number of vacancies. But it would have served me nothing, as there would have been no funds for my maintenance at the University till I should have entered in upon the fruition of the founder's endowment, and my career at Oxford must have been unfortunate.

When I left Winchester, I had three more years of school before me, having as yet endured nine. My father at this time having left my mother and sisters with my younger brother in America, took himself to live at a wretched tumble-down farmhouse on the second farm he had hired! And I was taken there with him. It was nearly three miles from Harrow, at Harrow Weald, but in the parish; and from this house I was again sent to that school as a day-boarder. Let those who know what is the usual appearance and what the usual appurtenances of a boy at such a school, consider what must have been my condition among them, with a daily walk of twelve miles through the lanes, added to the other little troubles and labours of a school life!

Perhaps the eighteen months which I passed in this condition, walking to and fro on those miserably dirty lanes, was the worst period of my life. I was now over fifteen, and had come to an age at which I could appreciate at its full the misery of expulsion from all social intercourse. I had not only no friends, but was despised by all my companions. The farmhouse was not only no more than a farmhouse, but was one of those farmhouses which seem always to be in danger of falling into the neighbouring horse-pond. As it crept downwards from house to stables, from stables to barns, from barns to cowsheds, and from cowsheds to dungheaps, one could hardly tell where one began and the other ended! There was a parlour in which my father lived, shut up among big books; but I passed my most jocund hours in the kitchen, making innocent love to the bailiff's

daughter. The farm kitchen might be very well through the evening, when the horrors of the school were over; but it all added to the cruelty of the days. A sizar at a Cambridge college, or a Bible-clerk at Oxford, has not pleasant days, or used not to have them half a century ago; but his position was recognised, and the misery was measured. I was a sizar at a fashionable school, a condition never premeditated. What right had a wretched farmer's boy, reeking from a dunghill, to sit next to the sons of peers,--or much worse still, next to the sons of big tradesmen who made their ten thousand a year? The indignities I endured are not to be described. As I look back it seems to me that all hands were turned against me,--those of masters as well as boys. I was allowed to join in no plays. Nor did I learn anything,--for I was taught nothing. The only expense, except that of books, to which a house-boarder was then subject, was the fee to a tutor, amounting, I think, to ten guineas. My tutor took me without the fee; but when I heard him declare the fact in the pupil-room before the boys, I hardly felt grateful for the charity. I was never a coward, and cared for a thrashing as little as any boy, but one cannot make a stand against the acerbities of three hundred tyrants without a moral courage of which at that time I possessed none. I know that I skulked, and was odious to the eyes of those I admired and envied. At last I was driven to rebellion, and there came a great fight,--at the end of which my opponent had to be taken home for a while. If these words be ever printed, I trust that some schoolfellow of those days may still be left alive who will be able to say that, in claiming this solitary glory of my school-days, I am not making a false boast.

I wish I could give some adequate picture of the gloom of that farmhouse. My elder brother--Tom as I must call him in my narrative, though the world, I think, knows him best as Adolphus--was at Oxford. My father and I lived together, he having no means of living except what came from the farm. My memory tells me that he was always in debt to his landlord and to the tradesmen he employed. Of self-indulgence no one could accuse him. Our table was poorer, I think, than that of the bailiff who still hung on to our shattered fortunes. The furniture was mean and scanty. There was a large rambling kitchen-garden, but no gardener; and many times verbal incentives were made to me,--generally, I fear, in vain,--to get me to lend a hand at digging and planting. Into the hayfields on holidays I was often compelled to go,--not, I fear, with much profit. My father's health was very bad. During the last ten years of his life, he spent nearly the half of his time in bed, suffering agony from sick headaches. But he was never idle unless when suffering. He had at this time commenced a work,--an *Encyclopaedia Ecclesiastica*, as he called it,--on which he laboured to the moment of his death. It was his ambition to describe all ecclesiastical terms, including the denominations of every fraternity of monks and every convent of nuns, with all their orders and subdivisions. Under crushing disadvantages, with few or no books of reference, with immediate access to no library, he worked at his most ungrateful task with unflagging industry. When he died, three numbers out of eight had been published by subscription; and are now, I fear, unknown, and buried in the midst of that huge pile of futile literature, the building up of which has broken so many hearts.

And my father, though he would try, as it were by a side wind, to get a useful spurt of work out of me, either in the garden or in the hay-field, had constantly an eye to my scholastic improvement.

From my very babyhood, before those first days at Harrow, I had to take my place alongside of him as he shaved at six o'clock in the morning, and say my early rules from the Latin Grammar, or repeat the Greek alphabet; and was obliged at these early lessons to hold my head inclined towards him, so that in the event of guilty fault, he might be able to pull my hair without stopping his razor or dropping his shaving-brush. No father was ever more anxious for the education of his children, though I think none ever knew less how to go about the work. Of amusement, as far as I can remember, he never recognised the need. He allowed himself no distraction, and did not seem to think it was necessary to a child. I cannot bethink me of aught that he ever did for my gratification; but for my welfare,--for the welfare of us all,--he was willing to make any sacrifice. At this time, in the farmhouse at Harrow Weald, he could not give his time to teach me, for every hour that he was not in the fields was devoted to his monks and nuns; but he would require me to sit at a table with Lexicon and Gradus before me. As I look back on my resolute idleness and fixed determination to make no use whatever of the books thus thrust upon me, or of the hours, and as I bear in mind the consciousness of great energy in after-life, I am in doubt whether my nature is wholly altered, or whether his plan was wholly bad. In those days he never punished me, though I think I grieved him much by my idleness; but in passion he knew not what he did, and he has knocked me down with the great folio Bible which he always used. In the old house were the two first volumes of Cooper's novel, called The Prairie, a relic--probably a dishonest relic--of some subscription to Hookham's library. Other books of the kind there was none. I wonder how many dozen times I read those two first volumes.

It was the horror of those dreadful walks backwards and forwards which made my life so bad. What so pleasant, what so sweet, as a walk along an English lane, when the air is sweet and the weather fine, and when there is a charm in walking? But here were the same lanes four times a day, in wet and dry, in heat and summer, with all the accompanying mud and dust, and with disordered clothes. I might have been known among all the boys at a hundred yards' distance by my boots and trousers,--and was conscious at all times that I was so known. I remembered constantly that address from Dr. Butler when I was a little boy. Dr. Longley might with equal justice have said the same thing any day,--only that Dr. Longley never in his life was able to say an ill-natured word. Dr. Butler only became Dean of Peterborough, but his successor lived to be Archbishop of Canterbury.

I think it was in the autumn of 1831 that my mother, with the rest of the family, returned from America. She lived at first at the farmhouse, but it was only for a short time. She came back with a book written about the United States, and the immediate pecuniary success which that work obtained enabled her to take us all back to the house at Harrow,--not to the first house, which would still have been beyond her means, but to that which has since been called Orley Farm, and which was an Eden as compared to our abode at Harrow Weald. Here my schooling went on under somewhat improved circumstances. The three miles became half a mile, and probably some salutary changes were made in my wardrobe. My mother and my sisters, too, were there. And a great element of happiness was added to us all in the affectionate and life-enduring friendship of the family of our close neighbour Colonel Grant. But I was never

able to overcome--or even to attempt to overcome--the absolute isolation of my school position. Of the cricket-ground or racket-court I was allowed to know nothing. And yet I longed for these things with an exceeding longing. I coveted popularity with a covetousness that was almost mean. It seemed to me that there would be an Elysium in the intimacy of those very boys whom I was bound to hate because they hated me. Something of the disgrace of my school-days has clung to me all through life. Not that I have ever shunned to speak of them as openly as I am writing now, but that when I have been claimed as schoolfellow by some of those many hundreds who were with me either at Harrow or at Winchester, I have felt that I had no right to talk of things from most of which I was kept in estrangement.

Through all my father's troubles he still desired to send me either to Oxford or Cambridge. My elder brother went to Oxford, and Henry to Cambridge. It all depended on my ability to get some scholarship that would help me to live at the University. I had many chances. There were exhibitions from Harrow--which I never got. Twice I tried for a sizarship at Clare Hall,--but in vain. Once I made a futile attempt for a scholarship at Trinity, Oxford,--but failed again. Then the idea of a university career was abandoned. And very fortunate it was that I did not succeed, for my career with such assistance only as a scholarship would have given me, would have ended in debt and ignominy.

When I left Harrow I was all but nineteen, and I had at first gone there at seven. During the whole of those twelve years no attempt had been made to teach me anything but Latin and Greek, and very little attempt to teach me those languages. I do not remember any lessons either in writing or arithmetic. French and German I certainly was not taught. The assertion will scarcely be credited, but I do assert that I have no recollection of other tuition except that in the dead languages. At the school at Sunbury there was certainly a writing master and a French master. The latter was an extra, and I never had extras. I suppose I must have been in the writing master's class, but though I can call to mind the man, I cannot call to mind his ferule. It was by their ferules that I always knew them, and they me. I feel convinced in my mind that I have been flogged oftener than any human being alive. It was just possible to obtain five scourgings in one day at Winchester, and I have often boasted that I obtained them all. Looking back over half a century, I am not quite sure whether the boast is true; but if I did not, nobody ever did.

And yet when I think how little I knew of Latin or Greek on leaving Harrow at nineteen, I am astonished at the possibility of such waste of time. I am now a fair Latin scholar,--that is to say, I read and enjoy the Latin classics, and could probably make myself understood in Latin prose. But the knowledge which I have, I have acquired since I left school,--no doubt aided much by that groundwork of the language which will in the process of years make its way slowly, even through the skin. There were twelve years of tuition in which I do not remember that I ever knew a lesson! When I left Harrow I was nearly at the top of the school, being a monitor, and, I think, the seventh boy. This position I achieved by gravitation upwards. I bear in mind well with how prodigal a hand prizes used to be showered about; but I never got a prize. From the first to the last there was nothing satisfactory in my school career,--except

the way in which I licked the boy who had to be taken home to be cured.

CHAPTER II

MY MOTHER

Though I do not wish in these pages to go back to the origin of all the Trollopes, I must say a few words of my mother,--partly because filial duty will not allow me to be silent as to a parent who made for herself a considerable name in the literature of her day, and partly because there were circumstances in her career well worthy of notice. She was the daughter of the Rev. William Milton, vicar of Heckfield, who, as well as my father, had been a fellow of New College. She was nearly thirty when, in 1809, she married my father. Six or seven years ago a bundle of love-letters from her to him fell into my hand in a very singular way, having been found in the house of a stranger, who, with much courtesy, sent them to me. They were then about sixty years old, and had been written some before and some after her marriage, over the space of perhaps a year. In no novel of Richardson's or Miss Burney's have I seen a correspondence at the same time so sweet, so graceful, and so well expressed. But the marvel of these letters was in the strange difference they bore to the love-letters of the present day. They are, all of them, on square paper, folded and sealed, and addressed to my father on circuit; but the language in each, though it almost borders on the romantic, is beautifully chosen, and fit, without change of a syllable, for the most critical eye. What girl now studies the words with which she shall address her lover, or seeks to charm him with grace of diction? She dearly likes a little slang, and revels in the luxury of entire familiarity with a new and strange being. There is something in that, too, pleasant to our thoughts, but I fear that this phase of life does not conduce to a taste for poetry among our girls. Though my mother was a writer of prose, and revelled in satire, the poetic feeling clung to her to the last.

In the first ten years of her married life she became the mother of six children, four of whom died of consumption at different ages. My elder sister married, and had children, of whom one still lives; but she was one of the four who followed each other at intervals during my mother's lifetime. Then my brother Tom and I were left to her,--with the destiny before us three of writing more books than were probably ever before produced by a single family. [Footnote: The family of Estienne, the great French printers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, of whom there were at least nine or ten, did more perhaps for the production of literature than any other family. But they, though they edited, and not unfrequently translated the works which they published, were not authors in the ordinary sense.] My married sister added to the number by one little anonymous high church story, called Chollerton.

From the date of their marriage up to 1827, when my mother went to America, my father's affairs had always been going down in the world. She had loved society, affecting a somewhat liberal role and professing an emotional dislike to tyrants, which sprung from the wrongs of would-be regicides and the poverty of patriot exiles. An Italian marquis who had escaped with only a second shirt from the clutches of some archduke whom he had wished to exterminate, or a French proletaire with distant ideas of sacrificing himself to the cause of liberty, were always welcome to the modest hospitality of her house. In after years, when marquises of another caste had been gracious to her, she became a strong Tory, and thought that archduchesses were sweet. But with her politics were always an affair of the heart,--as, indeed, were all her convictions. Of reasoning from causes, I think that she knew nothing. Her heart was in every way so perfect, her desire to do good to all around her so thorough, and her power of self-sacrifice so complete, that she generally got herself right in spite of her want of logic; but it must be acknowledged that she was emotional. I can remember now her books, and can see her at her pursuits. The poets she loved best were Dante and Spenser. But she raved also of him of whom all such ladies were raving then, and rejoiced in the popularity and wept over the persecution of Lord Byron. She was among those who seized with avidity on the novels, as they came out, of the then unknown Scott, and who could still talk of the triumphs of Miss Edgeworth. With the literature of the day she was familiar, and with the poets of the past. Of other reading I do not think she had mastered much. Her life, I take it, though latterly clouded by many troubles, was easy, luxurious, and idle, till my father's affairs and her own aspirations sent her to America. She had dear friends among literary people, of whom I remember Mathias, Henry Milman, and Miss Landon; but till long after middle life she never herself wrote a line for publication.

In 1827 she went to America, having been partly instigated by the social and communistic ideas of a lady whom I well remember,--a certain Miss Wright,--who was, I think, the first of the American female lecturers. Her chief desire, however, was to establish my brother Henry; and perhaps joined with that was the additional object of breaking up her English home without pleading broken fortunes to all the world. At Cincinnati, in the State of Ohio, she built a bazaar, and I fancy lost all the money which may have been embarked in that speculation. It could not have been much, and I think that others also must have suffered. But she looked about her, at her American cousins, and resolved to write a book about them. This book she brought back with her in 1831, and published it early in 1832. When she did this she was already fifty. When doing this she was aware that unless she could so succeed in making money, there was no money for any of the family. She had never before earned a shilling. She almost immediately received a considerable sum from the publishers,--if I remember rightly, amounting to two sums of (pounds)400 each within a few months; and from that moment till nearly the time of her death, at any rate for more than twenty years, she was in the receipt of a considerable income from her writings. It was a late age at which to begin such a career.

The Domestic Manners of the Americans was the first of a series of books of travels, of which it was probably the best, and was certainly the best known. It will not be too much to say of it that it had a material effect upon the manners of the Americans of the

day, and that that effect has been fully appreciated by them. No observer was certainly ever less qualified to judge of the prospects or even of the happiness of a young people. No one could have been worse adapted by nature for the task of learning whether a nation was in a way to thrive. Whatever she saw she judged, as most women do, from her own standing-point. If a thing were ugly to her eyes, it ought to be ugly to all eyes,--and if ugly, it must be bad.

What though people had plenty to eat and clothes to wear, if they put their feet upon the tables and did not reverence their betters? The Americans were to her rough, uncouth, and vulgar,--and she told them so. Those communistic and social ideas, which had been so pretty in a drawing-room, were scattered to the winds. Her volumes were very bitter; but they were very clever, and they saved the family from ruin.

Book followed book immediately,--first two novels, and then a book on Belgium and Western Germany. She refurnished the house which I have called Orley Farm, and surrounded us again with moderate comforts. Of the mixture of joviality and industry which formed her character, it is almost impossible to speak with exaggeration. The industry was a thing apart, kept to herself. It was not necessary that any one who lived with her should see it. She was at her table at four in the morning, and had finished her work before the world had begun to be aroused. But the joviality was all for others. She could dance with other people's legs, eat and drink with other people's palates, be proud with the lustre of other people's finery. Every mother can do that for her own daughters; but she could do it for any girl whose look, and voice, and manners pleased her. Even when she was at work, the laughter of those she loved was a pleasure to her. She had much, very much, to suffer. Work sometimes came hard to her, so much being required,--for she was extravagant, and liked to have money to spend; but of all people I have known she was the most joyous, or, at any rate, the most capable of joy.

We continued this renewed life at Harrow for nearly two years, during which I was still at the school, and at the end of which I was nearly nineteen. Then there came a great catastrophe. My father, who, when he was well, lived a sad life among his monks and nuns, still kept a horse and gig. One day in March, 1834, just as it had been decided that I should leave the school then, instead of remaining, as had been intended, till midsummer, I was summoned very early in the morning, to drive him up to London. He had been ill, and must still have been very ill indeed when he submitted to be driven by any one. It was not till we had started that he told me that I was to put him on board the Ostend boat. This I did, driving him through the city down to the docks. It was not within his nature to be communicative, and to the last he never told me why he was going to Ostend. Something of a general flitting abroad I had heard before, but why he should have flown first, and flown so suddenly, I did not in the least know till I returned. When I got back with the gig, the house and furniture were all in the charge of the sheriff's officers.

The gardener who had been with us in former days stopped me as I drove up the road, and with gestures, signs, and whispered words, gave me to understand that the whole affair--horse, gig, and barn--would be made prize of if I went but a few yards farther. Why they should not have been made prize of I do not know. The little piece of dishonest business which I at once took in hand

and carried through successfully was of no special service to any of us. I drove the gig into the village, and sold the entire equipage to the ironmonger for (pounds)17, the exact sum which he claimed as being due to himself. I was much complimented by the gardener, who seemed to think that so much had been rescued out of the fire. I fancy that the ironmonger was the only gainer by my smartness.

When I got back to the house a scene of devastation was in progress, which still was not without its amusement. My mother, through her various troubles, had contrived to keep a certain number of pretty-pretties which were dear to her heart. They were not much, for in those days the ornamentation of houses was not lavish as it is now; but there was some china, and a little glass, a few books, and a very moderate supply of household silver. These things, and things like them, were being carried down surreptitiously, through a gap between the two gardens, on to the premises of our friend Colonel Grant. My two sisters, then sixteen and seventeen, and the Grant girls, who were just younger, were the chief marauders. To such forces I was happy to add myself for any enterprise, and between us we cheated the creditors to the extent of our powers, amidst the anathemas, but good-humoured abstinence from personal violence, of the men in charge of the property. I still own a few books that were thus purloined.

For a few days the whole family bivouacked under the Colonel's hospitable roof, cared for and comforted by that dearest of all women, his wife. Then we followed my father to Belgium, and established ourselves in a large house just outside the walls of Bruges. At this time, and till my father's death, everything was done with money earned by my mother. She now again furnished the house,--this being the third that she had put in order since she came back from America two years and a half ago.

There were six of us went into this new banishment. My brother Henry had left Cambridge and was ill. My younger sister was ill. And though as yet we hardly told each other that it was so, we began to feel that that desolating fiend, consumption, was among us. My father was broken-hearted as well as ill, but whenever he could sit at his table he still worked at his ecclesiastical records. My elder sister and I were in good health, but I was an idle, desolate hanger-on, that most hopeless of human beings, a hobbledehoy of nineteen, without any idea of a career, or a profession, or a trade. As well as I can remember I was fairly happy, for there were pretty girls at Bruges with whom I could fancy that I was in love; and I had been removed from the real misery of school. But as to my future life I had not even an aspiration. Now and again there would arise a feeling that it was hard upon my mother that she should have to do so much for us, that we should be idle while she was forced to work so constantly; but we should probably have thought more of that had she not taken to work as though it were the recognised condition of life for an old lady of fifty-five.

Then, by degrees, an established sorrow was at home among us. My brother was an invalid, and the horrid word, which of all words were for some years after the most dreadful to us, had been pronounced. It was no longer a delicate chest, and some temporary necessity for peculiar care,--but consumption! The Bruges doctor had said so, and we knew that he was right. From that time forth my mother's most visible occupation was that of nursing. There were two sick

men in the house, and hers were the hands that tended them. The novels went on, of course. We had already learned to know that they would be forthcoming at stated intervals,--and they always were forthcoming. The doctor's vials and the ink-bottle held equal places in my mother's rooms. I have written many novels under many circumstances; but I doubt much whether I could write one when my whole heart was by the bedside of a dying son. Her power of dividing herself into two parts, and keeping her intellect by itself clear from the troubles of the world, and fit for the duty it had to do, I never saw equalled. I do not think that the writing of a novel is the most difficult task which a man may be called upon to do; but it is a task that may be supposed to demand a spirit fairly at ease. The work of doing it with a troubled spirit killed Sir Walter Scott. My mother went through it unscathed in strength, though she performed all the work of day-nurse and night-nurse to a sick household;--for there were soon three of them dying.

At this time there came from some quarter an offer to me of a commission in an Austrian cavalry regiment; and so it was apparently my destiny to be a soldier. But I must first learn German and French, of which languages I knew almost nothing. For this a year was allowed me, and in order that it might be accomplished without expense, I undertook the duties of a classical usher to a school then kept by William Drury at Brussels. Mr. Drury had been one of the masters at Harrow when I went there at seven years old, and is now, after an interval of fifty-three years, even yet officiating as clergyman at that place. [Footnote: He died two years after these words were written.] To Brussels I went, and my heart still sinks within me as I reflect that any one should have intrusted to me the tuition of thirty boys. I can only hope that those boys went there to learn French, and that their parents were not particular as to their classical acquirements. I remember that on two occasions I was sent to take the school out for a walk; but that after the second attempt Mrs. Drury declared that the boys' clothes would not stand any further experiments of that kind. I cannot call to mind any learning by me of other languages; but as I only remained in that position for six weeks, perhaps the return lessons had not been as yet commenced. At the end of the six weeks a letter reached me, offering me a clerkship in the General Post Office, and I accepted it. Among my mother's dearest friends she reckoned Mrs. Freeling, the wife of Clayton Freeling, whose father, Sir Francis Freeling, then ruled the Post Office. She had heard of my desolate position, and had begged from her father-in-law the offer of a berth in his own office.

I hurried back from Brussels to Bruges on my way to London, and found that the number of invalids had been increased. My younger sister, Emily, who, when I had left the house, was trembling on the balance,--who had been pronounced to be delicate, but with that false-tongued hope which knows the truth, but will lie lest the heart should faint, had been called delicate, but only delicate,--was now ill. Of course she was doomed. I knew it of both of them, though I had never heard the word spoken, or had spoken it to any one. And my father was very ill,--ill to dying, though I did not know it. And my mother had decreed to send my elder sister away to England, thinking that the vicinity of so much sickness might be injurious to her. All this happened late in the autumn of 1834, in the spring of which year we had come to Bruges; and then my mother was left alone in a big house outside the town, with two Belgian

women-servants, to nurse these dying patients--the patients being her husband and children--and to write novels for the sustenance of the family! It was about this period of her career that her best novels were written.

To my own initiation at the Post Office I will return in the next chapter. Just before Christmas my brother died, and was buried at Bruges. In the following February my father died, and was buried alongside of him,--and with him died that tedious task of his, which I can only hope may have solaced many of his latter hours. I sometimes look back, meditating for hours together, on his adverse fate. He was a man, finely educated, of great parts, with immense capacity for work, physically strong very much beyond the average of men, addicted to no vices, carried off by no pleasures, affectionate by nature, most anxious for the welfare of his children, born to fair fortunes,--who, when he started in the world, may be said to have had everything at his feet. But everything went wrong with him. The touch of his hand seemed to create failure. He embarked in one hopeless enterprise after another, spending on each all the money he could at the time command. But the worse curse to him of all was a temper so irritable that even those whom he loved the best could not endure it. We were all estranged from him, and yet I believe that he would have given his heart's blood for any of us. His life as I knew it was one long tragedy.

After his death my mother moved to England, and took and furnished a small house at Hadley, near Barnet. I was then a clerk in the London Post Office, and I remember well how gay she made the place with little dinners, little dances, and little picnics, while she herself was at work every morning long before others had left their beds. But she did not stay at Hadley much above a year. She went up to London, where she again took and furnished a house, from which my remaining sister was married and carried away into Cumberland. My mother soon followed her, and on this occasion did more than take a house. She bought a bit of land,--a field of three acres near the town,--and built a residence for herself. This, I think, was in 1841, and she had thus established and re-established herself six times in ten years. But in Cumberland she found the climate too severe, and in 1844 she moved herself to Florence, where she remained till her death in 1863. She continued writing up to 1856, when she was seventy-six years old,--and had at that time produced 114 volumes, of which the first was not written till she was fifty. Her career offers great encouragement to those who have not begun early in life, but are still ambitious to do something before they depart hence.

She was an unselfish, affectionate, and most industrious woman, with great capacity for enjoyment and high physical gifts. She was endowed too, with much creative power, with considerable humour, and a genuine feeling for romance. But she was neither clear-sighted nor accurate; and in her attempts to describe morals, manners, and even facts, was unable to avoid the pitfalls of exaggeration.

CHAPTER III

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE

1834-1841

While I was still learning my duty as an usher at Mr. Drury's school at Brussels, I was summoned to my clerkship in the London Post Office, and on my way passed through Bruges. I then saw my father and my brother Henry for the last time. A sadder household never was held together. They were all dying; except my mother, who would sit up night after night nursing the dying ones and writing novels the while,--so that there might be a decent roof for them to die under. Had she failed to write the novels, I do not know where the roof would have been found. It is now more than forty years ago, and looking back over so long a lapse of time I can tell the story, though it be the story of my own father and mother, of my own brother and sister, almost as coldly as I have often done some scene of intended pathos in fiction; but that scene was indeed full of pathos. I was then becoming alive to the blighted ambition of my father's life, and becoming alive also to the violence of the strain which my mother was enduring. But I could do nothing but go and leave them. There was something that comforted me in the idea that I need no longer be a burden,--a fallacious idea, as it soon proved. My salary was to be (pounds)90 a year, and on that I was to live in (pounds)ondon, keep up my character as a gentleman, and be happy. That I should have thought this possible at the age of nineteen, and should have been delighted at being able to make the attempt, does not surprise me now; but that others should have thought it possible, friends who knew something of the world, does astonish me. A lad might have done so, no doubt, or might do so even in these days, who was properly looked after and kept under control,--on whose behalf some law of life had been laid down. Let him pay so much a week for his board and lodging, so much for his clothes, so much for his washing, and then let him understand that he has--shall we say?--sixpence a day left for pocket-money and omnibuses. Any one making the calculation will find the sixpence far too much. No such calculation was made for me or by me. It was supposed that a sufficient income had been secured to me, and that I should live upon it as other clerks lived.

But as yet the (pounds)90 a year was not secured to me. On reaching London I went to my friend Clayton Freeling, who was then secretary at the Stamp Office, and was taken by him to the scene of my future labours in St. Martin's le Grand. Sir Francis Freeling was the secretary, but he was greatly too high an official to be seen at first by a new junior clerk. I was taken, therefore, to his eldest son Henry Freeling, who was the assistant secretary, and by him I was examined as to my fitness. The story of that examination is given accurately in one of the opening chapters of a novel written by me, called *The Three Clerks*. If any reader of this memoir would refer to that chapter and see how Charley Tudor was supposed to have been admitted into the Internal Navigation Office, that reader will learn how Anthony Trollope was actually admitted into the Secretary's office of the General Post Office in 1834. I was asked to copy some lines from the *Times* newspaper with an old quill pen, and at once made a series of blots and false spellings. "That won't do, you know," said Henry Freeling to his brother Clayton.

Clayton, who was my friend, urged that I was nervous, and asked that I might be allowed to do a bit of writing at home and bring it as a sample on the next day. I was then asked whether I was a proficient in arithmetic. What could I say? I had never learned the multiplication table, and had no more idea of the rule of three than of conic sections. "I know a little of it," I said humbly, whereupon I was sternly assured that on the morrow, should I succeed in showing that my handwriting was all that it ought to be, I should be examined as to that little of arithmetic. If that little should not be found to comprise a thorough knowledge of all the ordinary rules, together with practised and quick skill, my career in life could not be made at the Post Office. Going down the main stairs of the building,--stairs which have I believe been now pulled down to make room for sorters and stampers,--Clayton Freeling told me not to be too down-hearted. I was myself inclined to think that I had better go back to the school in Brussels. But nevertheless I went to work, and under the surveillance of my elder brother made a beautiful transcript of four or five pages of Gibbon. With a faltering heart I took these on the next day to the office. With my calligraphy I was contented, but was certain that I should come to the ground among the figures. But when I got to "The Grand," as we used to call our office in those days, from its site in St. Martin's le Grand, I was seated at a desk without any further reference to my competency. No one condescended even to look at my beautiful penmanship.

That was the way in which candidates for the Civil Service were examined in my young days. It was at any rate the way in which I was examined. Since that time there has been a very great change indeed;--and in some respects a great improvement. But in regard to the absolute fitness of the young men selected for the public service, I doubt whether more harm has not been done than good. And I think that good might have been done without the harm. The rule of the present day is, that every place shall be open to public competition, and that it shall be given to the best among the comers. I object to this, that at present there exists no known mode of learning who is best, and that the method employed has no tendency to elicit the best. That method pretends only to decide who among a certain number of lads will best answer a string of questions, for the answering of which they are prepared by tutors, who have sprung up for the purpose since this fashion of election has been adopted. When it is decided in a family that a boy shall "try the Civil Service," he is made to undergo a certain amount of cramming. But such treatment has, I maintain, no connection whatever with education. The lad is no better fitted after it than he was before for the future work of his life. But his very success fills him with false ideas of his own educational standing, and so far unfits him. And, by the plan now in vogue, it has come to pass that no one is in truth responsible either for the conduct, the manners, or even for the character of the youth. The responsibility was perhaps slight before; but existed, and was on the increase.

There might have been,--in some future time of still increased wisdom, there yet may be,--a department established to test the fitness of acolytes without recourse to the dangerous optimism of competitive choice. I will not say but that there should have been some one to reject me,--though I will have the hardihood to say that, had I been so rejected, the Civil Service would have lost a valuable public servant. This is a statement that will not, I

think, be denied by those who, after I am gone, may remember anything of my work. Lads, no doubt, should not be admitted who have none of the small acquirements that are wanted. Our offices should not be schools in which writing and early lessons in geography, arithmetic, or French should be learned. But all that could be ascertained without the perils of competitive examination.

The desire to insure the efficiency of the young men selected, has not been the only object--perhaps not the chief object--of those who have yielded in this matter to the arguments of the reformers. There had arisen in England a system of patronage, under which it had become gradually necessary for politicians to use their influence for the purchase of political support. A member of the House of Commons, holding office, who might chance to have five clerkships to give away in a year, found himself compelled to distribute them among those who sent him to the House. In this there was nothing pleasant to the distributor of patronage. Do away with the system altogether, and he would have as much chance of support as another. He bartered his patronage only because another did so also. The beggings, the refusings, the jealousies, the correspondence, were simply troublesome. Gentlemen in office were not therefore indisposed to rid themselves of the care of patronage. I have no doubt their hands are the cleaner and their hearts are the lighter; but I do doubt whether the offices are on the whole better manned.

As what I now write will certainly never be read till I am dead, I may dare to say what no one now does dare to say in print,--though some of us whisper it occasionally into our friends' ears. There are places in life which can hardly be well filled except by "Gentlemen." The word is one the use of which almost subjects one to ignominy. If I say that a judge should be a gentleman, or a bishop, I am met with a scornful allusion to "Nature's Gentlemen." Were I to make such an assertion with reference to the House of Commons, nothing that I ever said again would receive the slightest attention. A man in public life could not do himself a greater injury than by saying in public that the commissions in the army or navy, or berths in the Civil Service, should be given exclusively to gentlemen. He would be defied to define the term,--and would fail should he attempt to do so. But he would know what he meant, and so very probably would they who defied him. It may be that the son of a butcher of the village shall become as well fitted for employments requiring gentle culture as the son of the parson. Such is often the case. When such is the case, no one has been more prone to give the butcher's son all the welcome he has merited than I myself; but the chances are greatly in favour of the parson's son. The gates of the one class should be open to the other; but neither to the one class nor to the other can good be done by declaring that there are no gates, no barrier, no difference. The system of competitive examination is, I think, based on a supposition that there is no difference.

I got into my place without any examining. Looking back now, I think I can see with accuracy what was then the condition of my own mind and intelligence. Of things to be learned by lessons I knew almost less than could be supposed possible after the amount of schooling I had received. I could read neither French, Latin, nor Greek. I could speak no foreign language,--and I may as well say here as elsewhere that I never acquired the power of really talking French. I have been able to order my dinner and take a railway ticket, but

never got much beyond that. Of the merest rudiments of the sciences I was completely ignorant. My handwriting was in truth wretched. My spelling was imperfect. There was no subject as to which examination would have been possible on which I could have gone through an examination otherwise than disgracefully. And yet I think I knew more than the average young men of the same rank who began life at nineteen. I could have given a fuller list of the names of the poets of all countries, with their subjects and periods,--and probably of historians,--than many others; and had, perhaps, a more accurate idea of the manner in which my own country was governed. I knew the names of all the Bishops, all the Judges, all the Heads of Colleges, and all the Cabinet Ministers,--not a very useful knowledge indeed, but one that had not been acquired without other matter which was more useful. I had read Shakespeare and Byron and Scott, and could talk about them. The music of the Miltonic line was familiar to me. I had already made up my mind that *Pride and Prejudice* was the best novel in the English language,--a palm which I only partially withdrew after a second reading of *Ivanhoe*, and did not completely bestow elsewhere till *Esmond* was written. And though I would occasionally break down in my spelling, I could write a letter. If I had a thing to say, I could so say it in written words that the readers should know what I meant,--a power which is by no means at the command of all those who come out from these competitive examinations with triumph. Early in life, at the age of fifteen, I had commenced the dangerous habit of keeping a journal, and this I maintained for ten years. The volumes remained in my possession unregarded--never looked at--till 1870, when I examined them, and, with many blushes, destroyed them. They convicted me of folly, ignorance, indiscretion, idleness, extravagance, and conceit. But they had habituated me to the rapid use of pen and ink, and taught me how to express myself with faculty.

I will mention here another habit which had grown upon me from still earlier years,--which I myself often regarded with dismay when I thought of the hours devoted to it, but which, I suppose, must have tended to make me what I have been. As a boy, even as a child, I was thrown much upon myself. I have explained, when speaking of my school-days, how it came to pass that other boys would not play with me. I was therefore alone, and had to form my plays within myself. Play of some kind was necessary to me then, as it always has been. Study was not my bent, and I could not please myself by being all idle. Thus it came to pass that I was always going about with some castle in the air firmly build within my mind. Nor were these efforts in architecture spasmodic, or subject to constant change from day to day. For weeks, for months, if I remember rightly, from year to year, I would carry on the same tale, binding myself down to certain laws, to certain proportions, and proprieties, and unities. Nothing impossible was ever introduced,--nor even anything which, from outward circumstances, would seem to be violently improbable. I myself was of course my own hero. Such is a necessity of castle-building. But I never became a king, or a duke,--much less when my height and personal appearance were fixed could I be an Antinous, or six feet high. I never was a learned man, nor even a philosopher. But I was a very clever person, and beautiful young women used to be fond of me. And I strove to be kind of heart, and open of hand, and noble in thought, despising mean things; and altogether I was a very much better fellow than I have ever succeeded in being since. This had been the occupation of my life for six or seven years before I went to

the Post Office, and was by no means abandoned when I commenced my work. There can, I imagine, hardly be a more dangerous mental practice; but I have often doubted whether, had it not been my practice, I should ever have written a novel. I learned in this way to maintain an interest in a fictitious story, to dwell on a work created by my own imagination, and to live in a world altogether outside the world of my own material life. In after years I have done the same,--with this difference, that I have discarded the hero of my early dreams, and have been able to lay my own identity aside.

I must certainly acknowledge that the first seven years of my official life were neither creditable to myself nor useful to the public service. These seven years were passed in London, and during this period of my life it was my duty to be present every morning at the office punctually at 10 A.M. I think I commenced my quarrels with the authorities there by having in my possession a watch which was always ten minutes late. I know that I very soon achieved a character for irregularity, and came to be regarded as a black sheep by men around me who were not themselves, I think, very good public servants. From time to time rumours reached me that if I did not take care I should be dismissed; especially one rumour in my early days, through my dearly beloved friend Mrs. Clayton Freeling,--who, as I write this, is still living, and who, with tears in her eyes, besought me to think of my mother. That was during the life of Sir Francis Freeling, who died,--still in harness,--a little more than twelve months after I joined the office. And yet the old man showed me signs of almost affectionate kindness, writing to me with his own hand more than once from his death-bed.

Sir Francis Freeling was followed at the Post Office by Colonel Maberly, who certainly was not my friend. I do not know that I deserved to find a friend in my new master, but I think that a man with better judgment would not have formed so low an opinion of me as he did. Years have gone by, and I can write now, and almost feel, without anger; but I can remember well the keenness of my anguish when I was treated as though I were unfit for any useful work. I did struggle--not to do the work, for there was nothing which was not easy without any struggling--but to show that I was willing to do it. My bad character nevertheless stuck to me, and was not to be got rid of by any efforts within my power. I do admit that I was irregular. It was not considered to be much in my favour that I could write letters--which was mainly the work of our office--rapidly, correctly, and to the purpose. The man who came at ten, and who was always still at his desk at half-past four, was preferred before me, though when at his desk he might be less efficient. Such preference was no doubt proper; but, with a little encouragement, I also would have been punctual. I got credit for nothing and was reckless.

As it was, the conduct of some of us was very bad. There was a comfortable sitting-room up-stairs, devoted to the use of some one of our number who in turn was required to remain in the place all night. Hither one or two of us would adjourn after lunch, and play *ecarte* for an hour or two. I do not know whether such ways are possible now in our public offices. And here we used to have suppers and card-parties at night--great symposiums, with much smoking of tobacco; for in our part of the building there lived a whole bevy of clerks. These were gentlemen whose duty it then was

to make up and receive the foreign mails. I do not remember that they worked later or earlier than the other sorting-clerks; but there was supposed to be something special in foreign letters, which required that the men who handled them should have minds undistracted by the outer world. Their salaries, too, were higher than those of their more homely brethren; and they paid nothing for their lodgings. Consequently there was a somewhat fast set in those apartments, given to cards and to tobacco, who drank spirits and water in preference to tea. I was not one of them, but was a good deal with them.

I do not know that I should interest my readers by saying much of my Post Office experiences in those days. I was always on the eve of being dismissed, and yet was always striving to show how good a public servant I could become, if only a chance were given me. But the chance went the wrong way. On one occasion, in the performance of my duty, I had to put a private letter containing bank-notes on the secretary's table,--which letter I had duly opened, as it was not marked private. The letter was seen by the Colonel, but had not been moved by him when he left the room. On his return it was gone. In the meantime I had returned to the room, again in the performance of some duty. When the letter was missed I was sent for, and there I found the Colonel much moved about his letter, and a certain chief clerk, who, with a long face, was making suggestions as to the probable fate of the money. "The letter has been taken," said the Colonel, turning to me angrily, "and, by G----! there has been nobody in the room but you and I." As he spoke, he thundered his fist down upon the table. "Then," said I, "by G----! you have taken it." And I also thundered my fist down;--but, accidentally, not upon the table. There was there a standing movable desk, at which, I presume, it was the Colonel's habit to write, and on this movable desk was a large bottle full of ink. My fist unfortunately came on the desk, and the ink at once flew up, covering the Colonel's face and shirt-front. Then it was a sight to see that senior clerk, as he seized a quite of blotting-paper, and rushed to the aid of his superior officer, striving to mop up the ink; and a sight also to see the Colonel, in his agony, hit right out through the blotting-paper at that senior clerk's unoffending stomach. At that moment there came in the Colonel's private secretary, with the letter and the money, and I was desired to go back to my own room. This was an incident not much in my favour, though I do not know that it did me special harm.

I was always in trouble. A young woman down in the country had taken it into her head that she would like to marry me,--and a very foolish young woman she must have been to entertain such a wish. I need not tell that part of the story more at length, otherwise than by protesting that no young man in such a position was ever much less to blame than I had been in this. The invitation had come from her, and I had lacked the pluck to give it a decided negative; but I had left the house within half an hour, going away without my dinner, and had never returned to it. Then there was a correspondence,--if that can be called a correspondence in which all the letters came from one side. At last the mother appeared at the Post Office. My hair almost stands on my head now as I remember the figure of the woman walking into the big room in which I sat with six or seven other clerks, having a large basket on her arm and an immense bonnet on her head. The messenger had vainly endeavoured to persuade her to remain in the ante-room. She followed the man

in, and walking up the centre of the room, addressed me in a loud voice: "Anthony Trollope, when are you going to marry my daughter?" We have all had our worst moments, and that was one of my worst. I lived through it, however, and did not marry the young lady. These little incidents were all against me in the office.

And then a certain other phase of my private life crept into official view, and did me a damage. As I shall explain just now, I rarely at this time had any money wherewith to pay my bills. In this state of things a certain tailor had taken from me an acceptance for, I think, (pounds)12, which found its way into the hands of a money-lender. With that man, who lived in a little street near Mecklenburgh Square, I formed a most heart-rending but a most intimate acquaintance. In cash I once received from him (pounds)4. For that and for the original amount of the tailor's bill, which grew monstrously under repeated renewals, I paid ultimately something over (pounds)200. That is so common a story as to be hardly worth the telling; but the peculiarity of this man was that he became so attached to me as to visit me every day at my office. For a long period he found it to be worth his while to walk up those stone steps daily, and come and stand behind my chair, whispering to me always the same words: "Now I wish you would be punctual. If you only would be punctual, I should like you to have anything you want." He was a little, clean, old man, who always wore a high starched white cravat inside of which he had a habit of twisting his chin as he uttered his caution. When I remember the constant persistency of his visits, I cannot but feel that he was paid very badly for his time and trouble. Those visits were very terrible, and can have hardly been of service to me in the office.

Of one other misfortune which happened to me in those days I must tell the tale. A junior clerk in the secretary's office was always told off to sleep upon the premises, and he was supposed to be the presiding genius of the establishment when the other members of the Secretary's department had left the building. On an occasion when I was still little more than a lad,--perhaps one-and-twenty years old,--I was filling this responsible position. At about seven in the evening word was brought to me that the Queen of,--I think Saxony, but I am sure it was a Queen,--wanted to see the night mails sent out. At this time, when there were many mail-coaches, this was a show, and august visitors would sometimes come to see it. But preparation was generally made beforehand, and some pundit of the office would be at hand to do the honours. On this occasion we were taken by surprise, and there was no pundit. I therefore gave the orders, and accompanied her Majesty around the building, walking backwards, as I conceived to be proper, and often in great peril as I did so, up and down the stairs. I was, however, quite satisfied with my own manner of performing an unaccustomed and most important duty. There were two old gentlemen with her Majesty, who, no doubt, were German barons, and an ancient baroness also. They had come and, when they had seen the sights, took their departure in two glass coaches. As they were preparing to go, I saw the two barons consulting together in deep whispers, and then as the result of that conversation one of them handed me a half-a-crown! That also was a bad moment.

I came up to town, as I said before, purporting to live a jolly life upon (pounds)90 per annum. I remained seven years in the General Post Office, and when I left it my income was (pounds)140. During the whole

of this time I was hopelessly in debt. There were two intervals, amounting together to nearly two years, in which I lived with my mother, and therefore lived in comfort,--but even then I was overwhelmed with debt. She paid much for me,--paid all that I asked her to pay, and all that she could find out that I owed. But who in such a condition ever tells all and makes a clean breast of it? The debts, of course, were not large, but I cannot think now how I could have lived, and sometimes have enjoyed life, with such a burden of duns as I endured. Sheriff's officers with uncanny documents, of which I never understood anything, were common attendants on me. And yet I do not remember that I was ever locked up, though I think I was twice a prisoner. In such emergencies some one paid for me. And now, looking back at it, I have to ask myself whether my youth was very wicked. I did no good in it; but was there fair ground for expecting good from me? When I reached London no mode of life was prepared for me,--no advice even given to me. I went into lodgings, and then had to dispose of my time. I belonged to no club, and knew very few friends who would receive me into their houses. In such a condition of life a young man should no doubt go home after his work, and spend the long hours of the evening in reading good books and drinking tea. A lad brought up by strict parents, and without having had even a view of gayer things, might perhaps do so. I had passed all my life at public schools, where I had seen gay things, but had never enjoyed them. Towards the good books and tea no training had been given me. There was no house in which I could habitually see a lady's face and hear a lady's voice. No allurements to decent respectability came in my way. It seems to me that in such circumstances the temptations of loose life will almost certainly prevail with a young man. Of course if the mind be strong enough, and the general stuff knitted together of sufficiently stern material, the temptations will not prevail. But such minds and such material are, I think, uncommon. The temptation at any rate prevailed with me.

I wonder how many young men fall utterly to pieces from being turned loose into London after the same fashion. Mine was, I think, of all phases of such life the most dangerous. The lad who is sent to mechanical work has longer hours, during which he is kept from danger, and has not generally been taught in his boyhood to anticipate pleasure. He looks for hard work and grinding circumstances. I certainly had enjoyed but little pleasure, but I had been among those who did enjoy it and were taught to expect it. And I had filled my mind with the ideas of such joys.

And now, except during official hours, I was entirely without control,--without the influences of any decent household around me. I have said something of the comedy of such life, but it certainly had its tragic aspect. Turning it all over in my own mind, as I have constantly done in after years, the tragedy has always been uppermost. And so it was as the time was passing. Could there be any escape from such dirt? I would ask myself; and I always answered that there was no escape. The mode of life was itself wretched. I hated the office. I hated my work. More than all I hated my idleness. I had often told myself since I left school that the only career in life within my reach was that of an author, and the only mode of authorship open to me that of a writer of novels. In the journal which I read and destroyed a few years since, I found the matter argued out before I had been in the Post Office two years. Parliament was out of the question. I had not means to go to the Bar. In Official

life, such as that to which I had been introduced, there did not seem to be any opening for real success. Pens and paper I could command. Poetry I did not believe to be within my grasp. The drama, too, which I would fain have chosen, I believed to be above me. For history, biography, or essay writing I had not sufficient erudition. But I thought it possible that I might write a novel. I had resolved very early that in that shape must the attempt be made. But the months and years ran on, and no attempt was made. And yet no day was passed without thoughts of attempting, and a mental acknowledgment of the disgrace of postponing it. What reader will not understand the agony of remorse produced by such a condition of mind? The gentleman from Mecklenburgh Square was always with me in the morning,--always angering me by his hateful presence,--but when the evening came I could make no struggle towards getting rid of him.

In those days I read a little, and did learn to read French and Latin. I made myself familiar with Horace, and became acquainted with the works of our own greatest poets. I had my strong enthusiasms, and remember throwing out of the window in Northumberland Street, where I lived, a volume of Johnson's Lives of the Poets, because he spoke sneeringly of Lycidas. That was Northumberland Street by the Marylebone Workhouse, on to the back-door of which establishment my room looked out--a most dreary abode, at which I fancy I must have almost ruined the good-natured lodging-house keeper by my constant inability to pay her what I owed.

How I got my daily bread I can hardly remember. But I do remember that I was often unable to get myself a dinner. Young men generally now have their meals provided for them. I kept house, as it were. Every day I had to find myself with the day's food. For my breakfast I could get some credit at the lodgings, though that credit would frequently come to an end. But for all that I had often breakfast to pay day by day; and at your eating-house credit is not given. I had no friends on whom I could sponge regularly. Out on the Fulham Road I had an uncle, but his house was four miles from the Post Office, and almost as far from my own lodgings. Then came borrowings of money, sometimes absolute want, and almost constant misery.

Before I tell how it came about that I left this wretched life, I must say a word or two of the friendships which lessened its misfortunes. My earliest friend in life was John Merivale, with whom I had been at school at Sunbury and Harrow, and who was a nephew of my tutor, Harry Drury. Herman Merivale, who afterwards became my friend, was his brother, as is also Charles Merivale, the historian and Dean of Ely. I knew John when I was ten years old, and am happy to be able to say that he is going to dine with me one day this week. I hope I may not injure his character by stating that in those days I lived very much with him. He, too, was impecunious, but he had a home in London, and knew but little of the sort of penury which I endured. For more than fifty years he and I have been close friends. And then there was one W---- A----, whose misfortunes in life will not permit me to give his full name, but whom I dearly loved. He had been at Winchester and at Oxford, and at both places had fallen into trouble. He then became a schoolmaster,--or perhaps I had better say usher,--and finally he took orders. But he was unfortunate in all things, and died some years ago in poverty. He was most perverse; bashful to very fear of a lady's dress; unable to restrain himself in anything, but yet with a conscience that was always stinging him; a loving friend, though very quarrelsome;

and, perhaps, of all men I have known, the most humorous. And he was entirely unconscious of his own humour. He did not know that he could so handle all matters as to create infinite amusement out of them. Poor W---- A----! To him there came no happy turning-point at which life loomed seriously on him, and then became prosperous.

W---- A----, Merivale, and I formed a little club, which we called the Tramp Society, and subjected to certain rules, in obedience to which we wandered on foot about the counties adjacent to London. Southampton was the furthest point we ever reached; but Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire were more dear to us. These were the happiest hours of my then life--and perhaps not the least innocent, although we were frequently in peril from the village authorities whom we outraged. Not to pay for any conveyance, never to spend above five shillings a day, to obey all orders from the elected ruler of the hour (this enforced under heavy fines), were among our statutes. I would fain tell here some of our adventures:--how A---- enacted an escaped madman and we his pursuing keepers, and so got ourselves a lift in a cart, from which we ran away as we approached the lunatic asylum; how we were turned out of a little town at night, the townsfolk frightened by the loudness of our mirth; and how we once crept into a hayloft and were wakened in the dark morning by a pitchfork,--and how the juvenile owner of that pitchfork fled through the window when he heard the complaints of the wounded man! But the fun was the fun of W---- A----, and would cease to be fun as told by me.

It was during these years that John Tilley, who has now been for many years the permanent senior officer of the Post Office, married my sister, whom he took with him into Cumberland, where he was stationed as one of our surveyors. He has been my friend for more than forty years; as has also Peregrine Birch, a clerk in the House of Lords, who married one of those daughters of Colonel Grant who assisted us in the raid we made on the goods which had been seized by the Sheriff's officer at Harrow. These have been the oldest and dearest friends of my life, and I can thank God that three of them are still alive.

When I had been nearly seven years in the Secretary's office of the Post Office, always hating my position there, and yet always fearing that I should be dismissed from it, there came a way of escape. There had latterly been created in the service a new body of officers called surveyors' clerks. There were at that time seven surveyors in England, two in Scotland and three in Ireland. To each of these officers a clerk had been lately attached, whose duty it was to travel about the country under the surveyor's orders. There had been much doubt among the young men in the office whether they should or should not apply for these places. The emoluments were good and the work alluring; but there was at first supposed to be something derogatory in the position. There was a rumour that the first surveyor who got a clerk sent the clerk out to fetch his beer, and that another had called upon his clerk to send the linen to the wash. There was, however, a conviction that nothing could be worse than the berth of a surveyor's clerk in Ireland. The clerks were all appointed, however. To me it had not occurred to ask for anything, nor would anything have been given me. But after a while there came a report from the far west of Ireland that the man sent there was absurdly incapable. It was probably thought then that none but a man absurdly incapable would go on such a mission to the

west of Ireland. When the report reached the London office I was the first to read it. I was at that time in dire trouble, having debts on my head and quarrels with our Secretary-Colonel, and a full conviction that my life was taking me downwards to the lowest pits. So I went to the Colonel boldly, and volunteered for Ireland if he would send me. He was glad to be so rid of me, and I went. This happened in August, 1841, when I was twenty-six years old. My salary in Ireland was to be but (pounds)100 a year; but I was to receive fifteen shillings a day for every day that I was away from home, and sixpence for every mile that I travelled. The same allowances were made in England; but at that time travelling in Ireland was done at half the English prices. My income in Ireland, after paying my expenses, became at once (pounds)400. This was the first good fortune of my life.

CHAPTER IV

IRELAND--MY FIRST TWO NOVELS

1841-1848

In the preceding pages I have given a short record of the first twenty-six years of my life,--years of suffering, disgrace, and inward remorse. I fear that my mode of telling will have left an idea simply of their absurdities; but, in truth, I was wretched,--sometimes almost unto death, and have often cursed the hour in which I was born. There had clung to me a feeling that I had been looked upon always as an evil, an encumbrance, a useless thing,--as a creature of whom those connected with him had to be ashamed. And I feel certain now that in my young days I was so regarded. Even my few friends who had found with me a certain capacity for enjoyment were half afraid of me. I acknowledge the weakness of a great desire to be loved,--of a strong wish to be popular with my associates. No child, no boy, no lad, no young man, had ever been less so. And I had been so poor, and so little able to bear poverty. But from the day on which I set my foot in Ireland all these evils went away from me. Since that time who has had a happier life than mine? Looking round upon all those I know, I cannot put my hand upon one. But all is not over yet. And, mindful of that, remembering how great is the agony of adversity, how crushing the despondency of degradation, how susceptible I am myself to the misery coming from contempt,--remembering also how quickly good things may go and evil things come,--I am often again tempted to hope, almost to pray, that the end may be near. Things may be going well now--

"Sin aliquem infandum casum, Fortuna, minaris;
Nunc, o nunc liceat crudelem abrumpere vitam."

There is unhappiness so great that the very fear of it is an alloy to happiness. I had then lost my father, and sister, and brother,--have since lost another sister and my mother;--but I have never as yet lost a wife or a child.

When I told my friends that I was going on this mission to Ireland they shook their heads, but said nothing to dissuade me. I think it must have been evident to all who were my friends that my life in London was not a success. My mother and elder brother were at this time abroad, and were not consulted;--did not even know my intention in time to protest against it. Indeed, I consulted no one, except a dear old cousin, our family lawyer, from whom I borrowed (pounds)200 to help me out of England. He lent me the money, and looked upon me with pitying eyes--shaking his head. "After all, you were right to go," he said to me when I paid him the money a few years afterwards.

But nobody then thought I was right to go. To become clerk to an Irish surveyor, in Connaught, with a salary of (pounds)100 a year, at twenty-six years of age! I did not think it right even myself,--except that anything was right which would take me away from the General Post Office and from London.

My ideas of the duties I was to perform were very vague, as were also my ideas of Ireland generally. Hitherto I had passed my time, seated at a desk, either writing letters myself, or copying into books those which others had written. I had never been called upon to do anything I was unable or unfitted to do. I now understood that in Ireland I was to be a deputy-inspector of country post offices, and that among other things to be inspected would be the postmasters' accounts! But as no other person asked a question as to my fitness for this work, it seemed unnecessary for me to do so.

On the 15th of September, 1841, I landed in Dublin, without an acquaintance in the country, and with only two or three letters of introduction from a brother clerk in the Post Office. I had learned to think that Ireland was a land flowing with fun and whisky, in which irregularity was the rule of life, and where broken heads were looked upon as honourable badges. I was to live at a place called Banagher, on the Shannon, which I had heard of because of its having once been conquered, though it had heretofore conquered everything, including the devil. And from Banagher my inspecting tours were to be made, chiefly into Connaught, but also over a strip of country eastwards, which would enable me occasionally to run up to Dublin. I went to a hotel which was very dirty, and after dinner I ordered some whisky punch. There was an excitement in this, but when the punch was gone I was very dull. It seemed so strange to be in a country in which there was not a single individual whom I had ever spoken to or ever seen. And it was to be my destiny to go down into Connaught and adjust accounts,--the destiny of me who had never learned the multiplication table, or done a sum in long division!

On the next morning I called on the Secretary of the Irish Post Office, and learned from him that Colonel Maberly had sent a very bad character with me. He could not have sent a very good one; but I felt a little hurt when I was informed by this new master that he had been informed that I was worthless, and must, in all probability, be dismissed. "But," said the new master, "I shall judge you by your own merits." From that time to the day on which I left the service, I never heard a word of censure, nor had many months passed before I found that my services were valued. Before a year was over, I had acquired the character of a thoroughly good public servant.

The time went very pleasantly. Some adventures I had;--two of which I told in the Tales of All Countries, under the names of The O'Conors of Castle Conor, and Father Giles of Ballymoy. I will not swear to every detail in these stories, but the main purport of each is true. I could tell many others of the same nature, were this the place for them. I found that the surveyor to whom I had been sent kept a pack of hounds, and therefore I bought a hunter. I do not think he liked it, but he could not well complain. He never rode to hounds himself, but I did; and then and thus began one of the great joys of my life. I have ever since been constant to the sport, having learned to love it with an affection which I cannot myself fathom or understand. Surely no man has laboured at it as I have done, or hunted under such drawbacks as to distances, money, and natural disadvantages. I am very heavy, very blind, have been--in reference to hunting--a poor man, and am now an old man. I have often had to travel all night outside a mail-coach, in order that I might hunt the next day. Nor have I ever been in truth a good horseman. And I have passed the greater part of my hunting life under the discipline of the Civil Service. But it has been for more than thirty years a duty to me to ride to hounds; and I have performed that duty with a persistent energy. Nothing has ever been allowed to stand in the way of hunting,--neither the writing of books, nor the work of the Post Office, nor other pleasures. As regarded the Post Office, it soon seemed to be understood that I was to hunt; and when my services were re-transferred to England, no word of difficulty ever reached me about it. I have written on very many subjects, and on most of them with pleasure, but on no subject with such delight as that on hunting. I have dragged it into many novels,--into too many, no doubt,--but I have always felt myself deprived of a legitimate joy when the nature of the tale has not allowed me a hunting chapter. Perhaps that which gave me the greatest delight was the description of a run on a horse accidentally taken from another sportsman--a circumstance which occurred to my dear friend Charles Buxton, who will be remembered as one of the members for Surrey.

It was altogether a very jolly life that I led in Ireland. I was always moving about, and soon found myself to be in pecuniary circumstances which were opulent in comparison with those of my past life. The Irish people did not murder me, nor did they even break my head. I soon found them to be good-humoured, clever--the working classes very much more intelligent than those of England--economical, and hospitable. We hear much of their spendthrift nature; but extravagance is not the nature of an Irishman. He will count the shillings in a pound much more accurately than an Englishman, and will with much more certainty get twelve pennyworth from each. But they are perverse, irrational, and but little bound by the love of truth. I lived for many years among them--not finally leaving the country until 1859, and I had the means of studying their character.

I had not been a fortnight in Ireland before I was sent down to a little town in the far west of county Galway, to balance a defaulting postmaster's accounts, find out how much he owed, and report upon his capacity to pay. In these days such accounts are very simple. They adjust themselves from day to day, and a Post Office surveyor has nothing to do with them. At that time, though the sums dealt with were small, the forms of dealing with them were very intricate. I went to work, however, and made that defaulting postmaster teach

me the use of those forms. I then succeeded in balancing the account, and had no difficulty whatever in reporting that he was altogether unable to pay his debt. Of course, he was dismissed; but he had been a very useful man to me. I never had any further difficulty in the matter.

But my chief work was the investigating of complaints made by the public as to postal matters. The practice of the office was and is to send one of its servants to the spot to see the complainant and to inquire into the facts, when the complainant is sufficiently energetic or sufficiently big to make himself well heard. A great expense is often incurred for a very small object; but the system works well on the whole, as confidence is engendered, and a feeling is produced in the country that the department has eyes of its own and does keep them open. This employment was very pleasant, and to me always easy, as it required at its close no more than the writing of a report. There were no accounts in this business, no keeping of books, no necessary manipulation of multitudinous forms. I must tell of one such complaint and inquiry, because in its result I think it was emblematic of many.

A gentleman in county Cavan had complained most bitterly of the injury done to him by some arrangement of the Post Office. The nature of his grievance has no present significance; but it was so unendurable that he had written many letters, couched in the strongest language. He was most irate, and indulged himself in that scorn which is easy to an angry mind. The place was not in my district, but I was borrowed, being young and strong, that I might remember the edge of his personal wrath. It was mid-winter, and I drove up to his house, a squire's country seat, in the middle of a snowstorm, just as it was becoming dark. I was on an open jaunting car, and was on my way from one little town to another, the cause of his complaint having reference to some mail conveyance between the two. I was certainly very cold, and very wet, and very uncomfortable when I entered his house. I was admitted by a butler, but the gentleman himself hurried into the hall. I at once began to explain my business. "God bless me!" he said, "you are wet through. John, get Mr. Trollope some brandy and water--very hot." I was beginning my story about the post again when he himself took off my greatcoat, and suggested that I should go up to my bedroom before I troubled myself with business. "Bedroom!" I exclaimed. Then he assured me that he would not turn a dog out on such a night as that, and into a bedroom I was shown, having first drunk the brandy and water standing at the drawing-room fire. When I came down I was introduced to his daughter, and the three of us went in to dinner. I shall never forget his righteous indignation when I again brought up the postal question on the departure of the young lady. Was I such a Goth as to contaminate wine with business? So I drank my wine, and then heard the young lady sing while her father slept in his armchair. I spent a very pleasant evening, but my host was too sleepy to hear anything about the Post Office that night. It was absolutely necessary that I should go away the next morning after breakfast, and I explained that the matter must be discussed then. He shook his head and wrung his hands in unmistakable disgust,--almost in despair. "But what am I to say in my report?" I asked. "Anything you please," he said. "Don't spare me, if you want an excuse for yourself. Here I sit all the day--with nothing to do; and I like writing letters." I did report that Mr.---- was now quite satisfied with the postal arrangement of his district;

and I felt a soft regret that I should have robbed my friend of his occupation. Perhaps he was able to take up the Poor Law Board, or to attack the Excise. At the Post Office nothing more was heard from him.

I went on with the hunting surveyor at Banagher for three years, during which, at Kingstown, the watering place near Dublin, I met Rose Heseltine, the lady who has since become my wife. The engagement took place when I had been just one year in Ireland; but there was still a delay of two years before we could be married. She had no fortune, nor had I any income beyond that which came from the Post Office; and there were still a few debts, which would have been paid off no doubt sooner, but for that purchase of the horse. When I had been nearly three years in Ireland we were married on the 11th of June, 1844;--and, perhaps, I ought to name that happy day as the commencement of my better life, rather than the day on which I first landed in Ireland.

For though during these three years I had been jolly enough, I had not been altogether happy. The hunting, the whisky punch, the rattling Irish life,--of which I could write a volume of stories were this the place to tell them,--were continually driving from my mind the still cherished determination to become a writer of novels. When I reached Ireland I had never put pen to paper; nor had I done so when I became engaged. And when I was married, being then twenty-nine, I had only written the first volume of my first work. This constant putting off of the day of work was a great sorrow to me. I certainly had not been idle in my new berth. I had learned my work, so that every one concerned knew that it was safe in my hands; and I held a position altogether the reverse of that in which I was always trembling while I remained in London. But that did not suffice,--did not nearly suffice. I still felt that there might be a career before me, if I could only bring myself to begin the work. I do not think I much doubted my own intellectual sufficiency for the writing of a readable novel. What I did doubt was my own industry, and the chances of the market.

The vigour necessary to prosecute two professions at the same time is not given to every one, and it was only lately that I had found the vigour necessary for one. There must be early hours, and I had not as yet learned to love early hours. I was still, indeed, a young man; but hardly young enough to trust myself to find the power to alter the habits of my life. And I had heard of the difficulties of publishing,--a subject of which I shall have to say much should I ever bring this memoir to a close. I had dealt already with publishers on my mother's behalf, and knew that many a tyro who could fill a manuscript lacked the power to put his matter before the public;--and I knew, too, that when the matter was printed, how little had then been done towards the winning of the battle! I had already learned that many a book--many a good book--

"is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

But still the purpose was strong within me, and the first effort was made after the following fashion. I was located at a little town called Drumsna, or rather village, in the county Leitrim, where the postmaster had come to some sorrow about his money; and my friend John Merivale was staying with me for a day or two. As

we were taking a walk in that most uninteresting country, we turned up through a deserted gateway, along a weedy, grass-grown avenue, till we came to the modern ruins of a country house. It was one of the most melancholy spots I ever visited. I will not describe it here, because I have done so in the first chapter of my first novel. We wandered about the place, suggesting to each other causes for the misery we saw there, and, while I was still among the ruined walls and decayed beams, I fabricated the plot of *The Macdermots of Ballycloran*. As to the plot itself, I do not know that I ever made one so good,--or, at any rate, one so susceptible of pathos. I am aware that I broke down in the telling, not having yet studied the art. Nevertheless, *The Macdermots* is a good novel, and worth reading by any one who wishes to understand what Irish life was before the potato disease, the famine, and the Encumbered Estates Bill.

When my friend left me, I set to work and wrote the first chapter or two. Up to this time I had continued that practice of castle-building of which I have spoken; but now the castle I built was among the ruins of that old house. The book, however, hung with me. It was only now and then that I found either time or energy for a few pages. I commenced the book in September, 1843, and had only written a volume when I was married in June, 1844.

My marriage was like the marriage of other people, and of no special interest to any one except my wife and me. It took place at Rotherham, in Yorkshire, where her father was the manager of a bank. We were not very rich, having about (pounds)400 a year on which to live.

Many people would say that we were two fools to encounter such poverty together. I can only reply that since that day I have never been without money in my pocket, and that I soon acquired the means of paying what I owed. Nevertheless, more than twelve years had to pass over our heads before I received any payment for any literary work which afforded an appreciable increase to our income.

Immediately after our marriage, I left the west of Ireland and the hunting surveyor, and joined another in the south. It was a better district, and I was enabled to live at Clonmel, a town of some importance, instead of at Banagher, which is little more than a village. I had not felt myself to be comfortable in my old residence as a married man. On my arrival there as a bachelor I had been received most kindly, but when I brought my English wife I fancied that there was a feeling that I had behaved badly to Ireland generally. When a young man has been received hospitably in an Irish circle, I will not say that it is expected of him that he should marry some young lady in that society;--but it certainly is expected of him that he shall not marry any young lady out of it. I had given offence, and I was made to feel it.

There has taken place a great change in Ireland since the days in which I lived at Banagher, and a change so much for the better, that I have sometimes wondered at the obduracy with which people have spoken of the permanent ill condition of the country. Wages are now nearly double what they were then. The Post Office, at any rate, is paying almost double for its rural labour,--9s. a week when it used to pay 5s., and 12s. a week when it used to pay 7s. Banks have sprung up in almost every village. Rents are paid with

more than English punctuality. And the religious enmity between the classes, though it is not yet dead, is dying out. Soon after I reached Banagher in 1841, I dined one evening with a Roman Catholic. I was informed next day by a Protestant gentleman who had been very hospitable to me that I must choose my party. I could not sit both at Protestant and Catholic tables. Such a caution would now be impossible in any part of Ireland. Home-rule, no doubt, is a nuisance,--and especially a nuisance because the professors of the doctrine do not at all believe it themselves. There are probably no other twenty men in England or Ireland who would be so utterly dumfounded and prostrated were Home-rule to have its way as the twenty Irish members who profess to support it in the House of Commons. But it is not to be expected that nuisances such as these should be abolished at a blow. Home-rule is, at any rate, better and more easily managed than the rebellion at the close of the last century; it is better than the treachery of the Union; less troublesome than O'Connell's monster meetings; less dangerous than Smith O'Brien and the battle of the cabbage-garden at Ballingary, and very much less bloody than Fenianism. The descent from O'Connell to Mr. Butt has been the natural declension of a political disease, which we had no right to hope would be cured by any one remedy.

When I had been married a year my first novel was finished. In July, 1845, I took it with me to the north of England, and intrusted the MS. to my mother to do with it the best she could among the publishers in London. No one had read it but my wife; nor, as far as I am aware, has any other friend of mine ever read a word of my writing before it was printed. She, I think, has so read almost everything, to my very great advantage in matters of taste. I am sure I have never asked a friend to read a line; nor have I ever read a word of my own writing aloud,--even to her. With one exception,--which shall be mentioned as I come to it,--I have never consulted a friend as to a plot, or spoken to any one of the work I have been doing. My first manuscript I gave up to my mother, agreeing with her that it would be as well that she should not look at it before she gave it to a publisher. I knew that she did not give me credit for the sort of cleverness necessary for such work. I could see in the faces and hear in the voices of those of my friends who were around me at the house in Cumberland,--my mother, my sister, my brother-in-law, and, I think, my brother,--that they had not expected me to come out as one of the family authors. There were three or four in the field before me, and it seemed to be almost absurd that another should wish to add himself to the number. My father had written much,--those long ecclesiastical descriptions,--quite unsuccessfully. My mother had become one of the popular authors of the day. My brother had commenced, and had been fairly well paid for his work. My sister, Mrs. Tilley, had also written a novel, which was at the time in manuscript--which was published afterwards without her name, and was called Chollerton. I could perceive that this attempt of mine was felt to be an unfortunate aggravation of the disease.

My mother, however, did the best she could for me, and soon reported that Mr. Newby, of Mortimer Street, was to publish the book. It was to be printed at his expense, and he was to give me half the profits. Half the profits! Many a young author expects much from such an undertaking. I can, with truth, declare that I expected nothing. And I got nothing. Nor did I expect fame, or even acknowledgment. I was sure that the book would fail, and it did fail most absolutely. I never heard of a person reading it in those days. If there was

any notice taken of it by any critic of the day, I did not see it. I never asked any questions about it, or wrote a single letter on the subject to the publisher. I have Mr. Newby's agreement with me, in duplicate, and one or two preliminary notes; but beyond that I did not have a word from Mr. Newby. I am sure that he did not wrong me in that he paid me nothing. It is probable that he did not sell fifty copies of the work;--but of what he did sell he gave me no account.

I do not remember that I felt in any way disappointed or hurt. I am quite sure that no word of complaint passed my lips. I think I may say that after the publication I never said a word about the book, even to my wife. The fact that I had written and published it, and that I was writing another, did not in the least interfere with my life, or with my determination to make the best I could of the Post Office. In Ireland, I think that no one knew that I had written a novel. But I went on writing. The Macdermots was published in 1847, and The Kellys and the O'Kellys followed in 1848. I changed my publisher, but did not change my fortune. This second Irish story was sent into the world by Mr. Colburn, who had long been my mother's publisher, who reigned in Great Marlborough Street, and I believe created the business which is now carried on by Messrs. Hurst & Blackett. He had previously been in partnership with Mr. Bentley in New Burlington Street. I made the same agreement as before as to half profits, and with precisely the same results. The book was not only not read, but was never heard of,--at any rate, in Ireland. And yet it is a good Irish story, much inferior to The Macdermots as to plot, but superior in the mode of telling. Again I held my tongue, and not only said nothing but felt nothing. Any success would, I think, have carried me off my legs, but I was altogether prepared for failure. Though I thoroughly enjoyed the writing of these books, I did not imagine, when the time came for publishing them, that any one would condescend to read them.

But in reference to The O'Kellys there arose a circumstance which set my mind to work on a subject which has exercised it much ever since. I made my first acquaintance with criticism. A dear friend of mine to whom the book had been sent,--as have all my books,--wrote me word to Ireland that he had been dining at some club with a man high in authority among the gods of the Times newspaper, and that this special god had almost promised that The O'Kellys should be noticed in that most influential of "organs." The information moved me very much; but it set me thinking whether the notice, should it ever appear, would not have been more valuable, at any rate, more honest, if it had been produced by other means;--if, for instance, the writer of the notice had been instigated by the merits or demerits of the book instead of by the friendship of a friend. And I made up my mind then that, should I continue this trade of authorship, I would have no dealings with any critic on my own behalf. I would neither ask for nor deplore criticism, nor would I ever thank a critic for praise, or quarrel with him, even in my own heart, for censure. To this rule I have adhered with absolute strictness, and this rule I would recommend to all young authors. What can be got by touting among the critics is never worth the ignominy. The same may, of course, be said of all things acquired by ignominious means. But in this matter it is so easy to fall into the dirt. *Facilis descensus Averni*. There seems to be but little fault in suggesting to a friend that a few words in this or that journal would be of service. But any praise so obtained must be an injustice to the

public, for whose instruction, and not for the sustentation of the author, such notices are intended. And from such mild suggestion the descent to crawling at the critic's feet, to the sending of presents, and at last to a mutual understanding between critics and criticised, is only too easy. Other evils follow, for the denouncing of which this is hardly the place;--though I trust I may find such place before my work is finished. I took no notice of my friend's letter, but I was not the less careful in watching The Times. At last the review came,--a real review in The Times. I learned it by heart, and can now give, if not the words, the exact purport. "Of The Kellys and the O'Kellys we may say what the master said to his footman, when the man complained of the constant supply of legs of mutton on the kitchen table. Well, John, legs of mutton are good, substantial food;" and we may say also what John replied: 'Substantial, sir,--yes, they are substantial, but a little coarse.'" That was the review, and even that did not sell the book!

From Mr. Colburn I did receive an account, showing that 375 copies of the book had been printed, that 140 had been sold,--to those, I presume, who liked substantial food though it was coarse,--and that he had incurred a loss of (pounds)63 19S. 1 1/2d. The truth of the account I never for a moment doubted; nor did I doubt the wisdom of the advice given to me in the following letter, though I never thought of obeying it--

"GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET,
November 11, 1848.

"MY DEAR SIR,--I am sorry to say that absence from town and other circumstances have prevented me from earlier inquiring into the results of the sale of The Kellys and the O'Kellys, with which the greatest efforts have been used, but in vain. The sale has been, I regret to say, so small that the loss upon the publication is very considerable; and it appears clear to me that, although in consequence of the great number of novels that are published, the sale of each, with some few exceptions, must be small, yet it is evident that readers do not like novels on Irish subjects as well as on others. Thus, you will perceive, it is impossible for me to give any encouragement to you to proceed in novel-writing.

"As, however, I understand you have nearly finished the novel La Vendee, perhaps you will favour me with a sight of it when convenient.--I remain, etc., etc.,

"H. COLBURN."

This, though not strictly logical, was a rational letter, telling a plain truth plainly. I did not like the assurance that "the greatest efforts had been used," thinking that any efforts which might be made for the popularity of a book ought to have come from the author;--but I took in good part Mr. Colburn's assurance that he could not encourage me in the career I had commenced. I would have bet twenty to one against my own success. But by continuing I could lose only pen and paper; and if the one chance in twenty did turn up in my favour, then how much might I win!

CHAPTER V

MY FIRST SUCCESS

1849-1855

I had at once gone to work on a third novel, and had nearly completed it, when I was informed of the absolute failure of the former. I find, however, that the agreement for its publication was not made till 1850, by which time I imagine that Mr. Colburn must have forgotten the disastrous result of *The O'Kellys*, as he thereby agrees to give me (pounds)20 down for my "new historical novel, to be called *La Vendee*." He agreed also to pay me (pounds)30 more when he had sold 350 copies, and (pounds)50 more should he sell 450 within six months. I got my (pounds)20, and then heard no more of (pounds)a Vendee, not even receiving any account. Perhaps the historical title had appeared more alluring to him than an Irish subject; though it was not long afterwards that I received a warning from the very same house of business against historical novels,--as I will tell at length when the proper time comes.

I have no doubt that the result of the sale of this story was no better than that of the two that had gone before. I asked no questions, however, and to this day have received no information. The story is certainly inferior to those which had gone before;--chiefly because I knew accurately the life of the people in Ireland, and knew, in truth, nothing of life in the *La Vendee* country, and also because the facts of the present time came more within the limits of my powers of story-telling than those of past years. But I read the book the other day, and am not ashamed of it. The conception as to the feeling of the people is, I think, true; the characters are distinct, and the tale is not dull. As far as I can remember, this morsel of criticism is the only one that was ever written on the book.

I had, however, received (pounds)20. Alas! alas! years were to roll by before I should earn by my pen another shilling. And, indeed, I was well aware that I had not earned that; but that the money had been "talked out of" the worthy publisher by the earnestness of my brother, who made the bargain for me. I have known very much of publishers and have been surprised by much in their mode of business,--by the apparent lavishness and by the apparent hardness to authors in the same men,--but by nothing so much as by the ease with which they can occasionally be persuaded to throw away small sums of money. If you will only make the payment future instead of present, you may generally twist a few pounds in your own or your client's favour. "You might as well promise her (pounds)20. This day six months will do very well." The publisher, though he knows that the money will never come back to him, thinks it worth his while to rid himself of your importunity at so cheap a price.

But while I was writing *La Vendee* I made a literary attempt in another direction. In 1847 and 1848 there had come upon Ireland the desolation and destruction, first of the famine, and then of the pestilence which succeeded the famine. It was my duty at that

time to be travelling constantly in those parts of Ireland in which the misery and troubles thence arising were, perhaps, at their worst. The western parts of Cork, Kerry, and Clare were pre-eminently unfortunate. The efforts,--I may say, the successful efforts,--made by the Government to stay the hands of death will still be in the remembrance of many:--how Sir Robert Peel was instigated to repeal the Corn Laws; and how, subsequently, Lord John Russell took measures for employing the people, and supplying the country with Indian corn. The expediency of these latter measures was questioned by many. The people themselves wished, of course, to be fed without working; and the gentry, who were mainly responsible for the rates, were disposed to think that the management of affairs was taken too much out of their own hands. My mind at the time was busy with the matter, and, thinking that the Government was right, I was inclined to defend them as far as my small powers went. S. G. O. (Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne) was at that time denouncing the Irish scheme of the Administration in the Times, using very strong language,--as those who remember his style will know. I fancied then,--as I still think,--that I understood the country much better than he did; and I was anxious to show that the steps taken for mitigating the terrible evil of the times were the best which the Minister of the day could have adopted. In 1848 I was in London, and, full of my purpose, I presented myself to Mr. John Forster,--who has since been an intimate and valued friend,--but who was at that time the editor of the Examiner. I think that that portion of the literary world which understands the fabrication of newspapers will admit that neither before his time, nor since, has there been a more capable editor of a weekly newspaper. As a literary man, he was not without his faults. That which the cabman is reported to have said of him before the magistrate is quite true. He was always "an arbitrary cove." As a critic, he belonged to the school of Bentley and Gifford,--who would always bray in a literary mortar all critics who disagreed from them, as though such disagreement were a personal offence requiring personal castigation. But that very eagerness made him a good editor. Into whatever he did he put his very heart and soul. During his time the Examiner was almost all that a Liberal weekly paper should be. So to John Forster I went, and was shown into that room in Lincoln's Inn Fields in which, some three or four years earlier, Dickens had given that reading of which there is an illustration with portraits in the second volume of his life.

At this time I knew no literary men. A few I had met when living with my mother, but that had been now so long ago that all such acquaintance had died out. I knew who they were as far as a man could get such knowledge from the papers of the day, and felt myself as in part belonging to the guild, through my mother, and in some degree by my own unsuccessful efforts. But it was not probable that any one would admit my claim;--nor on this occasion did I make any claim. I stated my name and official position, and the fact that opportunities had been given me of seeing the poorhouses in Ireland, and of making myself acquainted with the circumstances of the time. Would a series of letters on the subject be accepted by the Examiner? The great man, who loomed very large to me, was pleased to say that if the letters should recommend themselves by their style and matter, if they were not too long, and if,--every reader will know how on such occasions an editor will guard himself,--if this and if that, they should be favourably entertained. They were favourably entertained,--if printing and publication be favourable

entertainment. But I heard no more of them. The world in Ireland did not declare that the Government had at last been adequately defended, nor did the treasurer of the Examiner send me a cheque in return.

Whether there ought to have been a cheque I do not even yet know. A man who writes a single letter to a newspaper, of course, is not paid for it,--nor for any number of letters on some point personal to himself. I have since written sets of letters to newspapers, and have been paid for them; but then I have bargained for a price. On this occasion I had hopes; but they never ran high, and I was not much disappointed. I have no copy now of those letters, and could not refer to them without much trouble; nor do I remember what I said. But I know that I did my best in writing them.

When my historical novel failed, as completely as had its predecessors, the two Irish novels, I began to ask myself whether, after all, that was my proper line. I had never thought of questioning the justice of the verdict expressed against me. The idea that I was the unfortunate owner of unappreciated genius never troubled me. I did not look at the books after they were published, feeling sure that they had been, as it were, damned with good reason. But still I was clear in my mind that I would not lay down my pen. Then and therefore I determined to change my hand, and to attempt a play. I did attempt the play, and in 1850 I wrote a comedy, partly in blank verse, and partly in prose, called *The Noble Jilt*. The plot I afterwards used in a novel called *Can You Forgive Her?* I believe that I did give the best of my intellect to the play, and I must own that when it was completed it pleased me much. I copied it, and re-copied it, touching it here and touching it there, and then sent it to my very old friend, George Bartley, the actor, who had when I was in London been stage-manager of one of the great theatres, and who would, I thought, for my own sake and for my mother's, give me the full benefit of his professional experience.

I have now before me the letter which he wrote to me,--a letter which I have read a score of times. It was altogether condemnatory. "When I commenced," he said, "I had great hopes of your production. I did not think it opened dramatically, but that might have been remedied." I knew then that it was all over. But, as my old friend warmed to the subject, the criticism became stronger and stronger, till my ears tingled. At last came the fatal blow. "As to the character of your heroine, I felt at a loss how to describe it, but you have done it for me in the last speech of Madame Brudo." Madame Brudo was the heroine's aunt. "'Margaret, my child, never play the jilt again; 'tis a most unbecoming character. Play it with what skill you will, it meets but little sympathy.' And this, be assured, would be its effect upon an audience. So that I must reluctantly add that, had I been still a manager, *The Noble Jilt* is not a play I could have recommended for production." This was a blow that I did feel. The neglect of a book is a disagreeable fact which grows upon an author by degrees. There is no special moment of agony,--no stunning violence of condemnation. But a piece of criticism such as this, from a friend, and from a man undoubtedly capable of forming an opinion, was a blow in the face! But I accepted the judgment loyally, and said not a word on the subject to any one. I merely showed the letter to my wife, declaring my conviction, that it must be taken as gospel. And as critical gospel it has since been accepted. In later days I have more than once

read the play, and I know that he was right. The dialogue, however, I think to be good, and I doubt whether some of the scenes be not the brightest and best work I ever did.

Just at this time another literary project loomed before my eyes, and for six or eight months had considerable size. I was introduced to Mr. John Murray, and proposed to him to write a handbook for Ireland. I explained to him that I knew the country better than most other people, perhaps better than any other person, and could do it well. He asked me to make a trial of my skill, and to send him a certain number of pages, undertaking to give me an answer within a fortnight after he should have received my work. I came back to Ireland, and for some weeks I laboured very hard. I "did" the city of Dublin, and the county of Kerry, in which lies the lake scenery of Killarney, and I "did" the route from Dublin to Killarney, altogether completing nearly a quarter of the proposed volume. The roll of MS. was sent to Albemarle Street,--but was never opened. At the expiration of nine months from the date on which it reached that time-honoured spot it was returned without a word, in answer to a very angry letter from myself. I insisted on having back my property,--and got it. I need hardly say that my property has never been of the slightest use to me. In all honesty I think that had he been less dilatory, John Murray would have got a very good Irish Guide at a cheap rate.

Early in 1851 I was sent upon a job of special official work, which for two years so completely absorbed my time that I was able to write nothing. A plan was formed for extending the rural delivery of letters, and for adjusting the work, which up to that time had been done in a very irregular manner. A country letter-carrier would be sent in one direction in which there were but few letters to be delivered, the arrangement having originated probably at the request of some influential person, while in another direction there was no letter-carrier because no influential person had exerted himself. It was intended to set this right throughout England, Ireland, and Scotland; and I quickly did the work in the Irish district to which I was attached. I was then invited to do the same in a portion of England, and I spent two of the happiest years of my life at the task. I began in Devonshire; and visited, I think I may say, every nook in that county, in Cornwall, Somersetshire, the greater part of Dorsetshire, the Channel Islands, part of Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, and the six southern Welsh counties. In this way I had an opportunity of seeing a considerable portion of Great Britain, with a minuteness which few have enjoyed. And I did my business after a fashion in which no other official man has worked at least for many years. I went almost everywhere on horseback. I had two hunters of my own, and here and there, where I could, I hired a third horse. I had an Irish groom with me,--an old man, who has now been in my service for thirty-five years; and in this manner I saw almost every house--I think I may say every house of importance--in this large district. The object was to create a postal network which should catch all recipients of letters. In France it was, and I suppose still is, the practice to deliver every letter. Wherever the man may live to whom a letter is addressed, it is the duty of some letter-carrier to take that letter to his house, sooner or later. But this, of course, must be done slowly. With us a delivery much delayed was thought to be worse than none at all. In some places we did establish posts three times a week, and perhaps occasionally

twice a week; but such halting arrangements were considered to be objectionable, and we were bound down by a salutary law as to expense, which came from our masters at the Treasury. We were not allowed to establish any messenger's walk on which a sufficient number of letters would not be delivered to pay the man's wages, counted at a halfpenny a letter. But then the counting was in our own hands, and an enterprising official might be sanguine in his figures. I think I was sanguine. I did not prepare false accounts; but I fear that the postmasters and clerks who absolutely had the country to do became aware that I was anxious for good results. It is amusing to watch how a passion will grow upon a man. During those two years it was the ambition of my life to cover the country with rural letter-carriers. I do not remember that in any case a rural post proposed by me was negatived by the authorities; but I fear that some of them broke down afterwards as being too poor, or because, in my anxiety to include this house and that, I had sent the men too far afield. Our law was that a man should not be required to walk more than sixteen miles a day. Had the work to be done been all on a measured road, there would have been no need for doubt as to the distances. But my letter-carriers went here and there across the fields. It was my special delight to take them by all short cuts; and as I measured on horseback the short cuts which they would have to make on foot, perhaps I was sometimes a little unjust to them.

All this I did on horseback, riding on an average forty miles a day. I was paid sixpence a mile for the distance travelled, and it was necessary that I should at any rate travel enough to pay for my equipage. This I did, and got my hunting out of it also. I have often surprised some small country postmaster, who had never seen or heard of me before, by coming down upon him at nine in the morning, with a red coat and boots and breeches, and interrogating him as to the disposal of every letter which came into his office. And in the same guise I would ride up to farmhouses, or parsonages, or other lone residences about the country, and ask the people how they got their letters, at what hour, and especially whether they were delivered free or at a certain charge. For a habit had crept into use, which came to be, in my eyes, at that time, the one sin for which there was no pardon, in accordance with which these rural letter-carriers used to charge a penny a letter, alleging that the house was out of their beat, and that they must be paid for their extra work. I think that I did stamp out that evil. In all these visits I was, in truth, a beneficent angel to the public, bringing everywhere with me an earlier, cheaper, and much more regular delivery of letters. But not unfrequently the angelic nature of my mission was imperfectly understood. I was perhaps a little in a hurry to get on, and did not allow as much time as was necessary to explain to the wondering mistress of the house, or to an open-mouthed farmer, why it was that a man arrayed for hunting asked so many questions which might be considered impertinent, as applying to his or her private affairs. "Good-morning, sir. I have just called to ask a few questions. I am a surveyor of the Post Office. How do you get your letters? As I am a little in a hurry, perhaps you can explain at once." Then I would take out my pencil and notebook, and wait for information. And in fact there was no other way in which the truth could be ascertained. Unless I came down suddenly as a summer's storm upon them, the very people who were robbed by our messengers would not confess the robbery, fearing the ill-will of the men. It was necessary to startle them into the revelations which I required

them to make for their own good. And I did startle them. I became thoroughly used to it, and soon lost my native bashfulness;--but sometimes my visits astonished the retiring inhabitants of country houses. I did, however, do my work, and can look back upon what I did with thorough satisfaction. I was altogether in earnest; and I believe that many a farmer now has his letters brought daily to his house free of charge, who but for me would still have had to send to the post-town for them twice a week, or to have paid a man for bringing them irregularly to his door.

This work took up my time so completely, and entailed upon me so great an amount of writing, that I was in fact unable to do any literary work. From day to day I thought of it, still purporting to make another effort, and often turning over in my head some fragment of a plot which had occurred to me. But the day did not come in which I could sit down with my pen and paper and begin another novel. For, after all, what could it be but a novel? The play had failed more absolutely than the novels, for the novels had attained the honour of print. The cause of this pressure of official work lay, not in the demands of the General Post Office, which more than once expressed itself as astonished by my celerity, but in the necessity which was incumbent on me to travel miles enough to pay for my horses, and upon the amount of correspondence, returns, figures, and reports which such an amount of daily travelling brought with it. I may boast that the work was done very quickly and very thoroughly,--with no fault but an over-eagerness to extend postal arrangements far and wide.

In the course of the job I visited Salisbury, and whilst wandering there one mid-summer evening round the purlieus of the cathedral I conceived the story of *The Warden*,--from whence came that series of novels of which Barchester, with its bishops, deans, and archdeacon, was the central site. I may as well declare at once that no one at their commencement could have had less reason than myself to presume himself to be able to write about clergymen. 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 life-like, 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. It was such as that, in my opinion, that an archdeacon should be,--or, at any rate, would be with such advantages as an archdeacon might have; and lo! an archdeacon was produced, who has been declared by competent authorities to be a real archdeacon down to the very ground. And yet, as far as I can remember, I had not then even spoken to an archdeacon. I have felt the compliment to be very great. The archdeacon came whole from my brain after this fashion;--but in writing about clergymen generally, I had to pick up as I went whatever I might know or pretend to know about them. But my first idea had no reference to clergymen in general. I had been struck by two opposite evils,--or what seemed to me to be evils,--and with an absence of all art-judgment in such matters, I thought that I might be able to expose them, or rather to describe them, both in one and the same tale. The first evil was the possession by the Church of certain funds and endowments which had been intended for charitable purposes, but which had been allowed to become incomes for idle Church dignitaries. There had been more

than one such case brought to public notice at the time, in which there seemed to have been an egregious malversation of charitable purposes. The second evil was its very opposite. Though I had been much struck by the injustice above described, I had also often been angered by the undeserved severity of the newspapers towards the recipients of such incomes, who could hardly be considered to be the chief sinners in the matter. When a man is appointed to a place, it is natural that he should accept the income allotted to that place without much inquiry. It is seldom that he will be the first to find out that his services are overpaid. Though he be called upon only to look beautiful and to be dignified upon State occasions, he will think (pounds)2000 a year little enough for such beauty and dignity as he brings to the task. I felt that there had been some tearing to pieces which might have been spared. But I was altogether wrong in supposing that the two things could be combined. Any writer in advocating a cause must do so after the fashion of an advocate,--or his writing will be ineffective. He should take up one side and cling to that, and then he may be powerful. There should be no scruples of conscience. Such scruples make a man impotent for such work. It was open to me to have described a bloated parson, with a red nose and all other iniquities, openly neglecting every duty required from him, and living riotously on funds purloined from the poor,--defying as he did do so the moderate remonstrances of a virtuous press. Or I might have painted a man as good, as sweet, and as mild as my warden, who should also have been a hard-working, ill-paid minister of God's word, and might have subjected him to the rancorous venom of some daily Jupiter, who, without a leg to stand on, without any true case, might have been induced, by personal spite, to tear to rags the poor clergyman with poisonous, anonymous, and ferocious leading articles. But neither of these programmes recommended itself to my honesty. Satire, though it may exaggerate the vice it lashes, is not justified in creating it in order that it may be lashed. Caricature may too easily become a slander, and satire a libel. I believed in the existence neither of the red-nosed clerical cormorant, nor in that of the venomous assassin of the journals. I did believe that through want of care and the natural tendency of every class to take care of itself, money had slipped into the pockets of certain clergymen which should have gone elsewhere; and I believed also that through the equally natural propensity of men to be as strong as they know how to be, certain writers of the press had allowed themselves to use language which was cruel, though it was in a good cause. But the two objects should not have been combined--and I now know myself well enough to be aware that I was not the man to have carried out either of them.

Nevertheless I thought much about it, and on the 29th of July, 1853,--having been then two years without having made any literary effort,--I began *The Warden*, at Tenbury in Worcestershire. It was then more than twelve months since I had stood for an hour on the little bridge in Salisbury, and had made out to my own satisfaction the spot on which Hiram's hospital should stand. Certainly no work that I ever did took up so much of my thoughts. On this occasion I did no more than write the first chapter, even if so much. I had determined that my official work should be moderated, so as to allow me some time for writing; but then, just at this time, I was sent to take the postal charge of the northern counties in Ireland,--of Ulster, and the counties Meath and Louth. Hitherto in official language I had been a surveyor's clerk,--now I was to be a surveyor.

The difference consisted mainly in an increase of income from about (pounds)450 to about (pounds)800;--for at that time the sum netted still depended on the number of miles travelled. Of course that English work to which I had become so warmly wedded had to be abandoned. Other parts of England were being done by other men, and I had nearly finished the area which had been entrusted to me. I should have liked to ride over the whole country, and to have sent a rural post letter-carrier to every parish, every village, every hamlet, and every grange in England.

We were at this time very much unsettled as regards any residence. While we were living at Clonmel two sons had been born, who certainly were important enough to have been mentioned sooner. At Clonmel we had lived in lodgings, and from there had moved to Mallow, a town in the county Cork, where we had taken a house. Mallow was in the centre of a hunting country, and had been very pleasant to me. But our house there had been given up when it was known that I should be detained in England; and then we had wandered about in the western counties, moving our headquarters from one town to another. During this time we had lived at Exeter, at Bristol, at Caermarthen, at Cheltenham, and at Worcester. Now we again moved, and settled ourselves for eighteen months at Belfast. After that we took a house at Donnybrook, the well-known suburb of Dublin.

The work of taking up a new district, which requires not only that the man doing it should know the nature of the postal arrangements, but also the characters and the peculiarities of the postmasters and their clerks, was too heavy to allow of my going on with my book at once. It was not till the end of 1852 that I recommenced it, and it was in the autumn of 1853 that I finished the work. It was only one small volume, and in later days would have been completed in six weeks,--or in two months at the longest, if other work had pressed. On looking at the title-page, I find it was not published till 1855. I had made acquaintance, through my friend John Merivale, with William Longman the publisher, and had received from him an assurance that the manuscript should be "looked at." It was "looked at," and Messrs. Longman made me an offer to publish it at half profits. I had no reason to love "half profits," but I was very anxious to have my book published, and I acceded. It was now more than ten years since I had commenced writing *The Macdermots*, and I thought that if any success was to be achieved, the time surely had come. I had not been impatient; but, if there was to be a time, surely it had come.

The novel-reading world did not go mad about *The Warden*; but I soon felt that it had not failed as the others had failed. There were notices of it in the press, and I could discover that people around me knew that I had written a book. Mr. Longman was complimentary, and after a while informed me that there would be profits to divide. At the end of 1855 I received a cheque for (pounds)9 8s. 8d., which was the first money I had ever earned by literary work;--that (pounds)20 which poor Mr. Colburn had been made to pay certainly never having been earned at all. At the end of 1856 I received another sum of (pounds)10 15s. 1d. The pecuniary success was not great. Indeed, as regarded remuneration for the time, stone-breaking would have done better. A thousand copies were printed, of which, after a lapse of five or six years, about 300 had to be converted into another form, and sold as belonging to a cheap edition. In its original form *The Warden* never reached the essential honour of a second edition.

I have already said of the work that it failed altogether in the purport for which it was intended. But it has a merit of its own,--a merit by my own perception of which I was enabled to see wherein lay whatever strength I did possess. The characters of the bishop, of the archdeacon, of the archdeacon's wife, and especially of the warden, are all well and clearly drawn. I had realised to myself a series of portraits, and had been able so to put them on the canvas that my readers should see that which I meant them to see. There is no gift which an author can have more useful to him than this. And the style of the English was good, though from most unpardonable carelessness the grammar was not unfrequently faulty. With such results I had no doubt but that I would at once begin another novel.

I will here say one word as a long-deferred answer to an item of criticism which appeared in the Times newspaper as to *The Warden*. In an article--if I remember rightly--on *The Warden* and *Barchester Towers* combined--which I would call good-natured, but that I take it for granted that the critics of the Times are actuated by higher motives than good-nature, that little book and its sequel are spoken of in terms which were very pleasant to the author. But there was added to this a gentle word of rebuke at the morbid condition of the author's mind which had prompted him to indulge in personalities,--the personalities in question having reference to some editor or manager of the Times newspaper. For I had introduced one Tom Towers as being potent among the contributors to the *Jupiter*, under which name I certainly did allude to the Times. But at that time, living away in Ireland, I had not even heard the name of any gentleman connected with the Times newspaper, and could not have intended to represent any individual by Tom Towers. As I had created an archdeacon, so had I created a journalist, and the one creation was no more personal or indicative of morbid tendencies than the other. If Tom Towers was at all like any gentleman connected with the Times, my moral consciousness must again have been very powerful.

CHAPTER VI

"BARCHESTER TOWERS" AND THE "THREE CLERKS"

1855-1858

It was, I think, before I started on my English tours among the rural posts that I made my first attempt at writing for a magazine. I had read, soon after they came out, the two first volumes of Charles Menville's *History of the Romans under the Empire*, and had got into some correspondence with the author's brother as to the author's views about Caesar. Hence arose in my mind a tendency to investigate the character of probably the greatest man who ever lived, which tendency in after years produced a little book of which I shall have to speak when its time comes,--and also a taste generally for Latin literature, which has been one of the chief

delights of my later life. And I may say that I became at this time as anxious about Caesar, and as desirous of reaching the truth as to his character, as we have all been in regard to Bismarck in these latter days. I lived in Caesar, and debated with myself constantly whether he crossed the Rubicon as a tyrant or as a patriot. In order that I might review Mr. Merivale's book without feeling that I was dealing unwarrantably with a subject beyond me, I studied the Commentaries thoroughly, and went through a mass of other reading which the object of a magazine article hardly justified,--but which has thoroughly justified itself in the subsequent pursuits of my life. I did write two articles, the first mainly on Julius Caesar, and the second on Augustus, which appeared in the Dublin University Magazine. They were the result of very much labour, but there came from them no pecuniary product. I had been very modest when I sent them to the editor, as I had been when I called on John Forster, not venturing to suggest the subject of money. After a while I did call upon the proprietor of the magazine in Dublin, and was told by him that such articles were generally written to oblige friends, and that articles written to oblige friends were not usually paid for. The Dean of Ely, as the author of the work in question now is, was my friend; but I think I was wronged, as I certainly had no intention of obliging him by my criticism. Afterwards, when I returned to Ireland, I wrote other articles for the same magazine, one of which, intended to be very savage in its denunciation, was on an official blue-book just then brought out, preparatory to the introduction of competitive examinations for the Civil Service. For that and some other article, I now forget what, I was paid. Up to the end of 1857 I had received (pounds)55 for the hard work of ten years.

It was while I was engaged on Barchester Towers that I adopted a system of writing which, for some years afterwards, I found to be very serviceable to me. My time was greatly occupied in travelling, and the nature of my travelling was now changed. I could not any longer do it on horseback. Railroads afforded me my means of conveyance, and I found that I passed in railway-carriages very many hours of my existence. Like others, I used to read,--though Carlyle has since told me that a man when travelling should not read, but "sit still and label his thoughts." But if I intended to make a profitable business out of my writing, and, at the same time, to do my best for the Post Office, I must turn these hours to more account than I could do even by reading. I made for myself therefore a little tablet, and found after a few days' exercise that I could write as quickly in a railway-carriage as I could at my desk. I worked with a pencil, and what I wrote my wife copied afterwards. In this way was composed the greater part of Barchester Towers and of the novel which succeeded it, and much also of others subsequent to them. My only objection to the practice came from the appearance of literary ostentation, to which I felt myself to be subject when going to work before four or five fellow-passengers. But I got used to it, as I had done to the amazement of the west country farmers' wives when asking them after their letters.

In the writing of Barchester Towers I took great delight. The bishop and Mrs. Proudie were very real to me, as were also the troubles of the archdeacon and the loves of Mr. Slope. When it was done, Mr. W. Longman required that it should be subjected to his reader; and he returned the MS. to me, with a most laborious and voluminous criticism,--coming from whom I never knew. This was accompanied by an offer to print the novel on the half-profit system, with a

payment of (pounds)100 in advance out of my half-profits,--on condition that I would comply with the suggestions made by his critic. One of these suggestions required that I should cut the novel down to two volumes. In my reply, I went through the criticisms, rejecting one and accepting another, almost alternately, but declaring at last that no consideration should induce me to cut out a third of my work. I am at a loss to know how such a task could have been performed. I could burn the MS., no doubt, and write another book on the same story; but how two words out of six are to be withdrawn from a written novel, I cannot conceive. I believe such tasks have been attempted--perhaps performed; but I refused to make even the attempt. Mr. Longman was too gracious to insist on his critic's terms; and the book was published, certainly none the worse, and I do not think much the better, for the care that had been taken with it.

The work succeeded just as *The Warden* had succeeded. It achieved no great reputation, but it was one of the novels which novel readers were called upon to read. Perhaps I may be assuming upon myself more than I have a right to do in saying now that *Barchester Towers* has become one of those novels which do not die quite at once, which live and are read for perhaps a quarter of a century; but if that be so, its life has been so far prolonged by the vitality of some of its younger brothers. *Barchester Towers* would hardly be so well known as it is had there been no *Framley Parsonage* and no *Last Chronicle of Barset*.

I received my (pounds)100, in advance, with profound delight. It was a positive and most welcome increase to my income, and might probably be regarded as a first real step on the road to substantial success. I am well aware that there are many who think that an author in his authorship should not regard money,--nor a painter, or sculptor, or composer in his art. I do not know that this unnatural sacrifice is supposed to extend itself further. A barrister, a clergyman, a doctor, an engineer, and even actors and architects, may without disgrace follow the bent of human nature, and endeavour to fill their bellies and clothe their backs, and also those of their wives and children, as comfortably as they can by the exercise of their abilities and their crafts. They may be as rationally realistic, as may the butchers and the bakers; but the artist and the author forget the high glories of their calling if they condescend to make a money return a first object. They who preach this doctrine will be much offended by my theory, and by this book of mine, if my theory and my book come beneath their notice. They require the practice of a so-called virtue which is contrary to nature, and which, in my eyes, would be no virtue if it were practised. They are like clergymen who preach sermons against the love of money, but who know that the love of money is so distinctive a characteristic of humanity that such sermons are mere platitudes called for by customary but unintelligent piety. All material progress has come from man's desire to do the best he can for himself and those about him, and civilisation and Christianity itself have been made possible by such progress. Though we do not all of us argue this matter out within our breasts, we do all feel it; and we know that the more a man earns the more useful he is to his fellow-men. The most useful lawyers, as a rule, have been those who have made the greatest incomes,--and it is the same with the doctors. It would be the same in the Church if they who have the choosing of bishops always chose the best man. And it has in truth been so too in art

and authorship. Did Titian or Rubens disregard their pecuniary rewards? As far as we know, Shakespeare worked always for money, giving the best of his intellect to support his trade as an actor. In our own century what literary names stand higher than those of Byron, Tennyson, Scott, Dickens, Macaulay, and Carlyle? And I think I may say that none of those great men neglected the pecuniary result of their labours. Now and then a man may arise among us who in any calling, whether it be in law, in physic, in religious teaching, in art, or literature, may in his professional enthusiasm utterly disregard money. All will honour his enthusiasm, and if he be wifeless and childless, his disregard of the great object of men's work will be blameless. But it is a mistake to suppose that a man is a better man because he despises money. Few do so, and those few in doing so suffer a defeat. Who does not desire to be hospitable to his friends, generous to the poor, liberal to all, munificent to his children, and to be himself free from the casking fear which poverty creates? The subject will not stand an argument;--and yet authors are told that they should disregard payment for their work, and be content to devote their unbought brains to the welfare of the public. Brains that are unbought will never serve the public much. Take away from English authors their copyrights, and you would very soon take away from England her authors.

I say this here, because it is my purpose as I go on to state what to me has been the result of my profession in the ordinary way in which professions are regarded, so that by my example may be seen what prospect there is that a man devoting himself to literature with industry, perseverance, certain necessary aptitudes, and fair average talents, may succeed in gaining a livelihood, as another man does in another profession. The result with me has been comfortable but not splendid, as I think was to have been expected from the combination of such gifts.

I have certainly always had also before my eyes the charms of reputation. Over and above the money view of the question, I wished from the beginning to be something more than a clerk in the Post Office. To be known as somebody,--to be Anthony Trollope if it be no more,--is to me much. The feeling is a very general one, and I think beneficent. It is that which has been called the "last infirmity of noble mind." The infirmity is so human that the man who lacks it is either above or below humanity. I own to the infirmity. But I confess that my first object in taking to literature as a profession was that which is common to the barrister when he goes to the Bar, and to the baker when he sets up his oven. I wished to make an income on which I and those belonging to me might live in comfort.

If indeed a man writes his books badly, or paints his pictures badly, because he can make his money faster in that fashion than by doing them well, and at the same time proclaims them to be the best he can do,--if in fact he sells shoddy for broadcloth,--he is dishonest, as is any other fraudulent dealer. So may be the barrister who takes money that he does not earn, or the clergyman who is content to live on a sinecure. No doubt the artist or the author may have a difficulty which will not occur to the seller of cloth, in settling within himself what is good work and what is bad,--when labour enough has been given, and when the task has been scamped. It is a danger as to which he is bound to be severe with himself--in which he should feel that his conscience should be set

fairly in the balance against the natural bias of his interest. If he do not do so, sooner or later his dishonesty will be discovered, and will be estimated accordingly. But in this he is to be governed only by the plain rules of honesty which should govern us all. Having said so much, I shall not scruple as I go on to attribute to the pecuniary result of my labours all the importance which I felt them to have at the time.

Barchester Towers, for which I had received (pounds)100 in advance, sold well enough to bring me further payments--moderate payments--from the publishers. From that day up to this very time in which I am writing, that book and *The Warden* together have given me almost every year some small income. I get the accounts very regularly, and I find that I have received (pounds)727 11S. 3d. for the two. It is more than I got for the three or four works that came afterwards, but the payments have been spread over twenty years.

When I went to Mr. Longman with my next novel, *The Three Clerks*, in my hand, I could not induce him to understand that a lump sum down was more pleasant than a deferred annuity. I wished him to buy it from me at a price which he might think to be a fair value, and I argued with him that as soon as an author has put himself into a position which insures a sufficient sale of his works to give a profit, the publisher is not entitled to expect the half of such proceeds. While there is a pecuniary risk, the whole of which must be borne by the publisher, such division is fair enough; but such a demand on the part of the publisher is monstrous as soon as the article produced is known to be a marketable commodity. I thought that I had now reached that point, but Mr. Longman did not agree with me. And he endeavoured to convince me that I might lose more than I gained, even though I should get more money by going elsewhere. "It is for you," said he, "to think whether our names on your title-page are not worth more to you than the increased payment." This seemed to me to savour of that high-flown doctrine of the contempt of money which I have never admired. I did think much of Messrs. Longman's name, but I liked it best at the bottom of a cheque.

I was also scared from the august columns of Paternoster Row by a remark made to myself by one of the firm, which seemed to imply that they did not much care for works of fiction. Speaking of a fertile writer of tales who was not then dead, he declared that ---- (naming the author in question) had spawned upon them (the publishers) three novels a year! Such language is perhaps justifiable in regard to a man who shows so much of the fecundity of the herring; but I did not know how fruitful might be my own muse, and I thought that I had better go elsewhere.

I had then written *The Three Clerks*, which, when I could not sell it to Messrs. Longman, I took in the first instance to Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, who had become successors to Mr. Colburn. I had made an appointment with one of the firm, which, however, that gentleman was unable to keep. I was on my way from Ireland to Italy, and had but one day in London in which to dispose of my manuscript. I sat for an hour in Great Marlborough Street, expecting the return of the peccant publisher who had broken his tryst, and I was about to depart with my bundle under my arm when the foreman of the house came to me. He seemed to think it a pity that I should go, and wished me to leave my work with him. This, however, I would not

do, unless he would undertake to buy it then and there. Perhaps he lacked authority. Perhaps his judgment was against such purchase. But while we debated the matter, he gave me some advice. "I hope it's not historical, Mr. Trollope?" he said. "Whatever you do, don't be historical; your historical novel is not worth a damn." Thence I took *The Three Clerks* to Mr. Bentley; and on the same afternoon succeeded in selling it to him for (pounds)250. His son still possesses it, and the firm has, I believe, done very well with the purchase. It was certainly the best novel I had as yet written. The plot is not so good as that of the *Macdermots*; nor are there any characters in the book equal to those of Mrs. Proudie and the Warden; but the work has a more continued interest, and contains the first well-described love-scene that I ever wrote. The passage in which Kate Woodward, thinking that she will die, tries to take leave of the lad she loves, still brings tears to my eyes when I read it. I had not the heart to kill her. I never could do that. And I do not doubt but that they are living happily together to this day.

The lawyer Chaffanbrass made his first appearance in this novel, and I do not think that I have cause to be ashamed of him. But this novel now is chiefly noticeable to me from the fact that in it I introduced a character under the name of Sir Gregory Hardlines, by which I intended to lean very heavily on that much loathed scheme of competitive examination, of which at that time Sir Charles Trevelyan was the great apostle. Sir Gregory Hardlines was intended for Sir Charles Trevelyan,--as any one at the time would know who had taken an interest in the Civil Service. "We always call him Sir Gregory," Lady Trevelyan said to me afterwards, when I came to know her and her husband. I never learned to love competitive examination; but I became, and am, very fond of Sir Charles Trevelyan. Sir Stafford Northcote, who is now Chancellor of the Exchequer, was then leagued with his friend Sir Charles, and he too appears in *The Three Clerks* under the feebly facetious name of Sir Warwick West End.

But for all that *The Three Clerks* was a good novel.

When that sale was made I was on my way to Italy with my wife, paying a third visit there to my mother and brother. This was in 1857, and she had then given up her pen. It was the first year in which she had not written, and she expressed to me her delight that her labours should be at an end, and that mine shoul

Livros Grátis

(<http://www.livrosgratis.com.br>)

Milhares de Livros para Download:

[Baixar livros de Administração](#)

[Baixar livros de Agronomia](#)

[Baixar livros de Arquitetura](#)

[Baixar livros de Artes](#)

[Baixar livros de Astronomia](#)

[Baixar livros de Biologia Geral](#)

[Baixar livros de Ciência da Computação](#)

[Baixar livros de Ciência da Informação](#)

[Baixar livros de Ciência Política](#)

[Baixar livros de Ciências da Saúde](#)

[Baixar livros de Comunicação](#)

[Baixar livros do Conselho Nacional de Educação - CNE](#)

[Baixar livros de Defesa civil](#)

[Baixar livros de Direito](#)

[Baixar livros de Direitos humanos](#)

[Baixar livros de Economia](#)

[Baixar livros de Economia Doméstica](#)

[Baixar livros de Educação](#)

[Baixar livros de Educação - Trânsito](#)

[Baixar livros de Educação Física](#)

[Baixar livros de Engenharia Aeroespacial](#)

[Baixar livros de Farmácia](#)

[Baixar livros de Filosofia](#)

[Baixar livros de Física](#)

[Baixar livros de Geociências](#)

[Baixar livros de Geografia](#)

[Baixar livros de História](#)

[Baixar livros de Línguas](#)

[Baixar livros de Literatura](#)
[Baixar livros de Literatura de Cordel](#)
[Baixar livros de Literatura Infantil](#)
[Baixar livros de Matemática](#)
[Baixar livros de Medicina](#)
[Baixar livros de Medicina Veterinária](#)
[Baixar livros de Meio Ambiente](#)
[Baixar livros de Meteorologia](#)
[Baixar Monografias e TCC](#)
[Baixar livros Multidisciplinar](#)
[Baixar livros de Música](#)
[Baixar livros de Psicologia](#)
[Baixar livros de Química](#)
[Baixar livros de Saúde Coletiva](#)
[Baixar livros de Serviço Social](#)
[Baixar livros de Sociologia](#)
[Baixar livros de Teologia](#)
[Baixar livros de Trabalho](#)
[Baixar livros de Turismo](#)