

figure, and a general expression of buoyancy in his manner, that gave Nicholas the impression that he had suddenly fallen heir to a vast fortune, and had come to tell a stranger the news before visiting his tailor.

Nicholas rose to receive him, and Mr. Cavendish extended his blue hand, with which he shook that of the young man very long and very heartily.

"I suppose I ought to know you," said Nicholas, doubtfully. "Be seated sir."

Mr. Cavendish sat down, and gave Nicholas a long and interested examination.

"Well it doesn't seem possible! It—does—not—seem—possible!" said Mr. Cavendish. "To think that the little lad that I used to see at Ottercliff has come to this! Ah! Time flies!"

Nicholas was so much embarrassed that he took up the man's card, and looked at it again, to see if it would not touch the spring in his memory that seemed so slow in its responses.

"I see that you are puzzled," said the man, "and I ought to say, in justice to—to all concerned, that, in one sense, you ought to know me, and in another sense that you ought not to know me. Now, let me try to assist you. Flat Head? Flat Head? Does it help you any? Don't you catch a glimpse of a pale enthusiastic young man, bending over you, and playing with your curls? Flat Head, now!"

"No, I must beg your pardon. I cannot recall you."

"Don't feel badly about it, I beg of you. I'll tell you who I am in a moment; but psychology has always been a favourite study with me, and I want to make a little experiment. I have a theory that every event in a man's life makes an impression upon the memory, and can be recalled, if we touch the cords,—if we touch the right cord, you know. Now, don't you remember hearing old Tom say to your mother: "Here's that plug of Cavendish turned up again? Don't that start it?"

"So you knew old Tom?" said Nicholas.

"Yes, and a good old fellow he was. Queer, but good at heart, you know?"

"Won't you sit nearer the fire?" Nicholas inquired, seeing that Mr. Cavendish was in a shiver.

"No, sir,—no. You wonder why I wear no overcoat. I would not consent to such a degree of effeminacy. My life has inured me to hardship. When I am within the confines of civilization, I endeavour, as far as possible, to preserve the habits I am compelled to follow among the wild tribe that engages my poor services. I should be ashamed to wear an overcoat, sir. Ah! your dear departed mother has talked to me about it, with tears in her eyes, again and again."