

Sonia Bičanić

## Writing for the Magazines

A Study Based on the Novels of the *Cornhill Magazine*  
(1860—1880)

I... felt that the rushing mode of publication to which the system of serial stories had given rise, and by which small parts as they were written were sent hot to the press, was injurious to the work done<sup>1</sup>.

This remark of Trollope's, and a superficial acquaintance with the habits of Dickens and Thackeray, have made it seem that the writing of a novel to be published in serial parts was a haphazard or mechanical mode of construction, generally to be used as part excuse for formlessness in the Victorian novel. A study of the novels serialized in the *Cornhill Magazine* between 1860—1880 show how varied were the ways in which novelists set about the task of writing a novel to be published in instalments, and how different was the effect this form of publication had upon individual writers.

Serialization, as a primary method of publication, could be met in three main ways. Sometimes the novelist, as far as possible, ignored the serial divisions, and wrote a novel based on some other constructional plan, or on no particular plan, and he, or the editor, simply kept breaking the story off when a serial part had to end. In this way serialization had the least effect on the structure and composition of the novel. Complete disregard, however, is rarely found, and it seems to have been almost impossible for a writer to take no account whatsoever of the serial division when writing a novel which he knew was to come out in instalments. Alternatively the novelist could treat the serial ending mechanically, feeling that the instalment must end on a note of excitement or at least of heightened interest. This method itself was open to two uses: sometimes the point of

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<sup>1</sup> A. Trollope, *An Autobiography* II vols., 1883, I, 186.

suspense or heightened interest on which the part ended grew out of the situation as it was, and thus added piquancy and reinforcement to the natural desire of every novel reader to know what was coming next, or, more crudely, the suspense or interest could be made by the introduction of some new aspect at the end of the serial part. Finally the part could be taken as a constructional challenge, and made to reinforce the effect that the novelist was trying to achieve. This last and most exacting way is less often found, but when it is, it means that the serial instalment played a definite part in the creation of the total effect, and must have affected the responses of the first readers of the novels in a way which it is perhaps difficult for us to realize today.

### 1. The Attempt to Disregard

The only novelist who knew her novels were to be serialized, and yet completely disregarded the serial divisions in which they came out was Mrs. Gaskell. Her *Cornhill* novel was *Wives and Daughters*, published over a period of eighteen months from August 1864-January 1866. This novel was not her first experience of serialization for *Cranford* and *North and South* had already come out in *Household Words*. Dickens's letters over the second of these are full of interest and among the many showing the pains he went to as editor, and his views on serial construction.<sup>2</sup> For these views he could not, among all Victorian novelists, have found a less apt listener than Mrs. Gaskell, and the result of her experience over *North and South* was to make her feel repelled by the idea of serialization. She left a record of her feelings in the Preface to the volume edition, and published her next novel in volume form only.

For her last novel Mrs. Gaskell was persuaded back to the serial form partly because of her personal friendship with George Smith, and partly because of the attractive offer of £ 2,000 that he made her. In his letter making this offer he probably suggested that the novel should fill 24 *Cornhill* pages monthly, for, in her reply she asked »please how much of *my* writing is 24 pages of the *Cornhill*? and by what day of the month *must* you have the next month's MS to print, in case I am driven very hard?«. <sup>3</sup> The MS of *Wives and Daughters*<sup>4</sup> shows immediately why Dickens had all the trouble that he did. It is written on large sides of paper, and, beginning at the beginning

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<sup>2</sup> *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, ed. Walter Dexter, 3 vols., 1938, II, 542, 561—563, 570—571, 580.

<sup>3</sup> A. B. Hopkins, *Elizabeth Gaskell: her Life and Work*, 1952, p. 293.

<sup>4</sup> The MS of *Wives and Daughters* is in the John Rylands Library.

of the story, goes straight on to the end with no break even into chapters, and certainly no indication that any particular amount was to go into any particular serial number. Presumably she sent it in batches to Smith, and he, or his coeditor Frederick Greenwood, simply included as much in each issue as they needed. The lengths of the parts in any case are very uneven, and vary between 23—41.<sup>5</sup> In the serial it was divided into chapters, and the chapter headings may have been put in in the editorial office, or, perhaps more likely, by Mrs. Gaskell herself in proof. Unlike some novelists who enjoyed the stimulation of public reaction, Mrs. Gaskell was only upset by this aspect of serialization. In his Memoirs Smith recalled:

A letter of 1864, just before the publication of »Wives and Daughters« began in the *Cornhill*, displays her literary sensitiveness towards her audience. She begs that her name should not be advertised as the author of the new serial, not merely for her own sake but because she always feels the greatest difference between writing under her own name and anonymously. Writing under her own name she feels so completely 'en evidence' and hampered that the story suffers. And if she were known as the author, then after each number she would be subjected to criticisms, suggestions, and questions, which would perplex and shackle her in her work just as much as the remarks of visitors, during the progress of a picture, distort and weaken the original conception of an artist.<sup>6</sup>

For this reason Smith did not publish the customary trade notice announcing the author of the next serial, thus foregoing the draw of a popular name in order to spare Mrs. Gaskell in every possible way from the inconveniences of serialization. Indeed for this last novel the only way in which serialization can be said to have affected her was by the fact that she was never far ahead of the printer, and, although she did not make any exact serial division, she had to provide a certain amount every month.

One of the two first contributors to *Cornhill* was Trollope. With him the technical aspect is exactly the opposite of Mrs. Gaskell's lack of system, and his work-sheets show him to have consistently provided exactly 48 pages of MS for each instalment of *Framley Parsonage*, *The Small House at Allington* and *The Claverings*.<sup>7</sup> Trollope is a novelist however who progressed through three stages in his use of the serial part. *Framley Parsonage*, his first *Cornhill* novel came out in sixteen monthly instalments, but only five of these end on anything that could possibly be considered a note of suspense. One of these five is

<sup>5</sup> The instalments filled the following number of *Cornhill* pages: 25, 30, 24, 26, 27, 23, 26, 26, 27, 27, 24, 29, 36, 39, 41, 34, 38, 11 (unfinished).

<sup>6</sup> L. Huxley ed. *The House of Smith Elder*, priv. pr. 1923, p. 81.

<sup>7</sup> Work sheets for all Trollope's novels are among his literary papers in the Bodleian Library.

the last part but one (Ch. XL). This conclusion of the penultimate part on a particularly strong note was a very common practice among serial novelists, and found in a large number of *Cornhill* novels. The reason for it was given most clearly by Charles Reade to William Blackwood when he was serializing *A Woman Hater* for *Blackwood's Magazine*:

Thinking it probable that you may desire to follow the usual plan of publishing in 3 vols. before actual completion in *Maga*. I have been careful to conclude No. 12 (the last but one) with the strongest and most exciting situation in the tale; and having regard to the interest of the Magazine, and my own reputation, have put the biggest business of all into the last instalment.<sup>8</sup>

This last but one serial ending was supposed to stimulate library lending of the novel, the three-volume edition of which was published before the ending of the magazine run for the same reason. The penultimate instalment of *Framley Parsonage* left the following situation: Lucy Robarts was still at Hoggstock nursing Mrs. Crawley; Lord Lufton had returned to Framley Court but still had no sign that his mother would allow him to marry Lucy; the bailiffs had come to Framley Parsonage and Mark's disgrace been heard of in Barchester; there were hints that Lord Dumbello had left for Paris. Thus the part ended with all three main threads of interest confused. On the whole however *Framley Parsonage* may be considered as a novel in which the serial instalments were disregarded in all but the mathematical sense.

After the success of *Framley Parsonage* Smith naturally wanted another novel from Trollope, and his next contribution (other than the stop-gap *Brown, Jones & Robinson*) was *The Small House at Allington* which came out in twenty parts. Trollope did not in theory reckon to start the publication of a novel before he had finished writing it. He admitted to breaking this rule in the unusual case of *Framley Parsonage* but this was not in fact such an absolute exception as his *Autobiography* suggests. The agreement for *The Small House* was signed July 9, 1861, but Trollope did not start work on the novel until a year later, May 20, 1862, finishing it ten months later, February 11, 1863. Publication however began in September 1862, thus, in spite of his awareness that »an artist should keep in his hand the power of fitting the beginning of his work to the end«<sup>9</sup> he was only just half way through when serialization began. *The Small House* shows a little more regard for the serial part than simply that of accurate measure. Indeed Trollope in this novel

<sup>8</sup> Malcolm Elwin, *Charles Reade. A Biography*, 1931 p. 313.

<sup>9</sup> Trollope, *Autobiography*, I, 185

seemed to take a delight in rounding off the instalment so that the reader was seldom left in a state of suspense. There was never any suspense over the original engagement of Lily Dale and Adolphus Crosbie. Part four ended not on a note of anxiety lest Crosbie accept Lily's offer to free him, but in the knowledge that he had refused to do so. When Lord de Guest was attacked by the bull and saved by Johnny Eames all sense of crisis was over before the instalment ended with the Earl and Johnny comfortably on their way to eat dinner. In four instalments of the novel Trollope did end on a slight upward note, the strongest of these was at the end of the last instalment but one (end of Ch. LVII).

Although serial influence on the construction of the novels of Mrs. Gaskell and Trollope was so slight, nevertheless they were openly admitted to be successful as serialists, fulfilling in every way a publisher's expectations. »'Wives and Daughters' constrained many to take up the periodical in which the quiet tale month by month unwound itself«<sup>10</sup> wrote *The Athenaeum* reviewer when the novel came out in two volumes, and on the volume publication of *The Small House* made a somewhat similar remark adding »those who have taken it in monthly fractions will go over the ground again . . . recognizing the old landmarks where the story broke off, leaving them hungry and impatient at the month's pause that must intervene before the next instalment«.<sup>11</sup>

## 2. More Next Week

As one might expect the most common way of using the instalment ending was to finish on a strong note of suspense calculated to increase the readers' natural curiosity. In considering the novel from this point of view it is important to know whether the novelist kept the serial divisions in mind when he was writing, or whether he handed the MS over entire and then left the editor to make the divisions where he felt there were good breaks in the story — as was the case with George Gissing's *Cornhill* novel *A Life's Morning*. Much light on this point is shed by the correspondence between Leslie Stephen and Thomas Hardy when Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* was coming out in *Cornhill*. In his first letter to Hardy, expressing his pleasure at reading *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Stephen wrote that the novel had too little incident for a magazine story for:

<sup>10</sup> *The Athenaeum*, March 3, 1866, p. 295

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, March 26, 1864, p. 437

»though I do not want a murder in every number, it is necessary to catch the attention of readers by some distinct and well arranged plot.«<sup>12</sup>

The interesting letter in which this phrase appears is reminiscent of letters sent by Dickens to would be contributors, and we see that Stephen definitely suggests that the author keep in mind a different design when writing for volume and for serial publication.

In June 1873 Hardy sent Stephen a few chapters of *Far From the Madding Crowd* and Stephen accepted it in October or September but asked Hardy if he began to issue the novel the following January whether he could keep ahead of the printer month by month. Hardy replied that he thought he could, so Stephen sent the first number to the printers asking Hardy to send the second soon.<sup>13</sup> The arrival of the second instalment gave rise to another letter from Stephen which throws light on the role which must sometimes have been played by the editor in the serial division of a novel. This letter was sent to Hardy on January 8, 1874 when the first instalment had already been published and the second was being printed:

As printed the February number takes 29 pages. This is rather long and I propose to end with chapter 8 i. e. on page 26; where I think there is a better break.

The March number will then have 4 pages added to it, and would have to end either with Chap XV, wh. would make 23 pages or with Chap XVI wh. would make 32 pages... Now Chap. XVI is rather a long one; and it would be convenient to me if there were some possible halting-places between the two extremes. Would it be possible to divide Chap XVI into two and if so would you make the necessary alteration?<sup>14</sup>

This, and subsequent letters, shows the extent to which Stephen expected Hardy to tailor his novel to fit the serial part. It also suggests that the MS was sent to Stephen in small batches with an indication from Hardy of what he thought should go into each part, but that Stephen was finally responsible for the serial division of the early part of the novel.

Part I, which was Hardy's own, ended on as strong a note as ever an editor could desire, with the entire flock of sheep belonging to Farmer Oak plunging over a precipice, dispersing the savings of his life at one blow, and laying low his hopes of becoming an independent farmer. Part II as Hardy originally suggested it ended on a fairly neutral note, but in Stephen's

<sup>12</sup> R. L. Purdy, *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study*, 1954, p. 336

<sup>13</sup> F. W. Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, 1906, p.

<sup>14</sup> R. L. Purdy, *op. cit.* p. 337

revision ended more dramatically with Bathsheba's dismissal of her baliff, and the disappearance of Fanny Robin. Owing to some renumbering of the chapters and rewriting in proof Stephen's advice over the next two parts is difficult to follow with certainty. On the fifth instalment however he sent a commendatory letter to Hardy, only suggesting shortening, which Hardy obligingly carried out. This part ending, which was probably Hardy's own, introduced Sergeant Troy of the Dragoons, whose spurs became entangled in Bathsheba's skirt, thus definitely leaving the reader with the expectation of a new development.

There seems to have been no further correspondence between editor and novelist by which we might judge who was responsible for the division of the remaining serial parts, but as printing continued month by month the later parts are probably Hardy's own. Of the twelve parts of the novel four end at really dramatic moments, three at moments when the interest is deliberately heightened, and only four have no marked serial ending (the twelfth of course being the final instalment).<sup>15</sup> They are also very even in length except for the last.

Another novel in which most of the serial parts end on a strong upward note is *Harry Richmond*. It is almost certain that the serial division of this novel was Meredith's own, as when it was accepted for serialization Smith was in effect still editor as far as novels were concerned (though he, Frederick Greenwood and G. H. Lewes formed an editorial committee), and his normal practice was to buy novels unwritten<sup>16</sup> and to leave MS untouched. *Harry Richmond* was not Meredith's first serial. His first novel to be written and published in instalments was *Evan Harrington*, and there is an interesting series of letters between him and Lucas, editor of *Once a Week* in which the novel came out, showing the difficulty Meredith felt in adapting his style for a magazine public and arranging his matter to fit serial parts.<sup>17</sup> In his *Cornhill* novel *Harry Richmond* most of the instalments end on a note of heightened interest, and just under half of them end at definitely dramatic points.

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<sup>15</sup> The chapters in each part, and the length of the parts in *Cornhill*—pages was as follows: I—V 25 pgs., VI—VIII 24 pgs., IX—XIV 22 pgs., XV—XX 22½ pgs., XXI—XXIV 21½ pgs., XXV—XXIX 20 pgs., XXX—XXXIII 21 pgs., XXXIV—XXXVIII 23½ pgs., XXXIX—XLII 23 pgs., XLIII—XLVII 22½ pgs., XLVIII—LI 23 pgs., LII—LVII 32 pgs.

<sup>16</sup> He signed contracts with all the following before their novels had even been begun: Thackeray, Trollope, Mrs. Gaskell, Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, Mrs. Beecher Stowe.

<sup>17</sup> See R. A. Gettmann, »Serialization and *Evan Harrington*« PMLA LXIV (1949) pp. 963—975

The first four parts are devoted to four parts of Harry's early life: his childhood with his father (Chs. I—IV), his school-days and escape to the gypsies (Chs. V—VII), his boyhood at Riversley and escape to the sea (Chs. VIII—XII), his journey through Europe to the German principality of Saarkeld (Chs. XIII—XVI). The first instalment ends on a fairly rounded note, but one with a hint of anxiety in it as Harry is left at school by his father. The other three early parts however all end on heightened points of expectation, especially part four which ends dramatically as, what is apparently a bronze statue suddenly comes alive, and, unmounting, walks through the crowd of spectators straight to Harry whom it greets as son. Meredith himself was afraid that this fourth ending might be too melodramatic and wrote to a friend

I resisted every temptation to produce great and startling effects (after the scene of the Statue, which was permissible in art, as coming from a boy and coloured by a boy's wonder).<sup>18</sup>

Not only do these first four parts end on heightened notes, but they seem in general to have been constructed round the serial part. Indeed had Meredith continued his novel in the same way he would have to be included among those novelists who used the serial instalment constructionally. After Part IV however the novel became more complex and consideration of the content of the parts more perfunctory. Instalments VII and VIII both end on notes of suspense — Harry shot in a duel; Harry and Ottilia having a stolen meeting and realizing another person is present. Parts XI, XII and XIII all end on heightened notes. Thus of a total of fifteen instalments eight end dramatically or at a moment of suspense, and only in two of the remaining six does there seem to have been no account taken of the ending.

Wilkie Collins who published *Armadale* in *Cornhill* was aised to providing the short instalments necessary for *All the Year Round* and in a letter to Smith remarked that he found some difficulty in getting used to the longer *Cornhill* parts. This shows another aspect of serialization relevant to those novelists who wrote constantly for this form of publication. Some of them came to think of their work in blocks of a certain length. Trollope for instance normally wrote in lengths of *Cornhill* size, i. e. 48 of his MS pages, or sometimes 44 or 40. He did this even when writing a serial for publication in shorter instalments, for example his work-sheet for *Is he Popenjoy?* which came

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<sup>18</sup> *Letters of George Meredith*, coll. and ed. by his Son, 2 vols., 1912, I, 229



out in *All the Year Round* is numbered not in weekly parts, but in sixteen parts of 48 pages each to cover the 28 week serialization.

Collins, like Meredith, constructed the early instalments round the serial part. Part I comprises the history of the original Alan Armadale told on his death-bed. It ends as he dies, assured that the important letter he has just handed over is in the post. Part II takes up the story nineteen years later and is entirely devoted to the recollections of the Rev. Decimus Brock giving the history of the first nineteen years of life of young Alan Armadale and the entrance into his life of Ozias Midwinter. It ends with Midwinter putting into Mr. Brock's hands the identical letter that had been posted nineteen years before at the end of Part I. From this point onwards there is no clear cut planning of the novel in individual parts. Instalments III, V, VII and IX end on very strong notes, but as the novel progressed Collins paid less attention to any particular event at the end of a part, relying on the impetus of the mystery to carry the novel along.

Among all the novelists contributing to *Cornhill* none used the serial instalment in such a consistently sensational way as Charles Reade in *Put Yourself in His Place*. Of the seventeen serial instalments in which this novel came out all but one end at very strongly exciting moments. Part I ends with a threatening letter impaled by a knife on the forge of Henry Little, the worker who has incurred the enmity of the Trade Unions — a letter saying that if he does not return to London his carcase will be slit open. Part II ends on a note of even greater drama with Henry Little, who has disregarded all trade union warnings, blown out of the window and hanging scorched, blackened and blinded, outside. Similar breathless endings continue up to the end of the novel, and, in pursuance of the policy given to William Blackwood, Reade finished the penultimate part on a particularly strong note. Reade's use of the sensational ending was of great use to him as a serial novelist, but it would be wrong to suppose that it was developed by him entirely because of his experience with the serial part. He used this technique too when not writing serially. In the last parts of *The Cloister and the Hearth*, when Gerard is returning home to Margaret who is waiting for him in Holland, the suspense is made almost unbearable by skilful use of suspense and change of scene between chapters LXXX—XCV.

Although Hardy, Meredith, Collins and Reade all took into consideration the strong serial ending, their novels did not fall into the same category as those of the »made to measure« professional novelists. For one thing of the writers considered so

far only Trollope measured out his material into a definite number of pages per part. In *Harry Richmond* Meredith varied the length of his weekly parts between 24 and 36 pages, though most of them were between 27 and 32 pages long. Reade varied in *Put Yourself in His Place* from 19 to 32, most of them being between 21 to 26, *Far From the Madding Crowd* is more regular, and Wilkie Collins varied only between 22 to 26 pages. This is an important point for though the novelists may have had frequently in mind the identity of the part and the ending or rounding off, they did not feel compelled to curtail or bloat their novel as they went along in order to fit into some exactly stipulated number of pages.

Mrs. Oliphant and Mrs. Lynn Linton are typical examples of novelists who produced according to contract. Mrs. Oliphant's novel *Carita* came out regularly in 22 or 22½ pages (except part I which had only 20), each part being divided into three chapters and ending very frequently, though not invariably on a note of mild or acute suspense. *The Atonement of Leam Dundas*, by Mrs. Lynn Linton, was almost as regularly divided and varied only between 27 to 30 pages. Each part had four chapters, and most ended at a point of heightened interest or mystery. Charles Lever was a novelist who largely ignored the strong ending, but who had a curious mannerism of his own by which the division into serial instalments is often marked. He did not pay the slavish attention to length of Mrs. Oliphant or Trollope though his parts are fairly regular. A large number of his parts end with that actual termination of an event or scene which is achieved in real life by going to bed, or leaving a room, a house, or a country. While only two parts of *Lord Kilgobbin* end on dramatic notes, eleven end with the act of retiring or withdrawing. The following last words of chapters were also the last words of serial instalments: »»But if you mean to sleep at all, old fellow, it's time to begin,« and he chanted out the last words in a clear and ringing tone, as he banged the door behind him« (Ch. III); »... he finished his glass, lighted his bedroom candle, and nodding a good-night, strolled away« (Ch. V); »»By-by!« Said Atlee carelessly, and he strolled away« (Ch. XIV); »»I'll be shot if I don't like that rebel««, said Flood as he went to bed« (Ch. LV).

### 3. The Instalment Used Constructionally

The use of the serial instalment as a considered element in the construction of a novel is perhaps more frequent than might be supposed. As we have seen Meredith, and to a lesser extent Collins both constructed portions of their novels round the serial

part, though not continuing to do so throughout. In addition to these two writers Thackeray and Trollope to a lesser degree, and George Eliot and Henry James to a greater degree all used the serial instalment constructionally in fiction contributed to *Cornhill*.

Thackeray was very conscious of the number of pages that had to be filled, and for *The Adventures of Philip* provided a very regular number. Out of 20 parts seventeen have 23 or 24 pages and each part has two chapters (except part I which has three). This alone is not enough for it to be said that he used the serial part as an element of construction. One however feels *Philip* definitely to have been written part by part, and seven of the instalments end in a rather rambling kind of moralizing way that suggests that Thackeray was trying to fill the part out to the required number of pages and that the length of the part was here responsible for the method of writing and the content. Four of the parts end at dramatic moments, and eight at well marked points of heightened interest.

*Lovel the Widower* to an even greater extent than *Philip* appears to have been built round the serial part. *The Wolves and the Lamb*, the early dramatic sketch on which *Lovel the Widower* was based, had two acts. Thackeray, with six parts to fill, seems to have decided to base three on Act I and three on Act II. In the sketch there was almost nothing about the past life of the various characters, but it is the past that fills almost the whole of the first two serial instalments of the novel. Each of them is built on the same plan, that is a recounting of past history and its relation to the present moment. Instalment I largely traces the history of the narrator, Mr. Batchelor, of Lovel himself, and of Elizabeth Prior. It ends by bringing matters up to the present with Lovel's marriage, and his wife's death which leaves him a widower with two children in the devoted care of a governess. In the very last sentence of the part Thackeray gives a spice of added interest calculated to make a reader curious to see next month's part. Lovel's children are quarrelling with each other, and with their maternal grandmother:

»Silence Pop«, says papa, »and don't be a rude boy«.

»Isn't Pop a rude boy?« echoes Cecy.

»Silence, Pop«, continues Papa, »or you must go up to Miss Prior«<sup>19</sup>.

Since Miss Prior has been previously known to us only as the daughter of Mr. Batchelor's landlady, a lovely, young girl who covertly earns her living as a dancer, we cannot but wonder

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<sup>19</sup> W. M. Thackeray, *Lovel the Widower*, Ch. I, *Cornhill Magazine* I, 60.

what she comes to be doing in Lovel's household. Part II begins with the words »Of course we all know who she was, the Miss Prior of Shrublands«<sup>20</sup> and then goes back into the past to relate what has happened to Bessy Prior since her father's death. The part again ends with the entrance of the children's grandparents who bring with them Mrs. Prior. Part III has very little content and many passages are taken in a slightly different order and with slightly different wording from the latter part of. Act I of *The Wolves and the Lamb*, unlike parts I and II which deal with matters that are not part of the sketch. Part III has no very pronounced ending but it is interesting from another point of view as showing the conscious or subconscious tendency that must often have been present in a novelist to consider the serial part as having affinities with scenes or acts in a drama. The third part of *Lovel* ends with a fuss being made by Lovel's mother-in-law« I shall draw the curtain over this sad — this humiliating scene« writes Thackeray »Drop, little curtain! on this absurd little act«.<sup>21</sup> A similar consideration of serial parts as identifiable with acts is found in some of the notes of Henry James when he was wrestling with the presentation of *The Old Things*<sup>22</sup> (published in volume form as *The Spoils of Poynton*). Parts IV and VI of *Lovel* both end on dramatic notes. IV is largely devoted to Lovel's brother-in-law, Clarence, he is introduced in this part, and it might be called his. It ends by openly referring the reader to next month's instalment as Clarence recognizes in Miss Prior the girl whom he used to see dancing on the stage, »Elizabeth ran round, gave a little cry — but what happened I shall tell in the ensuing chapter«.<sup>23</sup> Part V, like part III adds little to the novel. It is as if Thackeray, having decided to give three instalments to each act of the play, had in reality only enough material for a four part tale. Thus, in this novel, we may say that instalments I, II, IV and VI have a definite form, based on the serial part (the early life of Lovel, Batchelor and Bessy; Bessy's life from her father's death until she becomes a governess; Captain Baker, and his recognition of Bessy; the final proposal of Lovel and the behaviour of the other characters), but that parts III and V were largely padding.

Another novel showing a partial use of the serial part as a unit of construction is Trollope's last *Cornhill* novel, *The Claverings*. As was usual with Trollope's contracts with pu-

<sup>20</sup> W. M. Thackeray, *Lovel the Widower*, Ch. II, *Cornhill Magazine* I, 233.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. III, *Cornhill Magazine*, I, 345.

<sup>22</sup> *The Notebooks of Henry James*, ed. F. O. Matthiessen and K. B. Murdock, 1947, pp. 198—199, 209.

<sup>23</sup> *Cornhill Magazine*, I, 402.

blishers the contract for *The Claverings* stipulated very exactly how long the parts were to be. Each was »to consist of sixteen numbers of 24 pages each«<sup>24</sup>. The first half of *The Claverings* is the best constructed of Trollope's *Cornhill novels*. It was not in the Barchester series and this made it necessary for him to create fresh characters and situations and may account in part for the greater clarity of outline. The central issue of the novel (originally called in Trollope's work-sheet *Harry Clavering*) was provided by the emotional situation of young Harry Clavering in love with two women, Julia Brabazon and Florence Burton. This although held well within the bounds of Victorian convention, is an honest and convincing exploration of the case of a young man genuinely in love with two women of very different attractions. Trollope in his *Autobiography* does not praise the novel. Harry he says »vacillates and is weak, — in which weakness is the fault of the book«<sup>25</sup>. But Harry's very weakness is what makes him convincing. His feelings as he veers between the two women, Julia's determination to win him back, and Florence's to hold him yet be prudent, are the core of the novel, and this central theme is stressed by the use of the serial parts in the first two thirds of the novel.

The first instalment starts immediately with Harry's proposal to Julia and her refusal of him because he is too poor. It goes on to relate Harry's decision to study Civil Engineering, his settling with the Burton family and meeting Florence, and ends with Julia's marriage to Lord Ongar. Part II takes place eighteen months later, when there has been time for Julia to become a widow and for Harry to become engaged to Florence. But on Julia's return to England from the continent he is impelled to go to the station to meet her, partly in fulfilment of the wish of Julia's sister, but mostly spurred on by his hardly abated passion for her. Julia meets him at the station coldly and he is able to return home consoling himself with the fitness of fate which is to give him Florence as a wife and not Julia. But a strong upward slant of expectation is given at the end of the second part when Julia writes a letter to Harry in which she thanks him with warmth and the beginning of indiscretion for coming to meet her, and asks him to come and see her.<sup>26</sup> In part III Julia and Harry's relationship is still apparently that of friendship based on distant relationship (Julia is the sister of Harry's cousin's wife), but their real

<sup>24</sup> Trollope's *Literary Papers*.

<sup>25</sup> Trollope, *Autobiography*, II, 2.

<sup>26</sup> For this letter, never reprinted since serialization see. S. Bićanić »A Missing Page of *The Claverings*«, *Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagabiensia* No. 8, Dec. 1959, pp. 13—15.

feelings, smothered in each of them, are becoming something different. It is in this part that Harry's susceptibility to women, and attractiveness for them, is underlined by his introduction into the family of Florence's brother. Once more the latter part of the instalment emphasizes his position between the two women with whom he is in love. Florence sends him a sensible and prudent letter refusing to marry him at once, with only the prospect of shared poverty for them in London. Just following this he gets a letter from Julia, suggestive and exciting, asking him to see on her behalf a man with whom her name has been unpleasantly linked. Julia's letter is as sure to make the blood of a young man run faster as Florence's is to damp even a lover's ardour. In part IV the interest is equally divided between Julia and Florence and it is something of a triumph on Trollope's part that he makes us believe in Harry's genuine attachment to Florence and not that he is unwillingly held only because of his plighted word. Florence, so level headed and sensible, has a natural sweetness and charm which we can understand as engaging one side of Harry's nature, while another side is everlastingly attracted by Julia. The end of the next part, the fifth, again stresses Harry's struggle between the two women and the stage that he has reached in his feelings. Until then he had been able to delude himself that he was being friendly to Julia as a relation now he begins to admit to himself that this is not the case, and, after a tantalizing visit to Julia, he returns to pray that he may remain true to Florence. Part VI is the first that does not deal mainly with the central Florence, Harry, Julia triangle. It is a complete digression, introducing Mme. Gordeloup, a Franco-Polish friend of Julia's, of strange accent and origins. The main event of the part is the death of Harry Clavering's baby cousin, which alters the succession of Clavering Park. The part ends with Harry's acknowledgement of his love for Julia, but as he holds her in his arms they are interrupted by Mme Gordeloup. The suspense of their relationship is retained into the beginning of Part VIII as Harry goes to his cousin's funeral, full of remorse and agonised love, but now Trollope began to get fond of those comic scenes which, he was later to write, were the »chief merit of *The Claverings*«<sup>27</sup> and the next two parts are mostly concerned with Archie Clavering's designs on Julia, in which he is aided by Mme Gordeloup, and with the equally dubious designs of Mme Gordeloup's brother on the same lady. In part X Harry confesses the whole situation to Cecilia, Florence's sister-in-law. He tells her how he had loved Julia and been jilted by her, how he had come to love Florence with a second love, but one stronger and more worthy

of a woman, and then how, with Julia's return he had seen her again as a friend until something of the old feeling had come back. This interview between Cecilia and Harry is the dramatic climax of the plot, but the novel was only a little more than half done, there were six more parts of 24 pages to come. Trollope could not make his main theme dominate for another six parts, and the problem that he faced was the same as that faced by all novelists working under the technical conditions of magazine serialization. It was something of which he was acutely aware, and his advice on this point given to young writers was based on his own lifelong experience. Its successful application is part of his method of constructing a serial novel. He wrote:

Though the plot itself may require but few characters, it may be so enlarged as to find its full development in many. There may be subsidiary plots, which shall all tend to the elucidation of the main story, and which will take their places as part of one and the same work.<sup>27</sup>

We may notice how, in *The Claverings* Trollope carefully placed early in the novel (Ch. VI) the development of the love of the Rev. Samuel Saul for Harry's sister Fanny. This was something that he was able to make use of much later on in the novel (Chs XXIII, XXIV and XLVII). It was a theme capable of extensive or slight treatment as the necessity arose. Similarly there were the background themes of Sir Hugh and Lady Clavering, the life of Cecilia and Theodore Burton, and the shady haunts of Capt. Clavering and Capt. Boodle. These background themes never, in *The Claverings*, swamped the main theme, but they were always there to be brought forward and elaborated as necessary.

This greater attention to form did not go uncommented on at the time. At the end of a long review of the volume edition *The Spectator* wrote:

*The Claverings* has, as we believe, a higher moral, and a more perfect artistic unity of the kind we have indicated, than any of Mr. Trollope's previous tales. There is scarcely a touch in it that does not contribute to the main effect, both artistic and moral.<sup>28</sup>

Thus of *The Claverings* one could say that the first ten instalments were mostly concerned with the working out of the situation between Harry, Julia and Florence. All other

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<sup>27</sup> Trollope *Autobiography* II, 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 58.

<sup>29</sup> *The Spectator* May, 4, p. 499.

themes were kept subservient to this main one and six of the serial endings underlined the relationship between Harry and the two women, and marked the emotional stage reached. But from part XI (Ch. XXXI) the construction became far looser and the central theme more interwoven among problems of the inheritance of Clavering Park, the love affair of Harry's sister and the machinations of Mme Gordeloup and her brother.

*Cornhill's* best example of the serial part used constructionally is George Eliot's novel, *Romola*. The seriousness with which George Eliot took the serial division of her novel is clearly apparent in her correspondence with George Smith before serialization began. So important did she consider the number of parts to be than on that account alone she was willing to forego £ 2,500, an amount the magnitude of which is doubly realized when one remembers that for the original edition of *The Mill on the Floss* she did not receive more than £ 2,000 from John Blackwood.<sup>30</sup> Two accounts of her insistence on a smaller number of serial parts than originally suggested were left by George Smith, one in the January 1901 number of *Cornhill* the other in his Memoir, which later formed the basis for *The House of Smith Elder*, these differ only in small details. In both he recounts how he offered George Eliot £ 10,000 for the novel which was to extend through sixteen numbers of the magazine, and how, just before publication was about to begin she told him that she could not properly divide it into sixteen parts, as it did not lend itself to this division, and would have to come out in twelve parts. It was then that Smith, and Lewes too, pointed out to her that this would mean reduced payment and urged her that:

the magazine form of the story was temporary; the book would afterwards appear in a complete form, and any artistic injury the work might be supposed to suffer owing to its being broken up into sixteen parts would be temporary.

But George Eliot was firm. She was cheerfully content to accept the smaller sum for the sake of an artistic division of her novel... [She] threw away £ 2,500 on what many people would think a literary caprice, but what she considered as an act of loyalty to her canons of art.<sup>31</sup>

The MS of *Romola*<sup>32</sup> shows that George Eliot took the parts into consideration while writing, and, like Trollope, numbered each part from page one (except for the first three parts which are

<sup>30</sup> *The George Eliot Letters* ed. G. S. Haight, 7 vols., 1954—1956, III, 235.

<sup>31</sup> *The House of Smith Elder*, ed. L. Huxley, priv. pr. 1923, p. 101—102.

<sup>32</sup> The MS is in the British Museum.



numbered consecutively, and which were written earlier). Moreover from the sixth part onwards she put at the top of the part the month when it was to come out in the magazine. Unlike Trollope, however, the number of pages per part is not at all constant. The basic division of *Romola*, which in the end came out in fourteen instalments, is into three books of unequal length each dealing with a definite period of time. Book One presents the main characters and places them in their relationship to each other. Book Two, which takes place twenty months later, gives the personal development between Romola and Tito Melema, and more especially the emotional and spiritual crisis of Romola herself. Book Three carries the action away from the personal level into the field of Florentine public life in politics and religion. In addition to this threefold division the serial instalments also play their part and in each book help to reinforce the particular effect which is the problem of the book. Most of the parts also end at moments of heightened interest in a way emphasising the development and interrelation of the characters.<sup>33</sup>

The *Cornhill* was the first English magazine in which Henry James serialized. He first published there three short stories; *Daisy Miller*, *An International Episode* and *The Siege of London*. All these early short stories of Henry James are built round the serial part used at its simplest, that is, to contain an episode bounded in time and place. For example Part I of *Daisy Miller* takes place in three days in June in the Swiss watering place of Vevey; Part II takes place from January to April the following year in Rome. Part I of *An International Episode* describes three weeks in August in Newport; Part II is set in England the following summer. The first Part of *The Siege of London* takes place in a few weeks in Paris in September; Part II describes the events of the following Easter in England. Thus each of these three stories is constructed round the serial unit, and follows an almost identical plan. The first part contains the exposition of an emotional situation, the second its complication and final outcome after a year or six months has elapsed. In each case the stories are almost exactly divided into halves corresponding to the serial parts. This may, perhaps, seem the obvious way of writing a story that the author knew was to come out in two parts, but it is interesting to note that R. L. Stevenson, the other great short story writer contributing to *Cornhill* at this time, does not seem to have taken any notice of the

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<sup>33</sup> For a fuller treatment of *Romola* from this point of view see S. Bičanić, »The Effect of Magazine Serialization on *Romola*«, *Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagradiensia*, No. 6. Dec. 1958, pp. 15—23.

serial division, at least not in his stories for this magazine. For example *The Merry Men* which came out in two parts was outlined by Stevenson in a letter to a friend simply as a »Tip Top Tale« in five chapters<sup>34</sup>. It was not constructed in two parts, but conceived as one whole, and simply broken off, probably by Leslie Stephen, in the approximate middle.

The end of the second decade of the *Cornhill* was marked by the publication in the magazine of Henry James's novel *Washington Square* from June to November 1880. Without seeing the manuscript it is difficult to be sure he made the breaks himself. The only mention of the novel in his letters is of a »story in three numbers«<sup>35</sup> while *Washington Square* came out in six. It is perhaps worth noting however that the five serial endings each mark an important point in the progress of the novel: Dr. Sloper beginning to take an active hand; Dr. Sloper refusing Townsend his consent to the engagement; Dr. Sloper telling Catherine he will not leave them his money and becoming curiously convinced that she will »stick« after all; Catherine remaining fixed in her resolve after a year in Europe; Townsend leaving Catherine. It is also a point of some interest that, in the very different sequence of events given to *Washington Square* when it was turned into the play *The Heiress*, of the six scene endings three occur at places which had originally been serial endings. That James at a later date certainly did consider the serial part as a dramatic element of construction can be seen by the many entries in his Note-books concerning *The Old Things* and by a study of that novel in its serial issue.

In conclusion therefore it may be said that, after a consideration of the novels serialized in the *Cornhill*, magazine publication may be said to have had a definite, discernible, and, to varying degrees, important influence on the form of the great majority of novels which were deliberately written by novelists with the aim of serialization in mind, and where they made their own serial divisions.

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<sup>34</sup> *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson* ed. Sidney Colvin, 4 vols., II, 40.

<sup>35</sup> *The Letters of Henry James*, ed. P. Lubbock, 2 vols., I, 73.