

Brief summary of Ch. 7, bk. 1 (Mrs Sparsit)

Mrs Sparsit is introduced, as the genteel housekeeper to Bounderby, with whom, Bounderby discusses the issue of Louisa. Bounderby reveals his plan to employ Tom at his bank, and his fears that fanciful Sissy's presence might somehow defile Louisa. However, after falling on hard times, the aristocratic Mrs Sparsit has accepted employment with Mr Bounderby, but she constantly remind him of her family connections, 'a Powler'. Mr Gradgrind informs Sissy that she may continue to attend his school and she will care Mrs Gradgrind in her free time.

Commentary:

In this chapter, Bounderby is seen as Roman emperor or general riding in triumph in his chariot with Mrs Sparsit as accompanying slave of former high rank. Mrs Sparsit lives as a decorative-parasite upon the vulgarly brutal exploiter, Bounderby whereas James Harthouse is a parasite upon the Bounderby-Gradgrind class. It also has been seen that Bounderby plays with Mrs Sparsit the game of rich and poor.

Here we have seen the word 'Powler' is to be something is supposedly an indication of a distinguished family, upper class. This is why Mrs Sparsit repeatedly reminds Bounderby with her family's attribute.

Brief summary of Ch. 8, bk. 1 (never wonder)

'Let us strike the key-note again'. A conversation between Tom and Louisa reveals the extent to which they realise their potential emotional and imaginative retardation, slow development, as being the likely result of Gradgrind's philosophy. Both Louisa and Tom are depressed by the colorless monotony of life at Stone Lodge, but Louisa, attempting to cheer up Tom, reminds him of her affection for him. She seems to feel that something is missing from her life, but

when she wonders what it might be, Mrs. Gradgrind warns Louisa never to wonder—wondering contradicts the philosophy of fact.

Commentary:

Through the symbolism of fire, the narrator evokes the importance of imagination as a force that can counteract the mechanization of human nature. In this chapter the potential energy of secret fancies in Louisa's heart has been revealed: a reference to the fire in the heart of Louisa and fire that keeps factories running.