

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

MARION FAY



Anthony Trollope

Marion Fay

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Gary Bishop

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Introduction

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In a world where titles carry the weight of destiny, love refuses to bow. Marion Fay is Anthony Trollope's searching meditation on how private feeling collides with public rank, how the inner promptings of conscience strain against inherited expectations. From its opening scenes, the novel places young people of principle in the path of entrenched hierarchies, and then quietly asks what integrity requires. Rather than staging melodrama, Trollope's narrative discovers drama in deliberation: the ache of waiting, the tact of negotiation, the courage of renunciation, and the persistence of hope. The result is intimate yet expansive, a social panorama refracted through individual hearts.

Anthony Trollope (1815–1882), one of the central novelists of the Victorian era, wrote *Marion Fay* late in his career, and it was first published in 1882. The book belongs to the mature phase of his art, after the *Barsetshire* and *Palliser* sequences had secured his reputation. Composed during a period of sustained productivity in the early 1880s, it carries the steadiness of a seasoned craftsman: controlled pacing, crisp observation, and moral candor. Set in contemporary England, it draws on the familiar Victorian landscape of drawing rooms, clubland, and modest lodgings, using that varied terrain to test how far social boundaries can bend without breaking.

The central premise is at once simple and daring. An heir to high rank is drawn toward a woman whose circumstances place her well outside his circle, while his sister asserts an

equally independent choice of her own. Two parallel stories unfold, each probing the difference between what society deems suitable and what the heart finds true. Trollope builds the conflict from manners and conversation rather than sensational events, so the stakes gather gradually: parental objections, social surveillance, and the quiet pressure of duty. Without disclosing outcomes, it is enough to say that fidelity—to others and to oneself—is the novel's measure of worth.

Marion Fay holds classic status because it distills the qualities that made Trollope indispensable: calm realism, unshowy eloquence, and a humane sense of complexity. He gives readers no villains in the caricatured sense; instead, he renders competing goods that collide under the weight of custom. The novel's enduring themes—class mobility, personal conscience, and the ethics of marriage—remain vital precisely because they are handled with restraint. Trollope's refusal to preach allows the reader to inhabit each position. That poise, a refusal of easy triumphs, turned domestic fiction into an instrument for examining power, privilege, and the claims of love.

Part of the book's fascination lies in its exact attention to status: titles, incomes, and addresses carry consequences, but so do character and conduct. Trollope's society is one of thresholds—doorways that admit or exclude—and he maps how kindness, patience, and courage become their own forms of rank. The novel weighs promises and proposals, measuring what it costs to stand firm against ancestral expectations. It also considers friendship and loyalty, showing how confidences travel and how private choices ripple through a family. In every scene, civility matters; yet civility alone cannot decide questions of justice, and Trollope makes that tension quietly arresting.

Trollope's art is not only social but ethical. He is alert to the difference between sincerity and self-importance, between conviction and stubbornness. Characters who speak the language of principle must prove it by conduct, and those who hesitate are granted the dignity of time. The book is remarkably even-handed toward tradition and reform: inherited forms can protect as well as constrict, while new ideals promise freedom yet demand sacrifice. By tracking conversations, visits, and letters with lucid precision, Trollope turns the ordinary procedures of Victorian life into tests of character, where patience, truthfulness, and humility acquire dramatic weight.

Stylistically, Marion Fay exemplifies a late Trollopian clarity: supple sentences, persuasive dialogue, and an unobtrusive narrative voice that sometimes steps near the reader to judge with tact and then recedes. The plotting is deliberate rather than flashy, rewarding attentiveness to small shifts of feeling and perspective. Trollope's gift for naming motives—without stripping them of mystery—sustains a steady pressure. He trusts the intelligence of his audience, allowing ambiguities to mature. That confidence invites rereading: each visit reveals a different center of gravity, a new sympathy, a recognized silence. It is realism at once expansive and exact.

The publication context matters. Appearing in 1882, Marion Fay arrives after decades in which Trollope mapped English institutions with unusual intimacy, a knowledge sharpened by his long civil service career and his veteran novelist's eye. In this late work, the institutional frame narrows to domestic decision-making, but the broader Victorian world remains present in its assumptions about rank and work. Readers who know the earlier political and ecclesiastical panoramas will notice the same diagnostic calm applied to drawing rooms and lodging houses. The late date lends the

book an air of summation: a patient reconsideration of how English life orders affection and duty.

As a classic, the novel's influence is both direct and ambient. Trollope's measured impartiality shaped the English novel of manners for generations, and his late works—Marion Fay among them—demonstrate how intimate plots can interrogate public values. Critics and writers have long acknowledged the steadiness of his judgment and the transparency of his craft. Henry James, for example, wrote appreciatively about Trollope's method, which treats moral choice as the drama itself. That method, disseminated through readers and successors, encouraged later novelists to trust ordinary life as sufficient subject, to find consequence in conversation rather than in contrivance.

For readers approaching Trollope for the first time, Marion Fay offers a lucid entry point. It is complete in scope yet modest in scale, allowing the play of sympathy to guide one's progress. The situations are familiar enough—parental authority, sibling allegiance, the claims of fortune—but the handling is singular: motives are weighed, not announced; hope deepens, it does not erupt. The book rewards patience with increasing clarity, as each character's horizon becomes visible. Above all, it demonstrates Trollope's conviction that happiness, if it is to endure, must be built from truth, and that truth is often painstakingly won.

The novel's treatment of class and conscience grants it a long afterlife. Readers recognize the social surveillance that polices choice, the quiet rebellions that test loyalty, and the negotiations between aspiration and belonging. Marion Fay is not a tract, and it offers no program; instead, it trusts a reader's moral imagination to complete the picture. That trust, and the justness of its observations, give the book a distinct serenity. It keeps company with us after the last

page, not because of shocks, but because it teaches us how to watch people decide who they will become.

In our own time, questions about status, autonomy, and the ethics of intimacy remain unsettled. Marion Fay speaks to these concerns by showing how structures endure and how individuals make room within them for dignity and love. Its calm intelligence, refusal of cynicism, and faith in candid feeling make it perennially fresh. We return to it to learn how to balance fairness with affection, firmness with generosity. In a culture still sorting the claims of tradition and self-fashioning, Trollope's late novel offers guidance without presumption and company without noise—an enduring testament to the quiet courage of choosing well.

Synopsis

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Marion Fay, a late-career novel by Anthony Trollope first published in 1882, unfolds in Victorian London across intertwined worlds of aristocratic privilege and modest urban respectability. Trollope explores how rank, conscience, and affection collide when personal convictions confront social expectation. The narrative moves from drawing rooms governed by inherited power to small lodgings shaped by work, illness, and piety. Through careful scenes of conversation, visits, and letters, the book weighs the claims of duty and desire without melodrama. Its central questions—what constitutes a worthy marriage and how far principle should bend to custom—are pursued with Trollope’s characteristic patience and moral poise.

At the novel’s core stands the household of the Marquis of Kingsbury, where the heir—known by his courtesy title, Lord Hampstead—chafes against the inherited assumptions of his rank. His political sympathies lean toward reform, unsettling a family culture that prizes precedence and cautious alliances. A powerful counterforce is the current Marchioness, whose ambitions for her own child and for the family’s standing shape her view of acceptable matches. The Marquis, older and more temperate, is pulled between affection for his children and the pressures of lineage. The stage is set for conflicts where love seems to threaten the architecture of status.

Against this patrician backdrop, Trollope introduces Marion Fay, living with her father in a quiet, unpretentious corner of

the city. Their household, modest and devout, values simplicity, duty, and inward rectitude. Marion's delicacy of health—observed with restraint rather than sensational pathos—heightens the moral intensity of her choices. Trollope presents her not as an emblem of poverty but as a person of finely regulated conscience, whose social smallness contrasts with an inner largeness. The distance between her world and the great houses of the aristocracy is measured not simply in money but in outlook, habit, and spiritual aspiration.

The narrative channels these spheres together through acquaintances that cross the boundaries of class and occupation. Lord Hampstead, convinced that worth is not a function of title, enters circles below his rank without condescension, and so encounters Marion's home. The meetings are decorous and often mediated by mutual friends connected with the civil service, particularly the General Post Office, a workplace Trollope knew well. An admiration grows that tests both characters. The young peer finds in Marion a moral seriousness that challenges his ideals; she perceives in him sincerity tempered by privilege, and must judge whether his convictions can bear domestic consequence.

A parallel thread follows Lord Hampstead's sister, whose affections turn toward a capable junior official in the Post Office. This second attachment mirrors the first with its own class disparity, provoking sharper alarm among the family's guardians. For the Marchioness, such unions threaten calculations about alliances, settlements, and the precedence of a younger son. For the Marquis, the issue is more tempered: he weighs prudence and love, fearing both imprudent romance and stifling prohibition. Trollope lets these tensions accumulate in private conversations, where

hints, refusals, and compromised invitations speak louder than blunt command.

Public questions sharpen private ones. Debates about the responsibilities of rank, the value of work, and the claims of equality flow through parlors and offices. The Post Office milieu provides a disciplined counterpoint to aristocratic leisure, with hierarchy based—at least in theory—on merit and diligence. Lord Hampstead's reformist leanings are tested by the real limits of social mobility, while civil servants navigate ambition without patronage. Trollope is coolly observant rather than polemical: he shows how ideals must find workable forms, how justice can be constrained by convention, and how tenderness is often strongest where ceremony loosens its grip.

Courtship, in Trollope's hands, proceeds through patience, illness, and religious scruple rather than dramatic declarations. Marion's fragile health imposes a tempo of restraint, and her seriousness demands clarity of intention. Financial prudence and questions of household independence temper the hope of romance. The aristocratic family's attention, once secured, grows intrusive. Letters are weighed, visits are timed, and the etiquette of proposal becomes a test of character. Trollope's realism keeps the stakes domestic yet profound: it is less about splendid gestures than about the capacity to bind affection to a life that can be steadily lived.

Complications gather without theatrical surprise. Family strategems intensify; distance—physical as well as social—interrupts casual meetings; and rumors about birth and inheritance creep into view. Hints of hidden histories in official records suggest that identity, too, can be contingent in a society ruled by names and titles. The administrative rhythms of the Post Office intersect with private choices,

while illness makes every delay feel consequential. Trollope guides the narrative toward decision points but withholds easy resolution, allowing readers to register the pressure of time, propriety, and conscience upon all involved.

Without disclosing later turns, Marion Fay can be seen as Trollope's sober meditation on worth and belonging. The novel questions whether hereditary pride can yield to integrity, whether love can be honored without sacrificing prudence, and how illness clarifies priorities. It affirms the dignity of work and the claims of sympathy while recognizing the tenacity of custom. In place of grand thesis or shock, Trollope offers gradual moral illumination. The book endures for its measured critique of class, its humane attention to ordinary virtue, and its late-style assurance that character, not ornament, is the true ground of happiness.

Historical Context

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Anthony Trollope's *Marion Fay* is set in late Victorian Britain, primarily in London and its near suburbs, at a time when aristocratic privilege, the Church of England, Parliament, and a rapidly professionalizing civil service framed public life. The city was a hub of finance, governance, and culture, while suburban growth drew the middle classes outward along new rail lines. The novel's social world stretches from titled drawing rooms to modest houses, tracing everyday interactions in a nation balancing tradition and reform. Class, religion, and propriety regulate courtship and marriage, and institutions—from the House of Lords to local Quaker meetings—shape characters' choices and reputations.

The aristocracy remained a dominant social force, with courtesy titles, primogeniture, and strict settlements binding property and status to lineage. Great houses, a London Season, and family alliances cemented networks of power. Yet these customs increasingly faced criticism for elevating birth over character. *Marion Fay* probes this tension by juxtaposing noble rank with plain living and moral sincerity, illustrating how kinship, guardianship, and financial settlements could constrain personal choice. While nothing in law barred inter-class marriage, the social costs could be severe: ostracism, reduced allowances, or pressure from trustees determined to preserve a name and estate.

Political change formed a crucial backdrop. The Second Reform Act of 1867 and the Representation of the People

Act of 1884 expanded the male electorate, while the Secret Ballot Act of 1872 aimed to curb intimidation and bribery. These measures diminished, though did not end, aristocratic dominance in electoral politics. The book reflects a world in which a titled heir must reckon with a more democratic public sphere and with criticism of hereditary claims to authority. Trollope's fiction often tests whether leaders deserve obedience because of birth, or whether civic worth depends on conduct, competence, and accountability.

Another force altering British life was civil service reform. The Northcote-Trevelyan Report of 1854 recommended open competitive examinations, gradually replacing patronage with merit. By the 1870s, examination-based entry had reshaped government offices, including the General Post Office. Clerks and officials in Trollope's fiction represent this expanding bureaucracy and its steady, modest incomes. Trollope knew the milieu intimately: he served in the Post Office from the 1830s to 1867, championed efficiency, and understood the rhythms of official work. Marion Fay draws on this reality to depict how salaried professionals navigated social expectations formerly set by inherited wealth.

The metropolis itself was changing rapidly. London's population grew throughout the mid- to late nineteenth century, and new railways enabled commuting from emerging suburbs such as those in North and Northwest London. Districts like Hampstead retained semi-rural charm even as access improved, fostering social mixing at the edges of the city. Gentle families might keep town houses during the Season and retreat elsewhere, while clerks and tradespeople occupied terraces and purpose-built flats. Marion Fay traces the physical and social distances that rail and road narrowed, bringing together classes who could once avoid each other's neighborhoods and daily routines.

Communications technology structured everyday life and narrative possibility. The penny post, established nationwide in 1840, normalized frequent correspondence, and by the later nineteenth century London enjoyed multiple postal deliveries per day. The electric telegraph, nationalized under the Post Office in 1870, sped urgent messages between offices and homes. Trollope, the consummate novelist of letters, understood how notes, invitations, and official packets governed courtship, business, and family authority. In *Marion Fay*, written culture and swift delivery mediate public and private spheres, enabling confidences and misunderstandings while reminding readers that bureaucracy and intimacy often depend on the same envelopes.

Victorian marriage law and property customs strongly influenced choices portrayed in the novel. The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 established a civil court for divorce but preserved a double standard that made separation difficult and scandalous. Wealthy families used marriage settlements and strict settlements to control capital, often limiting a heir's financial freedom. The Married Women's Property Acts of 1870 and 1882 gradually allowed wives to own earnings and property in their own right. Trollope's plotlines unfold within this legal landscape, in which affection encounters trustees, guardians, and solicitors who interpret marriage as a transaction with dynastic consequences.

Gender expectations also defined the period. Middle- and upper-class women were chaperoned, their reputations guarded by convention and gossip. Opportunities expanded slowly: institutions such as Queen's College (1848) and Bedford College (1849) provided higher education for women, Girton College followed in 1869, and the University of London began awarding degrees to women in 1878.

Nonetheless, a woman's economic security often depended on marriage or family settlements. Marion Fay reflects these pressures while giving serious attention to female conscience and choice, suggesting that moral judgment and self-command may stand in for formal power.

Quaker belief and practice, central to the novel, carried a distinctive nineteenth-century profile. Friends emphasized inner light, plainness, truth-telling, and pacifism, often eschewing ostentation and titles. Quakers were permitted to affirm rather than swear oaths under British law, and they nurtured reputations for commercial integrity and philanthropy. Intermarriage with non-Quakers could incur disciplinary consequences in earlier decades, though many meetings had softened enforcement by the later Victorian period. Trollope uses the Quaker community's ethos of sincerity and equality to challenge aristocratic assumptions, contrasting inherited rank with a spiritual insistence on humility and moral clarity.

Religious pluralism more broadly shaped public debate. The Church of England retained establishment privileges, yet Nonconformists—Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Friends—exerted growing influence, especially in campaigns for temperance, education, and political reform. Evangelical moral leadership, and the so-called Nonconformist conscience, pressed for public probity and opposed displays of worldly pride. Trollope often explored the collisions of religious identity with social ambition. In *Marion Fay*, the doctrinal and stylistic gulf between Anglican elites and Quaker simplicity provides a measure by which characters' motives and manners are judged, complicating the already delicate traffic of courtship across class lines.

Public health concerns also hovered over Victorian domestic life. Tuberculosis, then commonly called consumption, was

endemic; its chronic course intersected with family duty, nursing, and the ethics of courtship. In 1882 Robert Koch announced the discovery of the tubercle bacillus, reshaping medical debates, though practical treatments remained limited. Before bacteriology's ascendancy, regimens of fresh air, rest, and relocation were common prescriptions. Without detailing outcomes, Marion Fay acknowledges the strain that illness placed upon households, highlighting how disease exposed vulnerabilities in social codes of endurance, propriety, and silence, and how compassion could push against rigid expectations of rank and decorum.

Economic context sharpened social anxieties. After 1873, Britain experienced a prolonged period often termed the Long Depression, with falling prices and pressure on profits. Agricultural rents declined in the 1870s and 1880s, straining landed estates that had long bankrolled aristocratic lifestyles. Meanwhile, urban and professional incomes rose more reliably than those tied to land. Trollope's narrative world registers these shifts: titled families must consider money with new seriousness, while clerks, merchants, and civil servants command a steady respectability. The resulting friction—between old symbols of honor and newer measures of solvency—undergirds conflicts over prudent marriage and social display.

Victorian publishing practices shaped how readers encountered the novel. Commercial circulating libraries, especially Mudie's, favored long, respectable fiction, underwriting the three-volume format well into the 1880s. Such gatekeepers encouraged narratives that examined morality without overt sensationalism. Trollope was a master of this mode, emphasizing social realism, ethical nuance, and plausible dialogue. Marion Fay, published in 1882 during the final phase of his career, fits the expectations of late-Victorian circulating-library realism while pressing tender

questions about status and sincerity. The book's measured tone and intricate social observation reflect a marketplace that prized steady, decorous scrutiny of contemporary life.

Etiquette and the London Season provide another frame. Families sought introductions, afternoon calls, promenades in the parks, and carefully supervised balls as part of a ritualized courtship market. Presentation at court, though evolving, still mattered for elite women. Chaperonage, calling cards, and visiting hours governed who could speak to whom, and for how long. In *Marion Fay*, breaches of these codes signal larger questions about the moral basis of social exclusion. When gentility is defined by outward ceremonies, Trollope asks whether steadfastness, truth, and sympathy might be the better index of breeding than a crest on silver or a name in Burke's Peerage.

Associational life and philanthropy were other hallmarks of the age. Friendly societies, charitable housing schemes like the Peabody Trust (founded 1862), and Octavia Hill's housing management model exemplified efforts to improve urban conditions. The Post Office Savings Bank, launched in 1861, promoted thrift among workers and clerks. Quaker philanthropy and reform work, often quiet and practical, influenced public discourse. The novel treats kindness not as sentimentality but as a civic virtue contested by pride and prejudice. By staging encounters between the well-born and the modestly placed, Trollope tests whether charity is compatible with equality and genuine respect.

Transportation and information networks deepened these social entanglements. Railways stitched together town and country, made day trips and suburban residence feasible, and synchronized timetables across classes. The telegraph and fast post blurred boundaries between public business and private feeling, as invitations, refusals, and obligations

traveled quickly. Gas lighting remained widespread, with early electric installations beginning to appear in the early 1880s in select districts. Marion Fay leverages this infrastructure to show how reputations can be made or marred at speed, and how the modern tempo tests the steadiness of promise, patience, and forbearance.

Trollope's own career helps to anchor the book historically. Born in 1815, he worked for decades in the Post Office, advocated administrative efficiency, and famously wrote while traveling on official business. He stood unsuccessfully as a Liberal candidate at Beverley in 1868, an episode that sharpened his understanding of electoral practices and public life. Retiring from the civil service in 1867, he continued to publish novels that scrutinized power, money, and marriage with steady realism. Appearing in 1882, Marion Fay belongs to the final tranche of his works and distills long-held concerns about duty, sentiment, and the social uses of rank and wealth. Lastly, Marion Fay functions as both mirror and critique of its era. It mirrors a Britain where aristocratic ceremony, Nonconformist conscience, and administrative modernity uneasily coexist; and it critiques the habit of valuing pedigree above probity. The book's attention to law, religion, property, illness, and communication technologies situates private feeling inside public systems. Without resorting to sensationalism, Trollope measures the worth of names and houses against unadorned integrity. In doing so, the novel registers the late Victorian struggle to reconcile equality of soul with inequality of station.

Author Biography

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Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) was a major Victorian novelist and long-serving civil servant. Best known for the Chronicles of Barsetshire and the Palliser novels, he produced more than forty novels along with short fiction, travel books, and criticism. His fiction, grounded in everyday institutions—church, law, finance, and Parliament—combined realism with measured satire and humane sympathy. While working for the British Post Office, he sustained a disciplined writing routine that helped make him one of the era’s most productive authors. His posthumously published Autobiography revealed the professionalism behind his art and has shaped both his reputation and modern understandings of nineteenth-century literary labor.

Educated at Harrow School and Winchester College, Trollope left without a university degree and entered government service as a young man. The classical and historical curriculum of those schools, together with avid reading in contemporary periodicals, fed his interest in character, manners, and public life. He was deeply attuned to the possibilities of serial publication and magazine culture, and his professional dealings with editors shaped his sense of audience. William Makepeace Thackeray, first editor of the Cornhill Magazine, became an important champion, and Trollope later wrote a brief critical life of Thackeray. Trollope’s method and aims aligned with the English realist tradition.

Trollope joined the General Post Office in the 1830s and was posted to Ireland in the early 1840s, work that took him on long inspection journeys through towns and countryside. There he began his first published novels, *The Macdermots of Ballycloran* and *The Kellys and the O'Kellys*, both rooted in Irish settings and society. As a postal surveyor he contributed to administrative reforms and played a role in establishing pillar boxes in the Channel Islands in the 1850s. His *Autobiography* later described a strict daily word quota, often kept before office hours, a practice that enabled steady progress despite a demanding day job.

The Chronicles of Barsetshire secured his first wide fame. Beginning with *The Warden* and continuing through *Barchester Towers*, *Doctor Thorne*, *Framley Parsonage*, *The Small House at Allington*, and *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, the sequence builds a richly peopled provincial world centered on church administration and local society. *Framley Parsonage*, serialized in the *Cornhill Magazine*, greatly expanded his readership. Across the series, Trollope balances institutional detail with comic observation and moral nuance, letting recurring characters develop across books. Critics and general readers alike admired the realism and coherence of *Barsetshire*, which fixed his reputation as a principal cartographer of Victorian provincial life.

From the mid-1860s he turned to Parliament and high society in the Palliser novels—*Can You Forgive Her?*, *Phineas Finn*, *The Eustace Diamonds*, *Phineas Redux*, *The Prime Minister*, and *The Duke's Children*—charting careers, marriages, and policy battles across successive volumes. Alongside them he produced ambitious stand-alone works, including *Orley Farm*, *He Knew He Was Right*, *The American Senator*, and *The Way We Live Now*. These books probe the pressures of money, ambition, journalism, and law, while maintaining his commitment to ordinary manners and

credible motive. The cumulative design of his sequences showcased his control of long-form narrative and a durable, loyal readership.

Trollope retired from the Post Office in 1867 to write full-time, and he briefly entered electoral politics, standing unsuccessfully as a Liberal candidate for Beverley in 1868. He traveled widely and turned his observations into substantial non-fiction, notably *North America*, *Australia and New Zealand*, and *South Africa*. His biographical criticism includes *Thackeray* and *The Life of Cicero*. The *Autobiography*, published after his death, famously disclosed his schedules, contracts, and payments. Some contemporaries took this candor as proof of mere craftsmanship, and his reputation dipped for a time, yet the book remains a key document of professional authorship and Victorian print culture.

In his later years Trollope maintained a brisk pace of publication. He died in London in 1882. Subsequent generations have valued his even-tempered realism, large ensembles, and insight into institutions and private conscience. His fictional county of Barsetshire became a byword for provincial England, while *Plantagenet Palliser* and colleagues shaped expectations for political fiction. Frequent reprints and scholarly editions keep the novels in circulation, and screen adaptations such as *The Pallisers* and *The Barchester Chronicles* have introduced new audiences. Today he is read for his humane intelligence and for the continuing relevance of his themes in civic life.

Marion Fay

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Postmaster-General would be a close aide with access to that patronage, explaining why Roden's acquaintances seek assistance through that channel.

100 In 19th-century England 'the living' denotes a Church of England benefice — the parish office (rector or vicar) that carried income, often from tithes or glebe, and sometimes a house. The right to appoint a clergyman (the advowson) belonged to a patron such as the Marquis, so 'giving the living' was both an economic provision and a social act of patronage.

101 An Italian word for a duke; here it appears in gossip ('Crocker says that the Duca says...') and denotes a foreign noble or an aristocratic rumour. The use of the Italian title rather than 'duke' reflects the period habit of invoking continental nobles in social talk and underlines the casual, possibly exaggerated character of the gossip.

102 The phrase names a business or household in the novel; Victorian firms were commonly titled after their partners. Here it denotes the local establishment (employer and social centre) associated with the Fay family, indicating where community news and reputations circulate.

103 'Traffords' refers to Lord Hampstead's aristocratic family name in the novel. References to being 'the last of a hundred Traffords' reflect Victorian concerns about lineage, inheritance, and the social expectations attached to maintaining a noble family's name and estate.

104 Midsummer refers to the middle of summer, traditionally celebrated around the summer solstice (late June). In Victorian England it signalled a lively period and is used here to show that the neighbourhood is bustling and gossiping about Marion Fay's situation.

105 A potboy was a young male attendant in a tavern or inn, responsible for serving drinks and running errands. The mention of the potboy knowing Marion's story highlights how local news spread quickly through informal, public places like pubs.

106 Duca is Italian for 'Duke' and here functions as a nickname for George Roden, who is caught between a ducal title and his working life as a clerk. The dispute over calling him 'the Duca' reflects Victorian anxieties about rank, social identity, and the propriety of addressing titles.

107 A trousseau is the collection of clothes, linens, and household items a bride brings to marriage; offering one was a customary part of wedding provision. The promise of a £100 trousseau indicates the material expectations surrounding the intended marriage and why Crocker felt the match worth pursuing.

108 'Hymeneal' relates to Hymen, the classical god of marriage, so 'hymeneal altar' is an archaic phrase for the marriage ceremony or wedding altar. Trollope uses the term to evoke formal, solemn nuptial rites and to emphasize Crocker's desperate anguish at the prospect of his wedding being interrupted.

109 The phrase 'Dismissal—B. B.' appears as an entry in the Post Office 'punishment book' and uses the initials of Sir Boreas Bodkin (B. B.) to indicate who authorized or recorded the action. In Victorian civil-service practice, such shorthand in official registers conveyed apparent finality and could be treated by colleagues and outsiders as proof of formal dismissal.

110 Newgate was a notorious prison in London long used for the incarceration and public punishment of serious

offenders; it features frequently in 18th- and 19th-century literature as a symbol of harsh criminal consequences. By invoking Newgate, characters express that destroying official papers was regarded as an offence serious enough to merit severe punishment.

111 'Epicurean' refers to the philosophy of Epicurus, an ancient Greek thinker who associated the good life with the pursuit of moderate pleasures and the avoidance of pain. Trollope uses the phrase 'Epicurean Paradise' to contrast worldly, sensuous enjoyment (an earthly 'paradise' of love and comfort) with the Christian, spiritual ideals that other characters invoke.

112 Hanover Square is a fashionable London square in the Mayfair district that, in the 18th and 19th centuries, was known for its concentration of aristocratic townhouses; mentioning it signals the high social status and upscale setting of the wedding guests.

113 Here Parliament refers to the British Parliament whose sitting calendar influenced social and political schedules; Victorian MPs' attendance and the summer recess often dictated the timing of high-society events, which is why the groom's availability is tied to parliamentary sittings.

114 In Victorian usage 'bevy' commonly denotes a group of young women, especially a set of bridesmaids or fashionable unmarried ladies; calling the bridesmaids a 'bevy' emphasizes their collective social importance and attractiveness in the period context.

115 Chloroform was an anesthetic introduced into medical practice in the mid-19th century (widely adopted from the 1840s-1850s) to induce unconsciousness for surgery and other procedures; the narrator's humorous suggestion of

using chloroform to 'administer' the marriage alludes to contemporary knowledge of anaesthesia and the desire to avoid the social ordeal.

116 Refers to the diamond fields around Kimberley in South Africa, the site of a major diamond rush from the late 1860s into the 1870s; new discoveries there greatly increased global supply and thus could sharply depress diamond prices. Trollope's reference evokes contemporary public awareness of colonial mineral booms and their economic effects.

117 A common 19th-century paper size used for long letters and official documents, larger than modern A4; 'foolscap' often denotes a bulky, single sheet suitable for lengthy correspondence. Its mention signals the formal, detailed character of Crocker's written explanation.

118 This archaic phrase means to withdraw or redirect one's affections or attention (the 'beams' being a metaphorical light or warmth). Marion's instruction that he should 'retrick his beams...take the light and the splendour of his sun elsewhere' asks him to turn his love and energies toward other people or pursuits.

119 In the Victorian mid-19th century context of Trollope's novel, 'mourning' referred both to inner grief and to elaborate social customs, including wearing black clothing for prescribed periods. Lord Hampstead's insistence that his outward black coat be removable while his mourning remain in his heart reflects the period's distinction between public, rule-bound displays of grief and private, ongoing sorrow.

120 The "penny-post" refers to the inexpensive postal system in 19th-century Britain (the Uniform Penny Post, introduced from 1840, made letter postage uniformly