

Brief summary of Ch. 9, bk. 1 (Sissy's progress)

Sissy is unhappy at the Gradgrind's, and only her faith in her father's imminent return persuades her to stay. Louisa convinces Sissy secretly to talk about life with her father. Louisa finds herself very moved by Sissy's deep feelings.

Commentary:

'To do unto others as I would that they should do unto me': This a moral lesson Dickens gave to the political-economists (Gradgrind and Bounderby). This is based on a saying from the Bible, 'whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them'. There was an idea of the day which supports this saying that it should be that there was iron law of wages based on supply and demand.

In this regard John Ruskin, very great critic, thus sets up an alternative model for good industrial relations between masters and men, claiming that the social affections need and must be cultivated, not for any ulterior motive or purpose beyond their fundamental rightness: The affections only become a true motive power when they ignore every other motive and condition of political economy. Treat the servant kindly, with the idea of turning his gratitude to account, you will get, as you deserve, no gratitude, or any value for your kindness; but treat him kindly without any economical purpose.

In this chapter there is a story based on the story of the Arabian Nights which is Scheherazade's skill in story-telling, which enables to tell her tales from 1001 nights, thus avoiding the usual fate of the Sultan's wives, of being beheaded immediately after their wedding night: **'And often and often of a night, he used to forget all his troubles in wondering whether the Sultan would let the lady go on with the story . . .'**

Brief summary of Ch. 10, bk. 1 (Stephan Blackpool)

Stephen Blackpool is introduced, a simple and poor man whose job is a power-loom operator in Bounderby's factory. Arriving at his lodging, a temporary place to stay, after escorting home his friend Rachael, the pure, honest woman he loves, Stephen surprised to encounter his drunken, immoral, slatternly wife lying in his bed.

Commentary:

Old Stephen: Stephen Blackpool: the name has clear associations of martyrdom in that St Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He was accused of blaspheming (to use words which show no respect for God) against Judaism and his speech in his own defence so outraged (to cause someone to feel very upset) his accusers that he was stoned to death. Blackpool a town in the north-west of England; the name also have the symbolic relation to Stephen's ultimate fate.

Dickens frequently uses synecdoche, that he uses a part to represent the whole, an example of this is that in Stephen Blackpool is referred to working class or to represent the plight of the poor. Hands are parts of the body but they represent the factory workers. In this regard, the reduction of human complexity to a single function implies in the phrase 'factory hand'.

'Yet I don't see Rachael, still!': Stephen says this phrase and he is still thinking of Rachael to be his legal wife. The idea of this phrase depends on the story in the Bible that the prophet Jacob worked for seven years to earn Rachel as his wife, but was tricked by her father into marrying her older sister, Leah. He laboured another seven years was eventually able to marry her.

'Come awa! from 't. 'Tis mine, and I've a right to 't!': Stephen talks to his wife when the former finds the latter laying on his bed. This statement reveals that the implication of claim on the marriage bed is clearly that of conjugal rights. And these rights are connected with marriage or the relationship between husband especially their sexual relationship.