

"Yes."

"Well, I don't think, you know, you had a right to speak as you did."

Lord Chiltern almost flew at his companion, as he replied, "I said nothing. I do say that when a man becomes engaged to a girl, he should let her hear from him, so that they may know what each other is about."

"You hinted something about being her brother."

"Of course I did. If you mean well by her, as I hope you do, it can't fret you to think that she has got somebody to look after her till you come in and take possession. It is the commonest thing in the world when a girl is left all alone as she is."

"You seemed to make out that I wasn't treating her well."

"I said nothing of the kind, Maule; but if you ask me—"

"I don't ask you any thing."

"Yes, you do. You come and find fault with me for speaking last night in the most good-natured way in the world. And therefore I tell you now that you will be behaving very badly indeed, unless you make some arrangement at once as to what you mean to do."

"That's your opinion," said Gerard Maule.

"Yes, it is; and you'll find it to be the opinion of any man or woman that you may ask who knows any thing about such things. And I'll tell you what, Master Maule, if you think you're going to face me down you'll find yourself mistaken. Stop a moment, and just listen to me. You haven't a much better friend than I am, and I'm sure she hasn't a better friend than my wife. All this has taken place under our roof, and I mean to speak my mind plainly. What do you propose to do about your marriage?"

"I don't propose to tell you what I mean to do."

"Will you tell Miss Palliser, or my wife?"

"That is just as I may think fit."

"Then I must tell you that you can not meet her at my house."

"I'll leave it to-day."

"You needn't do that either. You sleep on it, and then make up your mind. You can't suppose that I have any curiosity about it. The girl is fond of you, and I suppose that you are fond of her. Don't quarrel for nothing. If I have offended you, speak to Lady Chiltern about it."

"Very well; I will speak to Lady Chiltern."

When they reached the house it was clear that something was wrong. Miss Palliser was not seen again before dinner, and Lady Chiltern was grave and very cold in her manner to Gerard Maule. He was left alone all the afternoon, which he passed with his horses and groom, smoking more cigars, but thinking all the time of Adelaide Palliser's last words, of Lord Chiltern's frown, and of Lady Chiltern's manner to him. When he came into the drawing-room before dinner, Lady Chiltern and Adelaide were both there, and Adelaide immediately began to ask questions about the kennel and the huntsmen. But she studiously kept at a distance from him, and he himself felt that it would be impossible to resume at present the footing on which he stood with them both on the previous evening. Presently Lord Chiltern came in, and another man and his wife who had come to stay at Harrington. Nothing could be more dull than the whole evening. At

least so Gerard found it. He did take Adelaide in to dinner, but he did not sit next to her at table, for which, however, there was an excuse, as, had he done so, the new-comer must have been placed by his wife. He was cross, and would not make an attempt to speak to his neighbor; and, though he tried once or twice to talk to Lady Chiltern—than whom, as a rule, no woman was ever more easy in conversation—he failed altogether. Now and again he strove to catch Adelaide's eye, but even in that he could not succeed. When the ladies left the room, Chiltern and the new-comer—who was not a sporting-man, and therefore did not understand the question—became lost in the mazes of Trumpeton Wood. But Gerard Maule did not put in a word; nor was a word addressed to him by Lord Chiltern. As he sat there sipping his wine, he made up his mind that he would leave Harrington Hall the next morning. When he was again in the drawing-room, things were conducted in just the same way. He spoke to Adelaide, and she answered him; but there was no word of encouragement—not a tone of comfort in her voice. He found himself driven to attempt conversation with the strange lady, and at last was made to play whist with Lady Chiltern and the two new-comers. Later on in the evening, when Adelaide had gone to her own chamber, he was invited by Lady Chiltern into her own sitting-room up stairs, and there the whole thing was explained to him. Miss Palliser had declared that the match should be broken off.

"Do you mean altogether, Lady Chiltern?"

"Certainly I do. Such a resolve can not be a half-and-half arrangement."

"But why?"

"I think you must know why, Mr. Maule."

"I don't in the least. I won't have it broken off. I have as much right to have a voice in the matter as she has, and I don't in the least believe it's her doing."

"Mr. Maule!"

"I do not care; I must speak out. Why does she not tell me so herself?"

"She did tell you so."

"No, she didn't. She said something, but not that. I don't suppose a man was ever so used before; and it's all Lord Chiltern; just because I told him that he had no right to interfere with me. And he has no right."

"You and Oswald were away together when she told me that she had made up her mind. Oswald has hardly spoken to her since you have been in the house. He certainly has not spoken to her about you since you came to us."

"What is the meaning of it, then?"

"You told her that your engagement had overwhelmed you with troubles."

"Of course; there must be troubles."

"And that—you would have to be banished to Boulogne when you were married."

"I didn't mean her to take that literally."

"It wasn't a nice way, Mr. Maule, to speak of your future life to the girl to whom you were engaged. Of course it was her hope to make your life happier, not less happy. And when you made her understand—as you did very plainly—that your married prospects filled you with dismay, of course she had no other alternative but to retreat from her engagement."

"I wasn't dismayed."

"It is not my doing, Mr. Maule."

"I suppose she'll see me?"

"If you insist upon it, she will; but she would rather not."

Gerard, however, did insist, and Adelaide was brought to him there into that room before he went to bed. She was very gentle with him, and spoke to him in a tone very different from that which Lady Chiltern had used; but he found himself utterly powerless to change her. That unfortunate allusion to a miserable exile at Boulogne had completed the work which the former complaints had commenced, and had driven her to a resolution to separate herself from him altogether.

"Mr. Maule," she said, "when I perceived that our proposed marriage was looked upon by you as a misfortune, I could do nothing but put an end to our engagement."

"But I didn't think it a misfortune."

"You made me think that it would be unfortunate for you, and that is quite as strong a reason. I hope we shall part as friends."

"I won't part at all," he said, standing his ground with his back to the fire. "I don't understand it, by Heaven I don't. Because I said some stupid thing about Boulogne, all in a joke—"

"It was not in joke when you said that troubles had come heavy on you since you were engaged."

"A man may be allowed to know himself whether he was in joke or not. I suppose the truth is, you don't care about me?"

"I hope, Mr. Maule, that in time it may come—not quite to that."

"I think that you are—using me very badly. I think that you are—behaving—falsely to me. I think that I am—very—shamefully treated—among you. Of course I shall go. Of course I shall not stay in this house. A man can't make a girl keep her promise. No—I won't shake hands. I won't even say good-by to you. Of course I shall go." So saying, he slammed the door behind him.

"If he cares for you he'll come back to you," Lady Chiltern said to Adelaide that night, who at the moment was lying on her bed in a sad condition, frantic with headache.

"I don't want him to come back; I will never make him go to Boulogne."

"Don't think of it, dear."

"Not think of it! how can I help thinking of it? I shall always think of it. But I never want to see him again—never! How can I want to marry a man who tells me that I shall be a trouble to him. He shall never, never have to go to Boulogne for me."

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE SECOND THUNDER-BOLT.

THE quarrel between Phineas Finn and Mr. Bonteen had now become the talk of the town, and had taken many various phases. The political phase, though it was perhaps the best understood, was not the most engrossing. There was the personal phase—which had reference to the direct altercation that had taken place between the two gentlemen, and to the correspondence

between them which had followed, as to which phase it may be said that though there were many rumors abroad, very little was known. It was reported in some circles that the two aspirants for office had been within an ace of striking each other; in some, again, that a blow had passed—and in others, further removed probably from the House of Commons and the Universe Club, that the Irishman had struck the Englishman, and that the Englishman had given the Irishman a thrashing. This was a phase that was very disagreeable to Phineas Finn. And there was a third—which may, perhaps, be called the general social phase, and which unfortunately dealt with the name of Lady Laura Kennedy. They all, of course, worked into each other, and were enlivened and made interesting with the names of a great many big persons. Mr. Gresham, the Prime Minister, was supposed to be very much concerned in this matter. He, it was said, had found himself compelled to exclude Phineas Finn from the Government, because of the unfortunate alliance between him and the wife of one of his late colleagues, and had also thought it expedient to dismiss Mr. Bonteen from his Cabinet—for it had amounted almost to dismissal—because Mr. Bonteen had made indiscreet official allusion to that alliance. In consequence of this working in of the first and third phase, Mr. Gresham encountered hard usage from some friends and from many enemies. Then, of course, the scene at Macpherson's Hotel was commented on very generally. An idea prevailed that Mr. Kennedy, driven to madness by his wife's infidelity, which had become known to him through the quarrel between Phineas and Mr. Bonteen, had endeavored to murder his wife's lover, who had with the utmost effrontery invaded the injured husband's presence, with a view of deterring him by threats from a publication of his wrongs. This murder had been nearly accomplished in the centre of the metropolis—by daylight, as if that made it worse—on a Sunday, which added infinitely to the delightful horror of the catastrophe; and yet no public notice had been taken of it! The would-be murderer had been a Cabinet Minister, and the lover who was so nearly murdered had been an Under-Secretary of State, and was even now a member of Parliament. And then it was positively known that the lady's father, who had always been held in the highest respect as a nobleman, favored his daughter's lover, and not his daughter's husband. All which things together filled the public with dismay, and caused a delightful excitement, giving quite a feature of its own to the season.

No doubt general opinion was adverse to poor Phineas Finn, but he was not without his party in the matter. To oblige a friend by inflicting an injury on his enemy is often more easy than to confer a benefit on the friend himself. We have already seen how the young Duchess failed in her attempt to obtain an appointment for Phineas, and also how she succeeded in destroying the high hopes of Mr. Bonteen. Having done so much, of course she clung heartily to the side which she had adopted; and equally, of course, Madame Goesler did the same. Between these two ladies there was a slight difference of opinion as to the nature of the alliance between Lady Laura and their hero. The Duchess was of opinion that young men are upon the whole averse to

innocent alliances, and that, as Lady Laura and her husband certainly had long been separated, there was probably—something in it. “Lord bless you, my dear,” the Duchess said, “they were known to be lovers when they were at Lough Linter together, before she married Mr. Kennedy. It has been the most romantic affair! She made her father give him a seat for his borough.”

“He saved Mr. Kennedy’s life,” said Madame Goesler.

“That was one of the most singular things that ever happened. Laurence Fitzgibbon says that it was all planned—that the garroters were hired, but unfortunately two policemen turned up at the moment, so the men were taken. I believe there is no doubt they were pardoned by Sir Henry Coldfoot, who was at the Home-office, and was Lord Brentford’s great friend. I don’t quite believe it all—it would be too delicious; but a great many do.” Madame Goesler, however, was strong in her opinion that the report in reference to Lady Laura was scandalous. She did not believe a word of it, and was almost angry with the Duchess for her credulity.

It is probable that very many ladies shared the opinion of the Duchess; but not the less on that account did they take part with Phineas Finn. They could not understand why he should be shut out of office because a lady had been in love with him, and by no means seemed to approve the stern virtue of the Prime Minister. It was an interference with things which did not belong to him. And many asserted that Mr. Gresham was much given to such interference. Lady Cantrip, though her husband was Mr. Gresham’s most intimate friend, was altogether of this party, as was also the Duchess of St. Bungay, who understood nothing at all about it, but who had once fancied herself to be rudely treated by Mrs. Bonteen. The young Duchess was a woman very strong in getting up a party; and the old Duchess, with many other matrons of high rank, was made to believe that it was incumbent on her to be a Phineas Finnite. One result of this was that though Phineas was excluded from the Liberal Government, all Liberal drawing-rooms were open to him, and that he was a lion.

Additional zest was given to all this by the very indiscreet conduct of Mr. Bonteen. He did accept the inferior office of President of the Board of Trade, an office inferior at least to that for which he had been designated, and agreed to fill it without a seat in the Cabinet. But having done so, he could not bring himself to bear his disappointment quietly. He could not work and wait and make himself agreeable to those around him, holding his vexation within his own bosom. He was dark and sullen to his chief, and almost insolent to the Duke of Omnium. Our old friend Plantagenet Palliser was a man who hardly knew insolence when he met it. There was such an absence about him of all self-consciousness—he was so little given to think of his own personal demeanor and outward trappings, that he never brought himself to question the manners of others to him. Contradiction he would take for simple argument. Strong difference of opinion, even on the part of subordinates, recommended itself to him. He could put up with apparent rudeness without seeing it, and always gave men credit for good intentions. And with it all he had an assurance in his own

position, a knowledge of the strength derived from his intellect, his industry, his rank, and his wealth, which made him altogether fearless of others. When the little dog snarls, the big dog does not connect the snarl with himself, simply fancying that the little dog must be uncomfortable. Mr. Bonteen snarled a good deal, and the new Lord Privy Seal thought that the new President of the Board of Trade was not comfortable within himself. But at last the little dog took the big dog by the ear, and then the big dog put out his paw and knocked the little dog over. Mr. Bonteen was told that he had forgotten himself; and there arose new rumors. It was soon reported that the Lord Privy Seal had refused to work out decimal coinage under the management, in the House of Commons, of the President of the Board of Trade.

Mr. Bonteen, in his troubled spirit, certainly did misbehave himself. Among his closer friends he declared very loudly that he didn’t mean to stand it. He had not chosen to throw Mr. Gresham over at once, or to make difficulties at the moment; but he would not continue to hold his present position or to support the Government without a seat in the Cabinet. Palliser had become quite useless—so Mr. Bonteen said—since his accession to the dukedom, and was quite unfit to deal with decimal coinage. It was a burden to kill any man, and he was not going to kill himself—at any rate without the reward for which he had been working all his life, and to which he was fully entitled—namely, a seat in the Cabinet. Now there were Bonteenites in those days as well as Phineas Finnites. The latter tribe was for the most part feminine; but the former consisted of some half dozen members of Parliament, who thought they saw their way in encouraging the forlorn hope of the unhappy financier.

A leader of a party is nothing without an organ, and an organ came forward to support Mr. Bonteen—not very creditable to him as a Liberal, being a Conservative organ, but not the less gratifying to his spirit, inasmuch as the organ not only supported him, but exerted its very loudest pipes in abusing the man whom of all men he hated the most. The *People’s Banner* was the organ, and Mr. Quintus Slide was, of course, the organist. The following was one of the tunes he played, and was supposed by himself to be a second thunder-bolt, and probably a conclusively crushing missile. This thunder-bolt fell on Monday, the 3d of May:

“Early in last March we found it to be our duty to bring under public notice the conduct of the member for Tankerville in reference to a transaction which took place at a small hotel in Judd Street, and as to which we then ventured to call for the interference of the police. An attempt to murder the member for Tankerville had been made by a gentleman now well known in the political world, who, as it is supposed, had been driven to madness by wrongs inflicted on him in his dearest and nearest family relations. That the unfortunate gentleman is now insane we believe we may state as a fact. It had become our special duty to refer to this most discreditable transaction, from the fact that a paper, still in our hands, had been confided to us for publication by the wretched husband before his senses had become impaired, which, however, we were

debarred from giving to the public by an injunction served upon us in sudden haste by the Vice-Chancellor. We are far from imputing evil motives, or even indiscretion, to that functionary; but we are of opinion that the moral feeling of the country would have been served by the publication, and we are sure that undue steps were taken by the member for Tankerville to procure that injunction.

“No inquiries whatever were made by the police in reference to that attempt at murder, and we do expect that some member will ask a question on the subject in the House. Would such culpable quiescence have been allowed had not the unfortunate lady whose name we are unwilling to mention been the daughter of one of the colleagues of our present Prime Minister, the gentleman who fired the pistol another of them, and the presumed lover, who was fired at, also another? We think that we need hardly answer that question.

“One piece of advice which we ventured to give Mr. Gresham in our former article he has been wise enough to follow. We took upon ourselves to tell him that if, after what has occurred, he ventured to place the member for Tankerville again in office, the country would not stand it, and he has abstained. The jaunty footsteps of Mr. Phineas Finn are not heard ascending the stairs of any office at about two in the afternoon, as used to be the case in one of those blessed Downing Street abodes about three years since. That scandal is, we think, over—and forever. The good-looking Irish member of Parliament, who had been put in possession of a handsome salary by feminine influences, will not, we think, after what we have already said, again become a burden on the public purse. But we can not say that we are as yet satisfied in this matter, or that we believe that the public has got to the bottom of it, as it has a right to do in reference to all matters affecting the public service. We have never yet learned why it is that Mr. Bonteen, after having been nominated Chancellor of the Exchequer—for the appointment to that office was declared in the House of Commons by the head of his party—was afterward excluded from the Cabinet, and placed in an office made peculiarly subordinate by the fact of that exclusion. We have never yet been told why this was done; but we believe that we are justified in saying that it was managed through the influence of the member for Tankerville; and we are quite sure that the public service of the country has thereby been subjected to grievous injury.

“It is hardly our duty to praise any of that very awkward team of horses which Mr. Gresham drives with an audacity which may atone for his incapacity if no fearful accident should be the consequence; but if there be one among them whom we could trust for steady work uphill, it is Mr. Bonteen. We were astounded at Mr. Gresham’s indiscretion in announcing the appointment of his new Chancellor of the Exchequer some weeks before he had succeeded in driving Mr. Daubeny from office; but we were not the less glad to find that the finances of the country were to be intrusted to the hands of the most competent gentleman whom Mr. Gresham has induced to follow his fortunes. But Mr. Phineas Finn, with his female forces, has again interfered, and Mr. Bonteen has been relegated to the

Board of Trade, without a seat in the Cabinet. We should not be at all surprised if, as the result of this disgraceful manœuvring, Mr. Bonteen found himself at the head of the Liberal party before the session be over. If so, evil would have worked to good. But, be that as it may, we can not but feel that it is a disgrace to the Government, a disgrace to Parliament, and a disgrace to the country that such results should come from the private scandals of the two or three people among us by no means of the best class.”

## CHAPTER XLIV.

## THE BROWBOROUGH TRIAL.

THERE was another matter of public interest going on at this time which created a great excitement. And this, too, added to the importance of Phineas Finn, though Phineas was not the hero of the piece. Mr. Browborough, the late member for Tankerville, was tried for bribery. It will be remembered that when Phineas contested the borough in the autumn, this gentleman was returned. He was afterward unseated, as the result of a petition before the judge, and Phineas was declared to be the true member. The judge who had so decided had reported to the Speaker that further inquiry before a commission into the practices of the late and former elections at Tankerville would be expedient, and such commission had sat in the months of January and February. Half the voters in Tankerville had been examined, and many who were not voters. The Commissioners swept very clean, being new brooms, and in their report recommended that Mr. Browborough, whom they had themselves declined to examine, should be prosecuted. That report was made about the end of March, when Mr. Daubeny’s great bill was impending. Then there arose a double feeling about Mr. Browborough, who had been regarded by many as a model member of Parliament, a man who never spoke, constant in his attendance, who wanted nothing, who had plenty of money, who gave dinners, to whom a seat in Parliament was the be-all and the end-all of life. It could not be the wish of any gentleman, who had been accustomed to his slow step in the lobbies, and his burly form always quiescent on one of the upper seats just below the gangway on the Conservative side of the House, that such a man should really be punished. When the new laws regarding bribery came to take that shape the hearts of members revolted from the cruelty—the hearts even of members on the other side of the House. As long as a seat was in question the battle should of course be fought to the nail. Every kind of accusation might then be lavished without restraint, and every evil practice imputed. It had been known to all the world—known as a thing that was a matter of course—that at every election Mr. Browborough had bought his seat. How should a Browborough get a seat without buying it, a man who could not say ten words, of no family, with no natural following in any constituency, distinguished by no zeal in politics, entertaining no special convictions of his own? How should such a one recommend himself to any borough unless he went there with money in his hand? Of course

he had gone to Tankerville with money in his hand, with plenty of money, and had spent it—like a gentleman. Collectively the House of Commons had determined to put down bribery with a very strong hand. Nobody had spoken against bribery with more fervor than Sir Gregory Grogam, who had himself, as Attorney-General, forged the chains for fettering future bribers. He was now again Attorney-General, much to his disgust, as Mr. Gresham had at the last moment found it wise to restore Lord Weazeling to the Wool-sack; and to his hands was to be intrusted the prosecution of Mr. Browborough. But it was observed by many that the job was not much to his taste. The House had been very hot against bribery; and certain members of the existing Government, when the late bill had been passed, had expressed themselves with almost burning indignation against the crime. But through it all there had been a slight under-current of ridicule attaching itself to the question of which only they who were behind the scenes were conscious. The House was bound to let the outside world know that all corrupt practices at elections were held to be abominable by the House; but members of the House, as individuals, knew very well what had taken place at their own elections, and were aware of the checks which they had drawn. Public-houses had been kept open as a matter of course, and nowhere, perhaps, had more beer been drunk than at Clovelly, the borough for which Sir Gregory Grogam sat. When it came to be a matter of individual prosecution against one whom they had all known, and who, as a member, had been inconspicuous and therefore inoffensive, against a heavy, rich, useful man who had been in nobody's way, many thought that it would amount to persecution. The idea of putting old Browborough into prison for conduct which habit had made second nature to a large proportion of the House was distressing to members of Parliament generally. The recommendation for this prosecution was made to the House when Mr. Daubeny was in the first agonies of his great bill, and he at once resolved to ignore the matter altogether, at any rate for the present. If he was to be driven out of power, there could be no reason why his Attorney-General should prosecute his own ally and follower—a poor, faithful creature, who had never in his life voted against his party, and who had always been willing to accept as his natural leader any one whom his party might select. But there were many who had felt that as Mr. Browborough must certainly now be prosecuted sooner or later—for there could be no final neglecting of the Commissioners' report—it would be better that he should be dealt with by natural friends than by natural enemies. The newspapers, therefore, had endeavored to hurry the matter on, and it had been decided that the trial should take place at the Durham Spring Assizes, in the first week of May. Sir Gregory Grogam became Attorney-General in the middle of April, and he undertook the task upon compulsion. Mr. Browborough's own friends, and Mr. Browborough himself, declared very loudly that there would be the greatest possible cruelty in postponing the trial. His lawyers thought that his best chance lay in bustling the thing on, and were therefore able to show that the cruelty of

delay would be extreme—nay, that any postponement in such a matter would be unconstitutional, if not illegal. It would, of course, have been just as easy to show that hurry on the part of the prosecutor was cruel, and illegal, and unconstitutional, had it been considered that the best chance of acquittal lay in postponement.

And so the trial was forced forward, and Sir Gregory himself was to appear on behalf of the prosecuting House of Commons. There could be no doubt that the sympathies of the public generally were with Mr. Browborough, though there was a little doubt that he was guilty. When the evidence taken by the Commissioners had first appeared in the newspapers—when first the facts of this and other elections at Tankerville were made public, and the world was shown how common it had been for Mr. Browborough to buy votes—how clearly the knowledge of the corruption had been brought home to himself—there had for a short week or so been a feeling against him. Two or three London papers had printed leading articles, giving in detail the salient points of the old sinner's criminality, and expressing a conviction that now, at least, would the real criminal be punished. But this had died away, and the anger against Mr. Browborough, even on the part of the most virtuous of the public press, had become no more than lukewarm. Some papers boldly defended him, ridiculed the Commissioners, and declared that the trial was altogether an absurdity. The *People's Banner*, setting at defiance with an admirable audacity all the facts as given in the Commissioners' report, declared that there was not one tittle of evidence against Mr. Browborough, and hinted that the trial had been got up by the malign influence of that doer of all evil, Phineas Finn. But men who knew better what was going on in the world than did Mr. Quintus Slide were well aware that such assertions as these were both unavailing and unnecessary. Mr. Browborough was believed to be quite safe; but his safety lay in the indifference of his prosecutors—certainly not in his innocence. Any one prominent in affairs can always see when a man may steal a horse and when a man may not look over a hedge. Mr. Browborough had stolen his horse, and had repeated the theft over and over again. The evidence of it all was forth-coming—had, indeed, been already sifted. But Sir Gregory Grogam, who was prominent in affairs, knew that the theft might be condoned.

Nevertheless, the case came on at the Durham Assizes. Within the last two months Browborough had become quite a hero at Tankerville. The Church party had forgotten his broken pledges, and the Radicals remembered only his generosity. Could he have stood for the seat again on the day on which the judges entered Durham, he might have been returned without bribery. Throughout the whole county the prosecution was unpopular. During no portion of his Parliamentary career had Mr. Browborough's name been treated with so much respect in the grandly ecclesiastical city as now. He dined with the Dean on the day before the trial, and on the Sunday was shown by the head verger into the stall next to the Chancellor of the Diocese, with a reverence which seemed to imply that he was almost as graceful as a martyr. When he took his seat in the court next to his

attorney, every body shook hands with him. When Sir Gregory got up to open his case, not one of the listeners then supposed that Mr. Browborough was about to suffer any punishment. He was arraigned before Mr. Baron Boulby, who had himself sat for a borough in his younger days, and who knew well how things were done. We are all aware how impassionately grand are the minds of judges when men accused of crimes are brought before them for trial; but judges after all are men, and Mr. Baron Boulby, as he looked at Mr. Browborough, could not but have thought of the old days.

It was nevertheless necessary that the prosecution should be conducted in a properly formal manner, and that all the evidence should be given. There was a cloud of witnesses over from Tankerville—miners, colliers, and the like—having a very good turn of it at the expense of the poor borough. All these men must be examined, and their evidence would no doubt be the same now as when it was given with so damnable an effect before those clean-sweeping Commissioners. Sir Gregory's opening speech was quite worthy of Sir Gregory. It was essentially necessary, he said, that the atmosphere of our boroughs should be cleansed and purified from the taint of corruption. The voice of the country had spoken very plainly on the subject, and a verdict had gone forth that there should be no more bribery at elections. At the last election at Tankerville, and, as he feared, at some former elections, there had been manifest bribery. It would be for the jury to decide whether Mr. Browborough himself had been so connected with the acts of his agents as to be himself within the reach of the law. If it were found that he had brought himself within reach of the law, the jury would no doubt say so, and in such case would do great service to the cause of purity; but if Mr. Browborough had not been personally cognizant of what his agents had done, then the jury would be bound to acquit him. A man was not necessarily guilty of bribery in the eye of the law because bribery had been committed, even though the bribery so committed had been sufficiently proved to deprive him of the seat which he would otherwise have enjoyed. Nothing could be clearer than the manner in which Sir Gregory explained it all to the jury; nothing more eloquent than his denunciations against bribery in general; nothing more mild than his allegations against Mr. Browborough individually.

In regard to the evidence, Sir Gregory, with his two assistants, went through his work manfully. The evidence was given—not to the same length as at Tankerville before the Commissioners—but really to the same effect. But yet the record of the evidence as given in the newspapers seemed to be altogether different. At Tankerville there had been an indignant and sometimes an indiscreet zeal which had communicated itself to the whole proceedings. The general flavor of the trial at Durham was one of good-humored raillery. Mr. Browborough's counsel in cross-examining the witnesses for the prosecution displayed none of that righteous wrath—wrath righteous on behalf of injured innocences—which is so common with gentlemen employed in the defense of criminals; but bowed and simpered, and nodded at Sir Gregory in a manner that was

quite pleasant to behold. Nobody scolded any body. There was no roaring of barristers, no clinching of fists and kicking up of dust, no threats, no allusions to witnesses' oaths. A considerable amount of gentle fun was poked at the witnesses by the defending counsel, but not in a manner to give any pain. Gentlemen who acknowledged to have received seventeen shillings and sixpence for their votes at the last election were asked how they had invested their money. Allusions were made to their wives, and a large amount of good-humored sparring was allowed, in which the witnesses thought that they had the best of it. The men of Tankerville long remembered this trial, and hoped anxiously that there might soon be another. The only man treated with severity was poor Phineas Finn, and luckily for himself he was not present. His qualifications as member of Parliament for Tankerville were somewhat roughly treated. Each witness there, when he was asked what candidate would probably be returned for Tankerville at the next election, readily answered that Mr. Browborough would certainly carry the seat. Mr. Browborough sat in the court throughout it all, and was the hero of the day.

The judge's summing up was very short, and seemed to have been given almost with indolence. The one point on which he insisted was the difference between such evidence of bribery as would deprive a man of his seat, and that which would make him subject to the criminal law. By the criminal law a man could not be punished for the acts of another. Punishment must follow a man's own act. If a man were to instigate another to murder he would be punished, not for the murder, but for the instigation. They were now administering the criminal law, and they were bound to give their verdict for an acquittal unless they were convinced that the man on his trial had himself, willfully and wittingly, been guilty of the crime imputed. He went through the evidence, which was in itself clear against the old sinner, and which had been in no instance validly contradicted, and then left the matter to the jury. The men in the box put their heads together, and returned a verdict of acquittal without one moment's delay. Sir Gregory Grogam and his assistants collected their papers together. The judge addressed three or four words almost of compliment to Mr. Browborough, and the affair was over, to the manifest contentment of every one there present. Sir Gregory Grogam was by no means disappointed, and every body, on his own side in Parliament and on the other, thought that he had done his duty very well. The clean-sweeping Commissioners, who had been animated with wonderful zeal by the nature and novelty of their work, probably felt that they had been betrayed, but it may be doubted whether any one else was disconcerted by the result of the trial, unless it might be some poor innocents here and there about the country who had been induced to believe that bribery and corruption were in truth to be banished from the purlieus of Westminster.

Mr. Roby and Mr. Ratler, who filled the same office each for his own party, in and out, were both acquainted with each other, and apt to discuss Parliamentary questions in the library and smoking-room of the House, where such discussions could be held on most matters. "I was

very glad that the case went as it did at Durham," said Mr. Ratler.

"And so am I," said Mr. Roby. "Browborough was always a good fellow."

"Not a doubt about it; and no good could have come from a conviction. I suppose there has been a little money spent at Tankerville."

"And at other places one could mention," said Mr. Roby.

"Of course there has; and money will be spent again. Nobody dislikes bribery more than I do. The House, of course, dislikes it. But if a man loses his seat, surely that is punishment enough."

"It's better to have to draw a check sometimes than to be out in the cold."

"Nevertheless, members would prefer that their seats should not cost them so much," continued Mr. Ratler. "But the thing can't be done all at once. That idea of pouncing upon one man and making a victim of him is very disagreeable to me. I should have been sorry to have seen a verdict against Browborough. You must acknowledge that there was no bitterness in the way in which Grogram did it."

"We all feel that," said Mr. Roby, who was, perhaps, by nature a little more candid than his rival, "and when the time comes no doubt we shall return the compliment."

The matter was discussed in quite a different spirit between two other politicians. "So Sir Gregory has failed at Durham," said Lord Cantrip to his friend, Mr. Gresham.

"I was sure he would."

"And why?"

"Ah—why? How am I to answer such a question? Did you think that Mr. Browborough would be convicted of bribery by a jury?"

"No, indeed," answered Lord Cantrip.

"And can you tell me why?"

"Because there was no earnestness in the matter—either with the Attorney-General or with any one else."

"And yet," said Mr. Gresham, "Grogram is a very earnest man when he believes in his case. No member of Parliament will ever be punished for bribery as for a crime till members of Parliament generally look upon bribery as a crime. We are very far from that as yet. I should have thought a conviction to be a great misfortune."

"Why so?"

"Because it would have created ill-blood, and our own hands in this matter are not a bit cleaner than those of our adversaries. We can't afford to pull their houses to pieces before we have put our own in order. The thing will be done; but it must, I fear, be done slowly—as is the case with all reforms from within."

Phineas Finn, who was very sore and unhappy at this time, and who consequently was much in love with purity and anxious for severity, felt himself personally aggrieved by the acquittal. It was almost tantamount to a verdict against himself. And then he knew so well that bribery had been committed, and was so confident that such a one as Mr. Browborough could have been returned to Parliament by none other than corrupt means! In his present mood he would have been almost glad to see Mr. Browborough at the tread-mill, and would have thought six months' solitary confinement quite inadequate to the offense. "I never read any thing in my life that

disgusted me so much," he said to his friend, Mr. Monk.

"I can't go along with you there."

"If any man ever was guilty of bribery, he was guilty!"

"I don't doubt it for a moment."

"And yet Grogram did not try to get a verdict."

"Had he tried ever so much he would have failed. In a matter such as that—political and not social in its nature—a jury is sure to be guided by what it has, perhaps unconsciously, learned to be the feeling of the country. No disgrace is attached to their verdict, and yet every body knows that Mr. Browborough had bribed; and all those who have looked into it know, too, that the evidence was conclusive."

"Then are the jury all perjured," said Phineas.

"I have nothing to say to that. No stain of perjury clings to them. They are better received in Durham to-day than they would have been had they found Mr. Browborough guilty. In business, as in private life, they will be held to be as trustworthy as before; and they will be, for aught that we know, quite trustworthy. There are still circumstances in which a man, though on his oath, may be untrue with no more stain of falsehood than falls upon him when he denies himself at his front-door though he happen to be at home."

"What must we think of such a condition of things, Mr. Monk?"

"That it's capable of improvement. I do not know that we can think any thing else. As for Sir Gregory Grogram and Baron Boulby and the jury, it would be waste of powder to execrate them. In political matters it is very hard for a man in office to be purer than his neighbors, and when he is so, he becomes troublesome. I have found that out before to-day."

With Lady Laura Kennedy, Phineas did find some sympathy; but then she would have sympathized with him on any subject under the sun. If he would only come to her and sit with her, she would fool him to the top of his bent. He had resolved that he would go to Portman Square as little as possible, and had been confirmed in that resolution by the scandal which had now spread every where about the town in reference to himself and herself. But still he went. He never left her till some promise of returning at some stated time had been extracted from him. He had even told her of his own scruples and of her danger—and they had discussed together that last thunder-bolt which had fallen from the Jove of the *People's Banner*. But she had laughed his caution to scorn. Did she not know herself and her own innocence? Was she not living in her father's house, and with her father? Should she quail beneath the stings and venom of such a reptile as Quintus Slide? "Oh, Phineas," she said, "let us be braver than that." He would much prefer to have staid away, but still he went to her. He was conscious of her dangerous love for him. He knew well that it was not returned. He was aware that it would be best for both that he should be apart. But yet he could not bring himself to wound her by his absence. "I do not see why you should feel it so much," she said, speaking of the trial at Durham.

"We were both on our trial—he and I."

"Every body knows that he bribed and that you did not."

"Yes; and every body despises me and pats him on the back. I am sick of the whole thing. There is no honesty in the life we lead."

"You got your seat, at any rate."

"I wish with all my heart that I had never seen the dirty wretched place," said he.

"Oh, Phineas, do not say that."

"But I do say it. Of what use is the seat to me? If I could only feel that any one knew—"

"Knew what, Phineas?"

"It doesn't matter."

"I understand. I know that you have meant to be honest, while this man has always meant to be dishonest. I know that you have intended to serve your country, and have wished to work for it. But you can not expect that it should all be roses."

"Roses! The nosegays which are worn down at Westminster are made of garlic and dandelions!"

## CHAPTER XLV.

### SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF EMILIUS.

THE writer of this chronicle is not allowed to imagine that any of his readers have read the wonderful and vexatious adventures of Lady Eustace, a lady of good birth, of high rank, and of large fortune, who, but a year or two since, became almost a martyr to a diamond necklace which was stolen from her. With her history the present reader has but small concern, but it may be necessary that he should know that the lady in question, who had been a widow with many suitors, at last gave her hand and her fortune to a clergyman whose name was Joseph Emilius. Mr. Emilius, though not an Englishman by birth—and, as was supposed, a Bohemian Jew in the earlier days of his career—had obtained some reputation as a preacher in London, and had moved, if not in fashionable circles, at any rate in circles so near to fashion as to be brought within the reach of Lady Eustace's charms. They were married, and for some few months Mr. Emilius enjoyed a halcyon existence, the delights of which were, perhaps, not materially marred by the necessity which he felt of subjecting his young wife to marital authority. "My dear," he would say, "you will know me better soon, and then things will be smooth." In the mean time he drew more largely upon her money than was pleasing to her and to her friends, and appeared to have requirements for cash which were both secret and unlimited. At the end of twelve months Lady Eustace had run away from him, and Mr. Emilius had made overtures, by accepting which his wife would be enabled to purchase his absence at the cost of half her income. The arrangement was not regarded as being in every respect satisfactory, but Lady Eustace declared passionately that any possible sacrifice would be preferable to the company of Mr. Emilius. There had, however, been a rumor before her marriage that there was still living in his old country a Mrs. Emilius when he married Lady Eustace; and, though it had been supposed by those who were most nearly concerned with Lady Eustace that this report had been unfounded and malicious, nevertheless, when the man's claims became so

exorbitant, reference was again made to the charge of bigamy. If it could be proved that Mr. Emilius had a wife living in Bohemia, a cheaper mode of escape would be found for the persecuted lady than that which he himself had suggested.

It had happened that since her marriage with Mr. Emilius Lady Eustace had become intimate with our Mr. Bonteen and his wife. She had been at one time engaged to marry Lord Fawn, one of Mr. Bonteen's colleagues, and during the various circumstances which had led to the disruption of that engagement, this friendship had been formed. It must be understood that Lady Eustace had a most desirable residence of her own in the country—Portray Castle in Scotland—and that it was thought expedient by many to cultivate her acquaintance. She was rich, beautiful, and clever; and though her marriage with Mr. Emilius had never been looked upon as a success, still, in the estimation of some people, it added an interest to her career. The Bonteens had taken her up, and now both Mr. and Mrs. Bonteen were hot in pursuit of evidence which might prove Mr. Emilius to be a bigamist.

When the disruption of conjugal relations was commenced, Lady Eustace succeeded in obtaining refuge at Portray Castle without the presence of her husband. She fled from London during a visit he made to Brighton with the object of preaching to a congregation by which his eloquence was held in great esteem. He left London in one direction by the 5 P.M. express train on Saturday, and she in the other by the limited mail at 8.45. A telegram, informing him of what had taken place, reached him the next morning at Brighton while he was at breakfast. He preached his sermon, charming the congregation by the graces of his extempore eloquence—moving every woman there to tears—and then was after his wife before the ladies had taken their first glass of sherry at luncheon. But her ladyship had twenty-four hours' start of him—although he did his best; and when he reached Portray Castle the door was shut in his face. He endeavored to obtain the aid of blacksmiths to open, as he said, his own hall door—to obtain the aid of constables to compel the blacksmiths, of magistrates to compel the constables—and even of a judge to compel the magistrates; but he was met on every side by a statement that the lady of the castle declared that she was not his wife, and that therefore he had no right whatever to demand that the door should be opened. Some other woman—so he was informed that the lady said—out in a strange country was really his wife. It was her intention to prove him to be a bigamist, and to have him locked up. In the mean time she chose to lock herself up in her own mansion. Such was the nature of the message that was delivered to him through the bars of the lady's castle.

How poor Lady Eustace was protected, and, at the same time, made miserable by the energy and unrestrained language of one of her own servants, Andrew Gowran by name, it hardly concerns us now to inquire. Mr. Emilius did not succeed in effecting an entrance; but he remained for some time in the neighborhood, and had notices served on the tenants in regard to the rents, which puzzled the poor folk round Portray Castle very much. After a while Lady