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Gambling in 19th century literature

February 2024

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Activity introduction

Quick summary

Students will learn about the historical representation of gambling in 19th-century literature. They will read, annotate and discuss excerpts from three classic novels – *The Old Curiosity Shop* by Charles Dickens, *Ester Waters* by George Moore, and *Vanity Fair* by William Makepeace Thackeray. Students will analyse how these texts represented gambling as a harmful facet of society and compare this representation to modern conceptions of gambling, to consider similarities and differences.

Learning intentions

Students will:

- Identify and understand representations of gambling found in 19th Century English literature.
- Make connections between 19th Century representation and perspectives held in modern-day Australia.
- Explain the effect of language choices in different personal, social and cultural contexts and how these choices influence meaning.
- Learn and develop annotation and analytical skills.

21st-century skills

Communicating
Creative thinking
Critical thinking
Cultural understanding
Empathy
Personal and social skills
Teamwork

NSW Syllabus outcomes

- **EN11-1** responds to and composes increasingly complex texts for understanding, interpretation, analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure
- **EN11-8** identifies and explains cultural assumptions in texts and their effects on meaning

Activity introduction

General capabilities

Literacy

Critical and creative thinking

Ethical understanding

Stage 6 Syllabus objectives

Objective A

Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:

- communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and representing.

Objective D

Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:

- express themselves and their relationships with others and their world.

Topic

19th-century literature

Unit of work

Stage 6 English

Time required

90 minutes

Level of teacher scaffolding

Medium – teacher must facilitate class discussion.

Resources required

- A device capable of projecting text on the board
- Class set copies of:
 - Appendix A: Student worksheet
 - Appendix B: Student worksheet
 - Appendix C: Student worksheet
 - Appendix D: Student worksheet
- Hard copy print out of the analysis table
- Different coloured highlighters

Keywords

19th-century literature, Dickens, Moore, Thackeray, A Leprosy is o'er the Land, Vanity Fair, The Old Curiosity Shop, Ester Waters, anti-gambling league, gambling representation, problem gambling, literary analysis, jigsaw task, addictive behaviours, English classic novels, British classic texts.

Teacher worksheet

Teacher preparation

Before conducting the lesson it is recommended that teachers and parents read the Facilitator pack. The pack provides teachers and parents with essential information about gambling amongst young people, clarifies the nature of gambling-related behaviours and how to approach sensitive topics.

Learning intentions

Students will:

- understand the representation of gambling found in the 19th-century English literature.
- make connections between 19th-century representation and perspectives held in modern-day Australia.

Success criteria

Students can:

- communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and representing.
- learn and reflect on their learning through their study of English.
- express themselves and their relationships with others and their world.

Teaching sequence

- 15 minutes - Part A: 19th-century gambling - "A Leprosy is o'er the Land"
- 40 minutes - Part B: Reading jigsaw - Dickens, Thackeray and Moore
- 20 minutes - Part C: Group discussion
- 15 minutes - Part D: Reflection

Lesson introduction

Work through this resource material in the following sequence:

Part A:

19th-century gambling – “A Leprosy is o’er the Land”

Step 1

Share the poem “A Leprosy is o’er the Land” with the students in hard copy, and project the poem on the board.

Thou knowest, Lord, the fell disease.

Has Smitten myriads, rich and poor;

The workman’s hour, the wealth of ease

Are squandered for the gambler’s store.

Palace and cottage, works and mart

Are suffering from the fatal bane;

Prison, asylum, refuge, home,

Are peopled with the victims slain.

“A Leprosy is o’er the Land”: Winner of The National Anti-Gambling League’s hymn-writing competition, 1905.

Teacher background: This poem likens gambling to the disease of leprosy, a chronic disease that, while curable today, plagued society in 1905. The poet uses the analogy of disease to characterise the impact gambling had, and still has, on society, attracting both rich and poor to waste their work and leisure time, leading to all walks of life ‘suffering’. The poem concludes with the dire depiction of a range of locations housing those who have lost their lives to this ‘fatal bane’, alluding to the possibility of incarceration, insanity or suicide as a result of gambling harm.

Step 2

Read the poem as a class. Then ask students to highlight any parts of the poem they find confusing or challenging, and write a sentence reflecting their initial understanding of how the poem reflects gambling in the 19th century. This might be discussing as a class or allowing students to discuss their understanding of the poem with a partner. What do students understand? What clarification is needed?

Step 3

Facilitate a group discussion, with the poem projected on the board. Discuss how the poem can be read in varying ways depending upon the time in which it is read and the knowledge/ personal experiences of the reader.

Vocabulary that may be required:

- fell –of terrible evil or ferocity; deadly
- smitten –be strongly attracted to someone or something
- myriads –a countless or extremely great number of people or things
- squandered –waste something, in a reckless and foolish manner
- bane –a cause of great distress or annoyance
- asylum –an institution for the care of people who are mentally ill
- refuge –a place providing safety or shelter
- slain –kill a person in a violent way

Step 4

After the class discussion, students should revise their initial understanding of the poem using the prompts: *I used to think ... but now I think ...*

Part B:

Reading jigsaw – Dickens, Thackeray and Moore

Step 1

Organise your students into three groups. If it is a large class - split them into six groups. Then, distribute copies of the excerpts from *Ester Waters*, *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Vanity Fair* (see Appendix B, C and D) to the groups. Each table has their own reading, and will become 'experts' on one of the passages.

Step 2

Individually, students should read their excerpts, highlighting and annotating each time they see a reference to gambling. Students should highlight each character's differing point of view on gambling in a different colour for best understanding. They may also find themselves making connections between their reading and the opening poem, as well as having questions about the reading. They need to note these thoughts as they progress.

Step 3

In their expert groups, students should discuss their allocated excerpt, ensuring each member of the group understands the ideas found in the passage. You may need to circulate the room to support your classroom and provide students with prompts and feedback. Together, they should populate the table below for their excerpt:

Analysis table: representations of gambling in 19th-century literature:

	<i>Ester Waters</i> – George Moore	<i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i> – Charles Dickens	<i>Vanity Fair</i> – William Thackeray
Date published			
Who is providing the narrative voice?			

Analysis table: Representations of gambling in 19th-century literature:

	<i>Ester Waters</i> – George Moore	<i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i> – Charles Dickens	<i>Vanity Fair</i> – William Thackeray
What level of society is the narrative voice speaking from?			
Has the character always been a part of this level of society? If not, where have they moved from/to?			
How do you think the narrative voice's social status affected their reaction to gambling?			
How is gambling characterised? Select short quotes to support.			
How are those who gamble characterised? Select short quotes to support.			
What specific unsavoury acts and behaviours are mentioned?			

Step 4

Rearrange their groups so that each table has an expert on one of the excerpts. Students will share the findings with the remainder of the group, allowing them to fill in the other columns of the table. At the conclusion of this activity, each student should have a completed table of notes.

Part C:

Group discussion

Step 1

Facilitate a whole class discussion, asking students to share their findings with the class. Ask students what similarities and differences they discovered. There is no particular right or wrong answer to be found in this discussion, what is more valuable is that the students feel a sense of understanding that gambling was depicted in a generally negative light by the middle-class novelists of the time, rather than being seen as an amusing hobby or pastime. Students are to begin their notes about gambling in the 19th Century which will be used and referred back to as the unit progresses.

Part D:

Reflection

Project this article from the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and read through with the class: [Charles Dickens, The Old Curiosity Shop and problem gambling](https://maas.museum/inside-the-collection/2012/02/07/charles-dickens-the-old-curiosity-shop-and-problem-gambling/).

Link: maas.museum/inside-the-collection/2012/02/07/charles-dickens-the-old-curiosity-shop-and-problem-gambling/

The writer, Debbie Rudder, concludes with the statement, “Charles Dickens was indeed a master storyteller, and his stories still speak forcefully to us today.” Ask students to write a short response which:

1. Identifies the purpose and audience of Rudder’s audience.
2. Identifies how language is used to persuade Rudder’s audience about her point of view on gambling.
3. Consider if they found her article effective in its purpose.

4. Consider why they think stories written by Dickens (and Moore and Thackeray) are still so significant to a modern audience, based on their learning from today.

Extension

- Students could extend their thinking from the table into an extended piece of writing.
- Students can write their own persuasive article which examines whether gambling ads should be banned.

Provisions for learning support

Students could be provided the reading for this lesson as homework in preparation, allowing them to read in their own time, or use text-to-voice technology or audiobooks to support their comprehension.

Teacher reflection

Take this opportunity to reflect on your own teaching:

What did you learn about your teaching today?

What worked well?

What didn’t work so well?

What would you share?

Where to next?

How are you going to get there?

Appendix A

Analysis table – Representations of gambling in 19th-century literature

	<i>Ester Waters</i> –George Moore	<i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i> –Charles Dickens	<i>Vanity Fair</i> –William Thackeray
Date published			
Who is providing the narrative voice?			
What level of society is the narrative voice speaking from?			
Has the character always been a part of this level of society? If not, where have they moved from/to?			
How do you think the narrative voice's social status affected their reaction to gambling?			
How is gambling characterised? Select short quotes to support.			
How are those who gamble characterised? Select short quotes to support.			
What specific unsavoury acts and behaviours are mentioned?			

Appendix B

Ester Waters – George Moore

Moore, G., 1894. *Ester Waters*

Link: gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8157/pg8157.html

Set in England from the 1870s onward, *Ester Waters* depicts the life of a ‘fallen woman’ – a pious young woman from a working-class family who is seduced and falls pregnant to another employee who ultimately leaves her to raise the child as a single mother.

As the novel progresses, Ester is reunited with the father of her child, William Latch, who declares his undying love for her, and begs her to marry him and work with him in his successful pub. To marry William, she had to turn down another proposal, from a man named Fred Parsons, who offered her a starkly different life – one of serenity and religion. For the sake of her son, she chooses William.

In this chapter, Fred Parsons has come to warn William that the illegal betting he is hosting at the pub which could lead to fines and a revoked license. Ester is home with William discussing what has happened that day.

Chapter 36 – an excerpt

“I had a visit from Fred Parsons this afternoon.”

“That’s the fellow you were engaged to marry. Is he after you still?”

“No, he came to speak to me about the betting.”

“About the betting – what is it to do with him?”

“He says that if it isn’t stopped that we shall be prosecuted.”

“So he came here to tell you that, did he? I wish I had been in the bar.”

“I’m glad you wasn’t. What good could you have done? To have a row and make things worse!”

William lit his pipe and unlaced his boots. Esther slipped on her night-dress and got into a large brass bedstead, without curtains. On the chest of drawers Esther had placed the books her mother had given her, and William had hung some sporting prints on the walls. He took his night-shirt from the pillow and put it on without removing his pipe from his mouth. He always finished his pipe in bed.

“It is revenge,” he said, pulling the bed-clothes up to his chin, “because I got you away from him.”

“I don’t think it is that; I did think so at first, and I said so.”

“What did he say?”

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“He said he was sorry I thought so badly of him; that he came to warn us of our danger. If he had wanted to do us an injury he wouldn’t have said nothing about it. Don’t you think so?”

“It seems reasonable. Then what do you think they’re doing it for?”

“He says that keeping a betting-house is corruption in the neighbourhood.”

“You think he thinks that?”

“I know he do; and there is many like him. I come of them that thinks like that, so I know. Betting and drink is what my folk, the Brethren, holds as most evil.”

“But you’ve forgot all about them Brethren?”

“No, one never forgets what one’s brought up in.”

“But what do you think now?”

“I’ve never said nothing about it. I don’t believe in a wife interfering with her husband; and business was that bad, and your ‘ealth ‘asn’t been the same since them colds you caught standing about in them betting rings, so I don’t see how you could help it. But now that business is beginning to come back to us, it might be as well to give up the betting.”

“It is the betting that brings the business; we shouldn’t take five pounds a week was it not for the betting. What’s the difference between betting on the course and betting in the bar? No one says nothing against it on the course; the police is there, and they goes after the welshers and persecutes them. Then the betting that’s done at Tattersall’s and the Albert Club, what is the difference? The Stock Exchange, too, where thousands and thousands is betted every day. It is the old story — one law for the rich and another for the poor. Why shouldn’t the poor man ‘ave his ‘alf-crown’s worth of excitement? The rich man can have his thousand pounds’ worth whenever he pleases. The same with the public ‘ouses — there’s a lot of hypocritical folk that is for docking the poor man of his beer, but there’s no one that’s for interfering with them that drink champagne in the clubs. It’s all bloody rot, and it makes me sick when I think of it. Them hypocritical folk. Betting! Isn’t everything betting? How can they put down betting? Hasn’t it been going on since the world began? Rot, says I! They can just ruin a poor devil like me, and that’s about all. We are ruined, and the rich goes scot-free. Hypocritical, mealy-mouthed lot. ‘Let’s say our prayers and sand the sugar’; that’s about it. I hate them that is always prating out religion. When I hears too much religion going about I says now’s the time to look into their accounts.”

William leaned out of bed to light his pipe from the candle on the night-table.

“There’s good people in the world, people that never thinks but of doing good, and do not live for pleasure.”

“‘All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,’ Esther. Their only pleasure is a bet. When they’ve one on they’ve something to look forward to; whether they win or lose they ‘as their money’s worth. You know what I say is true; you’ve seen them, how they look forward to the evening paper to see how the ‘oss is going on in betting. Man can’t live without hope. It is their only hope, and I says no one has a right to take it from them.”

“What about their poor wives? Very little good their betting is to them. It’s all very well to talk like that, William, but you know, and you can’t say you don’t, that a great deal of mischief comes of betting; you

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know that once they think of it and nothing else, they neglect their work. There's Stack, he's lost his place as porter; there's Journeyman, too, he's out of work."

"And a good thing for them; they've done a great deal better since they chucked it."

"For the time, maybe; but who says it will go on? Look at old John; he's going about in rags; and his poor wife, she was in here the other night, a terrible life she's 'ad of it. You says that no 'arm comes of it. What about that boy that was 'ad up the other day, and said that it was all through betting? He began by pawning his father's watch. It was here that he made the first bet. You won't tell me that it is right to bet with bits of boys like that."

"The horse he backed with me won."

"So much the worse.... The boy'll never do another honest day's work as long as he lives ... When they win, they 'as a drink for luck; when they loses, they 'as a drink to cheer them up."

"I'm afraid, Esther, you ought to have married the other chap. He'd have given you the life that you'd have been happy in. This public-'ouse ain't suited to you."

Esther turned round and her eyes met her husband's. There was a strange remoteness in his look, and they seemed very far from each other.

"I was brought up to think so differently," she said, her thoughts going back to her early years in the little southern seaside home. "I suppose this betting and drinking will always seem to me sinful and wicked. I should 'ave liked quite a different kind of life, but we don't choose our lives, we just makes the best of them. You was the father of my child, and it all dates from that."

"I suppose it do."

Continue reading: gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8157/pg8157.html

Appendix C

The Old Curiosity Shop – Charles Dickens

Dickens, C., 1840. *The Old Curiosity Shop*

Link: gutenberg.org/files/700/700-h/700-h.htm

The Old Curiosity Shop, set in 1825 in England, follows the life of Nell Trent, a beautiful young 13 year old girl. Orphaned, she lives with her nameless maternal grandfather in a Curiosity Shop, with only one friend – Kit. Seeking to ensure Nell does not succumb to poverty like her parents, her grandfather gambles at cards to provide Nell an inheritance, borrowing money from the evil, deformed, hunchback moneylender, Daniel Quilp. When the money is exhausted, Quilp takes possession of the shop and evicts Nell and her grandfather ...

Chapter 9 – an excerpt

‘Once, and once for all, have you brought me any money?’

‘No!’ returned Quilp.

‘Then,’ said the old man, clenching his hands desperately, and looking upwards, ‘the child and I are lost!’

‘Neighbour,’ said Quilp glancing sternly at him, and beating his hand twice or thrice upon the table to attract his wandering attention, ‘let me be plain with you, and play a fairer game than when you held all the cards, and I saw but the backs and nothing more. You have no secret from me now.’

The old man looked up, trembling.

‘You are surprised,’ said Quilp. ‘Well, perhaps that’s natural. You have no secret from me now, I say; no, not one. For now, I know, that all those sums of money, that all those loans, advances, and supplies that you have had from me, have found their way to – shall I say the word?’

‘Aye!’ replied the old man, ‘say it, if you will.’

‘To the gaming-table,’ rejoined Quilp, ‘your nightly haunt. This was the precious scheme to make your fortune, was it; this was the secret certain source of wealth in which I was to have sunk my money (if I had been the fool you took me for); this was your inexhaustible mine of gold, your El Dorado, eh?’

‘Yes,’ cried the old man, turning upon him with gleaming eyes, ‘it was. It is. It will be, till I die.’

‘That I should have been blinded,’ said Quilp looking contemptuously at him, ‘by a mere shallow gambler!’

‘I am no gambler,’ cried the old man fiercely. ‘I call Heaven to witness that I never played for gain of mine, or love of play; that at every piece I staked, I whispered to myself that orphan’s name and called on Heaven to bless the venture; – which it never did. Whom did it prosper? Who were those with whom I played? Men who lived by plunder, profligacy, and riot; squandering their gold in doing ill, and propagating vice and evil. My winnings would have been from them, my winnings would have been bestowed to the last farthing on a young sinless child whose life they would have sweetened and made

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happy. What would they have contracted? The means of corruption, wretchedness, and misery. Who would not have hoped in such a cause? Tell me that! Who would not have hoped as I did?’

‘When did you first begin this mad career?’ asked Quilp, his taunting inclination subdued, for a moment, by the old man’s grief and wildness.

‘When did I first begin?’ he rejoined, passing his hand across his brow. ‘When was it, that I first began? When should it be, but when I began to think how little I had saved, how long a time it took to save at all, how short a time I might have at my age to live, and how she would be left to the rough mercies of the world, with barely enough to keep her from the sorrows that wait on poverty; then it was that I began to think about it.’

‘After you first came to me to get your precious grandson packed off to sea?’ said Quilp.

‘Shortly after that,’ replied the old man. ‘I thought of it a long time, and had it in my sleep for months. Then I began. I found no pleasure in it, I expected none. What has it ever brought me but anxious days and sleepless nights; but loss of health and peace of mind, and gain of feebleness and sorrow!’

‘You lost what money you had laid by, first, and then came to me. While I thought you were making your fortune (as you said you were) you were making yourself a beggar, eh? Dear me! And so it comes to pass that I hold every security you could scrape together, and a bill of sale upon the — upon the stock and property,’ said Quilp standing up and looking about him, as if to assure himself that none of it had been taken away. ‘But did you never win?’

‘Never!’ groaned the old man. ‘Never won back my loss!’

‘I thought,’ sneered the dwarf, ‘that if a man played long enough he was sure to win at last, or, at the worst, not to come off a loser.’

‘And so he is,’ cried the old man, suddenly rousing himself from his state of despondency, and lashed into the most violent excitement, ‘so he is; I have felt that from the first, I have always known it, I’ve seen it, I never felt it half so strongly as I feel it now. Quilp, I have dreamed, three nights, of winning the same large sum, I never could dream that dream before, though I have often tried. Do not desert me, now I have this chance. I have no resource but you, give me some help, let me try this one last hope.’

The dwarf shrugged his shoulders and shook his head.

‘See, Quilp, good tender-hearted Quilp,’ said the old man, drawing some scraps of paper from his pocket with a trembling hand, and clasping the dwarf’s arm, ‘only see here. Look at these figures, the result of long calculation, and painful and hard experience. I must win. I only want a little help once more, a few pounds, but two score pounds, dear Quilp.’

‘The last advance was seventy,’ said the dwarf; ‘and it went in one night.’

‘I know it did,’ answered the old man, ‘but that was the very worst fortune of all, and the time had not come then. Quilp, consider, consider,’ the old man cried, trembling so much the while, that the papers in his hand fluttered as if they were shaken by the wind, ‘that orphan child! If I were alone, I could die with gladness — perhaps even anticipate that doom which is dealt out so unequally: coming, as it does, on the proud and happy in their strength, and shunning the needy and afflicted, and all who court it in their despair — but what I have done, has been for her. Help me for her sake I implore you; not for mine; for hers!’

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'I'm sorry I've got an appointment in the city,' said Quilp, looking at his watch with perfect self-possession, 'or I should have been very glad to have spent half an hour with you while you composed yourself, very glad.'

'Nay, Quilp, good Quilp,' gasped the old man, catching at his skirts, 'you and I have talked together, more than once, of her poor mother's story. The fear of her coming to poverty has perhaps been bred in me by that. Do not be hard upon me, but take that into account. You are a great gainer by me. Oh spare me the money for this one last hope!'

'I couldn't do it really,' said Quilp with unusual politeness, 'though I tell you what — and this is a circumstance worth bearing in mind as showing how the sharpest among us may be taken in sometimes — I was so deceived by the penurious way in which you lived, alone with Nelly —'

'All done to save money for tempting fortune, and to make her triumph greater,' cried the old man.

'Yes, yes, I understand that now,' said Quilp; 'but I was going to say, I was so deceived by that, your miserly way, the reputation you had among those who knew you of being rich, and your repeated assurances that you would make of my advances treble and quadruple the interest you paid me, that I'd have advanced you, even now, what you want, on your simple note of hand, if I hadn't unexpectedly become acquainted with your secret way of life.'

'Who is it,' retorted the old man desperately, 'that, notwithstanding all my caution, told you? Come. Let me know the name — the person.'

The crafty dwarf, bethinking himself that his giving up the child would lead to the disclosure of the artifice he had employed, which, as nothing was to be gained by it, it was well to conceal, stopped short in his answer and said, 'Now, who do you think?'

'It was Kit, it must have been the boy; he played the spy, and you tampered with him?' said the old man.

'How came you to think of him?' said the dwarf in a tone of great commiseration. 'Yes, it was Kit. Poor Kit!'

So saying, he nodded in a friendly manner, and took his leave: stopping when he had passed the outer door a little distance, and grinning with extraordinary delight.

'Poor Kit!' muttered Quilp. 'I think it was Kit who said I was an uglier dwarf than could be seen anywhere for a penny, wasn't it. Ha ha ha! Poor Kit!'

And with that he went his way, still chuckling as he went.

Continue reading: gutenberg.org/files/700/700-h/700-h.htm

Appendix D

Vanity Fair – William Thackeray

Thackeray, W., 1847-1848 *Vanity Fair*

Link: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/599/599-h/599-h.htm>

Vanity Fair is an English novel by William Makepeace Thackeray, first published as a 19 volume monthly serial from 1847-1848. The narrative follows the lives of Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley during and after the Napoleonic wars.

Becky Sharp, the novel's amoral anti-heroine has 'married up', landing the talented gambler Colonel Rawdon Crawley, and they move to Paris as part of their social ascent. Determined to secure their social standing and situation, Becky does all she can to allow her husband financial success ...

Chapter 36 – an excerpt

The truth is, when we say of a gentleman that he lives elegantly on nothing a year, we use the word “nothing” to signify something unknown; meaning, simply, that we don't know how the gentleman in question defrays the expenses of his establishment. Now, our friend the Colonel had a great aptitude for all games of chance: and exercising himself, as he continually did, with the cards, the dice-box, or the cue, it is natural to suppose that he attained a much greater skill in the use of these articles than men can possess who only occasionally handle them. To use a cue at billiards well is like using a pencil, or a German flute, or a small-sword — you cannot master any one of these implements at first, and it is only by repeated study and perseverance, joined to a natural taste, that a man can excel in the handling of either. Now Crawley, from being only a brilliant amateur, had grown to be a consummate master of billiards. Like a great General, his genius used to rise with the danger, and when the luck had been unfavourable to him for a whole game, and the bets were consequently against him, he would, with consummate skill and boldness, make some prodigious hits which would restore the battle, and come in a victor at the end, to the astonishment of everybody — of everybody, that is, who was a stranger to his play. Those who were accustomed to see it were cautious how they staked their money against a man of such sudden resources and brilliant and overpowering skill.

At games of cards he was equally skilful; for though he would constantly lose money at the commencement of an evening, playing so carelessly and making such blunders, that newcomers were often inclined to think meanly of his talent; yet when roused to action and awakened to caution by repeated small losses, it was remarked that Crawley's play became quite different, and that he was pretty sure of beating his enemy thoroughly before the night was over. Indeed, very few men could say that they ever had the better of him. His successes were so repeated that no wonder the envious and the vanquished spoke sometimes with bitterness regarding them. And as the French say of the Duke of Wellington, who never suffered a defeat, that only an astonishing series of lucky accidents enabled him to be an invariable winner; yet even they allow that he cheated at Waterloo, and was enabled to win the last great trick: so it was hinted at headquarters in England that some foul play must have taken place in order to account for the continuous successes of Colonel Crawley.

Though Frascati's and the Salon were open at that time in Paris, the mania for play was so widely spread that the public gambling-rooms did not suffice for the general ardour, and gambling went on in private

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houses as much as if there had been no public means for gratifying the passion. At Crawley's charming little reunions of an evening this fatal amusement commonly was practised — much to good-natured little Mrs. Crawley's annoyance. She spoke about her husband's passion for dice with the deepest grief; she bewailed it to everybody who came to her house. She besought the young fellows never, never to touch a box; and when young Green, of the Rifles, lost a very considerable sum of money, Rebecca passed a whole night in tears, as the servant told the unfortunate young gentleman, and actually went on her knees to her husband to beseech him to remit the debt, and burn the acknowledgement. How could he? He had lost just as much himself to Blackstone of the Hussars, and Count Punter of the Hanoverian Cavalry. Green might have any decent time; but pay? — of course he must pay; to talk of burning IOU's was child's play.

Other officers, chiefly young — for the young fellows gathered round Mrs. Crawley — came from her parties with long faces, having dropped more or less money at her fatal card-tables. Her house began to have an unfortunate reputation. The old hands warned the less experienced of their danger. Colonel O'Dowd, of the — th regiment, one of those occupying in Paris, warned Lieutenant Spooner of that corps. A loud and violent fracas took place between the infantry Colonel and his lady, who were dining at the Cafe de Paris, and Colonel and Mrs. Crawley; who were also taking their meal there. The ladies engaged on both sides. Mrs. O'Dowd snapped her fingers in Mrs. Crawley's face and called her husband "no better than a black-leg." Colonel Crawley challenged Colonel O'Dowd, C.B. The Commander-in-Chief hearing of the dispute sent for Colonel Crawley, who was getting ready the same pistols "which he shot Captain Marker," and had such a conversation with him that no duel took place. If Rebecca had not gone on her knees to General Tufto, Crawley would have been sent back to England; and he did not play, except with civilians, for some weeks after.

But, in spite of Rawdon's undoubted skill and constant successes, it became evident to Rebecca, considering these things, that their position was but a precarious one, and that, even although they paid scarcely anybody, their little capital would end one day by dwindling into zero. "Gambling," she would say, "dear, is good to help your income, but not as an income itself. Some day people may be tired of play, and then where are we?" Rawdon acquiesced in the justice of her opinion; and in truth he had remarked that after a few nights of his little suppers, &c., gentlemen were tired of play with him, and, in spite of Rebecca's charms, did not present themselves very eagerly.

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