

"LET THE ROOF FALL IN"

CHAPTER I

THE weather was cold, the sky overcast, there had been several short, sharp showers of rain, and the prospect of a pleasant day's racing was not even problematic. The stand at Sandown would be half empty, and the difficulty of spotting winners, always great enough in the jumping season, would be doubled by the heaviness of the going.

Lady Carrie Carthew had been talking about the weather since nine o'clock, when her maid had called her. It was still the subject of her conversation when, at eleven, she walked to the window and decided it would be quite absurd to venture out. She had had her morning appetizer of rum and milk, followed by a cigarette, she had read her letters, torn up her bills, and yawned over her papers. Four or five dresses had been taken out of the wardrobe, and replaced, discarded definitely for the occasion. She had intended all along to wear the new brown cloth with her sables, and the wallflower toque. But what was the good of dressing-up on a day like this? From the window in Charles Street she had a side glimpse into Berkeley Square, and in Berkeley Square it was miserable enough, the moist air clung like grey fog to the leafless trees, and dripped from brown boughs on to the sodden grass. It would be worse still in the country, slopping across the Park