

THE PLEASURE OF THEIR COMPANY

closed on the best man and pinned him helplessly against the wall. "Take that!" said Henry, scientifically applying the third principle of jiu-jitsu.

"It's time — to get up!" gasped the best man. "Are you — awake?"

"Am I? What do *you* think?"

Whitaker dodged and gained the door. "You're a fine man to be married," he scoffed. "Don't you know breakfast is in twenty minutes? How do you like your eggs, hot or cold?"

Henry sobered instantly. "You don't need to go just yet," he said generously. "Sit down a second."

"I'm with you," promised the best man. "How's your nerve?"

"Good; how's yours?"

He performed his ablutions and proceeded to dress with the celerity born of four years of nine o'clock recitations when the alarm was set for eight-thirty.

"Oh," said Henry casually, "I suppose you might as well have this."

The best man accepted the little purple box