

from sufficient as yet to meet the outlay. One of two things was therefore necessary, either to stop the works or to increase the capital by a call upon the stockholders, or an issue of fresh stock.

A meeting was convened at the offices in Wall street, and after a somewhat stormy discussion Van Higgin succeeded in vetoing the first alternative, but the shareholders declining to respond to a call, the issue of further stock was finally passed. Van Higgin, whose blood was up at the opposition he had met, boldly, or more properly speaking rashly, took up a considerable number of new shares, but the remainder were allotted outside, which weakened the controlling power of the president. It would have been better had Van Higgin given way and allowed the work on the tunnel to be temporarily suspended, but he had been so used to assume the command, in every scheme he was connected with, that he did not see his mistake until it was too late. The money was collected, but owing to a sudden panic in South American securities, Van Higgin for the first time in his life found himself in what is called a corner. He still carried his head up and appeared to the world the same successful man as before, but he had received a blow and knew that within a week he must find a considerable amount of cash to meet his engagements. Misfortunes, it has often been said, never come singly, and in consequence of a crop failure a large lot of railroad stock became unsaleable. Then it was that Van Higgin began to lose his head, as it were; he omitted to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Colorado Tunnel Company, which was there thrown into the hands of a receiver. He still clung, with the pertinacious grasp of a drowning man, to the belief that the panic in South American bonds was all moonshine, until a cablegram announced the failure of one of the largest banking firms in London, when he was forced to admit that the worst had come and he was beaten.

He was seated in his office when the cablegram was brought him, and the clerk quite started at the terrific oath which burst from his employer's lips. Let us hope that the angel, who has so often had to weep, had still a tear left to expunge those ugly words. He gave orders that he could not see anybody, and on being left alone he locked the door leading to the public office. Rescating himself, he took a sheet of paper, on which he put down certain figures with memoranda opposite them, but he soon desisted, and sat with his hands before him vacantly staring. His life seemed then to rise up and pass like a panorama—his business life that is—showing how he had started a comparatively poor

man, and how by industry, tact, and perseverance, he had attained his pinnacle of wealth. He noted his bold strokes, and rapid conquests, in the financial world, which had made him the admiration of Wall Street. Then came the false step and the crash, the latter so complete that his energies and faculties appeared shattered and paralyzed, and he sank down with no fight left in him.

How long he remained thus he did not know, but finally he rose and let himself out by a private door leading to the hall. He made his way to the street, and hardly knowing where he went, found himself in the busy crowd of Broadway, when he turned his face uptown. As he walked along he caught himself wondering in a dull sort of fashion whether those he met knew who he was and if he saw anyone, who chanced to look at him, make a remark to a companion; he could not help thinking that such remark had reference to himself and what had taken place. He, the great Washington Van Higgin, the successful millionaire was being pointed at as a grand failure, and he fancied people pushed him rudely on one side as though aware that he was now nobody. Of course this was all morbid imagination, for in New York, except by a very few, you are not known from Adam, but at such a time a man is apt to become over sensitive.

At last reaching the space in front of the City Hall Van Higgin stepped into a cab, and giving the driver his address was quickly rattled up Broadway towards his home. Then came the thought of Madeline and how he was to tell her, for in the midst of all his pursuit of wealth and rush of business he had always loved his daughter with the whole force of his nature, and had endeavored, so far as his lights went, to be both a father and a mother to her—his wife having died during Madeline's infancy. He had lavished his riches upon her without stint, and of late years she had been his almost constant companion, they having travelled together not only in their own country, but in Europe. He had watched with pardonable pride how his child had gradually blossomed into the beautiful woman who had added lustre to his home and was admired by all who knew her. It had made his heart beat with joy as he saw her shine with a kind of regal splendour, even in their own democratic society—and now!

Grace Church is passed and he is still pondering as to how he shall break the news to Madeline. How he must make it plain that he will have to commence over again, as they say, and that she will have to give up the luxuries which have hitherto been so pleasant. He is no nearer solving the question, when he is landed at his house door.

"Why Papa how early you are! Do you know it is only two o'clock?" cried Madeline, as she met him in the hall. "Is anything the matter that you look so strange?"

"Yes something has happened Madge," replied Van Higgin, in a voice so unlike his own that it startled even himself. "I will tell you all about it presently. Would you mind ordering the mail phaeton round and coming out for a drive with me? I suppose you have had your lunch."

"Yes, but I can see you have not Papa, you are so pale" said Madeline, taking him by the hand and leading him into the dining room.

"No—I believe I forgot my lunch today—but never mind I am not hungry. Just send Graves here with some sherry and biscuits, and you go and get ready for the drive."

"Are you sure you are not sick Papa?"

"Quite—run off with you—I will tell you as we drive along—drive along," exclaimed Van Higgin in an impatient manner, and then repenting he patted her cheek and asked once more for the sherry and biscuits. As far as the latter were concerned the request was entirely superfluous, for he never touched them, but after a couple of glasses of sherry his color came back, and as he handed his daughter into the phaeton, neither Madeline nor anyone else would have guessed that he mounted that vehicle a ruined man.

To be continued.

GORY GAMBLERS.

The Frolicsome Fancy of a Champion Footballist.

I love my adversary's legs to kick,
To frisk upon his features with my feet,
Or butt him in the belly till he's sick—
All this is sweet.

I smile to hear his collar-bone collapse,
Accompanied by his expiring screech;
To crack his ribs is happiness, perhaps
Beyond all speech.

I laugh aloud when, in the scrimmage wild,
I smash the thigh-bone of some lusty boy,
And see him borne off, helpless as a child—
That, that is joy!

My sturdy heel into his spine to jam,
To beat his mouth until he pouts at fate,
To punch him sternly in his diaphragm
Is rapture great.

And then to batter flat his shapely snout
Is pleasure that I can't afford to miss;
To tear a handful of his giblets out—
That, that is bliss.

Than to perceive his manly blood run red
No greater joy can unto me be given;
But at one kick to kick him down stone dead—
That, that is heaven!

—English Sunday Chronicle.