

slipped it over so nicely on that guy that he shook my hand on it and said if he could afford a new clerk he'd take me on. And he didn't quit us either."

Bob had pressed the button for a bell-boy.

"That's right," encouraged Peel. "My throat feels as if Jim Ansom had been talking down it for an hour after drinking grape-juice."

A laugh drowned the words that fell from Ward's lips, and when he would have repeated them Linny struck him on the back with a very cordial hand and cried:

"Bo, we had the time of our life last week with our old friend Ansom. You haven't met him, have you?"

Ward shook his head and kept his eye on the door through which the bell-boy would come.

"We call him the missionary," continued Linny.

"Among the heathen—that's us," added Peel.

"Yes, he goes around giving advice. Carries an extra sample-case of it. I think——"

The bell-boy had arrived. Ward was worried. Was it his place to pay for the drinks, or the guests'? While he was debating the question Peel took charge of the tray and threatened to knock Linny down for attempting to pay and tip — and yet Linny had ordered the beer. The way they left Ward out of the financing struck him as a forcible demonstration of good-fellowship. The sporting impulse took hold of him, drove away the last flickering thought of Bertha and her letter, and inspired him to stand between the other two drummers like a sort of referee.

"See here, you guys," he said, in a way that made them look up, "if you think you can come up to my room and buy the drinks your eye's out."