

I've never mentioned it, not for years now. 'The old chap must have been a fine old chap. But I've told you all the boy told me, at the time.'

"Ye-es. I remember the particulars, generally. You said the row wasn't his fault."

"His fault?—no, indeed! The fellow drew a knife upon him. You know he was that awful miscreant, Daverill. There wasn't a crime he hadn't committed. But old Moses killed him—splendidly! By Jove, I *should* like to have seen that!"

"Really, Percy, if you talk in that dreadful way, I won't listen to you."

"Can't help it, my dear, can't help it! Fancy being able to kill such a damnable beast at a single blow!" The undertone in which Mr. Pellew went on speaking to his wife may have contained some particulars of Daverill's career, for she said:—"Well—I can understand your feeling. But we won't talk about it any more, please!"

Whereto the reply was:—"All right, my dear. I'll bottle up. Suppose we turn round. It's high time to be getting home." So the chairman put energies into a return towards the tunnel.

But for all that, the lady went back to the subject, or its neighbourhood. "Wasn't he somehow mixed up with that old Mrs. Alibone at Chorlton—Dave's aunt she is, I believe. At least, he always calls her so."

"Aunt Maria? Of course. She *is* his Aunt Maria. He was—or had been—Aunt Maria's husband. But people said as little about that as they could. He had been an absentee at Norfolk Island—a convict. That old chap she married—old Alibone—he's the great authority on horseflesh. Tim found it out when they came to Chorlton to stay at the very old lady's—what's her name?"

"Mrs. Marrable." Here Mrs. Pellew suddenly became luminous about the facts, owing to a connecting link. "Of course! Mrs. Marrable was the twin sister."

"A—oh yes!—the twin sister. . . . I remember. . . . at least, I don't. Not sure that I do, anyhow!"

"Foolish man! Can't you remember the lovely old lady at Clo Dalrymple's? . . ."

"She *was* the one I carried upstairs. I should rather think I did recollect her. She weighed nothing."

"Oh yes—you remember all about it. Mrs. Marrable's twin sister from Australia."