

his law. He had once written a book,—on the mortgage of stocks in trade; but that had been in early life, and he had never since dabbled in literature.

He was certainly a man of whom men were generally afraid. At the whist-table no one would venture to scold him. In the court no one ever contradicted him. In his own house, though he was very quiet, the servants dreaded to offend him, and were attentive to his slightest behests. When he condescended to ride with any acquaintance in the park, it was always acknowledged that old Wharton was to regulate the pace. His name was Abel, and all his life he had been known as able Abe;—a silent, far-seeing, close-fisted, just old man, who was not, however, by any means deficient in sympathy either with the sufferings or with the joys of humanity.

It was Easter time and the courts were not sitting, but Mr. Wharton was in his chamber as a matter of course at ten o'clock. He knew no real homely comforts elsewhere,—unless at the whist-table at the Eldon. He ate and drank and slept in his own house in Manchester Square, but he could hardly be said to live there. It was not there that his mind was awake, and that the powers of the man were exercised. When he came up from the dining-room to join his daughter after dinner he would get her to sing him a song, and would then seat himself with a book. But he never read in his own house, invariably falling into a sweet and placid slumber, from which he was never disturbed till his daughter kissed him as she went to bed. Then he would walk about the room, and look at his watch, and shuffle uneasily through half an hour till his conscience allowed him to take himself to his chamber. He was a man of no pursuits in his own house. But from ten in the morning till five, or often till six, in the evening, his mind was active in some work. It was not now all law as it used to be. In the drawer of the old piece of furniture which stood just at the right hand of his own arm-chair there were various books hidden away, which he was sometimes ashamed to have seen by his clients,—poetry and novels and even fairy tales. For there was nothing Mr. Wharton could not read in his chambers, though there was nothing that he could read in his own house. He had a large pleasant room in which to sit, looking out from the ground floor of Stone Buildings on to the gardens belonging to the Inn,—and here, in the centre of the metropolis, but in perfect quiet as far as the outside world was concerned, he had lived and still lived his life.

At about noon on the day following that on which Lopez had made his sudden swoop on Mr. Parker and had then dined with Everett Wharton he called at Stone Buildings and was shown into the lawyer's room. His quick eye at once discovered the book which Mr. Wharton, half hid away, and saw upon it Mr. Mudie's suspicious ticket. Barristers certainly never get their law books from Mudie, and Lopez at once knew that his hoped-for father-in-law had been reading a novel. He had not suspected such weakness, but argued well from it for the business he had in hand.

There m
lawyer w
you do, s
see you
and man
Buildings
committed
Is there a

There
father;—
Lopez did
such a fee
been intin
tainly ing
who had l
lived in B
Square, an
They were
of a second
of his lov
the old law
Lopez felt

The task
lover know
for the las
made muc
his Mary c
and will th
probably c
praise,—an
cult to br
Ferdinand
the brink o
plunge. ‘
here, beca

“About
genuine.
he knew w
But up to
Ferdinand
having com
unpleasant
flash of the
“Yes, s
having ven
come to su
thought it

“Does s
“Of my