

time as I can sell Tracy Court. I am hard hit, Trevelyan—very hard hit."

Trevelyan blushed to the roots of his hair.

"Good Lord, Sir John," he answered, "I had entirely forgotten. One does not worry over a Dering's debt of honour. In faith, my time is yours, and if accommodation serves your purpose, I'm very happy to be of use. But, for Heaven's sake, dear Sir John, don't imagine I came to dun you. God's luck! if you did, I should not be able to come to your house again. Besides, a turn of the cards, and I shall probably be your debtor. I had the honour of the luck. But I did not come to talk about so small a matter, and now my errand becomes doubly difficult."

Sir John looked at his caller questioningly.

"What is this errand, may I ask?" he said.

For a moment the sailor looked very much more like a guilty schoolboy than a fashionable man about town.

"It is about Rosa. Miss Dering has honoured me above all men. I have reason to believe in promoting my own happiness, I should be enhancing hers. I have her consent to approach you and ask you to do me the honour of permitting our early marriage."

"Since when have you held her consent?" Sir John asked.

"It was a memorable night, five weeks ago, in the Assembly Rooms at Bath.

Sir John hesitated for a moment.

"I am deeply sorry, Harry," he said slowly.

"That she loves you, I know; that union with you