

but what good will it do if I damn your eyes and smash things, Jack, and make myself ill? Tell me what it is."

Jack mumbled something.

"Has it come out, then?" asked the moral father.

"I — think so," said Jack.

"Who is it?"

Jack said nothing, and Sir John shook his head at him.

"It mustn't occur again," said Sir John. "This will be a warning to you. I knew damn well it would happen."

Then he made a most remarkable statement, which made Jack jump as if he were shot.

"I told her father to send her away the best part of a year ago."

"Oh, Lord," said Jack. But Sir John dropped his spud and walked off. He left the garden, and went into the field, across which led the path that ran to the village. It was the nearest way to the head gamekeeper's cottage.

There were many pretty girls about Charteris and its neighbourhood, many who sighed when Jack rode past. Some chased him, but few with such ardour as Sam Botfield's daughter. There was no doubt that she was pretty; there were some doubts