

IN THE MIDST OF ALARMS.

CHAPTER I.

IN the marble-floored vestibule of the Metropolitan Grand Hotel in Buffalo, Professor Stillson Renmark stood and looked about him with the anxious manner of a person unused to the gaudy splendor of the modern American house of entertainment. The professor had paused halfway between the door and the marble counter, because he began to fear that he had arrived at an inopportune time, that something unusual was going on. The hurry and bustle bewildered him.

An omnibus, partly filled with passengers, was standing at the door, its steps backed over the curbstone, and beside it was a broad, flat van, on which stalwart porters were heaving great square, iron-bound trunks belonging to commercial travelers, and the more fragile, but not less bulky, saratogas, doubtless the property of the ladies who sat patiently in the omnibus. Another vehicle which had just arrived was backing up to the curb, and the irate driver used language suitable to the occasion; for the two restive horses were not behaving exactly in the way he liked.

A man with a stentorian, but monotonous and mournful, voice was filling the air with the information that a train was about to depart