Anthony Trollope, the Socio-Clerical Historian of the Anglican Clergy in England's Eighteen-Fifties and 'Sixties

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ANTHONY TROLLOPE, THE SOCIO-CLERICAL HISTORIAN
OF THE ANGLICAN CLERGY IN ENGLAND'S
EIGHTEEN-FIFTIES AND 'SIXTIES

by

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PREFACE

During the last decade there has come to Anthony Trollope a new distinction, a steadily-growing recognition by readers who find an escape from the whirl of today in the quiet and quaintness of a crinoline age. This reaction resulted from the changing of the tastes which formerly had shrugged aside Trollope's novels along with gold-framed pictures. Before he had been thus discarded to the oblivion of things "Victorian", however, Trollope's popularity had known a sensational rise and decline, much like other authors'. This fluctuation was remarkable only in that it was followed by an apparent demise in 1883 at the suicidal hands of his Autobiography, which for many, was Trollope's posthumous chuckle at having duped his readers into believing that he was an artist.

But the readers avenged themselves, very unpatriotically, by reading Nana which had begun to assault English decency in 1881. Their taste went slumming in the naturalism of Moore and Gissing and though they continued to consider Trollope as a sound historian, he was unforgivably decent, and rare Trollopian enthusiasm centered mostly in his first editions.
It was the time, also, when art became fastidious, when, as Arthur Waugh says, even papers and periodicals searched for "remote allusions" and "le mot juste". And Trollope's work savored too much of beef and ale to live in a generation that worshipped literary fineries and the finesse of Bernhardt and Whistler. Stigmatized by the brand of "Victorian" and "Philistine", Trollope of the eighteen-nineties was relegated to the mothballs of the passé.

However, with the opening of the twentieth century, appeared signs of a recovery from the cult of Huysmans' degeneracy, H. T. Peck tells us, and not an inconsiderable number of the reading people began to look to Trollope for the very decency which they had previously considered intolerable; they looked to him also for refuge from the same blatant industrialism which formerly had pitched him aside as old-fashioned.

As Nichols had foretold, people of 1930 looked with curiosity, some with fascination at the every-day life of middle-Victorian England as related by Anthony Trollope. They were willing to permit utterly simple plots and a style with little brilliancy and no paradox, because such a medium drew a faithful portrayal of an enviable Victorian life; especially life-like did they find Trollope's socio-clerical picture.
Trollope's works have not perished, even in the conflict with time, because "the fiction which goes to life for its inspiration", as one critic expresses it, "has always carried the secret of survival in its heart". A study of Trollope's social history proves his possession of this "secret of survival".
CHAPTER I

Elements of Trollope's Primacy as Social Historian

Anthony Trollope is, categorically, the greatest social historian in English fiction of the period, 1850 - 1870, and particularly authentic as delineator of the socio-clerical manner, the clerical mode of life, and the types of personalities that lived it. There are essentially three modes of approaching the substantiation of this thesis: the assembling of authorities competent to pronounce upon its truth; the analytical scrutiny of the elements that constitute his novel and their comparison with the ingredients of rival compositions; and the identification of his fiction with the facts obtained from contemporaneous recordings admittedly true. Trollope, before the courts of contemporary authority, analysis, and history, can be proven the greatest social historian of mid-Victorian England, especially of its Anglican clergy.

Authoritative periodical literature and critical books written during his lifetime and subsequent to his death in 1882, abound with statements of Trollope's absolute leadership in the field of the realistic novel, the novel of manners, the novel of socio-clerical history. Such
unqualified assertions as this, "If a novelist's business is to delineate the manners of his own day, Trollope is the first master of his craft now in existence;"¹ or this, "The novelist 'par excellence' of the moment is assuredly Mr. Trollope;"² or in speaking of his characters, "They are photographic portraits of men his readers know; nature clothed with a form of art and from this exquisite truthfulness they derive their interest;"³--these express the convictions of men of acumen who witnessed personally the life portrayed by the novels of Trollope, and who noted the harmony between books and reality. Already in the 'sixties, advice was being given to the social historian of the future, that "Mr. Trollope, if his books survive, will afford invaluable materials to the future historian of the manners of the nineteenth century."⁴

After the death of Trollope, William Dean Howells, a judge of realism, was referring to him as the "greatest of Victorians" and advising those who wished "to fall completely under the lure of his genius," to "read quietly--and thoroughly . . . some thirty or forty volumes out of a possible hundred or more."⁵ The decade marking the last

³. Once a Week, 3rd series, vol. 9, (June 1,1872), p. 498.
years of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth, found no modification in this general evaluation. In 1896, W. P. Trent could still say that Victorian social life was not to be "better described than it is in Trollope's best novels."\(^6\)

In 1903, James Bryce ventured that "none . . . was in so many ways representative of a general character and spirit of English fiction;"\(^7\) and in 1917, Camaliel Bradford wrote, "Perhaps no writer represents more perfectly than Trollope the great development of social and domestic tendencies in the English novel of the middle and third quarter of the last century."\(^8\)

Finally in 1934, David Cecil could feel justified in insisting that "indeed he (Trollope) is almost the only Victorian novelist whom our sensitive intelligentsia appear to be able to read without experiencing an intolerable sense of jar."\(^9\)

From this and other almost unlimited quotable material, some of which will appear later, the peculiar stability of Trollope's reputation and first position as social historian appears. Such a phenomenon is unusual amid the

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fluctuating standards in the world of letters, and is strongly indicative that the achievement of Trollope as a portrayer of life, towers so far above that of his contemporaries that he remains comparatively untouched by the critical modifications which tumble over smaller novelists, or which have emphasized the defects of such novelists as Dickens and Thackeray.

It is necessary in corroborating the quoted opinions as to his fidelity of reproduction, to investigate in the actual work of Trollope the elements which established his primacy: his scope, his tone, his social-manners technique, and his qualifications by character and experience to chronicle the clergy.

Not the least of these constituents is Trollope's scope, universal in its field. The story of man's history paints a broad scene across the panorama of life and activity. It involves every individual, flunky and king; and while the king may contribute more to the trend, even the flunky contributes in a small way to the outcome. This integral unity of humankind, this importance of every part of humankind, necessitates that an historian, and particularly a social historian, include within his scope the entire gamut of human beings within the class upon which he concentrates. The remarkable fact that Trollope, between 1847
and 1882, produced one hundred and thirty-six volumes under sixty-eight titles, not a year between 1857 and 1884 passing without the publication of at least one, sometimes of four books, indicates at least potential coverage possibilities, and suggests that if any novelist was fitted to chronicle the complete activities of the clergy as a class, it was he. And an examination of Trollope as a chronicler of socio-clerical life reveals precisely this universal scope, an inclusion of the entire Anglican clerical world of the cathedral city and surrounding ecclesiastical houses. The Church of England provided splendid testing material for his broad perspective, with its complete hierarchy of clergymen and with its complete administrative system of the Cathedral Close. Trollope capitalized on the possibilities and painted “a whole gallery of portraits of clergymen of that church, clergymen of every rank, and of every shade of difference of character, opinion and demeanor.” His picture is “the most complete any English novelist has given us. No two faces are exactly alike, and yet all are such people as one might see any day in the pulpit.”

But Trollope possessed no mere horizontal scope—a broad sweep of the field with no specific point of concentration. He had also a vertical scope, the following of a distinct character through the activities of life, not only the noting of idiosyncrasies prominent at the moment of observation. Thus, for instance, Barchester Towers might be called "really and purely a 'prose comic epic' of the rise, decline, and fall of the Rev. Obadiah Slope."  

Finally then, if, as Paul Elmer More writes, Trollope "could not do, at any rate did not try to do, what Balzac, and Dostoievsky and Turgenev, and Manzoni have done,"—if he could not or would not sweep out the entire Human Comedy upon his canvas, he did bring into being a clerically cosmopolitan series of novels which treated aristocrat and menial and all intermediary gradations. If he did not write a world-drama portraying all types of men, he covered entirely the social world of Anglican clergy and all the types which that world possessed. This alone is not a criterion of his historical supremacy, but it must be admitted as one of the requisite qualities in order to be supreme.

This thorough scope Trollope saw through the medium of an attitude which properly interpreted and animated it. His intellectual outlook was typically that of the Englishman. As Sadleir writes, "He is intensely English, with the quiet humor, the shy sympathy masquerading as indifference, the delicate sense of kindliness and toleration, the occasional heaviness, the occasional irritability, that mark a man or a book as English." It was the subtle combination of these characteristics in Trollope that made him the social chronicler. With this "Englishry" went the general attitude of the Anglican gentleman, for, as Dean Inge notes, "The English Church represents, on the religious side, the convictions, tastes, and prejudices of the English gentleman, that truly national ideal of character."

An almost inevitable concomitant of these Anglican leanings was an unfavorable attitude toward the Low Church, and yet Trollope did the Evangelicals no satirical injustice within his novels. It is in the treatment of these hated Low Churchmen that Trollope proves his distinctive quality of subordinating personal opinion to the expression of truth in life and type; for though to him the "brimstone

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school" was anathema as a hated intruder, he did not caricature the obnoxious preacher or introduce protracted tirades against Low Church principles in general. He merely described, content again to let the ridiculous satirize itself. In Low Churchman Slope's attack against the art and beauty of cathedral service, for instance, there is no injection of a sermon on the universality of art, or on its intrinsic relationship to worship and liturgy with which Thackeray would have filled pages. And for the High Church Trollope has too much reverence to ever caricature or do more than merely record the foibles of clerical social life.

It is true that in early novels, particularly in The Warden, there is contained an element of caricature, the three children of the archdeacon representing three well-known bishops. However, Trollope "did not have the heart to do it in a slashing style," but in a manner "sympathetic rather than abusive." Learning quickly, he realized the futility of this unreal stroke, and dropped the element of caricature permanently. Although he probably understood, as

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Belloc has epigrammatized, that "caricature may add vitality at the expense of reality,"\textsuperscript{24} he preferred the reality and truth to an artificial accentuation of certain phases of life. He discarded the Dickensian "menagerie of oddities" for the Trollopian drama of normalcy.

He possessed too tolerant an attitude toward weak humanity, of which the clergy formed an integral part, to become bitter or cynical, or to forget the virtues of patience and humor. And though he was only human in having likes and dislikes, in having experienced the good and the bad of life, he remained remarkably detached, preserving the perspective of an unruffled judge, more sympathetic than stern. And as More says, "he is of all the novelists of the Victorian era, the one most contrary to the desolating mood of the 'futilitarians'."\textsuperscript{25} To Trollope, life presented itself as a game worth the candles. Such a faculty of accepting things as they are is an important factor in recording things as they are, a foremost requisite of the social historian.

This general non-adherence to any creed but the sacred tolerance of truth, to no formula beyond reality, to no artificial theory of life or art, makes him almost unique

\textsuperscript{24} London Mercury, vol. 27, (December, 1932), p. 156.
\textsuperscript{25} Paul Elmer More, op. cit., p. 119.
among the great novelists. If, unlike Hardy, he did not with a certain "coherent definiteness of his scheme," propose for himself the task of expressing his concept of the universe and its significance, he viewed with a more impartial outlook the events of that life, and so came closer to the ideal mental set of a social historian, interpreting and recording motives and acts not as the reflex of a philosophy but as a phase of actuality. If he was unlike the "theoretical realist, Zola, in not giving the reader a complete documented account of facts," he did not modify both facts and documentation to suit a conception of life.

From cynical Thackeray, from emotional Dickens, from analytical Eliot, he differs in disposition. Only with Jane Austen, of whom it is said that "her rendering of life is her philosophy of life," can he be compared in his contented, unimpassioned outlook. In attitude toward theme, therefore, Trollope possesses the requisites that constitute the correct temperament of the true social historian in the field of clerical life—or any other field of life which he might have chosen.

This English outlook Trollope was able to employ in

interpreting his country in its most English period, in the period when it was most Victorianly "social," and consequently most ready for portrayal. For it was during the years 1850 to 1870 that the entire English social structure assumed the atmosphere of Victorianism. In point of time the years constituted properly the middle point, the noon-day of Victorianism; and in the cyclical movement of social eras, the middle period is most allied to the dominating essence and expression of the era. This mean finds society in a passive state, living in the accumulated reserve of the preceding period of formation, and not yet beginning to feel the straining of the fiber of society, which begins after the impress of the era has begun to weaken. It is evident, then, that considering the peculiar gift of Trollope to portray individual human action from his insight into general human action, this middle period where individuals did adhere most consistently to the social norm, was the most favorable to his technique. This also was a factor insuring the permanency of the picture which he drew as representative of life over an extended period, not merely as representative of a rapid change.

Furthermore, the middle period of the Victorian age possessed certain particular characteristics making for the
favorableness of social portrayal. These arise chiefly from its historical connection with preceding and subsequent events and from the political tendencies of England during these twenty years. It was a time of unusual serenity, a breathing space in the general flux of the past two centuries. With the unfolding of the Industrial Revolution in the early nineteenth century, England had entered upon a period of trial and stress. Napoleonic wars, modifications in the government, and accompanying political movements such as Chartism, labor difficulties, and Irish unrest, had filled the first fifty years of the "eighteen hundreds" with constant turmoil, and the social structure found no time to harden in a definite mold.

But a gradual economic prosperity had been built up to mark with its impress the years after 1850, the Great Exhibit of 1851 at Hyde Park sounding the keynote. It was the Palmerstonian Age, a unique thirteen years, the heyday of Trollope's Barset generation, a "curious interlude in the Victorian Age, a time of steady prosperity and domestic quietude, when John Bull took his ease and enjoyed (or criticized) the adventures of a statesman who, whatever his faults, was proud of his country and determined that she should play a great and worthy part in the affairs of
English society was stable, and permitted to conform to the Victorian way of life. Although the period was one of intense activity and of the birth of new creeds in religion and politics, society as a whole lived as yet untouched by these movements. These two decades were unique in this peaceful normality and regularity of life, which added to the Victorian characteristic of an accentuated conformation of the particular to the general.

Trollope appeared precisely at this time to paint social conditions so ripe for portrayal. It would seem that he recognized this favorable maturity, for when the subject grew over-ripe in the 'seventies and 'eighties, he no longer wrote of a clerical society.

To this condition, the presence of material properly developed for Trollope's delineation, was added a heritage of almost perfected technique in the domestic-manners novel. For, beginning with the latter half of the eighteenth century there had occurred a progressive modification in the general outlook on life, a reaction against the corrupt moral tone of society. Though perhaps only the tone and not the morality itself was uplifted, this new trend expressed itself by the repudiation of such brutality as Swift's and

of coarse satire like Fielding's, by "an excess of fantastic refinement," a "wave of delicacy" which swept English society and manners\(^{31}\) and opened the way for a new kind of fiction, which should be a comedy of life and manners.

The school of Fielding and Richardson had traversed the vast field of English manners, to be followed by women who looked more closely at life, Fanny Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen, who particularized their matter and refined their technique, establishing the literature of domestic life. With them man became a member of a family, rather than of society.\(^{32}\) Miss Burney made the years between 1770 and 1790 particularly her own,\(^{33}\) scoring a great literary success and preparing the way for Miss Austen\(^{34}\) who was to record authoritatively middletown life in England during the period when Napoleon cast a shadow over all Europe. Almost contemporaneously, Miss Edgeworth was writing of the fashionable world and the Irish peasantry, with a preponderance toward the molding of characters to fit into a preconceived moral scheme. Thus she lacks the necessary untheoretical approach of the true social historian,

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32. Ibid., p. 255.
but many of her portrayals are to a good effect, her *Popular Tales* (1803) possessing a genuine charm in their picturing of the quiet, uneventful lives of a rustic world. So was evolving the novel of manners in England; and the process of development soon gathered momentum from the energy provided by various sources.

Notable among these was the movement in the field of the social novel which was stirring the continent at this time. In Russia, Gogol, with the powerful but "dolorous and overwrought" scheme of writing typical of his race, was composing *Dead Souls* and opening the path of social fiction for Dostoevski, Turgenev, and Tolstoy, authors moved by conditions of country to a more impassioned inspiration than is in the social writings of the English.

But especially from France did influence come upon the English novel, for as Edith Wharton writes, the modern novel springs from the "glorious brain of Balzac," who had united the novel of psychology born in France and the novel of manners born in England. It is evident that the heritage of the English novelists of manners in the Victorian era was to be a sublimated product, a super-novel of manners, of

which Balzac and Trollope may be called the masters—and masters moreover in their freedom from the taint of naturalism. 39

Meanwhile, in England, "from the days of Sartor Resartus," the novel began to depart from the more narrow domestic life of the great trio of feminine writers, and to assume "a social attitude." 40 Disraeli was presenting his picture of high society in a prose style weighed down with much ornament, exposing the social abuses of his day in melodramatic novels. Thackeray and Dickens were writing their great novels of society and the new novel of manners had reached popularity, to hold sway for twenty-five years after 1855. Trollope was now ready to enter upon the literary scene, to do for the years, 1850 to 1870, what Miss Fanny Burney had done for the years 1777 to 1790; but he was to own a far more fertile and natural manner with little of her tendency to grotesque or colorless character. 41

Interest in the improbable, sensational, and polemical fiction had subsided to a Victorian calm. As Baker asserts, "the period of fiction controversial in form and belligerent in tone had definitely given way to a more tolerant por-

40. Vida D. Scudder, op. cit., p. 120.
trayal of manners before Anthony Trollope's pictures of the Barceheterclergy began to appear.\textsuperscript{42} There is none of the fiery zeal for reform, or the glowing defense of conviction characteristic of Newman and Kingsley, to be found in the novels of Trollope;\textsuperscript{43} it seems as if the entire process of development had reached a point particularly compatible with Trollope's impersonal tendencies and objective art and he adapted the perfected type to his use.

Trollope, then, was highly favored by the conditions in the life and literature of his time, his art fitted perfectly into the tradition created, and he carried on in that tradition. Such qualifications do not in themselves elevate him to the rank of premier historian, but when combined with the other factors already treated and those yet to be considered, they do constitute a cogent reason for assigning to him such an eminent position.

In a chapter treating the accumulation of his qualifications as an historian it is necessary to examine in much detail that further characteristic of Trollope without which the novelist can hardly be, the qualification by personal character and personal experience to chronicle a given group,

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p. 136.
in this case the clergy. In doing this, a survey of Trollope's life to the conclusion of his days as a clerical novelist, is required, remarking particularly the elements which contributed to the formation of his makeup and consequent mental activities, and those events, meetings, and contacts which formed the total of his life experiences relevant to qualifying him as socio-clerical historian.

Descended from a family tree that boasted an admiral, a bishop, and a baronet, and with both his father and his clerical grandfather, Fellows of New College, Trollope was born into a semi-aristocratic, clerical tradition. And though the contention that Trollope's fondness for drawing bishops and parsons was an inheritance "from his parson grandfather, the Reverend William Milton," is probably nothing more than a far-fetched application of extreme theories of heredity, the fact of having a parson grandfather may have brought early knowledge of country clericalism through the usual family discussions of ancestors, their foibles, their abilities, and their work.

By his mother, who between the ages of fifty and

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seventy-two, wrote one hundred and fourteen novels. Anthony was left the heritage of a slight tradition of the clerical novel as represented by her Vicar of Wrexhill, The Widow Barnaby, and Father Eustace, which in their being the result of misinformation certainly cannot be termed lineal forerunners of those of her son. His elder sister also composed a clerical novel, an unsuccessful one, which Trollope rather mercilessly epitomized as "one little anonymous high church story, called Chollerton." His elder brother and his poor father also possessed literary ambition, the latter a dismal failure as barrister, farmer, speculator, and writer.

The childhood and youth of Trollope were filled with sorrow and instability, as he himself writes,

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 own part of that

49. Anthony Trollope, Autobiography, p. 18. (In future footnote references to Trollope's Autobiography and novels, the purposeless repetition of the author's name will be omitted.)
50. George Saintsbury, A Short History of Literature, p.751.
juvenile manhood which enables some boys to hold up their heads even among the distresses which such a position is sure to produce,\textsuperscript{52} and perhaps from the fact that he received more abuse from his irascible father than the other children.\textsuperscript{53} Obtaining his schooling under particularly difficult circumstances at Harrow and Winchester, he came into intimate though perhaps sometimes disagreeable contact with members of the clergy. The headmaster of one was to become a dean; the headmaster of the other, the Archbishop of Canterbury.\textsuperscript{54} In his Autobiography Trollope notes another particular clergyman, the Reverend William Drury, formerly a master at Harrow, under whom he underwent an apprenticeship as usher in that gentleman's classical school,\textsuperscript{55} thus again associating closely with the academic type of clergyman.

With schooling prematurely shortened, young Anthony moved to Bruges with his family, where consumption carried off two sisters and the father. The mother meanwhile supported the dying and the surviving by a constant outpouring of novels.\textsuperscript{56} On the whole this life of his youth was "utterly barren of that companionship and friendship for

\begin{footnotes}
\item[52] Autobiography, p. 2.
\item[53] The Bookbuyer, vol. 21, (October, 1900), p. 196.
\item[54] Autobiography, pp. 15-17.
\item[55] Ibid., p. 25.
\item[56] Ibid., p. 25.
\end{footnotes}
which his hunger was abnormal," so that for pleasure he was forced to turn to the activities of his own mind, "to that form of thought which was afterwards to make his lifework—castlebuilding of plot and character." Already he was developing that power of controlled day-dreaming, which could be so molded by himself "that it partook of the very texture and proportion and color of ordinary life." This faculty, as will be seen, was to be a prime factor in the greatness of Trollope as a socio-clerical annalist.

At the age of nineteen Trollope was summoned to a clerkship in the London post-office. There followed a period of seven years during which he lived through a sequence of squalor and poverty, the latter involving "gambling, excessive drinking, trouble with money-lenders and with a certain young woman," all of these dissipations probably of the milder sort. Trollope himself calls it a "wretched life;" though he did make several friendships "which lessened its misfortunes." John Merivale, an early companion, brought him into contact with his two brothers, Herman and Charles, the latter an historian and Dean of Ely.

Another friend was he whom Trollope called W....A....f., a takor of Orders comparatively late in life and just as completely a failure in them as in every other field he had previously attempted. Thus even in this period of big-city repression, Trollope was finding opportunity for clerical observation, to add to the data already stored away in his mind from youth.

After seven years in the post-office, he obtained a position as surveyor's clerk in Connaught, Ireland, was gradually transformed by this relatively more pleasant life, and found time for gathering material for several of his novels. Four years after his arrival, he had completed his first novel, The Macdermots of Ballycloran, and in a little over five more years he was back in England with a growing list of books to his name. It was now that he entered upon a two-year period of life which was to furnish him with rich opportunity for the acquisition of experimental knowledge for his social history. He was detailed to serve as a combination of inspector and adjuster for the post-office which was contemplating the extension of rural post deliveries and wiping out the old inequality. In this capacity he thoroughly traveled every bypath, and entered every

63. Ibid., pp. 54-76.
village of southwestern England, beginning in Devonshire, and visiting "every nook in that county, in Cornwall, Somersetshire, the greater part of Dorsetshire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, and the six southern Welsh counties." All this touring was on horseback, Trollope riding at an average of forty miles a day.

It was in these two years that he absorbed much of that acute, detailed knowledge of English life, of the "humanity of human nature" which was to feature his novels. It was the time during which he developed that capability of his mind to continually plot, arrange characters, and make deductions, to always record the experiences of his everyday life on the tablets of his memory. This practice was to be most instrumental in enabling him to draw such reasonable and life-like pictures of humankind with perfect harmony of motive and act, without ever obtaining what to the purely mechanical observer might seem a requisite opportunity for microscopic observation. It was also during these two years that Trollope visited Salisbury, and whilst wandering there one mid-summer evening round the purlieus of the cathedral ... conceived the story of The Warden, from whence came that series of novels of which

64. Autobiography, p. 76.
Barchester, with its bishops, deans, and archdeacon, was the central site. 66

It is important at this point to answer more definitely the problem proposed previously, which Trollope himself provokes in his *Autobiography*, and which he asserts was often put to himself. In what period of his early life had he lived with the ways of a close, 67 and did he possess sufficient experience with the clergy to qualify him as a faithful socio-clerical historian? Also, had he the ability to reason out the consequent acts of definite motives, applied to the clergy as perhaps a different type of humanity?

To begin with, when Trollope alleged that at the period of the writing of his first clerical novel, he had "never lived in any cathedral city,—except London, . . . and at that time had enjoyed no peculiar intimacy with any clergyman," 68 he was making a statement that requires qualification, and writing in continuance of the general tone of his *Autobiography*, which was written probably to enrage contemporary esthetes and theorists. 69 It has already been noted how constantly from very early childhood Trollope had

67. Ibid., p. 80.
68. Ibid., p. 80.
69. Richard Ferrar Patterson, *Six Centuries of English Literature*, vol. 5, p. 344.
come into contact with clericals and the clerical tradition. While it is true that these may never have been of any intimacy, they were at times prolonged sufficiently to permit complete observation by Trollope of all the characteristics, externals, the manifestations of life, the recording of which constitutes the essence of the socio-clerical novel as social history.

Trollope makes especial note of his delineation of Archdeacon Grantly, of whose species he maintains never to have seen even one, as the simple result of an effort of his "moral consciousness." But archdeacons are not intrinsically distinct in nature from bishops or headmasters, or from the average, adult, upper-class male whom he certainly had observed. In writing about clergymen in general, he says, "I had to pick up as I went whatever I might know or pretend to know about them," which statement is sufficiently vague to admit of as much empirical knowledge as can be judged reasonable from the opportunities to observe clergymen provided by his kind of life. Since the nature of his work brought him into association with diverse types of men of all classes, clergymen included, and since

70. Autobiography, p. 80.
chance meetings at a dinner table or in railway waiting rooms could not have been rarities, he possessed ample opportunity for observation.

Furthermore, since he never missed services in his parish church on Sunday and even joined in the Anglican Communion Office, a regular contact evidently was maintained with the church and with this must have come much chance to observe, and much gossip about those whom he was observing. Apparently, then, the contacts of Trollope with the clergy were limited neither in scope nor in number as would appear from a mere reading of his Autobiography, and it may be maintained that, considered together with the other factor to be next discussed, he possessed the requisite observational knowledge of the social historian.

The answer to the question proposed as to whether the proved ability of Trollope to predict human action in certain conditions or proceeding from certain motives, applied as fully to the clergy as to the layman, is most important in the discussion of the character of Trollope as fitting him for the role of socio-clerical historian. Writing of his clerical method, Trollope explained:

I took human nature crossured and cassocked by way of striking out a fresh line. Prelates with aprons,

gaiters, shovel-hats and the rest of it, once stripped of their cathedral trappings, are creatures of much the same experiences, owe their anxieties or happiness, their personal discomforts, their delights and their triumphs, to the circumstances not differing in kind from those that make up the life of their country neighbors, or of the middle-aged gentlemen, whom, when in towns, they meet daily at the Athenaeum Club. 75

It is evident that the "great elements of character" are found in clergymen as well as in other men; 76 and therefore, if "an author can depict perfectly natural men and women, he will not find it impossible to imagine clerical environment, and substitute the hopes and fears, loves and ambitions of rectory, deanery, and palace for those of Westminster." 77 Whether the contention of Balzac be true or not, that there are but seven original stories in the world, implying the existence of only a few really dissimilar characters, 78 it is true that human nature has much in common, the least of which universality is not in its foibles. Whether or not, as one critic theorizes, Trollope modeled his clergy after the Civil Service Hierarchy, which in his daily work he saw consumed with internal feuds, egotism,

76. Hugh Walker, op. cit., p. 775.
78. Ibid., pp. 40-59.
and self-importance, 79 undoubtedly clergymen did live in many ways like civil service employees.

It is necessary to emphasize just how great the often-cited ability was in Trollope to evaluate human motives and acts, and how much it was, through his own personal makeup, constantly developed by further experience and further living. An incident relative to his novel, The Warden, illustrates the efficacy of this power which welled from what Trollope termed his "moral consciousness;" as by its use he "created" a true archdeacon, analogously he "created" a true journalist. In this work he introduces one "Tom Towers," a leading contributor to the Jupiter, under which name Trollope admitted that he referred to The Times. He probably knew less about journalists than about archdeacons, and had certainly had no connections with writers for The Times, in fact he knew none of its staff. However, so true to reality was the imaginary "Tom Towers" that in a book review of The Warden, The Times administered words of rebuke for Trollope's indulgence in personalities at the expense of the editor of the paper. 80

The Spectator declares that Trollope's "perception not only of character, but of what any person would do or think in a given set of circumstances, was quite perfect;" and this perfection was the essential unit of his genius. Therein lies his triumph, similar to that of Chaucer, the preservation of "the traits of common humanity seen beneath professional idiosyncrasy." In the primacy of this interpretation lies essentially the primacy of Trollope as socio-clerical historian.

In addition, it was the happy nature of Trollope's character to harmonize with his synthetic and analytic power, and to prove a valuable adjunct to it by constant development of it, as mentioned previously. His vital, ever-operating mind would sift the play of life during every moment of consciousness. Every event, every personality, every habit, received a constant "cooking and cooling," a threshing out, and a resolution into one of the integral functions of humankind. Diverse life was constantly flashing before his eyes, and that same life received unity and form, substance and mode, in his mind. From this

general observation of all men, gradually evolved and con-
tinually developed that perception of the oneness of all
men in their common nature.

The further details of Trollope's life are an ex-
pression of the same tendencies and qualities, which evinced
previously, have bearing on his qualifications as socio-
clerical historian. His observation and the opportunities
for observation continued, and posterity was left the heri-
tage of priceless clerical chronicles.

It can be concluded, then, that to the social chron-
icler's necessary adjuncts of wide scope, correct attitude,
absence of theory, favorable conditions for portrayal, and
the accessibility of a perfected mode of expression,
Anthony Trollope added in a highest degree the qualifications
of proper personal character and necessary experience.
CHAPTER II

Trollope's Technique as a Social Historian

Like his character and the nature of his experience, Trollope's technique in writing the annals of Victorian society is remarkably harmonious with his purpose. The aim of a "manners" novelist is truth; as Trollope defines it, it is "truth of description, truth of character, human truth as to men and women."84 The complete mode of portrayal, character, dialogue, plot, style, tone, was to conform to this inviolable truth, a code as rigid to the recorder of manners as "le mot juste" was the ambition of the Gallic artists. To make his "little pictures as like to life as possible,"85 Trollope adopted the medium of realism. This was not the encyclopedic realism of James Joyce or Richardson, nor the vast and bewildering realism of Dostoevski, but the English realism that had been born to the pen of Fielding and had made England acknowledged champion of the novel of manners, the line of Trollope's forbears concluding with Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, and Maria Edgeworth.

With the simplicity of his contemporary, William Dean

Howells, Trollope states, "I have always written the exact truth as I saw it." The quality of his realism, then, is determined by his vision, which we have shown to have been exceedingly normal, sometimes distressingly so, and in this normality lay the fundamental of his determined truthfulness. His greatest contemporaries blurred the veracity of their picture by burlesque, passionate satire, philosophy, psychology, or other preferences to simple fidelity. Yet Trollope has been denounced for omitting these mistakes, for not philosophizing and psychologizing, for omitting symbolism, lyricism, and for not capitalizing on the English landscape. Because he is a realist who by concealing his art appears inartistic, the deluded Julian Hawthorne sighs over his "tremendous accountability to the muse of fiction," admitting Trollope the man to be a darling of mankind, but Trollope the novelist to be unquestionably a menace to "le mot juste." Likewise, because Trollope's plots and style are not tangled into very un lifelike patterns, A. V. Dicey relegates his books to "that class of readers too good for Miss Braddon and not good enough for George Eliot,"

thereby casting disgrace upon Stevenson who "battened" on Trollope, Jane Welsh Carlyle who "wearied" for his books, and Nathaniel Hawthorne who considered Trollope superb, like English beefsteak. William Lyon Phelps swoons at the very thought of anybody calling Trollope a genius—even a genius of the commonplace.

And all this artistic invective or polite surprise on the part of the new school of critics, because Trollope was a realist who perhaps realized and obeyed the tenets of his art more conscientiously than his highly-estimated contemporaries, Dickens and Thackeray, the Victorian angels of light in the eyes of most obsequious appraisers. Had Trollope possessed the clothing of plot, mood, and style which the sympathetic ones would give him to cover his nakedness, he would have been a very insignificant novelist of manners. Trollope's truth could not bear garnishing, nor could his novels become clothes horses for artistic vagaries. In his essay on the writing of the novel, his objective, truth, occurs continually in artistic correlation with his desire to please, and they are not incompatible. In fact, the

doggedness of his pursuit of truth was motivated by that aim to please, for he believed the recognition of truth to be the essence of enjoyment. 94

Trollope is the social historian whose method is realism, and whose every phase of technique contributes to the correctness of reproduction, to truth. His plots are not plotty; his characters are neither morbid, obscure Judes, nor his heroines ethereal Remis treading green mansions; his style is not idiosyncratic Carlylese. He is the inheritor and perfecter of realistic technique in the novel of manners.

Trollope was never so faithful in his adherence to his canons of realism as in his insistence on the true conception and projection of character as the major fundamental of "manners" technique. To the novelists, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and Balzac, the realization of character was indispensable to the study of manners, more indispensable than plot. 95 Trollope too, like Jane Austen, his fictional relative, was alive to this importance from his reading and from a correct evaluation of fictional values. He was convinced that the highest merit which a novel can have consists in perfect

95. Edith Wharton, op. cit., p. 130.
delineation of character, rather than in plot, or humour or pathos." According, he develops his stories, or allows them to develop themselves, from the characters. His entire Barset series, the bulk of his socio-clerical history, sprang from the character, Mr. Harding, whose original Trollope saw in the cathedral purlieus of Salisbury.

He realized that to characterize he must establish complete intimacy with his personages, and in his autobiography he recounts with legitimate pride how he lived with them "in the full reality of established intimacy." He ate, slept, and wept with them; loved, scolded, and hated them. His confession is that of an artist with a vital, fertile "moral consciousness:" "I know the tone of the voice, and the colour of the hair, every flame of the eyle, and the very clothes they wear. Of each man I could assert whether he would have said these or the other words; of every woman, whether she would then have smiled or so have frowned." "I have been impregnated with my own creations," he says, "till it has been my only excitement to sit with the pen in my hand, and drive my team before me at as quick a pace as

I could make them travel."100 Because the characters were so living to him, they became living to his readers whose contemporary reviews vowed that his works "had the air of personal sketches rather than fictitious creations,"101 and this admission of character-reality is unanimous. Self-termed critics with characteristic decisiveness, abolish Trollope because he did not write with the martyric "art pour art" spirit; but they hesitate to accuse him of poor character conception. Only George Saintsbury, very much alone, dares do this.102 But Saintsbury has nodded; in fact he retrieved his nod in a book judiciously called Corrected Impressions. James Bryce, in a position to bear very rude testimony against the inimitable George, assures us that Trollope's Mrs. Proudie and the Archdeacon were as popular characters in England at Trollope's death, "as Wilkins Micawber, Blanche Amory, or Rosamond Lydgate,"103 as memorable as Steyne and Sam Weller.104

And Trollope created hundreds of such characters. Although his social world was broad, he thickly populated it. There are over one hundred notable characters in the Last

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Chronicle of Barset; they jostled themselves about in his mind and grew accordingly, reacting fully and variously as characters will in close proximity.

In letting them thus develop naturally and independently of himself, Trollope approaches close to perfection in his art. He believed that characters are truer and more consistent with themselves the more they are let be themselves; and he recorded with a detachment that encouraged his heroes and heroines to act their own lives and command their own destinies, making himself dance to their piping rather than they to his. On occasion, Trollope was an unwilling dancer but he always acquiesced to truth. Lily Dale, for instance, in the Last Chronicle refused to marry the good man, and Trollope would not bend her to it; though he wished to end his novels like a children's party with "sweetmeats and sugar-plums," the sweets had to be consistent with character or they were to be foregone. By virtue of this unclouded vision and sharp reproduction, Henry James places Anthony Trollope among his most brilliant contemporaries in realism.106

As Trollope does not obtrude himself and his plans on

his characters and their lives, so also does he refrain from distorting their reflection in his novels which were the mirror of a complaisant public, as was Balzac's *Comédie Humaine*. His eye did not caricature his clergy to "Uriah Heepian" grotesques, nor was satire his passion and all men subject to it after the monomaniac manner of Thackeray, nor did he reproduce in the philosophical medium of George Eliot.

As he had recorded his characters instinctively, undistracted by artistic whims, so with the intuition of a realist Trollope continued his characters through a row of volumes recording a generation of clerical men and women. In doing this he identified his technique with that of his foreign competitors, Balzac, Dumas, Cooper, and Zola, and with Scott, Thackeray, Lytton, and Dickens.¹⁰⁷ Each of these men realized the advantages to realism of this recurrence of character, but perhaps none realized it to such advantage as Anthony Trollope. His continued characters were more numerous, some persisting through thirty-two volumes, and they aged more steadily and naturally, demanding on the part of their continuator "a memory approaching instinct."¹⁰⁸ The vast dimensions of Trollope's canvas demanded this whole universe of characters, and to use them again and again was

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but natural for him. The fact that he was aware of the practical economy of the scheme does not detract from his artistic use of it, however debasing it might seem in eyes etherealized by Gallic standards. His immediate purpose was not to economize, but to record reality and a novelist of broad fields of folk must use it if he would be real. Trollope well understood that the more intimate a novelist is with his characters, the sharper illusion of reality will his characters produce, and that if the novelist live on terms of intimacy with his personages during an entire generation of their lives he will surely understand them more correctly and his reproduction of them will be the more real. It is not particularly illuminating to attribute much of the lifelikeness of the Barset series to this persistence of characters with whom he familiarized during thirteen years.

From this protracted acquaintance with his people there results the essence of characterization—the power to trace the reacting and shaping of a character by various external circumstances and internal forces. In the five major characters, and in a smaller degree, in the families of minor people of Barset, Trollope records delicately yet decisively, the working of circumstance on character, and age on the point of view. Adversity and good fortune in
The Last Chronicle of Barset, weaken the Reverend Crawley of Hogglestock from rigid sanctity of which he is complaisantly conscious, to a semblance of humble tolerance and genuine virtue. The fatted calf that the Archdeacon had prepared for him, seduced the Tractarian, Arabin, to a life of wedded ease—but slowly, gradually, through the two volumes of Barchester Towers. Warden Harding changed slowly from the small, quiet churchman assured that he was a deserving apostle, to a wiser and a sadder man who feared that he had provoked the wrath to come. But the Archdeacon is Trollope’s achievement. At his second appearance, in the Barset series, Hugh Walker remarks already his softening from the “blatant” church official to an approachable ecclesiastic, and the change continues naturally through the six books. When the last is reached, the Archdeacon Grantly who had fumed at Low Church aggression twenty years ago, accepts almost meekly an accusation against the order he had championed.

There do exist irregularities in the time element of the aging of these men, but they are so inconspicuous as

to be apparent only to such meticulous scientists as Mr. Nichols whose reading, in unhappy moments, resolves itself into the question, to convict or not to convict. In illustrating the influence of time on his characters' growth, Trollope affords us "the very illusion of our working day world, its amusing ironies, its melancholy transformation." Though Trollope realized that no writer can mirror life exactly, he knew that a commendable illusion could be produced, and his method of character continuation goes far to create that illusion. In life, friends remain with us, occasionally moving in close proximity and important to our lives, at times receding, but always with us. With minor personages we form but temporary acquaintance; they pass away from our sphere, recurring only occasionally to renew their acquaintance and bid good day. Such is life and such is Trollope's fiction.

Characters thus surviving through novel after novel bestow, then, a sense of actuality, continuity of design, coherence, perspective, and oneness on the series, and as Lovett and Hughes maintain, "give the sense of a solid and

112. Spencer Van Bokkelen Nichols, op. cit., p. 46.
permanent social structure"\textsuperscript{114} as they do to Balzac's "social fabric. In view of this accomplishment of Trollope, it is difficult to reconcile with reason and a writer's reputation the statement in the \textit{Dublin Review}, that "Mr. Trollope falls short of two attributes of a great writer . . . breadth and height. His landscapes of life are deficient in perspective."\textsuperscript{115}

The impression of life-like characters accomplished by artistic detachment of the author, unobstructed view of the puppets, and the repetition of characters, is somewhat marred by occasional carelessness. Repeatedly, when the illusion of reality becomes most perfect, Trollope breaks it with suicidal glee. In \textit{Barchester Towers}, Bertie Stanhope and Obadiah Slope, Uriah Heep in a cassock, both design to win pretty Eleanora and her annual income of twelve thousand pounds. Sympathy is strong for the victim, the suspense tautens, but Trollope quiets our fears and blenches his art by assuring us that he has the villains well in hand and that neither will marry the lady.\textsuperscript{116} And he does rescue the heroine, but that is not all. He reminds us that

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Barchester Towers}, vol. 1, p. 180.
had has kept his promise, and completes our disillusionment by explaining that "the end of a novel, like the end of a children's dinner-party, must be made up of sweetmeats and sugar-plums." And he tints his final pages with "couleur de rose," as he says, "in accordance with fixed rule."

He further convinces us that he controls his puppets by christening them himself, much less happily than did Thackeray and the majority of the Victorian school. Dr. Erechild, Mr. Goodenough, Dr. Fillgrave, Farmer Subsoil, Mrs. Lookaloft, and Mrs. Quiverful with her fourteen children, are names too medievally allegorical to be Victorian reality. True, they do keep the intended impression from fading but there are ways of reminding us that a character is a snob other than calling her Lookaloft.

But in spite of occasional sins in type-naming and controlling his actors, "there is no novelist save Balzac," says one of his appraisers, "who gives us so certain a conviction of entering his doors, sitting on his chairs, eating at his tables... We touch the very clothes of his human beings, and stand at their elbows as they talk."

118. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 323.
These characters are never more real than in their conversation. Despite Henry James' dictum that Trollope had no "views on the novel,"\(^{120}\) he did have very definite ideas on the nature of dialogue, a particularly essential part of the novel of manners.\(^{121}\) His principle, in accord with his whole fictional purpose, was that of the stark realist. In his *Autobiography* that savors much of Arnold Bennett's similar defense of the realist's art, Trollope states that "the ordinary talk of ordinary people is carried on in short, sharp, expressive sentences, which very frequently are never completed," and that the author must guide between absolute "accuracy of language. . . and the slovenly inaccuracy of ordinary talkers. . . to produce upon the ear of his readers a sense of reality. . . No character should utter much above a dozen words at a breath,--unless the writer can justify to himself a longer flood of speech by the specialty of the occasion."\(^{122}\)

His statement in his essay on Thackeray pursues further this principle, maintaining that the novelist "must mount somewhat above the ordinary conversational powers of such persons as are to be represented,--lest he disgust.

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120. Henry James, "Anthony Trollope" in *Partial Portraits*, p. 100.
But he must by no means soar into correct phraseology,—lest he offend." Following this aim akin to Ring Lardner's, Trollope came very close to transcribing actual spoken words. His duplicate is so literal as to aggravate Saintsbury into abominating his "talkie-talkie" which he admits is natural, but too much so. There could be no representation too natural for Trollope. He wrote realistically of a commonplace world though that world absolved him from his imposed standards of "human truth as to men and women"—and dialogue. Frederick Harrison, an enthusiastic yet discriminating critic of Trollope, says succinctly of this "talkie-talkie," "his conversations are photographic, or stenographic reproductions of actual speech." Walpole finds this same speech-photography and an added trait, "a certain natural rhythm of human speech," which harmonious prose was another of Trollope's conscious objectives. He insists that a writer "so train his ear that he shall be able to weigh the rhythm of every word as it falls from his pen." One need not be an habitual reader of Trollope to detect and appreciate the charm of this actual sound of

123. Thackeray, p. 186.
Trollope taught that dialogue could exist almost on the strength of its intrinsic agreeableness, and that it sufficed but to tend in a minor way to the telling of the story.\(^{129}\) In that he wrote some such dialogue that exists because of itself, Trollope offended against economy and condensation, but not against his code of realism. He failed in spots to reconcile actuality with accepted novel form and on these occasions his realness becomes boresome to the story-seeker but remains valuable to the student of social history. And if Dostoevski was permitted to select and emphasize material that would depict the "confusion of life" which was his conception of the realistic, could not Trollope linger briefly on realistic commonplaces, irrelevant to the plot but not to his picture? One must remember, too, that Trollope was recording a Philistine age, and a dialogue with a propensity for the Philistine was in harmony with the nature and taste of his British puppets, though perhaps not with approved novel technique. Violations in the usage of dialogue occur rarely in Trollope's best social histories,\(^ {130}\) and then they are partially atoned for in its happy employment in the scène à faire which often derives its power from

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the aptness of the plentiful dialogue, almost as effective as Henry James' sparing use of it.

As his dialogue harmonized with the nature of his work, so was Trollope's narrative style suited to his purpose—the correct, easy, limpid reporting of a correct and quiet age. In this respect he is superior to his usually-considered betters. Thackeray's brilliance and raciness are obtrusive and Dickens' sentences are too often clotted by a weight and tangle of words. Trollope is free, equable, and not unfrequently melodious, never eloquent, discordant, or spasmodic. As he relates in his Autobiography, he strove for "a good and lucid style,"¹³¹ which would not make itself noticeable, and he strove well, for there is in it no flavor of the author, only a flow of words, restrained and subdued, like the Victorian life which it portrayed. Such is the correct style of the historian whose aim is to write in the medium that least distracts the attention from the picture it paints. Forum asserts that excepting Trollope, Jane Austen is "the only one who had this limpid ease,"¹³² but perhaps "even the divine Jane had the big bow-wow style at times."¹³³

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¹³³ The Dial, vol. 34, (March 1, 1903), p. 142.
These social historians in fiction forego what may be the greatest qualities of style, "passion, poetry, mystery, or subtlety,"

but they accomplish what Harrison calls a "most wonderful unity of texture and a perfect harmony of tone," which give the impression of a sustained evenness, with no exaggeration, no straining for effect, no startling felicity of expression. Trollope taboos even the usual stylistic tricks, satisfying himself with only an occasional repetition with which the reader unconsciously becomes familiar. His style is tempered with the quiet sobriety of the Victorian gentleman—a vehicle perfect for an objective and pleasant chronicling of manners.

Trollope's passion for realness persevered in the construction of plot, as it did in the reproduction of character, in the manipulation of dialogue, and in his perfection of style. In the essay, "On Novels and the Art of Writing Them," Trollope completes his treatment of plot construction in seven lines, the first of the two sentences beginning, "I have never troubled myself much about the construction of plots," and his books bear him witness. He purposed to photograph life, not to dovetail it with

Dickens' gleeful inventiveness. The love element, and a central theme tolerating sub-plots but no extraneous episodes, were his only rules, and his love-story is cast habitually in the same mold. Romeo has two Julies or vice versa; occasionally to stimulate his readers, the author allows a third into the lists. These young people and their friends Trollope follows through his pages, enlivening the tedium of "every-dayness" with an uncommon talent for the perception of the significant in the usual. Occasionally he does rise to the sensational which becomes all the more powerful for its contrast with the prevailing commonplace that precedes it. Such is the case when the thrice-besieged Eleanora Bold boxes the ears of her unctuous suitor; 137 and when the Reverend Crawley orders Mrs. Proudie out of her husband's sight with the sacrilegious words, "Peace, woman," 138 the scene is impressive enough to recall Shakespeare's Petruchio versus Katharina.

Trollope's story is then but a sequence of the ordinary in life broken opportunely by the sensational—a sequence consistent with his canon of truth, violating artistic laws as flagrantly as does life itself and achieving, in the words of Hawthorne, that which Trollope desired to do, to

"hew out some lump of the earth, and to make men and women walk upon it just as they do walk here among us." Such transcription of Victorianism in the lump without any process of artistic selection or heightening for effect, makes for what might be an elementary conception of realism, but a substantially real realism, nevertheless, the kind which Jane Austen, Mrs. Ferrier, and Thackeray essayed, but with perhaps less success; Jane Austen and her small block of ivory had their decided limitations; so did Thackeray and his "confidential talk between writer and reader."

In satisfying himself "with the narrowest thread of a plot," perhaps narrower and weaker than any which his predecessors wove, Trollope was anticipating the modern novel which is becoming increasingly negligent in the "elaboration of plot," deeming that to be "false to experience"—a step toward naturalism which Trollope hazarded in his theory that fiction, like life, must be unmethodical. This entire contention of plot-insignificance sprang from Trollope's emphasis on character, the true portrayal of which he felt would be impossible in an intricate plot, patterned

143. Carl H. Grabe, op. cit., p. 29.
144. Autobiography, p. 86.
to intrigue after the manner of Wilkie Collins, rather than to mirror truth.

But the plot which is not plotty, of necessity spends much of its time on the commonplace, and it must be in the power of the realist to dramatize this ordinariness, if he would be read; Trollope has this power, the flare for genius of the commonplace. He lent to ordinary things in life "the glamor and attraction that the most finished art can give." There is only one note of dissent from this statement and that comes from Leslie Stephen who accuses Trollope of exaggerating the commonplace to unreality, and holds that "by the excision of all that is energetic, or eccentric, or impulsive, or romantic," he does not become the more lifelike. William Dean Howells, whose opinion would seem more authentic than such an accusation, declares that "the true artist will spare the use even of real events if they are of an improbable character...the sincere observer of man will seek him in his habitual moods of vacancy or tedium."  

This dogged adherence to commonplace reality does not, however, prohibit occasional rises to the sensational which Trollope regarded as in accordance with life, and used ju-

diciously and capitaly in his novels, as has been previously shown. The dramatic episodes cited are a mute contradiction to John Macy’s assertion, that "the splendid scene or passage in which inspiration rises above commonplace...is not to be found in Trollope." 

By foregoing, as a rule, therefore, the intricately plotted thrillers abounding in murders, forgeries, and their complex solutions, by discarding them for the loose "manners" plot, Trollope adopted a medium that suited well his purpose to tell the truth. And though the telling of this truth forced him to recount reams of the commonplace, he remained staunch to his purpose and overcame the usual fate of inartistic recorders of the usual in life, by a developed acuteness for the perception and reproduction of that which was extraordinary in the ordinary.

His technique, then, an inheritance from a renowned line of "manners" forbears, Trollope adopted and improved to achieve a verisimilitude which is superior to that of his contemporaries in the field of the social chronicle.

If he can be called the superior realist, certainly

then, that which he treated most realistically, socio-
clerical life, epitomizes the peculiar value of the works
of Trollope and accounts for his greatest possible distinc-
tion. To establish Trollope's primacy in realism, one must
establish the truth of this clerical picture—the purpose
of the following chapters.
CHAPTER III

The Verification of Trollope as Socio-Clerical Historian

Critics agree that whatever durability belongs to Trollope's work as a novelist belongs to him as a social historian; that he is as great as his social picture is accurate, especially his social picture of the clergy. But they disagree as to the degree of his accuracy. They have either assumed it entirely, denied it entirely, or admitted it partially.

Joseph Ellis Baker calls Trollope's clergy an anachronism; Hain Friswell, "a disgrace, almost a libel," the *Contemporary Review*, a stupendous lie. Spectator voices the contention of the more numerous opposite school, that Trollope is the preeminent social historian of Victorian society, that his clergymen especially, are "creations of genius that have their originals in life...photographic portraits of men his readers know." But neither of these groups has brought proof to fortify its assertion.

This paper pronounces in the vein of the *Dublin Review*, that

154. *Once a Week*, vol. 9, (June 1, 1872), pp. 498-501.
"Trollope's Chronicles of Barset are good photographs of clergymen and of their influence, lives and opinions during the two middle quarters of the century," that posterity will not be able to get the socio-clerical life of England from 1850 to 1870 "better described than it is in Trollope's best novels." To substantiate this is the aim of this and the subsequent chapter.

The method of substantiation will be the identifying of Trollope's portrait with the genuine picture as taken from memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, letters, records, and from periodicals and dailies that vouch for the fidelity of Trollope's chronicle. These sources are used because they alone tell the social life of the clergy. Histories will be employed rarely because history speaks of history-making schools of thought and religious movements; Trollope's clergy were too conservative to make history and therefore do not appear in its pages; they would have considered that bad taste.

Before being able to verify Trollope's clerical picture, one must determine exactly what he intended to portray. Contrary to Miss Lillian Ida Sattler's thesis, he did

not write of ministers typical of the mid-Victorian Anglican Church. What he drew was the portrait of the High Church clergymen still lingering in the stolid, tranquil, agricultural counties, unconscious of a great intellectual, political, and social revolution that was turning over city-England like a flustered cake on a griddle. Realizing that these characters might seem to antedate 1850, Trollope insists in passages recurring through the novels, that his was the Englishman...the new ways of the world...not indeed in any case so moving him as to bring him up to the spirit of the age in which he lived. We must consider Trollope as a chronicler of such high, dry, and humdrum clergy living the even tenor of Victorianism.

That such a church did exist and could slumber during an Oxford Movement is vouched for by dozens of memoirs, especially the memoirs of Trollope's clerical domain, southwestern rural England. They explain that "owing to the isolation produced by faulty means of travel...Sussex villages, up to comparatively recent times retained much of old-world quaintness and charm." During the mid-Victorian

159. *The Small House at Allington*, p. 3.
period we are assured that Hampshire villages slumbered in the same conditions that had prevailed since the coming of the Conqueror's knights who still slept in their country churchyards. 161

Trollope's picture, therefore, is one of a quiet, almost medieval England only at a late hour disturbed by Evangelical fury and Puseyite reform. What disturbance there is, is carefully recorded through the twenty years of the novels during which there is a gradual reformation of the High and Dry Church discipline and doctrine, and consequentially in social practices. This paper will not depict the shades in that gradation to religious and social rigor, but will treat of the normal conditions that obtained during most of the twenty years considered as mid-Victorian.

The social life of Victoria's Anglican clergymen harmonized with their hierarchical position. Since that position determined their social relations with clergy and with seculars, Trollope's duty as a socio-clerical historian was to describe them in every possible rank. These ranks he found in the cathedral city, the home of the clerical aristocracy, and in the surrounding country rectories and archdeaneries, which offered this Du Maurier of fiction the most complete group of clergymen ever chronicled. 162

161. Lady Dorothy Nevill, Under Five Reigns, pp. 81-82.
Barsetshire gallery contains bishop, dean, archdeacon, "precentor, chancellor, prebend, treasurer, canon, minor-canon, preacher, rector, curate, vicar, chorister, clerk, and even the man of business, Mr. Chadwick. These individuals Trollope treats as members of a social order whose relations are regulated by precedence that is determined by ecclesiastical position. The usual "petty squabbles about etiquette and precedence," the characteristic of cathedral closes, however, are not in Trollope's pages because Trollope's clergy were too conservative to tamper with tradition; so were their great-forefathers. This attitude, tolerant of a centuries-old order, Trollope captures completely in his marking of the devious subdivisions in the clerical hierarchy. Because this attitude persisted, so did the social aristocracy which it respected—an entire order which made possible Trollope's comprehensive picture, a fundamental requisite for a correct social history.

First on this vast scope of his epic canvas are the bishops, Proudie and Grantly, the undisputed social lions of Barsetshire. Their subjects recognized in them the inhabitants of the cathedral mansion, the lords of the epis-

copal glebe, absentees during the London social season, and the worthiest hosts of the diocese. They recognized them as "My Lord" rather than "Bishop;" the lawn sleeve was a social badge as well as a religious insignia. In fact, the bishop's social prerogatives seemed to procure more respect than his episcopal authority. This dual role of a Victorian bishop as clerical and lay magnate is vividly exemplified in the life of Proudie's contemporary, Bishop Philpotts.

Between the bishop and "the eye of the bishop," there was a distinct but small descent in social notability. The archdeacon was the bishop's superintendent but somewhat of an independent authority also, and as such a power it was proper that he rule an estate which would demand the respect of his wardens, accommodate the hunting elite and dinner parties, and in general maintain the traditions of archdiocesan respectability. Like Archdeacon Denison's East Brent rectory, Plumstead Episcopi was a decided part of social church

165. Ibid., pp. 102-133.
61.

history. Even starveling and dyspeptic vicars would hesitate to confiscate its riches or the archdeacon's; both were social institutions that represented the permanence and endurance of their cloth, at least as a necessity to a well-ordered society.

Dean Arabia and his fossilized predecessor, second in authority to the bishop in the cathedral city, were second in social rank also, acquiring that dignity and importance from the Crown. They were recognized as presiders over the chapter as well as over the social wine-cups in the role of religious executives of the bishop, their correct position.

Lower in the strata of clerical aristocracy were the precentor of the choir, the chancellor, arch-theologian, the treasurer, canons, prebends, all demure well-fed men of the cloth who were as respected connoisseurs of wines as they were of social etiquette, and mutual social status, and who understood the value of nepotism and financial influence in acquiring clerical caste.

But Trollope stretches his broad canvas beyond the hallowed episcopal close and carefully portrays the status of even the smallest country rectors, vicars, and curates who thrive upon the social crumbs that fall to them from the

table of the high-breasted archdeacon. Their social worth among the clergy was determined by secular patronage from some "great house," by the income from their preferment, or "blood." The Reverend Oriel and Robarts were to be recognized because the Ladies Gresham and Lufton sponsored them. Rector Arabin had "blood" at least potentially, after he married an archdeacon's sister-in-law, and after his marriage he became elevated with the raising of his income.

But there were less fortunate rectors and vicars whose loaves and fishes were meager, whose wives were too unimportant, and whose salaries were too wretched to establish them otherwise than obsequious admirers of the cathedral gentry. For the most part they were respected by their rural clientele as the first men of the parish, but in the clerical way of thinking they were decidedly common. Trollope delineates this attitude accurately and repeatedly. In The Last of the Chronicles, Reverend Harding recalls old Bishop Grantly's remarking to him that if the wine was too heady for the prebendaries and rectors to drink, the curate would take it. And the profusely unctuous Reverend Slope, the Evangelical upstart in Barsetshire Towers, sets the wines

171. Mrs. E. Whately, English Life, Social and Domestic, pp. 298-299.
at the bishop's inaugural party, well understanding that curates and country vicars with their belongings did not require so generous an article as the dignitaries of the close. . . and Marsala at twenty shillings a dozen did very well for the exterior supplementary tables in the corner."173 And when the Framley Parsonage vicar shook hands with the bishopess, in the "deferential manner which is due from a vicar to his bishop's wife. . . Mrs. Proudie returned the greeting with all that smiling condescension which a bishop's wife should show to a vicar."174

That such graded social distinction as in Trollope's novels did exist among the Victorian clergy is as certain as its existence in secular society, and is admitted by contemporaneous magazines and memoirs of social life. George Russell, in describing the clerical garden-parties of Fulham and Lambeth, comments that "the overwhelming disparity between the position of host and guests is painfully apparent, and that the 'drop-down-dead-ativeness' of manner which Sydney Smith quizzed still characterizes the demeanour of the unbefited clergy."175 Further evidence of Trollope's accuracy in depicting this inter-clerical dis-

174. Framley Parsonage, p. 22.
parity is spread over the pages of his day's periodicals. The groveling curate, Quiverful, is so life-like as to seem an animated photograph of the "weak, pathetic little person, with a wife and children," whom the writer Bradley, pictures in *When Squires and Farmers Thrived*; and Reverend Thumble, the poverty-bitten servant of Bishop Proudie, is reminiscent of the Reverend Bunney in the role of a housemaid. These Quiverfuls and Thumbles typified the lower of the two immemorial orders in British clerical society, the unbenefted file "who touched their hats and courtesied" to the prosperous clerical rank.

From vicar to bishop, then, Trollope, comprehended thoroughly the smallest steps in social gradation and the importance of these steps in determining the social relations, even as Balzac comprehended his *Comedie Humaine*. He approached his task of depicting a clerical class by creating an entire shire and populating it with examples of every existing type of social country clergy. That these types existed and are correctly graded and differentiated in their own social kingdom, is a fact to which Trollope's generation bears abundant witness, a minimum of which has been called

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176. *All the Year Round*, vol. 4, (December 1, 1866), p. 498.
Trollope knew not only the strata in clerico-social life and the relative importance of each stratum but he knew also the forces that produced this social hierarchy, forces social in their very nature and therefore indispensable in a social history. As Thackeray illustrated the foundations of rank in *Vanity Fair*; as Balzac analysed conditions that established his Parisian ladies in their gilt carriages, so Trollope with as true an instinct, began from the sources that defined, formed, and maintained his high-church aristocracy. In proving him a reliable social historian, one may not neglect to identify the sources from which his clergy derived their rank, with the genuine sources indicated in contemporaneous history.

The Barset ministers found the origin of their social and ecclesiastical fortune in religious and political affiliations, in the patronage of powerful friends, colleges, and newspapers, in "blood," and in rare instances, in their religious worth and efficiency.

The majority of ecclesiastical appointments, the great ones, were in the hands of Parliament, and since their worldly and clerical well-being was decided by the government, the clergy supported the party favorable to theirs. A
loud example of this practice occurs in the history of Bishop Proudie, a conveniently versatile liberal, who "adapted himself to the views held by the whigs." He became indispensable to them as a tolerating divine who would sign his name to their church reforms without any bothersome theological stickling. But Proudie "was biding his time, and patiently looking forward to the days when he himself would sit authoritative at some board, and talk and direct, and rule the roost, while lesser stars sat round and obeyed, as he had so well accustomed himself to do." Proudie was not disappointed for his debtors made him bishop. His appointment like the Bishop of Belgravia's had necessitated his moving in a clerico-political world, a distinct social group; and his remaining in this group which appointed him, shaped his social life.

Other forms of diplomacy, more honorable than Bishop Proudie's, were accepted tradition in Barset and regarded as necessary to the maintenance of social position. In Framley Parsonage it is recorded how Archdeacon Grantly took lodgings in London at the resignation of the old ministry, and was seen visiting the Lord of the Treasury regularly;
at one time he had almost succeeded in arranging his own consecration as bishop through the influence of the prime minister.\textsuperscript{185} Diplomatic wheedlings and relations of this type demanded of the Archdeacon and his kin, many days spent in a world of nobility and diplomacy which decidedly colored their social life. Parsons, too, nourished the acquaintance of rising politicians.\textsuperscript{186} As these clerics were the molders of political thought in their respective dioceses and parsonages, it behooved the prime minister to curry their favor, which he did\textsuperscript{187} in appointments to preferments and sinecures—and social prestige.

In such fashion did Trollope's clergy approach their social ambitions, and in like manner did their parallels of the real world. Victorian Britshers accepted their church as a secular institution that should not scruple to demand emoluments from a government which they supported. This "legitimacy of political action on the part of the Church" was looked upon as "part and parcel of the alliance which from the earliest she has in one form or another contracted with the powers of the world."\textsuperscript{188} During the very days of Evangelical hubbub in Barchester, Lord Palmerston was con-

\textsuperscript{185} \textit{Barchester Towers}, vol. 1, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{186} \textit{Framley Parsonage}, pp. 31-32.
\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Barchester Towers}, vol. 1, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Quarterly Review}, vol. 118, (July-October, 1865), p. 200.
trolling the votes of the grateful "Evans" whose bishops he had tactfully placed on episcopal benches. The British Quarterly prints a similar substantiation of Trollope's social clergy in politics, stating that Mr. Gladstone responded to High Church support by the "appointment of its members to important positions and in the favor shown to certain points of its policy." 190

This clerical caution and diplomacy in cultivating the maintainers of their social and ecclesiastical position is illustrated with a crisp finality in an incident recorded by the Honorable Mrs. Gell in her Under Three Reigns. It so happened that Bishop Creighton's Sunday sermon synchronized with the reigning monarch's Accession Day. When he asked Dean Bradley if he should allude to it from the pulpit, the answer came, "Certainement! Et il faut que vous le layerez on très thick." 191 The bishop did so because as a bishop he felt obliged to sustain and even perhaps to increase the governmental patronage to the cloth. Trollope's Archdeacon Grantly would have done the same, but he would not have hesitated.

As political patronage determined the rank and wealth of the clerical elect, so private patronage adjusted the status and income of the lesser Levites whose patrons lifted them from ecclesiastical oblivion to social respectability by a preferment "in their gift" or by a purchased rectory. Lady Lufton bestowed Framley Parsonage on the young Robarts and in doing so gave him a social passport to the castles of earls and dukes. Archdeacon Grantly was more circumspect in his patronage, and selected Mr. Arabin for the Ewold rectory because he was an Oxford High Church divine, and able to take his place with ease in the Archdeacon's high society. He is one of the rarae aves whose worth merited him a place in the promised land of the Anglican house-parties. A more comprehensive example of private patronage by religious affiliations and partyism which decided the clergy's social welfare, was Bishop Proudie's profuse appointment of Evangelicals to the comfortable homes and church stalls of his cathedral close. More genuine nepotism manifests itself in the Grantly dynasty, Bishop and Archdeacon, who inherited social distinction by virtue of clannish ecclesiastical appointment.

192. Framley Parsonage, p. 3.
In these frequent recurrences to the sources which produced even the minor clerical society, Trollope is signally true. His story of clerical appointment is almost a photostat of passages in the very periodicals which one would think his clergy read. As Lady Lufton made a gift of her curacy to Mark Robarts, so did Baron Mayer de Rothschild endow the Reverend Maynard Currie, rector of Wentmore. The practice of a bishop to nourish his own suckling church party, and of Grantly to favor Grantly, is admitted in the pages of the Eclectic Review as inevitable, in the face of the secularity and peculiar administration of the church.

Trollope shows that advancement might come also from friendly pockets. As is related in Doctor Thorne, Mr. Oriel's friends "bought for him the next presentation to the living of Greshamsbury" and they did nothing unusual. Macmillan's Magazine assures us as late as 1874, that the purchase of church preferments was a customary abuse. Newspapers, too, could elevate becoming clergymen to social renown in the church-world. Trollope refers bitingly to the Jupiter's power in raising its friend to church offices and

195. Framley Parsonage, p. 3.
emoluments, a practice to which Macmillan's also testifies in its objection to the control of clerical appointments by "public bodies."200 Livings were also in the gift of colleges, as Lady Battersea recalls, and to which Trollope refers in his recounting of the archdeacon's motives for selecting an Oxford man202 to fill the pulpit at Saint Ewold and in the appointment of Parson Boyce by King's College, Cambridge.203

In this frequent exposition of and allusion to the different manners of clerical selection, Trollope reaches to the very roots of the social order which he essayed to portray and thus accomplished a necessary step to an accurate interpretation of the peculiar nature of that order. The powers which appointed the clergy to position were powers themselves of a highly social nature, in the political, religious, or scholastic sense, and the clergy derived from their benefactors, that social nature. Trollope, then, is logical and thorough in his procedure as a social historian—a procedure that begins with the characteristic derivatives of an institution and then proceeds to relate them to the institution's development.

201. Lady Constance Battersea, op. cit., p. 132.
203. Small House at Allington, p. 3.
The first phase of this development consisted of the clergy’s moving in the sphere to which a social order had appointed them, and enjoying the good things thereof as they were expected to do. Since the clergy were essentially a semi-secular body with all the steps of rank-subordination, their social circles corresponded approximately in number and tone with those of secular society. That these similar parallel orders should exist together, the Victorian expected and demanded. In fact, they considered the clergy as an indispensable element of Victorian English society. A ball room in the London season had no balance without the serge of Anglican divines, nor did a country house have the proper tone without a visiting bishop or an obliging archdeacon.

The necessity of the clergy for the entirety and orderliness of an English social group is historical. It dates from the time when archbishops used to "execute jurisdiction where their cities or palace were situate" of which day the Bishop of Ely’s domain is a survival;\(^{204}\) and "the notion of a clergyman being a gentleman falls in with the English notion of the proper relations of the poor and the rich."\(^{205}\) Mrs. Whately speaking in Trollope’s day is very

\(^{204}\) Dr. George C. Williamson, *Curious Survivals*, pp. 168-169.

\(^{205}\) *Frazer’s Magazine*, vol. 66, (December, 1862), p. 698.
explicit in stating the rarely-defined position and the elusive social quality of the clergy:

Of all private influences, we should expect that of the clergy to be the most effective, steady, and beneficial, not merely in their public capacity, ... but in their private relations with society. Connected both with the higher and middling ranks, they form, owing to their peculiar position, a link between all classes of community; and scattered as they are, throughout the population, they and their households are often centres of civilization in remote and unfrequented districts. 206

British clergy have been considered since Henry VIII and even before, as moderators and regulators, a system of good-will police who are accepted as a definite but not obtrusive governmental and social sanction. 207

On the one hand they inspire and conciliate the lower classes into an almost pleased submission to their social betters, and on the other they bestow a feeling of security and at times virtuous toleration on the aristocracy. So a well-mannered Victorian people, a grateful parliament, and inviolate tradition demanded and maintained the clergy in society. The latter were not particularly averse to complying. Not a few did more than comply, a fact that prompts the

206. Mrs. E. Whately, English Life, Social and Domestic, pp. 298-299.
so he attended the House, sat in the noblest chair in the
haha at Ullathorne, attended the functions of the elite:
Frank Gresham’s wedding, Lord de Guest’s house party,
and the week-end social at Gatherum castle. It behooved
him, too, as a husband and a bishop, to sponsor the bishop-
ness’ “conversations” during the London season. Such
were a bishop’s social exertions in the mid-Victorian age.

Among other aristocratic victims of this grim social
order were Dean Arabin and Archdeacon Grantly, characters
who persist through the entire Barset series. They did not
attend the House—the dean was too learned, the archdeacon,
too active; but they did attend important social functions
of the “quality,” a duty prompted by generations of High-
Church instinct and the preservation of their worldly reputa-
tions. Dr. Grantly “had lived all his life on terms of
equality with the best of the gentry around him.” In
Framley Parsonage Miss Dunstable, a dictator in social
propriety, invites the archdeacon to her London ball, saying
that she “should by no means have the proper ecclesiastical

211. Framley Parsonage, p. 168.
216. Ibid., p. 163.
balance without him. She condenses in a sentence the peculiar nature of the social position of the clerical aristocracy.

That this was the true rank of the Anglo-clerical "four hundred," Trollope's contemporaries aver. The Church Review, published in the heyday of the Barset Chronicles, says unabashed, "With the upper classes the clergy are connected by birth and education—they mix with them on equal terms." A Christian Remembrancer, also of the Chronicles' period, declares that the rank of the clerical costume decides "the position which society accorded to its possessor." And the Church Review speaks of the clergy as the "natural friends of... the upper classes."

In another contemporaneous periodical we are told that

the sense of the convenience of having them at call leads all those who are in any way called to manage the semi-public life of England to be very jealous of anything that will make the clergy less certain of a peculiar sort of select dignity and therefore less available for semi-public purposes. It was this feeling, we believe, which led the House of Commons to reject Mr. Bowerie's proposal to allow clergymen to retire from their sacred calling and enter on lay occupations.
The article further maintains that "it suits an infinite variety of people to have a church with a good social position," and that a festive mutton would not be considered well done without the archdeacon's grace. Trollope is faithful in his reproduction, then, matching the clergy of his mind with the clergy of his day and periodical.

His parsons, curates, vicars, minor canons, and other clerical commoners also have their appropriate positions in society. Magazines which Trollope may have read, define their status:

There is also the semi-public life of England, the country gatherings, the agricultural meetings, the dinners of lord mayors and the civic functionaries, at all of which it is most convenient and proper that clergymen should be present, and should lend a little dignity and extra respectability to the occasion, and represent the place of religion in common life. Practically it is found that clergymen do this, and that the sort of persons who are wanted are to be got.

Trollope's words almost cohere with those of Frazer's:
"Clergymen...particularly the rectors and vicars of country parishes...do become privileged above other professional men," for which reason Trollope's Reverend Oriel, a commoner,

was permitted to marry Beatrice Gresham on the strength of his cassock. 225

The Reverend Robarts, the popular rector of Framley parsonage, also was staunch to the clerico-social code, and went to the Duke of Omnium's castle to officiate, demurely of course, at the elite's breakfasts. 226 Like the editor of the Christian Remembrancer, he knew that he would receive "a cordial reception because he was a clergyman." 227 He was convinced as was his friend, the well-bred Sowerby, that "in these days it did not do for a clergyman to be a hermit," that he as a "man in the world must meet all sorts of men." 228

Parson Boyce, the heavy, slow, very ordinary man of the pulpit at Allington, sat next to Lady Julia Guest knowing that his lord's dinner could not go off without his two graces. 229 He was conscious of his social worth as was his host; both had grown up on tradition and the propriety of institutions. Both, too, were of the school that doubted much whether, "a cottager could go to heaven who had not touched his hat properly in life." 230 Trollope's characters and tone constantly ring true to contemporary sources.

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226. Framley Parsonage, pp. 69-70.
228. Framley Parsonage, p. 21.
229. The Small House at Allington, p. 513.
Harding, the gelatinous warden who recurs in the thirteen novels of the ecclesiastical series, ranked above Parson Boyce, and consequently realized more practically the duties of his position as representative of an hospitable Crown. His was among the households which "are often centres of civilization in remote and unfrequented districts." His supreme enterprise was the evening party-dance-cakes-and-cream, at which all Barchester was represented in fine silks and gauzy frocks. By virtue of such social amenities, and Mrs. Grantly's Sunday School buns, the people permitted that "the state set down in every parish a priest...as the official religious representative of the nation," a social leader and moderator to be obeyed. But each of these parsons with well-bred nicety, knew that "above a certain line, this duty and power cease." So do Trollope's bishops and deans, vicars and menials, prebends and canons, stand on a graduating social plane coincident with genuine contemporary parallels.

Further illustrations of this social subordination and of the inherent "socialness" of the Anglican Victorian cler-

231. Mrs. E. Whately, op. cit., p. 298.
gymen lie in their participation in such institutions as marriage, education, and politics, and in the nature of their clerical avocations. As Trollope classified clerical society in its cathedral stalls and London May seasons, as he analyzed the very sources of this classification, so he included within his picture the institutions that inevitably sprang from these levels of a characteristically social body. And in doing this the author of Barset is the conscientious systematic historian, even excelling in the meticulous comprehensiveness of his structure, the clerical worlds of Balzac, Fabre, and Anatole France.

The presentation of clerical marriage in all its worldly aspects, Trollope found essential to his complete picture. He revealed in its presentation the intrinsic social quality of his men of the cloth, a quality that had almost the permanence and strength of an instinct. And in the British attitude towards clerical marriage, he further reveals the imperativeness of the ministry as a social group. This network of interrelation in motives and manifestations of the secularity of his clergy, is most closely meshed in the author's treatment of marriage as a motif in the fine art of social living.

Victorian clergy usually regarded marriage as a required condition for the full realization of their clerical
office and as a handy means to financial security and to advancement in social prestige. Victorian seculars on their part, preferred, sometimes demanded, that their clergy marry, and allowed them the accompanying advantages of endowments in money or caste. They were willing to make concessions of wealth and honor provided that the clergy concede any possible churchy obstinacy to matrimony that to the Victorian savored of religious prudishness.

This idea of the necessity and propriety of clerical marriage and occasionally the attitude of mutual compromise to secure it, Trollope's pages reproduce with a photographic fidelity. His only determined bachelors are widowers. Potential bachelors, however strong-willed, fall before conventions that regulate even domestic fate. This was the convention that rose up against Mr. Oriel's virginity and defeated it early in the pages of Doctor Thorne. As an unmarried person he was a social evil, at least a deterrent to social good, and therefore was not fulfilling his proper office as a rural parson. Doctor Thorne contains very succinctly this contention: "If other clergymen all around should declare against wives and families, what was to become of the country, what was to be done with the rural districts? The religious observances, as regards women, of
82.
a Brigham Young were hardly so bad as this. Lady Linton, the protectress of Framley Parsonage, also was convinced that a man could not be a good parson without a wife. On their part, the Victorian clergy were conscious of this demand as well as of the power of the high ones who made it, as is testified by the prominence of vicaresses and priestesses in memoir references to Victorian society.

The clergy thus accommodated Victorian taste but they also managed to accommodate less virtuous interests. More than frequently, wealth and position were their recompense for accepting the matrimonial yoke. Soon after his first appearance in Barchester Towers, the Reverend Obadiah Slope decided to marry Eleanora Bold on the condition that her annual income would be twelve hundred pounds; he was thwarted by a fellow-clergyman, but succeeded elsewhere beyond his original hopes and by virtue of his matrimonially-acquired finances, mounted to the plane of ecclesiastico-social big wigs. Blunt Sir Louis Scatcherd, amused by this financially-minded clergy remarked to the Reverend Oriel of Doctor Thorne, "You parsons always have your own

235. Framley Parsonage, p. 3.
238. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 331.
luck. . . You get all the beauty, and generally all the money, too.  

Marriage, then, to many of Trollope's clergy, was a step to the finances requisite to social position, and Trollope is correct again in his striking a source that illustrates the social nature of his churchmen. Mrs. C. S. Peel's recounting of the marriage of the straightened Parson Weldon is one of the numerous demonstrations of Trollope's veracity in this regard.

Position, however, was a more frequent and precious end of matrimony. Archdeacon Grantly's son who married an earl's daughter is typical of the clerical school that tended to great things through the graces of nobility's daughters. And Reverend Oriel looked upon his engagement to the daughter of the "great house" of Greshamsbury as a distinct social gain. As severe as these examples in Trollope's fiction may seem, they are not exaggerations of this tendency of clergy to rise in the world by the purse of their brides. Lady Battersea herself a small historian of the clerical life of Trollope's day, is not at all surprised at a rector's wedding "the only daughter of Lord Cadogan."

240. Mrs. C. S. Peel, The Stream of Time, p. 198.
241. Last Chronicle of Barset, vol. 1, p. 188.
Thus, Trollope shows marriage to be the state of life essential to the clergy, to make them socially a part of the people. Frequently it elevated them to a nobler sphere by bestowing nobility or finances. In either case it was indisputably a determining force of rank and distinction and of the life and relations derived from them; as such a force Trollope recognized it and gave it the attention of a faithful copyist and analyst of Victorian clerical life.

Another institution that formed the clergymen in the mold of the social world was Victorian education—the early Victorian education that produced the Trollopian clergy of mid-Victorian England. Trollope reasoned that what social life his clergy led, would be in part the result of a corresponding training in that life. He therefore describes a set of churchmen bred to social relations and contacts and to the maintenance of ecclesiastical rank and pelf rather than to a convincing defense of the Thirty-Nine Articles. Trollope comprehended to the full the system of education that shaped his characters, and because he comprehended the system he understood its production.

Reverend Robarts, the rector of Framley, in many respects typical of Trollope's clergy, began his education under a tutoring clergyman\(^244\) and followed at Oxford his

\(^{244}\) Framley Parsonage, p. 1.
studies towards Lady Lufton's fat preferment. His resultant life is a distinctly successful social one and an indifferent mediocrity as a religious one. Trollope's portrayal of his priestly life as the result of an Oxford seminary education is a tribute to the novelist's powers of observation and deduction. In penetrating to the education which was the source and moderator of his social figures Trollope found one of the most reliable blocks of foundation upon which to construct his clerical "manners" chronicle. He knew the college as a "seminary intended for their tuition as scholars, whose thoughts have been mostly of boating, cricketing, and wine-parties." And his picture of the graduate from such a college is so true as to be substantiated by frequent duplicates in private histories of his day, the histories that tell of the type of clergyman "who never entered his church on a week-day, nor wore a white neckcloth except on Sunday; who was an active magistrate, a keen sportsman, an acknowledged authority on horticulture and farming; and who boasted that he had never written a sermon in his life."

245. *Framley Parsonage*, p. 3.
Though clergy could come from "theological schools or be ordained as literates,"\(^\text{248}\) the majority, especially the High-Churchmen of Trollope's novels, came from Oxford, the institution notorious as late as 1871 for its inefficiency as a seminary.\(^\text{249}\) Socially, it gave distinction, but religiously it gave only doubts.\(^\text{250}\) And Trollope's ministers as a rule did justice to their college trainers. Their sermons were dull, their libraries dusty, and their most brilliant conversation dealt with evil wine, weather, and Low-Churchmen. Considering their training one is impressed by the complete fitness of their social small talk, their adeptness at drinking a lady's health, and their occasional dragoon-like mastery of horses.

Realizing, then, the nature of the institution which produced his intellectual and social clergy, Trollope was able to deduce and reproduce the nature and normal social development of such socially educated clergy with an unerringly reason that was almost intuitive.

With their intellectual life, "cribbed, cabined, and confined" to the Bible, \textit{Cornhill}, and \textit{Macmillan},\(^\text{251}\) which they called by the severe name of "clerical reading," with

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{250.} W. H. Mallock, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 62.
\footnotetext{251.} \textit{Contemporary Review}, vol. 19, (December, 1871), pp. 60-61.
\end{footnotes}
social pleasantries sometimes scarce, and with scarcely a
vocation to call their own, the clergy frequently nour
ished avocations, the nature of which indicates the socio
secularity of Anglican ecclesiastics. Because these avoca
tions brought his ministers in contact with their fellowmen,
they bear the stamp of means to social intercourse, and as
such Trollope considers them in his efforts towards a com
plete treatment of the social theme.

These semi-social hobbies were of two classes, those
which grew out of the ecclesiastical office, and those which
sprang from a less sacred source. The Reverend Stanhope
and Robarts exemplify the second and more fascinating
group. Stanhope, Barchester's illustrious absentee-clergy
man, absent from four church offices upon the funds of which
he fattened, resided in his "hospitable villa on the lake
of Como," and his assortment of butterflies was "supposed to
be unique." Another clerical gentleman of Barchester was
"most completely versed in the knowledge of rocks and
minerals." There were many of these scientific or pseudo
scientific men whose intercourse lay with a distinct group

252. Dean Hole, More Memories, p. 28, and A. G. Bradley,
op. cit., pp. 49-50.
253. The Warden, p. 159.
of people. They were numerous enough at any rate for Trollope to make particular mention of them in his well-balanced social record. The closest genuine parallels to his shovelled-hatted scientists are the Reverend Frank Buckland, zoologist, 255 and Canons Jackson and Jones, archaeologist and genealogist, 256 whose activities can be found in the Memories of the Viscount Long of Wraxhall.

No scientist, but an out-of-doors man was the Reverend Robarts, out-of-doors because the gentry were there—a hunting gentry whom he followed. 257 His peculiar hobby was of an unusually high social nature, and represents more the almost secular character which the clergy had previously possessed, than a social observance of the mid-Victorian world. For this reason Robarts is only a demure rider to hounds. Many examples of a less conservative taste lived during the same period, but they did not live in shires as subdued as Barsetshire and therefore did not suit Trollope's moderate picture. Reverend John Russell was typical of these vigorous "hunting parsons." 258

Avocations which sprang from the ecclesiastical office, were music, pamphleteering, and landlordng. Harding's vi-

257. Framley Parsonage, pp. 148-149.
oloncello established him in the role of Barset's musici leader and director of the dance and socials. Trollope's Reverend Slope and Dean Arabin found argumentative and semi-libelous pamphleteering to be an agreeable means of contact between themselves and the aghast world. These writing clergy were social forces by their pens and could not be omitted in Trollope's large canvas, especially since they were so numerous as to "hold their own in almost every description of periodical literature." The Archdeacon, as became his office of episcopal foreman and overseer, indulged his landlord propensities freely, thus constituting himself a perpetuator and dictator of social observances--and caste. In being thus a social stabilizer he did no more than was appropriate to the archdiaconal office, as W. H. Mallock would have us infer from his account of the Archdeacon of Totnes' officiating in country social life.

Enumerating and displaying such diverse avocational outlets of social clergymen, Trollope gives his history a decided air of the thoroughness and completeness, which are characteristics of genuineness.

The demonstration, then, of marriage, education, and avocations in their office as manifesters, determinants, and outlets of a social people, the novelist-historian finds indispensable to his chronicle. By their very nature they are sources and barometers of social life; in their relation to an aristocratic clergy they are more so. Trollope knew this and capitalized on them in his comprehensive development of his social theme.
CHAPTER IV

Social Intercourse with Seculars and Clergy

Knowing the social status of the Anglican clergy individually and collectively, and understanding the institutions that established and formed it, it was not difficult for Trollope, accordingly, to record clergymen's social life. He knew that as much of human nature dwelt in a High-Church gown as in a dress suit and knew also that he dealt with a "purely human institution. . .emminently respectable," but very human nevertheless.261 Trollope understood the peculiar character of this institution as a civil and religious body, the character of the secular society with which it associated, and their mutual attitude. Their mutual social intercourse he chronicled with an exactness worthy of such understanding of the multi-faceted British social sphere. Living Age states that the fidelity of Trollope's portraiture of the clergy in their intercourse "is becoming increasingly problematic. There are few left to verify it."262 It is the purpose of this chapter to prove that Trollope's fidelity is certain, by the words of those who

saw his original and wrote to verify his reproduction."

Contemporaneous assertions as to Trollope's veracity abound in reviews of the Chronicles and in critical appraisals, but these statements, however trustworthy, will be ignored as assertions, not proofs. Our procedure will identify the clergy's social intercourse with seculars in Trollope's fiction, with that recorded in the non-fictional literature of his day.

Before this parallelism is drawn it is necessary to recall that Trollope's clergy were High Churchmen and therefore a highly social clergy. Even his few Evangelicals were men and women who considered their rank in society just as sacred as the Sabbath, and who could readily connive at a low skirt in a London ball-room. That this type did exist is true; Lady Nevill writes especially of them in her social memoirs.

But it must be remembered that though his clergymen were essentially social, they were not extravagantly so. As a recorder of normal conditions it was necessary that Trollope record only moderate social observances and their ob-

266. Lady Dorothy Nevill, op. cit., p. 147.
servers—those typical and somewhat universal, at least in his limited clerical universe. For this reason he omits the recent cheery-to-everybody type, the dancing parsons of the eighteen-thirties, and the social freaks of the mid-Victorian years. Though he may mention these, he but mentions them and gives them no significance as representatives of a common body. With the social activities also, Trollope maintains this taste for the subdued and the normal. Where Dickens would probably have caricatured the clergy into furious rough-riders to hounds in episcopal preserves, Trollope “defences” his hunters to suit not only the Victorian taste but the truth as to the prevailing custom as well. Because of their submergence into the oblivion of normalcy, his characters are less memorable than those of Dickens, but because they are so, they are truer representatives of the life and customs of a staid age and people.

The maintenance of this “average” in character and in incident did not prevent Trollope from illustrating in detail the whole gamut of clerico-secular intercourse. To

270. The Last Chronicle of Barset, op. cit., p. 302.
portray these mutual social observances was the avowed object of his writing the ecclesiastical novels. And since his bid for fame must be in the role of an ecclesiologist, he is as noteworthy and long-lived as his socio-clerical history is true.

The Victorian Anglican clergymen were most noticeably a social body in their relations with seculars, for which reason Trollope's social novels abound in clerico-secular dinner-parties, week ends, country festivals, London-season pastimes, and a variety of miscellaneous modes of association.

The most frequent occasion for clerico-social intercourse was the Victorian dinner-party, a "breakfast" party among Trollope's Ullathorne grandees, or a prodigiously substantial "tea" among the Englishmen of a more dogged nature. But, however its name and nature changed, the dinner-party remained an institution as enduring as an archdeacon's wine-cellar. With the institution persisted its devotees, the most earnest and indispensable of whom was the parson, or the canon, or the bishop, depending upon the quality of the host and of the repast.

The dinner most sacred and inevitable was that cooked

and brewed at "the great house" of the bountiful squire, the duke, or a commiserating landlord. This feast materialized at regular intervals, once a season usually, and was to be attended by a small or large table of friends according to the proportion of the dinner and the lord's charity. The family parson was always there. Regardless of his uncouthness, his crapulousness, his thin blood, his antiquity, he sat by his lord, and ate lustily of the roast if he did not rule it. Such a dinner-party furnished a most substantial means of intercourse. It assembled the landed men and fostered a most convivial interchange of ideas and wines, united men of a social level, or by the etiquette it demanded, kept alive the distinctions necessary to the maintenance of a graded country aristocracy, a part of which body was the clergy. It helped also to define and strengthen the civil position of Trollope's ministers, and their sitting beside their lord emphasized their social status, and evoked the corresponding respect. In fact, for many of Trollope's parsons the dinner constituted a social reinstallation.

272. Framley Parsonage, p. 11-12.
273. Ibid., p. 11.
275. The Small House at Allington, p. 514.
276. Ibid., pp. 512-513.
The degree of clerical participation in the spirit of these banquets depended upon the frequency of the banquets, the lordliness of the host, and the parson's delight in eating and drinking. Mr. Evan Jones was obsequious because his benefactress, Lady Lufton, was a High-Church patroness of Framley Parsonage and he was a Low-Churchman; in Doctor Thorne, Reverend Athill, "somewhat of a bon-vivant, and a man who thoroughly understood dinner-parties," whispered an unobtrusive prayer at the Duke's table and took his place before the mutton, energetic and capacious, fully alive to his opportunities and capable of capitalizing on them; he much preferred the meal to the social intercourse. The rector of Framley Parsonage, Reverend Robarts, appropriated his dinners composedly, like a man accustomed to patronage from the great. Parson Boyce attended the diminutive dinner at the Dale's home at Allington, assured of his position but not enjoying it because it separated him from the dancers on the lawn.

Though these parties were amusement, they were obligations also, and each dining parson felt himself to be doing his duty by the archdeacon who "cordially despised any

277. Framley Parsonage, p. 11.
279. Framley Parsonage, p. 7.
280. The Small House at Allington, p. 80.
brother rector who thought harm of dinner-parties, or dreaded the dangers of a moderate claret-jug. 281

It is true that Victorian clergymen played their indispensable role at the gentry's dinners. A mid-Victorian writes positively, "In every country dinner-party, the rector, is in a social point of view, the pièce de résistance." 282 Aside from vouching for the attendance of the clergy at these regular dinners, numerous memoirs speak of habitual ex-official visits of the clergy to secular friends--visits sometimes prolonged from the dinner of one day to the dinner of the next. 283 Originals of Trollope's clerical dinner-eaters, as of his secular characters, can be found in exceedingly frank recollections of Victorian Evelyne's and Pepys'.

Next in popularity after the dinner-parties were prolonged dinner-parties, social week-ends spent at the houses of the great ones, Trollope's Mrs. Dunstables, the Luftons, or the Greshams. Most frequently these were typical country socials, catering to the entertainment of an ennuied elite who were waiting for the opening of the London season, but they tolerated the social fry. Mrs. Dunstable was Trollope's most hospitable hostess. Barchester being crowded with the

281. The Small House at Allington, p. 80.
clerical "quality," her drawing rooms accommodated more clergy than were necessary to give her party the proper balance. The bishop, the dean and the accompanying Barchester priestesses and parsms spent a week-end frolick under the Chaldicotes oaks and around the walnut boards with their respective spheres of seculars. 284 The clerical ladies, too, participated in the amusement, even riding to hounds—in carriages, of course, as became Barset priestesses.

The higher church officials did more week-ending of a less social nature while residing in London on political or ecclesiastical business which sometimes prolonged the week-ends to month-ends. There were also private social calls of several days' duration, paid mutually by the honorable set. 285

Lady Battersea and S. M. Ellis write the most reliable and copious vouchers for the existence of these clerical visits to the homes of friends and patrons. 286

Escott assures us that the country houses were not only visited by the clergy but conducted by them. 287 A vestige of this early Victorian practice lingers in the pages of *Framley Parsonage* in the Proudies' invitation to Mrs. Dunstable to bring her entire suite to the episcopal mansion.
for a prolonged visit; and the invitation is given with "the air of clerical gentry accustomed to extending such hospitality."

Though all of the clergy could not hope to spend days and nights in secular mansions, they could hope to attend public fêtes, country garden-parties, called "sports" in Trollope's playfully satirical note, termed "fairs" or "picnics" today. One of these vast Olympian socials is recorded in *Barochester Towers,* and the clergy were there; in fact, they exceeded their usual quota of attendance at secular functions. Trollope finds explanation in the fact that this party had originally been planned "as a sort of welcoming to Mr. Arabin on his entrance into St. Ewold's parsonage. An intended harvest-home gala for the laborers and their wives and children had subsequently been amalgamated with it, and thus it had grown to its present dimensions." Regardless of its origin, "the clerical beards wagged merrily in the hall of Ullathorne that day" — hierarchical beards and humble vicarage beards.

The plausibility of such a gathering in Trollope's time is placed beyond doubt when Lady Dorothy Nevill writes

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288. *Framley Parsonage,* p. 29.
289. *Barochester Towers,* vol. 2, p. 82.
that harvest home-feasts still persisted as late as 1908. That the church's attending such a gathering was positively in accordance with Victorian taste and proprieties, one cannot doubt after reading that "the Rev. H. A. Simcoe kept the state of a squarson to a high degree" in the old manor house at Penheale in 1850; and Bradley relates an account of his rector's annual tithe-dinner at the village inn, taking place in Victorian times. If these genuine sources recount ministers' conducting festivals and socials similar to the Ullathorne sports in Barchester Towers, may one not believe that a very social clergy attended those sports?

The clerical big-wigs could not spend all of their sociable moments in a country house or at a lawn-party. To remain big-wigs they were obliged to manifest initiative in social enterprise in places where they could be recognized and appreciated as doing their duty by the Crown that paid them. They performed this duty during the social season in London. As the attractions of the Chaldicotes hunt passed away, "the great ones of the Barsetshire world were thinking of the glories of London." By the great ones were meant

291. Lady Dorothy Nevill, op. cit., p. 185.
294. Framley Parsonage, p. 150.
"chiefly the clerical dignitaries, bishops, deans, prebënds, and such like."\textsuperscript{295} The clerical aristocrats emigrated, therefore, each to his own sphere of social interest to pursue there the life of a gentleman--of course, a gentleman in a black frock. Trollope's was the age of the gentleman, we are told,\textsuperscript{296} especially of the clerical gentlemen who abounded in London during the May seasons.

There were clerical hosts and guests in London as there were in a country house. The celebrities, of course, were the bishop, his spouse, and their offspring, as is recorded in Barchester Towers. London was the prelate's fixed residence. His diocese was placed into the hands of his vice-roy, Slope, to enable his lord to "keep himself before the world...and to maintain a position in fashionable society."\textsuperscript{297} The bishop's intercourse with the world was constant, intimate, and necessary. He was a member of the House rather than the bishop of a diocese. His hospitality in the country limited itself to a Barchester banquet, but such hospitality would not suffice in London. In the first year of her reign Mrs. Proudie opened the London season "in a new house in Gloucester Place," in which she had her "conver-

\textsuperscript{295} Doctor Thorne, vol. 1, p. 286.
\textsuperscript{296} London Mercury, vol. 27, (December, 1932), pp. 151-152.
\textsuperscript{297} Barchester Towers, vol. 1, p. 132.
zationes," a form of social gathering as economical as it sounds but popular with society, nevertheless. What her lord was doing in the House of Commons, and what his male subjects were doing among the learned London society, the bishopess and her priestesses were doing in their Gloucester Place drawing-rooms—maintaining dutifully a pleasant intercourse with the secular world.298

The clergy did not limit their intercourse to inoffensive evening conversazioni. Balls of a decidedly non-clerical character they also managed to attend in their generous submission to their social obligations.299

Replicas of these prudently hospitable residents of episcopal palaces can be found in George Russell’s Collections and Recollections.300 As usual, however, Trollope’s clergy are conservative—the bishop did not conduct balls and play a rubber of whist the night before ordination, as did Bishop Philpotts. A mid-Victorian Temple Bar mentions the prevalent conversazioni of the learned London society.301

Further corroborating the opportuneness of Mrs. Proudie’s favorite institution is Ralph Nevill’s statement that Trollope’s London society “delighted in ‘parties,’ where people

298. Framley Parsonage, p. 163.
299. Ibid., pp. 44, 277.
went to meet one another and talk. " The magazine quoted previously, assures the reader of the great number of clergy swarming about these parties, especially their preponderating at the lunches.

A second ecclesiastical pair, the archdeacon and the archdeaconess, were also much ado about their London social life. As is recounted in Framley Parsonage, the archdeacon spent "the whole of the day between the Treasury Chambers, a meeting of Convocation, and his club," on the trail of the Westminster archbishopric. Meanwhile, Mrs. Grantly, with a propensity characteristic of Victorian mothers, pursued her praiseworthy aim of presenting her daughter, Griselda, to some scion of a desirable family, the Marquis of Hartletop, preferably. Nothing showed the secularity of the Anglican churchmen like a London season; that is why Trollope brought his clergy to the metropolis.

Dean Arabin, though a conscientious clergyman, was a conscientious social observer also, and absented himself from the cathedral precincts at convenient intervals as is recorded

304. Lady Dorothy Nevill, Leaves from the Note-Books of Lady Dorothy Nevill, p. 36.
305. Framley Parsonage, p. 162.
in Doctor Thorne and The Last Chronicle of Barset. His interests lay at Oxford, in after-dinner speeches, and in brilliant drawing-room conversation. Such absences as his might have been among the abuses that provoked "Cathedral Reform" editorials from the Contemporary Review, and the Edinburgh. Barchester's lesser aristocracy came to London, also, during the season. From the presence of the Barset wives at the bishopess' London conversaziones, one may logically conclude the presence of their husbands in the city.

This clerical inundation of London is not Trollopian fiction; it is fact, and proves Trollope to be a portrayer of clergy even beyond the sacred shades of the cathedral elms. Temple Bar in 1871 found the most cosmopolitan representation of Anglican clergy in London during the May season, and recounts a picture that would make Hain Friswell squirm for calling Trollope libelous in his clerical portraits.

May is the clerical month. London is more full of parsons in May than in any other month of the year. There is a vast immigration of bucolic parsondom to the metropolis. It is the time of the May meetings; it is the time for convocations; it is the time for all people who wish to enjoy the

bright gaiety of the London spring. You will find the black coats flitting about the Westminster cloisters. You will find them, almost in serried masses, adjacent to Exeter Hall, in the Strand; and at times farther west, closely investing either entrance of Saint James' Hall. And in all places where Londoners do congregate, whether at dinner or evening parties, or meetings of learned society, or conversations, or--let us batingly whisper--the Opera, you will find an unwanted incursion of the clerical element. Perhaps he preponderates at lunches in the evenings.

Such testimony makes Trollope’s picture far from even an approach to libel.

Beyond the brief conservative fling of a London May season there was another form of social intercourse--that found by absentee clergymen in the varied society of summer and winter resorts. The Honorable and Reverend Dr. Vesey Stanhope who appears momentarily in Barchester Towers, is the one clergyman of this old school whom Trollope allows himself. The author undoubtedly thought this species too rare for more frequent reproduction and his Victorian and artistic normalcy declared against that which might appear to be a freak type. Stanhope was "thoroughly a bon-vivant," a connoisseur of wines, of Italian romances, and of dinners, a refined gourmand who never overate. His intercourse was

foreign to the cathedral close, to England, and to everything but butterfly enthusiasts and visitors to Como in Italy. Trollope did not go Dickensian in his development of Stanhope. There were pluralist clergymen and there were absentee clergymen in his time, and Stanhope was a very plausible combination of both, being the brother of a peer, and having as wife, a peer's sister, all in all a relic of an old order that was fast dying out in Victoria's reign, lingering only in a milder form at the winter resort of Torquay.

Clerico-social labors in Trollope's novels are not limited to the men's program. The clergywoman's position demanded of her also activities of a social nature. Mrs. Proudie, Mrs. Grantly, Mrs. Robarts, and Mrs. Crawley, all appearing in The Last Chronicle of Barset, were of the very substance of ordained ministers, partaking of both their liberties and their social obligations. Their cooperation extended to more than counsel, encouragement, and reprimands. Mrs. Archdeacon would shoulder her husband's way to the Westminster archiepiscopal bench just as Mrs. Crawley would wish her husband into a seat at the Archdeacon's table. They were as socially ambitious and active as they were essential to

the clerical group as a social body. It has been demonstrated how during May seasons and in country houses they were considered as much a part of the social institution as their ordained husbands. Apart from this conjoint aspect of social position and obligation, however, clerical wives performed in a distinct sphere of social labor.

Mrs. E. Whately outlines the duties peculiar to the clergywoman. "The wife (or sister) and daughters of a clergyman must necessarily possess considerable influence, not only over the social habits of their neighbors, but in the maintenance of schools." Their own churchly work independent of their lords, consisted in teaching, decorating the churches, and playing godmothers to the country-folk, all of which activities brought them into intimate contact with their unclerical friends.

Mrs. Grantly and Grace Crawley typify the two classes of instructors and educations that the children of the parish were given. Mrs. Grantly "hears the children say their catechism, and sees that they are clean and tidy for church, with their hands washed and their shoes tied;" and her means of emulation is the large Sunday School bun which each child receives and which spreads the clerical good cheer.

315. Mrs. E. Whately, op. cit., p. 299.
abroad in the pupils' families. The Honorable Mrs. Gell writes that these Sunday Schools were common during the mid-Victorian years. 317 The social intercourse was perhaps more prominent in parish education than the intellectual.

Grace Crawley's pedagogic duties were of a more classical and purely secular nature--teaching in the grammar school annexed to the Hogglestock parsonage, one of the four rectories that populate the pages of The Last Chronicle of Barset. Hers was the very work done by Mrs. C. S. Peel in her day as she recounts in her A Hundred Wonderful Years. 318 Clergywomen's activity of a more successful nature, was the patronage of the parish sick and needy. Trollope's two Robarts sisters, prominent in Framley Parsonage, are such angels as Mrs. Whately wishes the clergy's wives to be. They performed the Anglican clergywoman's corporal works of mercy and visited the new-born babies. The feminine ecclesiastics in this fashion, fulfilled their clerico-social purpose in life, not only by constituting a better half that vindicated their husbands' presence in a London ball room, but by establishing themselves very instinctively as patronesses and protectresses of the parishioners in their spiritual and physical charge.

318. Mrs. C. S. Peel, op. cit., pp. 140-141.
Such are the noteworthy occasions of the clergy's social intercourse with seculars in Trollope's novels. The list might seem deplorably deficient in view of the fact that some vigorous divines played much secular croquet, tennis, and dance music, fished in Norwegian straits, and spent many of their ecclesiastical hours in cricketting and shooting partridge, and in social intercourse around the tavern jug. But Anthony Trollope is neither a writer about vivid clerical sportsmen, gamesters, and topers, nor even an author of whimsical Clerical Oddities; he was the social historian of the normal, decorous, Victorian churchman who was as oblivious to yachting and tavern excesses as he was actively aware of his social position and its maintenance. And of such mild clergy of an excessively "Victorian" social climate, Trollope was the meticulously comprehensive and accurate recorder.

Though the clergy greatly preferred the cakes and ale of secular drawing-rooms and though they considered it incumbent upon them to meet "men and women of the world at the houses of the fashionable and the rich," still by their very position as an independent aristocracy they were forced to mutual social relations. The character of these

320. *Framley Parsonage*, p. 44.
relations, the attitude which controlled them, and the spirit which sanctioned them were all determined and measured by socio-ecclesiastical rank, blood relationship, religious cliquishness, policy, and the "air of clanship" that pervaded cathedral cities, the strength of which elements has been explained in the previous chapter of this dissertation. All these factors contributed to a social intercourse which was respectful and fawning on the one hand, gracious and patronizing on the other, but withal quiet and formal, in good taste with all that was Victorian and ecclesiastic. Most of their intercourse was in the cathedral city and provincial towns and consequently partook of the unhurried calm of peaceful families and groups that perpetuated social existence in the country.

In the majority of these relations there is a marked tone of purposiveness which creates the air of a mercantile board meeting. The official clerical dinners, less official social calls, party meetings, library and hotel rendezvous, are pervaded more by this spirit of obligatoriness than by sociability.

Trollope alludes to this imperative sociableness in the Grantly-Proudie dinner formality. Because these were gentle-

men and because they respected the reputation of the Anglican Church whose ministers they were, they maintained appearances that might smother suspicion of the internecine warfare that raged between them. "Each house had been always asked to dine with the other house once a year; but it had been understood that such dinings were ecclesiastico-official, and not friendly. There had been the same outside diocesan civility between even the palace and Plumstead."  

So they interdined once every two years throughout the generation which the Chronicles record.  

Bishops and Archdeacons of the 1860's have not written obliging memoirs or confessions to vouch for Trollope's enforced, ecclesiastico-official dinners, but the premises for proving them have been given us by O. F. Christie who explains the internecine and intersect squabbles and warfare among the Victorian clergy, and by the Eclectic Review, from the pages of which we may infer that for the clergy, the preservation of their order was more sacred than their pride—even the pride of party that was Archdeacon Grantly's.  

If the High and Low Churches could overlook their private differences and band

322. Last Chronicle of Barset, p. 381.
323. Ibid., p. 255.
324. O. F. Christie, op. cit., p. 246.
together to save the institution from the "sons of breadth," they could also hazard temporary indigestion to maintain their order's reputability.

There were other dinner-parties less excessively clerical and official in tone. Such was the banquet of the Bishop, detailed in *Barchester Towers*, which in spite of the secular guests can be considered one of the customary means of intercourse among the clergy because of the preponderance of that element at the fête. In the twenty-three pages that recount this event of really diocesan dimensions, Trollope sketches almost unnoticeably, the picture of social intercourse among the clergy, and how rank, ecclesiastical partyism, and cliquishness govern it. Men of a party shook hands heartily, conversed together, and mutually escorted their wives to dinner. Rector spoke to rector, or perhaps to a curate—condescendingly; country Parsons drink cheap Marsala while the cathedral elect sipped sherry; and "Mrs. Proudie moved about with well-regulated grace, measuring out the quantity of her favours to the quality of her guests, just as Mr. Slope had been doing with the wine." These episcopal banquets were rare, but they are illustrative

327. *Barchester Towers*, vol. 1, p. 112.
of the mutual attitude in all social intercourse that obtained among Trollope's clergy, and of the elements that pronounced that attitude among the many genera, subgenera, and species of cathedral and country clergymen.

Trollope was neither anachronistic, nor libelous, nor even forgivably incorrect in his description of this ecclesiastical scramble for episcopal meats and drinks, the socio-churchly proprieties and rank that governed it, and the "church within a church" sociability that pervaded it. The *Christian Remembrancer* makes a contemporaneous mention of such banquets. That Trollope was, in fact, all temperance in his sherry and Marsala dinner is evidenced by the flamboyant bi-monthly champagne lunches given by Bishop Baring to his subjects. 328

A more urgent motive than a Low-Church bishop's inauguration frequently assembled the High-Church clergymen of Barset—motives rising from the very feuds and partyism that regulated mutual clerical intercourse. Party problems had to be mulled over, party policies and concerted action determined upon; so the high, militant, and cautious churchmen held politico-clerical meetings. In *Barchester Towers*, they "met in conclave" to ascertain unison response to

Proudie's invitations to the dinner;\(^\text{329}\) "to debate together" as to how Mr. Slope should be put down;\(^\text{330}\) and to discuss the "matter of Mr. Crawley's committal," in the Last Chronicle,\(^\text{331}\) all of which projects "demanded the full energies of their party."\(^\text{332}\) There were such meetings in the episcopal city, at Plumstead, and even at Framley Court, where they swelled to the proportions of a High-Church convention.\(^\text{333}\) This peculiar mode of association among Trollope's clergy existed in Victoria's day as certainly as did the church-partyism that caused it. These sects did exist,\(^\text{334}\) and platforms, policies, and party meetings were an inevitable necessity to their being.

Ecclesiastical club-rooms and clerical hotels also formed convenient rendezvous for Trollope's men of the close. The Barchester cathedral library, like most libraries of mid-Victorian cathedrals,\(^\text{335}\) had lost interest in books as had the cathedral clergy,\(^\text{336}\) and had deteriorated after much abuse into a club for churchmen,\(^\text{337}\) offering all the result-

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330. Ibid., pp. 69-73.
331. Framley Parsonage, vol. 1, p. 86.
332. Last Chronicle of Barset, vol. 1, p. 86.
333. Ibid., pp. 85-86.
ing advantages in social intercourse.

Select hotels for London-going Barchesterians offered the same opportunities. There were houses existing only to accommodate the clergy and their families, a good indication of the country clergy's tendency to travel. "Bishops and deans of the better sort" of the Last of the Chronicles, frequented the "quiet clerical hotel at the top of Suffolk street;" lesser officials imbibed their port at the Chapter Hotel. . . a quiet, sombre, clerical house. These hotels assume a very respectable importance as clerical meeting houses and centers of associations when one considers that they housed hundreds of clerical emigrants from the country during the May Convocations and London season. Lady Battersea, in her Reminiscences, speaks of her parents' keeping open house at Ashton Clinton for the Anglican ministers who could appreciate and reciprocate their hospitality.

In addition to the social relations provided by clerical dinners, party sessions, ecclesiastical clubs and hotels, Trollope's clergy tended frequently to one another's

339. Ibid., p. 277.
342. Lady Battersea, op. cit., p. 131.
company, forming a quiet background at entertainments and festivities, the nature of which amusements prevented their participation. They were necessary to countenance these secular amusements but were separated from them, nevertheless, and this seclusion naturally formed them into a group of mutual entertainers. At Warden Harding's party in the first of the Barset series, the frock coats and the crinolines danced while the black gowns retreated into a subdued corner to play their rubbers of whist. The Chaldicotes gentlemen of the house-party rode to hounds in Framley, but not the clergy; they entertained themselves, perhaps with whist again. Parson Boyce, too, felt himself divorced from the world at the dinner-party at Guestwick Manor; he solaced himself with the company of his wife and the supper. At the wedding of Henry Grantly to Grace Crawley in the closing Barset volume, there were the church aristocracy to perform the ceremonies, but there was also "a cloud of curates floating in the distance," who felt it unwise to obtrude themselves on the merriment, and therefore subsided

343. The Warden, p. 74.
344. Framley Parsonage, p. 50.
345. The Small House at Allington, p. 513.
to the quiet of mutual agreeableness. That the Victorian clergy did find this form of enforced sociability appropriate and even pleasant, we learn from their moving about London in groups, chatting "almost in serried masses... in the Strand."347

In their miscellaneous mutual intercourse, therefore, at dinner parties, official or amicable, at politico-clerical meetings, in their library or hotel, the clergy associated--always with the niceness of the Victorian social code. And Trollope is the recorder of the matter and manner of these relations, as true as disinterested contemporary biographers, and perhaps truer than contemporaneous periodicals--Trollope had no political axe to grind, nor an artistic one.

The first chapter of this paper has shown that responsible contemporaries of Trollope admitted his pictures to be unconditionally, most exact reproductions of mid-Victorian socio-clerical life; the first and second chapters analysed the elements that accounted for this primacy, the technique that accomplished his verisimilitude, and compared

these constituents with those of Trollope's rivals in recording manners. In the final chapters, the correctness of this analysis, and the testimony of his Victorian readers have been corroborated by the illustration of the exact correspondence of Trollope's picture in fiction with the picture in reliable records.

By virtue of this reality of his social painting, especially by the unexcelled truth of his clerical portraits, Trollope had weathered the bludgeonings of sensitive specialists in fiction finesse and years of hatred for the "Victorian." He is beginning to be read again by others than conscientious bibliophiles, because as has been shown, he was forever mindful of the criterion by which he would be recognized—by their truth you shall know them.
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The thesis, "Anthony Trollope as a Historian of Social and Clerical Life," written by Brother George Schuster, has been accepted by the Graduate School of Loyola University with reference to form, and by the readers whose names appear below, with reference to content. It is, therefore, accepted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Loyola University.

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