

seeing that Mrs. Nickleby was labouring to express her feelings, and was really overwhelmed by the happiness of the time, took her between them, and led her from the room under pretence of having to consult her on some most important arrangements.

Now, Tim and Miss La Creevy had met very often, and had always been very chatty and pleasant together—had always been great friends—and consequently it was the most natural thing in the world that Tim, finding that she still sobbed, should endeavour to console her. As Miss La Creevy sat on a large old-fashioned window-seat where there was ample room for two, it was also natural that Tim should sit down beside her; and as to Tim's being unusually spruce and particular in his attire, that day, why it was a high festival and a great occasion, and that was the most natural thing of all.

Tim sat down beside Miss La Creevy, and, crossing one leg over the other so that his foot—he had very comely feet, and happened to be wearing the neatest shoes and black silk stockings possible—should come easily within the range of her eye, said in a soothing way:

“Don't cry!”

“I must,” rejoined Miss La Creevy.

“No, don't,” said Tim. “Please don't; pray don't.”

“I am so happy!” sobbed the little woman.

“Then laugh,” said Tim. “Do laugh.”

What in the world Tim was doing with his arm, it is impossible to conjecture; but he knocked his elbow against that part of the window which was quite on the other side of Miss La Creevy; and it is clear that it could have no business there.

“Do laugh,” said Tim, “or I'll cry.”

“Why should you cry?” asked Miss La Creevy, smiling.

“Because I'm happy too,” said Tim. “We are both happy, and I should like to do as you do.”

Surely, there never was a man who fidgeted as Tim must have done then; for he knocked the window again—almost in the same place—and Miss La Creevy said she was sure he'd break it.

“I knew,” said Tim, “that you would be pleased with this scene.”

“It was very thoughtful and kind to remember me,”