the hooked piece of iron which connects the crank with the treadle."

"Precisely," said Glanville. "Well, if you watch a locomotive starting, you will see the piston-rod come shining out of the cylinder and push, by means of a crank, the huge driving-wheel into motion; and in this way it moves the whole engine and a line of interminable carriages. Think what a force the piston-rod exerts when pushing; and how strong it must be to do this—how flawless and how hard its steel. Were it made of wood or lead, it would split or double up or bend. I presume, Mr. Brompton, that what I say is clear."

In a slightly ironical voice, Mr. Brompton replied, "Perfectly."

"And yet," resumed Glanville, "we should none of us here say that the piston-rod, because it was strong, was the source in itself of the force by which it moved the crank. We should none of us say that it struggled to make the wheel go round. I shouldn't say so at all events, though perhaps Mr. Brompton would."

"I don't know," said Mr. Brompton, "what reason I may have given Mr. Glanville for assuming that my knowledge of mechanics is less than an ordinary schoolboy's. Let me earn his good opinion by declaring myself quite aware that the piston-rod is moved by the piston, the piston moved by the steam, the steam generated by the coal, the coal produced by a series of previous cosmic processes. In short, Mr. Glanville, I may assure you that I am master of the fact that your piston-rod, however hard, and however finely tempered, is a mere transmitter of energy, and is no more the origin of it than a single link in a bicycle chain, which pulls because it is pulled, is the origin of the energy which carries me on my morning's ride."

"I am glad," said Glanville, "to find that you so completely agree with me. The piston-rod does not struggle to push the crank, the link in your bicycle chain does not struggle