

reproachfully, "al-
said M. Pomereul
hand, Sabine to the
ture father-in-law.

was cheerful, spite of
Pomereul himself gave
at once touching

Xavier's, and the
at delight in serving
s accustomed place,
His eyes were anx-
nowever, that dinner
was determined to
He placed a share
chair, and changed
s young master had
things. As time
sadder and sadder,
e picture of misery.
ng served, the chim-
rushed towards the
to the antechamber.

ceived him. Xavier
ad of entering the
his own apartment.
ned to the drawing-
r father's thoughts,
he went to the piano,
s gloomy thoughts.

Benedict turned the pages, not so much because she re-
quired this service, for Sabine played well without music,
but simply to be near her, and leave Sulpice and his
father to converse the more freely. They sat, in fact, at
the other end of the apartment.

"Father," said Sulpice, "you seem to take Xavier's
want of punctuality very much to heart."

"Yes," said M. Pomereul, "in the first place because it
is a want of respect. In the second, because it is one
step further in the course he has pursued for five years.
I will not deny that your brother is a constant source of
grief to me."

"He will do better, father," said Sulpice, "he is so
young."

"So young," said Pomereul, "and can you too offer
such an excuse for him? Why, his very youth condemns
him. At twenty-three he neglects every duty; he has no
other pleasures, but foolish extravagance and excess, he
lives his whole life in idle or vicious society. He de-
spises his home, and prefers his club or the green-room
of theatres. Why do you defend him, Sulpice, when
you should be the first to blame?"

"I do blame him," said Sulpice, "but I would not
that his faults should bring down on him merited but
perhaps excessive severity. Besides he is my brother,
I might almost say my son. I first taught him the
truths of faith. I too suffer and am unhappy on his
account, but I know that the lost sheep are often found,
and I trust that the prodigal son will return to the fire-
side of home."

"What have I left undone for that ungrateful boy?"
said Pomereul, scarcely heeding Sulpice's consoling
words. "I readily gratified his every wish. His apart-
ments are more luxurious, his equipages more sumptuous
than mine. He is fond of horses, and I gave him a stable