

faces of Millie and Charlie Dixon. For a moment he gazed at them, then with suddenness he resumed his seat, conscious that his voice had failed him and that he was blinking and swallowing with unnecessary vigour. The silence was broken only by the loud thumping on the table of Mr. Dixon.

"Bravo!" he cried. "Bravo! one of the best speeches I've ever heard. Excellent! Splendid!"

Everybody looked at everybody else, as if wondering what would happen next, and obviously deploring Mr. Dixon's misguided enthusiasm.

Alice solved the problem by entering and whispering to Millie that the taxi was at the door. This was a signal for a general movement, a pushing back of chairs and shuffling of feet as the guests rose.

Charlie Dixon walked across to Bindle.

"Get us off quickly, Uncle Joe, will you," he whispered. "Millie doesn't think she can stand much more."

"Right-o, Charlie!" replied Bindle. "Leave it to me."

"Now then, 'urry up, 'urry up!" he called out. "You'll lose that train, come along. Once aboard the motor and the gal is mine! Now, Charlie, where's your cap? I'll see about the luggage."

Almost before anyone knew what was happen-