



Anthony Trollope
The Duke's Children
The Complete Text

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



Chapters 47-57

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Jim Siegel



the Trollope
Society

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47: Miss Boncassen's Idea of Heaven

Isabel reveals Silverbridge's marriage proposal to the astonished Mary and confesses her love

"If to be his wife seems to me to be the greatest bliss that could happen to a woman...I told him that he must ask his friends;—that I would not be his wife to be rejected by them all. Nor will I. Though it be heaven I will not creep there through a hole. If I cannot go in with my head upright, I will not go even there."...

"I will do as I have said," continued Miss Boncassen. "I will do as I have said. Though I love your brother down to the ground he shall not marry me without his father's consent."

48: The Party at Custins is Broken Up

- Mary refuses Lady Cantrip's request to meet with suitor Popplecourt

“Lord Popplecourt! He cares for nothing but his coal-mines. Of course, if you bid me see him I will; but it can do no good. I despise him, and if he troubles me I shall hate him. As for marrying him,—I would sooner die this minute.”

After this Lady Cantrip did not insist on the interview.

- Isabel reiterates to Mary she does not wish to disgrace Silverbridge

“Under certain circumstances I would not marry him. You don't suppose that I think he would be disgraced? If so I would go away at once, and he should never again see my face or hear my voice. I think myself good enough for the best man God ever made. But if others think differently, and those others are so closely concerned with him, and would be so closely concerned with me, as to trouble our joint lives,—then will I neither subject him to such sorrow nor will I encounter it myself.”

- Mary's dilemma

Yet Mary could not tell her tale in return. She could not show the reverse picture;—that she being a star was anxious to dispose of herself after the fashion of poor human rushlights. It was not that she was ashamed of her love, but that she could not bring herself to yield altogether in reference to the great descent which Silverbridge would have to make.

48: The Party at Custins is Broken Up

The Duke and Isabel discuss rank

"Many people think that if (Father) would only allow himself to be put in nomination, he might be the next president."

"The choice, I am sure, would do your country honour."

"And yet his father was a poor labourer who earned his bread among the shipping at New York. That kind of thing would be impossible here."

"My dear young lady, there you wrong us.... "There is no greater mistake than to suppose that inferiority of birth is a barrier to success in this country."

She listened to this and to much more on the same subject with attentive ears,—not shaken in her ideas as to the English aristocracy in general, but thinking that she was perhaps learning something of his own individual opinions. If he were more liberal than others, on that liberality might perhaps be based her own happiness and fortune.

“That (the Duke) should have one set of opinions so contrary to another set,—poor Isabel Boncassen did not understand.”

He, in all this, was quite unconscious of the working of her mind. Nor in discussing such matters generally did he ever mingle his own private feelings, his own pride of race and name, his own ideas of what was due to his ancient rank with the political creed by which his conduct in public life was governed. The peer who sat next to him in the House of Lords, whose grandmother had been a washerwoman and whose father an innkeeper, was to him every whit as good a peer as himself...

But there was an inner feeling in his bosom as to his own family, his own name, his own children, and his own personal self, which was kept altogether apart from his grand political theories. It was a subject on which he never spoke; but the feeling had come to him as a part of his birthright. And he conceived that it would pass through him to his children after the same fashion. It was this which made the idea of a marriage between his daughter and Tregear intolerable to him, and which would operate as strongly in regard to any marriage which his son might contemplate.

49: The Major's Fate

The affair of Prime Minister and the nail was not allowed to fade away into obscurity. Through September and October it was made matter for pungent inquiry. The Jockey Club was alive. Sporting men declared that the honour of the turf required that every detail of the case should be laid open. But by the end of October, though every detail had been surmised, nothing had in truth been discovered. Nobody doubted but that Tifto had driven the nail into the horse's foot, and that Green and Gilbert Villiers had shared the bulk of the plunder. They had gone off on their travels together, and the fact that each of them had been in possession of about twenty thousand pounds was proved....

Then in the first week in November a special meeting was called at the Beargarden, at which Lord Silverbridge was asked to attend. "It is impossible that he should be allowed to remain in the club." This was said to Lord Silverbridge by Mr. Lupton. "Either he must go or the club must be broken up."

Silverbridge was very unhappy on the occasion. He had at last been reasoned into believing that the horse had been made the victim of foul play; but he persisted in saying that there was no conclusive evidence against Tifto. The matter was argued with him. Tifto had laid bets against the horse; Tifto had been hand-and-glove with Green; Tifto could not have been absent from the horse above two minutes; the thing could not have been arranged without Tifto. As he had brought Tifto into the club, and had been his partner on the turf, it was his business to look into the matter. "But for all that," said he, "I'm not going to jump on a man when he's down, unless I feel sure that he's guilty."

49: The Major's Fate

Then the meeting was held, and Tifto himself appeared. When the accusation was made by Mr. Lupton, who proposed that he should be expelled, he burst into tears....

I've got to say that I'm here," said Tifto, still crying, "and if I'd done anything of that kind, of course I'd have gone with the rest of 'em. I put it to Lord Silverbridge to say whether I'm that sort of fellow." Then he sat down.

Upon this there was a pause, and the club was manifestly of opinion that Lord Silverbridge ought to say something. "I think that Major Tifto should not have betted against the horse," said Silverbridge.

"I can explain that," said the Major. "Let me explain that. Everybody knows that I'm a man of small means. I wanted to 'edge, I only wanted to 'edge."

Mr. Lupton shook his head. "Why have you not shown me your book?"

"I told you before that it was stolen. Green got hold of it. I did win a little. I never said I didn't. But what has that to do with hammering a nail into a horse's foot? I have always been true to you, Lord Silverbridge, and you ought to stick up for me now."

"I will have nothing further to do with the matter," said Silverbridge, "one way or the other," and he walked out of the room,—and out of the club. The affair was ended by a magnanimous declaration on the part of Major Tifto that he would not remain in a club in which he was suspected, and by a consent on the part of the meeting to receive the Major's instant resignation.

50: The Duke's Arguments

Lady Cantrip tells the Duke Mary/Popplecourt match is no go and he should relent.

"She ought to do as she is told," said the Duke, remembering how obedient his Glencora had been...

"She will do nothing without your permission. But she will remain unmarried unless she be allowed to marry Mr. Tregear."

"What do you advise then?"

"That you should yield. As regards money, you could give them what they want. Let him go into public life. You could manage that for him."

"He is Conservative!"

"What does that matter when the question is one of your daughter's happiness? Everybody tells me that he is clever and well conducted."

It is very well to tell a man that he should yield, but there is nothing so wretched to a man as yielding. Young people and women have to yield,—but for such a man as this, to yield is in itself a misery. In this matter the Duke was quite certain of the propriety of his judgment. To yield would be not only to mortify himself, but to do wrong at the same time.

...

If every foolish girl were indulged, all restraint would be lost, and there would be an end to those rules as to birth and position by which he thought his world was kept straight. And then, mixed with all this, was his feeling of the young man's arrogance in looking for such a match.

50: The Duke's Arguments

The Duke's reacts to Frank Tregear's letter

He read the letter very carefully, and at first was simply astonished by what he considered to be the unparalleled arrogance of the young man. In regard to rank this young gentleman thought himself to be as good as anybody else! In regard to money he did acknowledge some inferiority. But that was a misfortune, and could not be helped! Not only was the letter arrogant;—but the fact that he should dare to write any letter on such a subject was proof of most unpardonable arrogance. The Duke walked about the room thinking of it till he was almost in a passion. Then he read the letter again and was gradually pervaded by a feeling of its manliness. Its arrogance remained, but with its arrogance there was a certain boldness which induced respect. Whether I am such a son-in-law as you would like or not, it is your duty to accept me, if by refusing to do so you will render your daughter miserable. That was Mr. Tregear's argument. He himself might be prepared to argue in answer that it was his duty to reject such a son-in-law, even though by rejecting him he might make his daughter miserable. He was not shaken; but with his condemnation of the young man there was mingled something of respect.

51: The Duke's Guests

"The Duke of Omnium presents his compliments to Mr. Francis Tregear, and begs to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Tregear's letter of ———. The Duke has no other communication to make to Mr. Tregear, and must beg to decline any further correspondence." ...

It was not by his own doing that he belonged to an aristocracy which, if all exclusiveness were banished from it, must cease to exist. But being what he was, having been born to such privileges and such limitations, was he not bound in duty to maintain a certain exclusiveness? He would appeal to the young man himself to say whether marriage ought to be free between all classes of the community. And if not between all, who was to maintain the limits but they to whom authority in such matters is given? So much in regard to rank! And then he would ask this young man whether he thought it fitting that a young man whose duty, according to all known principles, it must be to earn his bread, should avoid that manifest duty by taking a wife who could maintain him.

51: The Duke's Guests

Lady Mary at the Duke's request sends invitations to visit with them at Matching at Christmastime to the Finns, the Boncassens, Mabel Grex, Miss Cass and Silverbridge.

All accept.

Though Silverbridge had written to his sister in his usual careless style, he had considered the matter much. The three months were over. He had no idea of any hesitation on his part. He had asked her to be his wife, and he was determined to go on with his suit. Had he ever been enabled to make the same request to Mabel Grex, or had she answered him when he did half make it in a serious manner, he would have been true to her. He had not told his father, or his sister, or his friends, as Isabel had suggested. He would not do so till he should have received some more certain answer from her. But in respect to his love he was prepared to be quite as obstinate as his sister. It was a matter for his own consideration, and he would choose for himself. The three months were over, and it was now his business to present himself to the lady again.

That Lady Mabel should also be at Matching, would certainly be a misfortune

52: Miss Boncassen Tells the Truth

"I will tell you the truth. 'Is it possible,' I said to myself, 'that such a man as that can want me to be his wife; he an Englishman, of the highest rank and the greatest wealth, and one that any girl in the world would love?'"...

And is it possible that I, who by all his friends will be regarded as a nobody, who am an American,—with merely human workaday blood in my veins,—that such a one as I should become his wife? Then I told myself that it was not possible. It was not in accordance with the fitness of things. All the dukes in England would rise up against it, and especially that duke whose good-will would be imperative."

"Why should he rise up against it?"

"You know he will."...

'If he comes to me again,' I said—'if it should be that he should come to me again, I will tell him that he shall be my heaven on earth,—if,—if,—if the ill-will of his friends would not make that heaven a hell to both of us.' I did not tell you quite all that."

"You told me nothing but that I was to come again in three months."

"I said more than that. I bade you ask your father. Now you have come again. You cannot understand a girl's fears and doubts. How should you? I thought perhaps you would not come. When I saw you whispering to that highly-born well-bred beauty, and remembered what I was myself, I thought that—you would not come."

"Then you must love me."

52: Miss Boncassen Tells the Truth

"Love you! Oh, my darling!—No, no, no," she said, as she retreated from him round the corner of the billiard-table, and stood guarding herself from him with her little hands. "You ask if I love you. You are entitled to know the truth. From the sole of your foot to the crown of your head I love you as I think a man would wish to be loved by the girl he loves. You have come across my life, and have swallowed me up, and made me all your own. But I will not marry you to be rejected by your people. No; nor shall there be a kiss between us till I know that it will not be so."

"May I speak to your father?"

"For what good? I have not spoken to father or mother because I have known that it must depend upon your father. Lord Silverbridge, if he will tell me that I shall be his daughter, I will become your wife,—oh, with such perfect joy, with such perfect truth! If it can never be so, then let us be torn apart,—with whatever struggle, still at once. In that case I will get myself back to my own country as best I may, and will pray to God that all this may be forgotten." Then she made her way round to the door, leaving him fixed to the spot in which she had been standing. But as she went she made a little prayer to him. "Do not delay my fate. It is all in all to me." And so he was left alone in the billiard-room.

53: “Then I am as Proud as a Queen”

Clear to Mabel and Isabel they were rivals... “Through it all the father never suspected the real state of his son's mind.”

Boncassen replies when Silverbridge says he wants to marry his daughter:

“Think of the position in which you are placing her. You are struggling to win her heart.” Silverbridge as he heard this assured himself that there was no need for any further struggling in that direction.

“Perhaps you have won it. Yet she may feel that she cannot become your wife. She may well say to herself that this which is offered to her is so great, that she does not know how to refuse it; and may yet have to say, at the same time, that she cannot accept it without disgrace. You would not put one that you love into such a position?”

"As for disgrace,—that is nonsense. I beg your pardon, Mr. Boncassen."

"Would it be no disgrace that she should be known here, in England, to be your wife, and that none of those of your rank,—of what would then be her own rank,—should welcome her into her new world?"

"That would be out of the question."

53: "Then I am as Proud as a Queen"

Boncassen's reply continued...

"If your own father refused to welcome her, would not others follow suit?"

"You don't know my father."

"You seem to know him well enough to fear that he would object."

"Yes;—that is true."

"What more do I want to know?"

"If she were once my wife he would not reject her. Of all human beings he is in truth the kindest and most affectionate."

"And therefore you would try him after this fashion? No, my Lord; I cannot see my way through these difficulties. You can say what you please to him as to your own wishes. But you must not tell him that you have any sanction from me."

53: "Then I am as Proud as a Queen"

(Silverbridge) intended to persevere, trusting much to a belief that when once he was married his father would "come round." His father always did come round. But the more he thought of it, the more impossible it seemed to him that he should ask his father's consent at the present moment. Lady Mabel's presence in the house was an insuperable obstacle. He thought that he could do it if he and his father were alone together, or comparatively alone. He must be prepared for an opposition, at any rate of some days, which opposition would make his father quite unable to entertain his guests while it lasted.... But as he could not declare his wishes to his father, and was thus disobeying Isabel's behests, he must explain the difficulty to her....

"I have told your father everything."

"Yes;—I know that. What good does that do? Father is not a Duke of Omnium. No one supposed that he would object."

"But he did," said Silverbridge.

"Yes;—as I do,—for the same reason; because he would not have his daughter creep in at a hole. But to your own father you have not ventured to speak." Then he told his story, as best he knew how. It was not that he feared his father, but that he felt that the present moment was not fit. "He wishes you to marry that Lady Mabel Grex," she said. He nodded his head. "And you will marry her?"

53: "Then I am as Proud as a Queen"

"Never! I might have done so, had I not seen you. I should have done so, if she had been willing. But now I never can,—never, never." Her hand had dropped from his arm, but now she put it up again for a moment, so that he might feel the pressure of her fingers. "Say that you believe me."

"I think I do."

"You know I love you."

"I think you do. I am sure I hope you do. If you don't, then I am—a miserable wretch."

"With all my heart I do."

"Then I am as proud as a queen. You will tell him soon?"

"As soon as you are gone. As soon as we are alone together. I will;—and then I will follow you to London. Now shall we not say, Good-bye?"

"Good-bye, my own," she whispered.

54: "I Don't Think She Is a Snake"

Mabel anguishes about not accepting Silverbridge's marriage proposal before Isabel appeared

Lady Mabel had not been long at Matching before she learned that she had much in her favour. She perceived that the Duke himself had no suspicion of what was going on, and that he was strongly disposed in her favour. She unravelled it all in her own mind. There must have been some agreement, between the father and the son, when the son had all but made his offer to her.

In all this she half-confided her thoughts and her prospects to her old friend, Miss Cassewary. "That girl has gone at last," she said to Miss Cass.

"I fear she has left her spells behind her, my dear."

"Of course she has. The venom out of the snake's tooth will poison all the blood; but still the poor bitten wretch does not always die."

"I don't think she is a snake."

"Don't be moral, Cass. She is a snake in my sense. She has got her weapons, and of course it is natural enough that she should use them. If I want to be Duchess of Omnium, why shouldn't she?"

54: "I Don't Think She Is a Snake"

Silverbridge announces he must go to Polpenno to support Frank Tregear's bid to become the MP for the borough as the seat unexpectedly become available

55: Polpenno

The whole of the next morning was spent in canvassing, and the whole of the afternoon. In the evening there was a great meeting at the Polwenning Assembly Room, which at the present moment was in the hands of the Conservative party. Here Frank Tregear made an oration, in which he declared his political convictions. The whole speech was said at the time to be very good; but the portion of it which was apparently esteemed the most, had direct reference to Mr. Carbottle (the Liberal candidate).

There was a clamour for the young lord. He was the son of an ex-Prime Minister, and therefore of course he could speak. He was himself a member of Parliament, and therefore could speak, He had boldly severed himself from the faulty political tenets of his family, and therefore on such an occasion as this was peculiarly entitled to speak. When a man goes electioneering, he must speak. At a dinner-table to refuse is possible:—or in any assembly convened for a semi-private purpose, a gentleman may declare that he is not prepared for the occasion. But in such an emergency as this, a man,—and a member of Parliament,—cannot plead that he is not prepared. A son of a former Prime Minister who had already taken so strong a part in politics as to have severed himself from his father, not prepared to address the voters of a borough whom he had come to canvass! The plea was so absurd, that he was thrust on to his feet before he knew what he was about.

Silverbridge was ill-prepared to speak but...

55: Polpenno

"My friend Frank Tregear," he began, rushing at once at his subject, "is a very good fellow, and I hope you'll elect him." Then he paused, not remembering what was to come next; but the sentiment which he had uttered appeared to his auditors to be so good in itself and so well-delivered, that they filled up a long pause with continued clappings and exclamations. "

Yes," continued the young member of Parliament, encouraged by the kindness of the crowd, "I have known Frank Tregear ever so long, and I don't think you could find a better member of Parliament anywhere." There were many ladies present and they thought that the Duke's son was just the person who ought to come electioneering among them....The women waved their handkerchiefs and the men stamped their feet. Here was an orator come among them!

"You all know all about it just as well as I do," continued the orator, "and I am sure you feel that he ought to be member for Polpenno." There could be no doubt about that as far as the opinion of the audience went. "There can't be a better fellow than Frank Tregear, and I ask you all to give three cheers for the new member." Ten times three cheers were given, and the Carbottleites outside the door who had come to report what was going on at the Tregear meeting were quite of opinion that this eldest son of the former Prime Minister was a tower of strength.

"I don't know anything about Mr. Carbottle," continued Silverbridge, who was almost growing to like the sound of his own voice. "Perhaps he's a good fellow too." "No; no, no. A very bad fellow indeed," was heard from different parts of the room. "I don't know anything about him. I wasn't at school with Carbottle." This was taken as a stroke of the keenest wit, and was received with infinite cheering.

Silverbridge was in the pride of his youth, and Carbottle was sixty at the least. Nothing could have been funnier. "He seems to be a stout old party, but I don't think he's the man for Polpenno. I think you'll return Frank Tregear. I was at school with him;—and I tell you, that you can't find a better fellow anywhere than Frank Tregear."

55: Polpenno

Trollope on the “joy” of canvassing for votes...and in the rain!

Parliamentary canvassing is not a pleasant occupation. Perhaps nothing more disagreeable, more squalid, more revolting to the senses, more opposed to personal dignity, can be conceived. The same words have to be repeated over and over again in the cottages, hovels, and lodgings of poor men and women who only understand that the time has come round in which they are to be flattered instead of being the flatterers....

Then he goes on to the next house, and the same thing with some variation is endured again. Some guide, philosopher, and friend, who accompanies him, and who is the chief of the cortège, has calculated on his behalf that he ought to make twenty such visitations an hour, and to call on two hundred constituents in the course of the day. As he is always falling behind in his number, he is always being driven on by his philosopher, till he comes to hate the poor creatures to whom he is forced to address himself, with a most cordial hatred.

55: Polpenno

Canvassing for votes continued...

It is a nuisance to which no man should subject himself in any weather. But when it rains there is superadded a squalor and an ill humour to all the party which makes it almost impossible for them not to quarrel before the day is over. To talk politics to Mrs. Bubbs under any circumstances is bad, but to do so with the conviction that the moisture is penetrating from your greatcoat through your shirt to your bones, and that while so employed you are breathing the steam from those seven other wet men at the door, is abominable. To have to go through this is enough to take away all the pride which a man might otherwise take from becoming a member of Parliament. But to go through it and then not to become a member is base indeed! To go through it and to feel that you are probably paying at the rate of a hundred pounds a day for the privilege is most disheartening. Silverbridge, as he backed up Tregear in the uncomfortable work, congratulated himself on the comfort of having a Mr. Sprugeon and a Mr. Sprout who could manage his borough for him without a contest.

They worked on that day all the morning till one, when they took luncheon, all reeking with wet, at the King's Head,—so that a little money might be legitimately spent in the cause. Then, at two, they sallied out again, vainly endeavouring to make their twenty calls within the hour.

56: The News is Sent to Matching

There were nine days of this work, during which Lord Silverbridge became very popular and made many speeches. Tregear did not win half so many hearts, or recommend himself so thoroughly to the political predilections of the borough;—but nevertheless he was returned. It would probably be unjust to attribute this success chiefly to the young Lord's eloquence...

The chief man among the candidate's guides and friends, that leading philosopher who would not allow anybody to go home from the rain, and who kept his eyes so sharply open to the pecuniary doings of the Carbottleites, that Mr. Carbottle's guides and friends had hardly dared to spend a shilling;—it was he who had in truth been efficacious. In every attempt they had made to spend their money they had been looked into and circumvented. As Mr. Carbottle had been brought down to Polpenno on purpose that he might spend money,—as he had nothing but his money to recommend him, and as he had not spent it,—the free and independent electors of the borough had not seen their way to vote for him....

The electioneering guide, philosopher, and friend...he knew very well how the seat had been secured. Ten shillings a head would have sent three hundred true Liberals to the ballot-boxes! The mode of distributing the money had been arranged; but the Conservative tailor had been too acute, and not half-a-sovereign could be passed. The tailor got twenty-five pounds for his work, and that was smuggled in among the bills for printing.

Silverbridge writes to the Duke about the canvassing and win and Tregear writes to Lady Mabel

56: The News is Sent to Matching

From Frank's letter to Lady Mabel:

Tell (Mary) that my pride in being a member of Parliament is much more on her behalf than on my own. The man who dares to love her ought at any rate to be something in the world. If it might be,—if ever it may be,—I should wish to be something for her sake. I am sure you will be glad of my success yourself, for my own sake.”

Lady Mabel shows the letter to the Duke in hope of aiding Frank's suit

The Duke took the letter in his hand and did read it, very slowly. "What he says about young men without means going into Parliament is true enough." This was not encouraging, but as the Duke went on reading, Mabel did not think it necessary to argue the matter. He had to read the last paragraph twice before he understood it. He did read it twice, and then folding the letter very slowly gave it back to his companion.

"What ought I to do?" asked Lady Mabel.

"As you and I, my dear, are friends, I think that any carrying of a message to Mary would be breaking confidence. I think that you should not speak to Mary about Mr. Tregear." Then he changed the subject. Lady Mabel of course understood that after that she could not say a word to Mary about the election at Polpenno.

57: The Meeting at the Bobtailed Fox

It was decided that a general meeting of the members of the Runnymede hunt should be called together with the express object of getting rid of the Major as Master of the Hounds.

(The invitation was sent to the Major) with an intimation that if he wished to attend no objection would be made to his presence.

"You are a swindler, a cheat, a rascal of the very deepest dye;—a rogue so mean that it is revolting to be in the same room with you!" That was what Mr. Jawstock had to say... you have evidence of what the Jockey Club thinks. The Master of our Hunt has been banished from racecourses." ... "At any rate he has been thoroughly disgraced," continued Mr. Jawstock, "as a sporting man. He has been driven out of the Beargarden Club." "He resigned in disgust at their treatment," said a friend of the Major's. "Then let him resign in disgust at ours," said Mr. Jawstock, "for we won't have him here."

57: The Meeting at the Bobtailed Fox

This is a very disagreeable position," (the Major) said, "very disagreeable indeed. As for the nail in the horse's foot I know no more about it than the babe unborn. But I've got two things to say, and I'll say what aren't the most consequence first. These hounds belong to me." Here he paused, and a loud contradiction came from many parts of the room. Mr. Jawstock, however, proposed that the Major should be heard to the end. "I say they belong to me," repeated the Major. "If anybody tries his hand at anything else the law will soon set that to rights. But that aren't of much consequence. What I've got to say is this. Let the matter be referred. If that 'orse had a nail run into his foot,—and I don't say he hadn't,—who was the man most injured? Why, Lord Silverbridge. Everybody knows that. I suppose he dropped well on to eighty thousand pounds! I propose to leave it to him. Let him say. He ought to know more about it than any one. He and I were partners in the horse. His Lordship aren't very sweet upon me just at present. Nobody need fear that he'll do me a good turn. I say leave it to him."

In this matter the Major had certainly been well advised. A rumour had become prevalent among sporting circles that Silverbridge had refused to condemn the Major. It was known that he had paid his bets without delay, and that he had, to some extent, declined to take advice from the leaders of the Jockey Club. The Major's friends were informed that the young lord had refused to vote against him at the club. Was it not more than probable that if this matter were referred to him he would refuse to give a verdict against his late partner?...

57: The Meeting at the Bobtailed Fox

Put it to the vote, Mr. Jawstock," said the livery-stable keeper. Mr. Topps, who had had great experience in public meetings, hereupon expressed an opinion that they might as well go to a vote. No doubt he was right if the matter was one which must sooner or later be decided in that manner....

Then there came a show of hands,—first for those who desired to refer the matter to Lord Silverbridge, and afterwards for Tifto's direct enemies,—for those who were anxious to banish Tifto out of hand, without reference to any one. At last the matter was settled. To the great annoyance of Mr. Jawstock and the farmers, the meeting voted that Lord Silverbridge should be invited to give his opinion as to the innocence or guilt of his late partner.

Questions for Breakout Rooms

- Did Major Tifto get the punishment he deserved or was he treated unfairly?
- Do they have integrity (the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles that one refuses to change) or are they obstinate (stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or chosen course of action) OR both? And why do you think so?
 - Isabel
 - Lady Mabel
 - Lady Mary
 - Mr. Boncassen
 - Frank Tregear
 - The Duke
 - Lady Cantrip
 - Silverbridge