

"What do you say, boys?" inquired Mr. Cavendish.

"I'm going to try it," said Mr. Lansing Minturn, "whether the rest do or not."

"I, too," said Mr. Yankton.

"Very well, I'm with you," said Cavendish.

Nicholas was overjoyed. He seized the hand of the first speaker, and said impressively:

"You are quite welcome to the name of my father and of my mother. Keep them both. They will help to shut you off from your old associations, and hold you to your new."

Then he shook the other men by the hand, and told them that they had given him one of the happiest moments of his life.

"Now, what do you propose to do with us?" said Cavendish, who refused to relinquish his lead.

"Don't put it in that way," responded Nicholas. "What do we propose to do with ourselves, for you must remember that we are all engaged in one enterprise. I am to help you, and you are to help me. I propose lunch."

"I presume we are all agreeable," said Cavendish, laughing.

Nicholas touched a bell, to which Pont promptly responded.

"Bring up lunch for four," said Nicholas as the negro appeared.

Then they broke bread together, and their viands were served with courteous punctilio. The men were awkward at first, but their embarrassment soon passed away, and they entered into a lively conversation, which made the meal thoroughly enjoyable.

"Now," said Nicholas, as he rose to his feet, "you are strong enough to promise me a few things which will be necessary to your success. In the first place, you must promise me never to return to your old haunts, never to drink a glass of liquor unless it is prescribed for you by a physician, always to stick together and be society for one another, and always to come to me if you are in trouble."

"That's pretty tough," said Cavendish.

"Do you falter?"

"A man doesn't like to lose his liberty, you know."

"Liberty to lose your place!" exclaimed Nicholas. "Liberty to go into dirty society when you can have good! What can you mean?"

The other men did not demur, and Nicholas knew that he had not yet touched the right spring in Cavendish, but he determined to study him thoroughly, and to find it at any cost.

"Well" said Cavendish, with a sigh, "let's come back to the question: What do you propose to do with us?"

"I propose to set you to work for wages, and to keep you at it every day. I propose to get you a comfortable boarding-house, where you