

THE COMING OF THE LODGER 13

starts a-playin' about wi' my 'Ome Comfort, 'e'll find 'is jaw closed for alterations. I'm a desperate feller where my 'eart's concerned. There was poor 'ole 'Orace only the other day. Jest back from the front 'e was."

Bindle paused and shook his head mournfully.

"Horace who?" demanded Mrs. Bindle.

"'Orace Gaze," replied Bindle. "Nice cove too, 'e is.

"'Ullo! 'Orace,' I calls out, when I sees 'im jest a-comin' from the station with all 'is kit

"'Cheerio,' says 'e.

"'The missis'll be glad to see you,' I says.

"'She don't know I'm 'ere yet,' 'e says.

"'Didn't you send 'er a telegram?' I asks.

"'Telegram!' says 'e, 'not 'arf.'

"'Why not?'

"'Lord! ain't you a mug, Joe!' says 'e; 'you don't catch me a-trustin' women, I got my own way, I 'ave,' says 'e, mysterious like

"'What is it?' I asks 'im.

"'Well, I goes 'ome,' says 'e, 'er thinkin' me at the front, rattles my key in the front door, then I nips round to the back, an' catches the blighter every time!'"

"I won't listen to your disgusting stories," said Mrs. Bindle angrily.

"Disgustin'?" said Bindle incredulously.

"You've a lewd mind, Bindle."

"Well, well!" remarked Bindle, "it's some-