

Being young, attractive, a good "mixer," not in the least shy, he was given a handsome "entertaining" allowance and told to bring in business. So he foregathered with out-of-town magnates, made the city a pleasant, familiar place to them, and brought much of their money into the firm's office. When Barbara was kind he despised his anomalous position and strove to free himself from it; but even the best man has to live.

And during those intervals when he thought he could do without her, Wilmot sank deeper and deeper into methods of self-advancement which, if not actually base and culpable, at least smirched the finer qualities of his nature, and hardened his heart.

If the father's heritage, drink and women, were spared him, or at least that part of him which was really noble, a love of cleanness, clear-mindedness, and purity, died hard. But gambling was second nature to him. He could not enjoy a game unless he had something on it; and all book-makers and proprietors of gambling-houses were friends of his and called him by his first name. Sometimes through a series of lucky turns he rose to heights of picturesque affluence; more often he was stone-broke; but so much money passed through his hands in the course of a year that it was always possible for him to borrow and live well enough on credit. Money became his passion, not for its own sake, not for the sake of what it could buy, but because it was a game upon which the best wits of the world have been engaged