

Anthony Trollope: *The Compleat Traveller*

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“The grand defect in travellers, and the reason why scarcely one in a hundred gives no more useful or interesting information touching the countries they visit, than any of us could give of the moon, is this. Man — the true unsophisticated, two legged, unfeathered man, is naturally and prodigiously an egotist. Whether he call himself *I*, in the style egotistical, or *we*, in the style royal, number one is the hero, the subject, predicate, and conclusion, the beginning middle, and end, by which he measures and compares every thing that he sees, enjoys, or suffers. In a word, his own habits, tastes, and pursuits, are the common measure by which he settles every value. . . . Very few travellers possess the enlargement of thought, and the generosity of feeling, and the capability of generalizing, to qualify them for giving adequate and just views of the countries they undertake to describe.”

“Travellers in America,” Timothy Flint,
Knickerbocker, October 1833.

“Of all travellers in the world, the English are the best and the worst. . . . Their insular manners stand in the way of that free intercourse which is the *passe-partout* to the life of a people; and certain lofty prejudices, which are not amiss at home in helping to impart self-reliance to the national character, lead them to depreciate or misjudge foreign customs exactly in proportion as they differ from their own.”

“Recent Travellers,” *Fraser's*, July 1850.

THE PREVAILING VOICE and dominant attitudes of Anthony Trollope are perhaps best known to readers of Victorian fiction through his quiet and sensible intrusions as narrator in his many novels of English life and manners. Wary of finding the real man

in a literary convention, others seek Trollope in his workmanlike and self-effacing *Autobiography*. But in these more self-conscious days, there are those who regard his utter frankness as simply another kind of literary pose. It has not occurred to many that the most broadly representative voice of Trollope might be heard in his lesser-known works of travel: *The West Indies and the Spanish Main*, 1859; *Travelling Sketches*, 1866; *Australia and New Zealand*, 1873; *South Africa*, 1878; and his most comprehensive and perceptive volume, *North America*, 1862.¹ While these volumes are in large part renderings of factual and external realities, the voice, personality, and experience of Anthony Trollope lie at their cores, making them unique among similar books in the popular nineteenth-century travel genre. Trollope's deepest and most fundamental trait was an eminent sense of fairness, developed no doubt, during his dark years of boyhood when he felt himself abandoned by his family and miserably persecuted by the rich and socially superior boys at Harrow School. Emerging from such unpromising beginnings to a secure and famous adulthood, Trollope eventually came to value fairness as the supreme informing sense a man could bring to his life, or a writer to his books. In his many novels, he is always compassionate toward the characters of his creation. Reluctant to portray any of them as mere villains, he spoke a word in behalf even of Mrs. Proudie, who although she was "a tyrant, a bully, a would-be priestess, a very vulgar woman, and one who would send headlong to the nethermost pit all who disagreed with her," was "at the same time . . . conscientious, by no means a hypocrite, really believing in the brimstone which she threatened, and anxious to save the souls around her from its horrors."²

In the travel books, this stance emerges as a prevailing willingness to evaluate other countries on their own terms and according to their own goals. The achievement of such supreme fairness brought a new dimension to the travel book genre, and is most remarkable in his lengthy volume *North America*. The criticism of America by Englishmen during the nineteenth century had not been distinguished either by fairness or objectivity; it was a touchy subject, at best, this judging of a rebellious "child" by its older parent. Beginning with the early volumes of his mother

(*Domestic Manners of the Americans*, 1832), who, in Anthony's own words, "judged . . . from her standing-point," and extending to Dickens, who in his *American Notes* (1842) let his disgust with the inequities of the Copyright Law colour his reactions, traveller after traveller seemed disposed to "write up" the United States according to his own particular set of prejudices or preconceptions.³ Both praise and blame were doled out according to what the traveller thought America *should* be doing. One early reviewer, tired of such methods, noted:

In a strange country, considerable pains must be taken to obtain sound materials for an opinion. There is, besides, a certain *charity of nature*, which is not more favourable to our own happiness and influence with others, than indispensable for the strict and simple purposes of truth. These precautions would weed page after page out of most modern travels, especially out of travels in America.⁴

Trollope, who came during the most difficult of all times for a foreign observer — the Civil War — succeeded in seeing the country for what it was: a young country struggling toward a difficult maturity. His innate "charity of nature" enabled him to do what so many had failed to do before him: to judge the United States on its own terms and according to its own goals. Because of his fairness as a person, he emerges as one of the most dependable sources of information on nineteenth-century America. His writings were not merely a desire to repeat the "family occupation" of writing travel books, for he had something special to offer: he really was "the compleat traveller."

In addition to his fairness Trollope brought to his writings still another asset. In that great age of peripatetic Englishmen, Trollope boasted an impressive set of credentials. Long before he visited America in 1861, he had proven his mettle as an indomitable and highly experienced traveller.

Living in and about Ireland for ten years, he had also made several visits to Florence to see his mother and brother. His position in the London Post Office had helped to make him intimately acquainted with the southern and western counties of England and Wales. In 1858 his employer selected him to journey to Egypt to conclude a postal treaty with that country. In

the process, he toured Egypt and the Holy Land, returning to England by way of Malta, Gibraltar, Spain, and France. He was so successful in his mission, that the Post Office, four days after his return, sent him to Scotland, and then, in November, to the West Indies, to reorganize the decrepit postal system of the Islands. Although his tours were official in nature, he soon learned how to use them as a means to sightseeing, and sightseeing as a means to authorship.⁵

Trollope's behaviour recalls that of the narrator in the earliest of his many novels, a man who, left to amuse himself one evening while in a strange town on a business trip, went out to see the countryside: "in such a situation, to take a walk is all the brightest man can do, and the dullest always does the same. There is a kind of gratification in seeing what one has never seen before, be it ever so little worth seeing; and the gratification is the greater if the chances be that one will never see it again."⁶ The West Indian trip resulted not only in the completion of his official duties, but also in the first of his several travel books. In it, he described his insatiable curiosity about the world and his pleasure in travel. "How best to get about this world which God has given us is certainly one of the most interesting works on which men can employ themselves" (p. 316).

For Trollope, there was an innate value in the mere fact of travel; even in the face of many personal misadventures, he never doubted the wisdom of giving up his accustomed home comforts in favour of the uncertainties of foreign travel. Once, in a wintry western city of the United States, Trollope, in search of hotel accommodations, stumbled and fell in the frozen snow, making a ludicrous spectacle even in his own eyes. He recorded in *North America* his wryly humorous analysis:

Why is it that a stout Englishman bordering on fifty finds himself in such a predicament as that? No Frenchman, no Italian, no German, would so place himself, unless under the stress of insurmountable circumstances. No American would do so under any circumstances. As I slipped about on the ice and groaned with that terrible fardle on my back, burdened with a dozen shirts, and a suit of dress clothes, and three pair of boots, and four or five thick volumes, and a set of maps, and a box of cigars, and a washing-tub, I confessed to myself that I was a fool. What was I

doing in such a galley as that? Why had I brought all that useless lumber down to Rolla? Why had I come to Rolla, with no certain hope even of shelter for a night? But we did reach the hotel; we did get a room between us with two bedsteads. And, pondering over the matter in my mind, since that evening, I have been inclined to think that the stout Englishman is in the right of it. (p. 395)

Never bristling at the hardships of travel, the dirt, delays and inconveniences, Trollope on tour "was very thoroughly Trollope. The banging, jolting, bustling adventure of train, steamer, diligence and mule-back travel, so far from tiring or fretting him, set him banging and jolting in response; spurred him to greater energies. . . ."7

Physical endurance was matched by his ability to forget the miseries of past travel, and he often so cautioned his readers. It is true that he began his volume on the West Indies in an uncharacteristically captious manner, by complaining about the dreariness and inconvenience of travelling in sailing vessels and that he resolved never again to set forth in one of those ships. But by the time he reached the end of his Caribbean journey, he had so far forgotten his grievance that he returned from Bermuda to New York again on board a similar vessel:

I had declared during my unlucky voyage from Kingston to Cuba that no consideration should again tempt me to try a sailing vessel, but such declarations always go for nothing. A man in his misery thinks much of his misery; but as soon as he is out of it it is forgotten, or becomes matter for mirth. Of even a voyage in a sailing vessel one may say that at some future time it will perhaps be pleasant to remember that also. (p. 365)

An undemanding traveller, Trollope toured the United States during the Civil War, when many facilities were subject to extraordinary delays and upheavals. Instead of complaining, he commented, when required to accept the company of some American private soldiers who were loud, noisy, dirty, and profane: "Of course I felt that if I chose to travel in a country while it had such a piece of business on its hands, I could not expect that everything should be found in exact order. The matter for wonder, perhaps, was that the ordinary affairs of life were so

little disarranged, and that any travelling at all was practicable" (p. 365). This self-effacing tone and a genuine tolerance distinguishes *North America*, his American book, from so many other travel volumes of the time.

Trollope was able to adjust to the mores and manners of the country he was visiting, while at the same time maintaining his own robust English individuality. He was never afflicted with what Henry James has called "the baleful spirit of the cosmopolite — that uncomfortable consequence of seeing many lands and feeling at home in none."⁸ Trollope always felt the sanctity of English habits, and yet he was able to compare, to look for the points of difference and, finally, to "think well of mankind."⁹ At Grand Haven, Michigan, while waiting for a steamboat to get underway (delays were proverbial), he amused himself according to the custom of the country. After walking alone for a time, "I went down into the bar-room of the steamer, put my feet upon the counter, lit my cigar, and struck into the debate then proceeding on the subject of the war" (p. 125). Ironically, this casual American posture was the very one so often vilified by his mother in her famous travel book, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. Still, Trollope always carried with him his books, his flask of port, his toothbrushes and combs, and always managed gracefully to retain the accoutrements of "a sturdy and sensible middle-class Englishman."¹⁰ As the reviewer for *Harper's* magazine rightly noted:

To be sure, he thinks an Englishman of middle age, sound digestion, comfortable income, and fair position — like himself — the luckiest and best man on earth. But as all men can not have all these blessings, he is quite ready to see what else the world has to offer to them.¹¹

He was not shy about letting his readers know where he stood on such matters as parallelogrammatical cities, walking habits, and heated rooms.¹² Although he berated the American love of central heating, he saw it with his usual tolerant perspective: "as the boats are made for Americans, and as Americans like hot air, I do not put it forward with any idea that a change ought to be effected."¹³ Surely the Stebbinses were incorrect in calling him

“an insular Englishman whose early sympathies and antipathies were unmodified by reason or by observation.”¹⁴ On the contrary, over the years, as he wrote his many novels, his imagination became ever more responsive and sensitive to all kinds of “otherness.”

Bradford Booth has accurately called Trollope “a statistical Baedeker.”¹⁵ Trollope never tired of assembling pages of practical information and facts about a country in which he found himself. He was seldom content merely with impressionistic renderings of places; factual details inevitably followed any generalization. Portland, Maine, had “an air of supreme plenty,” and he noted its quiet confidence as young girls returned from their tea parties at nine-o’clock, “many of them alone, and all with some basket in their hands which betokened an evening not passed absolutely in idleness” (p. 38). Beyond this impression, he noted too the size of the harbour, the number of inhabitants, and the great number of houses, “which must require an expenditure of from six to eight hundred a year to maintain them.” He always reinforced his observations by well-chosen statistics which emphasized salient facts in the life of the community. At Buffalo, for example, instead of describing young ladies walking quietly home in the evenings, he noted the city’s rapid urbanization, and that its “cars on tramways run all day, and nearly all night as well” (p. 170). The difference in the kind of observations and statistics he included tells the story of the difference in cities. *North America* abounds in statistics: the number of slaves in cities; the population count; the number of children educated in public free schools; the cost of corn in Bloomington and in Liverpool; the salaries of the military during the civil war; the gross revenues of the post office. Sometimes his facts were not always of the practical variety. On at least one occasion he went out of his way to ascertain a statistic which only his insatiable curiosity and bureaucratic love of figures did not permit him to overlook. On a visit to San Francisco, years after the first American trip, he told of how he stopped outside Yosemite Valley to measure some of the redwood trees, “finding the girth of the largest which I saw to be seventy-eight feet.”¹⁶

He was always willing to perform the expected, and he patiently visited all those places usually viewed by travellers. In his reactions to fabled places and striking views, Trollope comes close to "the average man." He is not the gushing aesthete, but the man who confesses to feelings of disappointment when confronted with, say, the citadel of Quebec. He was reluctant when pressed to go out to see the rock over which Wolfe climbed to the plains of Abraham. "Nevertheless, and as a matter of course, I went to see the rock, and can only say, as so many have said before me, that it is very steep" (p. 52). He ascended Mt. Washington on a pony because "that is *de rigueur*," but confessed that "I did not gain much myself by my labour" (p. 40). On the Falls of Minnehaha he said: "It is a pretty little cascade, and might do for a picnic in fine weather, but it is not a waterfall of which a man can make much when found so far away from home" (p. 149). At the Mountain House, he did "the one thing to be done," and scaled a dangerous peak with Rose, his wife, a trip which almost ended in serious mishap (p. 58). He did these things, not because he saw himself in any way as a man travelling to gather "literary" materials — indeed, he never sought his inspiration in strange scenes or striking places — but simply because they were expected of tourists.

When he sat down to write about what he saw, what emerged was, as Henry James called it, his genius for the usual. This "genius" was by far the one best suited for the writing of a solid and substantial book of travels. And when he came to describing America, he was more interested in viewing the grain elevators at Buffalo than in exulting over the Falls of Montmorency or Minnehaha. He knew his strength — and he also, characteristically, noted its limitations. In many of his travel stories and books, he reveals a strong sense of his own potential for absurdity ("John Bull on the Guadalquiver," "Father Giles of Ballmoy," in his *Tales of all Countries* and *Lotta Schmidt and Other Stories*). In his *Travelling Sketches* he made great fun of "the tourist in search of knowledge," the man who so resembled Anthony himself:

He will listen with wondrous patience to the details of guides, jotting down figures in a little book, and asking wonder-working

questions which no guide can answer. And he looks into municipal matters wherever he goes, learning all details as to mayors, aldermen, and councillors, as to custom duties on provisions, as to import duties on manufactures, as to schools, convents, and gaols, to scholars, mendicants, and criminals. He does not often care much for scenery, but he will be careful to inquire how many passengers the steamboats carry on the lakes, and what average of souls is boarded and lodged at each large hotel that he passes. He would like to know how many eggs are consumed annually, and probably does ask some question as to the amount of soap used in the laundries.

To the romance and transcendental ebullitions of enthusiastic admirers of nature he is altogether hostile, and dislikes especially all quotations from poetry. (pp. 79-30)

He saw such a traveller as "always thanking God that he is not as those idlers who pass from country to country learning nothing of the institutions of the people among whom they travel . . ." (*Sketches*, p. 75).

He was always ready to see himself as a figure of fun — and often appears in *North America* as the bumbling but lovable foreigner stumbling over the usages of a country new to him. He describes himself on a New York omnibus, helpless and befuddled, with bells ringing at him because he has not paid in the proper manner:

I knew I was not behaving as a citizen should behave, but could not compass the exact points of my delinquency. And then when I desired to escape, the door being strapped up tight, I would halloo vainly at the driver through the little hole; whereas, had I known my duty, I should have rung a bell, or pulled a strap, according to the nature of the omnibus in question. (p. 197)

This warm humour, so often directed at himself, pervades the pages of all his travel books — whether in the West Indies he is trapped behind a door in his nightgown while a black chambermaid dutifully seeks him out in order to curtsy,¹⁷ or whether he is being crushed by the crinoline of some New York beauty on the street cars.¹⁸ He manages always to see his misadventures as comical, or humorous, or even absurd, a kind of approach noticeably lacking in the more famous travel books of his mother and Charles Dickens, who, for all his talent at humorous effects, rarely saw himself as a comical figure.

Finally, Trollope brought to his travels a quality for which he praised his mother in his *Autobiography*: the capacity for joy. In one of those many passages in which he advises readers on how to travel properly, Anthony wrote: "In seeing the outer world, which is open to your eye, there may be great joy, almost happiness, — if you will only look at it with sincerity."¹⁹ He deplored the fact that many tourists do not really enjoy their travels:

To have been over the railroads of the Continent, to have touched at some of those towns whose names are known so widely, to have been told that such a summit was called by one name and such another summit by another name, to have crossed the mountains and heard the whistle of a steamer on an Italian lake, — to have done these things so that the past accomplishment of them may be garnered like a treasure, is very well. — but oh and alas, the doing of them! — the troubles, the cares, the doubts, the fears! Is it not almost a question whether it would not be better to live at home quietly and unambitiously, without the garnering of any treasure which cannot be garnered without so much discomfort and difficulty? But yet the tourists go.²⁰

Trollope knew how and where to find amusement. Instead of bemoaning the proverbial discomforts of sleeping in American trains, on a trip from Niagara to Detroit, he was glad to be introduced to "the thoroughly American institution of sleeping-cars," remarking that "I confess I have always taken a delight in seeing these beds made up, and consider that the operations of the change are generally as well executed as the manoeuvres of any pantomime at Drury Lane."²¹ This capacity for enjoyment extended to a genuine affection for a whole host of casual New World acquaintances. He met an old man on the train who instantly recognized Trollope as an Englishman. Trollope was surprised:

"There is no mistaking you," he said, "with your round face and your red cheek. They don't look like that here," and he gave me another grip.

Trollope's reaction was typical. "I felt quite fond of the old man, and offered him a cigar" (p. 255). In Washington, he told of the gypsy-like appearance of the sentry, his "higgledly-piggledy

state; the man was dirty and often splashed mud on Trollope's clothes as he trotted by, but still, "as I went . . . I felt for him a sort of affection, and wished in my heart of hearts that he might soon be enabled to return to some more congenial employment" (p. 364). He met some teamsters at an inn, dirty men, clumsy with their knives and forks. But Trollope thinks rather of their orderliness and intelligence. "I conceived rather an affection for those dirty teamsters; they answered me civilly when I spoke to them, and sat in quietness, smoking their pipes, with a dull and dirty, but orderly demeanour" (p. 379).

Perhaps Trollope's most significant and unusual ability as a traveller was his ability to project himself into the position of those peoples he had come to see. When he later wrote a book on Australia, he stated as a general rule for an Englishman visiting, say, the United States, that he "should be ever guarding himself against the natural habit of looking at things only from his own point of view. As he would not buy gloves for his friend by the measure of his own hand, so should he not presume that an American will be well-fitted or ill-fitted in the details of his life according as he may or may not wear the customs and manners of his life out after an English fashion."²² Trollope consciously refused to adopt English standards of measurement by which to judge the accomplishments of other lands. In *North America* he constantly reiterated a warning against judging on the basis of wrong standards. When on a New York omnibus, Trollope was bothered by some women who were aggressively arrogant in demanding their rights to a seat, and his mind automatically went to London women of the same class who were so humble as to doubt that they were even good enough to sit near an upper-class gentleman. But Trollope cut through his conventional assumptions, seeking (and finding) the new assumptions necessary to understand and judge a new phenomenon.

The question is which is best, the crouching and crawling or the impudent unattractive self-composure. Not, my reader, which action on her part may the better conduce to my comfort or to yours! That is by no means the question. *Which is the better for the woman herself?* That I take it is the point to be decided. That there is something better than either we shall all agree;—

but to my thinking the crouching and crawling is the lowest type of all. (p. 211; italics mine)

He liked the "hat-touchers" as well as any refined Englishman of his time, but he did not let personal preferences interfere with his clarity of thought. He knew that "if a man can forget his own miseries in his journeyings, and think of the people he comes to see rather than of himself, I think he will find himself driven to admit that education has made life for the million in the Northern States of America better than life for the million is with us" (pp. 267-68). He knew, too, what Englishmen would reply to this position:

They will declare that they do not want their paviours and hodmen to talk politics; that they are as well pleased that their coachmen and cooks should not always have a newspaper in their hands; that private soldiers will fight as well, and obey better, if they are not trained to discuss the causes which have brought them into the field. An English gentleman will think that his gardener will be a better gardener without any excessive political ardour; and the English lady will prefer that her housemaid shall not have a very pronounced opinion of her own as to the capabilities of the cabinet ministers. But I would submit to all Englishmen and Englishwomen who may look at these pages whether such an opinion or feeling on their part bears much, or even at all, upon the subject. I am not saying that the man who is driven in the coach is better off because his coachman reads the paper, but that the coachman himself who reads the paper is better off than the coachman who does not and cannot. I think that we are too apt, in considering the ways and habits of any people, to judge of them by the effect of those ways and habits on us, rather than by their effects on the owners of them. (p. 276)

Trollope acknowledged his personal discomfiture among the American lower orders. "They tread on my corns and offend me. They make my daily life unpleasant. But I do respect them. I acknowledge their intelligence and personal dignity. I know that they are men and women worthy to be so called; I see that they are living as human beings in the possession of reasoning faculties; and I perceive that they owe this to the progress that education had made among them" (p. 276). A broader or more humane point of view will not be found among many English travellers of this period. Consistently, conscientiously, he rejected

the standard of personal comfort and satisfaction. He once remarked that "New York I regard as the most thoroughly American of all American cities. It is by no means the one in which I should find myself the happiest, but I do not on that account condemn it" (p. 452). After all, he asked:

What is wanted in this world? Is it not that men should eat and drink, and read and write, and say their prayers? Does not that include everything . . . ? When we talk of the advances of civilization, do we mean anything but this, that men who now eat and drink badly shall eat and drink well, and that those who cannot read and write now shall learn to do so, — the prayers following, as prayers will follow upon such learning?

Distinguishing his own kind of evaluation from that of other, more critical assessors of the American achievement, he answered his own question:

Civilization does not consist in the eschewing of garlic or the keeping clean of a man's finger-nails. It may lead to such delicacies, and probably will do so. But the man who thinks that civilization cannot exist without them imagines that the church cannot stand without the spire. In the States of America men do eat and drink, and do read and write. (p. 276)

This method of evaluation produces the quality which gives his travel books as wholes their prevalent tone of fair friendliness, the hallmark which distinguishes, for example, *North America* from other contemporary British accounts of American life. In being able to see things from another point of view, Trollope brought to the writing of his travel books the same qualities that prevailed in his fiction. Just as there are no villains or heroes in his novels, so too, there are none in the accounts of his travels. He depicted only men and women walking the earth of the world, "going about their daily business, and not suspecting that they were being made a show of."²³

Trollope was truly able to project himself into the position of the people he had come to observe. He therefore sought to avoid an overemphasis on an anecdotal approach, clearly seeing the dangers inherent in such a method. "Who has ever travelled in foreign countries without meeting excellent stories against the citizens of such countries?"²⁴ Although he uses anecdotes, it is

important to note that he frequently turns them on himself. The ability to do so indicates a self-confidence, as well as a genial awareness that no man is free of absurdities. Anthony Trollope asks: "How few can travel without hearing such stories against themselves?"²⁵ The overall result of this objectivity is that the author and his subjects seem to stand on equal ground. When he came to write his travel book on America, for once, the Americans did not face a judge who had come over to record their foibles and not his own as well.

Several qualities distinguish *North America*, Trollope's book describing his eight-month stay in the States, from other contemporary travel books. Trollope believed that a good book of travels should tell not only about what *is*, but also about what is yet to come. Returning from the West Indies to Europe via a stop in the United States, he contemplated the writing of his book on America, a volume about "that people who are our children." He found the Americans worthy of special attention because they afforded "the most interesting phenomena which we find as to the new world; — the best means of prophesying, if I may say so, what the world will next be, and what men will next do."²⁶ Many other travellers had regarded their observations as final and conclusive. But Anthony was convinced that things would not long remain as they were (pp. 5-6), and in his book he frequently spoke in the prophetic voice. He saw "the all but countless population which is before long to be fed from these regions . . . the cities which will grow here . . ." (p. 123). Dickens, when once viewing some monotonous scenery, let his mind wander back, with romantic longing, to the past; he peopled the land, in his imagination, with tribes of Indians in picturesque postures.²⁷ But Trollope saw in similar scenes "crowds which will grow sleek and talk loudly, and become aggressive on these wheat and meat producing levels." Here will come "men and women who . . . are ambitious, who eat beef, and who read and write, and understand the dignity of manhood" (p. 123).

Europeans had seen as ludicrous the way in which American cities built hotels to accommodate many more guests than were ever in evidence. Trollope heard jokes about the ambitious street plan of New York, but he commented: "I do not in the least

doubt that they will occupy it all, and that 154th street will find itself too narrow a boundary for the population" (p. 123). He was never deceived by present inadequacies. He saw at Chicago that the hotel was too big, that the post office, though grand, could not properly deliver the mail, that the theatre, though handsome and convenient, was almost empty on the night of his attendance. But he was astute enough to predict that generations would come to fill up what now was empty. "Those taps of hot and cold water will be made to run by the next owner of the hotel, if not by the present owner. In another ten years the letters, I do not doubt, will all be delivered. Long before that time the theatre will probably be full" (pp. 165-66). Trollope had a vision of America's inevitable growth and development. It was not a mystical vision of blind faith, nor was it a poetic instinct. He had himself seen the productive power of the fertile plains and had been astounded by the amount of wheat in Chicagooan granaries. He had actually gone down to those granaries, and climbed up into the grain elevators. The rhetoric of his sentences ("I saw . . . I ascertained . . . I breathed . . . I believed . . .") gives ineluctable authority to the vision.

I saw the wheat running in rivers from one vessel into another, and from the railroad vans up into the huge bins on the top stores of the warehouses;— for these rivers of food run up hill as easily as they do down. I saw the corn measured by the forty bushel with as much ease as we measure an ounce of cheese, and with greater rapidity. I ascertained that the work went on, week-day and Sunday, day and night incessantly; rivers of wheat and rivers of maize ever running. I saw the men bathed in corn as they distributed it in its flow. I saw bins by the score laden with wheat, in each of which bins there was space for a comfortable residence. I breathed the flour, and drank the flour, and felt myself to be enveloped in a world of breadstuff. And then I believed, understood, and brought it home to myself as a fact, that here in the corn lands of Michigan, and amidst the bluffs of Wisconsin, and on the high table plains of Minnesota, and the prairies of Illinois, had God prepared the good for the increasing millions of the Eastern world, as also for the coming millions of the Western. . . . I began then to know what it was for a country to overflow with milk and honey, to burst with its own fruits, and be smothered by its own riches. (p. 158)

Although Trollope's prophecies were not always correct — he did, after all, predict the disintegration of the Union — this one has surely been realized. De Toqueville had prophesied for America in an ideological sense, and had not stressed her incipient material prosperity. Trollope's emphasis on the potential power, strength, and expansion of America is unique among English travellers of the period. Although he observed the rampant hero-worship and ostentatious patriotism which had so annoyed countless others, Trollope was convinced that despite the arrogance and impudence of the typical American, he was "at any rate a civilized being, and on the road to that cultivation which will sooner or later divest him of his arrogance" (p. 272).

Thus, in Trollope's travel books, the most important single ingredient is the informing personality and intelligence of the author playing over the objective reality of external scenes. Thus, the final appeal of *North America* (and of Trollope's other travel books and stories) is rooted firmly in the qualities of mind of its author. Following Trollope as he crossed and recrossed the globe on his many trips, one becomes gradually aware of fundamentals — his warm, genial tolerance, his resistance to judging things evil because they displeased or annoyed him personally, his prophetic voice, his patient good will and affection for those he saw — in short, of the full gamut of those talents which made him supremely "the compleat traveller."

NOTES

- 1 Trollope, Anthony, *The West Indies and the Spanish Main*, 1 vol. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1859); *Travelling Sketches*, 1 vol. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1866); *Australia and New Zealand*, 2 vols. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1873); *South Africa*, 2 vols. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1878); *North America*, 2 vols. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1862). All subsequent references are to these editions, except for *North America*, where I use the definitive edition edited by Donald Smalley and Bradford Booth (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951).
- 2 Trollope, Anthony, *An Autobiography* (London: OUP, 1961), p. 238.
- 3 Trollope, Frances, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, ed. Donald Smalley (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949); Dickens, Charles, *American Notes for General Circulation* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1842). Henry T. Tuckerman (*America and Her Commentators*, New York, 1864) found English treatments of America so uniform that he devoted a chapter to "these monotonous protests against the imperfect civilization prevalent in the United States," entitled "English Abuse of America" (p.

- 252 ff.). He does not see Anthony Trollope's account as any different, and calls it "the old leaven of self-love, self-importance, self-assertion of the Englishman . . ." (p. 234).
- ⁴ Unsigned review of *Domestic Manners*, italics mine, *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 55 (July 1832), 480.
 - ⁵ Sadleir, Michael, *Trollope: A Commentary* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, 1947), p. 183.
 - ⁶ Trollope, Anthony, *The Macdermots of Ballycloran* (Philadelphia, n.d.), p. 21.
 - ⁷ Sadleir, *Trollope*, p. 183.
 - ⁸ Henry James, "Occasional Paris," in *The Art of Travel: Scenes and Journeys in America, England, France and Italy from the Travel Writings of Henry James*, ed. Morton Dauwen Zabel (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 213.
 - ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 213. James considered this latter trait the one advantage of being a cosmopolite.
 - ¹⁰ James, Henry, *Partial Portraits* (London: Macmillan, 1888), pp. 121-22.
 - ¹¹ Unsigned review of *North America*, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXV (July 1862), 263.
 - ¹² See *North America*, p. 71: "I prefer a street that is forced to twist itself about. I enjoy the narrowness of Temple Bar and the misshapen curvature of Pickett Street. The disreputable dinginess of Holywell Street is dear to me, and I love to thread my way up by the Olympic into Covent Garden. Fifth Avenue in New York is as grand as paint and glass can make it; but I would not live in a palace in Fifth Avenue if the corporation of the city would pay my baker's and butcher's bills." For Trollope's views on the American dislike of walking, see *North America*, pp. 101-02.
 - ¹³ See *North America*, p. 178, for this diatribe against central heating; for the qualification, *North America*, p. 142.
 - ¹⁴ Stebbins, Lucy Poate, and Richard Poate Stebbins, *The Trollopes: The Chronicle of a Writing Family* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 321.
 - ¹⁵ Trollope, Anthony, *The Tireless Traveller: Twenty Letters to the Liverpool Mercury*, ed. Bradford Allen Booth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1941), introduction, pp. 2-3.
 - ¹⁶ *Tireless Traveller*, Letter XX, p. 220.
 - ¹⁷ *West Indies*, chapter XII.
 - ¹⁸ *North America*, p. 200.
 - ¹⁹ *Travelling Sketches*, p. 108.
 - ²⁰ *Travelling Sketches*, pp. 99-100.
 - ²¹ *North America*, pp. 119-20. See also *North America*, p. 166: "I found that these cars were universally mentioned with great horror and disgust by Americans of the upper class. They always declared that they would not travel in them on any account. Noise and dirt were the two objections. They are very noisy, but to us belonged the happy power of sleeping down noise. I invariably slept all through the night, and knew nothing about the noise. They are also very dirty, — extremely dirty, — dirty so as to cause much annoyance. But then they are not quite so dirty as

the day cars. If dirt is to be a bar against travelling in America, men and women must stay at home. For myself I don't care much for dirt, having a strong reliance on soap and water and scrubbing brushes. No one regards poisons who carries antidotes in which he has perfect faith."

²² *Australia and New Zealand I*, 25.

²³ Quoted in Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography*, p. 125. The remark is Hawthorne's criticism of Trollope's novels.

²⁴ *North America*, p. 4.

²⁵ *North America*, p. 4.

²⁶ *West Indies*, p. 366.

²⁷ Walter Dexter, ed., *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, 3 vols., Nonesuch Edition (Bloomsbury, 1938), I, 418, Dickens to Daniel Maclise, March 22, 1842: "As to scenery, we really have seen very little as yet. It is the same thing over and over again. The railroads go through the low grounds and swamps, and it is all one eternal forest, with fallen trees mouldering away in stagnant water and decayed vegetable matter and heaps of timber in every aspect of decay and utter ruin. I dress up imaginary tribes of Indians, as we rattle on, and scatter them among the trees as they used to be, sleeping in their blankets, cleaning their arms, nursing brown children, and so forth."