

He stroked a luxurious crop of shining white hair as he spoke.

"We have brought him up in the proper and right way," sobbed his wife.

"It's comforting to think how successful we have been on the whole," said the father. "He refuses to enter the Church, like a man."

"You are an atheist."

"I beg your pardon, my dear —"

"An atheist, John!"

"It is a misconception on your part, my dear," said Sir John. "To disagree with you on points of theology is not to be an atheist. However, I waive the point and go on with Jack."

They went on with Jack, and Jack went out and shot a number of wretched rabbits, as if he were bagging clergymen. Later in the day he went in to see his father, with whom he was always on the most intimate and friendly terms.

"Don't you think it rot of mother to want me to be a clergyman, guv'nor?"

"Rot of the worst sort, my boy," said Sir John.

"I'm doin' no sort of good as it is, sir."

"You are not," said the parent. "I fear you will give lots of trouble, Jack, though you are a good boy, as boys go."