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What he might have been had he chosen to tread the straight path of life we cannot tell, but certain it is that many of the qualities which he possessed would have adorned the character of any man, even in the higher walks of honour and respectability.

While we can have no sympathy with his nefarious calling, we cannot but regard with feelings of pity and charity the uses which were made of talents that would have enabled him to walk among his fellows admired and respected, had he devoted them to honourable pursuits and to laudable aims.

CHAPTER II.

A BANK-SNEAK'S COSTLY RAILWAY RIDE.

RIMINALS, among each other, have standing and tone, precisely as do members of society. The most shrewd and cunning members of the different "professions" have just as high a regard for their reputations as have the most *au fait* gentlemen in society, or the most fascinating belles of the leading circles of fashion.

A brilliant raid upon a bank, an extraordinary swindle in Wall street, a splendid haul by a faro bank, or three-card-monte crowd, a neatly executed burglary, a fine piece of check-raising, or a handsomely-made counterfeit bond, Government note or bank-bill, are each accomplishments, in their line, to be as proud of, and to cause as much praise and envy, as the most laudable success can compel in commercial, social or literary circles.

On the same principles, a failure, or any foolish error, causes the same proportion of derision; and the "professional" who permits himself to fail in any undertaking he may have in hand immediately loses caste, which he can only recover by some bolder stroke and more brilliant victory. These people have