

returned Miss La Creevy. "Nothing could have delighted me, half so much."

Why on earth should Miss La Creevy and Tim Linkinwater have said all this in a whisper? It was no secret. And why should Tim Linkinwater have looked so hard at Miss La Creevy, and why should Miss La Creevy have looked so hard at the ground?

"It's a pleasant thing," said Tim, "to people like us, who have passed all our lives in the world, alone, to see young folks that we are fond of, brought together with so many years of happiness before them."

"Ah!" cried the little woman with all her heart. "That it is!"

"Although," pursued Tim, "although it makes one feel quite solitary and cast away. Now, don't it?"

Miss La Creevy said she didn't know. And why should she say she didn't know? Because she must have known whether it did or not.

"It's almost enough to make us get married after all, isn't it?" said Tim.

"Oh nonsense!" replied Miss La Creevy, laughing "We are too old."

"Not a bit," said Tim, "we are too old to be single. Why shouldn't we both be married, instead of sitting through the long winter evenings by our solitary firesides? Why shouldn't we make one fireside of it, and marry each other?"

"Oh Mr. Linkinwater, you're joking!"

"No, no, I'm not. I'm not indeed," said Tim. "I will, if you will. Do, my dear!"

"It would make people laugh so."

"Let 'em laugh," cried Tim, stoutly, "we have good tempers I know, and we'll laugh too. Why, what hearty laughs we have had since we've known each other!"

"So we have," cried Miss La Creevy—giving way a little, as Tim thought.

"It has been the happiest time in all my life; at least, away from the counting-house and Cheeryble Brothers," said Tim. "Do, my dear! Now say you will."

"No, no, we mustn't think of it," returned Miss La Creevy. "What would the Brothers say?"

"Why, God bless your soul!" cried Tim, innocently, "you don't suppose I should think of such a thing