

what betting is, but what will men be tempted to do who bet?

*Tom.* It seems to me that you are mistaken there at any rate. Betting may be turned to harm, so may religion. Are you to give up religion for fear of harm? All good things may be turned to harm, religion itself not excepted.

*Harry.* Quite true. Good things may be turned to a bad use. But how do you make out betting to be a good thing? What is it? Let old William Cobbett in his plain way answer—'The object of every gamester is to get by doing injury to his neighbour.' Can you make a better definition of it than that? I say that betting is wrong in itself and leads to wrong.

*Tom.* But some men acquire wealth by betting at any rate.

*Harry.* If wealth means money—Yes. If wealth stands for 'welfare,' then I must answer 'No.' Money coming to a man suddenly is seldom enjoyed much, or kept long. When Jack Mytton was driving from Doncaster races back to Shropshire, the wind during the night blew his winnings, consisting of many thousand pounds worth of bank notes, out of the post chaise windows, 'Drive on,' said poor wild Jack, 'Light come, light go.' Yes, that is the usual way, money won lightly goes lightly, even without the help of the wind. Again, I never heard of a successful gambler handing on his business with satisfaction to his children. But the general experience of men, as regards gambling, is pretty well known. How have our great painters chosen to depict the progress of a gambler's career? Who would care to be recommended in business by a character for success in betting? Old properties, the roots of our social life, dissipated; priceless collections of pictures and treasures scattered to the wind; useful lives doomed to all the vices of despair; men consigned to Workhouses, Asylums, Gaols, and the Gallows, or to the Suicide's grave: these form a running commentary on the history of gambling and betting!

*Tom.* But the history of gambling and betting shows exceptions to all this.

*Harry.* Exceptions prove the rule. Suppose a man should chance to swim the rapids of Niagara in safety, is that a reason why you, or I, should do the same?

*Tom.* But there are many men of noble dispositions who bet.

*Harry.* Undoubtedly, but that does not make the ill effects of gambling less evil. If it was sad to see a small mischief destroy the noble physique of the Emperor Frederick, is it not more sad to see a noble disposition afflicted with the gambling fever?

*Tom.* But Princes and Dukes bet! It is their fault if in imitating them we get into mischief.

*Harry.* I am not a Prince, nor a Duke, I have myself to answer for. Besides, if they are wrong to set a bad example, it does not make me right in following it.

*Tom.* But surely a man may bet a little and no harm be done.

*Harry.* Gambling is an unreasoning passion, which, when once aroused, soon gets beyond control, and pursues a man for his lifetime, and often his descendants after him, so 'let sleeping dogs lie.' A racecourse is a beautiful sight. The wide expanse of country and fresh air are charming; the vast crowd, all bent on one thing, the rich and poor for once enjoying themselves together, the horses ready to share the duties and the pleasures of men, and to acknowledge the superiority even of the puniest specimens of the human race. This is a grand sight. But there is another side to the picture. A storm at sea is a fine sight if we could see it without remembering what the sea has swallowed up, and so I say again a race is a fine sight if we could forget the dark side; but we cannot, and to my mind 'the game is not worth the candle.'

*Tom.* Well, if we are to go by experience, experience is against betting and gambling, and experience is a true and safe guide. So we will not be like the boys who, Shakspeare tells us, 'Pawn their experience to their present pleasure, and so rebel to judgment.'