

"Thank you, Tom, my boy, I will," said the old man, rubbing his hands, "I will—I will. Ring for it, will you, Tom, and let Robbins think it's for you."

"Why, gov'nor?" cried Tom, staring, as he rang the bell.

"Well, you see, my boy," said the old man, stooping to gently rub his leg; "after that last visit of the doctor her ladyship told the servants—told the servants that they were not to let me have anything but what she ordered."

Tom uttered an angry ejaculation, waited a few moments, leaped from his chair, and began sawing away furiously at the unanswered bell.

"He's—he's a fine bold young fellow, my son Tom," muttered the old man to himself as he sat down, and began rubbing his leg; "I dare not ring the bell like that—like that."

"Look here, gov'nor," cried Tom, passionately, "I won't have it. I will not stand by and see you sat upon like this. Are you the master of this house or no?"

"Well, Tom, my boy," said the old man, feebly, and with a weak smile upon his closely shaven face, "I—I—I ought to be."

"Then do, for goodness' sake, take your position. It hurts me, dad, it does indeed, to see you humbled so before the servants. I'll pay proper respect to her ladyship, and support her in everything that's just, but when it comes to my old father being made the laughing-stock of every body in the house, I—I—there, damme, sir, I rebel against it."

As Tom seized the bell again, and dragged at it savagely, the old man seemed deeply moved. He