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ALVINA
The only medicine
that cures
Croup, Whooping
Cough, Bronchitis,
Asthma,
and all other
respiratory ailments.

**Better a Peasant
Than a Peer.**

CHAPTER I
"Oh, how new and how to see you.
They would have stayed for another
hour, I feel as if I had been choked.
But, let us go out; I want to breathe."
"Come on," says Neil, "there has an-
other mile of passage to be made, and
it is not a pleasant one."
"Mr. Bell."
"Well, Mister Bell would be here for
another half-hour. Let's go and have a
smoke."
"Come on, then," says Jeanne,
springing to the door, her face serene
and lighting up and smiling. "Mind,
you are to play fair, Ha!"
"All right," he responds, snatching
his cap. "Come around to the front;
you can't see us from the kitchen
stove."
Some looks around eagerly for her
at the present moment lying
under the sofa, and in place of it,
comes up a dark-brown shadow. With a
start she looks at the floor, she then
she around her head, and with a
start is out in the open air, and the
moment is scraping in the snow.
"Well—well!" she cries in surprise,
"you said you would wait for me."
"The train will be here in five min-
utes," retorts Charlie, "and then you
will be alone. And candidly, old fel-
low, much as I like you, I couldn't
stand this hole."
"It isn't a hole, and if it were, no
matter. It suits me. I want a good,
comfortable tomb for a time."
"By Jove, you've got what you want,
then!" retorts Charlie, looking around,
with a shudder. "A more dead-and-
alive place I never wish to see."
"I like it," responds the other. "It
struck me the moment I saw it. But,
he just, this isn't the village of New-
ton Regis!"
"Newton Regis!" groans his com-
panion. "Who ever heard of it? There
isn't a pack of hounds within twenty
miles; there isn't a decent house in the
place; there's a ditch—a river, then,
if you like—but you can't fish in the
middle of the winter, and what on
earth you are to do with yourself.
Heaven only knows!"
"I shall sleep—rest," said the other,
with a grim smile. "Besides, you for-
got; I can amuse myself with my brush.
There's the sea, too, within a couple
of miles, that will make work for the
evening!"
"In winter!" retorts the other, fling-
ing his cigar away, contemptuously.
"You can't go on painting snow pieces
and storm-beaten rocks for three
months!"
"Why not?"
"I don't know—I don't care! I'm out
of my mind over your obstinacy, and
that's a fact. Here! when you can go
and spend your Christmas like a
Christmas, where you like, you come
and busy yourself in this hole!"
"I want to go to the party of wo-

men you've quite resolved, I'm sure
I can't!" retorted the other, knocking
the ash off his cigar, and looking up
at the impassive and handsome face
of the speaker with a touch of irrita-
tion in his voice. "You always were
an obstinate beggar since I've known
you, and that's a good many years now,
eh, Vane?"
The man addressed as Vane nodded,
with a grave smile.
"Yes, a long while now, Charlie," he
said, puffing at his pipe.
"Just so; and the length of our
friendship gives me, you'll admit, some
right to remonstrate with you. I feel
that I am privileged to tell you that a
more infernally contrary bit of non-
sense than this even you couldn't in-
vent."
"All right!" assents the other, nod-
ding; "go on. You've said all this be-
fore, but say it all over again if you
like, Charlie."
"Well, if it's of no use, it eases my
mind to abuse you," is the candid ad-
mission. "Joking apart, it's the queer-
est start ever you made, old fellow,
and take my word for it, mischief of
some sort or other will come of it."
"Don't see it," said Vane, coolly,
"and if I did, it wouldn't shake me. I
know what you think, Charlie—that I
am a little touched. Don't apologise; I
can't help it if you do. At least, there's
some method in my madness—you'll
admit that?"
"Confounded little that I see!" mut-
ters the other, discontentedly. "If you
want rest—"
"Which I do."
"If you want rest, why don't you take
a change?"
"I am doing so."
"Bah! Why don't you go to Paris—to
Egypt?"
"I've been. Don't you see, that's just
it. If I could shake this off by trotting
about the continent, and starving in
out-of-season hotels, or climbing the
Matterhorn, I'd go; but I can't. What
I want is rest. There's no rest to be
got scrambling up the Pyramids, or
yawning about the Paris clubs. I've
done all that, and I'm sick of it. What
is there I haven't done? I might go to
Africa, but I do not care a button for
Africa, and the regeneration of the
negroes. Besides, one can't go to Africa
alone, and—forgive me, Charlie—I
want to be alone."
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