

While Dorothea is staying at Freshitt, I can never see her. Sir James hates my politics, because he hates all change. Mr Brooke wants to be a reformer, but he will never succeed in Middlemarch. He does not look after his estate and people here do not respect him.'

Will was right about the people of Middlemarch. Mr Brooke wished to serve his country by standing for Parliament. He had bought the *Pioneer* newspaper to express his ideas on reforming English politics. But, before he was accepted as a candidate, Mr Brooke had to speak to the people of Middlemarch. In his speech, he had to convince the townspeople that he was the best man to represent them.

The time for Mr Brooke's speech had come. He walked out onto the balcony of the White Hart Inn. He smiled and looked down at all the people who had crowded into the market-place to hear him.

'Gentlemen! Electors<sup>84</sup> of Middlemarch!' Mr Brooke began. 'I am very happy to be here, proud and happy.'

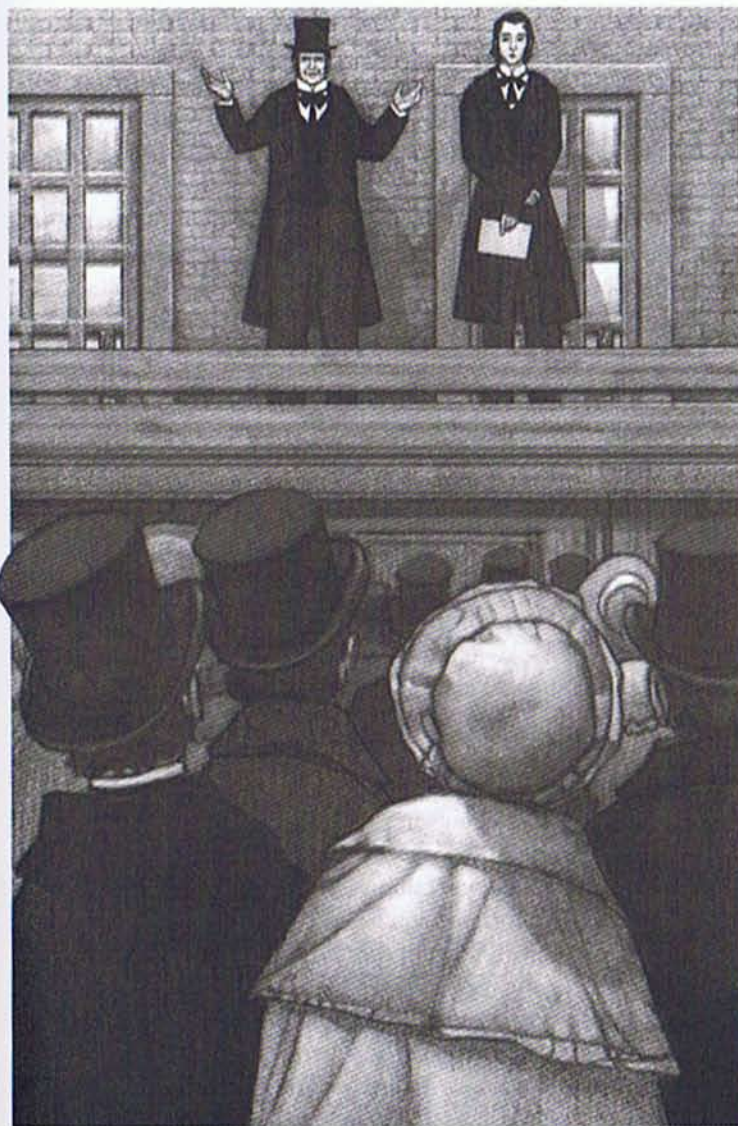
The crowd was silent. Will had written down the main points of Mr Brooke's speech for him, but he was not sure what Mr Brooke would say.

'You know me. I am your neighbour!' Mr Brooke went on. 'I have always tried to help you – you, the good people of Middlemarch. But the world is a big place. The traders and manufacturers of Middlemarch send their goods to many different countries. That is right. Now Middlemarch must follow new ideas – new ideas you know, from other countries. I must play my part and so must you!'

'Must?' someone shouted. 'In Middlemarch we do what's best for ourselves – not for other countries!'

'Or for rich landlords like you!' someone else called out.

Some of the crowd laughed and cheered. Another voice shouted,



*He smiled and looked down at all the people who had crowded into the market-place to hear him.*