

gathering—sort of mutual benefit arrangement, you know: each of us contributed what we could spare to a general fund, which was given to some deserving person in the crowd."

"Yes," said the professor dryly. "I heard the clerk telling the boy where he would be most likely to find you."

"Oh, you did, eh?" cried Yates, with a laugh. "Yes, Sam generally knows where to send for me; but he needn't have been so darned public about it. Being a newspaper man, I know what ought to go in print and what should have the blue pencil run through it. Sam is very discreet, as a general thing; but then he knew, of course, the moment he set eyes on you, that you were an old pal of mine."

Again Yates laughed, a very bright and cheery laugh for so evidently wicked a man.

"Come along," he said, taking the professor by the arm. "We must get you located."

They passed out into the hall, and drew up at the clerk's counter.

"I say, Sam," cried Yates, "can't you do something better for us than the fifth floor? I didn't come to Buffalo to engage in ballooning. No sky parlors for me, if I can help it."

"I'm sorry, Dick," said the clerk; "but I expect the fifth floor will be gone when the Chicago express gets in."

"Well, what can you do for us, anyhow?"

"I can let you have 518. That's the next room to yours. Really, they're the most comfortable rooms in the house this weather. Fine lookout over the lake. I wouldn't mind having a sight of the lake myself, if I could leave the desk."

"All right. But I didn't come to look at the lake, nor yet at the railroad tracks this side, nor at Buffalo Creek either, beautiful and romantic as it is, nor to listen to the clanging of the ten thousand locomotives that pass within hearing