

THE MISER'S DAUGHTER

By MONRE DE BALZAC

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

"Of course my b-b-brother's n-n-name was Grandet—th-that is certain sure; I d-d-don't deny it—and, anyhow, this l-l-liquidation would be a very g-good thing for my n-n-nephew in every way, and I am very f-f-fond of him. But you shall see. I know n-n-nothing of those sharpers in P-Paris, and their t-tricks. And here am I at S-Saumur, in my see. There are my vine-cuttings, in my d-d-draining—in sh-sh-short, there are my own a-t-f-fairs, to s-see after. I have n-n-never accepted a bill. What is a bill? I have t-t-taken many a one, b-but I have n-n-never put my n-n-name to a piece of p-paper. You t-t-take 'em and you c-c-can d-d-discount 'em, and that is all I know. I have heard s-s-say that you can b-b-buy them—"

lend himself to a dubious transaction, which, however you looked at it, hardly squared with notions of strict honesty; and not only so, but he had particularly noticed that Goodman Grandet had shown not the slightest inclination to disburse anything whatever, and he trembled instinctively at the thought of his nephew becoming involved in such a business. He took advantage of the entrance of the des Grassins, took his nephew by the arm, and drew him into the embrasure of the window.

"You have gone quite as far as there is any need," he said, "that is quite enough of such zeal; you are over-reaching yourself in your eagerness to marry the girl. You should not rush into a thing open-mouthed; like a crow at a walnut. Leave the steering of the ship to me for a bit, and just shift your sails according to the wind. Now is it a part you ought to play, compromising your dignity as magistrate, in such a—"

"Grandet, we have heard of the dreadful misfortunes which have befallen your family—the ruin of the firm of Guillaume Grandet and your brother's death; we have come to express our sympathy with you in this sad calamity."

"Yes," assented the president; "you can buy bills on the market, less so much per cent. Do you understand?" Grandet held his hand to his ear and the president repeated his remark.

"But it s-seems there are t-t-two s-sides to all this," replied the vine grower.

"At my age, I know n-n-nothing about this s-s-sort of thing. I must s-stop here to look after the s-s-grapes; the vines d-d-don't stand still, and the g-grapes have to p-pay for everything. Then I have a great d-d-deal on my hands at Froidfont that I can't p-possibly l-leave to any one else. I don't understand a word of all this; it is a p-pretty kettle of fish; I can't l-leave home to s-see after it. You s-s-say that to bring about s-s-s liquidation I ought to be in Paris. Now, you can't be in t-t-two p-places at once unless you are a b-b-bird."

"There is only one misfortune," the notary interrupted at this point, "the death of the younger M. Grandet; and if he had thought to ask his brother for assistance, he would not have taken his own life. Our old friend here, who is a man of honor to his finger tips, is prepared to discharge the debts contracted by the firm of Grandet in Paris. In order to spare our friend the worry of what is, after all, a piece of lawyer's business, my nephew, the president, offers to start immediately for Paris, so as to arrange with the creditors, and duly satisfy their claims."

"I see what you mean," cried the notary. "Well, my old friend, you have friends, friends of long standing ready to do a great deal for you."

"Come, now!" said the vine grower to himself, "so you are making up your minds, are you?"

"And if some one were to go to Paris, and find your brother Guillaume's largest creditor, and say to him—"

"The three des Grassins were thoroughly taken aback by these words; Grandet appeared to acquiesce in what had been said, for he was pensively stroking his chin. On their way to the house the family had commented very freely upon Grandet's ingratitude, and indeed had almost gone so far as to accuse him of fratricide.

"Ah! just what I expected," cried the banker, looking at his wife. "What was I saying to you just now as we came along? Grandet, I said, is a man who will never avenge a hair's breadth from the strict course of honor; he will not endure the thought of the slightest spot on his name! Money without honor is a disease. Oh! we have a keen sense of honor in the provinces! This is noble—really noble of you, Grandet. I am an old soldier, and I do not mince matters. I say what I think straight out; and this is sublime!"

"Quite so!" said the president. "Because, look here, Monsieur de Bonfons, you must l-look before you l-leave. A big a-t-f-fair like this wants l-look-into, or you may ru-ru-ruin yourself. That is so, isn't it, eh?"

"Certainly," said the president. "I myself am of the opinion that in a few months' time you could buy up the debts for a fixed sum and pay by installments. Ah! you can trail a dog a long way with a bit of bacon. When a man has not been declared bankrupt, as soon as the bills are in your hands, you will be as white as snow."

"Then the s-s-sublimity costs a great d-d-deal," stuttered the cooper, as the banker shook him warmly by the hand.

"But this, my good Grandet, is simply a matter of business," des Grassins went on, "and requires an experienced man of business to deal with it. There will have to be accounts kept of sales and outgoing expenses; you ought to have tables of interest at your finger ends. I must go to Paris on business of my own, and I could undertake—"

"As a s-s-snow?" said Grandet, holding his hand to his ear. "S-s-snow? I don't understand a word."

"Wh-what, just listen to me!" cried the president. "A bill of exchange is a commodity subject to fluctuations in value. This is a deduction from Jeremy Bentham's theory of interest. He was a publicist who showed conclusively that the prejudices entertained against money lenders were irrational."

"Will you hold your tongue, Nanon! You tell my wife that I have gone into the country, and that I shall be back to-day. Hurry up, Cornouiller; we must be in Angers before 9 o'clock."

The carriage started. Nanon bolted the gateway, let the dog loose and lay down and slept in spite of her bruised shoulder; and no one in the quarter had any suspicion of Grandet's journey or of its object. The worthy man was a miracle of circumspection. Nobody ever saw a penny lying about in that house full of gold. He had learned that morning from the gossip on the quay that some vessels were being fitted out at Nantes, and that in consequence gold was so scarce there that it was worth double its ordinary value, and speculators were buying it in Angers. The old cooper, by the simple device of borrowing his tenant's horse, was prepared to sell his gold at Angers, receiving in return an order upon the treasury for the sum destined for the purchase of his consols, and an addition in the shape of the premium paid on his gold.

"Bless me!" put in Grandet. "And seeing that, according to Bentham, money itself is a commodity, and that that which money represents is no less a commodity," the president went on; "and since it is obvious that the commodity called a bill of exchange is subject to the same laws of supply and demand that control production of all kinds, a bill of exchange bearing this or that signature, like this or that article of commerce, is scarce or plentiful in the market, commands a high premium or is worth nothing at all. Wherefore, I am of the opinion that you could easily buy up your brother's debts for twenty-five per cent of their value, and in law, if you hold all the outstanding bills of the firm of Grandet, your brother, his heirs and assigns, would owe you one penny."

"My father is going out," said Eugenie to herself. She had heard all that had passed from the head of the staircase.

(To be continued.)

CHAPTER XI.

A knock at the door announced the arrival of the des Grassins; their coming and exchange of greetings prevented Cruchot senior from finishing a sentence. Her was ill-pleased with this diversion; Grandet was looking askance at them already, and there was that about the way on the cooper's face which indicated that a storm was brewing within. And on sober reflection it seemed to the anxious notary that a president of a court of first instance was not exactly the person to dispatch to Paris, there to gaze upon the man who had ruined him.

"I should feel far more confidence in you than in the president," he remarked; "and besides that," he added, "there are other fish to fry. I want to make an investment. I have several thousand francs to put into consols, and I don't mean to pay more than eighty for them. Now, from all I can hear, that machine always runs down at the end of the month. You know all about these things, I expect?"

HUMOR OF THE WEEK

STORIES TOLD BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Other, but to no purpose, as to the good man's real intentions in this new turn that matters had taken.

A few moments later, and the news of Grandet's magnanimity was set circulating in three houses at once; the whole town talked of nothing but Grandet's devotion to his brother. The sale of his vintage in utter disregard of the agreement made among the vine growers was forgotten; every one fell to praising his scrupulous integrity and to lauding his generosity, a quality which no one had suspected him of possessing. As soon as Grandet had bolted the house door he called to Nanon:

Those Mine Blunders.

It was at St. Petersburg.

"Your excellency," ventured the prime minister, "we must raise another fund to build warships."

The Czar smiled a wan smile.

"All right," he responded, "and I suppose it will be a sinking fund."

Friendly Boost.

He—Tom Huggins asked me last night if I didn't think you would make some man a good wife.

Mabel—And what did you say?

Helen—Oh, I merely said I thought you'd be glad of a chance to test your ability to make good.

Getting at the Facts.

Miles—The duel has had its day.

Giles—On the contrary, my dear fellow, it never had a day.

Miles—It didn't, eh?

Giles—No; two seconds was its limit.

Time Works Wonders.

Sentimental Sue—Only last season Maud declared she wouldn't marry a man unless he was a hero.

Tantalizing Tess—Yes, but she has outgrown that sentiment. She's looking for an old fool with money this season.

As Indicated.

Ho—I wonder if the report is true that old Gotrox bought his daughter a husband?

She—I don't know. But the poor fellow looks as if he had been sold.

Now They Don't Speak.

"No man could kiss me," said Miss Plainin, with decided emphasis.

"Oh, I don't know," rejoined Miss Dimples. "Some men are awfully reckless."

Very Shocking.

Rodrick—This paper says that some things at St. Louis are so large they really appal the visitor.

Van Albert—H'm! they must mean the hotel bills.

Fine Finish.

Gunner—But Russia has some fine warships in the far east. They are adorned.

Guyce—Well, it won't be long before they are Japanned.

No Use.

"No, sir. I never should ask a woman with brains to marry me."

"Well, really, I don't believe it would be worth your while."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Disguised.

Sergeant—Judge, I strongly suspect the prisoner to be a man dressed in woman's clothes.

Judge Knox—Why?

Sergeant—She refuses to talk.

Well Up.

"Is he well up in his business?"

"Most of the time. He's a lineman."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Unselfish.

Alice—Yes, I accepted George at once. I knew when he proposed to me he was wholly unselfish.

Bertha—Oh, nobody could ever have any doubt about that.—Boston Transcript.

All Heart.

Greene—Do you mean to say that Miss Felcher said I had no head on me?

Gray—Well, if she didn't say that in so many words she said substantially the same thing. She told Daisy Brown you were all heart.—Boston Transcript.

Hard Pressed.

Ragson Tatters—Dese is mighty hard times, ain't dey?

Hungry Hawkes—Dat's w'at dey are. Ragzie, old man. So many people is offerin' me work when I asks for grub dat I'm runnin' out of excuses.—Philadelphia Press.

As Others See Us.

Biggs—Shortskate has quite a lot of money, has he not?

Diggs—He ought to have. I never knew him to pay any out.

Delays Are Dangerous.

Tom—But isn't your love for Miss Platinum rather sudden?

Jack—I suppose so. But, you see, her rich aunt died suddenly.

Merely a Suggestion.

"My salary," said the youth with the nosy neckwear, who invariably goes broke shortly after payday, "seems to burn a hole in my pocket."

"You should request the boss to hand it to you in cold cash," suggested the fair boarder who manipulates the typewriter keys between meals.

Between Friends.

Miss Golding—Do you think it is my money that attracts him?

Miss Prettymaid—Shouldn't wonder. He told a friend of mine that he had about made up his mind to marry you.

Natural Deduction.

She—They say Mrs. Peck is a hypochondriac. Do you suppose it is true?

He—Shouldn't wonder. She has neither wealth nor beauty, yet she got married.

Unlike a Woman.

Husband—My dear, your new waist doesn't fit in the back at all.

Wife—Oh, that doesn't matter. People in front of me will not be able to see it and I don't care what folks say behind my back.

Humor of the Week

Odd, Curious and Laughable Phases of Human Nature Graphically Portrayed by Eminent Word Artists of Our Own Day—A Budget of Fun.

Arthur—You ask if it is the proper thing for a gentleman to carry his hand baggage.

We think it is quite proper, Arthur. It wouldn't look well for his wife to carry it and if he carried somebody else's hand baggage he might be taken for a porter.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Making Up for It.

"They've got a rule in ma's literary club that bars out gum chewing."

"And what do they do to make up for it?"

"They talk just that much more."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Kindly Advice.

Young ladies," said the principal, who was distributing the diplomas, "each of these parchments shows that you have completed the courses in cooking and in elocution with honors. It is perhaps unnecessary for me to state that the one for elocution should be hung in the kitchen and the other one in the parlor."

Annoyed.

"I am strongly inclined to think that your husband has appendicitis," said the physician.

"That's just like him," answered Mrs. Cuntrox. "He always waits till anything has pretty near gone out of style before he decides to get it."—Washington Star.

The Billville Idea.

Office Boy—Man outside, sir, who says he ain't had a square meal in three weeks.

Editor—What paper does he edit?—Atlanta Constitution.

Geographical Changes.

"I don't see any use in having wars in this advanced age," remarked Mrs. Suburbs, turning up the lamp.

"If you were a mapmaker," replied Mr. Suburbs, glancing up from the new atlas on his knees, "you probably would."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

His Experience.

"Pa," said Willie, thoughtfully, "I think I know now what the minister meant when he said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

"Yes? What was it?"

"Castor oil."—Philadelphia Press.

Dreamed It.

Hiram Cornstassie—Hev ye plowed yer field yet, Silas?

Silas Hayrick—No, but I was thinkin' 'bout doin' it.

Hiram Cornstassie—I see; ye jes' turned it over in yer mind.

His Belief.

"Do you think that dollars should dominate our politicians?"

"Not at all," answered Senator Sorghum. "Quite the contrary. I believe that every politician should make it his business to dominate as many dollars as possible."—Washington Star.

Hopeless Case.

Pennibs—I am troubled with insomnia, doctor. What would you recommend?

Doctor—Do something to the yen.

Pennibs—Impossible, doctor. I can't afford a vacation this year.

In 1950.

Friend—Did you find the region you explored civilized?

Traveler—Very. Thirty per cent of the population can neither read nor write and 10 per cent do not own automobiles.

The Other Kind.

Higgins—Some folks say that woolen underwear is the only healthful kind and others say the same about linen. How is a fellow to know which kind is the better?

Wiggins—Nothing easier. The kind you didn't buy is the kind you ought to have got.—Boston Transcript.

HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT

Thick Gingerbread.

Mix three quarters of a pound four three-quarters of an ounce ground ginger, half ounce carbonate of soda, two ounces of shredded candied peel together; put two ounces butter and two ounces dripping into a saucepan to melt; add four ounces of brown sugar and half pound golden syrup, and allow sugar to dissolve over a gentle heat. Make a hole in the middle of the flour, and pour in sugar, butter and syrup. When it is partly mixed and slightly cooled, add two eggs and a little milk. The mixture should be just moist enough to run off the spoon. Bake in a deep tin for two hours. Cut into squares. This gingerbread will keep for weeks in a covered tin.

Egg Soup.

Wash and scrape two small carrots, a turnip, two sticks of celery, and an onion. Slice these vegetables very thin and fry in a tablespoonful of butter until of a yellow color. Take up the vegetables into a strainer, put them in a steapan, with three pints of water, seasoning of pepper and salt, and a very little sugar. Let the soup simmer for two hours, then pass all through a hair sieve. Return the soup to the fire, and thicken it with potato flour made into a smooth paste with cold milk. Meanwhile, poach an egg for each person, lay these in a tureen, add a gill of cream to the soup, and pour it over the eggs. Scatter chopped yolk of eggs over the soup and serve.

Baking-Powder Economy.

The best baking powder I use is home-made. Here is my recipe: Two and one-quarter pounds of cream tartar, one pound of baking-soda, one and one-quarter pounds of flour. Sift six or eight times thoroughly and keep in tin boxes. This makes four and one-half pounds of the baking-powder, and costs about half as much as that we buy. I buy the cream-tartar and soda at a drug store, as they are then sure to be pure, and the strength of the baking-powder depends so much upon the purity of the ingredients. Try this recipe, and you will be pleased with the result.—Exchange.

Yorkshire Teacakes.

Put three pounds and a half of flour into a basin, and, after adding a little salt, rub into it half a pound of lard. Dissolve two ounces and a half of yeast in a little slightly warm water, and add to it one pint of milk, also slightly warm, and three ounces of sugar. Make a hole in the center of the flour, and pour this liquid into it, letting it stand for a quarter of an hour, then work it up, and let it stand to rise for two hours. Roll out into cakes, and let them stand on the tins about half an hour, after which bake in a quick oven from twenty minutes to half an hour.

Graham Corn Gems.

Good graham and corn-meal gems are made with sour milk. To make the corn-meal gems, mix half a cup of sugar, one egg and one tablespoonful of butter together. Add two cups of sour milk in which a teaspoonful of soda has been dissolved. Sift two cups of corn meal and one of flour, and stir the other ingredients into it. Bake in a quick oven. Graham gems are excellent made in the same way, using in place of the corn meal and flour about the same amount of graham meal or enough to stiffen.

Pate a Chou.

Put into a pan half a cupful of milk and two tablespoonfuls of butter, and when boiling add eight rounding tablespoonfuls of flour; stir briskly for three minutes. Stand the pan on the table and when the paste is cooled to the lukewarm degree, break in an unbeaten egg, mix for two minutes, break in another, beat hard for another two minutes, and repeat with a third and a fourth egg. The pate a chou is then ready for use, in eclairs, puffs and choux a la creme.

Short Suggestions.

Making starch with soapy water is the best way to produce a gloss and prevent the iron from sticking.

The best way to mash potatoes is to rub them through a wire sieve; you can then be sure there are no lumps left.

When making a pudding don't forget to make a plait in the cloth at the top of your basin, so as to allow the pudding room to swell.

Before using a lamp wick soak it in strong vinegar, then dry it thoroughly, and it will burn both brightly and without any unpleasant smoke or smell.

The beating of eggs to a froth is sometimes tiring work. The labor will be lightened if before breaking the eggs into the basin the latter is rinsed with cold water. Add to the eggs a pinch of salt and while beating them stand in a good current of air and they will soon froth.

When the white of an egg is used the yolk is often left to harden and is then thrown out. A teaspoonful of cold water poured into the eggshell will keep it soft. If hardened, beat in a little milk, and the yolk may be made usable again. Whites of eggs must be kept covered if not used at once.

