

I suddenly turned to Clinker. I place ten cents in her hand.

Clinker departed.

'Poor child', I said compassionately to my companion—though I was not, I now confess, expressing my real sentiments—'Poor child, I guess she has a pretty hard time of it.'

Thus, you see, I gained a reputation for philanthropy.

But Clinker had rather made game of me, and I was wroth, neither do I candidly consider myself a philanthropist.

Was this the last of Clinker?

## CHAPTER II.

**A**GAIN the sinking sun was shining down the length of the street. Again—oh! to further loss of peace of mind. I was not alone. Again I was most eager to be agreeable.

Which, in passing, you will excuse the digression while I remark how very curious it is that men show their admiration for women in this way. For if a woman is beautiful, why so also are some pictures I know of; but men do not chatter away to a picture to show their admiration. Or if a woman has an eminent wit, why so also have some books I have heard of! But men prefer letting the book talk rather than themselves. I think a man should be silent and rather grave before a woman he thinks greatly of.

This is my private opinion. It is probably wrong. Anyway, I never act on it. This, however, would you believe me, is the very reason why I think it right. Because—privately—if it were a wrong opinion, I would be *sure* to act on it. It is a very happy thing when a man knows himself so certainly as to make himself thus sure and infallible in his discrimination of the right and wrong in opinion.

However, I have been leaving the

sun shining and myself eager to be agreeable all this time.

But a cloud comes over the sun, and a chill in the air, and a pause in the conversation.

Why did I turn pale suddenly?

Why turn cold?

'Please sir, Pa died yesterday.'

I turned.

Clinker was there, looking up with shining, innocent eyes.

'And Ma is sick in bed.'

Those innocent blue eyes! how winningly they looked up at me! and the little red mouth parted in its entreaty. The roll of papers lay under her arm unfolded, and the little faded shawl, with its many colours running into one another, clad the small timid shoulders.

Has wickedness always got such eyes and such gentle grace? I would almost then be wicked.

Or was it only the get-up of one of Nature's actresses, with the sweetness in her eyes, and the genius in her brain?

Faith! In little Clinker's case I know not what it was. I only know that I looked at her admiringly a minute, and then with anger.

At the same time I put my hand in my pocket and fumbled about.

'And I have nine little brothers, sir—'

Oh Clinker! I had no smaller change, and I handed her a quarter, and as she went away I smiled sadly and said: 'Poor little child. I daresay her life is not a happy one.'

While inwardly I vowed vengeance, all the time gaining additional sanctity for philanthropy.

Did I ever see Clinker again?

## CHAPTER III.

**I**T was Saturday afternoon, and I was hurrying along the promenade.

I was alone.