

conscience. For the soldier, it consists in defending his flag at the cost of his life; for the magistrate, in unswerving integrity; for the artist or man of letters, in employing his talents to the best advantage; for the merchant, in preserving his credit; for the son, in showing his gratitude to his parents. Honor! I can speak of it, sir, for I have kept my own. But I forbid you to mention the word in connection with a gambling debt. And as for the law, it considers them so sacred that it takes no cognizance of them."

"Father, would you advise me to—"

"I advise nothing. I simply say that I will not pay this debt."

"Then, what am I to do?"

"Make an arrangement with this creditor, as you have made with many others. You must ask for an extension of time, which will doubtless be granted you. You do not know, for you take no interest in family affairs, that Sabine was betrothed to-day to Benedict Fougerais. I do not think it right to sacrifice her share and that of Sulpice to your extravagance. I will not throw their fortune into the pit you dig for it. To-morrow you will take control of the factory, and will receive a salary of twelve thousand francs a year. By means of that sum you will pay this gaming debt."

"Father," said Xavier, rising, his face livid, his limbs failing under him, "you will not compel me to do this, to admit my poverty, to ask for a delay! Give me this forty thousand francs, and after that refuse what you will. Do not reduce me to shame and despair. What are forty thousand francs to you?"

"Such a sum represents the careful savings of several families," said the father. "Forty thousand francs! How many small tradesmen would it save from ruin,