

## SPEED ON THE HOME STRETCH 305

"It's no use, Torchy," says she. "I've promised Auntie that, whatever else I did, I would never run away to be married."

And there my grand little scheme is shot full of holes, all in a second. When I get headway on like I had then, though, I just don't know when I'm blocked. I swallows hard once or twice, and then shrugs my shoulders.

"Let's get the license, anyway," says I.

"What's the sense?" asks Vee.

"I can have it to read over, can't I?" says I. "That'll help some. Besides— Ah, come on, Vee! Be a sport. Didn't you say you'd leave it to me?"

"But I can't break my promise, Torchy," says she.

"That's right," says I, "and I wouldn't ask you to. Let's take the subway."

I won; and when I put her in a taxi an hour later she was still blushin' from answerin' questions. I had that paper with the city seal on it in my inside pocket, though. My next job is on the Reverend Percey, the one who did the job for Mr. Robert the time I stage-managed his impromptu knot-tyin'. Course, I couldn't sign him up for anything definite, but I got a schedule of his spare time from six o'clock on, and where he would be.

"But I—I don't quite understand," says he,