

out by handfuls over chaps before Master Jack ever cast his eyes on her."

Sir John sighed.

"It's a sad world we live in, Botfield."

Botfield was very cheerful, however.

"It might be worse, Sir John. Molly might ha' gone wrong with a chap that couldn't have put up even half a crown a week."

"So she might," said Sir John. "I didn't think of that."

"I've thought of it often, I can tell 'ee, Sir John," said Botfield, promptly, "and on your side, Sir John, the young master might have fell across a gal with a father that would have got drunk and told the whole village about 'un, and have bled 'ee fair to death, Sir John."

"That's so," said Sir John. "I'll put the cottage in hand at once, and here's the first week's ten shillings, Botfield."

"Thank you kindly, you was always a generous gentleman, Sir John."

But when his master was out of sight, Botfield slapped his thigh.

"The weekly money don't begin till the child's born," said Botfield. "Him a magistrate and not know that!"

On the whole, Jack got out of this sad trouble