"I think I have begun a new novel in numbers, giving up the idea of the lectures I had last week. But it is not worth while to write lectures for the Americans to rob them and any I do had best be for London hearers first," wrote Thackeray to his family late in the summer of 1852. This is the first we hear of The Newcomes: Memoirs of a Most Respectable Family, which began to appear in October of the following year. It was headed "Mr. Thackeray's New Monthly Work," an indication that he was returning to his established format, after having tried out the three-decker with Henry Esmond, but illustrated this time by a former Punch colleague, Richard Doyle. In announcing his new novel to his family, Thackeray had fresh in his mind his successful tour of the United States with his lectures on the eighteenth-century humorists. The nominal "editor" of The Newcomes, the now established writer Arthur Pendennis, also remembering this American tour, interrupts the "Overture" on themes from Aesop and Lafontaine to tell his readers: "Nay, since last he besought good-natured friends, a friend of the writer has seen the New World, and found the (featherless) birds there exceedingly like his brethren in Europe." To a young American friend he had met on his visit there, Sarah Baxter, Thackeray unburdened himself while at work on this most poignant and heartfelt of his books:

I mean that [the] world is base and prosperous and content, not unkind—very well bred—very unaffected in manner, not dissolute—clean in person and raiment and going to church every Sunday—but in the eyes of the Great Judge of right & wrong what
rank will all these people have with all their fine manners and spotless characters and linen? They never feel love, but directly it's born, they throttle it and fling it under the sewer as poor girls do their unlawful children—they make up money-marriages and are content—then the father goes to the House of Commons or the Counting House, the mother to her balls and visits—the children lurk upstairs with their governess, and when their turn comes are bought and sold, and respectable and heartless as their parents before them. Hullo—I say—Stop! where is this tirade a-going to and apropos of what?

It went of course into *The Newcomes*, where his "lectures" are carried on through his accustomed "confidential talk between writer and reader." "What a dreadful, dreadful place this great world of yours is, Arthur," says Laura Pendennis at one point, "where husbands do not seem to care for their wives; where mothers do not love their children; where children love their nurses best; where men talk what they call gallantry!" (chap. 49). After retreating to the Age of Anne, Thackeray was back in the world all too much with his readers, of getting and spending, of fathers and children, of marrying and giving in marriage. This time, however, his concern was not with people living without God in this world, as in *Vanity Fair*, but without love and charity. "I can bear it no longer—this diabolical invention of gentility which kills natural kindness and honest friendship," he had confided in his "Concluding Observations on Snobs," at the end of which he wrote: "... if Fun is good, Truth is still better, and Love best of all." The thwarting of natural relations through the blighting of young love is a pervasive theme of Thackeray's tragicomedy of errors, given out first by Colonel Newcome's short-lived romance with Mademoiselle Blois, reiterated shortly after by Lady Ann Kew and Tom Poyntz, repeated in the next generation by their offspring Clive and Ethel, as well as by that ill-fated couple Lady Clara Pulleyn and Jack Belsize, and, in her sentimental histrionic way, by Madame la Duchesse d' Ivry, pining away after her lost Adolphes and Alphonses. This family chronicle is an extended paean to ideal love in its various manifestations—filial, parental, avuncular, romantic, marital, and spiritual.

Thackeray well knew where love and charity began. Charlotte Brontë's observation after reading *Henry Esmond* that Thackeray "likes to show us human nature at home" is borne out by a number

*The Newcomes*, page from the *Newcomes Advertiser* in part 4, showing books on domestic life advertised alongside works of Thackeray and fellow novelists. (The Heineman Collection, The Pierpont Morgan Library; reproduced by permission.)
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of chapter headings in *The Newcomes*: “Mrs. Newcome At Home”; “Miss Honeyman’s”; “Ethel And Her Relations”; “In Which Everybody Is Asked to Dinner”; “Park Lane”; “The Colonel At Home”; “In Which Benedick Is A Married Man”; “Mrs. Clive Is At Home.” There are, to be sure, other more outgoing chapters that give this domestic history extension (“Describes A Visit To Paris . . .”; “In Which Clive Begins To See The World”; “Returns From Rome To Pall Mall”), but, generally speaking, Thackeray could say, along with Bulwer in *The Caxtons*, that here “man has been reviewed less in his active relations with the world than in his repose at his own hearth.” *The Caxtons* and its sequel, *My Novel; or, Varieties in English Life*, were two of numerous family novels publicized in *The Newcomes Advertiser*, such as Miss Mulock’s *The Ogilvies* and *The Head of the Family*; Marmion Savage’s *The Falcon Family*, Charles Lever’s *The Dodd Family Abroad*; Cuthbert Bede’s *The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*; Mrs. Oliphant’s *Alieford: A Family History*; and Grace Aguilar’s *Home Influence*, which was still in popular demand after its spinster author’s untimely death. “Home influence” makes itself felt in many other books advertised in the monthly parts of *The Newcomes*, in a pictorial ambience of clothing, furnishings, aromatic teas, home remedies, and patent medicines. One number offers such useful works as *The Illustrated Family Friend Almanack and Housekeeper’s Guide* (to which Martha Honeyman could have contributed) and Orr’s series of Household Handbooks. Also introduced at this time was a new illustrated magazine called *The Home Companion*. Frederika Bremer’s *Homes of the New World* in Mary Howitt’s translation was recommended by one of the reviews for its “sound, clear views of the public and private life in America, mixed with expressions of comprehensive human kindness, and close family affection.” On Mudie’s current list was *Home Life in Germany*. Curiosity about home life in England at its upper reaches was satisfied by *Punch’s Pocket Book for 1855* (advertised in number 14), which featured pieces on “The Royal Family,” “The Queen’s Household,” “Prince of Wales’ Household,” and “Duchess of Kent’s Household.” Advertised in number 4 of *The Newcomes*—preceding chapter 14 where we participate with the family of Sir Brian Newcome in prayer—were *Daily Family Devotion; or, Guide to Family Worship* and *The Altar of the Household, a Series of Services for Domestic Worship*. “God Bless the Home” could serve as a motto for many a novel then in vogue.

In *The Caxtons*, the best known of the predecessors to *The Newcomes*, Bulwer (through his alter ego Pisistratus Caxton) announces
that he intends “to imply the influence of Home upon the conduct and career of Youth.” Appropriately, and in line with Bulwer and other “domestic analysts” of the age, Thackeray traces the “home influence” on youth Clive to its roots. “As the young gentleman who has just gone to bed is to be the hero of the following pages, we had best begin our account of him with his family history,” writes Clive’s biographer Arthur Pendennis, adding, to the presumed relief of his readers, “which luckily is not very long” (chap. 2). Pendennis knew that he was writing to a genealogy-conscious generation represented in the novel itself by Clive’s mother-in-law, The Campainer, whom Pendennis recalls “it used to be my sport to entertain . . . with anecdotes of the aristocracy, about whose proceedings she still maintained a laudable curiosity” (chap. 78). Burke’s Peerage is part of her favorite reading as well as of her daughter Rosey. The Mackenzies were only two of many, to judge by the popularity of Sir Bernard Burke’s Family Romance; or, Episodes in the Domestic Annals of the Aristocracy, advertised along with humbler family romances in the first number of The Newcomes.

Sir Bernard really does not do the aristocracy proud, his theme, stated at the beginning of the second volume, entitled “The Vicissitudes of Great Families,” being “the decadence of many a royal line . . . the withering of many a proud stem.” He purposely confined himself to “such instances as have a historic halo around them,” adding that “the vicissitudes of families less distinguished would extend the subject far beyond our limits.” As can readily be surmised from the Newcomes Advertiser, numerous fictitious chroniclers of the 1850s took up where Burke left off, including The Newcomes itself with such innuendo-laden chapter headings as “Colonel Newcome’s Wild Oats”; “Family Secrets”; “In Which Kinsmen Fall Out”; and “Barnes’s Skeleton Closet.” Charles Lever, as “editor” of the papers of the quite ordinary and much tried Dodd family, justifies himself in words that could have served for his fellow authors who were also prying into domestic arcana: “It is not in our present age of high civilisation that an Editor need fear the charge of having indulged family secrets, or made the private history of domestic life a subject for public commentary. Happily, we live in a period of enlightenment that can defy such petty slanders. Very high and titled individuals have shown themselves superior to similar accusations, and if the ‘Dodds’ can in any wise contribute to the amusement or instruction of the world, they may well feel recompensed for an exposure to which others have been subjected before them.” The “others” were not only those exposed
by Burke, but also the likes of the Marlboroughs, the Bolingbrokes, the Walpoles, among illustrious clans, and, because of his recent death, the house of the Duke of Wellington, all of whose “family secrets” had been opened to readers in recent years. By now authors and the public seemed to agree with Bulwer that “every family is a history in itself and even a poem to those who know how to search its pages,” to quote a motto from the title page of The Caxtons.10

The Newcomes are not, of course, merely a family, but “a Most Respectable Family.” The term respectability was one much bandied about in popular reading at the time, one consequence presumably of middle-class families becoming subjected to the kind of scrutiny formerly reserved for their betters. It comes into the account of his lineage by one popular hero of the day: “If you will refer to the unpublished volumes of ‘Burke’s Landed Gentry’ and turn to the letter G, article ‘Green,’ you will see that the Verdant Greens are a family of some respectability and of considerable antiquity. We meet with them as early as 1096, flocking to the Crusades among the followers of Peter the Hermit, when one of their name, sur­named Greene the Witless, mortgaged his lands in order to supply his poorer companions with the sinews of war.”11 Young Verdant Green finds himself the latest in a long line of “unsuspicious, cred­ulous, respectable, easy-going people in one century after another, with the same boundless confidence in their fellow creatures, and the same readiness to oblige society by putting their names to little bills, merely for form’s and friendship’s sake.”

Young Pisistratus Caxton takes himself more seriously. His father and uncle (a retired East India military officer) are given to arguing over whether they are descended from William Caxton, the printer, or from the warrior William de Caxton, but he describes them simply as “a family . . . old enough, but decayed.” He is proud enough that his family lived “in what might be called a very respectable style for people who made no pretence to ostenta­tion” and that their Queen Anne house “had an air of solidity, and well-to-do-ness about it—nothing tricky on the one hand, nothing decayed on the other.”12 Their neighbor Squire Rollick, however, has a somewhat more restricted view: “‘Egad, sir, the country is going to the dogs! Our sentiments are not represented in parliament or out of it. The “Country Mercury” has ratted, and be hanged to it! and now we have not one newspaper in the whole shire to express the sentiments of the respectable part of the community!’” For “respectable part of the community,” read, of course,
"squirearchy." Uncle Jack Caxton, to whom this complaint is addressed, comes momentarily to the defense of the despised interlopers of this country, only to be summarily put down:

“Yes, respectable fellow-creatures, men of capital and enterprise! For what are these country squires compared to our wealthy merchants? What is this agricultural interest that professes to be the prop of the land?"

"Professes!" cried Squire Rollick—"it is the prop of the land; and as for those manufacturing fellows who have bought up the "Mercury"—"

The squire's unspoken expletive could have been directed at the "Screwcomes," scions of "manufacturing fellows," and now "men of capital and enterprise," who descend on London from their *rus in urbe*, and draw the scorn of the *Newcome Independent* (*The Newcomes*, chap. 14).

Try as he may, the conscientious chronicler of the Newcome family can find no authentic record of the clan before the reign of George III, when the father of Thomas, Brian, and Hobson Newcome "first made his appearance in Cheapside; having made his entry into London on a waggon, which landed him and some bales of cloth, all his fortune, in Bishopsgate Street" (chap. 2). He is determined to set the record straight, even to the embarrassment of the subjects of his memoir: "For though these Newcomes have got a pedigree from the College, which is printed in Budge's 'Landed Aristocracy of Great Britain,' [continues his account] and which proves that the Newcomes of Cromwell's army, the Newcome who was among the last six who were hanged by Queen Mary for protestantism, were ancestors of this house... and the founder slain by King Harold's side at Hastings, had been surgeon-barber to King Edward the Confessor; yet, between ourselves, I think that Sir Brian Newcome, of Newcome, does not believe a word of the story, any more than the rest of the world does, although a number of his children bear names out of the Saxon Calendar." The press is not so kind, as witness the lampoon by the *Newcome Independent* of Sir Brian as "Don Pomposo Lickspittle Grindpauper, Poor House, Agincourt, Screwcome, whose ancestors fought with Julius Caesar against William the Conqueror, and whose father certainly wielded a cloth yard shaft in London not fifty years ago" (chap. 14).

In the eyes of Squire Rollick, with his £5,000 a year rent roll and his escutcheon extending back several centuries, the Newcomes might be excluded from "the respectable part of the community,"
but Colonel Newcome tries to place respectability on a basis more substantial than land or lineage. One of Clive’s first disappointments is his discovery of what Pendennis brings to light—that his grandparents are not “swells.” “And when I came back to school, where perhaps I had been giving myself airs, and bragging about Newcomes,” he unburdens himself to his father during a visit to Grey Friars, “why you know I was right to tell the fellows.” So the occasion arises for one of Clive’s “early lessons” from his mentor:

“That’s a man,” said the Colonel, with delight; though had he said, ‘that’s a boy,’ he had spoken more correctly. . . . “That’s a man,” cries the Colonel, “never be ashamed of your father, Clive.”

“Ashamed of my father!” says Clive, looking up at him and walking on as proud as a peacock. “I say,” the lad resumed, after a pause . . . “Is that all true what’s in the peerage—in the baronetage, about uncle Newcome and Newcome; about the Newcome who was burned at Smithfield; about the one that was at the Battle of Bosworth; and the old old Newcome who was bar—that is, who was surgeon to Edward the Confessor, and was killed at Hastings? I am afraid it isn’t; and yet I should like it to be true.”

“I think every man would like to come of an ancient and honourable race,” said the Colonel in his honest way. “As you like your father to be an honourable man, why not your grandfather and his ancestors before him? But if we can’t inherit a good name, at least we can do our best to leave one, my boy; and that is an ambition which, please God, you and I will both hold by.” (Chap. 7)

In emphasizing through the colonel that respectability is something transmitted rather than inherited, Thackeray did his part to bring gentillesse within the purview of the middle class. By the same token, parentage becomes most crucial among the “first associates” of the rising generation, and in The Newcomes the character of Clive’s father and principal mentor preempts even that of Clive himself in the interest of the family biographer. The outlines of this character could have been suggested to Thackeray in another book advertised in The Newcomes—The Old Field Officer; or, The Military and Sporting Adventures of Major Worthington, by J. H. Stocqueler, a military writer of prestige. This hypothetical major recalls in his memoir, supposedly composed in retirement, an unhappy boyhood that began back in the eighteenth century. As a younger son of meager prospects, persecuted at school, and of a somewhat wild disposition, he leaves home to take up an army career in India, where he succeeds in moving up in the ranks. Here he becomes known for his kindliness, temperate disposition, and circumspection, except in money matters—his generosity leading him to make
loans that are not repaid, and his trusting nature leading him to invest in tottering local banks.

With his gallantry and misguided idealism, Colonel Newcome suggests a modern Quixote. Cervantes's knight errant is in fact one of the colonel's literary heroes (along with Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley and Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison), and he is depicted in one of the historiated initials as the Man of La Mancha (chap. 66). It is evident that, as with honor, Thackeray meant for this old soldier to exemplify the aristocratic ideal of chivalry in a modern bourgeois setting. Such was the intention also of an earlier book by J. H. Stocqueler, *The British Officer: His Positions, Duties, Emoluments and Privileges* (1851), published the year before Thackeray began his writing of *The Newcomes*. "In our estimation, the British uniform should represent the generous and lofty sentiments of which the golden spurs of knighthood were once emblematical . . ." as Stockqueler sums up the ideal soldier in this conduct book. For him the military and civilian virtues are joined together in modern society:

It is the character and conduct of the British gentleman that must secure this moral power for the British Officer [a bearing that inspires confidence]. He who seeks to obtain it must be urbane in manners and courteous to all; he must be just and honourable in his most trifling dealings. . . . Without being either a stoic or ascetic, he should look with scorn on that mindlessness which seeks for artificial excitement, or the worse gratification of avaricious rapacity. . . . But while scorning these low vices, our ideal, if grave with the grave, should be cheerful with the cheerful; should laugh with the gay and witty, but never with the envious and malicious. . . . In society, the British officer should be marked by unobtrusive courtesy and easy elegance of manners.16

The prototypical British officer, in short, should be "distinguished in ballrooms as well as in battlefields," and should be "as familiar with polite accomplishments as with professional attainments." Colonel Newcome tries his best amidst the assorted humbugs at Mrs. Hobson Newcome's "at Home" in her Bryanston Square mansion (chap. 8). The Doyle etching that accompanies this chapter shows the colonel poised and stately before the Hindustani guest paying respects to him. Two numbers later he is described kissing the hand of Ethel Newcome "with a great deal of grace and dignity" (chap. 15), the matching cut suiting the gesture to these words. Subsequently Arthur is pleased to see the colonel treat his wife, Laura, with a grace befitting Grandison (chap. 51).
The plate that illustrates chapter 56 catches the colonel acting with gallantry toward Rosey Mackenzie, and shortly afterward we "behold the stately grace . . . as he stepped out to welcome his daughter-in-law, and the bow he made before he entered her carriage" (chap. 62).

Stocqueler's model soldier is intended to be a pattern of morality as well as of courtesy, and the principle that he be "grave with the grave . . . cheerful with the cheerful" describes too the colonel's dual role of censor and companion to Clive. In early chapters we observe his capacity for innocent joy along with his sternness of disposition towards the intemperate (as in the Cave of Harmony episode), his sometimes pathetic attempts to share the pleasures of Clive's friends, as well as to participate in their literary and artistic conversation. The true soldier-gentleman, according to the ideal already set forth, scorns not only "artificial excitement," but also "the worse gratification of avaricious rapacity," and Colonel Newcome reacts accordingly against the greed and deceit of his brothers and other relatives. However, the colonel has certain chinks in his armor, as duly noted by his biographer. "He could believe all and everything a man told him until deceived once, after which he never forgave," Arthur comments on the colonel's first serious rift with his family, set off by Barnes's duplicity.17 "And wrath being once roused in his simple soul and distrust firmly fixed there, his anger and prejudices gathered daily" (chap. 52). "Slow to anger and utterly beyond deceit himself," Arthur writes later, "when Thomas Newcome was once roused, or at length believed that he was cheated, woe to the offender!" (chap. 56).

Stocqueler's manual offered some counsel along these lines that the colonel should have taken in stride: "If gentlemen could see the undignified figure they make when in a towering passion, the chances are that they would endeavour to keep their temper a little more within bounds." In this rule book, "We may excuse anger, or even passion perhaps, when the name, fame, or character of friends and relatives are assailed," but a sense of proportion is urged, along with caution, in taking out this anger on others. "The fact is, that in nine cases out of ten, people only get in a towering passion when their self-love is assailed, when some selfish gratification is endangered," in Stocqueler's judgment, "when they strive to conceal error or littleness beneath an explosion of noble rage." This mirror for the perfect gentle knight of Victoria's golden days, then, anticipates not only Colonel Newcome's virtues but what proves to be his tragic flaw as well. The perceptive Arthur Penden-
nis is quick to assess the combination of righteous indignation and wounded pride that prompts the colonel’s vendetta against Barnes and leads him, less justifiably, to malign Ethel, with sad consequences for Clive. He makes us aware too that his friend Clive, as “the inheritor of his father’s blood, his honesty of nature, and his impetuous enmity against wrong” (chap. 62), although he becomes imbued with the colonel’s ideas of respectability, also carries over the Newcome rashness of disposition.

“Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it,” from Proverbs, appears as an epigraph on the title page of one of the family novels that had preceded Thackeray’s home epic, characteristic of the tendency of this genre to consecrate the hearthside as sanctuary and seminary. Colonel Newcome follows the counsel of the author of Proverbs, with his penchant, as we have already noticed, for “improving” each occasion with some moral lesson for Clive’s benefit. The nurture of the Young Idea begins with the opening episode in the Cave of Harmony, where the colonel reproves Captain Costigan for his ribald songs: “For shame, you old wretch! Go home to your bed, you hoary old sinner! And for my part, I’m not sorry that my son should see, for once in his life, to what shame and degradation, and dishonour, drunkenness and whiskey may bring a man” (chap. 1). Later Clive’s impulsive action of flinging wine in Barnes’s face at the Oriental Club is turned by the colonel to his son’s edification. The morning after, Clive finds his father at the foot of his bed, “reproving conscience to greet his waking,” and following the soda water comes the sermon; “We ought to be ashamed of our doing wrong. . . . We must go and ask Barnes Newcome’s pardon, Sir, and forgive other people’s trespasses, my boy, if we hope forgiveness of our own” (chaps. 13, 14). Pendennis leads us to expect the colonel to become the censor of us all: “. . . that uplifted cane of the Colonel’s had somehow fallen on the back of every man in the room,” is his startling reaction to the abruptly terminated bacchanalian revel that concludes the first chapter. The catch is that the colonel’s cane has fallen on his own back as well by the time he responds “Adsum,” for both mentor and neophyte derive some harsh lessons from life.

The colonel’s guiding hand over Clive is felt even beyond “home influence.” In an early chapter (chap. 5) the colonel sets out a life program for Clive, beginning with the traditional gentleman’s education, supplemented by educational travel, to be followed by
choice of profession and a good marriage. Various chapter headings indicate stages of the colonel's scheme: "In Which Mr. Clive's School-Days Are Over"; "A School of Art"; "New Companions"; "Youth And Sunshine"; "In Which Clive Begins To See The World"; "Across The Alps"; "Clive In New Quarters"; "Mr. and Mrs. Clive Newcome"; "In Which Clive Begins The World." Furthermore, books promoted in various numbers of the Newcomes Advertiser seem sufficiently in keeping to have served as supplementary reading for those following the fortunes of this "respectable family." Along with Clive's school days one could have followed those of Mr. Verdant Green at Oxford; George Melly's School Experiences of a Fag at a Public and a Private School ("...a vivid and striking picture of the brighter side of Public School Life," according to a review); Revelations of School Life, by "Cantab." (described in a blurb as a "Thorough Exposure of Our Scholastic System"); and Kay-Shuttleworth's pamphlets on education. The account of Clive's art lessons was framed by notices of Samuel Carter Hall's Art Journal; John Cassell's series The Works of Eminent Masters; and Lectures on Architecture and Painting, by John Ruskin, M.A., along with his The Opening of the Crystal Palace: Considered in Some of Its Relations to the Prospects of Art. It was easy to roam the continent vicariously with Clive and his companion John James Ridley through such offerings as Purple Tints of Paris: Character and Manners in the New Empire, Adam and Charles Black's Guide Books (illustrated on their borders with young men hiking with knapsacks and sketching), and Doyle's delightful picture book The Foreign Tour of Messrs. Brown, Jones, and Robinson, as well as Thackeray's The Kickleburys on the Rhine. Shortly after the first meeting of Clive and Ethel, readers were freshly apprised of Frank Smedley's Harry Coverdale's Courtship And All That Came Of It, with its Phiz-designed wrapper dominated by hoops in the form of wedding rings in which courting couples of various ages are depicted. This is a preoccupation also of Punch's Pocket Book for 1855, advertised in this same number, that included pieces on "Love's Rational Dream," "Marriage Ceremonies of the Great Britons," and "The Experiences of a Discontented Old Bachelor, Aetat. 64." Social life too plays its part in Clive's growing up, and prominent among novels that entertained and edified readers between numbers of The Newcomes was Fortune: A Romance of London in the Nineteenth Century, by David Trevenna Coulton, which at the time evoked comparison with the novels of Thackeray and Bulwer as a "biting satire of fashionable life, the moral anatomy of high society," and particularly as a scath-
ing denunciation of materialism. So *The Newcomes* entered the stream of books of popular instruction, “rational amusements” pursued by cultural aspirants (like Mrs. Hobson Newcome, ever rushing to lectures, and the colonel’s friend James Binnie, with his British Institution, Political Economy Club, and such), guides to the perplexed in the affairs of everyday life.

Doyle’s decorated initials showing children at school or at play keep before us the focus of this novel on the formation of the young.\(^1\) Pendennis too, in occasional asides (“And now, young people, who read my moral pages . . .”), is aware of his didactic function. He knows also that he is supposed to contribute to the moral education of the parents of his young readers (“I ask any gentleman and father of a family . . .”; “Do not let us be too angry with Colonel Newcome’s two most respectable brothers. . . . I say, do not let us be too hard on them”; “Snooze gently in thy armchair, thou easy bald-head! play your whist, or read your novel, or talk scandal over your work, ye worthy dowagers and fogies!”). Now and then he brings his generations of readers together: “It may serve to recall passages of their early days to such of [Clive’s] seniors as occasionally turn over the pages of a novel; and in the story of his faults, indiscretions, passions, and actions, young readers may be reminded of their own.” So readers young and old are reminded that Clive’s life history is supposed to be an exemplary biography, but they were warned in advance by the opening farago of beast fables—which the design on the wrapper kept fresh in their minds from month to month\(^2\)—with the confused and scrambled moral explications furnished by the author, not to expect any simplistic message from the real-life fable that follows.

 Mothers and fathers looking for the way to train up their young could not have found much assurance from the relations between parents and children exhibited in this history. Colonel Newcome as a boy is subjected to an evangelical regimen, represented by, among others, his tutor, the Reverend T. Clack of Highbury College, “who was commissioned to spare not the rod neither to spoil the child” (chap. 2). The result, as the chapter title indicates (“Colonel Newcome’s Wild Oats”), is to make young Tommy an unruly boy. One cut in this chapter shows him kicking the family butler in the shins; in one episode he is horsewhipped by his father for running away from home; and the chapter ends with his going off on his own to India. Reaction against his own stern upbringing leads the colonel to be more indulgent toward his son—not always to Clive’s good. On the other hand, Martha Honeyman tells Ar-
thur: “I have a brother [Charles] to whom my poor mother spared the rod, and who, I fear, has turned out but a spoilt child” (chap. 3). If gold will rust, what will iron do? we may ask with Chaucer. Not only the incumbent of Lady Whittlesea’s Chapel, but also that peer of the realm and suitor to Ethel Newcome, Lord Farintosh, is a product of maternal pampering: “As an infant he had but to roar, and his mother and nurses were as much frightened as though he had been a Libyan lion. What he willed and ordered was law amongst his clan and family. During the period of his London and Paris dissipations his poor mother did not venture to remonstrate with her young prodigal, but shut her eyes, not daring to open them on his wild courses” (chap. 59). So much for permissiveness, but strictness does not fare better in the case of Lady Walham, whose son, and Ethel’s first suitor, Lord Kew takes up his rakish course in revolt against his closely guarded childhood (chap. 37).

Not only are parents left somewhat confused by this particular Familienroman as to what course to take, but their very authority is undermined. “Children ought to consider themselves in the house of their father as in a temple where nature has placed them, and of which she has made them the priests and ministers that they might continually employ themselves in the worship of those deities who gave them being,” reads the motto at the head of a chapter of one of the novels recommended by the Newcomes Advertiser. But one can readily come away from a reading of The Newcomes itself convinced that father does not know best. “Who set her on the path she walked in?” asks the family historian, in connection with Ethel Newcome’s betrothal to Lord Farintosh. “It was her parents’ hands which led her, and her parents’ voices which commanded her to accept the temptation set before her” (chap. 61). Circumstances, as it happens, compel Ethel to break off the engagement, sparing her the consequences of the family-arranged “Marriage in High Life” of Lady Clara Pulleyn to Barnes Newcome, and of the relatively low life one of Clive to Rosey Mackenzie. However, the first readers of The Newcomes who took it in gradually over a period of two years were left in suspense as to whether Ethel was destined for the fate of the unfortunate Lady Clara, or of the Duchesse d’lvry before her. The novelist Mrs. Oliphant, commenting on the novel before she knew the outcome, raised a question that must have been on many minds at that time: “Is Ethel to consume what remnants are left to her of that fresh girl’s heart she had when we first knew her—when she first fell in love with her good uncle—and be a great lady, and blaze her youthful days away in barren splen-
dour?”

Not too long before, Thackeray had cautioned Sarah Baxter, after whom Ethel Newcome was in part modeled, against making this very misstep:

—Well—I was fancying my brave young Sarah (who has tried a little of the pomps & vanities of her world) transplanted to ours and a London woman of society—with a husband that she has taken as she has threatened to take one sometimes just because he is a good parti. No—go and live in a clearing—marry a husband masticatory, expectoratory, dubious of linen, but with a heart below that rumpled garment—let the children eat with their precious knives—help the help, and give a hand to the dinner yourself—yea, it is better than to be a woman of fashion in London, and sit down to a French dinner where no love is, Immense Moralist! . . . I see a chapter out of the above sermon and you know—I must have an i to the main chance—

“Has Mr. Thackeray prepared this beautiful victim for Moloch, or is there hope for Ethel still?” asked Mrs. Oliphant in her essay. This sacrificial rite had been a leading topic of sermon and satire before Thackeray took it up. “We are a match-making nation,” proclaimed Bulwer in England and the English; “the lively novels of Mrs. Gore have given a just and unexaggerated picture of the intrigues, the manoeuvres, the plotting, and the counter-plotting that make the staple of matronly ambition.” As Thackeray’s friend Horace Smith put it in The Tin Trumpet: “The difficulty of effecting marriage in these times of expensive establishments is one of the great evils of our social system, and the principal source of corrupt manners.” The marriage mart was quite graphically displayed in the frontispiece to Punch’s Pocket Book for 1847, consisting of a colored foldout entitled “The Matrimonial Tattersall’s.”

Here in a house in May Fair, under the hammer of two enterprising ladies who have taken the name of the Sisters Tattersall, after the emporium of that name, prospective wives and husbands are sold at auction. Among the human merchandise vividly portrayed by John Leech are: “A fine buxom widow, well off . . .”; “A sprightly young thing affectionate and tender”; “A Maid of Honour, under twenty-five, not proud”; “Governess, extremely clever, accustomed to children and work, warranted to endure every hardship . . .”; and “The younger daughter of a baronet, only came out last season.” Leech’s erstwhile colleague Richard Doyle gives us a visual reminder of “The Matrimonial Tattersall’s” in the picture that heads chapter 54 of The Newcomes where we see Ethel, labeled “Lot 1.,” being auctioned off by Lady Kew to a group of top-hatted bidders, just before we read of the party celebrating her engage-
ment to Lord Farintosh. Anticipating one of the most famous episodes of *The Newcomes* is another diverting detail of the *Punch* cartoon, a heavy-set, over-dressed female with her back to the reader, on which is conspicuous a tag marked £20,000. Ethel, in labeling herself with the green tag from the Suffolk Street Gallery, joins the market place that her family thrives in with the milieu of her cousin Clive.

"Ethel, at this time, was especially stubborn in training, rebellious to the whip, and wild under harness . . .," we are told (chap. 32), in the imagery of educators of the period who tended to think of youth as animals to be tamed. "It is too much, grandmamma. Do please let me stay where I am: and worry me with no more schemes for my establishment in life," Ethel boldly tells off the formidable Lady Kew (chap. 38), who tries to supervise her as the colonel does Clive. The colonel slackens his reins over his young colt too, and his grand design for Clive is eventually balked, as are so many good intentions in this domestic tragedy where teenage rebellion comes into conflict with filial devotion. Clive may be said to signify for Thackeray what Pisistratus Caxton did for Bulwer: "... the specimen or type of a class the numbers of which are daily increasing in the inevitable progress of modern civilisation ... the representative of the exuberant energies of youth, turning, as with the instinct of nature for space and development, from the Old World to the New." Exuberance is a trait we associate with Clive from our first introduction to him by Pen as he "jumped up from the table, bounded across the room, ran to me with his hands out . . ." (chap. 1). Pen continues to impress us with his friend's "kind and jovial disposition," that "good temper and gaiety which have seldom deserted him in life, and have put him at ease wherever his fate has led him" (chap. 18). Certainly it would be hard to conceive a greater antithesis to the "cut-throat melancholy" represented by Henry Esmond. In a larger sense Clive is the embodiment of mirth and joy of life opposing itself to the puritanism of the previous generation as represented by Colonel Newcome. As Pen sums him up, he reflects "the ardent and impulsive disposition ... by whom all beauties of art and nature, animate or inanimate ... were welcomed with a gusto and delight whereof colder temperaments are incapable" (chap. 27).

A crucial question that arises in the course of Clive's training is to what useful end are his youthful energies going to be channeled. Advice of course is forthcoming. The colonel's intellectual and
iconoclastic friend James Binnie has young Clive charted in advance according to the phrenological jargon of the day: "The imaginative and reflective organs are very large—those of calculation weak. He may make a poet or a painter, or you may make a sojer of him . . . but a bad merchant, a lazy lawyer, and a miserable mathematician. He has wit and conscientiousness, so ye mustn't think of making a clergyman of him" (chap. 8). The colonel soon resigns himself to the fact that Clive is no scholar: "As regarded mathematical and classical learning, the elder Newcome was forced to admit, that out of every hundred boys, there were fifty as clever as his own, and at least fifty more industrious" (chap. 17). Actually the choice of profession comes quite spontaneously, particularly since the colonel is determined that Clive should not follow in his military steps. Clive's peering into a volume of Hogarth engravings while his father is trying to interest him in Addison and Dr. Johnson confirms what the colonel has noticed from Clive's early years: "... his delight in the pencil was manifest to all. Were not his school-books full of caricatures of the masters? Whilst his tutor, Grindley, was lecturing him, did he not draw Grindley instinctively under his very nose? A painter Clive was determined to be, and nothing else" (chap. 17). The colonel proves no more influential on Clive's choice of profession than on his studies or literary taste, but he has the good sense to allow his son to "follow his own bent." The colonel in fact defends "the pictorial calling" against its disparagement by that pillar of respectability the Reverend Honeyman: "... as long as his calling is honest it becomes a gentleman; and if he were to take a fancy to play on the fiddle—actually on the fiddle—I shouldn't object" (chap. 12).

So, along with his healthy hedonism, Clive asserts the value of the arts in a philistine society. Clive's semibohemian student days enable Thackeray to relive vicariously the joy his own first vocation had brought him. "'Oh,' says Clive, if you talk to him about those early days, 'it was a jolly time! I do not believe there was any young fellow in London so happy!'" (chap. 16). Thackeray himself was moved by a visit to Paris in 1849 to write to Mrs. Brookfield: "I went to see my old haunts when I came to Paris thirteen years ago and made believe to be a painter—just after I was ruined and before I fell in love and took to marriage & writing. It was a very jolly time, I was as poor as Job: and sketched away most abominably, but pretty contented. . . . where is Art, that dear Mistress whom I loved though in a very indolent capricious manner, but with a real sincerity?"

Though forced himself for practical rea-
sons to abandon this "dear mistress," in *The Newcomes* Thackeray pays tribute to those who remained faithful to her, as represented in particular by the painter Dick Tinto: "I love his honest moustache, and jaunty velvet jacket, his queer figure, his queer vanities, and his kind heart" (chap. 17). Tinto becomes a living paean to art itself: its vitality ("He is naturally what he is, and breaks out into costume as spontaneously as a bird sings, or a bulb bears a tulip"), its originality and mystery ("he gives his genius a darkling swagger, and a romantic envelope. . . . [he has] an instinct for the picturesque, which exhibits itself in his works, and outwardly on his person") combined with humane sympathies ("beyond this, a gentle creature loving his friends, his cups, feasts, merrymakings, and all good things").

Clive, like his creator, is attached to the artistic life because of its combination of nonconformity and elementary humanity. With Clive too Thackeray looks back over a time when the artist was struggling for status. Despite upholding his son's calling, the colonel has misgivings: "Newcome did not seem seriously to believe that his son would live by painting pictures, but considered Clive as a young prince who chose to amuse himself with painting" (chap. 27). Later we are told that he "felt secretly that his son was demeaning himself" (chap. 51). Other "respectable" people in the novel are of this opinion besides the Reverend Honeyman—Hobson Newcome, Major Pendennis, Lady Kew, and the Marquis of Farintosh, who thinks of Clive as a craftsman ready to "paint my dog Ratcatcher, by Jove! or my horse, or my groom, if I give him the order" (chap. 59). Clive's biographer gives the impression that the situation has not changed much at the time of writing. At the beginning of the chapter describing Clive's training at Gandish's Academy, he remarks: "In walking through streets which may have been gay and polite when ladies' chairmen jostled each other on the pavement, and link-boys with their torches lighted the beaux over the mud, who has not remarked the artist's invasion of those regions once devoted to fashion and gaiety?" (chap. 17). He gives examples of such deteriorated neighborhoods taken over by artists, and the fanciful initial drawn by Doyle shows a shabbily dressed young painter pondering before his easel in a Soho garret, above him a former inhabitant of these quarters, an elegant lady being attended to by her hairdresser. Pendennis later observes: "The Muse of Painting is a lady whose social station is not altogether recognised with us as yet. The polite world permits a gentleman to amuse himself with her, but to take her for better or for worse! forsake all
other chances and cleave unto her! to assume her name! Many a respectable person would be as much shocked at the notion, as if his son had married an opera-dancer" (chap. 27).

Alongside this discouraging testimony the Newcomes Advertiser provides some evidence of improvement of the artist's lot. The notice of the latest issue of the Art Journal (in no. 15) is accompanied by a retrospective note to subscribers by the editor, Samuel Carter Hall, calling attention to its success in achieving its initial purpose "to protect and advance the cause of Artists, and to extend a knowledge and appreciation of Art among all classes." Since the launching of this journal in 1839, Hall continues, "the Arts have been making large progress; the interest they create is no longer limited to the higher orders—it has spread among all ranks; the Manufacturers are now their liberal patrons, and the Artizans are those that most profit by the lessons they teach. It cannot be presumptuous in us to believe that our exertions during so long a period have greatly aided the movement to which art has been subjected in England, nor that we have much assisted in the progress it has made." Behind Hall's sanguine words were such phenomena as the success of the Crystal Palace Exhibition, within the recent memory of these readers, and the popularity of Ruskin's Modern Painters and The Seven Lamps of Architecture (also duly noted in the Newcomes Advertiser). Against the complaint of Clive's master Gandish that "there is no patronage for a man who devotes himself to 'Igh art" (chap. 17), it is of additional interest that Hall quotes a commendation of the Art Journal by Prince Albert and announces for the following year a series of engravings from pictures in the private collections both of His Royal Highness and of Her Majesty.

Clive then might not have met with so much resistance had he set up his studio in the 1850s. There are other indications that the times were ripe for what he was doing. In his choice of profession, we watch him wrench himself free not only from the colonel's reins but, as has been noted in a previous chapter, from Gandish's "'Igh art" (what Thackeray called "the sham sublime") to take up the "pathetic and familiar." At an international art exhibition held in Paris in 1855 (coincidentally, the year when The Newcomes completed its run) no less a critic than Baudelaire isolated as a leading feature of the British work in view there its "intimate glimpses of home." The British artist Richard Redgrave commented on this same show: "To pass from the grand salons appropriated in the Palais des Beaux Arts to the French and Continental works, into the long gallery of British pictures, was to pass at once from the
midst of warfare and its incidents, from passion, strife, and bloodshed, from martyrdoms and suffering, to the peaceful scenes of home.” Clive shows that he is moving in this direction in the letter he writes to Arthur from the Louvre in Paris, where he has gone to rest from his labors over “The Battle of Assaye”: “Art ought not to be a fever. It ought to be a calm; not a screaming bull-fight or a battle of gladiators, but a temple for placid contemplation, rapt worship, stately rhythmic ceremony, and music solemn and tender. I shall take down my Snyders and Rubens, when I get home; and turn quietist. To think I have spent weeks in depicting bony Life Guardsmen . . . and painting black beggars off a crossing!” (chap. 22).

Unlike his friend John James Ridley who inspires him, and more like Thackeray himself, Clive is not represented as a great painter. “If Mr. Clive is not a Michael Angelo or a Beethoven,” declares his biographer, “if his genius is not gloomy, solitary, gigantic, shining alone, like a lighthouse, a storm about him, and breakers dashing about his feet, I cannot help myself; he is as Heaven made him, brave, honest, gay, and friendly, and persons of a gloomy turn must not look to him as a hero” (chap. 39). Recognizing his own limitations Clive eventually abandons his imitations of the “Imperio-Davido-classical school” and his copies of the masterpieces “in the heroic vein” in the museums of Paris and Rome to find his subject matter in the streets. “We walked out to see the town, which I daresay you know, and therefore shan’t describe,” he writes to Pen. “We saw some good studies of fishwomen with bare legs; and remarked that the soldiers were very dumpy and small. . . . Didn’t I get up the next morning and have a good walk in the Tuileries! The chestnuts were out, and the statues are shining: and all the windows of the palace in a blaze. . . . No end of little children were skipping and playing in the sunshiny walks, with dresses as bright and cheeks as red as the flowers and roses in the parterres” (chap. 22). When he has to seek his livelihood by the sweat of his brow, he sets himself, however reluctantly, to record the life around him on canvas: “I am doing Mail Coaches . . . and Charges of Cavalry; the public like the Mail Coaches best—on a dark paper—the horses and milestones picked out white—yellow dust—cobalt distance, and the guard and coachman of course in vermilion”; “Crackthorp, and a half-dozen men of his regiment came, like good fellows as they are, and sent me five pounds apiece for their heads. . . .” (chap. 74). By trial and error Clive eventually comes round to Thackeray’s own view that “it is the study of
Nature, surely, that profits us, and not of these imitations of her. A man, as a man, from a dustman up to Aeschylus, is God's work, and good to read, as all works of Nature are."

Clive anticipates what is to be his metier when he sets up his first studio and invites the colonel to pose for him: "That's your key, sir... and you must be my first sitter, please, father; for though I'm a historical painter, I shall condescend to do a few portraits, you know" (chap. 22). At this point, Pen interposes: "Clive has never painted anything better than that head, which he executed in a couple of sittings; and wisely left without subjecting it to the chances of further labour." He shares Thackeray's own inclination for art that is spontaneous, for "small pictures" that "come straight to the heart," for faces expressive of "real nature, real startling home poetry." Eventually Clive's drawing of his own baby son helps to cheer the colonel's last days in Grey Friars. Not the turbulent genius prized by the romantics, Clive, though temporarily deflected from his path by his ill-advised marriage, comes closer to the Victorian middle-class ideal of the artist. His conversion to "the peaceful scenes of home" is most clearly signaled in that moment of illumination in Baden when his spiritual and human loves merge in his consciousness: "As he looked at a great picture or statue, as the 'Venus' of Milo, calm and deep, unfathomably beautiful as the sea from which she sprung; as he looked at the rushing 'Aurora' of the Rospigliosi, or the 'Assumption' of Titian, more bright and glorious than sunshine, or that divine 'Madonna and divine Infant' of Dresden, whose sweet face must have shone upon Raphael out of heaven; Clive's heart sang hymns as it were, before these gracious altars; and somewhat as he worshipped these masterpieces of art, he admired the beauty of Ethel" (chap. 30). Clive may be said to represent the modern artist of "the bourgeois style," whose cause Thackeray had advanced in his art criticism, as well as the spirit of art itself domesticated and, like other former manifestations of "the unbought grace of life," accommodating itself to everyday life. Clive's conversion as an artist is illustrated on the title page of the second volume of *The Newcomes* (in its original format) where he is represented before the easel, his wife looking over his shoulder, his child at his feet playing with the sketches that have fallen on the floor.

Along with Clive Newcome's hammering out of his "bourgeois style" of art we witness another significant coming of age—that of the domestic novelist incarnated in the chronicler of the Newcome
family, Arthur Pendennis of the staff of the *Pall Mall Gazette: Journal of Politics, Literature, and Fashion*. By now he has left far behind him both the mooncalf of Chatteris and the bachelor-about-town. He has taken on a more staid character, in keeping with that of his creator, who at this stage was determined to dispense more heady stuff than "the brisk, sparkling champagne drink from the presses of Colburn, Bentley & Co." "Write sober books, books of history, leave novels to younger folks," Thackeray advised himself in the letter to Miss Baxter. Appropriately Arthur purports to be, not a teller of tales, but the editor of Clive Newcome's "logs" and the colonel's "papers," a historian who, "charged with the duty of making two octavo volumes out of his friend's story, dresses up the narrative in his own way" (chap. 24). Never other than a "veracious" chronicler, Pendennis attempts with his leisurely pace to give the illusion of the random quality of life: "In such a history, events follow each other without necessarily having a connection with one another" (chap. 24). Having got his adolescent misanthropy and *weltenschmerz* out of his system with his apprentice work *Walter Lorraine*, he is ready to write the sort of books Laura approves of: "good books, kind books, with gentle, kind thoughts . . . such as might do people good to read." Ethel Newcome, who has read Arthur's first book (over Lady Kew's severe objections), also gives him ideas. "Why do you give such bad characters of women?" she asks him at a dinner party at the Hobson Newcome's mansion in Bryanstone Square. "Don't you know any good ones? . . . Why don't you put them into a book?" She adds: "Why don't you put my uncle into a book? He is so good that nobody could make him good enough" (chap. 24). Arthur takes up both challenges.

By the "good ones" Ethel refers not to herself but to Arthur's mother, Helen, and to Laura, whom indeed he marries midway through the book and whose supreme virtues he makes all too well known to us. But with Ethel, whom Clive elevates into an object of adoration, Arthur appears to be answering critics who thought that Thackeray himself had given "bad characters of women." Not too long before *The Newcomes* began coming out, Thackeray had been taken to task by an American magazine for dividing his feminine characters into "the good-foolish and the selfish-shrewd" with no gradations in between. Another American reviewer was perturbed to find that Thackeray's women are "either composites of vice or flattering slaves, and they are thus unnatural." Back home, Mrs. Oliphant complained: "Mr. Thackeray does not seem acquainted with anything feminine between a nursery-maid and a fine lady—
an undiscriminate idolator of little children and an angler for a rich husband. The 'perfect woman nobly planned' has no place in the sphere of Mr. Thackeray's fancy. 38 Ethel is far from the "perfect woman," being all too imbued with the Newcome pride and willfulness that bring grief also to Clive and to the colonel. Lord Farintosh is rash as usual when he sums her up as "the finest girl in England—and the best-plucked one, and the cleverest and the wittiest, and the most beautiful creature, by Jove, that ever stepped . . ." (chap. 59), but he comes close to what made her at the time a novelty among Thackeray's heroines. As though determined to prove that these virtues were not really dissociated, Thackeray made her as clever as Becky, as tender-hearted as Amelia, as flirtatious as Blanche, and almost a match for Beatrix as a beauty. He also showed that one and the same woman could be artful and good-hearted, vain and unselfish, an "idolator of little children" as well as an "angler for a rich husband." This shift was noticed by an early reviewer of The Newcomes who pointed out: "Mr. Thackeray is not for the most part a flattering painter of women. The clever are artful, and wicked; the good are insipid. Ethel is a great exception, and has no counterpart in Vanity Fair or Pendennis." 39

Most of Thackeray's characters, even his unscrupulous ones, reveal surprising glints of goodness from time to time, or unexpected resources, but Ethel is unique among his young women in developing with the passage of time, in being "improved" by her circumstances—as the moralists of Victoria's day would have it. Her elders having failed her as guides through life, Ethel becomes an autodidact in the school of hard knocks. "She has a generous nature, and the world has not had time to spoil it," Laura Pendennis observes to her husband. "Do you know there are many . . . problems that she has to work out for herself. . . . Life and experience force things upon her mind which others learn from their parents, or those who educate them" (chap. 49). Certainly she passes with honors the moral tests that life imposes on her: allowing Lord Farintosh to save his face by giving it out that he, rather than she, has broken off their engagement; taking over the care of the children of her brother Barnes and Lady Clara after their separation and divorce; attending to the poor and sick in the London slums. She really rises in our estimation when, prompted by moral scruples, she rejects, in Clive's favor, a family legacy to which she is entitled. (Here, incidentally, is the justification for the much criticized conventional device of the belated discovery of her paternal grandmother's will.) We can agree with Laura that "the trials,
and perhaps grief, which the young lady... had to undergo have brought out the noblest qualities of her disposition,” and with Arthur that by the end of this history, “She is a very different person from the giddy and worldly girl who compelled our admiration of late in the days of her triumphant youthful beauty, of the wayward generous humour, of her frivolities and her flirtations” (chap. 62). We are left guessing whether Ethel and Clive, after their respective trials and tribulations, actually achieve a “happy ever after,” it being merely hinted at the conclusion that they are united “in Fable-land somewhere.” The main point presumably is their biographer’s conviction that they are “a great deal happier now than they would have been had they married at first, when they took a liking to each other as young people.” They are both chastened by what they have known of spoiled human relations. What is more important—they have before them the noble example of Colonel Newcome.

“Why interest oneself in a personage who you know must, at the end of the third volume, die a miserable death?” Thackeray had asked the British public in a review ten years before. At this time he was urging them to read that “good, cheerful, clever, kind-hearted, merry, smart, bitter, sparkling romance” called *Jerome Paturot*, whose impact on *Vanity Fair* has already been noticed. With *The Newcomes*, however, we do indeed interest ourselves in a personage who dies abjectly, at the end of the second volume in this instance, one more sign of Thackeray’s growing inclination toward “sober subjects.” The colonel annoys some modern readers, but he was this novel’s pinnacle to many of Thackeray’s contemporaries. Mrs. Oliphant, who was critical of Ethel Newcome, found her most worthy of our regard “when we see her beautiful eyes shining with pride for her noble old uncle.” To the reviewer in the *Times*, the colonel was “a noble creature, worthy of any age.” The characterization of Colonel Newcome finally established Thackeray as a novelist of sympathy and human compassion, as well as of wit and intelligence. In America one reviewer praised him for at last creating a character who commands “our profound reverence”; and another found in *The Newcomes* ample refutation of the charges of misanthropy as well as of misogyny that had been laid at his door. The words of Saintsbury written near the beginning of this century seem best to express the continuing appeal of this Christian soldier on those who have basked in his radiance: “The Colonel’s end enchanted and enchants everybody who is susceptible to the senti-
mental, and appears to have disarmed, most of the anti-sentimentalists by the intensity of its humanity.”

Like Ethel, the colonel grows on us, but in a different way. At first he appears something of a prig and a bore, a figure for gentle ridicule. It is evident, in connection with the “improvement” program in progress throughout the novel, that in some respects Telemachus is ahead of Mentor: “Indeed [the colonel] spoke out his mind pretty resolutely on all subjects which moved or interested him; and Clive, his son, and his honest chum, Mr. Binnie, who had a great deal more reading and much keener intelligence than the Colonel, were amused often at his naive opinion about men, or books, or morals. Mr. Clive had a very fine natural sense of humour, which played perpetually round his father’s simple philosophy, with kind and smiling comments” (chap. 14). A passage that follows in the manuscript of *The Newcomes* but was dropped in press goes further: “Lad as he was he had a shrewdness & experience w' the elder’s 50 years had never attained. Clive with his young eyes looked more clearly at men & the world than his father who had seen it so long & so little: & the boy very soon began to keep his own opinion & to question the experience of w'h his artless sire never doubted the value. In truth Thomas Newcome was but a child in the understanding of the world although he fancied himself becomingly versed in that science, imagining that a man of necessity acquired experience by age & took steps in knowledge, as he did in military rank, by seniority.”

Whatever the superiority of pupil to master, the upshot of the colonel’s educational scheme for Clive is that the two learn from each other. One function of Pendennis, as surrogate for the author, is to act as eclectic moralist, reconciling the old and new generations:

Between this pair of friends the superiority of wit lay, almost from the very first, on the younger man’s side; but, on the other hand, Clive felt a tender admiration for his father’s goodness, a loving delight in contemplating his elder’s character, which he has never lost, and which in the trials of their future life, inexpressibly cheered and consoled both of them. Beati illi! O man of the world, whose wearied eyes may glance over this page, may those who come after you so regard you! O generous boy, who read in it, may you have such a friend to trust and cherish in youth, and in future days fondly and proudly to remember!

These are significant words coming from that “man of the world,” the erstwhile skeptic Arthur Pendennis, who seems to discern in
the “simple philosophy” of Colonel Newcome what M. Cousin referred to as “the authority of those general beliefs which constitute the common sense of mankind.” The better part of wisdom in Thackeray’s world blends the “reflective reason” (in Cousin’s terms) as represented by the wit and sophistication of Clive with the “spontaneous reason” of the colonel.44

Of all the people in this novel with whom the colonel comes into contact, he makes the deepest impression on Arthur, through whose eyes we see and judge him. Those readers who had been watching with interest his development from the young coxcomb of Pendennis must have been gratified by Arthur’s response to this pattern of “a gentleman, a Christian, and a man of honour,” as he is referred to by Pen’s journalist friend Frederick Bayham (chap. 12). Among Pen’s various functions in this novel is that of impartial (if unsuccessful) arbiter in the family feud that propels the drama of this book. In this capacity he sees the colonel as “a man . . . simple and generous, . . . fair and noble in all his dealings,” temporarily warped by a desire for revenge disguised as righteous indignation. It is poetic justice then that he rises to his true nobility in adversity, purged of his pride and vindictiveness. Stocqueler, to turn once more to his model after whom the colonel appears in a number of respects to have been fashioned, had written that “the manners of the British officer should invariably be those which Chesterfield delineated; his conduct and sentiments, those which in life and death Sir Philip Sidney illustrated.”45 It is fitting therefore that the example the colonel has set before us of holy living should be rounded off by an episode of holy dying, and indeed nothing becomes him in life like his leaving of it. For one who had been “but a child in his understanding of the world,” there is a special appropriateness to his last moments as reported by Arthur: “At the usual evening hour the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome’s hands outside the bed feebly beat a time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said ‘Adsum!’ and fell back. It was the word we used at school, when names were called; and lo, he, whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered to his name, and stood in the presence of the Master” (chap. 80).

Moving as the colonel’s death remains to those of us who are susceptible, it had a special significance to Thackeray’s contemporaries whose grief was still fresh over the passing three years before of one of Victorian England’s most revered military heroes, the Duke of Wellington. The first readers of The Newcomes were
reminded of this doleful occasion, not only through Tennyson's famous commemorative ode, but also through a published lecture by Samuel Warren (advertised in no. 1). "While my tears fell, in common with those of all present, including royalty itself; while music pealed mournfully, dissolving the very soul, and the gorgeous coronated coffin finally disappeared," lamented Warren, continuing in words that look forward to Colonel Newcome's fate: "there arose before my mind's eye a kindred yet different scene— the vision of some pauper burial, simple and rude, occurring perhaps at that very moment; the burial of some aged forlorn being, whose poverty-stricken spirit was at length safely housed where the weary are at rest: the poor dust unattended, save by those whose duty was to bury it—without a sigh, without a tear; with no sound but a reverend voice, and the gusty air, and no prolonged ceremonial." These sentiments, and some of the words, are echoed by Thomas Newcome when Arthur discovers him clad in a black pensioner's gown among the congregation at the Grey Frairs chapel, where the colonel has taken refuge after the Bundlecund disaster—having fled also the wrath of The Campaigner, more than his match for high spirits and temper. The colonel tells him of a friend, another pensioner, veteran of the Peninsular War, "gone now... where 'the wicked cease from trembling, and the weary are at rest'; and I thought then... here would be a place for an old fellow when his career was over, to hang his sword up; to humble his soul, and to wait thankfully for the end" (chap. 75). Subsequently we witness with Arthur the stoicism with which this Christian warrior faces death, once his "fate decreed poverty, disappointment, separation, a lonely old age." We are spared his "pauper funeral," but attend his death bed along with Arthur, Laura, Clive, Ethel, Frederick Bayham and Mme de Florac, his lost Léonore, who has remained faithful to him in spirit through the years.

Just before Arthur spots the colonel among the old pensioners, he has participated in the service before the Founder's Tomb, which inspires him with an awesome sense of our common destiny: "A plenty of candles lights up this chapel, and this scene of age and youth, and early memories, and pompous death. How solemn the well-remembered prayers are, here uttered again in the place where in childhood we used to hear them! How beautiful and decorous the rite; how noble the ancient words of the supplications which the priest utters, and to which the generations of fresh children, and troops of bygone seniors have cried Amen under those
arches!” (chap. 75). Colonel Newcome’s humbler memorial becomes equated with the Founder’s Tomb which, “with its grotesque carvings, monsters, heraldries darkles and shines with the most wonderful shadows and lights,” and “Fundator Noster [Sir Thomas Sutton], in his ruff and gown, awaiting the great Examination” is united under the aspect of eternity with an old veteran remembered only by a few devoted ones and by God. So Samuel Warren in his panegyric on the Duke of Wellington reminded the mourners of the nation: “In the world of spirits, both these might already have met—the warrior-statesman and the pauper, each aware of the different dispersal of the dust he had left behind! Thus are we equally unable to evade death, to conceal or disguise its true and awful character. One event happeneth to all (Eccles. 11. 14). The words spoken on high, and great and mean are beside each other in the same darkness, with the same event before them.”

The chapel bell that accompanies Colonel Newcome’s spirit out of this world tolls for us all. His cane falls lightly on our backs, too, as Arthur voices a belated apology: “The steps of this good man had been ordered thither by Heaven’s decree: to this almshouse! Here it was ordained that a life all love, and kindness, and honour, should end! I heard no more of prayers, and psalms and sermon, after that. How dared I to be in a place of mark, and he, he yonder among the poor? O pardon, you noble soul! I ask forgiveness of you for being of a world that has so treated you—you my better, you the honest, and gentle, and good!”

(chap. 75). However, the family chronicler of the Newcomes means for us to look back on life properly chastened rather than to dwell on contrition and death, and so the passing of Thomas Newcome leaves us ultimately exhilarated. “Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him,” Arthur reads from the Bible at the colonel’s bed, the very same psalm sung at the Founder’s Day service: “And who that saw him then, and knew him and loved him as I did—who would not have humbled his own heart, and breathed his inward prayer, confessing and adoring the Divine Will, which ordains these trials, these triumphs, these humiliations, these blest griefs, this crowning Love?”

New life is the theme of another episode where the colonel, Clive, and Clive’s little boy Tommy come together in prayer: “So these three generations had joined in that supplication: the strong man, humbled by trial and grief, whose loyal heart was yet full of love;—the child, of the sweet age of those little ones whom the Blessed Speaker of the prayer first bade to come unto Him;—and
the old man, whose heart was well nigh as tender and as innocent: and whose day was approaching, when he should be drawn to the bosom of the Eternal Pity" (chap. 79). Not only young Tommy but others of the rising generation seem to be imbued with the colonel's spirit. "The boys of the school, it must be said, had heard the noble old gentleman's touching history, and had all got to know and love him," observes Arthur upon revisiting Grey Friars (chap. 80). Such is the intended effect of this history on all others who have come to know this noble old gentleman—boys, girls, men, women, of all generations, in or out of school. Within the world of these "Memoirs of a Most Respectable Family," at least, love conquers all, the spirit of charity transmitted by Sophia Alethea, the mother of Brian and Hobson Newcome, stepmother of Thomas, somehow triumphing over the dark angels of greed, pride, and materialism.

"Parbleu, what virtue, my friend! what a Joseph!" exclaims that bon vivant Paul de Florac: "One sees well that your wife has made you the sermon. My poor Pendennis. You are hen-pecked, my pauvre bon! You become the husband model" (chap. 57). Himself conditioned in the more easygoing marital morals of the continent—which we have already seen exemplified through the sordid intrigue involving Lord Kew with Madame la Duchesse d'Ivry—Florac, if unintentionally, answers to the presumed satisfaction of Thackeray's readers of the time the question raised at the end of Pendennis: "And what sort of a husband would this Pendennis be?" If modern readers feel that they get a little too much of Pen as model husband and especially of his angel in the house, perhaps that is because, as Tolstoy writes at the beginning of Anna Karenina: "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Somehow we interest ourselves more in the "Children dishonoured . . . honest families made miserable" (chap. 57) with whom Pen brings us into sympathy. By this time too he has matured not only into a young Darby, but into "a man of the world looking on" as well, who, as Dr. Watts advised, "has seen the men and morals of many cities" (chap. 74) and hence is in a position to write not merely about a family, but the human family, relating the "small ills" of the Newcomes to the "great ills" of the world. "In The Newcomes we have 'the form and pressure of the very age and body of the time' as regards huge masses of society," in the words of one of its first reviewers. Moreover, taking in not only his own society but the ancient Orient, the continent, and, by implication,
"the (featherless) birds" of the New World, its sweep is not merely national but cosmopolitan.

With his enlarged views, Arthur tries to see the frustrations suffered by the parents in this book against a universe that baffles the mortal will: "Who can foresee everything and always? Not the wisest among us," he declares midway through his narrative. "We may be deep as Jesuits, know the world ever so well, lay the best ordered plans, and the profoundest combinations, and by a certain not unnatural turn of fate, we and our plans and combinations, are sent flying before the wind" (chap. 33). He is speaking here specifically of Lady Kew, who "brought a prodigious deal of trouble upon some of the innocent members of her family, whom no doubt she thought to better in life by her experienced guidance, and undoubted worldly wisdom." As with Colonel Newcome, we can infer that the elders of the tribe are not invariably the wise counselors, either in the domestic circle or in the family writ large in the state: "We may be as wise as Louis Philippe, that many-counseled Ulysses whom the respectable world admired so; and after years of patient scheming, and prodigies of skill, after coaxing, wheedling, doubling, bullying, wisdom, behold yet stronger powers interpose—and schemes and skill and violence are nought" (chap. 33). Old and young, high and low, stumble in the same darkness.

In keeping with his seriousness both as family man and as writer, Arthur even professes to "disdain, for the most part, the tricks and surprises of the novelist's art" (chap. 70), preferring to draw his matter from the vicissitudes of life itself. However, within the apparent random sequence of events and the talk of mischance and fortuity governing the world, in no other novel of Thackeray's do we become more convinced that character is destiny. Fate vies with free will through all of Thackeray's novels from Catherine on, but in The Newcomes we get more of a sense of men and women bringing ill on themselves than of ill being thrust upon them. Ultimately Arthur, as lawyer by training, writer by vocation, and moral philosopher by conviction, thinks of his role as surrogate for "the Judge who sees not the outward acts merely, but their causes, and views not the wrong alone, but the temptations, struggles, ignorance of erring creatures" (chap. 61). "Erring creatures" is the key phrase here, the vast gallery in The Newcomes, though it ranges wide through the moral spectrum, being free of the outlaws, scapegraces, and demireps who flash through most of his other novels. Hence while its predecessors may have more spark and color, The Newcomes comes closest to Thackeray's ideal of a novel made up of
“men and women of genteel society . . . living in no state of convulsive crimes, . . .” As Arthur points out, “The wicked are wicked no doubt, and they go astray, and they fall, and they come by their just deserts, but who can tell the mischief which the very virtuous do?” (chap. 20). Even the most depraved of these “erring creatures,” Barnes Newcome and Mrs. Mackenzie, are outwardly “respectable” and in conformity with the social codes. It is this moral realism, the grasp of the normality of sin as well as of the evil that is performed unwittingly, that led Coventry Patmore, another early reviewer of *The Newcomes*, to refer to its author as “the Athanasius of human peccability” whose “discreditable characters have an unhappy trick of claiming kindred with us” at the same time as “his good people confront us with a display of our own possibilities.”

As the most accessible and least ironical of Thackeray’s novels, *The Newcomes* brought Thackeray his greatest prestige along with the widest public esteem that he ever had, establishing his claim to be taken seriously as a writer among respectable readers. Early in our century George Saintsbury could still refer to it as “probably . . . Thackeray’s most popular book on the whole.” Such episodes as the devotion of Clive and his father in adversity, the humility of the colonel, and his reunion with and forgiveness of Ethel, have led Saintsbury to remark further that “perhaps, there is no book in which Thackeray has attained to such a Shakesperian pitch of pure tragicomedy,” an aspect of him missed by present-day readers who have not ventured beyond *Vanity Fair*. It obviously engaged Thackeray himself deeply, even in the midst of his doubts about his powers. In one letter to Miss Baxter written during its composition, he told himself: “You are old, you have no more invention &c. . . .”; but in another he wrote that the new novel “torments me incessantly, and I wander about it with my interior, lonely & gloomy, as if a secret remorse was haunting me.” His absorption with these fictitious men and women seems to have approached that of Dickens, as one gathers from his reluctance to let them as well as the readers go at the end. It is known that he took the pen from the hand of his daughter, who wrote down much of *The Newcomes* at his dictation, when he came to the death of the colonel, in order to write it himself in private. What this most penetrating of his novels meant to him is possibly best summed up in a letter he wrote a few days after finishing the book: “Last Thursday, the 28th at 7 o’clock in the evening, I wrote the last lines of the poor old Newcomes with a very sad heart. And afterwards
what do you think I did? Suppose I said my prayers, and humbly
prayed God Almighty to bless those I love and who love me, to help
me to see and speak the truth and to do my duty? You wouldn't
wonder at that would you? That finis at the end of a book is a
solemn word.”

"Damn all literary fellows—all artists—the whole
lot of them!" growls the respectable Hobson Newcome (chap. 20).
In defense of the calling that he and Clive have devoted themselves
to, as professors at the pen and at the easel, Arthur could affirm:
"Art is truth: and truth is religion; and its study and practice a daily
work of pious duty" (chap. 65).

1. 16 August 1852, from the Reform Club, Letters, 3:67.
2. Doyle had broken off his prosperous connection with Punch in 1850 taking
objection, as a Roman Catholic, to their attacks on the Papal Aggression—one
reason quite possibly why Thackeray is easier on Catholicism in The Newcomes than
he had been in Pendennis. In his article “Pictures of Life and Character” (Quarterly
Review, December 1854), devoted to Leech, Thackeray digresses on the great loss to
Punch brought about by Doyle’s defection. Thackeray at first planned to illustrate
The Newcomes himself, but gave up this task for health reasons, turning to Doyle,
whom he had already employed to delightful effect for Rebecca and Rowena.
3. 26 July 1853, Letters, 3:297; text taken from Thackeray’s Letters to an American
friendship with the Baxters during his first American lecture tour is summarized in
Letters, 1:1xxxvii–xc.
5. The narrator of My Novel is Pisistratus Caxton, hero of The Caxtons. This
device gave Thackeray the idea for making Pendennis the chronicler of The New-
comes (see letter of 26 July 1853 to Sarah Baxter, Letters, 3:298). About a year after he
began writing The Newcomes, and following upon a reprint of The Yellowplush Papers,
Thackeray wrote to Bulwer to apologize for his ridicule of him in the earlier work
(Letters, 3:278). In a letter to his mother, Thackeray praised the panoramic My Novel
as “fresher & richer than any [Bulwer] has done” (Letters, 3:288).
6. With special appropriateness to the occupation of Brian and Hobson New-
come, advertisements for banks and insurance companies are also interspersed
among the numbers.
7. This phrase is used in a family novel, Anna Harriet Drury’s Misrepresen-
tation (1850), to describe the function of the narrator. See Jane Miller Ross, “Minor
This thesis is valuable generally for the literary context of The Newcomes.
8. Ross comments on the tendency of the family chronicles of the decade to spin
out the narrative over several generations: “The presumed heroine of the first
volume turns out to be the real heroine’s grandmother. Often the dénouement of
the love plot hinges upon a scandal or feud, which occurred two centuries before the
fair seventeen-year old appears on the scene and threatens to blight her happiness
and absolutions of the final pages.” She quotes complaints about the prolixity of
these novels by critics, the most extreme being this one from the Athenaeum: “Are we
coming to the days when no tale will be complete unless it begins before the Flood
and ends with the final consummation of things” (“Minor English Novels of the
Eighteen-Fifties,” pp. 35–36). Arthur more considerately breaks off the ancestral
portion of his chronicle at the beginning of chap. 4: “If we are to narrate the
youthful history not only of the hero of this tale, but of the hero’s father, we shall
never have done with nursery biography.”

10. This epigraph is attributed to Lamartine. Among recently published biographies were MacFarlane's *Life of the Duke of Marlborough* (1852), a new edition of Bolingbroke's *Works and Life* in four volumes (1849), and Warburton's *Memoirs of Walpole and Contemporaries* (1851). In the *Newcomes Advertiser* are listed *The Duke of Buckingham's Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III. From Original Family Documents and Characteristics Of The Duke of Wellington Apart From His Military Talents* by the Right Honorable Earl De Gray. Anne Manning was among historical novelists who carried this trend over into fiction, e.g., *Ye Maiden and Married Life of Mary Powell Afterwards Mistress Milton* (1849) and *Ye Household of Sir Thomas More* (1851).


13. Ibid., chap. 4. To get in the good graces of Squire Rollick, the opportunistic Uncle Jack inaugurates a newspaper supporting the "agricultural interest" in opposition to the despised *Mercury* of the "manufacturing fellows" (cf. the attack on Sir Brian by the *Newcome Independent*, the source of which is left vague, though Barnes attributes it to "our infernal radicals of the press").

14. Some episodes of *My Novel* are set in Screwstown, whose "society... was, like most provincial capitals, composed of two classes—the commercial and the exclusive." A figure for satire is a tuft-hunting wealthy trader who maneuver himself into the "sublime coterie" of landed aristocrats. They patronize him for his wealth and hospitality and also try to manipulate him politically (bk. 5, chap. 3). In a later chapter is introduced one Colonel Pampley of Screwstown, "stately in right of his military rank and services in India," who, unlike Colonel Newcome, is a snob who makes claim to aristocratic connections.

15. J. H. Stocqueler, *The Old Field Officer; or, The Military and Sporting Adventures of Major Worthington* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1853), advertised in no. 4, January 1854. Stocqueler was a prolific writer, credited on the title page with a biography of Wellington, *The Handbook of British India,* and *The Military Encyclopedia.* The advertisement for the *Encyclopedia Britannica,* 8th ed., that appears on the back of several numbers lists him as contributor of the article on military affairs. He also wrote under the name Joachim Heyward Siddons.


17. In chap. 65 the colonel refers to Barnes's "falsehood and rapacity... cruelty and avarice."


19. Reference is made to children's fables: "When we read in the fairy stories that the King and Queen, who lived once upon a time, build a castle of steel, defended by moats and sentinels innumerable, in which they place their darling only child, the Prince or Princess, whose birth has blest them after so many years of marriage, and whose christening feast has been interrupted by the cantankerous humour of that notorious old fairy who always persists in coming, although she has not received any invitation to the baptismal ceremony: when Prince Prettyman is locked up in the steel tower, provided only with the most wholesome food, the most edifying educational works, and the most venerable old tutor to instruct and to bore him, we know, as a matter of course, that the steel bolts and brazen bars will one day be of no avail, the old tutor will go off in a doze, and the moats and the drawbridges will either be passed by his Royal Highness's implacable enemies, or crossed by the young scapegrace himself, who is determined to outwit his guardians, and see the wicked world" (chap. 10). Such analogies, along with the likening of Lady Kew to the wicked fairy of legend, remind us that Thackeray also composed *The Rose and the Ring,* his "Fireside Pantomime for Great and Small Children," during this period.
20. The design seems to be a carry-over from *Punch*. The title page of the 1851 volume, for example, represents *Punch* on a pedestal marked *The Modern Aesop* surrounded by humanized animals of various sorts—a lion in dress clothes, a donkey in sport suit and top hat, a bull sitting and reading, among others. *Punch's Pocket Book for 1852*, used by Thackeray as an engagement calendar during his first American tour, has a border designed by Tenniel made up of connecting circles containing performing animals.


22. The ugly divorce suit resulting from Lady Clara's elopement with Jack Belsize, in which she was forced to give up her children to Barnes, was especially topical. The account comes in no. 19 (April 1855), the year after the publication of Caroline Norton's famous pamphlet, *English Laws for Women In The Nineteenth Century* (London: Printed for Private Circulation, 1854) growing out of the suit brought against her for debt by her estranged husband, which eloquently denounced property and divorce laws that condoned the tyranny of husband over wives. She likened the situation of women at the time to slavery, invoking the name of Harriet Beecher Stowe (whose recent welcome in England is referred to in chap. 28 of *The Newcomes*). In a letter of 7 March 1855, Thackeray wrote to his mother that he had been to his club “to read the trial of Norton v. Melbourne having a crim-con affair coming on in the Newcomes” (*Letters*, 3:428). The 1850s was an active decade for divorce legislation. In 1850 a Royal Commission was appointed to examine the existing laws; Lord Cranworth's Marriage and Divorce Bill of 1855 (the subject of another pamphlet by Caroline Norton) transferred jurisdiction of these suits from ecclesiastical to civil courts; and in 1858 a more lenient law was passed.

Inevitably there was a spate of novels dealing with mismatings and unhappy marriages: e.g., *The Wife's Sister; or, The Forbidden Marriage* (1851); Clara Harrington: *A Domestic Tale* (1852); May and December: *A Tale of Wedded Life* (1854); *A Mother's Trials* (1859). Emma Robinson's *Mauleverer's Divorce: A Story of a Woman's Wrong* (1858) has for its heroine a novelist, possibly suggested by Mrs. Norton. For a discussion of these and others, see Ross, “Minor English Novels of the Eighteen-Fifties,” chap. 5.


25. In chap. 31 of *The Newcomes*, reference is made to an analogous Parisian institution, the *bureaux de convenance*.

26. The theme of the marriage mart recurs in novels advertised in *The Newcomes*. *The Fair Carew; or, Husbands and Wives* opens: “Marriage . . . that stumbling block to many a family in its march to preferment proved in most instances a useful auxiliary to the Lutrels, a circumstance prudent governing their conduct in this as in other matters of business.” Pisistratus Caxton is dismayed to hear the name of his ladylove bandied about at the Opera House as one of the most desirable heiresses in England by two young loungers who hope to marry wealth and who express the opinion that “one ought to be an earl at least to aspire to Fanny Trevarion.” In Coulton's *Fortune* a group of cynics at an evening party exchange such pearls as: “The heart of every woman is for sale”; “Marriage is as much a barter as any transaction concluded between Baring and Rothschild”; “Cupid, blind though he be, does not look favorably on inequality of condition, and Hymen abhors it.”

27. Richard Simpson saw in Clive a partial “autobiographical portrait” of his creator, representing “the reaction of youth and health, of the love of energy, of art, of beauty, against the pale cast of thought which sickles over the portrait of Pen­ dennis” (“Thackeray” [obituary], *Home and Foreign Review* 4 [April 1864]: 492).


29. A number of novels of this decade deal with artists struggling either to find their vocation or to establish status: e.g. Lady Georgina Fullerton's *Lady Bird* (1852); Anna Harriet Drury's *Light and Shade; or, The Young Artist* (1852); Julia Kavanagh's
"Daisy Burns" (1853); and Amelia Edwards's *My Brother's Wife; a Life History* (1855), which deals with a Dionysian painter, the direct antithesis of Clive. See Ross, "Minor English Novels of the Eighteen-Fifties," chap. 7. The young Burne-Jones, reviewing *The Newcomes* as a student, was inspired by the elevated position Thackeray accorded the artist (Oxford and Cambridge Magazine 1 [January 1856]: 50–61).

30. Pendennis refers to "the magnificent bankers and manufacturers" of Newcome who "would give their thousand guineas for a picture or statue, and write you a cheque for ten times the amount any day" (chap. 55). Clive's uncles apparently are not among them.


32. Quoted ibid. Redgrave was among the artists on whom Thackeray contributed an appreciative piece in Louis Marvy's *Sketches After English Landscape Painters*. Here he described Redgrave's work as "chiefly character pieces of the pathetic and domestic cast."

33. See above, p. 69.


35. See above, p. 63. In "On Men and Pictures" Thackeray expressed the opinion that in portrait painting "our English painters keep the lead still" over their continental rivals (*Works*, 13:381).

36. The corresponding plate for vol. 1, entitled "J. J. in Dreamland," shows Clive's friend and companion in a trance surrounded by figures conjured up by his imagination. Thackeray at one time contemplated a sequel to *The Newcomes* centered on Ridley, who is represented as a more inspired artist than Clive but remains a rather shadowy figure in this novel. J. R. Harvey has suggested that Ridley was intended as a representation of Doyle (*Victorian Novelists and Their Illustrators* [London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1971], p. 95); see also Anthony Burton, "Thackeray's Collaborations with Cruikshank, Doyle, and Walker," *Costerus*, n.s. 2 (1974): 167–74.


38. Mrs. Oliphant, "Mr. Thackeray and His Novels," p. 90.


42. George Saintsbury, introduction to *The Newcomes*, Oxford Thackeray, 15:xiv. For an intransigent antisentimentalist, see Russell A. Fraser, "Sentimentality in Thackeray's 'The Newcomes,'" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 4 (1949): 187–96. Fraser criticizes the novel completely out of the context of its period, and also fails to take into consideration that it is being told from the point of view of Arthur Pendennis, who is establishing his sympathy with the human condition.

43. Most of what has survived from the original manuscript (fourteen chapters of vol. 1, twenty-three chapters of vol. 2) is in the library of Charterhouse School, now in Godalming, Surrey. Why this significant passage should have been omitted cannot be determined—perhaps to allow for the paragraphs that conclude the chapter, beginning with Sir Brian's "'The spirit of radicalism is abroad in this country,'" which were added in press.

44. See above, pp. 31–32.


46. Samuel Warren, *The Intellectual and Moral Development of the Present Age* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1854), p. 11. This lecture was delivered before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Hull. Thackeray himself was in America at the time of the duke's funeral, but an ode, "Weep, Albion, weep!", that appeared in the *Globe* on the day of the ceremony (18 November 1852) has been attributed to him (see Harold C. Gulliver, *Thackeray's Literary Apprenticeship* [Valdosta, Ga.: Southern Stationery and Printing Co., 1934], pp. 164–67).
47. Warren, The Intellectual and Moral Development of the Present Age, p. 11.

48. This whole treatment of the colonel's death stands out in stark contrast to Lady Kew's funeral (chap. 55), quite fittingly headed by a picture of a weeping crocodile. Cf. also the brief dismissal of the last days of Major Pendennis at the end of chap. 49, a sure sign that Arthur has parted company with the "worldly philosophy."

49. In a letter written on Christmas Day 1849 to Mrs. Brookfield, he wrote: "I think that cushion-thumpers and high and Low Church exstatics have often carried what they call their love for Δ to what seems Impertinence to me... the wretched canting Fakeers of Christianity, the Convent & conventicle dervishes they are only less unreasonable now than the Eremites and holy women who whipped & starved themselves, never washed, and encouraged vermin for the Glory of God. What a history that is in the Thos Kempis book. The scheme of that book carried out would make the world the most wretched, useless, dreary, dotting place of sojourn,—there would be no manhood, no love no tender ties of mother & child, no use of intellect, no trade, or science—a set of selfish beings crawling about avoiding one another, and howling a perpetual miserere" (Letters, 2:615-16). Although devout, Thackeray definitely kept his eye on things of this world, though he could be hard also on those who take the easy way (the Reverend Honeyman, a false "cushion-thumerator").

50. The accompanying plate, the last in the book, shows Tommy kneeling in prayer at the colonel's bedside while the colonel sits hunched over and haggard in his chair and Clive looks sadly down at him.

51. The playing off by Madame d'Ivry of one lover against another, and the ensuing duel, are reminiscent of Horace de Viel-Castel's La faubourg St. Germain. This type of intrigue figures also in Charles de Bernard's Gerfaut. See Thackeray's essay "On Some French Fashionable Novels" and above, pp. 249-50.

52. The first part of that supreme paean to marriage, The Angel in the House, by Coventry Patmore, came out in 1854. Its author was one of the most favorable reviewers of The Newcomes (see below, n. 54). Even Major Pendennis joins the throng of worshippers in his deathbed recantation: "I had other views for you, my boy, and once hoped to see you in a higher position in life; but I began to think now, Arthur, that I was wrong; and as for that girl, sir, I am sure she is an angel" (chap. 49).

We are assured that the reformed rake Lord Kew is settled down to marital bliss with the sister of Lady Clara, but are spared a visit to their household.


54. Coventry Patmore, "Fielding and Thackeray," North British Review 55 (November 1855): 197-98. To illustrate the moral range of The Newcomes, Patmore classified its characters as "good" (Colonel Newcome, Ethel, Arthur and Laura, J. J. Ridley, Martha Honeyman, and the Countess of Florae), "mixed" (Bayham, Sherrick, De Florac, Lord Kew, Lady Walham), and "abominable" (Barnes, Mrs. MacKenzie, Mrs. Hobson Newcome, Lady Kew).

55. Saintsbury, introduction, Oxford Thackeray, 15:xv. Some of the unfavorable response that it met at the time of its publication, including that of Dickens who was then writing in Household Words against the administration of charity at Charterhouse, is summarized by Lionel Stevenson in The Showman of Vanity Fair (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), pp. 299-300.


58. Introduction to *The Newcomes*, *Works*, 8:xxxviii. According to another received account, Thackeray was found weeping by a housekeeper after he had completed the writing of the colonel's death.
59. 2 July 1855 to Kate Perry, *Letters*, 3:459.
60. Toward the end of "Concluding Observations on Snobs," Thackeray wrote: "A court system that sends men of genius to the second table, I hold to be a Snobbish system. A society that sets up to be polite, and ignores Arts and Letters, I hold to be a Snobbish society" (*Works*, 6:464). Cousin's *Du vrai, du beau, et du bien*, incidentally, was reissued in 1853.