

T.C.

ATILIM UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE M.A PROGRAMME

**COMEDY IN REGIONAL NOVELS: MRS GASKELL'S *CRANFORD*,
MARGARET OLIPHANT'S *MISS MARJORIBANKS*, ANTHONY
TROLLOPE'S *THE SMALL HOUSE AT ALLINGTON*.**

Master's Thesis

Buse GÜN

ANKARA, 2019

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Supervisor

Prof. Dr. N. Belgin ELBİR

ANKARA, 2019

ACCEPTION AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis titled “ Comedy in Regional Novels: Mrs. Gaskell’s *Cranford*, Margaret Oliphant’s *Miss Marjoribanks*, Anthony Trollope’s *The Small House at Allington*.” and prepared by Buse GÜN meets with the committee’s approval unanimously as Master’s Thesis in the field of English Language and Literature following the successful defense of the thesis conducted in 28.01.2019.

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- I prepared this thesis in accordance with Atılım University Graduate School of Social Sciences Thesis Writing Directive,
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ÖZ

GÜN, Buse. Comedy in Regional Novels: Mrs Gaskell's *Cranford*, Margaret Oliphant's *Miss Marjoribanks*, Anthony Trollope's *The Small House at Allington*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2019

1848-1870 yılları arası İngiltere'de Viktorya döneminin ortalarına denk gelmektedir. Bu dönem Erken Viktorya dönemi ile kıyaslandığında daha sorunsuz ve nisbeten huzurlu ve refah içinde geçen bir dönem olarak bilinmektedir. Endüstriyel Devrim ile birlikte makineleşme ve sanayileşme hızlandığında bu iki önemli gelişmenin getirdiği olumsuzluklar dikkatleri daha sorunsuz bir bölge olan taşraya çekmiştir. Endüstriyel Devrim'in getirisi olan raylı sistemin yapılması ise seyahat etmeyi kolaylaştırdığından bu bölgelere ulaşım kolaylıkla sağlanmıştır. Bu tezde Elizabeth Gaskell'ın *Cranford*, Margaret Oliphant'ın *Miss Marjoribanks* ve Anthony Trollope'un *The Small House At Allington* romanları mekan olarak taşrayı seçen romanlar olarak işlenmiştir. Buna ek olarak mizahın bu dönem romanlarında dönemin getirdiği zorlukları yumuşatmak ve daha kolay üstesinden gelmek amacıyla kullanıldığı gözlenmiştir. Bu tezde işlenen üç roman da taşra romanlarının özelliklerini taşıyan eselerdir. Romanların geçtiği yerler, çevrelerindeki büyük kentlerden yalıtılmış izlenimi uyandırmaktadır. Ayrıca, bu yerlerde yaşayan kişiler Endüstri Devrimi'nin meydana getirdiği büyük değişime direnmektedirler. Romanlarda bu direnç bir mizah unsuru olarak betimlenmekte, böylece yazarlar bir yandan değişimin kaçınılmazlığını vurgulamakta, öte yandan da sanayileşme sonucunda yitirilen geleneksel yaşam tarzlarına ve geleneksel değerlere duyulan özlemi sezindirmektedirler.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Komedi, Taşra romanları, *Cranford*, *Miss Marjoribanks*, *The Small House at Allington*.

ABSTRACT

Gün, Buse. Comedy in Regional Novels: Mrs Gaskell's *Cranford*, Margaret Oliphant's *Miss Marjoribanks*, Anthony Trollope's *The Small House at Allington*, M.A.Thesis, Ankara, 2019.

The Mid- Victorian Age (1848-1870) was a time period when peace and wealth were relatively sustained. As a result of this, regional and provincial novels emerged and became popular in that era. Moreover, with the industrialisation, English society underwent some radical changes. At that point, novelists used humour in the provincial novels to soften the hardships of these great social changes. Provincial novels usually told the story of a small circle of people who led quite leisurely lives. That's why they had time to be obsessed with small events and turn them into a crisis. The novels in this thesis *Cranford* by Elisabeth Gaskell, *Miss Marjoribanks* by Margaret Oliphant and *The Small House at Allington* by Anthony Trollope focus on these issues. The three novels mentioned above are provincial novels in which humour is used as an element to overcome the problems brought by industrialisation. The events turn around the small number of people who are usually familiar with each other. Due to the industrial revolution, old traditions are out of date and the people who follow them are put in humorous situations. As a result, these three novels show that to adopt the novelties is the key point. However, sometimes a feeling of nostalgia towards the lost values due to industrialisation is conveyed to the reader.

Keywords

Provincial novel, humour, *Cranford*, *Miss Marjoribanks*, *The Small House at Allington*.

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INTRODUCTION

Subject, Aim and Significance of The Thesis

The subject of this thesis is the elements of humour in regional novels written during the Mid- Victorian period. Hence, this thesis studies *Cranford* (1853) by Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Small House at Allington* (1864) by Anthony Trollope, and *Miss Marjoribanks* (1865) by Margaret Oliphant. The formal elements and functions of comedy in these novels in terms of the relations between the fictional characters, subversion of genres, the parody of Victorian social values and comic narration will be examined. The three novelists use elements of comedy in their regional novels and the aim of this thesis will be the examination of them. These elements will be related to the depiction of the social world and its values in the novels, and I will study how far these social worlds and values coincide with the Victorian social context. The significance of this study lies in its exploration of the relationship between the complex social context of the period and the elements of comedy in the Mid-Victorian regional novels. Moreover, this study engages with the relationship between the novels of the Mid-Victorian period and the social context of the Victorian era. It will be argued that in many Victorian novels, elements of comedy such as satire, parody, irony are used to represent and question the rapidly changing social, cultural and economic context of the Victorian period. In this study, these elements will be studied and contextualized to show that elements of comedy enable Victorian authors to portray and criticise these changes and also to contribute to the debates in the Victorian period.

This study will begin by describing the social context, and the characteristic features of regional novels, definitions of comedy will be given and the tradition of comedy in English novels will be traced. In the following three chapters the novels will be examined. The conclusion will present an overall evaluation.

Victorian Period and Its Relationship with Novel

Victorian Age started in 1830 and ended in 1901 with the death of Queen Victoria and the period bears her name. The period can be divided into three parts: Early Victorian (1830-1848), Mid-Victorian (1848- 1870) and Late Victorian (1870-1901). Literary periods in the Victorian era can also be divided into three parts that correspond to the historical division. The Early Victorian period can be considered as the time of problems because of the industrialization and the great and unexpected social changes it brought. Robin Gilmour writes about this era in his book *The Novel in The Victorian Age* as such:

The first ten years of Victoria's reign, in particular, were a time of acutely felt change and crisis: the years of the coming of the railways, of rise and decline of Chartism, of successful activities of the Anti-Corn Law League- a period marked by great social disaster, the Irish potato famine, and by a great, symbolic legislative decision, the repeal of the corn laws in 1846. (4)

In the Early-Victorian period, the consequences of the rapid changes in the social classes, lifestyles and technology could be felt. For instance, the notion of time and space changed fundamentally with the construction of railroads:

Such rapid urbanization was the result of industrialization, and the spectacular growth of the industrial city, especially north of England, was a contemporary wonder and a pressing social problem well before Victoria came to the throne. The first decade of her reign saw virtual establishment of a national railway network, again a dramatically rapid (and haphazard) development which changed not only the landscape but age-old notions of time and distance. (Gilmour, Robin, 3)

The Mid-Victorian era was relatively more stable and peaceful since the major problems of workers brought by industrialization were solved. A relatively optimistic atmosphere dominated the society. In 1851 The Great Exhibition was opened by Prince Albert and it showed the modern and powerful technology of England. This technology brought expansion and prosperity.

The Late Victorian era was the period when the British Empire reached its peak and started to decline. Rival countries came into existence such as The United States and Canada and Mid-Victorian values were questioned. Death of Queen Victoria closed the era.

The novel was unquestionably the dominating literary form of the period. Anthony Trollope who was a widely-read writer commented on the popularity of the novel. He said: “we have become a novel-reading people...Novels are in the hands of us all; from the Prime Minister down to the last-appointed scullery-maid. We have them in our library, our drawing rooms, our bed-rooms, our kitchens- and in our nurseries.” (*Anthony Trollope: Four Lectures*, ed. M.L. Parrish.108). The society and the novel had such close relations that almost all leading novels written in that era can be regarded as a response to the questions and issues of the time and suggest solutions for the problems caused by the fact of change. The rapid urbanization and changes in the society were reflected in the novels. Robin Gilmour says “The relation between the novel and society are particularly close and fascinating here: nearly every major of decade can be seen as a response, direct or indirect, to the upheaval of the time.” (*The Novel of the Victorian Age*, 4). As a result; the society and the popular genre have bidirectional relationship. However, serial novels in that era proves that unquestionably novel reading is one of the dominant activities of the Mid- Victorian people.

Regional and Provincial Novel

With the development of industrialization and urbanization the notion of time and space also changed. Regions started to take attention with the construction of railway network. The novelists depict in detail the everyday life of middle class people who live in these regions. A sub-genre, regional novels, arises from this interest especially in the 1850s- 1860s. According to Robin Gilmour in the “Introduction” of the book called *The Literature of Region and Nation* :

This is not to suggest that regionalism is a discovery of the twentieth century, and its rise somehow a counterpart of the decline and fall of the British Empire. It seems to have been a growth of the late eighteenth century- a response to the Industrial Revolution, at first of a pastoral kind, but rapidly countered by a wish not only to do proper justice to threatened rural traditions, but also to ‘paint the cot/ As truth will paint it, and as bards will not. (2).

So, these novels were written as a response to the fact of change. Also, looking backwards and feeling of nostalgia can be felt throughout the novels as well as sadness for the values which were lost with the industrial revolution.

Regional novels and provincial novels are two terms used interchangeably to talk about novels set in a region and a closed society. However these two terms have different connotations. Provinciality means simply different from the centre of the city. Provinciality sounds negative but regional has a neutral meaning. Robin Gilmour underlines the derogatory meaning of “provincial”. He says it is linked with inferiority and backwardness. (qtd in “The Provincial or Regional Novel” *A Companion of the Victorian Novel*. 322). So, Gilmour explains that the term “regional” is used to describe a place and its people and their way of living. But “provincial” is used for less improved towns and societies. To make clearer the differences between two terms Gilmour should be quoted from the “Introduction” of the book called *The Literature of Region and Nation* as such:

“Provincial” is a term which is often used slightly (though Wordsworth, Hardy and Larkin all seek to represent the life and customs of their native areas as preferable to the metropolis), but “regional” seems to attract no such derogatory usage. This is perhaps because it carries with it none of the hierarchically subordinate implications of “provincial”. “Regional” suggests a division of a larger unit, but without the larger the larger being necessarily dominant. It is at once a more neutral term and a more welcome one than “provincial”, and is generally free from the imputation of narrowness which is often implicit in the use of “provincial” (4).

In fact, provincial’s negative connotation dates back to 18th century to Dr. Johnson’s dictionary. One of his definitions of provincial was “rude” and “unpolished” (qtd in Gilmour, Robin. “Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature” *The Literature of Region and Nation*. 51). On the other hand, ‘regional’ implies authenticity, attractiveness and difference. “‘Regional’ and ‘Regionalism’ are at the least neutral and more usually positive terms, suggesting valid and vigorous differences from metropolitan norms-attractive alternative modes of speech, custom, landscape, and culture.” Says Robin Gilmour (“Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature.” *The Literature of Regional and Nation*. 51). Moreover, Gilmour adds that the separation between national and provincial is impossible in the novels of great mid-Victorian regional novelists like George Eliot, the Brontes and Elisabeth Gaskell. (qtd in Gilmour, Robin. ”Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature” *The Literature of Region and Nation*. 52). So, provincial/ regional novels represent a nation in mid- Victorian period. “Provincial” in these novels does not a derogatory

meaning in these novels on the contrary “ this is surely a sign of strength in the English tradition.” (qtd in. Gilmour, Robin. “Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature” *The Literature of Region and Nation*. 54).

The Regional novel reached its most mature period in the mid- Victorian era. This is not surprising because between 1850s-1870s the welfare level of the British Empire reached its peak. Unlike the 1830s-40s, a stable relationship was achieved between employers and employees. So, there were no uprisings; a relatively peaceful atmosphere dominated the country. As a result, people wanted to travel which was faster and more comfortable. This triggered the trend of writing about the countryside.

Definitions of regional novels by several critics reveal the characteristic features of this sub-genre. For example; M. H. Abrams defines the regional novel as such: “ The regional novel emphasizes the setting, the speech, and social structure and customs of a particular locality, not merely as local colour, but as important conditions affecting the temperament of the characters and their ways of thinking, feeling and interacting.” (*A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 231). According to this definition, regional novel underlines its setting and the story takes place in a specific and distinctive area. But it should be cleared that this place is totally different from the centre namely London. On the other hand, this place is usually close enough to London to enable the author to notice and to underline the differences. Thus, the reader can compare the two settings. Raymond Williams has called the communities depicted in these novels ‘knowable community’ (*The Country and The City*, Oxford University Press.1973), implying that the community in the country is transparent enough for all inhabitants to know each other, unlike modern cities. Another critic, K.D.M Snell defines the regional novel as such: “ I mean fiction that is set in a recognisable region, and which describes features distinguishing the life, social relations, customs, language, dialect or other aspects of the culture of that area and its people.” (*The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland 1800-1990*, 1). Also, this place can be an imaginary place like Hardy’s Wessex or Eliot’s fictitious setting Midlands of Middlemarch or “ an actual locality outside the metropolis”(Drabble, Margaret. Ed. *Oxford Companion to English Literature*. Oxford University Press. 2000) like Gaskell’s Knutsford. In terms of society, this regional setting is far and different

from London, where society is under influence of rapid changes brought by industrialization. But, the regional novel's society is so far that these changes have little influence on it. In other words "the problems of modernity have been bypassed" (Duncan, Ian. "The Provincial or Regional Novel" *A Companion to Victorian Novel*. 319). The people of that society live in an old-fashioned way. That is to say, they are bound to their traditions when it is compared to London's society. Thomas Hardy comments on such a way of living by calling these depictions "a fairly true record of a vanishing life". The modern life and its consequences have not been accepted by this society.

According to Abram's definition, social structure and customs are important in the regional novels. The occupations form the Victorian social structure. When it is compared to London, the inhabitant's posts are limited. People do particular works. According to Ian Duncan "It is curiously depopulated landscape, devoid of particular people doing particular work, rendered instead as a catalogue of properties." ("The Provincial or Regional Novel" *A Companion to Victorian Novel*. 320). The inhabitants are usually priests, shopkeepers, housewives, servants, milliners, doctors etc. Unlike the mill owners or factory owners of industrialised societies. Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1855) can be regarded as a good example of this. *North and South* is a regional novel as well as industrial or 'condition-of-England' novel and one of the main characters Mr Thornton is a mill owner in the industrialized town called Milton. Unlike the other leading character Margaret Hale and her family. Her father is a priest from Helstone which is an unindustrialized town. Also, the people of regional novels are from middle class and working class. Very few aristocratic people can be seen in these novels.

After explaining some features of the regional novel, the historical background of this sub-genre should be described. When and how did the regional novel emerge? First of all, the main cause of the emergence of the regional novel is the changing society because of the industrial revolution. As pointed out before, the industrialized societies undergo radical changes. In England, the people from the rising social class who earn their money through trade and have the capital started to gain power and demanded their rights from the aristocrats. However; this radical social change can hardly be seen in the regional novels. Because they tell the story of a closed society

that usually resists change. In most novels railways are used as a sign to modernity and novelty on the threshold. According to Ian Duncan in *A Companion to Victorian Novel* transportation is the key factor for modernity. He says:

The advent of the railways, from the late 1830s, has appeared especially decisive... The mechanization and acceleration of transport technology...provides for one of the key tropes of modernity, the production of speed; and a corresponding attention to places traversed and left behind, glimpsed from the window of the hurtling vehicle, in a stark dramatization of the slash of progress across an inert countryside. (“ The Provincial and Regional Novel” 324)

Most of these regions stand in an isolated area and the railway connects them to modernity. As Gilmour says “ Railway travel made the metropolitan passenger aware of living in a land of regions, but it also accelerated the process by which those regions were in time standardised to a nation norm.” Gilmour, Robin. “ Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature” *The Literature of Region and Nation*. 53). This means the change stands there and will be inevitable. According to Robin Gilmour, the railways work bidirectionally. He says “ If the railways bring the country into London, they also can carry London into country.” (“ Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature” *The Literature of Region and Nation*. 53). This means the country influences modern city like London but also the modern city has effects on the country as well.

It is difficult to single out a particular work as the first regional novel. However, some scholars like Snell accept Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* (1800) as the first regional novel. Snell categorizes the features of the regional novel as such:

The regional novel came to establish much firmer regional settings, developing characterisation within such contexts, showing awareness of regional influences on people and social relationships, and, in a great variety of ways interpreting these relationships or using them to develop more complex and explanatory depths of character. (*The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland 1800-1990*, 6).

Some scholars separate the periods of regional novels into three like Lucien Leclaire. According to him, the first phase is the time of national novel between 1800- 1830. Also, he says between 1830- 1870 the fiction focused on the region unselfconsciously and this sub-genre took attention. And the last period is between 1870- 1950 a period when the regional novel was getting more complex and the

number and variety of them were growing. (qtd in “ Regional and Provincial in Victorian Literature” *The Literature of Region and Nation*, 53).

Why were the regional novels popular in the mid- Victorian period? Since among the modern, industrial and problematic cities, small countryside towns took attention and became popular. They were seen as shelters to escape from that chaotic atmosphere, to soften the drastic changes in the society. As a result of this, the stories about these towns were told and written.

The novels chosen for discussion in this thesis are *Cranford* (1853) by Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Small House at Allington* (1864) by Anthony Trollope and *Miss Marjoribanks* (1865) by Margaret Oliphant. These three novels will be studied under the category of regional novels since their settings are places which are portrayed as being far from the centre. In *Cranford*, the inhabitants live in the village called Cranford which is in the countryside. In *The Small House at Allington*, as the title of the book infers the characters live in Allington. In *Miss Marjoribanks*, the name of the setting is Carlingford. These are small, obsolete towns. The people of these towns constitute a small social circle.

Humour and Its Function in the Mid-Victorian Novel

In the English novel, there has been a tradition of comedy that can be traced back to the 18th century novel. In the 18th century, humour was used for moral purposes. That’s why satiric comedies and parodies were used frequently. In the 18th century, humour was harsh, satiric and witty. However; humour in the 19th century was not tough, but serious. It was also light-hearted and sympathetic. For example; Johnathan Swift satirizes Britain in his book *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) and Henry Fielding parodies *Pamela* (1740) by Samuel Richardson in his novel *Shamela* (1741). But when they are compared to George Meredith, William M. Thackeray and George Eliot, the former group seem more aggressive towards society. The tradition of humour continued in the 19th century. In the mid-Victorian fiction, humour is not only based on laughter but it becomes more intellectual. But the period and the people had to pass hard times. According to Harold Orel, the existence of humour is a miracle because “ their (Victorian authors) century, as they saw it, was one of the Great Issues. (...) The problems created by industrialization, the conflict between

men of faith and men of science, and political cross-currents were so serious that many Victorians believed humor to be inappropriate in any discussion of them.” (Orel, Harold, *The World Of Victorian Humor*, 3). But still, humour is needed. Because “ The social, political, and religious problems that confronted thinking men then had grown out of the sound and fury of a shattering world. It was a thrill, every so often, to be able to laugh.”(Orel, Harold, *The World Of Victorian Humor*, 8). It created a perfect medium to soften these hardships in that period.

To understand comedy and humour, its place and function in the Mid-Victorian novel, a definition of comedy will be helpful:

Comedy is a fictional work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to amuse us; the characters and their discomfitures engage our pleasurable attention rather than our profound concern, we are made to feel confident that no great disaster occurs, and usually, the action turns out happily for the chief characters. (Abrams, M, H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 48)

Abram’s definition is a general one. However, comedy and humour in the Mid-Victorian novel fit this definition partially. Unfitting parts, I believe, make the Mid-Victorian novel unique. For example, Abram says comedy primarily amuses the reader. Gaskell’s novel *Cranford* can be a good example to explain that comedy and humour do not merely amuse in the Mid-Victorian novel. In *Cranford*, the conventions of old maids make the reader smile but at the same time, readers feel sorry for these women. Because their situation is funny when they are compared to the modern world but they are in a miserable situation, as well. Moreover, Abram says the reader feels sure that there will not be disasters anymore. However, again in *Cranford*, a disaster is followed by another. In *Miss Marjoribanks* while we are laughing at her attempt to construct her own realm, her father’s death comes. In *The Small House at Allington*, the dominant feeling is sorrow because none of the leading characters is able to reach satisfaction and happiness. These novels show that humour is not only used for purposes of entertainment.

Comedy’s function in the Mid-Victorian novel is inseparable from the industrial revolution its treatments in works of fiction. Comedy and humour become a way to overcome the difficulties brought by industrialization. Victorian era is a period when fundamental and rapid changes happened. It was both painful and difficult to keep up

with them. And Victorian people had strict rules and codes by which they led their lives. For example; the range of jobs a woman could do were restricted in Victorian society and a daughter was brought up to become first of all, a woman whose job was her home. George Eliot underlines this in her novel *The Mill on The Floss* (1860). The heroine Maggie Tulliver wants to learn algebra like her brother Tom. Even though she is more intelligent than Tom, algebra is not a subject suitable for girls. That's why; she is not allowed to learn it. In the novels, the old way of living was usually represented by old members of the society who resisted to the younger generation.

Humour sometimes can arise in sufferings like two faces of a coin. According to Kierkegaard: "The more one suffers, the more, I believe, one has a sense of the comic. It is only by the deepest suffering that one acquires the authority in the art of the comic." (*Stages on Life's Way*, 231). Kierkegaard means humour can be a mask to hide pains and suffering. *Cranford* can be given as the example because the old women who live in Cranford are poor, old-fashioned people and through humour, they try to cover it. Throughout the novel, the inhabitants of the town and the events they face do not reveal joy and laughter; instead soft humour and pity dominate the novel.

Humour can be an indispensable defence mechanism to be freed from suffering and difficulties. It can become a solution for people who have problems to keep up with the rapidly changing industry and society. Due to the construction of railway stations and rapid transportation by trains, people could travel quickly and they could visit their relatives. Through interaction with people, they could learn new technologies that change their lives. In the novels, humorous characters show readers how to set used to these changes. For example; in *Cranford*, at the beginning of the novel, the old ladies are afraid of the railway and for them it is a symbol of all evil things. Mr Brown dies because of the railway according to the ladies. This comic scene enhances the familiarity of the readers to developments like the railway. In *The Small House at Allington* London and its people show a modern way of life when they are compared to the people of Allington. However, people of London display a corrupted and amoral way of living because of the industrial revolution. Trollope shifts the places of some people of the city and some people of the town and puts them in

humorous situations to make people familiar with novelties. At the same time, the author shows that being familiar with novelties is a requirement but old values should not be forgotten. Thus, humour is used as a mediator and the chaos ends with reconciliation.

Humour focuses on trivial problems that cause crises. Humour exaggerates the certain situation, and sometimes a problem that character regards as very serious may appear unimportant to the reader. That can lead to laughter. Sigmund Freud says in his essay “ Humour” Readers take the position of a child and “ smiling at the triviality of the interests” that seem so big (218). For instance; when Lucilla's cousin proposes to her, she turns him down because “ her only wish to comfort her dear papa” . In fact, it seems Mr Marjoribanks does not need any help. However, she magnifies the situation and uses it as an excuse to reject Tom. Most Victorian readers would probably laugh at this scene, and thus, little by little get used to new ideas such as a young woman as a dominant figure in society and new technologies. Moreover, Lucilla Marjoribanks is a good example for women who come forward to be a leading figure in society. This is a painful process and through comedy, this pain can be relieved or softened. According to Eileen Gillooly, “ humour also acts as a coping mechanism, allowing women to avoid pain” (*Smile of Discontent: Humor, Gender, and Nineteenth-Century British Literature*, 24). This quote is valid for both women and men in the Mid-Victorian period. Another example can be given from Gaskell’s *Cranford*, after the death of Miss Jenkyns, Miss Matty appears very worried. She is panicked because she is not sure about hosting a man. This humorous scene functions as a defence mechanism and a way to deal with consequences of the industrial revolution for the reader of mid-Victorian novels. It should not be neglected that the novel tells the story of the 1830s and the readers had just passed these phases of the era. So, they can smile at the situation of these characters.

1. *CRANFORD*: A TOWN OF AMAZONS

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell was born on 29 September 1810 in Chelsea. She spent her childhood in Knutsford with her aunt. Her memories of Knutsford inspired her to write *Cranford*. Later, Gaskell married William Gaskell and moved to Manchester which was at the centre of change namely industrialisation. Elizabeth observed these social tensions and used her observations in her novels. *Mary Barton*, published in 1848, was her first novel. It was an industrial novel in other words ‘Condition of England’ novel which engaged with the social problems of the workers caused by this change. Gaskell told the story of people who tried to cope with these problems and changes. After *Mary Barton*, her second novel, *Cranford*, started to be published in *Household Worlds*. Similarly, *Cranford* is a novel about a society that resists changes and industrialization. After that another industrial novel was published, *The North and South* (1855). In all these novels Mrs Gaskell told the story of a group of people who live in a small and rural area and they will be influenced by the developments and improvements in technology. It can be said that Gaskell was an author who particularly narrated the story of societies that were affected by the industrial revolution in one way or another.

Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Cranford* was first written as a series of stories and published in episodic form in the weekly journal *Household Words* under the editorship of Charles Dickens between 1851 - 1853. It was published as a single volume book in 1853. After Dickens' invitation, Mrs Gaskell sent him a story called “ Lizzie Leigh”. In the beginning, Mrs Gaskell did not have an intention to continue writing more stories. She explained this later to Ruskin “ The beginning of *Cranford* was one paper in *Household Words*, and I never meant to write more, so killed Captain Brown very much against my will.” (qtd in *Elizabeth Gaskell: Cranford/ Cousin Phillis*, ed: Peter Keating, 8). Soon later, she changed her mind and wrote *Cranford* which portrays a group of single, elderly, Victorian women and their society. They are defined as Amazons in the very beginning of the novel. The story is told through the eyes of a young girl called Mary who is from Drumble, a nearby city.

Elizabeth Gaskell had always been interested in provincial life and told these people’s stories- *Cranford* was based on Gaskell’s observations of Knutsford where

she grew up. Before *Cranford*, She wrote two non-fiction works which reflected small-town life experiences. One is “The Last Generation in England” (1849). In this piece of work, she conveys her memories of Knutsford. The second one is “Mr Harrison's Confessions” (1851). It describes the life of a country doctor in a small town. As it is seen, Mrs Gaskell was interested in small towns and their inhabitants before *Cranford*. She knew and observed this life closely. So, in many of her novels like *North and South* (1855) and *Mary Barton* (1848), the setting can be seen as a particular region even though these novels cannot be categorized as provincial novels since their setting is a modern industrial city in the north of England.

Since *Cranford* is set in a period when the society of England was passing through great change due to the industrial revolution; when according to Maureen Morgan “Scarcely a single aspect of daily life was untouched by science and technology.” (*Victorian Literature and Culture*, 55), it becomes obvious that an awareness of this rapid change was inevitable in Cranford where the story took place.

Cranford can be categorized as a regional/provincial novel. Because it perfectly fits the definition and the features of both regional and provincial novels can be observed in it. Additionally, it can be a good example of the novels which have humorous elements. This was used in the Mid-Victorian period because as emphasized above, in this period there were many radical changes brought by the industrial revolution and the period was relatively stable when it was compared to the early Victorian period. Humour was used as a medium to soften these effects. In the following part of this chapter, *Cranford* will be examined as an example of mid-Victorian provincial novel in which elements of humour make a significant contribution to the way the story unfolds, the following will be answered in the chapter: Why did Mrs Gaskell choose such a region and its people to tell and what can be her point to use humour in this regional novel?

The inhabitants of Cranford are mostly old and unmarried women. A brief summary of the plot reveals that old spinsters such as Deborah Jenkyns and her sister Matilda Jenkyns are the most important inhabitants. Deborah Jenkyns is called Miss Jenkyns in the novel. The latter is called Miss Matty. Miss Jenkyns is the dominant one and the decision maker. When she dies early, Miss Matty stays alone and

struggles to survive. She even becomes worried over the question of hosting anxious a man because she does not know how to do it. Deborah Jenkyns rules over Miss Matty's life. When she was young, Thomas Holbrook proposed to Miss Matty but the older sister did not find him proper for her sister, although Miss Matty had feelings for him. The two had to separate. Then Mr Holbrook pays a visit to Cranford and invites the ladies to his house. Miss Matty goes with her friends Miss Pole and Mary Smith by hoping that her dream will come true but Holbrook dies later. Another inhabitant of Cranford is the Honourable Mrs Jamieson who is at the top of the social scale in Cranford. She is a widow and has aristocratic connections. Lady Glenmire who is Mr Jamieson's elder brother's (a baron) widow comes to Cranford to stay with Mrs Jamieson. But it seems she does not like her much. What is humorous in this part that all Cranford ladies wonder how the Queen is and they think Lady Glenmire met the Queen but she has never met her. Later Lady Glenmire engages to Mr Hoggins, the doctor of Cranford. The news is very surprising for Cranfordian ladies. Because the social status gap between Lady Glenmire and Mr Hoggins is huge. Miss Pole, Mrs Forrester and Betsy Barker are the other settlers of Cranford. Betsy Barker is a milliner and she loves her cow like her daughter. Mrs Forrester is another widow and Miss Pole is an unmarried woman. Miss Pole is the source of gossip and she spreads the news. That can be regarded as the source of humour as will be explained later. Captain Brown and his daughters Mary and Jessie Brown move Cranford. The population of men is few in Cranford and Captain Brown is one of them. He is a crude man but towards the ladies of Cranford, he is kind and considerate. So, he is accepted by the women of Cranford. However; he does not stay in the plotline and the reasons for this will be examined in the following parts of the chapter. Mary Brown is the eldest daughter of Captain Brown and dies of an incurable illness. Jessie Brown is the youngest daughter of Captain Brown. She stays alone after the death of her father and sister and marries Major Gordon who has been in love with her for a long time.

Since Cranford is a provincial novel, all the plot flows around a small number of people and the setting is a place far from the city centre. So the population of women is much more than men in Cranford. It is a city without men as Gaskell called "Amazons". Victorian era was a period of industrialization and that means

manpower had an important role. This brought progress. But without men, Cranford has no sign for future and progress. But, Cranford has already been looking back. Moreover; industry, trade and business were usually dominated by males in the Mid-Victorian era. But in Cranford the male population has no power even they are completely absent in the novel. According to Olivia Malfait in her essay “Domestic Humour in Elizabeth Gaskell’s Cranford”

In fact, the absence of men in Cranford’s female society entails seclusion from the public sphere, and all matters (political and economic) that are associated with it. It is this absolute alienation from events out in the industrialized world that causes the women to assign disproportionate significance to the domestic realm they do know (*Elizabeth Gaskell Victorian Culture and The Art of Fiction: Essays For The Bicentenary*.72)

Malfait means due to women's absence from the public sphere, women of Cranford are bound to domestic places. In the opening paragraph of the novel the narrator says:

In the first place, Cranford is in the possession of Amazons, all the holders of houses, above a certain rent, are women. If a married couple come to settle in the town, somehow the gentlemen disappears; he is either fairly frightened to death by being the only man in the Cranford evening parties, or he is accounted for by being his regiment, his ship, or closely engaged in business all the week in the great neighbouring commercial town of Drumble, the distant only twenty miles on a railroad. (*Cranford*, 3).

Also, women in the mid-Victorian era belonged to domestic areas such as houses and they had very little role and function in the industry, technology and economy. That's why, it was men who brought the new technologies, developments and economic changes in that era. Just because Cranford was dominated by women, there is no sign of industrial progress and there is nobody to promote it. Only a surgeon is mentioned at the beginning of the novel, and Captain Brown is the only man who is respected and highlighted as a member of Cranford. But Gaskell does not let him live long. So, it is not wrong to say that Cranford is a place where a small population consisting of mainly women live. This makes Cranford a provincial town.

The society in Cranford isolates themselves from their surroundings deliberately. Besides, outsiders are seen as dangerous because they may break their unity one way or another. Especially men are seen as outsiders and a threat to society. They may

destroy their *esprit-de corps* through marriage, commerce, technology. Eventually, Captain Brown is accepted by Cranfordians. That is surprising for a person who knows Cranford like the narrator, Mary. Because Cranford is directed by a 'strict code of gentility' and he is such an opposite character that any invitations for visit offered by Captain or his daughters are not accepted for such a long time. However, after some time 'his opinions quoted as authority' (*Cranford*, 6). But the plot line does not keep him alive and does not let him make changes in the Cranford society.

Cranford society is a secluded one. That's why outsiders make them panicked. Because they do not know how to treat them and how to react to them. For example; when Miss Matty's cousin, Major Jenkyns, who had been in India for a long time was travelling with his invalid wife to Scotland and wanted to spend a night in Cranford, Miss Matty panicked:

“Oh! How must I manage?” asked she, helplessly. “ If Deborah had been alive, she would have known what to do with a gentleman-visitor. Must I put razors in his dressing-room? Dear! dear! and I have got none. Deborah would have had them. And slippers and coat brushes?” I suggested that probably he would bring all these things with him. “ And after dinner, how am I to know when to get up and leave him to his wine?” Deborah would have done it so well; she would have been quite in her element. Will he want coffee, do you think? (*Cranford*, 28).

As it is seen in the quote above, Miss Matty was uneasy about hosting Major Jenkyns and his wife. It is also clear that she missed her dead sister and felt she could not cope with emergencies without her. At this point provincial novel and humour meet. Miss Matty does not know how to overcome her difficulty because as an individual she is closed to the people different from her sister like the society which is closed to other societies. That is required by the feature of being provincial novel. Also, Miss Matty's reactions give humour to that part.

Modernity arrived in England through the industrial revolution. Another sign of Cranfordians' resistance to change can be seen in the way they respond to the coming of the railway. The narrator's treatment of this incident emphasises the humorous aspect of this resistance. Railroads are the typical symbol of 19th-century industrial progress. However, Cranfordians signed a petition against it. Because they believe all the evil things root in railway. For example; Captain Brown is killed while

he is trying to save a child on the railway. The news about his death was brought by Jenny and she said “ Captain Brown is killed by them nasty cruel railroads.” (*Cranford*, 18). Paris, also, can be a symbol of revolution, change and progress. However, in *Cranford* Mr Halbrook dies a year after his visiting Paris. Mr Holbrook was warned by the Cranfordian ladies but he insisted on leaving. When the ladies first heard about that journey they exclaimed loudly and reacted astonishedly. Miss Pole comments on his death as such:

Poor Thomas! That journey to Paris was quite too much for him. His housekeeper says he has hardly ever been round his fields since; but just sits with his hands on his knees in the counting-house, not reading or anything, but only saying, what a wonderful city Paris was! Paris has much to answer for, if it's killed my cousin Thomas, for a better man never lived. (*Cranford*, 39).

Captain Brown and Mr Holbrook are two male characters who can be regarded as bearers of modernity and changes. However, *Cranford* could not reconcile with them. So, these two men were destined to die. But the rootless believes of Cranfordians support humourous part of the novel.

Cranford is a town situated very close to places that have become largely modernized. In the beginning, there is a mention a commercial city Drumble which is a modernized one and *Cranford* is linked with that city. However; throughout the novel, the plot flows around *Cranford* that creates a feeling of being trapped. The city is supposed to be linked with railroads but inhabitants of *Cranford* are against this. That's why, when someone wants to go out by using the railway, something bad happens to him. For example; Captain Brown is supposed to die in a railway accident. However, although Cranfordians grasp all modern tools as ill-omens, Mrs Gaskell underlines that modernization is inevitable.

Also, the narrator, young Mary is a source of humour because of the generation gap between Mary and Cranfordians. Her comments provide humour because as an outsider and a person who comes from modernity, she can see their funny habits and traditions. Mary usually compares London and *Cranford* in terms of modernity and she has cynical comments.

Traditions and customs are weird as in *Cranford*. And just because *Cranford* is a regional novel, these habits are unique for them as one of the features of the provincial/ regional novel. First of all, all these habits are passing away that's why giving much importance and magnifying them are funny according to modern readers of the Mid-Victorian period. Also, they are old-fashioned. They stay in a circle that they cannot go beyond it. What is more important, they do not want to break that circle or go beyond it. That's why; humorous scenes are displayed in these parts of the novel.

Cranford has its own rules. If a character does not follow them, they will be isolated in this society. For example; in *Cranford*, nobody can talk about his/her poverty in public places and loudly. They have “ elegant economy” that means they spend their money freely. “There economy was “ elegant” and money-spending always “vulgar and ostentatious,” a sort of sour-grapeism, which made us very peaceful and satisfied.” (*Cranford*, 5). Also, the rule in *Cranford* is that: “ Death was as common as poverty; yet people never spoke about that, loud out in the streets. It was a word not to be mentioned to ears polite.” (*Cranford*, 6). As it is clear in the quotes, *Cranford*'s unique rules do not have a harmony with their real situation. This discrepancy leads us to humour. According to Olivia Malfait in *Elizabeth Gaskell Victorian Culture and The Art of Fiction: Essays For The Bicentenary*:

Cranford thus becomes a kind of theatre, where the stage is inhabited by a series of comic character types such as the lazy aristocrat (Mrs. Jamieson), the nervous gossip (Miss Pole), or the childlike naïf (Miss Matty). Gaskell has her characters put on a mask that defines them by exaggerating one of their character traits. This masquerade allows the ladies to hide their poor spinster and widow faces and take up their parts in *Cranford*'s play of feigned aristocracy. (“Domestic Humour in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford*”. 75).

The point in here is that *Cranfordians* try to hide their poverty. That's why; they have so-called “ elegant economy” . But this poverty is like a concrete thing and can be felt in every aspect of the *Cranfordians*' lives. Again this leads us to the results of the industrial revolution that cannot be kept up with by *Cranfordians*. The following quotation can be given as an example of concealing the poverty of *Cranfordians* and it shows how they collaborate about hiding their poverty:

When Mrs. Forrester, for instance, gave a party in her baby-house of a dwelling, and the little maiden disturbed the ladies on the sofa by a request that she might get the tea-tray out from underneath, every one took this novel proceeding as the most natural thing in the world; and talked on about household forms and ceremonies, as if we all believed that our hostess had a regular servants' hall, second table, with housekeeper and steward; instead of the one little charity-school maiden. (*Cranford*, 5.)

Cranford tells a story about a dying way of life. Old traditions and customs are fading in Cranford. Also, Cranford is a town which stays behind the other industrial and commercial towns because they resist to all kinds of progress. Hence, the individual members of this society cannot keep up with the developing world. As a result, they have financial problems. However; ladies kept living by following old customs. This widening gap creates humour. Because these ladies' usual habits become unusual and weird. For example; a prominent member of this society Miss Matty has "peculiarities" according to the narrator and she continues to tell:

Miss Matty had a few little peculiarities...The bread was cut to the imaginary pattern of excellence that existed in Miss Matty's mind, as being the way which her mother had preferred; the curtain was drawn so as to exclude the dead-brick wall of a neighbour's stables, and yet so as to show every tender leaf of the poplar which was bursting into spring beauty. (*Cranford*, 130).

The quotation above was taken from the part called "Friends in Need" and in that part, Miss Matty went bankrupt and tried to overcome it by earning money. But some occupations were not suitable for her as it had been in the past. Moreover, Miss Matty kept following the rules of her mother even for cutting a loaf of bread. Finally, she understood this and the atmosphere became tense. As one more example, Miss Jenkyns's eating habit oranges can be given. As the elderly member of the society Miss Jenkyns has a habit of eating oranges which is weird and humorous and worth quoting:

When oranges came in, a curious proceeding was gone through. Miss Jenkyns did not like to cut the fruit; for, as she observed, the juice all ran out nobody knew where; sucking (only I think she used some more recondite word) was, in fact, the only way of enjoying oranges; but then there was unpleasant association with a ceremony frequently gone through by little babies; and, so, after dessert, in orange season, Miss Jenkyns and Miss Matty used to rise up, possess themselves each of an orange in silence, and withdraw to the privacy of their own rooms, to indulge in sucking oranges. (*Cranford*, 27)

This scene comes after Miss Jenkyns's death. The atmosphere is tense and grave. However; these humorous habits help to get rid of this atmosphere. That is one of the functions of humour in this novel.

Cranford tells about a society that is trying to cope with changes. From the mid-19th-century people's point of view, their attempts are humorous. One of the humour sources is the different point of view of Cranford's society and Mid-Victorian society. For example; the discussion on literature between Miss Deborah Jenkyns and Captain Brown that displays the obsession with old tradition which was symbolised by Dr Johnson and his *Rasellas*. Even though, in that period Mr.Boz namely Charles Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* were more popular. From the Victorian reader's point of view that obstinacy is humorous. Also, the narrator, young Mary is the source of humour because of the generation gap between Mary and Cranfordians. Her comments provide humour because as an outsider and a person who comes from modernity, she can see their funny habits and traditions.

Cranford is a town where old people and customs live. So, the " old world" s titles are still used namely aristocratic title such as: Lady, Honourable and Lord. But in the 'new world' a rising middle class can be observed in the mid- Victorian era. That's why these titles are fading as well. The depiction of these so called 'aristocrats' provide humour in these novels. Honourable Mrs Jamieson from *Cranford* and Lord De Guest from *The Small House at Allington* can be given as examples. In *Cranford*, the narrator's ironic tone about the depiction of Mrs. Jamieson supports humour in the novel. The portrayal of Mrs Jamieson should be examined under the light of this information. Honourable Mrs Jamieson is depicted as " dull, and inert, and pompous, and tiresome."(*Cranford*,114). These features degrade her 'ladyship'. Moreover; this lady always falls asleep and even she snores. " The dilemma was soon put an end to

by a singular kind of noise. If a Baron's daughter-in-law could ever be supposed to snore, I should have said Mrs. Jamieson did so." (*Cranford*, 66). It should be kept in mind that Mrs. Jamieson's sedan chair carried by shoemakers that decreases her 'aristocracy' as well. As it was mentioned before this can be regarded as a way to conceal her poverty.

According to Coral Lansbury comedy in *Cranford*, if there is, does not stem from the characters, it arises from reader's prejudices (*Elizabeth Gaskell: The Novel of Social Crisis*, 87). In contrast; Eileen Gillooly thinks that the generative source of humour is the narrator. (*Smile of Discontent: Humour, Gender and Nineteenth-Century British Fiction*, 130). Mary Smith is the narrator. She is a young woman who lived in Cranford she moved to Drumble. She pays visits frequently to Cranford and stays with Jenkyns. She is an important narrator because she is both an insider and an outsider. She is an outsider as she lives in Drumble an industrial city, a city which experienced fundamental changes. That's why she can observe novelties and how the people have changed with them. On the other hand, she also observes Cranfordians who resist all kinds of changes that will be brought by industrialization. The narrator has a chance to observe and compare these two cities and their inhabitants. Her ironic tone creates humour. To illustrate; when Miss Betty Barker's cow tumbled into a lime-pit and she lost her hair. Captain Brown offers her to get a flannel waistcoat and flannel drawers for the animal. At this point, Mary says " Do you ever see cows dressed in grey flannel in London." (*Cranford*, 7). She underlines the difference between London and Cranford. Her tone is ironic that creates humour.

Cranford is totally different from its surroundings in every aspect. Fashion, for example, is totally different from the ladies of Drumble or London. Ladies of Cranford has a distinctive sense of fashion. It can easily be deduced that they do not follow the centre of fashion London. Mary creates humour when she is talking about the fashion in Cranford. Her ironic tone can easily be felt. According to Mary, Cranford ladies can easily be recognised by looking at their dressing. Mary tells ladies dresses as such:

Their dress is very independent of fashion; as they observe, 'What does it signify how we dress here at Cranford, where everybody knows us?' And if they go from home, their reason is equally cogent: 'What does it signify how we dress here, where nobody knows us?' The materials of their clothes are, in general, good and plain, and most of them are nearly as scrupulous as Miss Tyler, of cleanly memory, but I will answer for it, the last gigot, the last tight and scanty petticoat in wear in England, was seen in Cranford- and seen without a smile. (*Cranford*, 4).

Fashion style of Cranford shows up itself in the Lady Glenmire's arrival party. Ladies display how stylish they are. But the narrator does not agree with them, she resembles them ostriches.

If the heads were buried in smart new caps, the ladies were like ostriches, and cared not what became of their bodies. Old gowns, white and venerable collars, any number of brooches, up and down and everywhere (some with dogs' eyes painted in them; some that were like small picture-frames with mausoleums and weeping-willow neatly executed in hair inside, some, again, with miniatures of ladies and gentlemen sweetly smiling out of a nest of stiff muslin)- old brooches for a permanent ornament, and new caps to suit the fashion of the day; the ladies of Cranford always dressed with chaste elegance and propriety, as Miss Barker once prettily expressed it. (*Cranford*, 74).

They have their own fashion to follow which is not modern. As I explained in the previous paragraphs modernity or any kinds of change are not acceptable by Cranfordians. However; the humour generated from the narration is not a cruel one rather sympathetic and amusing. Because Mary Smith is like a daughter to Cranfordian ladies.

Another source of humour is the society itself which is old fashioned and resists the changes. That creates humorous scenes. Cranford is a provincial place so it is not developed and industrialized. That means the inhabitants of the city are poor. Therefore; they may face financial difficulties. So, they try to protect what they have naturally. In the following scene, it can be easily seen: The narrator went to Drumble for a while and when she came back, she saw the only change was Miss Jenkyns' new carpet.

Miss Jenknys had purchased a new carpet for the drawing room. Oh the busy work Miss Matty and I had in chasing the sunbeams, as they fell in an afternoon right down on this carpet through the blindless window! We spread newspapers over the places, and sat down to our book or our work; and, lo! In a quarter of an hour the sun had moved, and was blazing away on a fresh spot; and down again we went on our knees to alter the position of the newspapers. (*Cranford*, 15).

They try to preserve the carpet from the sunbeams in case it fades. The ladies put papers and form a little path to take caution against the guests' shoes might be dirty in the following part of the quotation. The narrator interrupts here and makes a cynical comment "Do you make paper paths for every guest to walk upon in London?" (*Cranford*, 15). Here Olivia Malfait comments in *Elizabeth Gaskell Victorian Culture and The Art of Fiction: Essays For The Bicentenary* as such: "Yet, while the ladies' anxiety about the carpet is described as bordering on the ridiculous, one cannot deny the serious implications of the episode: after all, it is the women's poor circumstances that prompt their necessary thriftiness." ("Domestic Humour in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford*". 76). It is absolutely true that these eccentricities, which are also humorous, stem from this poverty. This leads to us another reason which is being a regional novel. The region is closed to all new things that will improve them.

Cranfordians have an old-fashioned lifestyle which is obviously fading. Therefore; it has its own unwritten rules which can be strange to the readers. For example, nobody can talk about his/her poverty openly in the public places. However; Captain Brown talks about his poverty openly and loudly. That irritates the gentle ladies of Cranford. The narrator tells the day Captain Brown came to Cranford like that in the following words:

I shall never forget the dismay felt when a certain Captain Brown came to live at Cranford, and openly spoke about his being poor- not in a whisper to an intimate friend, the doors and windows being previously closed; but, in the public street! in a loud military voice! an alleging his poverty as a reason for not taking a particular house. (*Cranford*, 5)

So, Captain Brown is a person who is out of the norms of Cranford and their “elegant economy”, and the reactions create humour in this scene which narrated by Mary Smith. What's more; living way of Cranfordians is not enough to satisfy the needs of the industrial world. The best example for this is Miss Matty's bankruptcy. When she lost all her money, her friends were looking for a suitable occupation that she could earn money. The first opportunity came to their minds was teaching. It was a popular post among the Mid-Victorian women. However, the problem was that Miss Matty could teach few things that were old fashioned.

Again as to the branches of a solid English education- fancy-work and the use of the globes- such as the mistress of the Ladies' Seminary, to which all the tradespeople in Cranford sent their daughters, professed to teach; Miss Matty's eyes were failing her, and I doubted if she could discover the number of threads in a worsted-work pattern, or rightly appreciate the different shades required for Queen Adelaide's face, in the loyal wool-work now fashionable in Cranford. (*Cranford*, 129)

As it is seen Miss Matty cannot do fancywork which is fashionable in Cranford because it demands attention and a keen eye but Miss Matty's eyes are failing her. Also, use of globes points geographic development and teaching them to new generations. But “equators and tropics, and such mystical circles, were very imaginary lines indeed to her, and she looked upon the signs of the Zodiac as so many remnants of the Black Art.” (*Cranford*, 129). The geographical developments are new to Miss Matty so she regarded them as a black art. That's why she cannot be sufficient to the new generations of Cranford. On the other hand, it should be mentioned no matter how Cranfordians resist, change and development are inevitable for them. Otherwise, they cannot survive like Miss Matty who cannot earn through teaching. No matter how they isolate themselves, they are exposed to the results of change and development. Mrs Gaskell shows that to some extent change is inevitable and should be adopted. But also the values of the old way of living like solidarity and helping a friend who is in need should not be lost in the process of moving forward. The humour, on the other hand, is sustained by Miss Matty's attitudes towards globes and zodiac signs. While the reader is sorry for the situation of her, at the same time we smile at her bitterly.

The episodic form of the book creates the feeling of not moving forward instead, Cranford has a nostalgic atmosphere, for Cranfordians look backwards. Also, time does not seem to flow. That's why small unimportant events attract more attention and lead to big crises. According to Sigmund Freud in his essay called "Humour", Readers takes the position of a child and "smiling at the triviality of the interests" that seem so big (218). In this society, old ladies are so concerned about themselves that they regard small events as big and important. For example; after the arrival of Lady Glenmire, Cranford was excited to host such a prestigious lady. Mrs Jamieson's anecdote which is humorous about a cat eases this atmosphere. Because a cat swallows her shoe laces which are so precious for her. "I treasure up my lace very much. I daren't even trust the washing of it to my maid.... I always wash it myself." (*Cranford*, 78). From the modern Victorian readers' point of view, giving so much importance to a shoelace is humorous. The following events make the situation more humorous. Mrs Jamieson washes her laces with milk. When a cat drinks all milk with laces in it. Mrs Jamieson and her friends' attempts to turning the cat up and Mrs Jamieson's determination are funny. Their effort is worth quoting:

When it came (Mr. Hoggins' top-boots), Jenny and I put pussy in, with her fore- feet straight down, so that they were fastened, and could not scratch, and we gave her a tea-spoonful of currant-jelly, in which (your ladyship must excuse me) I had mixed some tartar emetic. I shall never forget how anxious I was for the next half-hour. I took pussy to my own room, and spread a clean towel on the floor. I could have kissed her when she returned the lace to the sight, very much as it had gone down. (*Cranford*, 79).

After they saved the laces, they tried to get rid of the dirt and the bad smell. So they "spread it on a lavender-bush in the sun" (*Cranford*, 79). Moreover, Mrs Jamieson put it in milk before she could touch it again. As it was mentioned above, Freud believes readers laugh at exaggeration of such unimportant things. On the other side, Oliver Malfait comments on this scene as a reflection of Mrs. Forrester's need for a child. She puts her cat in the place of a child. The same situations are valid for Betsy Barker and her cow which is looked upon as a daughter and Mrs. Jamieson's dog called Carlo. (*Elizabeth Gaskell Victorian Culture and The Art of Fiction: Essays For The Bicentenary*. 78-79). She is pretty fond of her dog. In the scene given below this devotion can be seen:

As soon as Mr. Mulliner came in, Carlo began to beg, which was a thing our manners forbade us to do, though I am sure we were just as hungry; and Mrs. Jamieson said she was certain we would excuse her if she gave the poor dumb Carlo his tea first. She accordingly mixed a saucer-full for him, and put it down for him to lap; and then she told us how intelligent and sensible the dear little fellow was; he knew cream quite well, and constantly refused tea with only milk in it: so the milk was left for us; but we silently thought we were quite as intelligent and sensible as Carlo, and felt as if insult were added to injury, when we were called upon to admire the gratitude evinced by his wagging his tail for the cream, which should have been ours. (*Cranford*, 77).

Mrs. Jamieson prefers serving her dog and the best part of the tea before her friends. She loves her dog like her child and fills the absence of a baby with her dog. As a result, this scene results in a tragicomedy that can be felt throughout the whole novel as well.

Consequently, humour in *Cranford* is used as a mediator. In most situations after tense moments and events, a humorous scene is settled and that is done deliberately, of course. Mrs. Gaskell aims to ease the tension in the scene. Also, the unrest caused by the industrial revolution both in Cranford and in England societies are softened through novels and humour in this novel. It is difficult to say Mrs. Gaskell is against the industrial revolution. On the contrary, she shows a society who are resisting to change and development but also, the same society who find themselves out of date and in the progress of change. According to Olivia Malfait,

Life in Cranford is guided by an obsolete set of domestic rules (rules for visiting, dressing, serving tea, and even consuming oranges), that are followed with the utmost seriousness by its residents. Yet, the women's overzealous concern with household matters often appears absurdly comical to outsiders. While the narrator gently ridicules her protagonists, the novel's humour conceals the deeper tragedy of the Amazon's fate as poor, childless spinsters and widows. (*Elizabeth Gaskell Victorian Culture and The Art of Fiction: Essays For The Bicentenary*. 80).

Malfait supports the idea that the domestic rules in Cranford are 'obsolete', out of date and far from being modern. Humour in Cranford stems from this. Also, Malfait underlines that besides humour, there is a concealed tragedy in the novel. That is the result of industrialization. Mrs. Gaskell shows the inevitability of change and progress even in a society which seems so impossible to change like Cranford. Survival will be impossible for the people who are unable to adapt to change like

Miss Matty who went bankrupt and tried to earn money. But she realised that her abilities were out of fashion at that time because of the changing needs and demands. In this novel, Mrs. Gaskell dealt with the negative consequences of the industrial revolution as well. In many ways, the society is against all kinds of developments and Mrs. Gaskell criticises that attitude. However, she also underlines the negative effects of these developments by killing Captain Brown in a railway accident. In fact, Mrs. Gaskell implies the desirability a harmony of old traditions and new developments in peace. She says in this novel that change and progress are inevitable but they may cause devastating effects. Since old fashions and traditions are not effective enough to deal with these effects, a kind of reconciliation or harmony needs to be achieved and maintained between different, opposing, forces. This appears to be the main concern and theme of Gaskell's novel. Her use of elements of humour goes a long way towards showing the need for such reconciliation.

2. MISS MARJORIBANKS: THE QUEEN OF THE NEW WORLD

Margaret Wilson Oliphant was born in Wallyford, outside Edinburgh. In 1838 she moved to Liverpool with her family. She began writing in 1844 and her first published novel appeared in 1849. In 1852 she married her cousin Frank Oliphant who had a shorter lifespan than his wife. Oliphant lost her six children and she was very much affected by these deaths. During her career, she wrote nearly one hundred novels and short stories and non-fiction. After her husband's death, Oliphant did not have financial support to survive. That's why she had to write so many literary works. Her close relationships with Blackwood family brought her an opportunity to earn money through translations and writing the history of the publishing house (Blackwood Publishing). At the same time, Blackwood published her novels. The books of *Chronicles of Carlingford* are her most popular novels. They became model for Trollope's *Barset Chronicles*. Later Mrs Oliphant wrote supernatural stories. Oliphant's sorrow of losing her children can be seen in these stories. Autobiography of her was written posthumously by many authors like Elisabeth Jay and Merryn Williams.

Miss Marjoribanks was published in 1866. It is the fifth book of *Chronicles of Carlingford*. It is the story of Lucilla Marjoribanks who returns to her town from school with a mission which is to change the Carlingford society. Q. D. Leavis, one of the most prominent critics of the author wrote in the foreword of *Miss Marjoribanks* that the novel is one of the “ the wisest and the wittiest of Victorian novels,... unique outside Jane Austen's work for consistency of tone and maturity of criticism of a closed society.” (qtd in Rubik, Margaret, *The Novels of Mrs Oliphant: A Subversive View of Traditional Theme*, 14). As it is seen, Leavis praised the criticism that Oliphant offers in the novel the criticism that is maintained by the ironic tone. One of the important points that Leavis underlined that *Miss Marjoribanks* tells a closed society's story. That's why, the novel can be regarded as a provincial/regional novel. Moreover, Leavis puts this novel between Austen's *Emma* and Eliot's *Middlemarch*. (qtd in Rubik, Margaret, *The Novels of Mrs Oliphant: A Subversive View of Traditional Theme*, 14). Lucilla Marjoribanks is similar to Emma in terms of holding the ties of society and forming these ties. Also,

she is like Dorothea Brooke in terms of being presented as a complex character and having psychological depth.

There are several major and minor characters in *Miss Marjoribanks* and they are all significant in the development of the plot in terms of their roles, functions and objects of humour. The leading character is Lucilla Marjoribanks. When the novel starts she is just fifteen. When her mother dies she comes back to Carlingford and she wants to stay with her father but he sends her back to school. She is different from the people in her surroundings. One example is her physical appearance is unlike that of many other girls. She is described as “a large girl”. “She was not to be described as a tall girl- which conveys an altogether different idea- but she was large in all particulars, full and well- developed, with somewhat large features, not at all pretty as yet.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 4). She is always proud of herself. In the description of Lucilla, the narrator’s ironic tone, also, can be seen : “To add these excellences, Lucilla had a mass of hair which, if it could but have been cleared a little in its tint, would have been golden, though at present it was nothing more than tawny, and curly to exasperation.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 5). Margaret Oliphant’s description of Miss Marjoribanks is created deliberately. Oliphant’s aim is to stress that she is not a typical Victorian woman as described by male writers. For instance; John Ruskin describes the woman of his age in the following words:

But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle,- her sweet intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering...By her office and place, she is protected from all danger and temptation. The man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trial; for him, therefore, must be the failure, the offence, the inevitable error: often must be wounded, or subdued; often misled; and always hardened. But he guards the woman from all this. (*Sesame and Lilies*. 114).

Contrary to Ruskin's description of a woman, Lucilla is strong-willed and confident and the author’s description of her character shows this discrepancy to the readers. There is no doubt that she is highly intelligent. Her mind is shaped by novels and popular philosophy. She is also determined and does not give up easily. After her father sent her back to school, she did not give up. Instead, she came back with a mission. Also, she rehearsed all her plans before coming. In this novel, it seems Lucilla has control over everything and everybody. That’s why she is an object of

humour, as will be discussed later in the present chapter. On the other hand, Dr Marjoribanks, Lucilla's father contributes to humour with his scornful comments. When she becomes the 'sovereign' of Carlingford gradually, he prefers watching her and being happy for having such a shrewd daughter. Moreover, Dr Marjoribanks is a respectable man in Carlingford. Once his evening parties are popular in the town but only men could attend them. After Lucilla's arrival, like everything in the town his parties change. Also, Dr Marjoribanks is always engaged in his work when he is at home, he isolates himself in his library. He is similar to Jane Austen's character Mr Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*. Both characters are fathers and when they want to escape, they "lock" themselves in their libraries. Tom Marjoribanks is Lucilla's cousin from her father's side. He is in love with Lucilla. Later, he will be her husband. This event can be regarded as a biographical element. Because Margaret Oliphant married her cousin. Mr Cavendish is another important male figure in this novel. According to Lucilla, he is the only man who can flirt in Cranford. The aim of getting Mr Cavendish leads to a rivalry between Lucilla and Barbara Lake who is one of the inhabitants of Carlingford and an important minor character. She is relatively poor but more beautiful than Lucilla. She has a beautiful and harmonious voice with Lucilla and she is jealous of her. That's why she is pretty ambitious about seeing her failure. Her true feelings towards Lucilla come out about Mr Cavendish. "I should never take the trouble to think about him if it was not Lucilla believes he is paying her attention- that is the great fun. It would be delicious to take him from her, and make game of her and her kindness." (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 96). As it can be seen she hates Lucilla in spite of Lucilla's kindness. It can be felt that she feels inferiority because of her poverty. Rose Lake is Barbara's sister. She works at the school of design and she is called "Preraphaelite". Through the title she becomes one of the objects of humour. As a minor character the cook, Nancy, at the beginning of the book attempts to take the control of the house from Lucilla, but she fails. Mrs Woodburn is Mr Cavendish's sister. She is not very social in Carlingford. Lucilla's confidant Mrs Chiley takes care her like her mother. Lucilla usually gives importance to the elder members of Carlingford like Mrs Chiley and Mrs Centum. Because Lucilla believes that society is formed by such people, and Mr Ashburton the current member of Parliament of Carlingford is one of Lucilla's suitor. He is also the rival of

Mr Cavendish for electing MP. With the help of Lucilla, he has been chosen as MP. These are the members of Carlingford society, which is a closed region that the reasons and the effects will be discussed later.

Like Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford*, Carlingford society is a closed one and that is one of the features of a provincial town. That's why the number of old members of this society is high, and they do not accept the novelties either new people or a new way of life. Provincial novels like *Miss Marjoribanks* and *Cranford* tell an old-fashioned way of life. It is a kind of life that will have to be changed soon, and the signals of these changes or industrial revolution can be found in these novels. The tension between old way of life and the new kind of life also can be felt. When the novel is examined, using of the train in terms of transportation can be regarded as a sign of industrialization and the changes it will bring about. Also, this is a threat to customs and for a provincial town. Miss Marjoribanks comes back for reforming too. For instance; Tom Marjoribanks comes to Carlingford by the nine o'clock train. Moreover, Lucilla Marjoribanks is fully aware that a woman who does not travel the world cannot be a leader for Carlingford and also for novelties. That's why Lucilla Marjoribanks is important for that old-fashioned town. She is such a clever girl that she knows this from the beginning. She is planning to revolutionise the society. For this reason, she has a really good relationship with the elders of the society like Mrs Centrum and Mrs Chiley. She says "Dancing is all well but it implies quantities of young people- and young people can never make what I call society." (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 49). Carlingford society has its rules directed by mostly old ladies. These ladies are from Lucilla's side. The novel is similar to *Cranford* in terms of the inhabitants. *Cranford* is also made up of old people and that is the reason why they do not easily accept novelties. From this point of view, the two novels deal with similar issues.

Oliphant gives a detailed portrait of Carlingford the arrival of Miss Marjoribanks, so as to enable the reader to realize the need for change, and to understand why Lucilla was so determined to reform the town:

Affairs were an utterly chaotic state at the period when this record commences. There was nothing which could be properly called a centre in the entire town. To be sure Grange Lane was inhabited, as at present, by the best families in Carlingford; but then without organisation, what good does it do to have a number of people together?" (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 20).

The town lacks the organisation. This means a chaos dominates Carlingford even with the best, upper-class families. The reason for this hectic atmosphere can be the industrial revolution and its consequences. However; the members of the society should be mentioned here: "Mr Bury was utterly unqualified to take any lead. Mrs Bury had been dead a long time, and the daughters were married, and the Rector's maiden sister, who lived with him, was entirely of his own way of thinking, and asked people to tea-parties, which were Methodists' class-meeting." (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 20). The members of this society have no interest in the society itself. Some of them are really old and younger ones have no aim to reform this society like Lucilla. Lucilla differs from them in being more informed and determined. She travelled before she comes back and now she can compare the other cities and societies with Carlingford.

Miss Marjoribanks is a mid-Victorian novel like *Cranford*. That's why, it shows some similar features like the use of humour for drawing attention to several important social issues in the the society depicted in the novel. Margaret Oliphant creates a society which is similar to the Victorian English society. However; this society is placed in a far place from the centre and it has some unique features, and these make Carlingford a provincial town. Oliphant uses a female main character to point out the weaknesses of this society. Like Elizabeth Gaskell, Oliphant chooses heroine(s) because both authors believe that women can change the society and also bring novelties. Lucilla and Mary Smith (*Cranford*) are both young women who can go outside their towns and see "the world". So they have new perspectives and strength to change. In *Miss, Marjoribanks* Lucilla goes on a world tour after she finishes her school. Thus, she has enough "weapons" to fight against old customs. This struggle leads to humorous characters and scenes.

Humour is provided in *Miss Marjoribanks* in many ways. First of all, Margaret Oliphant challenges Victorian traditions in terms of her heroines and social customs. In the Victorian era, the leader of a family was usually the father. Dr Marjoribanks has customs like Thursday parties as the leading figure of this family. However, when Lucilla comes back home, step by step she will be the leader of the family. That's why she begins by changing old habits and customs. Lucilla starts her reforms in her own house. Lucilla has made a "conquest" and takes her father's place. Literally, she sits his place at the table. The narrator tells this part with the verbs of war like "occupy" and "abdicate". In fact, Lucilla is like an heir who overthrows the king and takes over the authority. Moreover; the struggle between Nancy and Lucilla for power at home can be given as an example of future changes. When Nancy hears that Lucilla is on her way home, she asks Dr Marjoribanks who the master of the house will be. He answers that everything will stay as usual. However, almost nothing stays the same. Tom's arrival can be given here as an example. Lucilla leads Tom and sends a message to Nancy about preparing a meal for him. She says " Tell Nancy not to put herself about, but to send up something cold- cold pie, or anything she can find handy. Tell her I am so vexed, but it is just like Mr Tom. He never knows what he is eating." (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 42). Lucilla shows her power by ordering food for Tom. But Nancy is not a piece of cake. Her answer shows that Lucilla has a long way to go. Nancy says " I'll thank Miss Lucilla to mind her own business. The cold pie is for master's breakfast. I ain't such a goose not to know what to send up-stairs." (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 42). In time Lucilla gains the ruling power of the house as well. In the following parts, she will continue to conquer the society. However; it is ironic that she lives in a small village and in a small house (compared to the houses of industrial cities), it cannot have such an important role to rule a house. That contributes to the effect of humour and humour prepares the reader for more important and radical changes step by step. Moreover, Lucilla is superior to her male counterparts in terms of intelligence. That is also surprising for Victorian readers. According to Margaret Rubik;

Oliphant even makes her women outdo their male counterparts in intelligence and energy and beat them in the very domains they traditionally consider their own. If intelligence alone was a doubtful virtue for girls in the nineteenth century, a woman superior to her spouse in this field was totally

unacceptable. Such a challenge to male dominance ultimately involves criticism of the patriarchal system and, by extension, a challenge to the whole social order. (*The Novels of Mrs Oliphant: A Subversive View of Traditional Themes*, 117).

Miss Marjoribanks shows her intelligence in the election of the representative in the parliament for Carlingford. When people were looking for a candidate for member of Parliament for Carlingford, Mr Ashburton flashed in Lucilla's mind suddenly and she supported him until the end. Nobody could foresee that Mr Ashburton would win the election against Mr Cavendish. But Lucilla could predict this from the beginning.

As it was mentioned before, Carlingford society is firmly depended on customs and traditions. That's why it cannot be easy for Miss Marjoribanks to effect significant changes. The reason for this devotion is that Carlingford is a small, isolated and untouched town. *Miss Marjoribanks* is a provincial novel in terms of portraying a less improved, authentic and unique society. In provincial novels, the locality influences the characters. Provincial novels emphasize the setting which is in a distinctive area and not close to the centre. The region has its own characteristics like social relations, customs and even language. In *Miss Marjoribanks* the provincial city is Carlingford and the heroine, Lucilla can differentiate between London and Paris like the heroine of *Cranford* :

She knew, for example, that there was a great difference between the brilliant society of London, or of Paris, which appears in books, where women have generally the best of it, and can rule in their own right; and even the very best society of a country town, where husbands are commonly unmanageable and have a great more of their own way in respect to the houses they will or will not go to, than is good for that inferior branch of the human family. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 15).

As it was mentioned before, setting influences society and in Carlingford, this society is not a developed and industrialized one when it is compared to London and Paris. Moreover; the provincial setting affects the characters. For example; Carlingford is a place where the inhabitants do not have the ability to change anything in spite of the potential of change. Lucilla can see this truth:

In short, you might have gone over Grange Lane, house by house, finding a great deal of capital material, but without encountering a single individual capable of making anything out of it. Such was the lamentable condition, at the moment this history commences, of society in Carlingford. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 21).

The society is so closed and busy with trivial things that Carlingford needs a saviour who can shape the society. Obviously, this person is Miss Marjoribanks. She is described like a queen. “ Thus, while the town ripened more and more for her great mission, and the ignorant human creatures, who were to be her subjects, showed their usual blindness and ignorance, the time drew nearer and nearer for Miss Marjoribanks’s return.”(*Miss Marjoribanks*, 22). The inferiority can easily be felt in the narration which contributes to providing humour. This can be related to being a provincial town. According to Robin Gilmour’s definition of provincial “ it is linked with inferiority and backwardness”.(qtd in “ *The Provincial or Regional Novel*” *A Companion of the Victorian Novel*. 322). Carlingford here is portrayed as a non-developed, ignorant, blind society. That's why it can be titled as a provincial society. Margaret Oliphant creates a society in this novel that the industrial revolution has not touched yet. According to Elisabeth Jay “ This is a Carlingford untouched until electioneering begins, by the economic expansion which produces the new northern quarter around the canal and necessitated the building of St Roque's chapel-of-ease.” (“Introduction” to *Miss Marjoribanks*, xiv). At the beginning of the novel, a railway is mentioned that can be regarded as a sign of development and change. When Lucilla finishes her school, she sets out on a journey to Switzerland and Italy and she sees that will be an advantage in Carlingford. Because these countries are industrialised and developed. “Nowadays, when people go everywhere, an untravelled woman would find it so much the harder to keep up the role of a leader of society to which she had devoted herself; and she felt to the depth of her heart the endless advantage to her future conversation of the experiences to be acquired in Switzerland and Italy.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 15). Moreover; it must be mentioned that throughout the novel industrialism and the workers of the era are largely omitted. This point is similar to *Cranford*. In Carlingford society, there is no mention of workers. It shows Carlingford is not influenced by the industrial revolution. Because, workers are significant symbols for industrialisation. Firstly, the members are from the upper-middle class which is an important criterion for the nominee who is planning to move Carlingford. Poor people cannot be accepted. For example; Barbara Lake is a perfect singer even better than Lucilla. However; she is from a family of artists and they are poor. Barbara's social class can be understood from the place where she lives. She lives on the Grove Street which is described as such “ At that hour in the morning the sun was shining on the little gardens on the north side of the street, which was the plebian side; and as it was the end of October, and by no means warm.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 32). This is the place where Lucilla hears Barbara's voice for the first time, and the place is described by the word "plebian"

that gives the social status of the people who live in there. Still, Barbara's good voice or her beauty do not matter for being a member of this society in the first place. That's why in her first Thursday evening she cannot join the conversations. She just stays in a corner and watches. She felt a little bit belittled and is absolutely jealous of Lucilla. The narrator tells these moments as such:

Barbara sat as if she could not move from that corner, looking out upon everybody with scared eyes, which expressed nothing but defiance, and in her own mind making the reflections of bitter poverty upon the airy pretty figures round her, in all the variations of that costume which Miss Marjoribanks had announced as the standard of dress for the evening. Barbara's muslin, six times washed, was not more different from the spotless lightness of all the draperies round her. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 85).

In this novel, the author's attitude towards the concept of "change" should be mentioned. Throughout the novel, Oliphant highlights the change is inevitable and is required. However; the nostalgia for the values which are lost by the change is underlined, as well. As it can be seen Barbara is isolated in this evening because not only she is not known but also she is not from their social class. In short, she is different. And this society is closed for different people and things. In this scene, the ironic tone provides humour but also pity and sadness can be felt for Barbara. The values lost by improvements and industrialization like sympathy and pity are underlined here. Similar emphasises are given in *Cranford* by Elizabeth Gaskell.

Next, the ironic language used by Oliphant brings humour to the novel. Moreover; Lucilla does not have a feminine beauty. As Oliphant says "It is, as we have said, a delicate subject to discuss; for the truth is, that this well-known and thoroughly established reward of female excellence had not fallen to Miss Marjoribanks's lot." (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 332). This absence of beauty may be compensated by her high intelligence. That gives her the power to manipulate and direct the society. As it can be seen she is totally different in appearance. Lucilla is distinguished by her features when she is compared to her friends. This is one of the features that makes her significant and a reformer in the society. In the beginning, it starts like a praise for Lucilla but later the tone of the narrator changes. "To add these excellences, Lucilla had a mass of hair which, if it could but have been cleared a little in its tint, would have been golden, though at present it was nothing more than tawny...She wore large, thick curls, which did not, however, float or wave, or do any of the graceful

things...but grow ridiculously, unmanageably thick.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 4-5). On the other hand, this description has a sense of irony. It seems that the narrator makes fun of these physical features of Lucilla. She is not a pure beauty when she is compared to Barbara Lake, for example. But her features are ridiculed by calling them “excellences” and also narrator gives more importance to Lucilla than the other girls which show that intelligence is more important than beauty to reshape a society. Moreover; romantic and heroic ideals are mostly mocked. According to Margaret Rubik “ Oliphant’s heroines often show little interest in romantic love; contrary to all conventions of romance literature and reversing set roles, they are more concerned with power and a career than with love.” (*The Novels of Mrs Oliphant: A Subversive View of Traditional Themes*, 120). In the beginning, when Lucilla comes back to Carlingford, she resists marriage for ten years. Even though everybody around her wants to marry and looks for a proper candidate, she has a mission in her mind, and therefore she refuses Tom who is actually her future husband. According to Miss Marjoribanks her only aim is to comfort her dear father. But, infact, this is an excuse for her plans to reorganize Carlingford society. Throughout the novel, Lucilla’s romantic relationships are with Mr Cavendish, The Archdeacon, Tom Marjoribanks and Mr Ashburton. In the first part of the novel, Lucilla tries to reshape society but she fails to some extent. At this point, marriage can be seen as a gateway. However, Lucilla never retreats:

People who know no better may go away upon marriage- tours or they may fly off to foreign travel, or go out as a governess, when all things do not go just as they wish. But as for Miss Marjoribanks, she stood bravely at her post and scorned to flinch or run away. Thus commenced amid mists of discouragement, and in an entire absence of all that was calculated to stimulate and exhilarate, the second grand period of Lucilla's life. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 334).

Lucilla uses her marriage to reach a new life and a new society on which she can work and finally a new career. The humorous part of this subject is that Lucilla is proposed four times when she does not want to marry. But she is also jilted twice by the Archdeacon and Mr.Cavendish. Although she is not a great beauty, she gets three proposals and turns them down. According to the narrator, these men lose the best choice when they leave her. The narrator says:

And as for the other men who had been presented to Lucilla as eligible candidates for her regard, none of them had given her this proof of their admiration. The year has passed away, and society had laid no tribute of this description upon Lucilla's shrine. The Archdeacon had married Mrs Mortimer instead, and Mr Cavendish had been led away by Barbara Lake!... Poor men! They had had the two ways set before them, and they had not chosen the best. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 332-333).

Another source of humour in the novel is that Lucilla is a girl who acts to get what she wants. She plans every step she will take and she plays her part in detail like an experienced actress. For example; when she feels that a crisis is on the way, she has already rehearsed for it. “ She carried out the second part of her programme without either inference or sympathy, except Miss Marjoribanks's maid, who had some hopes from the moment of her arrival.”(*Miss Marjoribanks*, 6). In a particular scene, Dr Marjoribanks likens her to Lady Macbeth:

Lucilla was tall enough to go through this process without any great throwback in point of grace- the long step giving rather a tragedy-queen effect to her handsome but substantial person and long, sweeping dress. She stopped short, however, when she saw them, and withdrew to the sofa, on which she had established her throne; and there was a little air of conscious pathos on her face as she sat down, which impressed her companions. (*Miss Marjoribanks*,44).

After Lucilla's powerful acting, Dr Marjoribanks asks “What were you doing, Lucilla? ”, “-rehearsing Lady Macbeth, I suppose. At least you looked exactly like it when we came into the room.”(*Miss Marjoribanks*, 44). Lucilla’s answer is also humorous in this place when she says “No papa, I was only measuring to see how much carpet we should want.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*,44). As it is seen she is a successful actress. Also, she abuses her father by pretending and using mise-en-scenes. This can be seen in the first chapter. Lucilla does not want to go back to school. That's why she acts as if she could do everything to comfort her father. But Dr Marjoribanks is a little bit stubborn about that. In order to persuade her father, she kneels down her mother's bed. Her father wants her to get up “ but the devoted daughter knew better than to get up. She hid her face in her hands, and rested her hands upon her mother's sofa, where the Doctor was sitting; and the sobs of that emotion which she meant to control henceforward, echoed through the room.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 9). As it can be seen she acts as a devoted daughter but she does not want her father's second marriage and she has different plans. Furthermore; there are

romantic scenes which have the aim of parodying similar scenes in the Victorian novel. Through the relationship between Tom Marjoribanks and Lucilla classic romances are mocked in many scenes along the flow. When Lucilla decides not to marry, Tom comes with the intention of making love to her. But Lucilla has different ideas. In the quoted scene below Lucilla goes for a walk and Tom comes after her:

Miss Marjoribanks had nearly reached Salem Chapel, which pushed itself forward amid the cosy little line of houses, pondering in her mind the unexpected hindrance which was about to be placed in her triumphant path, in the shape of Tom Marjoribanks when that singular piece of good fortune occurred to her had so much effect upon her career in Carlingford. Such happy accidents rarely happen, except to great generals or heroes of romance; and it would have been, perhaps, a presumption on the part of Lucilla to place herself conspicuously in either of these categories. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 32).

Lucilla sees Tom as “hindrance” in her way to her target. When she comes across him, her description of this should be underlined. She says these “fortunate” occurrences happen to great people. She probably means great people of romantic novels. Similar scenes can be seen in popular novels of the age. However; Lucilla is not obviously glad with the situation, and again the irony in the narration can be felt easily. In terms of heroic ideals, Lucilla is compared to warriors, generals and rulers throughout the novel. But these images are ironic. For example; “ Thus, while the town ripened more and more for her great mission, and the ignorant human creatures, who were to be her subjects, showed their usual blindness and ignorance, the time drew nearer and nearer for Miss Marjoribanks’s return.”(*Miss Marjoribanks*, 23). In the quotation above the people who live in Carlingford are called “subjects and ignorant human creatures” and this means Lucilla can become their ruler. Her position is exaggerated and the inhabitants of Carlingford are belittled. The irony in the narration can be sensed, which creates humour. Lucilla is always described by means of war metaphors and the effect of this is to make fun of heroism. For example; when Lucilla's mother passed away, she did not want to go back to school but her father sent her back. In that scene the tension between Dr Marjoribanks and Lucilla is given as such “ And with these commonplace words, Dr Marjoribanks withdrew in calm possession of the field. As for Lucilla, she obeyed him, and betook herself to her own room, and swallowed her negus with a sense, not only of defeat,

but of disappointment and mortification which was very unpleasant.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 10). The word “field” in this quotation refers to the battlefield and also the verbs such as “obey”, “betook”, “defeat” portray a war scene. Also, Miss Marjoribanks takes over the control of her “kingdom” which is the word used for Carlingford, by “abdicating” her father. The words in inverted commas again remind the reader of a war between a king and his heir. The idea of heroism is present throughout the novel. It is used in the description of characters and the relation between them. That's why, it can be seen not only between Dr Marjoribanks and Lucilla but also between Lucilla and Barbara Lake. “Barbara like a young soldier of fortune, ready to take a great deal for granted, and to swallow much that was mysterious in the programme of the adventurous general who might lead her on to glory” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 38). In this quotation, the words “soldier” and “general” refer to a war between Lucilla and Barbara.

Like *Cranford* humour is supplied through many ways. One of them is exaggerating trivial things and problems. Because people of Carlingford do not have more important things to deal with, they become obsessed with the trivial things. Carlingford society has one important feature that is evening parties. These parties bring together every member of the society and such parties are common in the mid-Victorian novel. These parties are important because the newcomers are introduced to the society in these parties, for instance, and the only organization where people can come together and talk, even sometimes gossip, is these evenings. What is happening in the town, who is coming and leaving, who is flirting with whom? are the main issues of these evenings. Moreover; all important events happen during these gatherings. For instance; the archdeacon's coming or discovering of Barbara's voice. Before Lucilla, Dr Marjoribanks and his male friends come together. But with Lucilla women start to join these gatherings. She reforms them by saying “there are a few things more pleasant than a little impromptu luncheon-party, where everybody comes without being expected, fresh from the outside world, and ready to tell all that is going on; though, on the other hand, it was a little doubtful how it might work in Carlingford.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 39). The humorous part of these gathering is what people call them and what Lucilla calls them. Lucilla insists upon calling them “evenings” but Dr Marjoribanks calls them “parties”. That is what Lucilla

persistently corrects Dr Marjoribanks. According to Lucilla, there will be no dancing and no dressing like parties because this is an “evening”. Lucilla corrects not only Dr Marjoribanks about this issue but she corrects Barbara too. When Barbara wants to wear her white frock for the Thursday gathering, Lucilla becomes indifferent to her and warns her “ There will be no dress. I have insisted upon that. You know it is not a party, it is only an evening. A white frock, *high-* that is all I mean to wear.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 82). As it can be seen Miss Marjoribanks is serious about the name of the organisation which should not have such gravity. Because these evenings have such function that Miss Marjoribanks can show or declare something but mostly they are used for showing off. On the other hand, Lucilla has new plans in her mind but she is not sure whether they will work or not for that society which has its own rules. For example; “ the men had generally something to do, and where the married ladies took their luncheon when the children had their dinner, and presided at the nursery meal. And as for a party of young ladies, even supposing they had the courage to come, with no more solid admixture of the more important members of society.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 39). However, Lucilla will come to this society with novelties.

Misunderstandings play some parts in providing humour. These misunderstandings are usually caused by men. Because female domination is apparent. Tom Marjoribanks is one of the characters who usually misunderstands what Miss Marjoribanks's says. The narrator tells about Tom that “ Tom, like most other people, was utterly incapable of fathoming the grand conception which inspired Miss Marjoribanks.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 52). Such incidence happens on the first evening of Miss Marjoribanks. When Miss Marjoribanks is preparing for the evening mentioned before Lucilla tells him “ Do go away. You can come back to luncheon if you like;- that is to say, if you can pick up anybody that is very amusing, you may bring him here about at half- past one.” (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 52). In here Miss Marjoribanks's aim is to make her evenings more appealing. However; the “amusing” man brought by Tom is disappointing. He is a bit coarse in that he is not careful about the words he uses and the subjects he is talking on. That's why Miss Bury is shocked. He says:

I think they are going to hang that fellow that killed the tailor. That will stir you up a little in Carlingford, I should suppose. It is as good as a play for a country town. Of course, there will be a party that will get up a memorial, and prove that a man so kind-hearted never existed out of paradise; and there will be another party who will prove him to be insane, and then at the end all the blackguards within a hundred miles will crowd into Carlingford, and the fellow will be hanged, as he deserves to be, but I assure you it's a famous amusement for a country town. (*Miss Marjoribanks*, 55-56).

The man is talking about an execution and it should be noted that the words he uses are “amusement”, “play” and ”party” for an execution. It can be felt that, for him, this is like a show that must be watched a totally unexpected situation but also at the same time, it is ironic and humorous. Miss Bury starts trembling and she is alarmed. Her panic is funny to watch. But Tom’s idea of an amusing man is also questioned here. In the end, Lucilla tries to cover it up by accusing Tom of talking nonsense.

Miss Marjoribanks has the characteristic features of the provincial novel, and displays like many other Victorian novels, the changing conditions. The steps of the industrial revolution can be heard and it is coming closer and closer to the people who live in the countryside. The inhabitants of Carlingford are also glad to live in these places. They have their own society that all members know each other and they are close to novelties. Because the new way of life sounds frightening naturally. The novel can be categorised as the provincial novel with its closed society and members, their old-fashioned lives and the pressure of industrialisation that can be felt in the air. So, it can be deduced that Margaret Oliphant creates a provincial town where she wants to show a fading way of life and ridicule them by using humour because she wants to underline that change is indispensable for all. If you want to resist it or try to escape or ignore it, you will find yourself in a humorous situation, and humour is used in many ways and with many aims in this Victorian novel. It is obvious that Oliphant is not satisfied with the world she lives in. That's why, she criticises these world's people sometimes with their physical appearances, sometimes with their behaviours and ideas. While she is doing this, she prefers mocking them, putting them in funny and ridiculous situations. Moreover, Oliphant shakes the traditions boldly. She challenges them. Also, she uses ironic language and continues to criticise. She believes in the power and abilities of women and their capacity to adopt to change. That's why she chooses a unique heroine and gives her enough

power and intelligence to change even the member of parliament for Carlingford. Furthermore, the author knows the steps of oncoming industrial revolution. Maybe, workers and their life cannot be seen in this novel but this progress can be felt with some clues like the railway. It shows that life will be changed soon and that this is inevitable.

3. COLLIDING WORLDS OF ANTHONY TROLLOPE IN *THE SMALL HOUSE OF ALLINGTON*

In this chapter of the thesis, Anthony Trollope's *The Small House at Allington* will be studied in the context of humorous elements in this provincial novel. Moreover; the novel will be studied in a comparative way with the previous two novels, *Cranford* and *Miss Marjoribanks* which have similar features in terms of being a provincial novel and the function of humour. In the Mid- Victorian era the provinces become significant with the construction of a national railway network. The authors of the era wrote about the pastoral and peaceful places which are free from the chaos of the industrial cities. The aim of using humour in these provincial novels is to soften the difficulties brought about by the industrial revolution. Moreover; humour is used as a medium to deal with the problems of urbanisation. So, all these issues will be studied in this chapter.

Anthony Trollope was born in London. He studied at Harlow school. Then he went to Winchester College. He was not a bright student at school but he liked daydreaming and creating imaginary places. In later years of his life due to his father's debts, he and his family had to move to Belgium to avoid arrest. Later, he was offered a clerkship at General Postal Service in Ireland. This part of his life was reflected in his novel *The Small House at Allington*. So, in his many early novels, Ireland can be seen as the setting. Trollope's first major success came with *The Warden* (1855), which was the first novel of *Chronicles of Barsetshire*. There are six novels successively *The Warden* (1855), *The Barchester Towers* (1857), *Doctor Thorne* (1858), *Framley Parsonage* (1861), *The Small House at Allington* (1864), *The Last Chronical of Barset* (1867). The only serial novels of his are not *Chronicles of Barsetshire*, but also there are *Palliser Novels* consisted of six books. Besides, he has some novels like *The Way We Live Now* (1875) which is not a serial book and also a complete success. Anthony Trollope as one of the most prolific writers of Victorian Age he died in 1882 in London.

The Small House at Allington was published in 1864 and it was the fifth novel of *The Chronicles of Barsetshire*. It was published serially in *The Cornhill Magazine*. Barsetshire plays an important role in this part of the thesis because Barsetshire is a province which is a small area and has own characteristics and unique inhabitants. The place is not far from the city centre. However; it is not touched by industrial revolution like London. The inhabitants have their own way of life and their own moral values. As was the case with the *Cranford* and *Miss Marjoribanks*, the setting of the novel is made recognizable and familiar to the Victorian reader. The plot turns around the family of Dales who live in the small house. The major characters are Lilian Dale in short Lily, Isabella Dale in short Bell, Aldophus Crosbie, Johnny Eames, Bernard Dale, Christopher Dale, Dr Crofts, family members of De Courcy and Lord de Guset and his sister Lady Julie. They will be examined in details. For example; Lily Dale is a complicated character. She falls in love with Aldophus Crosbie and they get engaged. But Crosbie does not keep his promise and breaks the engagement. Even further he gets married to another woman, Lady Alexandrina de Courcy. Still, Lily does not stand against him and will not marry anybody included Eames who is in love with her from his boyhood. At this point according to Dinah Birch “ Trollope insists on a family context for Lily's resolve, and in doing so he raises wider questions about the durability of the provincial gentry that she represents, a class whose survival must depend on the capacity to adapt the transformations of the modern world.” (Introduction). Birch means that Lily represents the middle class that can only survive if they can adapt to changes required by the era. But obviously Lily does not seem to adopt that will be discussed later in this thesis. In addition that similar concepts are used in the previous novel namely *Cranford* by Elizabeth Gaskell and *Miss Marjoribanks* by Margaret Oliphant. In *Cranford*, the old maids are the ones who cannot keep up with the changes, in *Miss Marjoribanks*, Lucilla Marjoribaks who is able to adopt the novelties and gain enough power to rule and to revolution the society. Bell has just an opposite character of Lily and she is her sister. Bell is the rebel of the family because she refused to marry her cousin Bernard in spite of her dear uncle's will. She resists to all persistence of Bernard and Squire of Allington. At this point, the Squire of Allington has an important and dominant role. Because he is the leader of the

family. He is the centre of this family in terms of both financial and authority. That's why Bell resists against authority. When Lily and Bell are compared with each other, Lily continues to love a man who betrays her. But Bell does not accept a man whom she does not love. Bell and Lily are described in the novel as such: “ They were fair-haired girls, very like each other...They were something below the usual height, being slight and slender in all their proportions. Lily was shorter of the two, but the difference was so trifling that it was hardly remembered unless the two were together.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 48). Crosbie should be mentioned in this part. The exact word that defines Crosbie is a social climber. He is called “Apollo” by Lily. First, he thinks that Lily’s uncle Squire Dale will give some money as dowry if he gets married to Lily. But, Mr Dale refuses this. Then, Crosbie starts to think about excuses to break his promise. After he met Alexandrina the daughter of Lord de Courcy, he tries to get rid of Lily Dale. Money and social status attract him more than anything. Trollope shows Crosbie while he is comparing Lily and Alexandrina de Courcy in chapter 25 and he explaining to himself why he wants to marry Lady Alexandrina:

Lily would make the best wife that a man could take to his bosom. As to Alexandrina, he knew the thinness of her character. She would stick by him. No doubt; and in circuitous, discontented, unhappy way would probably be true to her duties as a wife and mother. She would be nearly such another as Lady Amelia Gazebee. But was that a prize sufficiently rich to make him contented with his own prowess and skill in winning it? (*The Small House at Allington*, 222).

He knows from the beginning that he cannot be happy with Alexandrina. However, he marries her to get his “prize” , namely his high social status and money. Moreover, throughout the novel, he is not mentioned with positive adjectives. Instead, some negative words like “scoundrel” , “swell” , “cruel” are used for him. “Scoundrel” is used by Lily’s uncle after Crosbie left Lily as such: “ I don’t understand it; I don’t indeed. I cannot bring myself to believe that the man who was sitting the other day at my table should be so great a scoundrel” (*Cranford*, 228). Another example about the unpleasant adjective used for Crosbie is “swell” in the chapter called “ The Two Pearls of Allington” by Lily. She says “ I’ll tell you what he is, Bell; Mr. Crosbie is a swell ” (*Cranford*, 12), and the narrator supports her comment by saying “ And Lilian Dale was right; Mr. Crosbie was a swell.”

(*Cranford*, 12). Third example for “cruel” can be found in the chapter called “ John Eames and His Adventures.” In this chapter the narrator explicitly says “In all this he was no doubt very cruel to Lily.” (*Cranford*, 188). His nickname ‘Apollo’ suits him because Apollo in Greek mythology is known with his affairs. His opposite character, Johnny Eames is one of the major characters. He is the childhood friend of Lily and Bell. He is desperately in love with Lily. But this love is unrequited. One thing should be mentioned about Eames, he is called a hobbledehoy which can be described as “a clumsy or awkward youth”(Oxford Living Dictionary). This word coined by Trollope and use in the sixth chapter called “ Mrs. Roper’s Boarding House”. The passage is worth quoting: “ In truth, they are not as yet men, whatever the number may be of their years; and, as they are no longer boys, the world has found for them the ungraceful name of hobbledehoy.” (*Cranford*, 31). This situation of his continues until the last chapter. He is described in the novel as such:

John Eames had no friends. There is a class of young men who never get petted, though they may not be the less esteemed, or perhaps loved. (...)Such young men are often awkward, ungainly, and not yet formed in their gait; they struggle with their limbs, and are shy; words do not come to them with ease, when words are required, among any but their accustomed associates. Social meetings are a period of penance to them, and any appearance in public will unnerve them. They go much about alone and blush when women speak to them. In truth, they are not as yet men, whatever the number may be of their years; and, as they are no longer boys, the world has found them the ungraceful name of hobbledehoy. (*The Small House at Allington*, 31).

From his hobbledehoyhood, he is in love with Lily. But, he is turned down by her even when she is deceived by Crosbie. Moreover, Mrs Dale is the mother of Lily and Bell. She lost her husband who was Squire Dale's brother. She is relatively poor but is supported by Mr Dale. But she is always an honourable woman. “ In birth she had been much lower than her husband, seeing that her grandfather had been almost nobody. (...) She had been a beauty; according to my taste, was still very lovely; but certainly, at this time of life, she, a widow of fifteen years' standing with two grown-up daughters, took no pride in her beauty.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 22). Although, she is lower than the Squire, he always sees her as his equal. Mr Dale namely the Squire Dale, is another dominant character in *The Small House at Allington*. He is the uncle of Bell and Lily. He has a major role in these two young

women's lives. He is like a father to them. He wishes their happiness and tries to protect them. However; at the same time, he puts some pressure on girls especially on Bell about her marriage to Bernard. It should not be forgotten that he behaves like girls' father but he does not give any money for their marriage. Dr. Crofts is a rising practitioner of Allington and also Bell's future husband. And, De Courcy Family who are one of the noble families of the land. Alexandrina is the beauty of the family and the youngest member of them all. "That her forehead, and nose, and cheeks, and chin were well formed, no man could deny. Her hair was soft and plentiful. Her teeth were good, and her eyes were long and oval." (*The Small House at Allington*, 148). The only fault on her face is that her face cannot be remembered. She does not have a unique face. Alexandrina de Courcy gets married to Crosbie even though she acknowledges the engagement between Lily and Crosbie. The reason why she gets married to him is explained by her as such: "She would have preferred a gentleman with £5,000 a year; but then as no gentlemen with £ 5,000 a year came that way, would she not be happier with Mr Crosbie than she would be with no husband at all? She was not very much in love with Mr Crosbie, but she thought that she could live with him comfortably and that on the whole, it would be a good thing to be married." (*The Small House at Allington*, 238). She does not love him but she thinks that it would be better than being single. Moreover; she tries to feel innocent about Lily's abandonment and blames Crosbie. She thinks "her own rank did in some degree extenuate her lover's falseness" (*The Small House at Allington*, 239). But she could not confess herself too. The only member of the aristocracy who stands against Crosbie's behaviour is Lady Julia. *The Small House At Allington* is a Victorian novel that's why besides the major characters there are many minor characters and they will be examined when they are relevant.

Humour in this novel is mainly provided by the attitude and the tone of author-narrator. The action of the novel takes place within the changing social conditions of the time that lead to conflict and contrast between the old traditional forms and the changing new ways. In the novel, this conflict is expressed in the contrast between specifically Allington and London. Allington represents the traditional older way of life. London is the representative of all brought about by the changes occurring mostly due to the industrial revolution and its consequences. The dominant feeling in

the novel is sorrow and disappointment. Because none of the characters has a happy ending, except a few. However, humour is used for mostly criticizing the society and to soften the harsh situations. Humour in *The Small House at Allington* can be provided in many ways and some of the features are similar to the previous novels, *Cranford* and *Miss Marjoribanks*. First of all use of language which is ironic has an important role in providing humour. Then some daily, trivial problems are exaggerated either by the characters or by the society. Because the novel takes place in a small town called Allington the novel can be regarded as a provincial novel. It is the reason why trivial problems are exaggerated because the inhabitants do not have many things to do. Thirdly, traditions of Allington society are criticized through humour. These people strongly and blindly hold their traditions that causes humorous situations. Also, humour sometimes can be based on only characters and their behaviours. In the following parts of this thesis, they will be examined.

As stated above, *The Small House at Allington* is a provincial novel. because it portrays life in a provincial society namely Allington. Like *Cranford* and *Miss Marjoribanks*, an imaginary place far from the centre with its inhabitants is the setting of the novel. The events revolve around the small house and the great house at Allington. In many ways country namely, Allington is different from a city which has become industrialized. Dinah Birch mentions the provinciality of the novel in the Introduction of *The Small House at Allington* and says the novel is “Honouring the quiet rhythms of pastoral life rather than the brittle excitements of the city.” She means the novel praises the peaceful way of life in provincial towns. Also, in the novel, there is a parallelism between the people who represent the country and the people who represent the city. Trollope puts his country characters in the city or vice versa. These people's way of living and the perspectives of life are totally different from each other. As the main heroine, Lily Dale represents the country with John Eames. While, Aldophus Crosbie and Alexandrina de Courcy represent the city. In the beginning, the environment of the Great House is described as such:

Round the house, there were trim gardens, not very large, but worthy of much note in that they were so trim,- gardens with broad gravel paths, with one walk running front of the house so broad as to be fitly called a terrace. (...)The pastures round the house were but pretty fields, in which timber was abundant. There was no deer-park at Allington; and though the Allington woods were very well known, they formed no portion of the whole of which the house was a part. They lay away, out of sight, a full mile from the back of the house; but not on that account of less avail for the fitting preservation of foxes. (*The Small House at Allington*, 9).

As it can be seen the scene is very pleasant and green, unlike an industrial city. So, this is one of the reasons that makes Allington is a provincial place. Moreover; in terms of provinciality, the occupations which are carried out by the inhabitants of the county can be seen as a signal. For example; farming is the main occupation of the Dales. It is said by the narrator that “ The Dales of Allington had always been gardeners, and their garden was perhaps more noted in the country than any other of their properties.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 9). Moreover, the other members of the society are the baker, apothecary, vicar, etc. They are mentioned as such:

Here, as this cross rises the hill, are the best houses in the village. The baker lives here, and that respectable woman, Mrs Frummage, who sells ribbons, and toys, and soap, and straw bonnets, with many other things too long to mention. Here, too, lives an apothecary, whom the veneration of this and neighbouring parishes has raised to the dignity of a doctor. And here also, in the smallest but prettiest cottage that can be imagined, lives Mrs Hearn, the widow of a former vicar. (*The Small House at Allington*, 11)

As it can easily be seen the jobs inhabitants have are those that can be seen in a provincial town and these people are not factory owners or lawyers like the people who live in an industrial city.

While the narrator is introducing the Dale family and the present Squire Dale, he underlines that they were attached to their values and principles although, mourning for the lost values of the old traditions. Some of these may be rather old-fashioned at the time of the story. In the beginning chapter of the novel the description of the Great house and its around shows the alteration of the ideas in time:

To be near the village, so as in some way to afford comfort, protection, and patronage, and perhaps also with some view to the pleasantness of neighbourhood for its own inmates, seemed to be the object of a gentleman when building his house in the old days. A solitude in the centre of a wide park is now the only site that can be recognized as eligible. No cottage must be seen, unless the cottage orné of the gardener. The village, if it cannot be abolished, must be got out of sight. The sound of the church bells is not desirable, and the road on which the profane vulgar travel by their own right must be at a distance. When some old Dale of Allington built his house, he thought differently. (*Cranford*, 9)

The Squire Dale belongs to “old Dale of Allington” tradition. The most obvious example of this conflict is Squire Dale. When Lily is abandoned by Crosbie, Squire Dale's reactions show his shock by the new world's values. Initially the chapter's name “On my honour, I do not understand it” is the sentence uttered by the Squire. This shows that Squire does not belong to this new and modern world that he does not understand. He says:

Excuse him! How could any one excuse him? Words could not be found to excuse him. And then he sat silent for some half mile. On my honour, Bernard, I can hardly yet bring myself to believe it. It is so new to me. It makes me feel that the world is changed and that it is no longer worth a man's while to live in it. (*The Small House at Allington*, 245).

The Squire openly confesses that he does not know how to behave in this new world. As a man whose mind was shaped by the old world's values, he cannot grasp the behaviour of Crosbie. In addition to these, the author's words can be regarded as proof that he takes side with Lily and does not approve the behaviours of Crosbie, when he makes the Squire imply that the world changed for the worse.

In the novel, the country and the city are almost always compared through the representations of Allington and London. Allington can be represented by Lily Dale and John Eames and London can be represented by Aldophus Crosbie and Alexandrina de Courcy. Through the novel, Eames and Crosbie are usually compared with each other. First of all, Crosbie is ‘Apollo’ of this story. However, Eames is just a “hobbledoy”. “When I compare the hobbledehoy of one or two and

twenty to some finished Apollo of the same age, I regard the former as unripe fruit, and the latter as fruit that is ripe.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 31) says the narrator. From this point of view, Crosbie is over Eames. So the city is over the country. It can be said that Crosbie has an excessive self-confidence. On the contrary, Eames is not such a strong character that he could not tell his love for Lily for a long time. At that point, Eames is falling like agricultural towns and Crosbie is like rising industrial cities.

The idea of love and relationship alters according to the place where a character lives. Whether it is rural or urban the notion of moral alters too. For example; the idea of marriage shows some differences from a rural person like Lily to an urban person like Alexandrina. Lily loves Crosbie with her whole heart and she does not give up even Crosbie deceives her and marries Alexandrina. Love, itself, is important to Lily the rest does not matter that much. Lily's love can be explained as such “ She had seen girls who were half ashamed of their love, but she would never be ashamed of hers or of him. She had given herself to him, and now all the world might know it if all the world cared for such knowledge. Why should she be ashamed of that which, to her thinking, was so great an honour to her?” (*The Small House at Allington*, 79). As it can be seen from the quotation Lily is proud of her love and in this love, there is no self-interest and nothing material. On the other hand, Alexandrina's idea of love or marriage is totally different. She marries Crosbie but she is not in love with him, contrary to Lily. However, she has her own reasons. “She was not possessed of strong affections, nor of the depth of character, nor of high purpose, but she was no fool, nor was she devoid of principle. (...) But she had at last taught herself to believe that she had more to gain by becoming the wife of such a man as Crosbie than by remaining as an unmarried daughter of her father's house.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 238). As it can be seen from the quotation she forces herself to become a wife. It seems that a suitable candidate in terms of rank and economic situation is enough for her. Moreover, it can be concluded that she is afraid of remaining at home and is jealous of her sister who is already married. That's why she wants to get married so much. As it is seen, Lily's pure, disinterested love and Alexandrina's reasons for love are compared here. And the effect of the places they grew up and lived can be mentioned here, too. In Alexandrina's character

effects of urbanization and industrialization can be understood. An urbanized world is dominated by trade and money. Alexandrina's love is like trade and exchange. She exchanges her social position, respectability and wealth for overcoming her fear of remaining an unmarried young woman. However; Lily is innocent as Allington has not been touched by industrialization yet. That's why she does not have any plans such as having much more money and marrying a man who has a high position. At this moment, the two men Crosbie and Eames take attention too. Like Lily and Alexandrina, Eames and Crosbies are different and this arises from their environments. Aldophus Crosbie is from London and he works there. So, he represents urbanization and industrialization. And Eames is from Allington. He stands for rural, non-developed country. Their point of view for marriage is also different. Crosbie has feelings for Lily, for sure. But he is more interested in money than Lily. When he wants to marry Lily, he hopes that Lily's uncle will give some amount of money to his niece. That's why there were not any problems until Mr Dale refuses giving money. Crosbie says to Bernard " I say, Dale- your uncle has never said a word to me yet as to Lily's fortune." Bernard answers " As to Lily's fortune! The question is whether Lily has got a fortune." Crosbie's reply shows his character and the reason why he is interested in Lily. " He can hardly expect that I am to take her without something. Your uncle is a man of the world and knows-" (*The Small House at Allington*, 60). As it can be seen Crosbie is reluctant to marry Lily if her uncle will not give her some sum of money. Then, when he meets Alexandrina, daughter of a Lord, he does not want to miss this chance. On the other hand, Eames is faithful to Lily from the beginning. But he does not have enough income to propose to her. When he improves his economic situation, he proposed to Lily but is refused. Then, he repeats his proposal many times and each trial concludes as a failure. To sum up, the relations between Lily, Crosbie, Eames and Alexandrina are also shaped by their environment. However; it would not be true to say only the environment has effects on them, other factors are also important, like family.

On the other hand, people's manners towards situations supply humour in provincial novels. This behaviour can be seen in the city like London and the people who live and represent it in the novel. The perception of love and marriage also depend on where a character lives and his/her society. The relationship between Mr Cradell and

Mrs Lupex can also give an idea about the perception of love and marriage that is under influence of the environment. Mrs Lupex is a married woman but she has an affair with Mr Cradell. According to Cradell the affair between him and Mrs Lupex is “nonsense”. It means there is nothing serious between them. He says “ Mrs Lupex was a woman of talent, whom no one seemed to understand, and, therefore, he had taken some pleasure in studying her character. It was merely a study of character, and nothing more.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 45). As it can be seen the affair between a married woman and a young man is given in the shape of a trivial thing. However; because of this relationship, the boarding house loses its clients. On the other hand, Mrs.Lupex has a husband. When he feels this relationship, he does not feel easy at the boarding house. Even it is said he was about to commit suicide when Mrs Lupex prevented him. Still, Cradell's point of view does not change. Mr Eames warns him that she is a man's wife. And when Eames says he would give his heart for a woman whom he loves but she should not be a man's wife. Cradell's answer is really interesting that he says “ That's a matter of taste.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 262). It seems that he is proud of this “dangerous” affair all of which happen in the city, not in the county. Also, Cradell is a man in the city. Because in the country it can be said that people have more sincere and closer relationships that this small circle does not give any opportunity to have an affair with a married woman.

Lily and Alexandrina are compared in the novel in terms of their environment, as well. In the previous paragraphs, Lily and Alexandrina were compared for their notion of love and marriage but it should be mentioned that industrialisation had started to make its impact on the country. Everything is under the influence of it, ladies too. In the beginning, when Lily gets engaged to Crosbie, it is said that Lily must become a city lady (*The Small House At Allington*, 166). It can be understood that Lily is a provincial lady now but she will be a city lady because Crosbie and she will live in London due to Crosbie's work. At this scene, Mrs Dale thinks about Bell too. She says “ Bell would find for herself some country home.” (*The Small House At Allington*, 166). Bell will be happy at the country, that is obvious. When the end of the novel is taken into consideration, Bell becomes happy in the country. However, Lily is deceived and left by a city man. From this perspective, the old way

of country life and sincere feelings are praised. Moreover, Crosbie and his manners are never honoured by the narrator.

On the other hand, Lily represents the old way of life and the countryside but at the end of the novel she stays alone, she disappoints in many ways and fails. All these results show that the old is dying and people should adopt the new. Provincial novels are related to humour in the novel. Because provincial mostly represents by the old in the age of the new. This paradoxical situation creates humour that can be seen in the narration and causes irony which is one of the common features, which provides humour, of the three books in this thesis. Irony can be reflected in the language. And it can be seen that language is used as a tool and medium. As an example of ironic language the dialogue between Lily and Crosbie before a party can be given. Bell and Lily are discussing expedient part of the house for dancing. “ You see we’ve only got four young gentlemen and one ungrown said Lily and they will look so stupid standing up all properly in a room, as though we had a regular party.”(*The Small House at Allington*, 70) And Crosbie’s answer is humorous he says” Thank you for the compliment” (*The Small House at Allington*,70). His answer is so shrewd that it makes the reader laugh. This scene also breaks prejudices about Crosbie in Lily after her first impression. Also, it softens the tense atmosphere in the scene which is one of the aims of using humour in the novel.

Lily, on the other hand, represents the resistance against change and development. Throughout the novel, Lily is depicted as determined stubbornly to believe and not to give up her love for Crosbie. At this point, Trollope underlines that keeping up with the changes that are required is vital, otherwise the result may be unpleasant. According to Dinah Birch, “ Trollope reflects on what it means for a character, or a community, to accommodate change. Some are unwilling or unable to shift their ground, while others seem only too ready to transfer allegiances.” (“Introduction”). Lily is the one who is unwilling and resisting to change. Also, Johnny Eames can be counted in the list. Moreover, as Birch says, the one who is too ready to change is Crosbie. He changes his way of devotion from Lily to Alexandrina too quickly. But the problem is that he and Alexandrina are not ready for this change like an industrial city which is trying to adopt the novelties required by a radical change. So, the

destiny of these four characters are determined by their ability to adapt to change and keep up with the requirements of change. In the end, four of them are led to unhappiness and loneliness.

Trivial problems are usually exaggerated in the novel and that brings humour as it was mentioned before. The reason for this is that the town is so small that inhabitants are not busy with anything. The problem of snoring can be given as an example of this. Lord de Guest calls for Dr Crofts to solve his problem. It is obvious that snoring is a shame for Lord de Guest and Lady Julia usually complains about it. “ But doctor- I didn't snore, did I?” asks Lord de Guest and Dr Crofts replies “ Only occasionally.” After that the Lord accepts that he is snoring but this time he focuses on the frequency of his snoring. When he gets the positive answer he is disappointed. However; the funniest part of this conversation is that Earl thinks he can hear his around while sleeping. At this point, neither Eames nor Dr Crofts can react his words. Because he is the authority there and even his words are funny and nonsense, nobody can say this to Lord de Guest.

One of the most humorous scenes is Johnny Eames's bull scene. Earl's one of the meek bulls goes mad, and Johnny tries to tame it. In the beginning, Earl is afraid of the beast “ The bull was making short runs at his owner, as though determined in each run to have a toss at his lordship; and at each run the earl would retreat quickly for a few paces, but he retreated always facing his enemy, and as the animal got near to him, would make digs at his face with the long spud which he carried in his hand.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 189). As it is seen the bull is coming towards the Lord and the situation is getting more dangerous for him. However, it is ironic and humorous that when Eames asks him if the bull is always mad. His answer is as such “ The gentlest creature alive; he's a lamb generally,- just like a lamb. Perhaps he saw my red pocket-handkerchief.” (*The Small House at Allington*,192). Lord does not accept that a bull can be furious and dangerous. He blames his handkerchief which is humorous. Moreover; in this scene, the language of the narrator is also ironic that makes humorous of this scene. For example; when Eames comes to help earl, the bull is given speeches by the narrator “ he stood for a while, disgusted by the injustice of humanity.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 189). This can be regarded as

a criticism of general humanity, but the bull only thinks now he has two enemies instead of one. So, through one unimportant event gives a very important message. On the other hand, it should not be neglected that *The Small House at Allington* is a provincial novel that's why the inhabitants of the province do not have much space to move or they do not have many things to do. As a result of this, they exaggerate their little problems and perceive them seriously. So, humour is directly linked with the setting here. In the novel, when the setting is London it is clear that relations are not pure or deserved. It is not important whether it is a romantic affair or a formal relation at work. Occupations have important roles to show a place is provincial. Because people earn their living in different ways in town and in the country. Also, Johnny Eames goes to town to earn more money. His adventures at the Board show office rituals and ethics in London. Eames's relation with his boss is humorous. Sir Raffle Baffle is a strange man who has a very high voice. That's why his secretary does not want to continue his work anymore. Thanks to Lord de Guest Eames gets this position. Because, Lord de Guest is a friend of him, he says. Sir Raffle is interested in Lord de Guest more than Eames. "I believe Lord de Guest is a friend of yours; isn't he?" (*The Small House at Allington*, 419). Then Sir tells his duties to Eames. One of his duties is interesting and humorous. When he is asked he will bring Sir Raffle Baffle's shoes. This sounds silly because Sir is an adult that he can wear his own shoes and should not ask his own private secretary. That's why Eames questions this situation and says "A man is not asked to bring another man his shoes." (*The Small House at Allington*, 421). Later, in a letter, it is understood that Sir Raffle and Lord de Guest know each other. However; Sir Ruffle is not favoured by Lord de Guest. On the other hand, another man who works in London finds consolation in his office. Mr Crosbie obviously is not happy with his wife. That's why he focuses on his works. Later he will leave his wife. As a result, in these scenes humour comes from using ironic language and ironic scenes and the setting is emphasized and the relation between setting and humour is underlined that the humour is not the only stem from the language but also it is linked with the place which is a province and the reflections of the limited space can be shown as exaggerating trivial things like demanding his shoes by an adult.

Humour in the narration can be sensed in many scenes. The scene which has the verbal battle between Mrs Lupex and Amelia should be given as an example to the humour provided by the language that is used for showing Amelia Roper's character. Also, the narrator tells the scene as if it was a real battle. This increases the humorous effect of the scene. First of all the combatants are introduced by the narrator. "Mrs. Lupex had doubtless on her side more matured power, a habit of fighting which had given her infinite skill, courage which deadened her to the feeling of all wounds while the heat of the battle should last, and recklessness which made her almost indifferent whether she sank or swam." (*The Small House at Allington*, 98). As it is seen Mrs Lupex is a very determined woman. But Amelia Roper is not a weak character against her. She is described as such: "But then Amelia carried the greater guns, and was able to pour in heavier metal than her enemy could use; and she, too, swam in her own waters." (*The Small House at Allington*, 98). The use of language should be taken attention here. Because a simple quarrel between the two women is exaggerated by using language. That increases the feeling of humour.

Humour is used to criticise society in the novel. Throughout the novel, in different ways, British society of the period is criticised. Sometimes aristocrats of the society are criticised for their pretences, sometimes for their nonsense and funny traditions, sometimes for their behaviours and reaction to the situations. According to Dinah Birch, "The novel might be seen to endorse the rise of the middle classes, scornful of both aristocratic pretension and the vulgarities of those who were struggling for respectability on precarious incomes." ("Introduction XI", *The Small House at Allington*). In Birch's words being scornful for aristocratic pretensions should be underlined. Because this scornful language creates humour while criticising aristocratic pretensions. First of all, the traditions in the society can sometimes be funny. For example; in Burton Crescent, there is a discussion among Mrs Lupex, Miss Spruce, Amelia and Cradell about whether a married woman wears a cap or not. Again such an unimportant issue is magnified by the inhabitants of the boarding house. In this scene Mr Cradell tells about married women which are not mentioned before, then Mrs Lupex takes attention by saying "An unmarried man like Mr Cradell has no business to know whether a married lady wears a cap or her own hair-has he, Mr Eames?" and then Mr Cradell replies "We all know where your

attention is riveted. If you were to wear a cap, my dear, somebody would see the difference very soon- wouldn't they, Miss Spruce?" (*The Small House At Allington*, 43). It is understood that wearing cap by married women is a tradition and a symbol used for showing marital status. The immoral relations are meant here by seeing the difference when a married woman wears a cap. Because she will lose the attention of single men. Moreover; in the society of Allington people show some pretences to be accepted by society. For example; Mrs Dale and her daughters are not wealthy or aristocrat but she behaves like them. The following quotation shows how she deals with the situation.

When a family of three persons has to live upon an income of three hundred a year, and, nevertheless, makes some pretence of going into society, it has to be very mindful of small details, even though that family may consist only of ladies. Of this Mrs, Dale was well aware, and as it pleased her that her daughters should be nice and fresh, and pretty in their attire, many a long hour was given up to that care. (*The Small House at Allington*, 25).

So, Mrs Dale gives all her care to her daughters' appearance because she wants that daughters should be accepted by the society.

In *The Small House at Allington* the social mobility is criticised in a humorous way. The social climber of the book is Aldophus Crosbie. He can be observed at his office. As it was mentioned before he left Lily to get married Alexandrina de Courcy, a girl from an aristocrat family, then he starts working in his office in Whitehall. However; the office and the clerks are not like he imagines. Moreover; in this scene the public life in London is seen in detailed. When Crosbie sets in his office other clerks come to congratulate him. Mr. Butterwell whom Crosbie is in the shoes, pays a visit but the portrait of him is not like Crosbie expected. Mr. Butterwell is depicted as "He knew that he was not very clever, but he knew also how to use those who were clever. He seldom made any mistake, and was ver scrupulous not to tread on men's corns." (*The Small House at Allington*, 250). He is not a qualified person for his position but he is promoted like Crosbie. The quoted words about Mr. Butterwell above should be highlighted too. "He knew that he had not given the world much; yet, he had received largely, and no one had begrudged it to him." (*The Small House at Allington*, 250). It means he does not work much to deserve his position. This can be regarded as criticism for the people and the system in London. Moreover; Trollope

gives the reader a chance to compare Mr. Butterwell and Mr. Optimist who are totally different characters. He is depicted as “ Mr. Optimist was, in truth, an industrious little gentleman, very well connected, who had served the public all his life, and who was at any rate, honest in his dealings. Nor was he a bully, such as his predecessors. It might, however, be a question whether he carried guns enough for the command in which he was now to be employed.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 253). As it is understood that Mr. Optimist works better and qualified better for any position in The Board when he is compared to Mr. Butterwell. But Mr. Butterwell is the one who is promoted. This scene shows the injustice for appointing a person for a position. And it can be regarded as pure criticism for the age.

One of the “trivial” problems in the novel is that men cannot have duels. When Crosbie disappoints Lily and causes the Dales and their friends to hate him. All of these men want to have a duel with him. However; in this era having a duel is not popular, unfortunately. Bernard, as Lily’s cousin is one of these men. As a cousin of Lily, he has naturally animosity against Crosbie. He says: “ He would have had no objection to fighting a duel with Crosbie, had duels in these days been possible. But he believed them to be no longer possible, - at any rate without ridicule.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 278). When the circumstance is taken into consideration, Lily is humiliated by Crosbie and her male cousin worries about being ridiculous if he has a duel with Crosbie. At this point, heroic ideals are ridiculed because the tradition of having duels belonged to knights. Also, it should not be forgotten that if the duel between Bernard and Crosbie came into reality, the story would turn into a tragedy which is not the aim of the author. In terms of taking revenge of Lily's abandonment, Eames takes action and punches Crosbie in the railway station. But it does not mean much. Because At this Victorian Age impracticability of the requirements of these ideals can be seen obviously.

In society, people make fun of others' difficult situations. For example; When Crosbie is beaten by Eames and Eames leaves him a black eye. In every chance, Lady Julia makes fun of Crosbie's black eye. She wishes that Eames sent Crosbie to Lady Alexandrina De Courcy with two black eyes (*The Small House at Allington*, 328). It is obvious that she becomes happy with it. Because of the abandonment of

Lily. Then, The British society is criticised with that incident. Because it is said that public sympathy goes with Crosbie due to the fact that Eames attacked him first. The narrator says:

As a matter, of course, the first burst of public sympathy went with Crosbie. He had been assaulted, and the assault had come from Eames. In the British bosom there is so firm a love of well-constituted order, that these fact alone were sufficient to bring twenty knights to the assistance of three policemen and the six porters; so that for Eames even had he desired it, there was no possible chance of escape. (*The Small House At Allington*, 305).

The use of “love of constituted- order” is meaningful. In this scene, the reader knows what kind of a man Crosbie is. However, the public and the policemen do not know this. This dramatic irony also brings humour to this scene. Moreover; the public's strict rules and prejudices are criticised with this scene.

Another criticism for British society comes about the broken promises. As it was mentioned before Crosbie breaks his engagement with Lily. This is not a manly manner and strongly criticised by the people of Allington or even some people of London. When Crosbie goes to the Courcy Castle for the first time, he plans to break his engagement with Lily. He makes up excuses and goes further and finds a way to justify his action. He will laugh off as the other men do. He questions himself “But might he not who were engaged did so usually, and why should not he?” (*The Small House At Allington*, 152). As the quotation shows men “usually” break their engagements and promises and nobody is surprised by such behaviour any more. And the irony in the tone of narration can be felt again.

In spite of all broken promises, betrayals and rejections, it should be highlighted that Trollope leaves some hope by wedding cheerfully Bell and Dr Crofts. Even Lily rejects to be a tragic heroine and becomes happy and bright at the wedding of Bell and Dr Crofts. “She resolved that she would be happy, and I here declare that she not only seemed to carry out her resolution but that she did carry it out in very truth.” (*The Small House at Allington*, 545). According to Dinah Birch in the Introduction, “Trollope provides his readers with a pragmatic but broadly hopeful account of the human resilience that makes the best of disappointment and loss.”(xxvii). She means Trollope covers up everything and saves the novel from its bleak tone.

To sum up, throughout the novel the existence of humour can be felt like a persona. Anthony Trollope uses humour to soften the often painful consequences of the industrial revolution. He underlines corruption in society, especially moral corruption that can be observed mostly in urban characters. The narrator's disapproval of those characters is made evident by means of his ironic tone and mocking treatment of their behavior. This can be regarded as a punishment or divine justice for them. Crosbie with his black eye is punished because he hurt Lily. Moreover; he is not awarded a happy marriage or a happy end. Like Crosbie, another urban character, Alexandrina de Courcy is punished with an unhappy marriage because although, she is informed about Crosbie's engagement she chooses to ignore it. The author criticises urbanisation and the resulting loss of some important values. However, he does not completely praise or idealize rural life. Because Lily as a rural character is not awarded in the end. It cannot be said that she becomes happy at the end of the novel. This is another way of punishment because Lily is a stable character. She faces obstacles and negative things but still, she does not change and does not keep up with the novelties that are required by the Age. That's why she cannot reach a conventional happy end. Johnny Eames has similarity with Lily. He does not give up his feelings towards Lily although he is turned down. In the end, it is difficult to say that he becomes happy and satisfied. For that reason, the feeling of sorrow dominates the novel. However, by using humorous scenes Trollope underlines that keeping up with the new requirements of the Age is a must but the human values which are represented by rural characters should be preserved and cherished.

4. CONCLUSION

Victorian Era can be examined in three phases: Early Victorian, Mid-Victorian and Late Victorian. The early Victorian period can be defined as "Times of Troubles" because of the problems brought by industrialisation such as workers riots. As the popular genre of the age novels reflected and participated in the debates concerning social and cultural issues their age. So, industrial novel or the condition-of-England novels were popular in that era. Then, Provincial novels start to dominate in the Mid-Victorian Era. Because, the Mid-Victorian era was more peaceful than the Early Victorian Era. Also, people began to keep up with the requirements of the age, and, authors directed their attention to the provinces. Industrialisation and urbanisation helped them to reach these places easily. Hence, in this thesis, characteristic aspects of provincial novels are examined in three representative novels by prominent authors as such: *Cranford* by Elizabeth Gaskell, *Miss Marjoribanks* by Margaret Oliphant and *The Small House at Allington* by Anthony Trollope.

Provincial novels are one of the popular sub-genres of the age and they are unique in terms of their setting, characters and events. First of all, the setting is a town which is not far from the city centre but it is not an industrialised town, as well. The three novels have in common about being a provincial novel and a province is chosen as the setting. In *Cranford*, the book takes its name from the province. In *Miss Marjoribanks* the name of the province is Carlingford. Likewise, in *The Small House at Allington*, Barsetshire is the province. At this point, *The Small House at Allington* shows a difference because it belongs to a series of books as the fifth book of the six books. *Cranford* and *Miss Marjoribanks* do not belong to any series of books. The pastoral depiction of the town leads us to the conclusion that the settings of the three books are provincial. Moreover; the society in provincial novels are usually small ones that conclude a small number of inhabitants. *The Small House at Allington* draws parallelism with *Miss Marjoribanks* here. Because they have the homogeneous type of society in terms of sexes. Otherwise, in *Cranford* female domination can easily be seen. In these novels, the consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation can be observed. The mostly old way of life and values started to vanish and people hesitate to get used to these changes. That's why the clash between the old and the

new is portrayed. For example; in *Cranford*, the old maids are trying to deal with the problems brought by urbanisation like Miss Matty. She realizes that she is old-fashioned for the new society that she cannot satisfy the needs anymore. And the ladies struggle to solve the problems sometimes causes humour throughout the novel. For example; Miss Jenknys does not change anything at her house but when the narrator pays a visit she realises that a new carpet is bought. However; she covers the carpet to protect it. This is one of the most humorous scenes and the narrator mocks with the old world's traditions. Similarly, in *Miss Marjoribanks* the new way of life is symbolized by Lucilla Marjoribanks. She is the one who can keep up with novelties. That's why she starts to rule this society and also she takes the place of her father who symbolizes the old way of life at home. For example; when Lucilla comes back from her school the first thing she touches is the decoration of the house. Then she rearranges evening parties. As it is seen she changes traditions of Carlingford society. The clash between old and the new brings humour. In *The Small House at Allington*, old traditions are seen and represented by the town named Allington. The Squire of Allington can be given as an example of a character who belongs to the old way of life and thinking. He is fairly old and cannot understand new morals of this new world. However, in these three novels, it is not possible to see praises for the new order of the life by the narrator. For example, In *Cranford*, old maids find themselves in ridiculous situations but these people are poor and in need and they try to conceal it. So, we cannot laugh at them. Instead, pity and sympathy are shown them. The author mainly criticises the people who are unable to change. Resisting brings destruction like in *Cranford*. It should not be forgotten that there is few male populations in Cranford and in that industrialised world, it is impossible to have progress without manpower. Similarly, In *The Small House At Allington* Lily is criticised in term of resisting to change. She is stubborn to love Crosbie who deceives her. She imprisons herself in a lonely life. The author obviously takes part with the old and lost values by creating corrupted characters like Crosbie who lives in the "modern" world. In short, throughout all these novels in the beginning resistance against change and novelties is seen and that brings humorous scenes whose function is to soften the hard truths. The adaptation to the novelties slowly is observed. If there is no adoption, tragedy is the inevitable end for the characters.

One of the common features that these three novels have is the societies are so small that they are always busy with trivial “crises” of the society. In *Cranford* when Mr Gordon Brown moves to the town, a small scale crisis emerges between the women of Cranford. Because they are not familiar with the male population in the society or Miss Matty gets into a panic when she hears Major Jenkyns will pay a visit. The reason for this is Cranford society is so closed and isolated that first a visitor from outside is seen as a threat. Second, this stranger is a man. These small crises are seen in *Miss Marjoribanks* that trivial problems are exaggerated by the members of the society. For example; Lucilla's nonsense insistence on the name of the evening gatherings. Dr Marjoribanks, as a representative of "the old calls them "parties" but Lucilla changes the name as “evenings” and humorously she insists on this name. She creates a crisis from an unimportant problem. In the last novel *The Small House at Allington*, the problem of snoring is a trivial problem that is magnified by Lord de Guest and he alerts the doctors in the town. Of course, these scenes create humour in all the novels that are examined in this thesis. It reaches a conclusion that humour is a perfect medium for facing and coming to terms with the problems of the age.

In the novels, technique of narration has an important function because when the three novels are compared it can be noticed that *Cranford* is different from *Miss Marjoribanks* and *The Small House at Allington*. The narrator in *Cranford*, whose name is Mary Smith, has a retrospective point of view. It means Smith tells the story by moving backwards. All the events are over and she tells them nostalgically. As a result of this, the narrator in *Cranford* uses a tone of irony and it is easy to find references for the future by the narrator.

In the novels reconciliation and harmony are underlined by the authors. At the beginning of the novels chaotic and hectic atmosphere dominate the novels. For example; in *Cranford* with the coming Captain Brown the women panic so much that they do not know how to behave. Moreover; they sign a petition against the railway network which is a symbol for industrialisation in Cranford. In the end, the inhabitants who stay in difficult situations like Miss Matty are saved and reconciliation is provided. In *Miss Marjoribanks* the chaos starts with the election in the town. The rivalry between Mr Cavendish and Mr Ashburton rises the heat in the

town. But in the end, Lucilla's nominee Mr Ashburton wins the election and peace arrives. In Lucilla's private life, she gets married to her cousin Tom who is a proper husband for her and chaos ends. In *The Small House At Allington*, Lily arrives at peace by not giving up living, instead she enjoys her sister's wedding.

Finally, it can be concluded that all three novels are typical Mid- Victorian novels, yet each of them is also unique in their treatment of important issues of the period. As such, they are significant works of literature and also social history. Another difference is the number of characters. The Victorian novel is famous for having crowded character casts. The most crowded cast in here is in *The Small House at Allington*'s. There are many people from aristocrats and upper-middle classes, and two settings can be observed in detailed, Allington and London. The other two novels do not give such detailed descriptions of an industrialised city. In *Miss Marjoribanks* the cast is less crowded. Also, the industrial cities are only mentioned like *Cranford*. Moreover; Cranford is different with its mostly female dominated cast.

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