

Good night Dave, say a prayer for me and go to sleep. I'm going to have a walk in the air, for my head is splitting."

He goes noiselessly out, and for an hour longer that I remain awake, I hear his footsteps on the verandah below.

Next morning there were dark circles under Charley's eyes, sufficient evidence that he had been indulging in unusual dissipation. A nervous restlessness which made him disinclined to study was another unpleasant result.

"Charley," I said, when evening came and he had at length settled down to smoke and read, "you were telling me a queer story last night. I hope it's not true."

"I suppose you mean the story of my engagement to Miss Merivale," he answered with a strange smile. "Yes it's true. Won't you wish me joy?"

"Charley," I said solemnly, "whatever your faults may be, and they are many, ficklemindedness is not one of them. Now," I went on angrily, "you know what you have been telling me for the last two years. What explanation can you give of your present conduct?"

"You're very hard on me, old fellow," he sighed, "but surely you wouldn't have me to go on if I found out that I had made a mistake."

"Certainly not, but I believe you're more likely to make a mistake to-day, than you were two years ago."

He threw down his book, and walked about the room, with a cloud on his brow.

"It's another day-dream broken, Dave, that's all. A man mustn't allow himself to be knocked over by a shadow."

And now with a sudden burst of gayety he cried, "Oh, Dave! if you only knew the dear girl! She's the best creature in the world, and I am desperately in love with her. Tom Moore knew the human heart, my boy, when he sang

"Oh, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream."

He trolled out the verse in his rich baritone, but the joyful notes could not pierce the gloom which shadowed my spirits. I leaned forward towards Charley, my elbows on the arms of my chair.

"Take care, old chum, that your *dream* of love doesn't prove a *nightmare*."