

## MILLIE'S WEDDING

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sister Bertha, heavy of face and flat of foot, attended to the wants of the guests.

The meal began in constrained silence. The first episode resulted from Alice's whispered enquiry if Mr. Dixon would have lime-juice or lemonade.

"Beer!" cried Mr. Dixon in a loud voice.

Alice looked across at Mr. Hearty, who, being quite unequal to the situation, looked at Alice, and then directed his gaze towards Mr. Sopley.

"I beg pardon, sir?" said Alice.

"Beer!" roared Mr. Dixon.

Everybody began to feel uncomfortable except Bindle, who was watching the little comedy with keen enjoyment.

"We—we——" began Mr. Hearty—"we don't drink beer, Mr. Dixon."

"Don't drink beer?" cried Mr. Dixon in the tone of a man who has just heard that another doesn't wear socks. "Don't drink beer?"

Mr. Hearty shook his head miserably, as if fully conscious of his shortcomings.

"Extraordinary!" said Mr. Dixon, "most extraordinary!"

"Well, I'll have a whisky-and-soda," he conceded magnanimously.

Mr. Hearty rolled his eyes and cast a languishing glance in the direction of Mrs. Bindle.

"We are temperance," said Mr. Hearty.

"What!" roared Mr. Dixon incredulously.

"Temperance! temperance at a wedding!"