A few years ago-it is easy to find out how many, for it was at the close of that terrible Indian mutiny time of 1857 and 1858—I found myself so shattered in health, and broken wn in spirits, by some twelve months of hard service in the north-west provinces, where rebellion.had been the hottest, as to be compelled to take sick leave; the spring was then too far advanced to make a homeward voyage through the Red Sea a prudent sten for one in my condition, so I resolved on seeking change and cure in a cheaper and speedier fashion, by going off to one of the many delightful sanita ria in the Himalayas.

The curious among the readers of this little sketch must forgive me if I withhold the name of the station to which I went; and they must likewise further exercise that Christian feeling towards me for introducing in the disguise of fictitious names the various characters that figure here. It may be that some of my readers of Indian experiences may identify not only the place, but also some of the individuals; to all such, if any there be, I can only say-exercise by all means your memories and perceptive powers to the utmost, if you please,

A pleasant little spot was this retreat of mine, among the pine-covered hills, backed by range upon range, ending in mountain summits clad in a glistening garment of never changing snow; while, far below, like a grev misty ocean, lay the sandy plains, traced here and there by silver veins, fast and broad flow ing rivers in reality, but seen from such a dis tant height, looking like thin serpentine lines of gleaming light. The pure, free atmosphere; the cool breezes; the tempered sun-no longer feared and avoided as an enemy, but courted and enjoyed as a benefactor-all these, and endless other beauties, silent appealings from nature to man's better sense, seemed almost to bring back upon me a tranquility of spirit, and a delicious feeling of contentment and repose-a state of mind which many years of military life, with its rough experiences and hardening influences, had banished for awhile. I cannot say that civilization and the congregation of one's fellow-creatures had added much to what nature had done towards mak ing the place enjoyable; but this view of the case depended of course upon one's peculiar character and disposition. Mine, I fear, had imbibed, from my profession, which had forced me to a mere existence in some of the dullest and most detestable of the many dull and detestable places to be found in the upper provinces of India, a dash of the cynic, the misanthrope, and the materialist; a state of mind which I only found to be acquired and not inherent when my thoughts traveled back, as they very often did, to the home far away, and to those among whom my earlier years had been passed. It was then, and only then; perhaps, I discovered that there remained in my nature a little of the sympathy and warmth towards others which is born in all of us, more

There was the church, of course, utterly deserted for six days out of the seven; but on the seventh holding high gala, for then were gathered together in great force the feminine strength, or rather weakness, of the station gorgeously attired in the Paris fashions of the preceding year. A club likewise, close to though clearly an institution of outter antago nism, but which there is no denying got by far the best of it, for the club days were six of the seven, besides the nights too; rarely out of those one hundred and forty-four hours weekly could one pass by without hearing the clicking of billiard balls, or without seeing, through some of its many windows, silent parties of four scated at whist tables, shuffling, cutting, dealing, and going through the mysteries of the game, intent as though the fate of British

India depended upon their play. Then, topmost on one of the many peaks of the hill over which the station spread, stood, with the English flag waving over it, the house of the governor of the province—the centre of a world-a small world, certainly, yet as brimful as any larger one of anxietics and fears, hopes and aspirations, running over with envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness. Where the golden calf of self-interest was ele vated and worshipped unceasingly, as it is everywhere elevated and worshipped in this world of ours—a centre it was to which all looked, many for advancement, others for approval and praise; some, the shortcomers and offenders, for moderation and forgiveness; all for something or another, from a coveted appointment down to an invitation to dinner. Ranged round about, respectfully, yet very moderately subordinate, were the residences of the general of the division, where, from the top of a more humble staff waved a flag of smaller size; and the commissioner, besides those of other civil and military magnates; then, promiscuously mingled, came the smalle fry-the gudgeons, the minnows, and the ittlebats of the social seas.

We were soon settled down in a small hou which by a very liberal construction of an English term had been described to me by the house agent as 'furnished.' I say we, though it seems that my companion has not been in troduced; as he plays rather a conspicuous part in the small events about to be chronicled it is only fair to bring him forward, with a flourish of trumpets, by the grand entrance, and not shuffle him in up the back stairs.

Buckley was his name—Charley Buckleyor, as he had always been called by his brother officers, Buckey. No doubt, it had been thought that by sliding the '1' the name was softened down, and so conveyed a better idea of the affectionate regard felt for him. He was lecidedly a favorite with men, women, and children, and with the brutes too; and this last point I am by no means disposed to treat lightly, for it has always seemed to me that there is a marvellous discernment sometimes shown by dogs and horses, more like reason than instinct, in the spontaneous attachments and dislikes which they form towards us. Buckley certainly had but few enemies either among human or brute kind. I don't mean to maintain by this that nearness to moral perfection ensures friends, or that Buckley was very close to that impossible standard of excellence often read of but never met with; he was only a rather above the average specimen of the young, vigorous, well-educated, and generous Englishman, such as our public schools and colleges send out into the by hundreds, and fortunate it is for England that it is so. A good rider across country, great at cricket, foot-ball, and rackets; ever ready to join, heart and soul, in promoting any scheme for the general good and amusement—whether races, balls, pic-nics, croquet fights, or anything else. He added to this frank, handsome face; an open, generous manner ; broad shoulders, and five feet eleven; outward and superficial advantages, which, oppose the feeling as we may, prepossesses most of us at once. Nor must I forget to add

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another strong point in his favor-a liberal have no desire to hurt the feelings of any one.' allowance, generously and freely spent.

friendship-the sort of friendship generally met with between a younger and an elder patronage sometimes on Buckley's part which a certain sort of character among the juniors, desire to put it mildly, I am making an egotistical fool of myself) had given me a degree of influence over him which it was frequently necessary to exercise, often to the disturbance, but never to the permanent lessening or break ing of our attachment.

And so we settled down to pass the summe onths away, Buckley devoting his time to the Club billiard tables in the morning, to calling on all the ladies, married and single, in the place during the middle of the day, and in the evening to riding upon the Mall, or lounging at the Band Stand with the prettiest and most agreeable women to be found; while I, following the more hermit-like and thoughtful propensities of my nature, devoted myself, with little exception, to reading and day dreaming, and to quiet and solitary rambles among the hills, not forgetting my Persian and | greater worldly experience that morning. other studies-for I was grinding hard for a Staff appointment-content to hear of the doings of the little world around us from my

'We are getting up a Spins' Sweep,' said Buckley to me a week or two after our arrival; will you join it? They are great fun.' We were standing in the veranda in the early morning, drinking the customary tea, and enjoying-at least I was-the fresh air. and luxuriating in the bright sunshine as it poured slantingly through the branches of the

surrounding pines. 'A Spins' Sweep! What on earth is that?

replied. 'Well, a Spinsters' Sweepstake, since you don't understand contractions of your native tongue. They are generally got up here every year, and are an immense resource to the poor well as an amusement to some of those who

'Your explanation leaves me no wiser than before.

'Well, old fellow, I am sorry to find a man of your intelligence in so benighted a state of ignorance as to the manners and customs of time-killing bachelors in these diggings; but at the Bazaar., I'll tell you all about it if you promise first of all to take a ticket. I can't, you know, expend my time and energies for the mere diffusion of knowledge without some material result.'

'Consider it promised,' and I continued with smile, ! I entrust to you both my purse and my reputation, so be careful of the trust.' Meanwhile Buckley had lighted a cheroot,

and prepared to enjoy the first, and what he always declared to be the most delicious smoke himself into the most comfortable of the two crockery thereon; leaning back his head as though about to fall into a dreamy contemplaion of the rafters of the veranda roof, he took two or three luxuriously lazy whiffs before condescending to proceed.

Well, my dear fellow, it is this: you must know-from hearsay, of course only, because you don't often go prowling about that there are no end of spins here : and you must know that there are no end of fellows here too. Possibly you may guess-vinegary old cynic as you are—that it may sometimes enter into the dear little heads of the aforesaid spins—though this I would not myself for the world assert, but merely just suppose, that a state of matri mony would perhaps be a more pleasant con dition of existence than that of lonely virgin

hat in the hearts of us solitary, selfish, wretched bachelors there is a suspicion that the beer and skittles of life, or, to express it more elegantly, the claret and billiards of existence, are not likely to be made more plentiful by venturing on the risky and expensive investmen of a wife. There,' he went on, breaking into one of his gay laughs, which had been gradually rising as he spoke, 'I have unconsciously condensed into a nutshell one of the greatest social problems of this enlightened century. Well, to proceed, we young moral philosophers, sceing and comprehending these things, have

ity; while you may have an idea, moreover

resolved to derive both instruction and amuse ment from the study of this peculiar phase of the human character, male and female; and in order to bring the study within the compass of all, and so make it popular, we, knowing the love of chance inherent in all men, have hit upon a plan for developing the nobler aim by pandering to the ignoble. To go into practical marriageable girls in the place, not forgetting the widows, should there fortunately be any,

s they give a wonderful zest to the thing, and often puzzle the oldest philosophers among us. These names are drawn, and the man who draws the name of the girl who first marries gets the stakes—in fact like a Derby, Ascot, or other race sweep, with the difference that women run instead of horses, and the stakes are matrimony.'

'I see,' I replied 'and to carry the simile still further, the reputation which a woman carns for good running depends very much non the value of the prize carried off.

Precisely so. The uncharitable addition comes from the very bottom of your heart, I know. But the fun of the thing is not in the nere lottery drawing, but in the buying and selling and the betting that follow, and the opportunities for exercising one's observation d judgment; the rise and fall in the value of likely fillies, as flirtations keenly watched, grow cooler or become more serious, is perectly startling, and would stagger the Bulls and Bears of the Stock Exchange. The day before and the day after a ball or pic-nic is the time for speculation. Oh, it's just the sort of thing you would enjoy. You should take a

lozen chances at least. 'It seems to me,' for I was half annoyed, though half amused, at all this,- it seems to me that you young moral philosophers, as you call yourselves, have not hit upon an amusement either very generous or considerat towards others, but rather suggestive of the danger and annoyance of the frogs. What say the fathers and the brothers of the fair

spinsters to this little scheme ?' One of the grandest sciences of life, old fellow, as you know, is to adapt oneself to the customs and usages of the society into which we are thrown. Let us hopethat they see the wisdom of following this excellent philosophy. Of course,' he continued, in a more serious tone, we keep the thing tolerably quiet, and Buckley broke down for want of a simile.

'I've no sisters, either martied or single, His military career had then been but a short | nor indeed any female relatives at all here; one, he having joined the regiment in which I but if I had it would not be very gratifying to was a captain but five years before. Between | me to think that they might unconsciously be us there had, from the first, existed a great aiding in the entertainment of a set of idle

young fellows ' 'It is not often,' said Buckley, 'that we find brother, not forgetting, however, a dash of you riding the conventional horse, but I must say you have certainly got upon his back now rather amused me. My greaterage (I was his | Do you suppose that the matrimonial chances senior by about twelve years), combined with or prospects—the term is fearfully caddish, but for want of a better it must do-do you supfor a calm and unprejudiced judgment in most | pose that the matrimonial chances or prospects matters (I am sadly afraid that, spite of every of one's sisters at home are not speculated upon and discussed among their acquaintance there fully as much as is the case here? and do you imagine that there is less of real respect and true chivalrous feeling among us than there is among the scandal-mongering gossips of an English little Pedlington? No, my dear Cox, be liberal and dispassionate as you generally of time.'
are, and don't be called to reason by an inexperienced griff like myself. However, enough of this; I'll go and tub, and then we'll break fast, for I've promised to play Tommy Mar

shall at billiards at the Club at ten.' Whereupon he threw away the end of his cheroot, yawned, got up, stretched himself, and went in-doors, leaving me to think over what had been said, and to come to the conclusion, as I very soon did, that Buckley had shown the older head of the two, and the Many days had passed since our converse

tion about the lottery; and the subject, so far as I was concerned, was well nigh forgotten. I was busy with my Moonshee at the mid-day lesson in Persian, translating one of the many extravagant stories so well known to all students of that language, when Buckley, with a young officer of artillery named Watson, disnounted at the door and came in.

'Well, Cox,' as he threw his whip into one chair and his hat into another, 'deep in the mysteries of those very improper Persian tales? Thank God, my education in that line was neglected, and I don't understand them; but send away Mr. Harshang Dass, put aside your books; and let's have some tiffin, -and above all, some beer; we are both dead-beat after our ride in the sun, and the mental exertion of inventing little bits of scandal and small devils who don't know how to kill time, as talk for the entertainment of the women folk on whom we have been calling.'

'Give me five minutes, and I will be at your service,' I answered, after a nod and a word or two of greeting to Watson; 'meanwhile make yourself useful by shouting until you wake up the Khitmulgars in the kitchen, if they should fortunately be there, and not off

been dismissed, books put aside, and the table arranged for lunch.

'In what a conventional age we live,' Buckley began, as soon as he could recover his breath after emptying at one pull a pewter of bitter beer, and inverting the mug upon the table, in incontestable proof of his having really emptied it-'in what a conventional age we live. What an excellent custom it would be of the whole twenty-four hours, by throwing if the married people here were to keep a tap casy chairs our establishment beasted, and elevating his legs upon the small table, utterly regardless of the safety of the scanty stock of thirsty peacocks of society, like Watson and 'You might have ascertained that, if anxmyself, and, besides, be an advantage to themselves too, for there's no denying we should be much more amusing and fluent when in the drawing-room than we can be now, under the present rigorous system, with throats full of dust, and energies exhausted."

'Scarcely a profitable investment,' I said. for the benedicts; it is doubtful whether they, and their wives too, would not think that morning callers could be got at too dear-s

'You look at things in too commercial a spirit; you reduce everything to a kind of bar-

'Nevertheless, Buckley, it is a spirit which s the basis of every act, motive, impulse, and eeling of life-from the affection of a mother for her child, down to the purchase of a penny box of cigar-lights in the street; however, we

von't discuss metaphysics now.' 'But,' put in Watson, 'there's no doubt a couple of glasses of cool sherry, administered oth sensible and pleasant, without being open to the charge, as Buckley's suggestion is, of

'It reminds me of old Mrs. Briggs, the wife of Briggs, the Commissariat, who gives milkounch—made of Commissariat rum of course to her visitors; did you ever call there ? Buckley asked us.

We both confessed we had not, though w knew of her by hear-say.

'I did once,' he went on, 'and great fun i was; the punch was brought in; and a small glass was forced down my throat—a case of no compulsion, only you must. The size of the dose is regulated by the rank of the visitor: subs and captains get a small glass, field-officers etails, it is this: we get out a list of all the a larger one, and so on: one day the general alled, and he was made to take some in a mug.

'It is a pity that she stands too near the bot tom of the metaphorical ladder for her good example to become fashionable.' I said : 'but it s clear, from the graduated scale by which she measures out her funch, that she has learned omething from the manners of the upper ten.

other day,' Watson said; 'she was saying to Mrs. Robinson that she always got her boots from Paris, it was the only way to be well fitted. Mrs. Robinson asked the name of her maker. "Droit and Gauche," answered old Mrs. Briggs, with the most delightful uncon sciousness in the world. She had seen th words, one inside each boot, and had jumped at the conclusion that they were the names of

the makers!' 'By-the-way, Cox,' said Buckley, after our aughter had ceased, ' the drawing for the to say, was most religiously and warmly resweep comes off this afternoon at Baker,s bunalow-you know Baker, of the Seikhs ?--wil ou come ?-Watson and I are going.'

'No : I am afraid not : this is the last safe day for the mail, so this afternoon must be given up to writing English letters; you must look after my interests at the lottery. Who are the favorites?' I inquired. 'Oninions differ, of course; some say one,

some another.' Buckley replied. 'There's only came out last cold weather; she is really engaged to Edwards, the competition wallah the season. It resolves itself into a question England, with a complexion as fresh as paint, sister of Mrs. Butler, without much complexlike Juno, and sits a horse li

laugh. 'No ungenerous comparison if you please then there's Kate Maxwell, who lives with the Fullers, a nice girl; Miss Richardson, the major's daughter.!

'With a retroussee nose, pink cheeks, bright eyes, lively spirits, and a good temper, but no her consent is certain; so you have only to regular features, and altogether wanting in look sharp not only to win a wife but to gain style-what the Persian writers happily de- a bet too. scribe as the beauty of the young jackass, I put in parenthetically.

'Besides,' Buckley went on, regardless of the interruption, 'a host of other girls, not forgetting the charming widow, Mrs. Tollitt, any one of them likely to win in my opinion. Good gracious, when we consider that four long months are before us, it is positively absurd to attempt to say what may be. Why, in this country a man may almost be engaged, married, and the father of twins in that space

'We'll say nothing about the last matter but it is certainly ample time for the first two events to come off,' I remarked. 'But,' exclaimed Watson, with a look partly

nquisitive and partly amused at Buckley, you have forgotten little Carry Wharton, he lace is first, decidedly.' 'Little Carry Wharton, little Carry 'Whar-

on,' I repeated—'to think of your leaving her out of the list! Why, she is the prettiest and best girl I know, and should stand above all. 'Yes, she is a nice girl,' Buckley replied, with an attempt at carclessness which he did not carry off very well.

'You have been rather attentive in that quarter" of late, I think,' I observed, after a short pause.

' Not attentive in the way that you imply or that people generally mean by that word,' .said Buckley, flushing a little. 'You know that her brother and I were at Rugby togetherher brother Harry of whom she was so fond: he was killed before Delhi-you must remem-

'Yes, poor fellow! a fine gallant boy he was -and Carry Wharton is now almost without near relations. Let us hope that some one will claim her before long, and prove as good a husband to her as she deserves.'

'Both her parents.' Buckley went on, 'have cen dead some years, and she now lives with her sister, Mrs. Jurton: the small pension as a colonel's orphan being all she has to depend upon, I fancy.' 'However,' he added, jumping up, 'it is

time to be off. Take a soda and brandy, and light up another cheroot first, Watson; and Cox,' turning to me, 'don't expect me home to dinner to-night—I am engaged to the Jur-In the course of ten minutes the teacher had ton's for croquet at five, with a ticket for soup afterwards. Au revoir, old fellow.'

Watson gave me a humorous look as Buckley finished, said 'Good-bye,' and went out; and in less than a minute they were both can tering off in the direction of Baker's house. English letters written and sent to the post,

solitary dinner quickly disposed of, two hours of reading, followed by a pipe, brought the day to an end. It could scarcely have been more than half an hour after my having of cool beer in their verandas, specially for the turned into bed when I was suddenly roused

ous to know, without waking me to ask,' I replied rather sharply, for this sudden invasion rather out me out. 'Don't be out of temper, Cox: I am sorry

o have awoke you ; but I could not go to be without first speaking with you." His look, seen in the dim light of the small night-lamp, was thoughtful and anxious,

while there was a subdued tone in his voice. as unusual as was the serious expression upon his face. 'Something is the matter,' I exclaimed, jumping up and then suddenly sitting down

upon the side of the bed. 'What has hapened? Any news from the plains? Has the Nana been taken?' Every one's thoughts n those day turned upon the mutiny, and the uncaught monster who had played so fiendish a part in it. 'Has the Nana been taken?' I repeated.

'No, no,' said Buckley, smiling at my ear nestness. 'I have no such good news to tell by the servant before one went in, would be It is about myself that I want to speak. Since ve parted this afternoon I have made a fool of myself.'

Which generally means that a man has oposed—is it so with you ?"

'Yes.' 'In that case advice would come too late

'I'll say nothing.' 'I don't want your advice; but simply to tell

you all about it if you will listen, But you may prefer going to sleep again, so I will leave ou,' and he turned to go.

My seeming indifference had nettled him It was but a seeming indifference-all the while my thoughts had been in a confused state between sleeping or waking, made still more confused by his sudden and unexpected onfession

'Sit down, Buckley, and tellme as much o as little as you like-you can trust me, I think.' I said no more, but left him to begin in his own way and when he pleased.

It all came of that cursed sweep-confound the thing and all those who started it!' he sayagely jerked out, as though it were a relief to 'There was a good story told of her the his feelings to get it out; then, continuing more slowly-' We went to the drawing, Watson and I; a lot of men were thereamong them that insufferable snob, Smith of packing-cases, went staggering along the the Dragoons. You know how thoroughly I

detest that fellow?" A quiet nod was my reply. One of the impulses of my companion was a hearty prejudice against the Queen's officers generally, an old feeling, and, even at that time, a very prevalent one among the officers in the late Com pany's army— a feeling which, it is only just

ciprocated. Well, as bad luck would have it, this Smith drew the name of Miss Macdonald. He was awfully clated at this, wanted to back her, and offered to take four to one in hundreds-rupees of course; so I gave him the odds. was booked, and I swore to myself-for he positively had put me out of temper—that he should not win-not for the sake of the paltry stakes or the still more paltry bet, I don't car Miss Macdonald, the brigadier's daughter, who one penny for them, but he shall not have the laugh of me.' And here the Grand Turk looked very scornful and very savage too, as and the wedding is to come off at the end of though the committing of serious violence upon the absent dragoon would have been fable of the idle boys who threw stones to the of time : will other matches be made up, and very agreeable indeed. After that I went to will they come off before them ? Surely there | the Jurtons to play croquet. I was thorough will. There are lots of likely girls here this ly out of temper, and did all sorts of reckless ner. There's Miss Munro, sister of Munro | things-went through the same hoops twice, of the Civil Service, only three months from | croquetted away my partner's ball into the most out-of-the-way places, and by the time besides a small something a year; Miss Battle, the game was over had made enemies for life of all the players, friends as well as foes. ion, and no money, but a tip top figure ; walks After the people were gone, Carry Wharton Here and I walked about the garden. I feel like a stowed away. How different to the feelings blackguard, Cox,' he went on passionately, with which, a few short months before, they

'An Amazon,' suggested Watson, with a 'In mixing up all these things almost in the had been unpacked; then all was hope and contained a draft for the stakes, in amount then that I proposed to her.'

'And she accepted you?' 'Yes-provided Mrs. Jurton, who is her earest relative, makes no objection.' 'Then it may be looked upon as settled:

' And carry off the sweepstakes as well, since you prefer to jest about the matter,' he answered, bitterly. 'I drew Carry Wharton's ame-But, for God's sake, Cox,' he went on, say no more of this miserable lottery! I looked to you for sympathy and comfort, and

not for chaff.' "I can't see that you stand much in need of either sympathy or comfort,' I added. 'You have proposed to a most amiable girl, who I have long thought was more than fond of you, and towards whom I have also thought your feelings were more than those of friendship She will make a wife of whom any man might be proud. It would be well if all those who want to marry could get such a one; there yould be fewer bachelors in that case. I think

'That's the very point,' said Buckley; 'I don't want a wife. Twelve hours ago I had no more idea of marrying, and no more desire to marry, than the man in the moon. But above all, the miserable circumstances of the lottery and the bet make me so disgustedconfound it all.'

'In short, you begin to think that there are after all objections to the study of moral philosophy through the medium of spinstersweep-

'You try to provoke me; you hit a man

then he's down!' "My dear Buckley, I don't sympathise with u, because sympathy would be out of place. Would you have me sit down and weep over the matter and encourage you to do the same ? -to moralize feebly on the subject of hasty and imprudent engagements, and their miserable endings? to offer you all sorts of commonplace consolation; in short, do my very best to make you believe yourself to be the most miserable wretch in the world, with nothing before you but a wretched future or suicide? The thing is done rnd cannot be undone. Even supposing it possible to undo it, it would be done again ere the next three months are

past. Don't blame the lottery for it; all it has done has been to bring about the crisis a few months earlier, for you were on the high road to an engagement with Carry Wharton.' 'I believe you are right. I believe I have cared far more for her for some time than I

have admitted even to myself.' 'Of course you have,' I went on. seen it for a long time. Sympathy and comfort, indeed! You will never need either on account of this. I have too much faith in her. And God forbid that she should ever be in

need of them; but I have no fears for either of you in the future.' 'But then the bet and the lottery,' said Buck-'Why should they? It was pretty shrewderested in croquet at the Jurton's of late; besides you have neither won the bet nor the

sweep yet. Who knows but one or two wedlings may come off before yours? Perhaps,'. added, with a smile, 'I may be surprising you one of these days soon by throwing my self away. I almost think it would be dangerous, confirmed old bachelor as I am, if here was a second Carry Wharton here,' I continued more seriously, and feeling very nuch inclined to sigh as I stopped. 'However, good-night! I congratulate you most

sincerely and heartily.' He returned my pressure of the hand warmy, and with a smile, said 'Good night!' and urned to leave the room.

'But, selfish fellow as I am,' he said, comng back with the old gay look upon his face and the cheerful tone in his voice again, ' I was forgetting to tell you your fate—you are uite out of the coach : you drew the she go-

rilla of the place.' 'I can guess who you mean,' and we both 'Let us spare the utterance of the aughed. lady's name, though only the walls would hear it. Yes, as you truly say, I am out of the coach.' It was clear that the name of Grace Thompson had fallen to my lot, a girl mos

plain, and to whom, unfortunately, one could ot apply the alternative adjective- 'amiable. 'Good-night, once more.'

Time, the mighty old clock, went on, tick ing, ticking-marking off upon the dial of the year the days and weeks and months. Wonderful old clock ! never to have needed any winding up, nor oiling of wheels, nor clean ing of mechanism since the works were first set going, nor ever likely to, to the very end of its existence. Marvellous old chrono never varying with season or with place, in winter the same, in summer the same, in all latitudes and longitudes the same-at the equator or at the pole, on mountain summits

or in the deepest valleys-needing no regulat ing and yet never having its decrees questioned The middle of September was par: sick caves and privilege leaves were drawing to a close; grass widowers, who had been kep down in the plains at their courts or with their regiments during the tedious summer months. egan to look for the return of their wives and children. It was clear that the long summer carnival was near its end. Camels and mules freighted with furniture, portmanteaus, and downward roads. Tradesmen were balancing up their books, making out and presenting their 'little bills' at their customers like loaded pistols, and causing in most cases scarcely less onsternation than loaded pistols would have estimating the bad and questionable debts, and calculating the probable gains. The clubmanager was doing the same as the shopkeep ers, with the same sensational results. The elergyman, commercial in his way too, gave himself up, heart and soul, to collecting the pew rents for the waning season, circulating a bscription-list on behalf of the Additional Clergy Society, and debating whether one or two more appeals in the shape of collections could not be made before his flock became scattered abroad. The season, viewed in matrimonial light, had been a most disastrous one. The bachelors, spite of every encour-

themselves equal to the occasion. No marriages, not even a proposal, had been brough about; Miss Macdonald's engagement still dragged its slow length along, and Buckley stood revealed the hero of the hour.

It is hard, or to speak more truthfully, it is impossible to imagine with what feelings the poor girls must have set themselves to work to superintend the repacking of trunks and net-boxes. Many a bitter tear, no doubt, fell upon the delicate silks, the dear pets of

bonnets, the exquisite croquet boots, and the

agement from the lovely spins, had not show

ame breath; but it can't be helped-it was anticipation, now all was bitterness and despair. The feelings of a newly-fledged M. P. who, primed with a virgin speech, rehearse

and corrected over and over again, finds the debate prematurely to a close by a divisionor the soldier, who, after whetting his sabre for the combat, is forced to return it to his sheath after a little bloodless skirmishing-or the schoolboy caught in the act of orchard robbing when just about to fill his pocket with the coveted fruit, are among some of the most trying circumstances of masculine life, but they must be as nothing compared with the trials of disappointed spinsterhood.

NO. 4

Nor were disappointment and disgust cor fined to the spinster's only, the feelings were strong and almost general, for the music and dancing were nearly over, and the piper had to be paid. Married life, like single life, ha its cares, as little Mrs. Williams, who looked so happy at the general's ball two nights ago, was quite ready to declare. Next week sh must go down to rejoin her dear Charles, who was unable to get leave this summer, and had been grilling in the plains most patiently How on earth she was to tell him of that bil for Rs. 470, just sent in by that horrid Madame Valence, she really did not know. It was perfectly awful how the trifles amount ed up-a dozen pairs of gloves or so, a new bonnet, and a few other odds and ends were all she had had : however, if Charles liked her to look nice, and he always declared that he did, why he must not mind paying for his whim. She was not extravagant, not at all and then it was all the fault of the horrid country that things were so dear. Then there was the charming Mrs. Campbell: her dear old, suspicious hubby had positively written that she was not to be so intimate with that dear, delightful Capt, Morton, the A. D. C. It was positively shameful that people should carry stories about her to her husband's ears. What business was it of theirs if Capt. Mor ton was kind enough to ride with her on the Mall, or to walk beside her jampan to the Bank, or to send her nice flowers and fruit? Nasty meddling old things! they were spiteful and jealous, and only wanted to make mischief. So she should have to coax her dear hubby when she got back, put him in good temper again, and make him promise never.

never more to listen to unkind things said of her, or to think of them again. Every one, in short, was out of sorts, more While the women said 'Bother the place,' the men with more emphasis exclaimed, Damn the place;' for, as I have said, the fiddling and dancing were over, and the settling day had come. But there were two exceptions to this state of things-Buckley and Carry Wharton; the wedding-day had come at last. Smoothly and safely they had flofted down the stream of courtship, and were now to be safely moored in the matrimonial haven. The waters had looked uncertain near their source, almost promising, many might have hought, a rough and anxious voyage; but of this, I, usually the least sanguine of men, had never felt any misgivings. I almost begin to think that my cynicism is but a theory after all, and not a very deep-scated one either, always breaking down or giving way when brought to a practical application.

The wedding was a quiet one, and after the breakfast, which was at the Jurtons' house. we gathered in the verandah to say good-bye and God speed. They were going off for th honeymoon to a house a few miles in the in terior, there to remain until the time came for Buckley to return to his regiment. It was doubtful whether I should see them again for ome time, as my examination had been passed and orders were given me to join, within week, the staff appointment to which I had been gazette**d**.

'Cox, my dear fellow,' said Buckley, taking ne by the arm and leading me back into the dining-room, 'one word with you. Here ar two letters I received only this morning,' and he placed them in my hand. , 'Will you dis pose of them for me? To Smith I would vish the cheque returned; and as to the other matter, let it be sent anonymously to any char itable fund you may choose.'

I promised to do as he wished, pretty wel ruessing the nature of the letters. 'And now,' he continued, 'good-bye, You nust write us sometimes, and I-and Carry too-will write you, and very often. May w

soon meet again, old fellow.' I warmly shook the offered hand, promise o write often, said a few words, which, kind

as I tried to make them, seemed, as they were uttered, to be miserably commonplace, and to carry a meaning very short of what I felt, and we returned to the verandah. Like most Englishmen, we were both undemonstrative in our meetings and our partings. I devoutly believe that either one of us would have risked his own life to have saved

the other's or would have shown the equally rare virtue, had occasion called for it, of giving the other a letter of credit upon his bankers to the full extent of his account. And yet friends such as we were, and there are many to be found in the world, meet, after long years of absence, with a mere 'Well, old fel low,' and a shake of the hand, and separate, perhaps, for years, in the same cool fashion We can imagine a couple of Icelanders doing this sort of thing, and we can imagine a couple of Frenchmen indulging in stage embraces and other antics on such occasions; and yet it cannot be the sun-latitude can have nothing to do with it-for we cannot imagine the pulses of the two phlegmatic Icelanders beat ing one whit the faster, or their keeping bot tled up under their scalskin waistcoats very much impulsive and generous feeling; nor can we picture to ourselves Henri and Alphonse, spite of their gesticulations and em braces, having very much idea of carrying their regard beyond such demonstrations. And yet under this seeming coldness and in difference we keep down the best feelings of our natures. It must be that the dread of being thought a humbug and sentimental—those spectres which haunt an Englishman, and make him out of very fear appear other than he is-are at the bottom of it all. A general confusion of handshakings and

general confusion of spoken farewells, many tears and much kissing on the part of women kind, Carry Buckley smiling and tearful carried away in a jampan, with her husband riding beside her, a fluttering of handkerchiefs, some slippers in mid-air, and they were gone.

Miserably lonely and cheerless the little house seemed, and very solitary and very much alone I felt on my return home that afternoon. Even the pipe failed to afford me the usual amount of comfort; I could neither smoke, read, nor work at my usual tasks : so after trying each in turn, and failing utterly, I rushed off to seek companionship and life at the club. But Buckley's letters yet remained in my pocket. These I first took out, and soon disposed of. One was from Smith, with a cheque for Rs. 100, in payment of the eventful lawyer of a witness that he was examining. bet : the other was from Baker, who had been the treasurer for the Spinster Sweepstake and

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My little story is nearly finished. We will take just one more little glimpse at our friends before the curtain falls and the lights are extinguished. Time, the perpetual old clock, has gone on ticking; the dial of the year had been circled and thrown into the abyss of the past, there to moulder and rot among the unknown thousands of its predecessors; another dial and another had been circled too, and added to the decaying mass. It was three years since Buckley's marriage, and I was

with them again for the first time since In looking back, as I very often did during those three years, and recalling to my mind what Carry Wharton then was, it used to seem to me that she was all a woman should be. and that in meeting her again she could scarcely befound so good, so excellent, and so loveable as of old. But perfect as she had been as a girl. I found her, as a wife, still as perfect. And what is still more, Buckley evidently thought so too. And as I saw them in their happiness, their mutual confidence and love. aiding, cherishing, and supporting each other, a darkness seemed to fall from mine eyes, and a voice seemed to say, 'You were generous in your judgment of these; you were confident in your hopes of these; you judged and you hoped wisely: there is much that is good in this world; be generous in your judgment of all, be hopeful in your hopes of all.'

## THE DEEPEST COAL PIT IN ENGLAND.

A correspondent of the London Telegraph has been down the great coalpit at Wigan, and writes a long account of what he saw and heard, from which we extract the following interesting details: "It is very difficult to realize the enormous value of Wigan underground. Looking at the plans of the mines which we mean to inspect to-day, we see that between the surface and the deepest point to which the sinkers have reached, there have been no fewer than twelve workable seams of coal. These include the great seam of cannel. The seams are classed in five different series. First there is the Ince series, consisting of four seams -the 'yard' seam, at a depth of eighty-four yards; the 'four feet' seam, one hundred and thirty-four yards below the surface; the 'seven feet' seam, twenty-six yards lower; and the 'furnace' seam, at a distance of one hundred and eighty-six yards from the surface. With the exception of that which was named last, all these seams are exhausted. Below them come the Pemberton series, with a five-feet eam, at a depth of two hundred and seventy yards, and a four feet scam twenty-five yards beneath. Then there is the Wigan series, with its five feet, four feet, and nine feet seams; the first of which is four hundred and fortyfive, the second four hundred and sixty-six, and the third four hundred and ninety-five yards below the surface. Lower still, at a depth of six hundred yards, is the famous cannel scam, and now the men are going even below that; they have indeed "sunk the shaft to the vard seam of the Orrell series, which is six hundred and seventy-three yards below the surface; and are now, night after night, pushing their way to the flery and dangerous hundred yards below ground, although at Hindley they have reached the same coal at a lepth of three hundred and twenty yards. There are about six hundred and fifty mer employed at these mines-the Rosebridge Colieries. Just now the times are rather bad for colliers. They have not been known to be

worse at any time during the last thirty years. "After chatting awhile with the manager and his son, we made ready for a descent. We do this by doffing the clothing we ordinarily vear, and donning in its stead a very rough miner's dress. Then we (the manager's son and the writer) walk out, and, calling at the lamp room, provide ourselves with lamps,

which are somewhat better than the ordinary 'Davy.' "It is necessary to prepare your nerves for a shock. We are going down to the Cannel Mine, a depth of six hundred yards, and the big engine will throw us that distance in less than a minute. At a signal there is, as it were, a sudden withdrawal of the bottom of the cage eneath our feet, and a rapid falling through dark space; then there is as sudden a check, and we feel, not only as if we had regained our footing, but as if we were being thrust back again as rapidly as we had been before falling. Before time is allowed to analyze the sensations we have experienced, the cage touches the bottom, and we stumble out half

dizzy into the eye of the pit.

Before we leave the pit eye we have our lamps lit, and then turn to take a stroll into the workings. We are not long in reaching a little cabin, Into which we step, and while sitting there we are told some particulars respecting life in the pit. When the men come heir to work they obtain their lamps, already lit, but unlocked, at the pit bank. Then they descend, and at the pit eye the lamps are examined as the men enter the particular district of the mine in which they may be employed. Every day the fireman examines the clothes of each miner, to prevent the introduction of pipes and matches. The law is observed very strictly. If a man is found to have the means of striking a light he is sent before a magistrate and either fined or imprisoned. But such a discovery is rarely made at Rosebridge. The authority of the manager is regarded, and he himself is personally respected by the men; and throughout a large colliery district these mines are noted for the admirable system of working adopted, and for the skill and wisdon engaged in their management.

From talk about matters in general, we, still sitting in this cabin, six hundred yards below the surface of the earth, turn to what is more personal, and I learn that my guide has had his dangers and his narrow escapes, as all men must have who have to do with the getting of coal. Once he was in at an explosiand of course ran for his life. The subtle choke damp, that palpable white mist, was swifter than himself, and floating all about him, so numbed his senses that he sat down, and felt as if lulled to a gentle, delicious sleep. Consciousness was fast passing from him when his brother, stronger than limself, dragged him rapidly to the pit eye, and saved his life. My friend thinks that choke damp is the easiest and nicest possible way of dying. There is no pain-there is simply a going to sleep, which you have neither the wish nor the power to prevent."

-A certain damsel, having been aggravated beyond endurance by her big brother, plumped down upon her knees and cried: "O Lord! bless my brother Tom. He lies, he steals, he swears; all boys do; us GIBLS DON'T.'

Amen. -"How long can a fool live?" asked a "Don't know, I'm sure, Sir. How jong have you lived ?" was the answer.