Commentary on the Uses of Classics in *Can You Forgive Her?*

Authors for individual glosses are identified by their initials in square brackets, along with the year in which the gloss was first written or posted. Contributor names and source abbreviations are provided in full at the end of the document.

Trollope's Apollo
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Chapter 1 – Mr. Vavasor and His Daughter

big people

- The phrase is not unique to Trollope, to describe socially significant people as occupying a lot of space, and English *big* can connote the same idea as the Latin *magnus*, a size and measuring word that conveys weight and importance. Trollope's blunt use of the adjective here may wryly hint, without calling the people grandiose, that size is not equivalent to value. Certainly his opening paragraph makes clear that the advantage to Alice Vavasor from her "very big" relatives was very small. [CMS 2025]

a comitatus of her relatives having agreed that such was to be her fate

- A group of Alice's relatives decides that she will be sent to school in Aix-la-Chapelle. Trollope's choice of vocabulary lends weight to the decision in two ways. He refers to the group with the word *comitatus*, Latin for "group of attendants" or "retinue," and the formality of the word contributes to the definiteness of the decision. Trollope also frames the decision as one concerning Alice's "fate," which seems to elevate both the decision and the body which makes it. Throughout this novel Trollope will present the effects of human decision-making as matters of fate or Fate, as if they are simultaneously determined by and beyond human control. [RR 2025]

I am not sure that he had not spoken truly

- Trollope employs litotes, a rhetorical technique common in Latin literature by which the speaker or writer expresses an idea by negating its opposite. Litotes may variously convey irony, distance, or humor. The litotes here adumbrates, and is the culmination of, the two previous sentences that describe the misery into which evidently pleasant behaviors (staying home and dining with his daughter) throw Mr. Vavasor; the device affirms the reality of Mr. Vavasor's thought but withholds Trollope's approval. [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 2 – Lady Macleod

What Grecian, what Roman

- Trollope is decrying the architecture of contemporary London drawing-rooms and asks if other groups of people, past or present, would tolerate it. He starts his list with Greeks and Romans, a nod to the authority of Classical architecture, before widening the scope and mentioning Turks and Italians—not only those who experienced canonically validated architecture would consider the drawing-rooms ugly. [RR 2025]

valediction

- Lady Macleod's parting words to Alice are called a valediction. The word combines the Latin element *dict-* ("say") and the imperative *vale* ("farewell" or "be well"). By using the Latinate *valediction* rather than English *farewell*, Trollope reflects and reinforces Lady Macleod's formality. [RR 2025]

your chief study

- Lady Macleod tells Alice that Mr. Grey's approval should be her "chief study." Such a use of *study* resonates with Latin *studium*, "pursuit" or "object of zeal," from which the English word developed. [RR 2025]

Chapter 3 – John Grey, the Worthy Man

auspicious omen for future nuptials

- When Kate declares the presence of her uncle and Mr. Grey at dinner an "auspicious omen for future nuptials," her phrasing is highly Latinate. English *auspicious* ("pointing toward a successful outcome") comes from the Latin *auspicium* ("a sign, especially based in divination via birds"), and *omen* ("sign" in both English and Latin) emphasizes the divinatory meaning. *Future* is based on the Latin future active participle *futurus* ("about to be"), and *nuptials* derives from Latin *nuptiae* ("wedding"). The elevated diction is sarcastic on Kate's part and reveals that she has no real wish, conscious or not, for Alice to marry anyone but George. [CMS & RR 2025]

Mr. Grey's ability to make words pleasant

- A contrast between the value of word and deed is at least as old as Greek and Roman literature and philosophy. Words are subject to ambiguity where actions are self-evident; words are the vehicle of deceit and manipulation, and pleasant words, or skillful rhetoric, may persuade in dangerous ways. Trollope's narrator does not suggest that Mr. Grey deceives Alice, but he does hint that Mr. Grey recognizes the difficulty of his situation with her. The narrator is non-committal as to how much Mr. Grey uses his pleasant

words to manipulate Alice or how much it indicates his recognition of Alice's own ambivalence about him or about her own marriageability. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 4 – George Vavasor, the Wild Man
(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 5 – The Balcony at Basle

Retro age, Satanas
- Latin for "Go back, Satan." Similar phrasing is found in the Vulgate Latin version of the Bible. When Peter remarks that Jesus will not be suffer and be killed in Jerusalem, Jesus refuses such tempting comfort and responds: *vade post me Satana* ("get behind me, Satan"). Trollope makes comic use of the deadly serious Biblical context to indicate how profound a temptation he is resisting as he holds back from writing an account of the Vavasors' journey in Switzerland. [CMS & RR 2025]
- source: Matthew 16:23

Chapter 6 – The Bridge over the Rhine

Hyperion to Satyr
- Alice and her cousin Kate are discussing John Grey and George Vavasor. Kate suggests that at an earlier time Alice wouldn't have considered Mr. Grey a serious rival for George, and she frames the comparison as that between Hyperion, a Greek god associated with the sun and the heavens, and a satyr, a part-human, part-animal creature associated with the woods and the wild. While Kate clearly means to equate George and Hyperion, Alice queries in regard to the two men, "And which is the Satyr?" While Kate enlists the mythologically based comparison, itself borrowed from Shakespeare, to bolster her case in favor of George, Alice turns Kate's rhetoric on its head. [RR 2025]
- source: William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 1.2.140 (with Hamlet comparing his "Hyperion" father to the "satyr" Claudius)

Chapter 7 – Aunt Greenow

shade and manes
- Mrs. Greenow makes much of her widowhood, from her frequent declarations about her deceased husband to her carefully curated widow's weeds. When she is showing her accoutrements to Kate, Mrs. Greenow "address[es] the shade of the departed one" and says, "Peace be to his manes!" Trollope's use of *shade* in the narrative register prepares us for Mrs. Greenow's use of *manes*. *Manes* is a Latin word for "shades or spirits of the

dead," and Mrs. Greenow's inclusion of Latin in her exclamation accords with her formal and performative expressions of grief. However, Mrs. Greenow's Latin has some challenges: she pronounces *manes* (in which *-es* would usually be voiced as *-ays*, making a two-syllable word) as the one-syllable *mains*, and she treats the word as singular rather than plural. She is not alone in the latter; the OED notes that sometimes in English the word has been treated as singular, despite its plural number in Latin. While Mrs. Greenow's use of *manes* indicates a gap between her aspiration and her actual knowledge, Mrs. Jones' reception of it demonstrates less Classical understanding than her lodger's. Mrs. Jones interprets *manes* as *remains*, a linguistic substitution akin to an eggcorn. In this scene the two characters' familiarity (or not) with Classics becomes a marker of social class as well as gender. [RR 2025]
- source: OED

Chapter 8 – Mr. Cheesacre

Venus dancing on the sands
- Captain Bellfield has dressed up for the dinner party at the beach. Trollope remarks that the captain's shoes were "well adapted for dancing on the sand, presuming him to be anxious of doing so, as Venus offered to do, without leaving any footmarks." The reference to Venus' dancing points to lines from Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, in which Venus declares to her beloved Adonis that "like a nymph, with long disheveled hair" she will "[d]ance on the sands, and yet no footing seen." Trollope quotes this portion of the poem directly earlier in the chapter, but without mention of Venus. Trollope's reference to Venus here is apt as well as humorous. In Shakespeare's poem, Venus comically strives to capture Adonis' attention and affection, and Captain Bellfield is similarly intent on wooing Mrs. Greenow. Trollope sometimes cross-genders characters in his Classical analogies, as he does in this instance, likening the captain to the goddess of love and Mrs. Greenow to Adonis. As the novel progresses, there are multiple instances in which Mrs. Greenow takes a more controlling, "masculine" position in relation to the emasculated captain.

While Trollope's most immediate source is Shakespeare's poem, the image of Venus dancing can also be found in one of Horace's odes. In *Ode* 1.4 Horace explains to Sestius that spring has arrived; Venus and her nymphs dance in the moonlight, and it is a time fit for celebration, hope, and love. Captain Bellfield joins in the picnic and festivities with the hope of gaining Mrs. Greenow's affections and, eventually, her hand in marriage. [RR 2025]
- sources: William Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis* 147-148 and Horace, *Odes* 1.4.5-6

Chapter 9 – The Rivals

the real patron of the feast

- Mr. Cheesacre, "the real patron," has provided the feast, but the recognition and status that should be his are usurped by the canny Captain Bellfield, who takes over the "patron's" place by proposing a toast and then justifies his action by claiming his only intention is to have everyone raise a glass in tribute to Mr. Cheesacre. The latter thus cannot maneuver himself into the position of power befitting the patron. While Trollope's use of *patron* does not rely directly or exclusively on the Roman relation of patron and client, it yet implies the hierarchy of a more influential and financially comfortable party who bestows benefits on his subordinates. [CMS & RR 2025]

Venus and Adonis

- See the commentary for Chapter 8. Trollope returns to Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, juxtaposing the ideality of Venus' promised dancing with the reality faced by the party-goers. While Venus tells Adonis that she will dance on the sands should he wish it, Trollope suggests that she knows Adonis will not ask it of her. Those in attendance at the beach party, however, encounter the actual difficulty of dancing on sand that is ill-suited to the enterprise. [RR 2025]

erratic steps

- When it is time for the party to conclude, "[t]he erratic steps of the distant dancers were recalled and preparations were made for the return journey." Trollope's use of *erratic* recalls the meaning of the Latin verb from which the English adjective developed: *errare* means "to wander," and that sense seems to be at play more than current connotations of *erratic* as "unpredictable" or "irregular." The "distant dancers" who have wandered off must return to the group. [RR 2025]

Chapter 10 – Nethercoats

the library at Nethercoats

- We see this room first as an aesthetic contrast to the dull fen country of Cambridgeshire where Nethercoats is situated; along with the drawing-room and the dining-room, the narrator calls them the prettiest rooms he has seen anywhere. The contents of this library are locally famous, but we learn little else about them except, a few paragraphs on, that additions to the library prompt John Grey's trips to London. Such a library in England in 1865 would have included mainly Greek and Latin texts and perhaps editions of Dante and Petrarch, along with editions of the Bible and scholarly treatments of Biblical texts. But it would also have contained the current periodicals which Grey discusses with

editors in London. John Grey's context is presented as the problem for Alice—the isolation and drabness of Cambridgeshire—and the fact alluded to in the novel that all the adjustments necessary for the couple upon their marriage will be difficult for Alice and pleasant for John. The library is beautiful, but will the books and periodicals housed in it make the life there for Alice feel any less foreign and bounded? [CMS 2025]
- source: Leah Price, *How to Do Things with Books in Victorian Britain*. Princeton, 2014.

Chapter 11 – John Grey Goes to London

Providence and prudence
- In discussing marriage, Trollope contrasts Providence and prudence: most people trust that Providence provides them with a mate no worse than one they could have contrived for themselves, and a woman's prudence may not be sufficient to procure a good husband. Although Trollope distinguishes between Providence, as a higher power, and prudence, as a personal attribute, the words are, etymologically speaking, more similar than different. They both come from Latin *providentia* or "foresight." [RR 2025]

Roman senate and Augustus
- An intellectual like John Grey would be likely to have been influenced by the scholarship on Roman government that flourished in the wake of Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, written in the late 18th century, and of Theodor Mommsen's *History of Rome*, published first in German in 1854-56 (translated into English in 1862-64, around the time this novel was published). The influence of the Roman senate grew vanishingly small throughout the time of the emperors, a process already begun in the period of Rome's civil wars in the 1st century BCE. When Octavian renamed himself Augustus in 27 BCE and became the first emperor, calling himself *princeps* (first man of the senate), he presided over a mostly compliant body that contained few if any of his former enemies. John Grey certainly would have believed in the positive power of the senate, against the authoritarian power of Augustus. These are the kinds of views that may seem important in Cambridge but are not politics, Trollope observes. Alice has a yearning for drama that George has already unkindly (and manipulatively?) observed make her unfit to be the wife of John Grey, and that drama here is expressed in the romance of political radicalism. She dimly fears that her future husband has only academic, irrelevant passions that will eventually stultify their marital conversations. [CMS 2025]

like a god

- Trollope's use of pagan gods as point of comparison may refer to an abstraction of exaggerated value, such as money or success, which becomes a personal god (*The Bertrams,* Chapters 1 and 16), or to persons whose influence over someone else feels superhuman, godlike. For the second category the tone of the comparison can be gently ironic (when noting that Eleanor's baby is a "little god," *Barchester Towers*, Chapter 5) or outright comical (as in "Apollo can't get through the hoops," on Crosbie's failure at croquet in *The Small House at Allington*, Chapter 2), or a means of serious evaluation (as with Lily Dale's changing emotions about Crosbie: "he had lost the look of an Apollo," *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, Chapter 53).

In her ruminations on the stultifying inadequacy of marriage to John Grey, which persuade her to end the engagement, Alice has not included the other side of her ambivalent feelings, and she is thus entirely unprepared for the powerful attraction he has for her when she sees him. Trollope lists John Grey's attractive features as they strike Alice, finishing on "and a mouth like a god," with which he proceeds to kiss Alice. The comparison, which isolates one single godlike feature, his mouth, calls up the sensuous features of Classical statuary; but the comparison also indicates how Alice has tried to dissect John Grey's person and character and has failed to understand either herself or him. She attributes her own erotic feelings for him, her fear and awe, as a divine attribute of his. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 12 – Mr. George Vavasor at Home

Sybarite

- Residents of Sybaris, a city located in southern Italy, had a reputation in antiquity for luxurious living. *Sybarite* appears in English from the 16th century on as a way to refer to a person given to a voluptuous lifestyle and sensuous pleasures. Trollope's declaration that "George Vavasor was no Sybarite" gives force to Trollope's depiction of George's self-sufficiency and choice to do without a valet. George may have many failings, but indulgence in personal luxuries beyond his means is not one of them. [RR 2025]
- sources: OED and Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 12.36

Chapter 13 – Mr. Grimes Gets His Odd Money

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 14 – Alice Vavasor Becomes Troubled

ergo

- In a letter to Alice, Kate writes that she is glad to learn that Alice has ended her engagement to John Grey. Kate explains that, despite his supposed excellences, Mr. Grey "was not suited" to Alice and his way of life would have rendered Alice "wretched." Kate concludes, "Ergo, I rejoice." Kate's use of Latin *ergo*, "therefore," lends an air of finality to her conclusion, even though the certainty it bespeaks is specious. Kate has not, in fact, given any actual proof for her contention that Alice would be miserable with Mr. Grey. As in her citation of Shakespeare in Chapter 6 (see above), Kate uses rhetoric to make her assertions seem more grounded than they are. [RR 2025]

god though he be

- John Grey interfered with Kate's determination to bring about the marriage of her brother George and Alice, and now that Grey is, Kate reckons, defeated, she is not shy about belittling him, nor about showing some impatience with Alice. Her extended mirth at the idea that the fen country of Nethercoats is heaven—"a flat Eden"—leads her to sneeringly call John Grey a god, with the suggestion that he may be too dull, too perfect, too remote, to be able to fathom the words of Alice, a mere mortal who only wants to live an interesting life, and thus to be free of him. Kate uses the comparison to a god to convey to Alice her scorn for John Grey, her brother George's undeserving rival. [CMS 2025]

John Grey's reading and knowledge

- Mr. Vavasor is appalled that Alice has rejected Mr. Grey, and when he says to Alice that John Grey has "all that reading and knowledge which you profess to like," this phrase is the last in a list of traits that make Mr. Grey a suitable husband for Alice in the consensus of the world. The "reading and knowledge" refers to the same traits in Grey that his library suggests, an interest in Classical languages and current scholarship on related topics, the interests of an intellectual of the English elite. If Alice has ever professed to like these features of her former fiancé, we have not seen it, but they are certainly congruent with his being a gentleman and a man of honor, as Mr. Vavasor asserts of John Grey, although we have also seen before that Mr. Vavasor does not personally like him. But John Grey had solved the problem of his responsibility for Alice, which we have seen he did not relish, and now she has undone that solution. [CMS 2025]

Rome and Tibur

- Alice fluctuates in her alternating desires for George Vavasor and John Grey. Trollope explicates her situation by likening it to that faced by Horace in *Epistle* 1.8. Horace writes to Celsus about his own discontent and irritability, explaining that when in Rome he wants to be in Tiber and vice versa. Just as Horace is torn between city and country, Alice is torn between her suitors. In (temporarily) choosing George over Mr. Grey, Alice also unwittingly echoes Horace's contention in the same epistle that he pursues what has done harm and runs from what he believes will benefit him. Although Trollope maintains that Alice's brand of discontent is her "special fault," his description of it via Horace gives her respectable and humane company in her predicament. [RR 2025]
- source: Horace, *Epistles* 1.8.11-12

nectar

- Late at night, after the disturbing visit from George, Alice conceives of an improbable plan to beg her father to go to John Grey and "ask for pardon for her." But her father has gone to his club in dudgeon at Alice, and she recognizes by two in the morning that the cigars and "some superfluous beakers of club nectar" would unfit him for the task. The use of the word denoting the gods' sweet drink for Mr. Vavasor's escapist club drinking charges the lonely late-night scene for Alice with pathos and maybe a bit of rueful comedy. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 15 – Paramount Crescent

effluvia

- Trollope explains that Lady Macleod's frugality leads her to rent lower-cost rooms near the stables. As a result, Lady Macleod regularly "inhale[s] the effluvia of the stables." The use of the Latinate *effluvia*—literally "things flowing out"—has a humorous effect because the word's higher register contrasts with the earthy stuff to which it refers here. [RR 2025]

Chapter 16 – The Roebury Club

horses

- Over their breakfast the gentlemen of the Roebury Club discuss George Vavasor's horse, which leads one of them, Maxwell, to generalize and somewhat to philosophize about horse-trading and human choices. He observes that there is no such thing as a perfect horse, any more than there is a perfect man or woman. But men want perfect horses (to make money off them in racing) and so horse-sellers lie to them about the

horse's flaws, and the buyer is always disappointed in the horse he buys. This is not now a mistake he makes, Maxwell notes.

In Horace's *Satire* 1.2 the speaker uses the analogy of horse-buying to demonstrate that a man's sexual desires are easily gratified if he is realistic about what nature needs. Rightly do rich men buy horses which are covered up, so they can judge if the horse has a good foot, undistracted by other features of the horse that may be beautiful but irrelevant to the purpose of the horse for them. Likewise the object of your desire should match the desire nature instills in you, not match your desire to raise your status by marrying a senator's daughter. Confusions about their desires ruin men's lives.

Maxwell's point reverses Horace's elements of the comparison: his argument about horse-buying uses the idea that men unrealistically want a perfection which does not exist, and deceit and disappointment follow when they buy a horse. Horace argues that the approved method for buying a horse shows just how to avoid self-deceit and disastrous liaisons. Horace makes a large point about human happiness, whereas Trollope can use the recollection of Horace's satire to make a small point about horses that has a thoughtful, backward echo about the folly of seeking perfection. [CMS 2025]
- source: Horace, *Satires* 1.2.73-113

swearing by Jove

- Mr. Calder Jones swears by the Roman god Jove to signal his agreement with Mr. Maxwell's pronouncement about horses, horse-selling, and horse-buying. Trollope seems especially inclined to put "by Jove" in the mouths of men who are associated with sporting affairs or London life. Here Mr. Calder Jones' use of the exclamation is taken by Trollope as a sign that "Mr. Maxwell the banker reigned as king" among the Roebury Club. Trollope's phrasing might be a bit of a wink, given that Jove is himself the king of the Roman pantheon. [RR 2025]

<u>Chapter 17 – Edgehill</u>

Athenian

- Mr. Maxwell jokingly addresses Mr. Pollock with the epithet *Athenian*. Mr. Maxwell presumably chooses the word to connect Mr. Pollock, a "literary gentleman," to ancient Athens and its renown for literary culture. Perhaps Mr. Maxwell is inspired by the British use of *Corinthian* to refer to fashionable and pleasure-seeking young men in London. Trollope has Mr. Maxwell enlist a new sobriquet based on the different connotations of another ancient city. [RR 2025]

Chapter 18 – Alice Vavasor's Great Relations

Duke of Omnium

- *Omnium* is the Latin genitive plural of *omnis*, "all" or "every," and so Trollope calls this man "the Duke of Everything" or "the Duke of All Things." The duke's title rendered in Latin avoids being overtly preposterous, while Trollope nevertheless has his joke. See the gloss on Gatherum Castle below in this chapter. [CMS 2025]

she of the waving hair and light blue eyes

- Thus does Trollope refer to Lady Glencora. The phrasing recalls Homeric epithets or short descriptions attached to characters in the epics. Two common epithets applied to goddesses as well as mortal women are *euplokamos* ("well-haired") and *boōpis* ("ox-eyed"). Though Trollope's descriptions are not translations of these Greek adjectives, they also focus on hair and eyes as signal attributes. The epic feel of Trollope's language elevates Lady Glencora in a light and playful way. [CMS & RR 2025]
- source: LSJ

Lady Julias and Lady Janes

- Alice declines Lady Glencora's invitation to be a bridesmaid for her wedding to Plantagenet Palliser. In explaining Alice's decision, Trollope says that she "did not wish to undergo the cold looks of the Lady Julias and Lady Janes" who would also be in attendance. Trollope's phrasing plays with similarity as well as contrast: *Julia* and *Jane* are connected by alliteration but differ in their register. The more formal, Latinate *Julia* is juxtaposed with the more down-to-earth *Jane*. While *Jane* also has ancient roots (in Hebrew, then Greek and Latin), it has been more assimilated to English and thus creates texture when paired with the obviously Latinate *Julia*. [RR 2025]
- sources: behindthename.com and etymonline.com

Gatherum Castle

- In naming the residence of the Duke of Omnium Trollope playfully draws on the phrase *omnium gatherum*. *Omnium* is Latin for "of all people/things," and *gatherum* is the result of the Latinate ending *-um* being playfully added to the English word *gather*. *Omnium gatherum* has been used since the 16th century to refer to a collection of all sorts of people or things. [RR 2025]
- source: OED

Lady Flora Macleod

- In this chapter we learn, via Lady Midlothian's letter to Alice, that Lady Macleod's first name is Flora. The Latin word for "flower," *flora* is at odds with Lady Macleod's age as

well as her rigid views. Yet it may also hint at a gentleness or softness behind Lady Macleod's demeanor: she does care for Alice's well-being. [RR 2020 & 2025]

Chapter 19 – Tribute from Oileymead

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 20 – Which Shall It Be?

ambrosial perfume

- *Ambrosia* is the ancient Greek word for the food that only immortals eat, as far back as our ancient Greek texts attest, and is often seen in the Homeric epics. Mr. Cheesacre, in his agony of hope for Mrs. Greenow's hand in marriage, has diligently adorned every aspect of his person. Trollope's language in this sentence suggests Cheesacre has gone past the mark: "As he pushed up his hair with his hands there came from his locks an ambrosial perfume,—as of marrow-oil…." One guesses that the hairdresser's application of this heavily-scented meat by-product did not produce a divine outcome when Mr. Cheesacre ran his hands through his hair. [CMS 2025]

comic lover, pastoral lover

- The male lover whose desires far exceed his attractions and who mixes boasting and vulnerability is a stock comic character who lives throughout the history of dramatic comedy (e.g., Malvolio in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*), and in some ways Bellfield and Cheesacre conform well to this type. As lovers they are full of self-regard and self-pity, and they are readily manipulated by Mrs. Greenow. There is further a tradition, vividly developed in the renditions of Polyphemus by Theocritus and Ovid, in which the lover is a pastoral figure, a shepherd who sings enthusiastically to his beloved, ineptly flattering her and bragging expansively about his good looks and the wealth of his caves, fruits, cattle, sheep, goats, and lambs. Trollope seems mindful particularly of this rustic lover in the figure of Cheesacre, with his self-absorbed commentary to Mrs. Greenow about his prosperity and his clumsy attempts to lure her with the riches of Oileymead's fowls and "supplies from the dairy." Captain Bellfield's appearance on the scene, so infuriating to Mr. Cheesacre, can recall the fury Polyphemus feels that he has a rival. [CMS & RR 2025]
- sources: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.789-869 and Theocritus *Idylls* 11

Chapter 21 – Alice Is Taught to Grow Upwards, Towards the Light

hating the name of Vavasor

- In talking with Alice, her father acknowledges that his relatives-in-law "hate the name of Vavasor." This turn of phrase has a Classical echo: Cicero tells us that the Romans, upon ousting the last king of Rome, came to hate the name of king. The locution bespeaks the strength of dislike for the reality named by the word. And while the Romans' dislike for the term supposedly led them to eschew the title for subsequent rulers, the relatives of Alice's mother try to include her in the fold of their family, almost ignoring her connection to the family whose name she bears. [RR 2025]
- source: Cicero, *De Re Publica* 2.52

philhorseophist

- George is explaining to Alice that one cannot govern people solely out of philanthropical motivation, but because he uses driving horses as an analogy for governing people, he switches *philanthropist* (from Greek, "one who loves people") to *philhorseophist*. *Horse* is Germanic in origin, so George's nonce-word is a humorous hybrid. George's verbal playfulness perhaps bespeaks his good spirits as he imagines that he will soon be elected and thinks about how Alice's connections may help him in his political career. [CMS & RR 2025]
- In Chapter 73 of *The American Senator* Reginald Morton discusses his social philosophy with Mary Masters, and the custom of fox-hunting becomes part of the conversation. Reginald has been contacted by a philosopher who asked him to join a society opposing such sports. Reginald explains to Mary that although he had not formerly hunted, he may participate in the local fox-hunts now that he is the squire—and, in any case, he "hate[s]...the trash of the philanimalist." *Philanimalist* is a Greek/Latin hybrid meaning "one who loves animals," and like George's *philhorseophist* it adds a note of jocularity to his criticism. In both instances the men enlist an unusual hybrid in the course of discounting a social view, and the hybrids themselves can be seen as a kind of mockery of the positions they name. [RR 2025]

Chapter 22 – Dandy and Flirt

charioteer

- The charioteer is a key figure in Homeric battle, as well as in competitions at Greek games and festivals. Roman chariot races imitated Greek chariot competitions, and the chariot race was an important event in Roman civic celebrations. The charioteer in all cases is a figure embodying skill, courage, and preeminence. In Chapter 18 Lady Glencora has been designated with epithets, "she of the waving hair and light blue eyes,"

as if she has an aura of the epic goddess. When Trollope seats Alice next to the "charioteer" for the ride to Matching, Lady Glencora takes on another bit of ancient grandeur and superior command that is only partly humorous. A few moments after this she promises to take Alice under her "shield," perhaps again calling on the associations of Homeric battle. [CMS 2025]
- source: OCD

nymphs and Cupids
- Nymphs, goddesses who take the form of beautiful women, are said to "inhabit and animately express differentiated nature: water (rivers, springs, the sea), mountains, trees, and 'places' (regions, towns, states). Their ubiquitous presence in popular imagination, folklore, art, myth, and cult, provides a vivid illustration of ancient pantheism." Cupid, the son of Venus, is often plural in Roman love poetry, where the plurality invokes an atmosphere of beauty and eroticism. Cupids morph into winged cherubs and *putti* in European art, and by the Renaissance appear in both Christian and Classical contexts.

The Duke of Omnium has designed Lady Glencora's dressing room with nymphs painted on the ceiling and Cupids on the doors so that the exquisite room is replete with pleasant associations from the Classical world and its art. Lady Glencora twice asks Alice, "Isn't it pretty?" Her immediate assessment of her husband, who is not interested in anything pretty, but only in function, she says, alerts us to the trouble soon further revealed in Glencora's marriage. [CMS 2025]
- sources: OCD (1996 edition for the quoted material) and Catullus 3 (for an example of plural Cupids)

Iphigeneia Theodata Palliser and Euphemia Palliser
- Iphigeneia and Euphemia are cousins of Plantagenet Palliser and are staying at Matching during Alice's visit. In Greek mythology, Iphigenia is the daughter of the Greek commander Agamemnon, and she is sacrificed so that the Greek troops can sail to Troy. The name Theodata is a compound of *theo-*, "god," and *dat-*, "given;" the *-a* makes the word feminine. Euphemia's name is Greek, meaning "good speech." The sisters are serious in their pursuits, and their Classically weighted names enact their gravity. Those close to the sisters, however, call them Iphy and Phemy. While their full names are a bit stiff, their nicknames seem comically casual for their dispositions. [RR 2025]

Chapter 23 – Dinner at Matching Priory

a feminine House of Commons

- While talking with Alice, Jeffrey Palliser expresses thanks that women are not able to be politicians in Britain, and he conjures the image of a "feminine House of Commons" in which women bring their feminine attributes to bear in conducting matters of government. Jeffrey's dinner-table joke has a Classical precedent: the Athenian comedian Aristophanes presented a female-run government in *Ecclesiazusae*. [RR 2025]

god

- Rowland Hill, an educator and administrative reformer, showed in 1835 that a uniform postal rate, a penny for a half-ounce letter and prepaid in the form of a stamp, would increase correspondence dramatically and enhance the revenue of the postal service (as proved to be the case in fact). Jeffrey Palliser's phrase "Rowland Hill is the god they worship" grants the exuberant force of pagan idolatry to the cousins' competitive letter-writing fervor. [CMS 2025]
- source: *Encyclopedia Brittanica*

clue

- Jeffrey Palliser mentions to Alice that at Matching "there is a library but the clue to it has been lost, and nobody now knows the way." Although the word *clue* is Germanic, Jeffrey's use of it here has a Classical connection. Originally referring to a ball of yarn or string, *clue* comes to mean "something that shows the way" because in Greek mythology Ariadne gives Theseus a ball of thread to help him navigate the labyrinth which houses the Minotaur. The mythological backstory is evident in Jeffrey's usage: no one has something to guide them through the labyrinth of Matching to the library. [RR 2025]
- source: etymonline.com

ill-natured tales

- When the women at Matching are together after dinner, "Mrs. Conway Sparkes told ill-natured tales of some one to Miss Euphemia Palliser." Trollope may be having a bit of etymological fun here: Euphemia's name, meaning "good speech" in Greek, makes her an ironically poor recipient for Mrs. Conway Sparkes' unpleasant gossip. [RR 2025]

Chapter 24 – Three Politicians

born in the purple

- Purple dye was a valued commodity in Classical antiquity, and in Greece and Rome alike it was associated with wealth and rank. The color's connotations are evident in the

phrase “born in the purple,” used to explain that Plantagenet Palliser comes from an aristocratic family. [RR 2025]

oratory

- This passage presenting Plantagenet Palliser through his view of oratory seems crucial to our understanding of why his marriage to Glencora will be hard. Palliser is suspicious of oratory in that it has a capacity to simulate meanings and to be dishonest, and so he strives to divest his speeches of ornament (even jokes), and to speak only to reveal facts with clarity and accuracy. Trollope describes the outcome as dull, a dullness in which Palliser takes pride. Trollope’s narration here, however, in contrast to what it describes, is dense with oratorical flourishes. For instance, twelve sentences repeat *dull* or *dullness* eight times, and variations on *labour*, *laborious*, and *labouring* six times (a rhetorical device known as anaphora). Four sentences climactically use four tricola (a tricolon is three verbal entities working together); the first one, introducing Palliser, is simply “He was an upright, thin, laborious man.” Trollope’s artful literary oratory here easily stands against the accusation that oratory is equivalent to dishonesty, and moreover, the emotional intensity that the account of Palliser builds up suggests precisely what Palliser will not understand his wife needs in a partnership. [CMS 2025]

colossal wealth

- The Colossus of Rhodes was a 115-foot statue of the sun god Helios that stood for 50 years in the 3rd century BCE overlooking the city of Rhodes. Nero built a similarly colossal statue of himself near his house in Rome (the *Domus Aurea*, “Golden House”), and after Nero’s death the emperor Vespasian began building, near the site of the statue, the great amphitheatre in Rome, which later came to be called the Colosseum after the nearby colossus of Nero. The adjective *colossal* comes into English with imperial associations of size beyond reason. These associations are drawn to Plantagenet Palliser’s wealth, which exceeds any use that an ordinary mortal might conceive for it. [CMS 2025]
- source: *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*

the fountains of Venus

- Explaining that Plantagenet Palliser did not have much experience with women before his marriage, Trollope remarks, “He had not dabbled much in the fountains of Venus, though he had forgotten himself once, and sinned in coveting another man’s wife.” Venus is the Roman goddess of love, and in Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* she enjoins her young mortal beloved, “Graze on my lips; and if those hills be dry, / Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.” For those who don’t recognize the Shakespearean context, Trollope’s mention of Venus might seem straightforward symbolic shorthand;

for those who do, a more particular sexual innuendo is activated. Palliser's sexual experiences have been limited, and the flirtation with Lady Dumbello alluded to here (and recounted in *The Small House at Allington*) did not involve any physical contact. In describing Palliser has having "sinned in coveting another man's wife," Trollope recalls the tenth commandment's injunction: "thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife." The transition from Classical and Shakespearean to Biblical in the course of the sentence moves a reader from the light-hearted to the serious. [RR 2025]
- sources: William Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis* 233-234 and the King James Version of Exodus 20:17.

votive offering and *idoneus puellis*
- As we see Plantagenet Palliser's recollection of the time when he realized he was not cut out for love affairs, Trollope has him ponder a Horatian ode, whose first line is: *vixi* ***puellis*** *nuper* ***idoneus***, "I have lived until now **well fit for girls**." There is some pathos in the fact that Palliser can only conjure the words of a Roman poet to articulate what he himself is *not*. The speaker of Horace's poem has had much success in his love-battles, but he declares that he will now give up his weapons of love and his lyre as votive offerings to Venus, to hang on her temple wall. Horace's poem has a little joke in it, and we note the irony that the singer (Horace) declares he is done with his lyre while singing a lyric poem. The inexperienced Planty Palliser, however, takes the ode's words straight and finds them useful in reminding himself that he never was a ladies' man, nor would he need to abandon pursuits of love that he had never engaged in: and so he marries Lady Glencora. Palliser's inexperience with love, and one might say with human relationships in general, provides us context for his utter inability to comprehend what his wife wants him to know about her feelings for Burgo Fitzgerald. [CMS 2025]
- source: Horace *Odes* 3.26

clue
- In the course of telling readers that Mr. Bott did not spend much of his time at Matching in the library, Trollope remarks, "Perhaps he had not found the clue to that lost apartment." Trollope's comment harkens back to Jeffrey's use of the mythologically influenced *clue* in Chapter 23; see the commentary for that chapter. [RR 2025]

Chapter 25 – In Which Much of the History of the Pallisers Is Told

Mr. Bott as a type
- The poet Horace makes a satiric poem out of an encounter he has while taking a stroll through the streets of Rome. A man he knows, nameless, talkative, and unwelcome, comes along and blithely ignores the poet's increasingly desperate hints that he wishes to

escape the man's company. Ancient Roman comic genres use stock characters who come pre-packaged with traits we all recognize, and Mr. Bott's resolute indifference to Alice's longing to get away from him neatly fits the obnoxious interlocutor type we see in Horace's satire. Mr. Bott has further characteristics of comic types: he is a figure of little importance who imagines he is important, he has a tendency to flatter, he is keenly sensitive to social hierarchies, and he blatantly makes use of people for his often delusional goals. Trollope ironically notes Bott's "considerable courage" in ignoring Alice's increasingly stern rebuffs. [CMS 2025]
source: Horace *Satires* 1.9

Hecuba
- In Classical mythology, Hecuba is a spouse of Priam and queen of Troy during the Trojan War. She is the mother of many sons (including Hector, Paris, Helenus, and Deiphobus), and Trollope draws on that aspect of her identity here. As long as Lady Glencora and Plantagenet Palliser are childless, Jeffrey Palliser is Plantagenet's heir. The narrator explains, however, that the chance of Jeffrey Palliser becoming a duke is slim: among other possibilities, "Lady Glencora might yet have as many sons as Hecuba." Trollope's invocation of the mythological character known for her production of children highlights Lady Glencora's currently childless state as well as her importance in producing heirs. [RR 2025]

vulgar error
- In his discussion with Jeffrey Palliser about acquiring money, Plantagenet Palliser declares that "[t]here is no vulgar error so vulgar,—that is to say, common or erroneous, as that by which men have been taught to say that mercenary tendencies are bad." Trollope seems to have Plantagenet draw on *vulgar* variously. The English word is based on the Latin adjective *vulgaris* ("pertaining to the common people"), and Plantagenet is saying that the mistake he identifies is widespread. But he is also sharply criticizing the mistake, and here we may detect the negative sense of English *vulgar* at play: "lacking in sophistication, refinement, or good taste; not considered fitting or appropriate in educated or polite circles." As Trollope makes clear as the paragraph proceeds, Plantagenet presents himself as speaking from an authoritative position, with informed knowledge beyond that of a common person and "that air and tone of wisdom which a Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to possess." [RR 2025].
- source: OED

Plantagenet's magniloquence
- When Jeffrey mentions the money that he owes to his cousin, Plantagenet sweeps the debt aside and asserts that Jeffrey owes him nothing, especially since Jeffrey may be

Plantagenet's heir if he and Lady Glencora do not have a son. Trollope remarks that Plantagenet talks "with some little touch of magniloquence in his tone." The Latinate *magniloquence* (literally, "big speaking") is itself magniloquent, and the move to a Classical register with the word is interesting on several counts. It is, in part, humorous, since Trollope pairs the Latin-based *magniloquence* (containing *magn-*, "big") with its English opposite in "some *little* touch." The combination of grandiosity with a small amount also reflects the unease of the situation: Plantagenet is in a more powerful position for the present, but that position is precarious. So Plantagenet exercises his beneficence (a show of prestige) but moderately (an acknowledgement of vulnerability). Trollope's use of a Latinate word reflects Plantagenet's desire to stand on more certain, authoritative ground. [RR 2025]

Chapter 26 – Lady Midlothian

Bacchus and Ariadne

- When Mrs. Sparkes asks Lady Glencora if Mr. Bott is romantically interested in Alice, she also explains that she knows that Alice is not interested in Mr. Bott by saying, "when he plays Bacchus she plays Ariadne." Bacchus is a god of wine and fertility, and he approaches Ariadne to make her his consort after Theseus abandons her on the island of Naxos. A painting by Titian famously shows Ariadne turning away as Bacchus and his attendants advance, and earlier in the day Mrs. Sparkes had witnessed Alice running away from Mr. Bott's unwelcome conversation about Lady Glencora. Trollope puts a clumsy Classical reference into Mrs. Sparkes' mouth here: Mr. Bott is no god; he has no romantic designs on Alice; and Alice herself is hardly an Ariadne. Instead of being abandoned, Alice is desired as a spouse by more than one man. Mrs. Sparkes' clumsy mythological analogy may suggest that this "literary lady" wants to seem witty and learned but doesn't have the perspicacity to back up her pretension. When Lady Glencora follows up on Mrs. Sparkes' Classical reference, Mrs. Sparkes supports it by saying that Mr. Bott seemed to have "something of a godlike and triumphant air about him." Lady Glencora deflates the observation by commenting, "I don't think his godship will triumph there," and the matter—along with its Classical packaging—is soon dropped. [RR 2025]

Alice's august relative

- Alice must finally face Lady Midlothian, "her august relative." The adjective gestures to Lady Midlothian's aristocratic status and also to her bearing. Augustus is the first Roman emperor, and Lady Midlothian is somewhat imperious in wanting to weigh in on Alice's affairs. [RR 2025]

Chapter 27 – The Priory Ruins

Lady Glencora's speech

- Whereas Plantagenet Palliser suspects rhetoric of being dishonest and is purposefully dull in his speech (see the commentary for Chapter 24), Lady Glencora is explosive with rhetorical gifts and well understands that rhetoric is a tool to convey emotion. Her speech to Alice in the cold night bristles with urgent figures of speech, including emphatic anaphora (repetition) and tricola (build-ups of three elements). [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 28 – Alice Leaves the Priory

conjure

- When Iphigenia Palliser asks if there is a reason why Lady Glencora should stay away from Monkshade, she says to Alice, "I conjure you to tell me." The use of the Latinate *conjure* to mean "entreat" or "beg" imparts a formality to Iphigenia's request. The word may also underscore the confidential, even conspiratorial, nature of the conversation as Iphigenia sees it, since the Latin components of *conjure* mean "swear" (*jur-*) and "with" (*con-*). Iphigenia sees herself as making a pact with Alice to protect the marriage of Lady Glencora and Plantagenet Palliser. [RR 2025]

patron

- Trollope is well aware of the formal Roman context in which a *patronus* was the former owner of a slave, who became a client to that patron upon manumission. An interdependent relationship between men of unequal social power persists in the 19th century English version of the patron/client relationship, and Trollope alludes to this sort of patronage elsewhere in his novels. Here Mr. Bott's zealous subservience to Planty Palliser elaborates his comic character; though generally indifferent to all nuance, Mr. Bott has "duly appreciated" Alice's loss of status in the eyes of "his great patron," and he is eager to relegate Alice in conformity with Palliser's whim, to demonstrate his loyalty. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 29 – Burgo Fitzgerald

Burgo's godlike face

- Burgo's beauty is extraordinary, seemingly invulnerable to the punishments that his way of life normally inflicts on human physiology, and in that sense he is godlike. But we may think of the effect of his face on Lady Glencora and also remember Alice's response to Mr. Grey in Chapter 11, where the startling feeling of attraction she has on seeing Mr. Grey prompts the narrator to say his mouth is like a god's. Here it seems

Burgo's constitution is super-human, but we are also not allowed to forget a god's desirability and Burgo's intense appeal for Lady Glencora.

At the end of this chapter, when late at night Burgo has given some aid to a young and impoverished girl, the narrator suggests that perhaps Burgo's life would have gone better if his face were "less godlike in form." This may be the closest Trollope comes to an analysis of Burgo's misfortune, and he leaves the impression that the kindness of the world that Burgo receives on account of his looks has stymied the development of his inner resources and better nature. [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 30 – Containing a Love Letter

perhaps not altogether without reason

- George Vavasor reflects on his history with Alice and wonders if he should again ask her to marry him. He thinks that he and Kate influenced Alice in her decision to break her engagement to Mr. Grey, and Trollope remarks that George's supposition is "perhaps not altogether without reason." Trollope here uses the Classical rhetorical figure of litotes in which an idea is expressed through the negation of its opposite. In this instance, litotes allows Trollope to acknowledge George and Kate's role without denying Alice's own agency in deciding to break the engagement. [RR 2025]

Chapter 31 – Among the Fells

I know not what of charm

- In discussing the countryside around Vavasor Hall, Trollope remarks, "I can find I know not what of charm in wandering over open, unadorned moorland." Trollope's phrasing is more Latinate than native English. "I know not what of charm" echoes a Latin construction in which *nescioquid* (literally "I do not know what") is followed by a partitive genitive (conveying "of…"), and the meaning is roughly equivalent to "some (of)…." Perhaps Trollope uses this particular—qualified or cautious—phrasing to express the subjectivity of finding pleasure in a landscape that he admits others do not enjoy walking in. [RR 2025]

changed themselves with gradual changes

- When Alice and Kate stop in their walk, Trollope describes the lake below them: "…the slow clouds were passing over it, and the shades of darkness on its surface changed themselves with gradual changes." The combination of *changed* and *changes* is an example of the Classical rhetorical device known as polyptoton, the use of different words which share the same verbal element. It is particularly fitting here, since the quiet

alteration in part of speech mirrors the gradual alteration in the look of the lake as the clouds pass. [RR 2025]

Kate takes the position of a suppliant

- Ancient Greek and Roman art depicts the suppliant as a figure with arms raised, often kneeling, facing a god or a person of greater power, and begging for mercy, protection, or a favor. After learning of George's proposal to Alice, Kate kneels at Alice's feet and repeats her name over and over, gazing up at her, as a suppliant would. Kate enacts the authority Alice holds over Kate's happiness, but Kate's supplication also puts pressure on Alice to secure that happiness by agreeing to marry George. [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 32 – Containing an Answer to the Love Letter

renewing love

- Trollope describes Mr. Grey as a person "in whom Love could hardly be renewed." Trollope may be playing with a notion articulated in the Roman comedy *Andria* by Terence: "the angers of lovers are the renewal of love." In *Framley Parsonage* Trollope uses Terence's Latin, *amantium irae amoris integratio*, as the title of Chapter 5, and Miss Baker gestures toward the adage in Chapter 20 of *The Bertrams*. Trollope frames Mr. Grey's character, however, in contradiction of it. His love is more passionate and constant than Alice understands at this point, and it is neither volatile nor nursed by discord. [RR 2025]
- sources: Terence, *Andria* 555

Mercury

- Alice paid sixpence to a boy to take her letter on a day when there was no mail service at Vavasor Hall, and she refers to him as Mercury, the Roman god of messengers and merchants. Her little joke, that the god has pocketed sixpence to take the letter, may recall that her message, the promise she makes to marry George, is about giving him money, not love. [CMS 2025]

rushing away at once into the middle of her subject

- Alice has decided to re-engage herself to George and now must inform her grandfather, who—she knows—will disapprove. Instead of gradually broaching the topic, Alice "rush[es] away at once into the middle of her subject." Trollope's wording recalls Horace's description of Homer in the *Ars Poetica*: "Homer always hastens toward the issue and snatches a listener into the middle of things." Despite the difference between Homer's mythological subjects and Alice's personal affairs, Trollope has Alice follow epic precedent by taking her grandfather directly into the matter at hand. [RR 2025]

- source: Horace, *Ars Poetica* 148-149

Chapter 33 – Monkshade

Sir Cosmo Monk

- Sir Cosmo Monk's first name is derived from Greek *cosmos*, "order." His support is deemed crucial for Plantagenet Palliser's aspirations to move up in the political order. While that part of his name may be fitting, his surname—derived from Greek *monakhos*, "solitary"—contrasts with Sir Cosmo's social networking. [RR 2020]

the blackness as of a thunder cloud upon his brow

- Trollope gives Burgo's dudgeon a quality of the great thunderer Zeus in Homer's *Iliad*. Zeus, the god of the lightning bolt and thunder cloud, has epithets in the *Iliad* describing him as having broad brows, dark brows, and is called Zeus the cloud-gatherer. In a sense Burgo's passion is large and real, like the towering anger of Zeus; in another sense the scene, in which the terrible social impropriety of Burgo's feelings for Glencora focuses everyone on their own breakfast, is comic and human. [CMS 2025]

not without success

- Iphigeneia Palliser is worried about Lady Glencora and the planned visit to Monkshade. Although she thought to mention her concern to Plantagenet Palliser, she decides to talk with Lady Glencora directly instead. Trollope tells us that she does so "not without success." The use of litotes—the rhetorical figure in which an assertion is made by negating its opposite—seems fitting in that it can convey the ambivalence and uncomfortability of this particular situation, one in which an unalloyed victory cannot be claimed. [RR 2025]

stiffness and names

- Lady Glencora finds her cousins-in-law "hard, stiff, and too proud of bearing the name of Palliser." While Lady Glencora attributes some of the Iphigeneia and Euphemia's bearing to their pride in their surname, their Classical first names also reflect and reinforce their overall stiffness. See the commentary for Chapter 22. [RR 2025]

Chapter 34 – Mr. Vavasor Speaks to His Daughter

the books of Nethercoats

- With regret Alice thinks of the quiet life she had been offered at Nethercoats, including its books. See the commentary for Chapters 10 and 14. [RR 2025]

honour

- In thinking about a marriage with George, Alice considers that "[s]he might save him from ruin, and help him to honour and fortune." *Honour* here has multiple meanings as well as a Classical connection. The Latin word *honor*, from which the English word is derived, can mean "public office" as well as "esteem," particularly the esteem which comes from socially decent conduct. Alice's partnership will help George attain political office and perhaps restore some of his respectability. [RR 2025]

Chapter 35 – Passion Versus Prudence

George's dress

- We have seen Mr. Cheesacre's zeal in dressing to woo Mrs. Greenough, how his sartorial efforts fail and how they elaborate the essentially comic role in the novel of that courtship. This satirical portrait of dressing with amorous goals activates a comic sense that is hard to suppress when we see George make a similar (futile) attempt to woo Alice. George's attempt to dress to please is especially ill-judged considering Alice's reply to his proposal—she denying any "passionate love" in their marriage—and also considering what the narrator has told us of his cynical response to Alice's letter. That George poses—dresses—as a conventional lover suggests that he is self-deluded in a menacing, not comic, style, and that he refuses to understand Alice or take her at her word. George is a narcissist, and a conformist, at heart, when it comes to the conventions of marriage, at least insofar as those conventions favor the man. [CMS 2025]

double triumph

- A successful Roman general would celebrate a great military conquest in a "triumph," a parade enacting Rome's strength and her enemy's weakness. Trollope says George had his triumph when he "sarcastically" tossed aside Alice's letter accepting his marriage proposal, recognizing he would only have her money, not her love. But George does want her love, a "double triumph" that Trollope says he has no right to expect. In the conversation between them that follows, the triumph which is defined as winning Alice's affection takes a dark turn, not just as a conquest over Alice but, as George sees he will only have Alice's money, the narration reveals that the triumph George also has in mind is over John Grey, his rival. He must defeat his enemy, and the language of triumph helps to articulate how wretched this is: George must have Alice's money, but without her love he will not win his triumph over the enemy Grey. He is enraged. Alice, like a conquered enemy, cannot see that she has any strength when George asks her if she wishes to retract her letter; she lacks the courage to do so, says Trollope. [CMS 2025]

instant need

- In describing George's need for Alice's money as "instant," Trollope uses *instant* in a sense that is closely related to the Latin word on which it is based. The Latin participle *instans, instantis* means "stand upon" or "press upon." Trollope's use of *instant* in this sense conveys the urgency of George's need. [RR 2025]

cent. per cent.

- Mr. Scruby explains to George that men who delay settling their bills eventually pay "through the nose;—cent. per cent., and worse." *Cent. per cent.* is short for *centum per centum* ("hundred through hundred" or "hundred by hundred") and in financial transactions can signify the interest rate or a payment equal to the principal. Mr. Scruby's Latin phrase adds formality after his more colloquial use of "through the nose." [RR 2025]
- source: OED

Chapter 36 – John Grey Goes a Second Time to London

adverse fate

- In Greek and Roman epic, fate is what is bigger than the will of either mortals or gods. In Latin the root *fa-* relates to speaking: fate, *fatum*, is what has been spoken and is unchangeable. Alice interprets reality at this point as externally built, not as the product of her choices and decisions. [CMS 2025]
- Alice's incomplete recognition of her role in her situation is underscored by the adjective in the phrase "adverse fate." *Adverse* etymologically means "turned against," and it reinforces the (inaccurate) notion that she is suffering from external opposing forces rather than from things she has willingly done and said. [RR 2025]

Pandemonium

- *Pandemonium* is a Classically based coinage used by John Milton as a name for the capital of Hell in *Paradise Lost*. *Pan* is Greek for "all," and *demon-* is from the Greek word for "demon" or "spirit." The *-ium* suffix is Latinate. Trollope seems aware of the word's Miltonic heritage here because he has Alice contrast the Paradise of a marriage to Mr. Grey with the Pandemonium of one to George. A similar contrast using these same terms is made in Chapter 43 of *The Claverings*. [RR 2013 & 2025]
- source: OED

rushing into the middle of her subject

- Alice's letter to Mr. Grey dispenses with opening niceties and directly tells him of her engagement to George. She was similarly straightforward when informing her

grandfather, and Trollope uses language here that echoes that of Chapter 32. For the Classical resonance of this phrasing, see the commentary for Chapter 32. [RR 2025]

whatever of anger

- Mr. Grey senses that Alice is not looking forward to marrying George, and "[w]hatever of anger" he previously had disappears. Trollope's phrasing is more Latinate than native English. "Whatever of anger" echoes a Latin construction in which *quidquid* ("whatever") is followed by a partitive genitive (conveying "of..."). Trollope's wording here helps to signal the mixture of emotions that Mr. Grey has felt in the wake of the broken engagement. [RR 2025]

Chapter 37 – Mr. Tombe's Advice

her own fate was fixed

- As in the previous chapter, Alice interprets her situation as externally determined, as if fate, here overdetermined as "fixed," were the cause of all the moves that bring her to lose a man she loves and marry a man she loathes. It is perhaps Trollope's way of speaking to us about what we need to forgive Alice for, not for her mistakes but for her blindness to her own judgments, as the narrator goes on to say. What she calls fate is perhaps only the confusion of a motherless girl, insufficiently nurtured. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 38 – The Inn at Shap

triumph

- The language of triumphs (see the commentary for Chapter 35) continues: George belittles Kate's long-standing desire that he and Alice marry by saying with sarcasm, it seems, that she is entitled to her triumph now they are engaged—as if, again, the engagement were a violent conquest, whose success now glorifies Kate. Kate rejects George's notion of the triumph; he then says he wants money. Kate, whom George bullies, promises him all her money, the very thing their grandfather has warned her not to do. Their grandfather's dislike for him will in turn conquer George. [CMS & RR 2025]

struggling to pick fruit which is above my reach

- Odysseus sees Tantalus in the underworld standing forever in a chin-high pool of water. Above Tantalus' head is a fruit tree, and whenever he tries to take a piece of fruit to eat, the winds blow the tree branches out of his reach. George accurately describes his own situation with this mythic allusion. Despite his awareness that his pursuit of this

parliamentary fruit is vexing and possibly bootless, he still cannot stop himself. [CMS & RR 2025]
- source: Homer, *Odyssey* 11.582-92

Chapter 39 – Mr. Cheesacre's Hospitality

hospitality
- The title of the chapter refers to the fact that Mr. Cheesacre has invited his rival Captain Bellfield to stay with him at Oileymead. Mr. Cheesacre has an ulterior motive: he hopes to keep an eye on the captain this way. And during the captain's stay Mr. Cheesacre reminds him of the money which the captain owes him. Mr. Cheesacre is thus hardly a model, benevolent host, and the dynamics between himself and Captain Bellfield could be seen as a parody of the proper guest/host relations between aristocratic men presented in Homer's *Odyssey*. [RR 2025]

augean spoils of Oileymead
- In Chapter 14 Kate wrote to Alice that Mr. Cheesacre boasted to Mrs. Greenow of his farm's manure. Trollope now invokes Classical mythology when referring to the manure produced at Oileymead. As one of his labors, Heracles needs to clean the stables of King Augeas; so filthy are the stables that Heracles has to divert a river to do so. In being designated "augean spoils," the manure of Oileymead is figured as a heroic prize rather than a massive nuisance in need of removal. Trollope's roundabout mention of the muck generates humor through its hyperbolic, elevated register and its juxtapositioning of heroic mythology with the realities of 19th century farming. [RR 2025]

crowned with laurels
- In ancient Greece and Rome laurel crowns betokened victory and honor. Laurels are mentioned here as Trollope traces Captain Bellfield's train of thought about his courtship of Mrs. Greenow. Since "all is fair in love and war," Captain Bellfield feels justified in his falsehoods, just as one general who tricks another may be "crowned with laurels because of his lie." For Captain Bellfield, the ends—or even the hoped-for ends—justify the means of his amatory pursuit. [RR 2025]

Chapter 40 – Mrs. Greenow's Little Dinner in the Close

paraphernalia
- Trollope uses *paraphernalia* when discussing the clothing and toiletries which Mr. Cheesacre packs so that he can spruce himself up before visiting Mrs. Greenow. Trollope's word choice might be a bit of an etymological wink, since its original meaning

has special reference to the start of a marriage. In ancient Greek the word *parapherna* referred to goods "beyond" (*para*) a "dowry" (*phernē*) which a bride brought with her when she married, and the earliest attested English uses of *paraphernalia* reflect this. Trollope uses *paraphernalia* in a courtship context but applies it to the man rather than woman; such a gender reversal may be fitting, since Mrs. Greenow often has the upper-hand in her dealings with Mr. Cheesacre. [RR 2013 & 2025]
- source: LSJ and OED

Charlie Fairstairs as a parasite
- Trollope's identification of Charlie Fairstairs as a "false-tongued little parasite" may seem harsh, given the current understanding of a parasite as a creature that feeds off another. Charlie may be better seen as embodying other meanings of the word. Etymologically, *parasite* designates someone who "eats" (Greek *sit-*) "alongside" (Greek *para-*) someone else. According to the OED, in its earliest attested English uses *parasite* refers to "a person who lives at the expense of another, or of society in general; *esp.* (in early use) a person who obtains the hospitality or patronage of the wealthy or powerful by obsequiousness or flattery." Charlie has managed to get in the good graces of Mrs. Greenow and receive material benefits (including meals) through her compliance, which extends to her reinforcement of Mrs. Greenow's exaggeration of the length of her mourning. The word *parasite* is also a common way to refer to a stock figure in Greek and Roman comedy, a flattering sidekick of sorts who is also on the lookout for their own advantage. Though Charlie is hardly as baldly conniving as comic parasites can be, this provides another point of comparison between the Greenow courtship narrative and ancient comedy. [RR 2025]
- sources: OED and OCD

the good things which the gods provided
- Trollope tells us that at the dinner with Mr. Cheesacre and Mrs. Greenow Captain Bellfield "took the good things which the gods provided with thankful good-humour." While the sentiment has some precedent in ancient sources, the wording here specifically recalls *Alexander's Feast* by John Dryden: "Lovely Thais sits beside thee— / Take the goods the gods provide thee." The Alexander of the title is the Macedonian Alexander the Great, and Thais is a courtesan celebrating with him—so there is Classical resonance in Trollope's channeling of a 17th century poem. Trollope seems to tap into the poem's context of feasting as well as its mention of female companionship: Captain Bellfield enjoys the company of Mrs. Greenow as well as the food of the meal. [RR 2025]
- sources: Homer, *Iliad* 3.65
Plautus, *Rudens* 1229
John Dryden, *Alexander's Feast* 87-88 (in some editions) or 105-106 (in other editions)

Chapter 41 – A Noble Lord Dies

rushing instantly into the middle of her subject

- When Mrs. Greenow replies to Kate's letter, she immediately addresses Kate's request for a loan to George and turns down that request without preamble. For the Classical echo in Trollope's phrasing, see the commentary for Chapter 32. [RR 2025]

Chapter 42 – Parliament Meets

British government and Classical mythology

- In this chapter, Trollope extensively enlists Classical mythology (using Roman names) to depict the British government and its officials. He identifies members of Parliament as human gods, divine in all but their mortality, and while there is humor in hyperbolically framing 19th century politicians as ancient deities, doing so underscores their importance in British life as well as in the estimation of characters such as Alice Vavasor and Plantagenet Palliser. For them, as for the ancient Romans, the pursuit of public office is the key way for men to make their way in the world.

Trollope contrasts the shifting alliances of these contemporary human gods with the ancient "Olympus in which Juno and Venus never kissed." Juno is the queen of the gods and spouse of Jupiter, while Venus is the goddess of love and mother of the hero Aeneas. Vergil's *Aeneid* presents the conflict between the two goddesses as Venus opposes Juno's attempts to thwart Aeneas as he travels from Troy to Italy.

Trollope refers to parliamentary discussions as councils of the gods, and we can see such councils on Mount Olympus in epic poetry: e.g., book 4 of Homer's *Iliad*, book 1 of Homer's *Odyssey*, and book 1 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In fact, in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses* Ovid himself compares the Olympian residence of the gods to Rome's Palatine hill, a neighborhood of the rich and powerful in Ovid's day, so Trollope's conflation is not without ancient precedent.

Trollope repeatedly refers to the first lord of the treasury (who is often also the prime minister) as Jove, another name for Jupiter, king of the gods. In mythology, Jove brings the Trojan Ganymede to Olympus and makes him the cup-bearer for the gods; Trollope reworks the cup-bearer into a purse-bearer in order to fittingly signify the chancellor of the exchequer, who is the second lord of the treasury.

Trollope may be mining the planet Jupiter, named after the mythological figure, for some wordplay here. He calls the prime minister's supporters "satellites," a word which can mean "followers," but which may also remind us of the many moons, or satellites, of the planet. [RR 2025]

- sources: Homer, *Iliad* 4.1-72 and *Odyssey* 1.26-96
Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.163-252

eloquence

- In Chapter 24 Trollope enjoyed some boisterous rhetoric of his own in clarifying that Plantagenet Palliser was a trusted and honored man in Parliament because he was a careful, supremely dull speaker, without rhetoric—i.e. not using the skills in speech that persuade listeners by artfully manipulating their emotions. In this chapter eloquence, like the political oratory of the Roman statesman Cicero, which we might think should especially belong to parliamentary debates, is the very quality of a speech a speaker must at all costs avoid, says our narrator. The running joke of this passage, which compares these men of government to gods and thus points out what fumbling mortals they are, supports Trollope's suggestion that inspiration and excellence in speech have no place in this arena of humbug and petty ambition. But Trollope may also allude, slyly, to the profound suspicion of eloquence and clever speech in the Athenian democracy that we see in the playwrights of the 5th c. BCE and in Plato; Trollope may share the suspicion that the sounds and emotional workings of eloquence can fool people into thinking that bad ideas are good ones. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 43 – Mrs. Marsham

Argus

- Mrs. Marsham thinks that Lady Glencora "wants watching" and takes it upon herself to keep an eye on her on Plantagenet Palliser's behalf. Trollope tells us that Mrs. Marsham "had not made any distinct suggestion to him that she would act as Argus to his wife." Argus is a 100-eyed mythological creature, and when Jupiter turns Io, whom he desires, into a cow in order to avoid Juno's detection, Juno is suspicious of the cow and sets Argus to guard it. Mercury slays Argus, and Argus' eyes are transferred to the feathers of the peacock, Juno's bird. Trollope's mention of Argus not only highlights Mrs. Marsham's watchfulness but also reinforces the theme of potential marital infidelity. In this case, however, Plantagenet Palliser is an unsuspecting Juno. [RR 2025]
- source: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.583-750

Cerberus

- Cerberus is the multi-headed, ferocious dog who guards the gates of the underworld, keeping the dead inside. Trollope says that Mrs. Marsham is a Cerberus to Lady Glencora, who knows that she is being "guarded by a watch-dog." By identifying Mrs. Marsham with Cerberus, Trollope reinforces the appalling list of Mrs. Marsham's faults given earlier in the chapter and increases our sense that Lady Glencora's resentment is just. [CMS 2025]

Dr. Fell

- In a conversation with Alice and Mrs. Marsham, Lady Glencora expresses her dislike of Mr. Bott: "All the same; we do not like Mr. Bott—do we, Alice? He is Doctor Fell to us; only I think we could tell why." Lady Glencora is referring to a free translation of Martial by Tom Brown. A literal translation of Martial's epigram:

> I do not love you, Sabidius, nor am I able to say why:
> only this am I able to say, I do not love you.

And Brown's version:

> I do not like thee, Doctor Fell,
> The reason why I cannot tell;
> But this I know, I know full well,
> I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.

Dr. Fell was the dean of Oxford's Christ Church College in the mid-17th century, while Brown was a student there. Brown's clever translation supposedly caused Dr. Fell to revoke Brown's imminent expulsion from the college for bad behavior. It seems fitting that Lady Glencora channels Brown's cheeky dislike of authority, though—unlike both Martial and Brown—she claims to be able to articulate the reasons for her dislike. [RR 2025]

- sources: Martial, *Epigrams* 1.32 and *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*
- note: *Brewer's* gives the translation provided here, but other versions of the third line can be found—"But only this I know full well" and "But this I know and know full well."

gods and a seal on the lips

- Lady Glencora tries to rescue Alice during dinner from the humiliation her own husband, Mrs. Marsham, and Mr. Bott have inflicted on her. But Alice cannot recover from the "snubbing" and cannot respond to Lady Glencora's conversational attempts to "give some relief." When Trollope says it was a moment in which "the very gods interfere to put a seal upon the lips of the unfortunate one," this seems a different use of gods than what we have seen earlier. Here they are sheer metaphor for the paralysis brought on by social mortification. No human spirit is in charge; we are helpless in these moments. While Trollope blames Alice for her "overfed craving for independence," no reader can fail to cringe at this episode of what the narrator calls the "hard discourtesy" of the Pallisers. [CMS 2025]

<u>Chapter 44 – The Election for the Chelsea Districts</u>

the River Bank's odious name

- During the bustle of campaigning, George is hit by thrown offal "so that the very name of the River Bank became odious to him." Trollope's language may be Classically

resonant. As mentioned in the commentary for Chapter 21, Cicero says that the Romans, upon ousting the last king of Rome, came to hate the name of king. The historian Livy writes that the Romans disliked the family name of the last king, Tarquinius, so much that one of the early consuls of Rome, Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, was pressured to resign his office and leave Rome because he bore the same family name. In adapting the Romans' name-hating to George's situation, Trollope retains a political context but shifts the dynamics. It is not the people who hate the name of their ruler but George who has become disillusioned with his constituents and district even before he is elected. [RR 2025]
- sources: Cicero, *De Re Publica* 2.52 and Livy, *History of Rome* 2.2

Chapter 45 – George Vavasor Takes His Seat

Fate
- Trollope uses Fate this time in the same sense that Classical epic sees Fate as a force beyond our will that dictates how our lives will take shape. In this rare, extended and comradely address to his "male friend and reader" Trollope speaks in his own voice and confesses his own longings for the public life in politics that Fate has denied him—"not to have done that which it most becomes an Englishman to have achieved." He reminds us that George Vavasor has gained something of incomparable value in winning his seat in the House of Commons. He reminds us too in this chapter how much George simultaneously deserves and fails to deserve the nobility of this honor, and we may infer that this is a matter not of Fate but of character. [CMS 2025]

thunderbolts
- Lord Middlesex has given a poorly attended speech in the House and contrasts his dwindling audience with the attention a speech by Mr. Farringcourt received earlier in the day. Lord Middlesex's diligent work cannot compete with the rhetoric of Farringcourt, "[a] man who could shake the thunderbolts." The mention of thunderbolts, Jupiter's signal weapon, reminds readers of the mythological presentation of politics in Chapter 42. [RR 2025]

Chapter 46 – A Love Gift

responses to George's election
- When George wins his election, Alice "resolved that she would be triumphant," and take "her share in the ovation," but she finds it difficult to do so. Kate, by contrast, wrote to Alice "with a loud paean of sincere rejoicing" at her brother's success. *Triumphant* and *ovation* recall Roman celebrations of victory and their ceremonial processions of

successful commanders into the city, while *paean* hearkens to ancient Greek songs of victory or thanksgiving. Alice does not feel the enthusiasm that Kate does, and Trollope's use of Classically laden words to convey their reactions underscores Kate's support for George and Alice's growing alienation from him.

Trollope uses the vocabulary of triumph when George's victory is discussed in Chapters 44 and 45, and in Chapter 52 George reflects on the fact that his entry into the House in the company of Mr. Bott offered no feeling of triumph. Those moments may be tinged with Classical color as well. Here, however, the pile-up of Classically related words and images more certainly activates ancient connections. [RR 2025]

Fortune tied to chariot wheels

- The Roman goddess Fortune is presented as a figure bound by George Vavasor to his triumphal chariot. The overblown, even hubristic, image of a divine force conquered by a mortal suggests that Kate's apprehension of her brother and reality are false. [CMS & RR 2025]

Fate

- Again, Kate's idea that only a lack of money could have stood in the way of George's progress, and that he has leapt across the barrier of Fate, is part of her passionate affiliation to her brother and his worth. Fate is less easy to breach. [CMS 2025]

satire

- The literary critic Quintilian says that the Romans invented the genre of satire, a genre known for topical mockery and humor, but lacking the harsh malice of invective. Here, George takes pleasure in Alice's "satire" of him—when she gently chides him for wanting to equal the great orator William Pitt, Earl of Chatham—and he unguardedly asks for her affection. But Alice's satire does not indicate a return to their older, easier dynamics, and the mood of the moment is lost. [CMS & RR 2025]
- source: Quintilian, *Institutes* 10.1.93

Chapter 47 – Mr. Cheesacre's Disappointment

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 48 – Preparations for Lady Monk's Party

factotum

- An English noun composed of two Latin elements: the imperative *fac*, "do," and the substantative *totum*, "the whole thing." A servant or assistant who undertakes a variety of tasks could be called a factotum, and here Lady Monk's factotum is helping her with

her party arrangements. While Lady Monk resists when her factotum suggests that Mr. Bott be invited, she yields when it becomes clear that Mr. Palliser would like Mr. Bott to be included. The use of *factotum* emphasizes the lower status of the servant, identified by household role rather than name. [RR 2025]

Chapter 49 – How Lady Glencora Went to Lady Monk's Party

sanctum

- Originally a neuter form of the Latin adjective *sanctus, -a, -um* ("holy"), *sanctum* in English can signify a shrine or holy place, as well as a space of refuge or retreat. Here it refers to the room at Lady Monk's party where women may go to attend to their clothing. In this context the word provides some playful verbal veiling of feminine mysteries. [RR 2025]

Plantagenet's eloquence after all

- In the heat of his scolding of Lady Glencora, Plantagenet Palliser turns out to be able to express himself with the eloquence he is so careful to avoid using in Parliament. See the commentary for Chapter 24. [CMS 2025]

Fate

- A beautiful compliment to Glencora: Fate, in control of our lives but not our hearts or wishes, could have made Lady Glencora a man, and hence a gentleman; in a lady a great-hearted nature is denied recognition, the remark suggests. [CMS 2025]

see and be seen

- In the *Ars Amatoria* Ovid writes that women come to public spectacles to see and to be seen. Trollope's phrasing echoes Ovid's, but its scope is narrower. Trollope is not addressing lovers-to-be in general about ways to attract women at the Roman games; instead, he is mentioning that a specific amatory aspirant, Burgo, both sees and is seen by Lady Glencora at Lady Monk's party. [RR 2025]
- source: Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.99

Burgo's beauty

- Burgo's mouth is described as "glorious...such as the old sculptors gave to their marble gods!" The analogy and the exclamation mark together express the effect of Burgo's beauty on Lady Glencora when she sees him at the party. But Trollope makes sure we know that Burgo's looks appear more loving than they are; the beauty of marble gods does not guarantee the veracity of what they seem to convey. See the commentary for

Chapter 11 (on Mr. Grey's godlike mouth) and the commentary for Chapter 29 (on Burgo's godlike face). [RR 2025]

born in the purple

- The Marchioness of Hartletop attends Lady Monk's party, and Trollope remarks that the marchioness was not "born in the purple"—that is, she is not from an aristocratic family herself, though she married into one. See the commentary for Chapter 24 for an explanation of the phrase. [RR 2025]

Chapter 50 – How Lady Glencora Came Back from Lady Monk's Party

prudential

- Trollope mentions that Burgo "cannot be said to have looked forward in any prudential way to coming years." *Prudential* contains Latin elements meaning "look" (*vid*-) and "forward" (*pro*-). The repetition of the idea using vocabulary based in different languages may emphasize how completely Burgo has not planned for his future. [RR 2025]

he saw her and was seen

- The phrasing echoes the "see and be seen" wording previously used; see the commentary for Chapter 49. [RR 2025]

not unpleasant

- When Burgo approaches Lady Glencora and offers her his hand, "her countenance seemed to show that the meeting was not unpleasant to her." Trollope turns to litotes here, a rhetorical move in which something is expressed through a negation of its opposite. Litotes may help to convey Lady Glencora's ambivalence: her attraction to Burgo versus the pull of her marriage vows. Litotes also allows Trollope to avoid stating Lady Glencora's problematic pleasure at Burgo's advances outright. [RR 2025]

she who doubts is lost

- The line closely paraphrased ("the woman that deliberates is lost") is from Joseph Addison's play *Cato, A Tragedy* (1713) about the Roman Republican hero Cato the Younger, who dies opposing Julius Caesar and his path to tyranny. The line is spoken by Cato's daughter Marcia, who fears she will lose the chance to marry the man she loves.

Trollope defends women against the imputation that those who doubt are in some immediate moral peril, presumably because their desires are dangerous. Trollope's response to the idea does acknowledge that women are ever constrained by social forms, but he notes that they cope with it successfully most of the time, even if they are doubting

all the while. He notes that men and women both think by nature about what is fitting, useful, and best to do—"unless they have brought themselves to the Burgo Fitzgerald state of recklessness." [CMS 2025]
- Trollope is speaking against a notion that is taken as a given by some, and his argument gains force through his use of this paraphrase of a line from an older play set in antiquity—he demonstrates that he is willing to question traditional "knowledge." [RR 2025]
- source: Joseph Addison, *Cato, A Tragedy* 4.1 (the line in question is the final one in that scene)

Chapter 51 – Bold Speculations on Murder
(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 52 – What Occurred in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall

George as orator
- After being "worsted" by John Grey, George goes home and ponders how the seat in the Commons has done him no good and how disappointing he has found the men and the speeches thus far. George has not "as yet commenced his career as an orator," but he can see it is unlikely he can soon succeed "with brilliance." We have already seen that brilliant oratory is precisely what George's colleagues in Parliament avoid. But George is also rousing his own violence for a fight to keep his seat, not a fight for votes but for money, and more a fight to dominate the growing number of people (his grandfather, Alice, Kate, John Grey) whom he conceives as enemies. Trollope seems to show us the coming decline and fall for George as he is increasingly at war, using violence not words. [CMS 2025]

august
- Trollope describes the lamps flanking the entry to the House of Commons as august. The English adjective recalls Augustus, the first of the Roman emperors, and its application to the lamps signals the importance of a parliamentary seat to George Vavasor. Later in the chapter John Grey's manners are called august, reinforcing his social standing and appropriate corresponding behavior. The use of the adjective twice in this chapter may invite us to compare and contrast George Vavasor and John Grey: the one is struggling to belong to the governing elite; the other is assured in his social position. [RR 2025]

Chapter 53 – The Last Will of the Old Squire

Fate and snapping the thread

- In Greek and Roman depictions fate is imagined not as an abstraction but as three goddesses. They spin the thread of a life and determine its length—the life is over when the thread breaks or runs out. In Vergil's *Aeneid* Dido's suicide prompts Juno to send the messenger Iris to cut Dido's lock of hair because her thread (her hair in this case) has not yet been cut; she dies against her fate. Trollope here alludes to this role of the goddesses alongside the more abstract Fate and reinforces the futility, and foolishness, of George's monomaniacal rage that his grandfather still lives. [CMS 2025]
- sources: *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* and Vergil, *Aeneid* 4.693-705

perfected

- Although Kate knows that her grandfather is reconsidering how his property will be distributed after his death, she "did not think that a new will had been perfected." In legal contexts the verb *perfect* can mean "finish" or "complete." This use of the word reflects its Latin etymological elements: *per-* ("thoroughly") and *-fect* ("done"). [RR 2025]
- source: OED

Chapter 54 – Showing How Alice Was Punished

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 55 – The Will

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 56 – Another Walk on the Fells

as one driven by the Furies

- In Greek myth the Furies are very ancient female deities, scary-looking, who avenge the murders of blood relations (among other serious crimes, such as oath-breaking) with relentless punishments. In Aeschylus' *Oresteia* the Furies drive Orestes mad for murdering his mother Clytemnestra. In Roman contexts especially we may find a single Fury acting rather than a group of them. Trollope builds his portrait of George's madness by alluding to the Furies, their irresistible menace, and their way of invisibly possessing someone's spirit. George is not in control of his emotions or thoughts; he explicitly acknowledges to himself that he must stay on good terms with Kate, but the "unappeased wrath" he constantly indulges drives him at once to abuse his sister, "as one driven by the Furies." The talk of Furies continues throughout the chapter. Trollope says that George

had no purpose when he attacked John Grey, insulted the attorney, or rudely shook Alice: "a Fury was driving him, and he was conscious of being so driven." A little later on we see George having left Kate, walking across the fells and hardly conscious of himself: "[t]he Fury was driving him on." [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 57 – Showing How the Wild Beast Got Himself Back from the Mountains

os femoris

- Injured when her brother pushes her to the ground, Kate maintains that she broke her arm in a fall, an explanation which her grandfather questions. The attending doctor, however, tells him, "One never can say how anything may occur.... I know a young woman who broke the os femoris by just kicking her cat;—at least, she said she did." The doctor could have used the English *thighbone* or even the Latinate *femur* rather than *os femoris* (literally "bone of the thigh"). The doctor's deployment of the Latin phrase reinforces his professional credentials, produces a kind of detachment while mentioning part of a woman's body, and underscores his interest in the medical consequences of injuries rather than the human reasons for them. [RR 2025]

George's fury and the Fury

- As George thinks of how Kate defied his bullying, Trollope describes George's emotion as fury, lower case, not the goddess. (See the commentary for Chapter 56.) But his emotion is no less fearsome as he thinks of her murder. Depressingly, Geoge has the rational capacity to see that Kate's murder would do him no good; he can distinguish between his fury and his self-interest to this degree. The chapter closes with George driven by the Fury, cursing all, including himself. George's anger gets so large and ungovernable that it can be effectively depicted as an external, supernatural force. [CMS & RR 2025]

Mercury

- When George arrives at the inn at Shap, he sends "a Mercury" to fetch his clothing from Vavasor Hall. Trollope playfully likens the courier to the Roman messenger god. However, unlike the Classical deity—who usually sports a pair of winged sandals to aid his travel—"the Mercuries of Westmoreland do not move on quick wings," and George must wait into the night for his belongings to arrive. [RR 2025]

Chapter 58 – The Pallisers at Breakfast

the Argus eyes of the constant Bott

- Reminding readers that Mr. Bott had watched Lady Glencora as she talked with Burgo Fitzgerald at Lady Monk's party, Trollope refers to Mr. Bott's Argus eyes. See the commentary for Chapter 43, which treats a reference to Argus in the context of Mrs. Marsham's general watchfulness over Lady Glencora. Trollope's use of the 100-eyed mythological monster in regard to both characters highlights their similar officious overseeing of Lady Glencora. Unlike the Classical Argus, who was tasked by Juno to guard Io-turned-cow, Mrs. Marsham and Mr. Bott have not been explicitly appointed by Plantagenet Palliser to watch their charge. Although Plantagenet Palliser may not be suspicious of his spouse like Juno is of Jupiter, readers know that Lady Glencora has skirted the brink of infidelity. [RR 2025]
- source: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.583-750

Chapter 59 – The Duke of St. Bungay in Search of a Minister

joviality

- The noun *joviality* and the adjective *jovial* indicate the quality of being under the astrological influence of the planet Jupiter, Jove; they are derived from Italian and French, and thus from late Latin *iovialis*, "pertaining to Jupiter." Those born under the sign of the planet Jupiter are believed to be merry, mirthful, and "persons of good fellowship." This usage in English is current from at least the early 17th century.

The Duke of Bungay, described as being in "a glow of delight," delivers news to Palliser that he will be the next chancellor of the exchequer, a development that the duke has very much wished for and on which Palliser has long fixed his ambition. The duke is "almost jovial," full of the expectation that Palliser will of course welcome the chance. At Palliser's rejection, "all his joviality had vanished." [CMS 2025]

- An association between the Duke of Bungay and the king of the gods makes some sense in this context, since the duke is in the position of offering a place of power to Plantagenet Palliser. [RR 2025]
- sources: OED and etymonline.com

ovation

- The Duke of St. Bungay is confident that Plantagenet Palliser will accept the position of chancellor of the exchequer, and he "was prepared to celebrate some little ovation with his young friend." *Ovation* here recalls the Roman *ovatio*, a victory parade granted to generals. *Ovationes* were considered a secondary form of triumph since they marked success in lesser, or even bloodless, conflicts. The use of *ovation* rather than *triumph*

here is apt, since the duke anticipates Plantagenet Palliser's easy acquiescence and a smooth replacement of the old chancellor with the new one. [RR 2025]
- source: LS

quidnuncs
- The Latin phrase *quid nunc* means "what now?" The English noun *quidnunc* refers to a person who constantly seeks news. Trollope uses the noun twice in this chapter, and both times in the plural (*quidnuncs*), in reference to people who keenly follow political developments. The word is less harsh than *gossips* yet perhaps gently satirizes the class of people who track political goings-on. [RR 2025]
- source: OED

Chapter 60 – Alice Vavasor's Name Gets into the Money Market
(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 61 – The Bills Are Made All Right

laity
- Generally *laity* in English describes people who are not clergy. Trollope uses the word to indicate that people of the "outer world" do not know about the Inns of Courts, knowledge of which is confined to insiders, just as those in holy orders have more knowledge of the church. The word derives from Greek *laos*, which can refer to a group of (common) people, a tribe, or a military force. Though there is humor at work in Trollope's application of an English word with religious connotations in a secular context, he may also be enlisting the scope of the Greek word here. [CMS & RR 2025]
- source: LSJ and etymonline.com

dark as Erebus and melancholy
- When John Grey visits Mr. Vavasor in his signing room, he must go through a hall and up some stairs; both areas are beset with "darkness and gloom." Trollope emphasizes the "darkness and gloom" through his description of the hall "as dark as Erebus" and the stairs as "melancholy." Erebus is a god of darkness in Classical mythology, and the proper noun can also be used to refer to the darkness of the underworld or even the underworld itself. *Melancholy* etymologically contributes to the pile-up of darkness with its Greek element *melan-* ("black"). Trollope's bleak depiction of the place coincides with Mr. Vavasor's feelings about it: it is a place to which he feels condemned to come in order to earn his salary. [CMS & RR 2025]
- source: LS

Chapter 62 – Going Abroad

Mercury

- Once Plantagenet Palliser has determined to go abroad with his wife, Lady Glencora sends a servant to ask Alice to come to her. Trollope tells us, "He had come from Lady Glencora, and had been specially ordered to go in a cab and come back in a cab, and make himself as like a Mercury, with wings to his feet, as may be possible to a London footman." In Chapter 57 Trollope invoked Mercury—the Roman messenger god equipped with winged sandals—to refer to a courier. Here Trollope highlights the footman-Mercury's subordinate status: Plantagenet Palliser gives his orders to Lady Glencora, and she gives hers to the footman. Lady Glencora's desire that the footman be as divinely quick as humanly possible emphasizes her eagerness to see Alice. [RR 2025]

hope and fear

- Plantagenet Palliser has worked long and hard toward a ministerial position. About being offered such a position "[h]e has hoped and feared, and has been, I believe, sometimes half-mad with expectation." The Stoic philosopher Seneca advises the tempering of hope and fear lest fear lead one to panic and hope to foolishness. From a Stoic perspective, both of these dispositions toward the future can have outcomes that are emotional distortions of reason and hence should be guarded against. We see that in Plantagenet Palliser's case they may have occasionally resulted in a kind of half-madness. Though he may not be living up to Stoic ideals, his emotional connection to his desired goal shows readers that he may not be as bland as he might have appeared at first, to both readers and Lady Glencora. [RR 2025]
- source: Seneca, *Moral Letters to Lucilius* 13

Burgo as Apollo

- Lady Glencora tells Plantagenet Palliser that she used to regard Burgo Fitzgerald as a god, and as Apollo in particular. She cites Burgo's extraordinary handsomeness as support for her view. We have already seen (in Chapter 29) Burgo's form heralded as "godlike" and (in Chapter 49) his "glorious" mouth likened to that of ancient sculptures of gods. Burgo's seeming divinity rests on his looks and is not a reliable indicator of his full character. In *The Small House at Allington* Adolphus Crosbie is repeatedly compared to Apollo, but his good looks and charm do not keep him from jilting Lily Dale. [RR 2025]

fate

- We know what Glencora feels but not what she would have done without Palliser's intervention, and her account of herself to Alice paints her in a poor light. She says her

husband came back to Lady Monk's ball (after Mrs. Marsham rushed to report the dancing of Burgo and Glencora) and that Palliser could hardly do otherwise unless he were to leave his wife to her "fate," as if she herself were not making a decision. Glencora's narration and her mention of fate here (as if, helpless, she required a hero such as her husband to rescue her) are melodramatic, more perhaps for own hearing than for Alice's. Trollope wants us to see how powerful the temptation is that Burgo presents to Glencora, but Trollope's narration encourages us to think that Glencora would have rescued herself. Like Alice, Glencora has only wanted to make her decisions for herself, and Trollope keeps in mind that this is not easy, or always possible, for women in their circumstances. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 63 – Mr. John Grey in Queen Anne Street

town mouse and country mouse

- John Grey cites "the old story of the town mouse and the country mouse" to characterize the difference between Alice's positive valuation of public life and his own preference for retired quiet. In this ancient tale (versions of which exist in both Latin and Greek), the town mouse finds the country mouse's fare too boring, and the country mouse finds the town mouse's life too worrisome. The story has a Classical pedigree which the scholarly Mr. Grey could have invoked to buttress his authority, but instead he merely presents it as a folktale "old as the hills." This allows him to refer to the long-standing disagreement between himself and Alice with a lighter touch. [RR 2025]
- sources: Babrius, *Fables* 108 and Horace, *Satires* 2.6

the Rubicon of parental delicacy

- Traditionally, Julius Caesar began civil war in Rome when he crossed the Rubicon River with troops in 49 BCE. The river marked the boundary of the province in which Caesar was allowed to command forces; leading soldiers beyond that boundary and into Italy was taken as an act of aggression. The phrase "crossing the Rubicon" alludes to the making of a consequential and irreversible decision. In this context the Rubicon that Mr. Vavasor has passed is his sharing of information with John Grey about Alice's affairs without her knowledge. Some might say it marks a betrayal of Alice, however kind the intentions. Now that the river has been crossed, however, Mr. Vavasor continues discussing Alice's situation with Mr. Grey, just as Caesar continued his move into Italy. [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 64 – The Rocks and Valleys

Venus
- Aunt Greenow explains to Kate that she is well aware of the inflated rhetoric of lovers: to wit, they may call a woman a Venus, the Roman goddess of love and beauty, even if she "were hump-backed and had only one eye." [RR 2025]

nollimy tangere
- Mrs. Greenow refers to the seemingly stand-offish quality of some women as "what the men call a 'nollimy tangere.'" *Noli me tangere* means "don't touch me," and in the Vulgate translation of the Gospel of John the resurrected Jesus says these words to Mary Magdalene. Mrs. Greenow's use of Latin here is an implicit claim to authority. Mrs. Greenow presents the phrase as belonging to male parlance and a masculine view of the world, and she presents herself as understanding that way of talking and seeing. However, her mispronunciation—which combines two Latin words into one—shows her limits. Compare Mrs. Greenow's mispronunciation of the Latin word *manes* in Chapter 7.
- source: John 20:17

enough is as good as a feast
- Aunt Greenow articulates the principle of Epicurean wisdom found in Horace's *Satires*, that what we need for happiness is what is enough; excess is wasted. In the *Satires* Horace likes to pun on the Latin word for "enough," *satis*, and the name of his genre, *satura*—the humble genre of satire, in contrast to epic, is enough for real life. Aunt Greenow's extreme practicality, even if elaborated with untruthful flourishes, emerges as a sensible grasp of life's realities. [CMS 2025]
- The particular phrasing is found in both Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Walter Scott's *Waverly* and was considered proverbial in English by the 16th century, so Trollope has Mrs. Greenow invoke a Classical idea with a long-standing English formulation. [RR 2025]
- source: John Simpson, *A Dictionary of Proverbs*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

efforts crowned with success
- Both the ancient Greeks and Romans granted crowns as rewards for athletic, poetic, and military victories. Trollope's phrasing here satirically elevates Captain Bellfield's now-successful campaign for Mrs. Greenow's hand in marriage. [RR 2025]

Chapter 65 – The First Kiss

second string to his bow
- Although Mr. Cheesacre's first wish was to marry Mrs. Greenow, he turns his sights to Kate when Mrs. Greenow decides to marry Captain Bellfield. Trollope refers to Mr. Cheesacre's back-up plan as a "second string to his bow." This idiom derives from an archer's practice of carrying an extra bowstring. Although this turn of phrase is not Classical, Trollope often uses it when talking about romantic relationships, which conflates the bow of the saying with Cupid's love-inspiring weapon. [RR 2016 & 2025]
- source: *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*

not altogether without prudence
- Trollope has said that Mrs. Greenow has chosen "with prudence," and then enumerates Bellfield's virtues in terms of what he is not: no forger or thief, nor a returned convict, an idle scamp, "moderate in his greediness." Trollope finishes the list saying that Mrs. Greenow, in her choice, has been "not altogether without prudence." The litotes—an idea expressed by the negative of its contrary—is Trollope's way of summarizing what he has just said about Bellfield, that his absence of dire vices amounts to virtue, and of signaling that Mrs. Greenow is in fact thoughtful about the man whom she will marry. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 66 – Lady Monk's Plan

factotum
- See the commentary for Chapter 48.

fate
- Trollope's use of fate is capacious. Here fate seems carelessly defined by Burgo, a general displeasing outcome that he curses off-handedly, that a few sentences before he called ill-luck. Trollope points out how different Burgo Fitzgerald is from George Vavasor in temperament—Burgo lacks hatred, so his curses, as well as the fate he curses, come off as ordinary, part of the pull of life and its disappointments. [CMS 2025]

Chapter 67 – The Last Kiss

the hero and the distaff
- When Lady Glencora tells Alice that Plantagenet Palliser has been helping with the packing, he "winced...as the hero of old must have winced when he was found with the distaff." The hero is Heracles, who spent time in service to Queen Omphale as

punishment for his attack on Delphi and theft of the oracular tripod. Ancient and post-antique artists depict the enslaved hero with a distaff or spindle, a visual crystallization of the reversal of gender roles. Lady Glencora's husband is slightly embarrassed to be found doing a domestic task. Trollope reminds readers that Plantagenet Palliser has traded a position in government for his attendance on his wife abroad and "could take no glory in the change." While Plantagenet Palliser's actions may not seem heroic or glorious in a traditional sense, they reflect a growing understanding of his spouse and their relationship and likely elevate him in the eyes of readers. [RR 2025]
- source: Edward Tripp, *The Meridian Handbook of of Classical Mythology*

Chapter 68 – From London to Baden
(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 69 – From Baden to Lucerne

hero-worship
- Trollope remarks that Alice's love involves less hero-worship than "there always should be in a girl's heart when she gives it away." Heroes in antiquity had shrines and cults dedicated to their worship; Trollope renders the practice metaphorical and limits it to young women's adoration of the men whom they love. [RR 2025]

Chapter 70 – At Lucerne

august assembly, heroes, and Fortune
- During his travels abroad Plantagenet Palliser thinks of the workings of the British government. Trollope refers to the cabinet of ministers as an august assembly; the adjective recalls Augustus, the first of the Roman emperors, and emphasizes the status of the cabinet in Plantagenet Palliser's eyes. Similarly does the identification of its members as heroes favored by Fortune, here presented as if the Classical goddess. See the commentary for Chapter 52 for the description of the lamps outside the House of Commons as august. [RR 2025]

Chapter 71 – Showing How George Vavasor Received a Visit
(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 72 – Showing How George Vavasor Paid a Visit
(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 73 – In Which Come Tidings of Great Moment to All Pallisers

the Fates

- The Fates in a Classical sense are the goddesses who determine the lives of mortals and to some extent limit the behaviors of gods. John Grey's use here seems notably benign, as if the Fates in his mind are the purveyors of good things in life, which one can lose with a poor choice, such as George's choice to enter on a career in Parliament without being rich. Trollope's understanding of John Grey's highly rational nature may mean that he sees Grey as incapable of comprehending either the darker forces of the Fates in the ancient sense or the narcissistic despair in George that Trollope has shown us with such clarity. [CMS 2025]

expectant father of embryo dukes

- The multisyllabic adjectives in this phrase are Classically derived—*expectant* is from Latin and *embryo* is from Greek. They impart a particular rhythm to Trollope's prose and both echo and gently satirize the familial pride and aspirations of Plantagenet Palliser. The phrase's abrupt end in a monosyllable may serve to cement its humor. [RR 2025]

Chapter 74 – Showing What Happened in the Churchyard

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 75 – Rouge et Noir

triumph and patronize

- Alice imagines Lady Midlothian's reaction to Alice's renewed engagement to John Grey: Lady Midlothian "would triumph" and "would try to patronize her." The words *triumph* and *patronize* have Roman resonances: triumphal parades were granted to victorious generals, and the patron/client relationship was a significant feature of Roman society. The use of these words to describe Lady Midlothian's reaction emphasizes Alice's view of the lady as enforcing and enjoying a dominant position in relation to Alice herself.

Lady Glencora, in discussing the engagement with Alice, asks, "Do you think that I don't know you well enough to be sure that you regard yourself now as an unfortunate prisoner,—as a captive taken in war, to be led away in triumph, without any hope of a ransom?" The image recalls Roman practices of including conquered foes in triumphal processions and dramatically casts Alice as overcome not by Lady Midlothian's condescension but by the engagement itself. When Alice seems to disdain Lady Glencora's characterization, Lady Glencora remarks that Alice would have equally dismissed any suggestion that she should "triumph in [her] success, as might be expected

on such an occasion." Alice does not see her engagement as a victory on her part; in fact, at the end of Chapter 74, John Grey told her, "the battle is over now, and I have won it," to which Alice replied, "You win everything—always." The talk of triumph in this chapter continues the military motif and reinforces Alice's submission in "yielding" to John Grey. [RR 2025]

Plantagenet Palliser, John Grey, and triumph

- The two couples leave Lucerne together, and Trollope comments that each of the two gentlemen is triumphant. Whereas for Alice the terms of triumph have defined her as the one conquered, both men will return home as heroes of their own stories. The allusion to the Roman triumph recalls that a triumph involves losers. Trollope is careful to remind us how Palliser left London, having relinquished a cherished ambition to care for his wife, in a defeated frame of mind, whereas he is returning with his domestic house in order, an heir on the way, and the promise that he will return to a secure place in the political world. Grey has won Alice, and Trollope reminds us how Grey kept his faith in Alice, "never having been stirred from his purpose" despite Alice's rejection of him. Conceivably we are to think too of the tragically routed men of our story, George Vavasor and Burgo Fitzgerald. [CMS 2025]

Fate

- Trollope deploys Fate here as the external force in our lives beyond our control. Alice has accustomed herself to naming herself a failure; it is not possible for her to feel that she has *chosen* John Grey as a husband. If she continues to "regard her lover as Fate," her view of herself does not change, since Fate is beyond human control or will. It would seem, however, that Trollope wants us to see that John Grey and Alice are both aware that Alice has loved him throughout, and that in some sense Alice *did* make a choice which she refuses to see. [CMS 2025]

quaffed molten pearls, like Cleopatra

- When Lady Glencora wishes that she were a milkmaid and asks Plantagenet Palliser for a favor, he is wary. Trollope explains that Mr. Palliser would have found it easier if Lady Glencora had asked for jewelry or had "quaffed molten pearls, like Cleopatra." Trollope is referring to a famous episode in which Cleopatra displays the magnificence of her court to Marc Antony by drinking wine or vinegar in which a pearl has been dissolved. Mr. Palliser would have been more comfortable with a request from his wife that accords with their high social status; instead, Lady Glencora's wish that she were a milkmaid prepares Mr. Palliser for a favor (a visit to the gambling rooms) that she knows might not seem fitting for her position.

In referring to Cleopatra's pearl-drinking, Trollope remarks that Mr. Palliser "would have procured the beverage,—having first fortified himself with a medical opinion as to the fitness of the drink for a lady in her condition." This qualification acknowledges Mr. Palliser's personality as well as his concern for Lady Glencora's pregnancy and renders the hyperbolic Classical reference more humorous. [RR 2025]
- source: Pliny, *Natural History* 9.58/119-121

Chapter 76 – The Landlord's Bill

daughters of Danaus
- The Danaids, the fifty daughters of King Danaus, are compelled to marry their uncle's sons; they obey their father's order to murder their new husbands on their wedding night, and for this they are punished, forced to spend eternity in Hades carrying water in perforated jugs. Burgo Fitzgerald, amused by Palliser's suggestion he might repay the money offered at his "convenience," explains his insolvency by comparing his resources to the leaking "tubs" of these mythic women. His allusion to the Danaids' tubs is homely and makes them sound like washer-women. Palliser, though entirely having the advantage, is at a loss and awkwardly tries to fill out the allusion to the daughters of Danaus; Burgo denies knowing their paternity but notes it's as good to loan the money to them as to him. Trollope's telling of this encounter includes humor and pathos, and a note on the social standing of Palliser and Burgo: the two men once on equal footing, now worlds apart, meet over an allusion to Greek mythology to side-step the inherent pain of the encounter. [CMS 2025]
- The two men's conversation about the Danaids highlights the difficulty of their meeting. While Burgo draws on the presumption of shared Classical knowledge, he downplays it through his deflated description of the Danaids phrased as a question. Plantagenet Palliser signals that he understands the reference and clarifies it in his answer. Burgo shrugs off the clarification and underscores the point that the reference was meant to make: he will be unable to pay Palliser back. The exchange of Classical knowledge that can consolidate social relations between men only partly works here. [RR 2025]
- source: *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*

Chapter 77 – The Travellers Return Home

the fox who had lost his tail
- On their journey back to England, Plantagenet Palliser pushes John Grey to consider entering politics. Trollope likens Mr. Palliser to a fox in one of Aesop's fables: having lost its tail in a trap, the fox tries to persuade other foxes to cut theirs off voluntarily until one of them calls out the fox's self-interest. Mr. Palliser is like the fox because his

political work encroaches on his private life and he encourages Mr. Grey to follow a path that will take him away from a quiet life in the country as well. Trollope's use of the fable makes it clear that though Plantagenet Palliser is committed to public service, his attempts to persuade John Grey are not simply or solely motivated by selfless ideals. [RR 2025]
- source: mythfolklore.net/aesopica

gods of the world
- It is decided that Lady Glencora should give birth to her first child at Gatherum Castle. Trollope identifies those making the decision as "[t]he gods of the world,—of Lady Glencora's world." The mention of gods elevates these people and their power; we might recall the analogies between gods and political figures in Chapter 42. At the same time that Trollope heightens the status of Lady Glencora's relatives, he limits their realm and reach: gods they may be, but gods of Lady Glencora's particular world. While Lady Glencora may feel their power to be nearly absolute, Trollope's qualification reminds readers that their power is specific and circumscribed. [RR 2025]

Chapter 78 – Mr. Cheesacre's Fate

title and opening paragraph
- The first paragraph of this chapter presents Mrs. Greenow as extremely resourceful and strategic, and we learn that she will be the director of Mr. Cheesacre's fate mentioned in the chapter title. Mr. Cheesacre will be helpless before her maneuvering, just as mortals in mythology are before the workings of fate. [CMS & RR 2025]

Chapter 79 – Diamonds Are Diamonds

Alice to be taken to heaven
- Kate is wary of participating in Alice's wedding at Matching, and she worries about being left alone amid the grand people who will be in attendance. As Kate sees it, Alice on her wedding day "will be taken away, up to heaven, upon the clouds." Such a description makes Alice's wedding into a kind of apotheosis or deification, be it through the aristocratic associations of Matching or the very act of marrying John Grey. Kate's imagery illustrates and emphasizes her perception that Alice's impending wedding will entail a change in sphere. [RR 2025]

mea culpa
- *Mea culpa* is a Latin ablative, meaning "by/through my fault," and is an acknowledgement of wrongdoing. It is used in the Latin version of the Catholic prayer of

contrition and is accompanied by a striking of the breast. Though the phrase also appears outside a specifically Catholic context, here the connotations of religious repentance are activated. Alice owns her past errors, even if Lady Midlothian's attention to them is unseemly and unpleasant. Trollope has Alice perform internal penance—"with sundry inward exclamations of 'mea culpa', and with many unseen beatings of the breast"—after leaving Lady Midlothian. Perhaps Trollope ironically invokes a dramatic Catholic practice to emphasize Alice's heightened view of her failings; she may persist in ritually repenting, but we are supposed to forgive her. [CMS & RR 2025]

august

- Trollope uses the adjective *august* six times in eight sentences in connection with Lady Jane, one of Alice's aristocratic bridesmaids who is the daughter of the Marchioness of Auld Reekie and all but unknown to Alice herself. While the adjective underscores the status of Lady Jane and her mother, its repetition strikes a satirical note. [RR 2025]

Chapter 80 – The Story Is Finished Within the Halls of the Duke of Omnium

cup and lip

- Plantagenet Palliser's seemingly certain appointment to the cabinet is delayed, and to convey the unexpected turn of events Trollope riffs on a well-known proverb. Trollope's phrasing—"[t]he cup of fruition had not yet reached Mr. Palliser's lips"—recalls "there's many a slip betwixt the cup and the lip." This saying has both Greek and Latin parallels, and the sentiment has been connected to the mythological character Ancaeus. Ancaeus is told that he will not live to drink wine from his vineyards. When Ancaeus is about to take a drink that will prove the prophecy wrong, the speaker of the prophecy reminds him that "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip." Ancaeus then receives news of a rampaging boar and heads off to deal with it, wine untasted. Ancaeus is killed by the boar, and the prophecy holds true.

Elsewhere in his novels, Trollope enlists this proverb in the context of courtship and marriage: a betrothal may not lead to a wedding (as in the case of Lily Dale in *The Small House at Allington*). A reader who has noticed Trollope's deployment of this proverb in a matrimonial sense may detect humor in his use of it here. For Plantagenet Palliser, a cabinet appointment is as significant as a wedding. [RR 2020 & 2025]

- sources: *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*
Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* 157e
Greek Anthology 10.32
Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 13.18
Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.5.1

purpureo genitus, purple-born

- Trollope apostrophizes the newborn son of Plantagenet Palliser and Lady Glencora: "Wondrous little baby,—purpureo genitus! What have the gods not done for thee...." The Latin phrase (meaning "born in the purple"), the reference to gods, and the use of the archaic *thee* amplify Trollope's address to the child, who is also called purple-born later in the chapter. See the commentary for Chapter 24. [RR 2025]

fate and triumph

- Mr. Palliser's fate, so-called, is the combined outcome of good fortune and his intense work and ambition, and we have seen through the novel why he would be content now. Along with John Grey he is described as triumphant, and Palliser more so than Grey, because Palliser has cared more and longer about dedicating himself to the public good through politics, and he has reached his pinnacle. In the previous paragraph Glencora has been describing how entirely powerless she was as she was moved against her will to Gatherum Castle to have the baby. She has called the birth of the baby boy a triumph for Palliser. Trollope lays out clearly the contrasting agency that Glencora (powerless) and Palliser (triumphant) possess. While Trollope does not denigrate the triumphs of Plantagenet Palliser and John Grey, he does show us that these men's fates are connected to social privileges and prerogatives not available to Lady Glencora or Alice Vavasor. Perhaps especially for this reason we are to forgive these women as well as Kate Vavasor and Mrs. Greenow—for actions they undertook (or contemplated undertaking) when trying to govern and shape their own lives. [CMS & RR 2025]

Source abbreviations

LS : Lewis and Short *Latin Dictionary*
LSJ : Liddell-Scott-Jones *Greek-English Lexicon*
OCD : *Oxford Classical Dictionary*
OED : *Oxford English Dictionary*

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