

A DOWNING STREET SENSATION 35

he continued after the horses. "Well, I'm damned! They'd get you if you was deaf an' dumb an' blind. Pore ole Tippy! no wonder 'e looks like that."

Just outside Merton they came upon a stranded pantehnicon. Drawn up in front of it was a motor-car containing two ladies.

"This the little lot?" enquired Bindle as they pulled up beside the vehicle, which bore the name of John Smith & Company, Merton.

"Are you from Empson & Daleys?" enquired the elder of the two ladies, a sallow-faced, angular woman with pince-nez.

"That's us, mum," responded Bindle.

"I suppose those are the horses," remarked the same lady, indicating the animals with an inclination of her head.

"You ain't got much to learn in the way o' guessing, mum," was Bindle's cheery response.

The lady eyed him disapprovingly. Her companion at the wheel smiled. She was younger. Bindle winked at her; but she froze instantly.

"The horses that were in this van were taken ill," said the lady.

"Wot, both together, mum!" exclaimed Bindle.

"Yes," replied the lady, looking at him sharply.

"Must 'ave been twins or conchies,"¹ was Bindle's explanation of the phenomenon. "If

¹ Conscientious objectors to military service.