

for a short time until she had removed the traces of her tears.

Richard had joined the "Liberal Club," and as he threw his whole soul into anything which he deemed worthy of his attention, his wife soon had grave fears that it absorbed too much of his time. Hours which should have been devoted to business were spent in discussing the political issues of the day, and she felt they suffered serious loss, for there were left to his employees important transactions which should have had his undivided attention; and the course he had pursued had alienated some of his best customers. The Liberal Club of which he was a member was composed of the most ultra of the Radicals in that section of country—in fact a great many of its members had been participants in the Chartist agitation, and, a short time after Ashton joined, they invited Henry Vincent, the celebrated agitator, to deliver an address, he, while he remained in town, being the guest of Ashton. This gave great offence to many of his best customers—not only to those who were ultra-tories, but also to the whigs, and, as a consequence, many of them left him and gave their patronage to rival establishments.

This, however, was not the worst feature of the case; there was another and a stronger motive power to accelerate his already rapid descent. He, with many more of the prominent members of the "Liberal Club," was also among those who are called liberals in their religious views. This could not be tolerated for