

plied Morley, "I was very much with the regiment. In fact, I was the man who mixed up Clere's love affair with Miss Delavel; that was the young lady's name."

"Then out with it all like a good fellow. I don't suppose it'll do any harm," said the Surgeon.

"I'm sure it won't improve my character," returned Morley, laughing; "but it'll give you an idea of your future commander, so I'll trust you with the history. You may think what you like, but I know I acted like a fool, and that Sergeant Clere—he was an N.C.O. at the time—acted like a true gentleman, and afterwards saved my life from the hands of a horde of bloodthirsty savages. It was up on the higher slopes of the Himalayas, and a miracle it was that the whole column was not destroyed, but perhaps I had better start at the beginning.

All present assented, and after they had lit their cigars, and the Major had quenched his thirst, he began:

"It was soon after I joined the old Lowlandshire Regiment that I was first introduced to Miss Delavel, who was a very handsome and accomplished young lady, and only daughter of the baronet of that name, who was at one time a commissioner in Burmah, and a great friend of my father's. She was always surrounded by a large number of suitors, but was to all the same; and though urged by her father to marry one or other of the wealthy and titled young men about her, she allowed his advice to go unheeded. I was on as good terms with her as any of the rest, and tried to get into a more favourable position, but we were all rather startled when we heard rumours that all the time she was very much in love with a young fellow who had recently returned from the Cape.

"The baronet favoured my suit, but I got no further, and when I heard I had to proceed to India

with my regiment, I determined to raise the siege and leave the field open for the 'Africander'—our pet name for the favoured one. He was never seen at Delavel's house, as old Delavel was averse to his daughter marrying one out of the pale of society. But here he made a big mistake, for we afterwards learned that Clere—that was the fellow's name—was an Oxford man, and had only been to South Africa to take over a large property left him by his uncle. Anyway, the Baronet knew nothing of this, and would not sanction the engagement.

"Just as I was about to leave England a very unexpected event happened, for young Clere, who seemed to have all the running to himself, was put out of action. It was this way: Clere went boldly to the Baronet and pleaded his suit, and told him of his splendid property and prospects. Delavel was pleased with his manner, and certainly saw his finances were good, so he promised to consider the matter. Next day poor Clere got news, not that he was rejected—oh, no; but that his mining shares were involved in the breaking of a South African bank, and that he was almost penniless. Old Delavel was very wild at the time, and declared that poor Clere knew that his fortune was gone when he asked for Miss Delavel. Of course Clere was in the right, and made up his mind to struggle on and win the approval of the Baronet. But another blow came, for old Delavel gave Clere to understand that he would never give him permission to marry his daughter, and told him, in fact, that I was her affianced husband. At that time I did not know the 'Africander,' even by sight; and one day, while telling some brother officers I hoped to call the Baronet my father-in-law, he happened to be near, and heard the conversation. This, together with the Baronet's direct refusal, seems to have temporarily crushed his spirit. He left the district and enlisted in the