

spoke to me about it. Sam Botfield is as cunning as a ferret."

He found Sam at home and called him outside. Botfield came hurriedly. Perhaps he was a trifle less obsequious than usual. There are some who would have said he was a little uplifted in his mind.

It is hard to fathom any one's heart, but it was probably true. There have been noble families proud of odd things when royalties condescended, and Sir John Bexley was the king to Sam Botfield. But he put on a proper air of sorrow.

"This is a bad business, Botfield," said his master.

"It is fair rotten, Sir John," replied the gamekeeper without any pretence of not understanding.

"I warned you of this six months ago, Botfield."

"You did, sir, I own it freely," said Botfield.

"I'm a downcast man this day, Sir John, and the missis is weepin' in the washus which 'asn't any roof to speak of."

"Hasn't it?" asked Sir John, with much interest. "Does the rain come in?"

"Like as if it were a colander. But the missis doesn't care now. She says she wants to die, Sir John."

"Dear me," said Sir John, anxiously. He was quite aware that Mrs. Botfield's nose was flattened