

have married him on the respectable salary which he now earned, Cyril said loftily that he had no intention of venturing on matrimony until he had some better prospect than that of merely "grubbing along," as he elegantly expressed it.

Cyrus Rodney was very fond indeed of the old shop and of his work in the City Road. He was bound to it by many traditions of memory and association, and it had been rather a pang to him to behold the old house above it which, to his certain knowledge, had sheltered five generations of Rodneys, given up to the occupancy of strangers for storage purposes. These tenants had also wanted to lease the shop, but he had strenuously refused to shift his business to another locality. And, indeed, for him to have done so would have been quite a fatal step, for the old-fashioned customers who had been in the habit for years of buying certain articles at Rodney's would never have taken the trouble to follow him to these fresh quarters.

The customers were nearly all City men who, having proven the excellence of certain articles of attire to be had in the City Road shop and approving Cyrus Rodney's personal interest and old-fashioned courtesy, had continued to extend their patronage to him over a long period of years.

But these were dwindling in numbers, for the younger generation imagined that smartness even in underwear belonged exclusively to the West End.

At the end of each quarter, when Rodney made up his balance-sheet, his heart sank as he beheld the shrinkage of the credit side, and he found it increasingly difficult as time moved on to obtain the necessary money to carry on his household at Denmark Hill, though it was not conducted on extravagant lines.

Three of the children were now self-supporting, and the two girls paid a modest sum each week for their