

## How to use housing provident fund

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**Chapter 17 Phineas Finn returns to London**It was a scene of vast bleakness and desolation, stern, forbidding, fascinating. We gazed down upon a place of fire and earthquake. The tie-ribs of earth lay bare before us. It was a workshop of nature still cluttered with the raw beginnings of world-making. Here and there great dikes of primordial rock had thrust themselves up from the bowels of earth, straight through the molten surface-ferment that had evidently cooled only the other day. It was all unreal and unbelievable. Looking upward, far above us (in reality beneath us) floated the cloud-battle of Ukiukiu and Naulu. And higher up the slope of the seeming abyss, above the cloud-battle, in the air and sky, hung the islands of Lanai and Molokai. Across the crater, to the south-east, still apparently looking upward, we saw ascending, first, the turquoise sea, then the white surf-line of the shore of Hawaii; above that the belt of trade-clouds, and next, eighty miles away, rearing their stupendous hulks out of the azure sky, tipped with snow, wreathed with cloud, trembling like a mirage, the peaks of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa hung poised on the wall of heaven. "I heard him at the Albert Hall last week," said Flossie. "He's quite wonderful." "Not lately." The silver clock upon her desk struck six. It had been a gift from her father when she was at Girton. It never obtruded. Its voice was a faint musical chime that she need not hear unless she cared to listen. She turned and looked at it. It seemed to be a little face looking

back at her out of its two round, blinkless eyes. For the first time during all the years that it had watched beside her, she heard its quick, impatient tick. She stayed over the week-end; and on the Saturday, at her suggestion, they took a long excursion into the country. It was the first time she had ever asked him to take her out. He came down to breakfast in a new suit, and was quite excited. In the car his hand had sought hers shyly, and, feeling her responsive pressure, he had continued to hold it; and they had sat for a long time in silence. She decided not to tell him about Phillips, just yet. He knew of him only from the Tory newspapers and would form a wrong idea. She would bring them together and leave Phillips to make his own way. He would like Phillips when he knew him, she felt sure. He, too, was a people's man. The torch passed down to him from his old Ironside ancestors, it still glowed. More than once she had seen it leap to flame. In congenial atmosphere, it would burn clear and steadfast. It occurred to her what a delightful solution of her problem, if later on her father could be persuaded to leave Arthur in charge of the works, and come to live with her in London. There was a fine block of flats near Chelsea Church with long views up and down the river. How happy they could be there; the drawing-room in the Adams style with wine-coloured curtains! He was a father any young woman could be proud to take about. Unconsciously she gave his hand an impulsive squeeze. They lunched at an old inn upon the moors; and the landlady, judging from his shy, attentive ways, had begun by addressing her as

**Madame.**