

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

No. 66.

NEW YORK, APRIL 27, 1900.

Price 5 Cents.

CHING FOO, THE YELLOW DWARF; OR

THE BRADYS AND THE OPIUM SMOKERS.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

20 CHING FOO'S BOARDING AND LODGING HOUSE. 20.



Just as the Bradys came abreast of the opium joint, a queer misshapen little figure dashed out before them, flinging itself directly in their way. Stumbling over the object Old King Brady fell heavily to the ground. Harry, who was right behind, came to a sudden stop.

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(Continued on page 3 of cover.)

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NEW YORK, April 27, 1900.

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Ching Foo, the Yellow Dwarf;

OR,

The Bradys and the Opium Smokers.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CRIME IN CHINATOWN.

"Harry, do you see that old building down there in Doyers street?"

"Do you mean the one with the long, narrow Chinese sign over the door, Old King Brady?"

"Yes. That place is owned by Ching Foo, the yellow dwarf. It's the worst opium joint in New York. People have gone into that house and never come out again. Many a dark mystery owes its origin to that dangerous den."

The speakers were those celebrated Secret Service detectives, known as Old and Young King Brady. They were standing on the corner of Doyers Street and Park Row, at nine o'clock, one pleasant night in May. They had no particular business in view, just then.

Every crook from the Tenderloin to the Red Light district knew and feared them.

Both were of striking appearance.

Old King Brady was an eccentric man in actions and dress.

He had a tall, gaunt figure, clad in dark trousers, a long blue frock coat, a standing collar, and an old-fashioned stock. A wide-brimmed white felt hat covered his closely cut white hair, and a pair of shaggy eyebrows shaded his deep, piercing eyes.

Harry Brady, a youth of about twenty, was his pupil.

This young detective did not belong to his preceptor's family. But the old detective had recognized the boy's ability, and formed a partnership with him. Working to-

gether, they had a warm attachment for each other, and became a terror to the crooks of Gotham.

Although Harry dressed somewhat like his tutor, he was more stylish.

He was a handsome, dashing youth of keen perception, and high courage.

As he fastened his glance upon the opium joint Old King Brady pointed out to him, a most startling incident suddenly occurred.

A fearful yell was heard coming from the Chinaman's house.

It was followed by a number of smothered voices, raised to an angry pitch.

A moment later there sounded a fearful crash against the store door. The glass windows were smashed and fell jingling on the pavement.

Then the door flew open with a bang, and the figure of a well-dressed young man came reeling out backward. He fell in the middle of the street.

He had a slim figure, and a smooth, white face, dark eyes, and light brown hair.

In dress and appearance, he was an aristocrat. In fact such a fine-looking fellow looked very much out of his element in such a vile slum.

"An opium fiend!" commented Old King Brady, taking a chew of tobacco.

"Must have had a fight in the dive," added Harry, with an amused smile.

They hardly expected the tragedy which was to follow. As the pale youth staggered to his feet, a man rushed out of Ching Foo's place.

He was an elderly gentleman with gray hair and a beard

of the same color, and he wore a silk hat, and was carrying a black japanned money box under his left arm.

"I'll hit you again, you thief!" he cried angrily, shaking his fist at the youth.

"Give me that box of money!" hissed the young man in threatening tones.

"Never!" shouted the old gentleman. "You are done for, now."

"By Heavens, I'll kill you for the blow you struck me!" madly cried the youth.

And on a sudden impulse he pulled a Derringer from his pocket, and leveled it at the old man, who now paused, recoiled, and raised his hand, crying hoarsely:

"For mercy's sake, don't shoot!"

The young man made no reply.

Upon his face there was a deadly look of hate and rage.

He touched the hair-trigger, and there came a blinding flash and a sharp report.

The old man staggered back, dropped the box, and fell to the pavement, with blood flowing from a wound upon his forehead.

"You've killed me!" he groaned despairingly.

His form stiffened out, and he rolled over upon his back.

The young man tossed aside the pistol, rushed over to the money box, picked it up, and glanced around like a hunted beast to see if his crime was detected.

It all happened so swiftly that the two detectives had no time to interfere.

But they had witnessed the whole incident.

"Good Lord, Harry, it's a murder and robbery," gasped the old sleuth.

"Arrest him, Old King Brady! Don't let him escape!" quickly answered the boy.

The next moment they dashed into Doyers street.

The youth with the money box saw them coming and ran away.

It was a dirty, narrow little street with an abrupt bend, beyond which it ran into Pell street. Near the bend was the Chinese theatre.

The thief was heading toward Pell street.

Just as the Bradys came abreast of the opium joint, a queer misshapen little figure dashed out before them, flinging itself directly in their way.

Stumbling over the object, Old King Brady fell heavily to the ground.

Harry, who was right behind his partner, came to a sudden stop.

As the fugitive took advantage of this diversion in his favor, he shot around the bend, disappearing behind Lavelle's sporting house.

Old King Brady bounded to his feet, very much out of humor, and glared wrathily at the diminutive Chinaman who had interfered with him.

It was Ching Foo.

He was a hunchback dwarf, clad in Chinese costume.

In a squatting position in the middle of the street, he looked like an ape.

No more than four feet high, and with a huge head, fiery

eyes, a flat nose, and a big mouth filled with huge, fang-like teeth, Ching Foo was grinning like a demon.

"Ho-ho-ho!" he croaked. "No clatchee now, allee same!"

"Blast you, Ching Foo, are you doing this to aid that murderer to escape?"

"Ho-ho-ho-ho!" shrieked the dwarf, in diabolical tones. "Me no help noblody, Blady!"

There was a jeering derision in his horrible voice which the detective noticed.

He pointed at Ching Foo, and thundered:

"I'll have an accounting from you, when I come back."

"Come on, or we'll lose that murderer," impatiently cried Harry.

They rushed away.

The pistol shot had attracted attention.

Scores of Chinamen swarmed up from cellars, out of doorways, and crowded in windows, and people were running toward Doyers street from all directions.

Before anyone but the Chinese in the immediate vicinity could see what was going on, Ching Foo, with an extraordinary exhibition of strength, dragged the fallen man into his store, and put out the lights.

No one saw what happened inside in the darkness.

Leaving the scene of excitement behind, the Bradys raced after the fugitive.

They saw him turn up Pell street, and run to the Bowery.

Here he sprang aboard a downtown car and was carried swiftly away.

Luckily Young King Brady observed what he did.

"There he goes!" he cried, pointing after the car.

"We can't overhaul him by running," growled the old detective.

"No need to. We can keep him in view by boarding the following car."

"And here it comes, now, Harry."

They sprang on while the car was in motion.

Rushing out on the front platform, they displayed their shields to the motorman.

"There's a murderer escaping us on the car ahead," said Old King Brady. "He just shot a man, in Chinatown. We want you to run ahead till we overtake that car, so we can place him under arrest. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," replied the motorman. "I'll do my best."

He turned the controller, and the car dashed ahead at top speed.

A passenger wanted to alight, and the conductor rang the bell, but no attention was paid to the signal, and the car dashed ahead furiously.

Harry kept his glance fixed on the fugitive.

He stood on the rear platform with the money box in his hand.

As the vehicle upon which the detective rode was rapidly overtaking him the fugitive's suspicions were aroused, and he peered hard at it.

Then he caught view of the detectives.

A startled exclamation escaped his lips.

Glancing around, he noticed that he was then near the

bridge and he sprang off and rushed up the horse gangway on the east side. A man now joined him.

The Bradys observed his action, and followed him. His companion darted into the car shed.

Running at the top of his speed, the thief gained some distance, and then rushing to the side, he hurled the money box over toward the street.

Only he knew where it landed, but he probably told his pal where it would fall.

When the Bradys came racing after him, he had gone ahead, and reaching a point where he could cross the bridge car tracks, he went over to the footpath.

The detectives felt relieved, and Old King Brady exclaimed triumphantly:

"He can't escape us now, Harry. We've run him into a bad place to elude us."

"Oh, he'll have to skip straight ahead. But what's become of the black box?"

"I saw him fire it off the bridge somewhere near Rose street."

"He's running like fury now. The fellow who joined him must have been his pal."

"Sprint ahead. He can't beat us. His pal has disappeared among the cars."

Putting on speed, they gained on the young man.

He glanced back over his shoulder, and saw how he was losing. It brought a look of despair to his pallid face, for he was winded and could not run faster.

Presently Harry reached him.

"Halt!" cried the young detective.

Then he grabbed the man by the neck and stopped him.

With a cry of vexation the fugitive grappled Harry and fought desperately to throw him. But the young detective was more than a match for him.

Getting a half Nelson grip on the fellow, Harry hurled him down.

The next moment he had out a pair of handcuffs, snapped one on the man's wrist and the other on his own, and pulling the fugitive up, he cried sternly:

"You are my prisoner, sir!"

"And if you don't go quietly, I'll fix you!" added Old King Brady threateningly.

"Gentlemen, I submit," replied the prisoner quietly. "The jig is up!"

CHAPTER II.

IN THE OPIUM JOINT.

The Bradys marched their prisoner to the Elm street station house where they found the captain behind the desk.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed. "The Bradys! Who have you got there?"

"A murderer, we believe, captain," replied Old King Brady.

"What did he do?" queried the officer, opening the blotter and picking up a pen.

"Shot a man in Doyers street.

"Indeed. That's serious. What did he do it for?"

"Looked as if the motive was robbery."

"You ain't sure that the man is dead?"

"No. Looked very much as if he were, though."

The captain made an entry in his book, and looked the prisoner over.

Pale, silent, and yet defiant, the young man returned his glance brazenly.

"What's your name?" demanded the captain in gruff tones.

"Charles Craven," replied the prisoner, in a low voice.

"Age?"

"Twenty-five."

"Occupation?"

"Variety actor."

"Residence?"

"Morton House."

"Married?"

"Yes, sir."

Having written his replies in the book, the captain said tersely:

"Search him."

Old King Brady rapidly went through the prisoner's pockets, and produced a roll of money amounting to thirty dollars, a bunch of keys, a penknife, a small memorandum book, and a gold watch and chain.

He turned them over to the captain.

This done, the young man was locked up and the detectives departed, and headed back to the scene of the crime.

"We must search Ching Foo's opium joint," remarked Old King Brady.

"One of the hardest things to do is to get information from a Chinaman," said Harry. "But we may have to so in order to clear up this mystery."

"There must be someone in Chinatown to-night who can give us points."

"No doubt. I hope we'll find the money box."

They soon reached Doyers street and found it utterly deserted.

Not a white or a yellow man was seen, but the dull lights were blazing in Ching Foo's place, and the detectives went in.

It looked like a tea store, in which crockery, opium lay-outs, Chinese curios and odd-looking sandals, clothing and toys were for sale.

There were open umbrellas hanging from the ceiling, lanterns dangled from strings, fans adorned the walls and scarlet streamers, covered with queer dragons and Chinese figures, fluttered from hooks.

Quietly lighting a stick of incense among a group of dark-brown figures of joss, the Chinese god, was Ching Foo, the yellow dwarf.

His beady black eyes sparkled like those of an angry snake when he saw the detectives and he uttered a discordant laugh.

"Yo clum black?" he asked pleasantly.

"I told you we would meet for an accounting," answered Old King Brady severely.

"Me no flaidee you," replied the hideous little wretch coolly.

"No? Perhaps you may be before we finish," said the detective, darting a keen, searching look upon the man.

"Whatee want?"

"First you may tell us where the wounded man is."

"He glone, sarvy?"

"Where?"

"Dunno."

"That's a lie," said Old King Brady. "However, we won't discuss that point now. I want to know what interest you had in that thief getting away that prompted you to hinder us from arresting him? Are you ringing in with him on this deal for a divvy?"

"Ching Foo notee know de man," declared the Mongolian.

"I expected you to say that. I don't believe you, though. It's evident you are in league with him. If his victim dies, you may go to prison with the villain. Never mind. Let's hear what caused the fight."

"Allee samee me not know."

"I see you are determined to keep mum."

"Yes," assented the dwarf, with a grin. "Ching Foo gotee gleet head."

Old King Brady turned impatiently to Harry and growled:

"It's of no use trying to pump this beast. He won't say a word. Let's go down and look over the dope fiends in the cellar. We might find one among them who can give us points about this case."

He pushed open a rear door and Ching Foo watched them like a cat.

As they passed into the back room, he stealthily crept after them.

Descending a flight of stairs at the rear, the Bradys found themselves in the cellar. It was a small place, with a low ceiling, and the air was filled with the sickening fumes of opium.

A number of rough, wooden bunks were ranged round the walls.

Some were occupied by Chinamen, and others by white people, some of whom were elegantly dressed.

In some cases they were smoking opium from long-stemmed pipes with huge bowls, and in other cases they were sleeping off the effects of the drug.

A Chinese attendant was rolling and cooking the pills and keeping the lamps burning, and a man was crying like a child in the middle of the room.

This grewsome scene was dimly lit up by a smoky lamp standing on a table near the attendant.

The man who was crying so piteously was a shabby wretch with deepset, hollow eyes, a pallid, gaunt face and a trembling figure.

He was a fiend of the worst kind, and he was begging in anxious tones:

"For pity's sake give me just one more pill, Hop Sing."

"No money, no smoky," replied the attendant shortly.

"But I'll pay you when I come in again," protested the man.

"No!" roared the Celestial. "No!"

"Oh! Oh! I've got such cramps!" groaned the man, grasping his stomach and crying again till the tears ran down his cheeks.

Old King Brady chuckled:

"He's got a yen-yen, Harry."

"What the deuce is that?"

"A craving for opium which he can't get. His imagination gets the best of him. Thinks he's got all sorts of pains and ailments. He's daffy. Would do nearly anything to get another pill to smoke."

"Then it seems to me he's just the man we want."

"Of course he is. I'll try him."

He strode over to the weeping man, and tapped him on the arm.

"See here, my friend," he remarked in kindly tones. "I'll pay for your dope, if you will answer some questions for me."

The man glanced up at him with a wan smile of sudden joy and asked eagerly:

"Will you? Oh, will you?"

"Yes. But I want the information first."

"I'll tell you anything I can, boss, only hurry. I'm crazy for another smoke. If I don't get it soon, it will drive me mad."

"How long have you been in this joint?"

"Two days. Smoked up all my money."

"Then you saw the fight here an hour ago?"

"Every bit of it."

"How did it begin?"

"Well—" began the man.

But he got no further for just then Ching Foo pulled a dagger from up the flowing sleeve of his blue blouse and rushed forward brandishing it.

"No speakee!" he yelled. "You do, me cutee heart lout!"

With a cry of fright the opium smoker recoiled, his face drawn, his eyes bulging, and every limb quivering with alarm.

Old King Brady flew in a towering passion.

At one stride he reached Ching Foo, and shaking his clenched fist at the demoniacal dwarf he roared:

"You get out of here, and stop interfering with us, do you hear!"

Ching Foo made no reply.

Instead, he sprang at the detective and landed against him with great force.

Clinging to the officer's body, he drew back the knife with the evident intention of stabbing him, when Harry darted forward. With one blow of his fist the young detective knocked the dwarf to the floor.

He struck against the table on which the lamp stood, uttering a blood-curdling yell.

Down went the lamp with a jingling crash.

The cellar was suddenly cast in gloom, which was only

broken by the tiny flames of the alcohol lamps being used by the smokers.

Harry had saved his partner.

He saw the terrified opium fiend make a rush for the stairs to escape, but the young detective pounced on him.

They clinched and fell to the floor in a struggle.

Hop Sing rushed to his employer's aid, uttering a guttural cry of anger, and Old King Brady drew his revolver.

Pointing it at the two Chinamen alternately he shouted: "Stand where you are. The first one who moves will get shot!"

The Chinamen dared not attack him then.

CHAPTER III.

A MYSTERIOUS GIRL.

There was such a dim light in the cellar that Old King Brady could only just discern the shadowy figures of the two Chinamen.

Both crouched back uttering guttural remarks in their own tongue, but the old detective saw he had them frightened.

That was all he wanted.

Knowing he could easily hold them at bay, he exclaimed:

"Harry, get that dope fiend out of the joint."

"Very well," replied Young King Brady, as he grasped the smoker by his collar, and yanked him to his feet. "Come along you, or I'll arrest you."

"Mercy! They're detectives!" groaned the man, more frightened than ever.

He made no resistance, but went upstairs with the boy.

None of the stupefied opium smokers had been disturbed by the fracas, and Old King Brady backed up to the stairs.

"Ching Foo," he remarked, "I'd be justified in pulling you in. But I won't. I'm going to let you run at large till you so criminate yourself that you'll do lifetime or swing for your villainy."

"Ugh!" grunted the dwarf, well knowing what he meant.

"Recollect one thing! we ain't through with you yet. Now crawl into one of those bunks—both of you!"

The yellow villains obeyed.

Once they were out of reach, the detective went upstairs.

Harry had taken the prisoner out into the street and Old King Brady followed them and said to the young detective.

"Bring him over to the Bowery."

This was quickly done and when they reached the broad street the old detective said to the prisoner:

"We will keep our word to give you opium money. But you must not go into Ching Foo's joint to spend it, or he may kill you. Now, let us hear what you were going to say."

"Ain't you going to arrest me?" asked the prisoner in surprise.

"By no means. Don't be afraid to speak out now. How

did the row between the young man and the old fellow begin?"

"Why, the young fellow is a smoker," replied the prisoner. "I've often seen him in Ching Foo's place. He was hitting the pipe to-night when the old chap came in as if he was looking for someone. The young man had a metal box in the bunk and was slightly doped. As soon as the old fellow saw him, he grabbed the box, and yelled: 'I've caught you. Give me my property, you thief!' That brought the young man to his senses. He chased the old man upstairs, but when I got up in the store, they were having a fearful fight for the box."

"Did Ching Foo help the young man?"

"Yes. The old fellow was game, though. He gave the youngster a punch that knocked him out into the middle of the street, then followed him out."

"Was that when the shot was fired?"

"Yes."

"What became of the old man's body?"

"Ching Foo put out the lights after dragging it into the store."

"Was an ambulance summoned?"

"No, indeed."

"Then what did the Chinaman do with the old man's body?"

"I don't know. I couldn't see in the darkness."

"Wasn't it taken out of the joint?"

"Oh, no. It's in there yet, somewhere, I'll swear."

"Hidden?"

"No doubt."

"Did any conversation pass between the fighters?"

"Not a word."

"Then you don't know if the two men were related?"

"Neither of them said anything to give me a clew."

Old King Brady questioned the young man further. But he did not learn anything of any importance. No light was shed on the mystery.

He gave the opium smoker some money and let him go.

Then he turned to Harry and said:

"Keep watch on the joint till I come back."

"All right," replied the young detective with a nod.

Old King Brady strode away.

Within ten minutes he returned with four policemen and asked Harry:

"Did you see anyone go in or out of Ching Foo's?"

"No."

"I'm going to search the place for the missing man with the aid of these policemen."

"Well?"

"Meantime you'd better go and hunt for the stolen money box."

"Where'll I meet you in an hour?"

"Here. Lose no time or Craven's pal may get the box and baffle you."

Harry strode away and Old King Brady and the patrolmen went down to the joint.

The young detective realized the importance of looking

for the japanned box as quickly as possible, for he feared Craven's pal might find it.

Returning to the bridge, he went out on the roadway.

In a few minutes he located about the spot where Craven stood when he hurled the box from the bridge, down toward the street.

A bridge policeman approached and asked what he was doing there.

Harry told him.

"You'll never see that box again," laughed the officer.

"Why not?" demanded the boy with some asperity.

"If he chucked it off here, it must have landed down in Rose street and as there's been plenty people passing by down there, someone must have picked it up long before now."

"I don't believe he tossed it into the street."

"Where else could he have thrown it?"

"Over one of those fences. He doubtless selected a spot where he could rely upon finding it again, when he had a chance to return and look for it."

"Well, I wish you good luck, but I think you'll get left."

Harry went off the bridge, walked around into Frankfort street and passing along that thoroughfare till he reached the bridge arch spanning Rose street, he turned into the dark tunnel.

As he did so he caught view of a female figure ahead.

The glow of a street lamp showed him that she was a finely dressed young woman with a handsome figure.

She was acting suspiciously.

Pausing at the other side of the tunnel when she heard his footsteps behind her, she leaned against the masonry, and glanced around.

Harry then saw that she was very beautiful.

She was very dark, and had big brown eyes, handsomely arched eyebrows and dark hair smoothly brushed back from her forehead.

There was a burning look in her eyes as she watched him, and he observed that she acted as if she was very nervous.

The boy passed on, and she followed him a few paces, then suddenly darted around the anchorage and disappeared.

Puzzled by these queer actions on her part, he paused and retraced his steps.

As he reached the corner of the last building and peered around, he saw her going through an opening in a fence.

Harry followed her in.

She was bending over, peering down at the ground, as if in search of something.

"That's mighty queer!" he muttered. "What can she be looking for?"

He might have kept on wondering, but just then his glance was suddenly arrested by a small dark object near the building.

Approaching it, he stopped to examine it.

To his surprise and delight he saw that it was the stolen money box, and he picked it up and found one corner badly dented from its fall.

Just then he heard a quick footstep.

Glancing up he observed the girl.

"That's mine!" she exclaimed holding out her hands for the box.

"Yours?" echoed Harry, with an amused smile.

"Yes. Didn't you just see me looking for it?"

"Were you?" he asked in surprise.

"Certainly. That's what I came here for. Give it to me."

"How came you to lose it here?" demanded Young King Brady curiously.

"I didn't. A friend of mine dropped it in here and requested me to find it."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Harry, astonished at hearing this assertion. "Who was it?"

"That I decline to say."

"Was his name Charles Craven?"

The mysterious girl gave a cry of astonishment.

Gazing keenly at Harry, she gasped:

"Do you know him?"

"Of course I do. How did he get word to you that the box was here?"

"By a messenger."

"When?"

"To-night."

"Do you know where Craven is?"

"No."

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes."

"He's in jail, for stealing this box from a man he murdered, and I am one of the detectives who arrested him!"

A suppressed shriek burst from the girl's lips.

She glared at Young King Brady with a look of horror on her beautiful face.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHIEF OF THE SECRET SERVICE

It looked very much as if the girl was ignorant of the villainy practiced by Charles Craven that night. Still, she might be shamming.

Harry thought she might throw some light on the mystery. He therefore strode over to her and demanded:

"What's your name?"

"Nellie Craven," she replied.

"Are you related to Craven?"

"We are married."

"Then you are a variety performer?"

"I am. He and I form a sketch team."

"Do you know where he got this box?"

"No. I do not."

"Where do you live, Mrs. Craven?"

"On Lexington avenue, with my father."

"Do you know that Craven is an opium smoker?"

"Yes. It's the only fault he has that I know of. And I've tried my best to break him of the awful habit, but haven't succeeded yet."

"Well, I fear his craving for the product of the poppy flower has got him into a fatal difficulty. More than likely he was half insane from the drug when he shot that old man in Chinatown, to-night."

"Do you mean to say he is under arrest?"

"Yes. The messenger he sent to you must have been his pal. Will you let me know what message you received?"

"Certainly. I can see no harm in that."

She drew a note from her pocket and handed it to him.

Harry took it over to the opening in the fence where he could get the light of the street lamp, set down the box, and began to read the note.

The girl was watching him closely.

She drew a small vial from her pocket and uncorked it.

Pouring a pale, yellowish liquid on her handkerchief, she dropped the bottle and stole up behind Young King Brady.

The detective was so intent upon the note that he did not observe her actions, nor hear her quick, stealthy footstep.

Getting behind him, she suddenly clapped the handkerchief to his mouth.

A startled cry escaped him.

"Treachery!"

The next moment he inhaled the fumes of chloroform.

His brain reeled—he staggered—his trembling legs gave away from beneath him, and he sank to the ground, stupefied.

The girl had drawn back a step.

She was watching him anxiously.

As he was overcome by the subtle drug, she darted forward. Bending over him, she held the saturated cambric over his nostrils.

Harry weakly strove to push her away.

But he inhaled the drug again and again and collapsed.

The moment she saw how she had overpowered him, a low mocking laugh escaped her lips and she muttered:

"I've got him! He might as well be dead. Poor fool, he little suspected that Charley's pal saw the whole affair in Doyers street—the chase—the flinging away of the box of money—and the arrest. I've had a hard job searching for that box, but I've got it at last. We've got to have the money, now, to get Charley out of that scrape."

Picking up the money box and fake letter she had given to Harry she fled to the street, made her way to Park Row, got into a waiting cab and was driven rapidly away.

It was several hours later before Harry recovered his senses.

He quickly recalled to mind what had happened and rose to his feet.

One glance at his watch told him the story.

"Well—I'll—be—blowed!" he muttered, in tones of deep chagrin. "She doped me. I've been lying here senseless over two hours. And she has skipped with the box of money. She must be Craven's wife."

The glittering vial lying on the ground met his glance.

Picking it up, he glanced at the label.

"Chloroform!" he muttered. "She fixed me cleverly. I've been careless. I'll keep this bottle for the druggist's ad-

dress on it. I may find her by means of this clew. She's a daring girl!"

He put the bottle in his pocket.

A short search convinced him that the box was gone.

He felt bad from the effects of the drug and went home and to bed.

Old King Brady did not come in until daybreak, and as he was tired he turned in. It was early in the afternoon when they arose.

"Well?" asked the old detective, when he and his partner met.

"I've failed;" said Harry, in deep disgust.

"And so have I. Ching Foo has disappeared, and so has the body of Craven's victim."

Harry then told his partner what happened.

The old detective smiled with amusement and asked:

"Why were you soft enough to trust her for a moment?"

"She fooled me well."

"It serves you right. Next time don't be so careless."

"Going to court?"

"Yes. And we haven't much time to lose."

After having something to eat they went out.

Craven was arraigned in court when they got there, and was given a hearing. The judge realized that it was a very grave offense for which Craven was arrested and held him for the grand jury.

He was finally bundled into a "Black Maria" with a batch of other indicted prisoners and remanded to the Tombs for trial.

The Bradys went to see the district attorney, and requested him to see that no bonds were accepted for the man by the sheriff. They based their application on the grounds that he might be a murderer and would be apt to forfeit his bail and run away.

The detectives' request was granted.

As the man's trial would not occur for several months, they felt that he would be safer under lock and key in the city prison.

That would give them time to investigate the case before the trial, and if the man he shot was found dead, he would suffer for his villainy.

The Bradys then went to Secret Service headquarters.

Here they found their chief at his desk and gave him the details of the case.

Listening attentively to it all, he lit a cigar, and remarked:

"The whole thing was a put-up job."

"So it appears," assented Old King Brady.

"But I know it was."

"Why do you speak so positively?"

"Because I already know all about the case."

The Bradys were startled and exchanged meaning glances.

Here was a surprise. Had the chief got ahead of them?

Finally Old King Brady ventured to ask.

"Has anyone been working on this case before us?"

"No, indeed," laughed the chief. "I see you are puzzled. Let me enlighten you."

"Go ahead, sir."

The Bradys sat down and the chief opened his notebook and began studying over some entries he had made in it.

Presently he looked up, leaned back in his chair, and said:

"The man Craven shot was William Leland, his own uncle."

"Ah! Then he has been robbing his uncle, eh?"

"Evidently, Mr. Leland paid me a call yesterday, and told me his troubles. He is a wealthy, retired business man. He lives on Fifth avenue, near Forty-fifth street and owns a quantity of real estate. Craven is his nephew and only relation. The young man was heir to a million, but led a double life. He led his indulgent uncle to believe he was a traveling salesman. Instead, Mr. Leland has just discovered that Craven was a variety actor, and married Nellie Hill, one of the most notorious shoplifters in New York."

"That must have been her I met," said Harry.

"Of course it was. Well, Craven bled his uncle well, and finding he could not get any more money out of him, he resolved to rob the old man. Mr. Leland sold some property and got \$70,000 for it in cash. Receiving the money too late to deposit it in the bank, he put it in a japanned money box, placed it in the safe in his bedroom, and forgot to lock the door. Last night he returned home from a trip downtown and found the money box gone. A servant told him she had seen Craven going out of the house with a bundle. A letter found in Craven's room, written by Jack Dalton, his pal, who was an opium fiend, disclosed the fact that the thief was a smoker and had an appointment to meet his pal in Ching Foo's joint in Doyers street last night. Mr. Leland came to me with the story to invoke my aid and asserted that he was going down to Chinatown to get the box. While the fracas was at its height, a wardman called me up on the wire and told me you two were already mixed up in the case. I knew you could take care of the matter, so I've been waiting patiently to learn the result."

"It didn't end very well," growled Old King Brady.

"No, but you had better follow up the case and try to find out what became of Mr. Leland's body and recover the money box."

"Very well, sir," replied the old detective rising.

"Let me hear how you get on from time to time."

"We shall," was the reply and the Bradys departed.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE DIVE.

The Bradys shadowed Ching Foo's joint for a couple of weeks, but failed to see anything of the Chinaman.

Hop Sing had closed up the dive, and spies kept a constant watch for the police, as the Chinamen expected a raid.

One night the detectives went into a notorious dive next door to the opium joint, to look over the inmates.

It was a ramshackle little wooden house painted pale green. On the ground floor was a dingy barroom filled with a queer assortment of well-known crooks.

A staircase in the hall led the officers up to a well-furnished big room over the saloon, in which a man was thumping a piano, and an old rounder was singing a ragtime coon song.

This room was filled with noted Chinatown crooks, smoking, drinking and dancing when the singer was not roaring his melodies.

The Bradys sat down at a table and a waiter got an order from them for a couple of beers.

Both officers were disguised to look like a pair of tough citizens and therefore kept their identity hidden.

Had they not done so, they would have been recognized instantly by three-quarters of the gang in the resort.

Old King Brady shot a side glance at the party sitting at the next table.

One was a veiled woman and the other a young man clad in stylish clothing and a Derby hat.

He had a sallow face, a closely trimmed black mustache and a huge angular nose, while his eyes betrayed the fact that he was an opium fiend.

Conversing in low tones, the pair paid but little heed to the two seeming loafers sitting so close to them.

Suddenly the detectives heard the woman use the name Craven and they glanced significantly at each other and listened to their talk.

"I'm sorry for Charley," the man was saying. "He was expecting to get pinched when he shot the old guy."

"Well, he feels cheerful," replied the young woman. "I go to the Tombs to see him as often as I can. I've got a plan to get him out, now, Jack."

"Have you?" eagerly asked the man. "What is it?"

"Oh, I don't dare to tell you here. It will make the biggest sensation this town has ever known in years, though."

"Ain't you going to let me into the deal?"

"Yes. You can escort me home to-night and I'll give you the particulars. We will need your wife to help us in this game, Jack Dalton."

"And she'll help you with pleasure, Nellie."

"Then that's settled."

"When are you going to make the attempt?"

"To-morrow, as it is visiting day."

"Good enough! We mustn't let him stand trial. They'd convict him sure. He'd swing for shooting old Leland, and that would be the end of him."

"Sure enough, Jack," replied the girl. "Those Bradys are bound to convict him. But we'll beat them yet, eh?"

They laughed and Harry nudged his partner and whispered:

"They are Craven's pals. The girl is the one who got away with the money box and the man is the fellow we saw join Craven at the bridge."

"Luck is with us, to-night, Harry."

"So it appears. But—hark!"

The man and woman had resumed their dialogue. It was Nellie who spoke and she said in low tones:

"It's mighty lucky we've got the money that got Charley in trouble."

"Yes. Was there much in the box?" replied the man.

"I don't know as I haven't broken it open yet. It's locked."

"You wouldn't have had that money only for me."

"I know it, Jack. But how was it you happened to be at the bridge just in the nick of time that night?"

"Why, the game was arranged beforehand between Charley and I. You see, I knew he was going to tap his uncle that night for the box. He was to meet me at the bridge entrance and pass it to me in the crowd so I would get away with it in safety if anyone chased him. He could not resist the temptation on the way down to drop off in Ching Foo's to smoke a pipe before he met me. His uncle must have got on to the place and followed him. The fight and shooting followed. When he reached the bridge I saw the Bradys were after him. I ran out on the bridge with him. He told me where he was going to fire the box and advised me to get it in case she got nabbed. I left him the next moment."

"You saw how the detectives pinched him?"

"I did. That's why I didn't go after the box myself. They knew me. So I telegraphed you, as you know, to come down to the bridge. When we met, you recollect how I instructed you to look for the box. Then I hid."

"And a nice time I had of it to get the money from Young King Brady!"

"Well, you had the nerve to fool him successfully."

"Of course I did."

They laughed heartily again and Harry flushed with mortification.

Just then dancing began and the pair got up on the floor.

Left alone, Harry asked his partner:

"Shall we arrest them?"

"By no means. We must shadow them to find out where the girl has got that money box planted. Besides, I'm anxious to discover what their scheme is to get Craven out of the Tombs, so we can baffle the attempt when they try to put it into practice."

They watched the pair and finally saw them return to their seats, but they did not say anything of any interest.

In the course of an hour Nellie rose to her feet, and remarked wearily:

"Come on. Let's go. I'm sick of this place, Jack."

"So am I," replied the man. "Going back to the Morton House?"

"No. Ching Foo is under cover. He owns a hop factory over in Mulberry Bend. It's run by a Chink named Hi Lung. I think I'll take a pill before I turn in."

"Good joint?"

"Pretty fair. Have to be known to get in."

"How?"

"They've got a signal."

"Put me next so I can get in."

"Just say 'Suey-Pow' to the doorkeeper. That word means a sponge."

"I think I'll go over with you, now."

"All right. Come along, and while we're over there, I'll explain our plan."

They passed out together, and the Bradys stealthily followed them.

Elated over what they heard, the detectives shadowed the pair to a mean-looking house on Mulberry near Bayard street.

The exterior looked like a Chinese laundry, and a couple of Mongolians were inside busily ironing some shirts and collars.

Pausing in the doorway of an Italian grocery store the detectives saw the pair enter the laundry and speak to one of the Chinamen.

He nodded and they passed through a door in the unpainted board partition at the rear and disappeared from view.

"Run to cover!" commented Harry.

"We'd better get right in after them," said Old King Brady. "Just make a change in your appearance so they won't drop to our game."

This was an easy thing for them to do. Beneath their disguise they had another and they stripped off their rags and flung them away.

Changing the shape of their felt hats and slipping on false whiskers the detectives made a startling change in their looks.

To all appearances they were now a couple of loudly dressed sports, covered with fake jewelry and puffing at two huge cigars.

Boldly entering the laundry, Old King Brady nodded to the Chinamen, slapped one familiarly on the back and roared:

"Hello, John, how goes it?"

"Bully," said the mongolian with a sickly grin and a scared look.

"We want ter hit ther pipe, ole feller. Where's ther joint?"

"No, sarvy," quietly said the Chinaman.

"Ha-ha-ha! You're a sly dog. Maybe this'll open yer trap," said the old detective, and leaning over, he whispered, "Suey-Pow."

Instantly the laundryman's face changed to a more friendly expression and with a faint grin he exclaimed:

"Allee light. Go in."

The detectives passed into the back room.

It was used as a living and sleeping apartment, but there was another door through which the detectives passed and they then found themselves in a full-fledged opium joint.

The arrangement was similar to Ching Foo's cellar in Doyers street, only that it had a more Oriental appearance.

All the furniture was of luxurious kind, there were fine bamboo and upholstered couches, matting on the floor, handsome wall draperies, beautiful Chinese bric-a-brac, and a quiet air of elegance.

Hi Lung and Ching Foo were attending to the numerous people who were lying about the room.

The Bradys observed Nellie and Jack.

Both were smoking opium on a big Turkish couch and were conversing in low tones.

The yellow dwarf glared up at the detectives like a demon and keenly studied their features for they were strangers to him.

CHAPTER VI.

PLUNGED INTO A CISTERN.

"Well, old almond-eyes," said Old King Brady boisterously, "what's ther matter wi' you? Think yer'll know me if yer see me again?"

"Smokee plipe?" grunted Ching Foo, his black eyes sparkling.

"That's what brung us here," replied the old detective. "Let's have two o' ther handsomest pipes, an ther softest couches yer've got, ole buck. We've hit a sixty ter one shot down at Sheepshead terday, an' we're celebratin'—see!"

"Betcher life," added Harry. "We want good dope, too!"

Ching Foo nodded and pulled his queue around over his shoulder.

Pointing at a divan, he nodded, and said:

"Allee light."

When the detectives took possession of the couch, the dwarf picked up a pipe. The bamboo stem was highly polished, one end was tipped with silver, and the mouthpiece was made of ivory.

He cleaned out the red clay bowl with an instrument called a yen she gow, and handed it over to Old King Brady.

The detectives had placed themselves as near to the man and woman as possible, in order to overhear what they were talking about.

But the pair spoke in such low tones, they could only catch a word now and then.

Hi Lung now came over for his money for the opium.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded Harry as he extended his hand.

"One dollee," was the laconic reply.

"Give us ther best dope old man."

"Allee hop bellee good in Hi Lung house."

Harry paid him, and he brought two flaming lamps and placed them on the bamboo stools standing beside the couch.

Picking up a hop-toy he lifted the lid.

It was a small jar made of polished bone, chased with golden figures and it contained a small quantity of what looked like dark-brown paste. This stuff was opium.

The Chinaman took out a small quantity and began forming it in a pill about the size of a pea, in the meantime slyly watching the Bradys.

In constant fear of the police gaining evidence, to raid them, the heathen owners of the crooked joints in New York are suspicious of everyone.

In fact, Chinamen are naturally of a distrustful nature.

The detectives began to talk over their pretended betting and occasionally geyed the Chinaman, meantime listening to catch what Nellie and Jack were saying.

Just then Jack exclaimed:

"That's a wonderfully good job."

"Bound to work, ain't it?" asked the girl.

"Without a doubt. They can't suspect my wife, either."

"No, indeed. She can pretend she lost the pass."

"Well, she's as big as Charley, and——"

But here his voice sank into a whisper and the detectives lost the rest of it.

Hi Lung now stuck the opium pill on the end of a long needle called a yen-hoc to cook the drug and finally thrust a pill in the tiny hole in the top of the big bowl of the pipe.

The Bradys had often seen hop fiends smoke the stuff and therefore were not at a loss to know how to operate the queer pipes by inhaling.

As a matter of fact they did not actually smoke.

Both feared the poisonous drug.

They kept a keen watch upon everyone in the den.

Ching Foo had retired to the further end of the room behind them and picking up a pair of powerful opera glasses which one of the fiends had left upon a table inlaid with pearl he leveled it at the detectives.

The yellow dwarf was suspicious of them.

His keen eyes had detected the fact that they wore false whiskers.

It was to verify this idea that he used the opera glasses.

He now saw that he made no error.

The glass plainly showed him that the whiskers worn by the pair did not move with the muscles of their faces while they were speaking.

He said something to Hi Lung in his native language.

The attendant answered and a brief dialogue followed which translated was about as follows:

"These men are spies," said Ching Foo, laying down the glass.

"Do you mean secret police?" asked the other Celestial.

"Yes, and I fear them."

"Do you know who they are?"

"No. But I suspect."

"Who? You need not mention names or they will understand."

"The two men who caused me to close up my store."

"How can you tell?"

"Pull off the false beard of one and I'll show you."

"But it may be them."

"I'll be ready to send the couch down the shaft."

"Get ready."

With a diabolical grin upon his ugly yellow face Ching Foo grasped an iron lever sticking up from the floor.

All unconscious of the danger they were in, the Bradys were reclining on the big couch, whispering and pretending to smoke.

Hi Lung walked over to them.

"Smokee more plipe?" he asked softly.

"No," replied Old King Brady. "Not yet."

"Me takee pipe den."

He reached over as if to take the pipe, but instead he suddenly darted his hand forward and plucked off Old King Brady's beard.

Ching Foo was watching him closely.

The detective was startled and sat up.

Jack and Nellie saw the action.

Both knew the detectives by sight.

"It's Old King Brady!" shouted the opium smoker in alarm, and the girl gave a suppressed cry, sprang to her feet, and recoiled.

Ching Foo pulled the lever. A trapdoor in the floor swung open. The couch upon which Old King Brady and Harry sat disappeared in the dark hole.

It was done so suddenly that the detectives could not save themselves.

Feeling themselves descending like a gunshot, the officers grasped the couch, and almost had their breath taken away by the speed of their fall.

With a violent crash the couch struck the bottom.

It was smashed to pieces.

The padding and springs saved the detectives from fatal injury.

But they were hurled by the shock in different directions upon the floor and were partially stunned by the fearful shock.

Finally Old King Brady arose.

He was enshrouded in dense gloom.

Bruised and aching he stood up and called:

"Harry! Where are you?"

"Over here," groaned the boy from somewhere in the gloom.

"Badly hurt?"

"I guess not. But I ache like fury."

"Hold on. I'll light my lantern and see where we are."

Fortunately it was not destroyed and the old detective lit it and flashing its rays around he quickly discovered his pupil.

Harry was sitting on the floor amid the wreckage of the smashed couch, tenderly rubbing his scratched shins.

By the light of the lantern they carefully examined their wounds and found that neither of them was injured very much.

Then they viewed their surroundings.

There was very little to see.

They seemed to be at the bottom of a huge cistern sunk fifteen feet below the bottom of the cellar.

It was circular in form, ten feet in diameter, the bottom was damp mud, and the walls were of slimy stone masonry with a rough surface and the joints slushed full of cement.

"A regular trap!" dryly said the detective.

"The top is out of your reach, too, isn't it?" asked Harry gloomily.

"Yes, indeed. Fully fifteen feet up."

"How are we to get out of here?"

"There don't seem to be much chance."

"Confound those Chinks. They must have suspected our identity."

"No doubt, or that villain Hi Lung wouldn't have pulled off my beard."

"I think we can thank Ching Foo for this."

"Of course. He has the eyes of a lynx."

"That's a pretty well-arranged trap they've got above there. I suppose it was built for just such people as we are."

"Or victims they intend to murder and rob."

"Let's see if we can't get out of here."

They made several desperate efforts to scale the walls, but found they could not get a grip or a foot hold.

Finding every effort useless, they abandoned the attempt and tried to arrange the broken couch to sit on so they could keep out of the mud.

"They've baffled us badly," said Old King Brady gloomily. "Dalton and the girl will get away and put their plan in operation to rescue Craven from the Tombs. I'm afraid we are in a bad fix, Harry."

"Desperate, without a doubt," replied the boy.

The night and all of the next day passed by and beset by hunger and thirst the detectives could not help fearing that they were left to starve to death.

CHAPTER VII.

USING THE CHINAMAN'S PIGTAIL.

As the horrible conviction grew upon the Bradys that the yellow dwarf designed to kill them by starvation, it made them desperate.

"We've been here a night and a day," said Old King Brady, "and not a soul has come near us. It seems more than probable that those fiendish Chinamen are determined to kill us. It will be such an easy matter to put us out of the way in this place. Not a soul could hear our cries for help and it isn't likely that anyone ever comes near this place except those yellow villains."

"We must get up out of here before it's too late," said Harry in determined tones. "I don't purpose falling a passive victim to the demoniacal spite of Ching Foo, I can tell you."

"I can't see how it's to be done."

"Light your lantern again and we'll try a new plan."

Old King Brady complied.

He felt famished and eager for anything to escape.

"What next?" he demanded.

"Stand against the wall."

"Going to mount on my shoulders?"

"I am. That will bring me within two feet of the top if you stand on that pile of broken stuff from the couch."

"Even then you can't reach the top."

"I might by jumping for it. And if I once get a grip I'll pull myself up and get you out with a rope, or something."

They stacked up the ruined couch near the wall.

Standing upon it, with his back to the wall, Old King Brady laid his bull's-eye so its light would shine to the top.

Harry climbed upon his shoulder and reached up his hands, but he found that the top course of stone was beyond his reach.

Just then there came an interruption.

A burst of hoarse, elfin laughter in a queer voice rolled down into the old cistern and the boy glanced upward hastily.

High above he saw Ching Foo's head.

The dwarf was lying on the floor of the cellar peering down at them, and it was he who gave utterance to that horrible sound.

"Oh—it's you is it?" demanded Harry sharply.

"Wantee git lout?" jeered the rascal.

"Yes. And we shall, too."

"No—no. You die dere allee samee," chuckled the dwarf.

"That's what you think and intend, is it?"

"Bladys muchee blad mans. No more chasee Ching Foo."

"We'll fool you yet, you murderous brute."

The Chinaman leaned over further to see where Old King Brady was and his long black pigtail dangled down in the hole.

In an instant Harry seized it with both hands.

"By thunder, I've got him!" he cried delightedly.

"Wow!" yelled the dwarf. "Pullee whole head loff!"

He struggled to get free, but Harry had wound the queue around one hand, and the yellow villain could not get free.

"I'll pull myself out of here by the hair of your head, or I'll pull you down into this hole with me!" declared the boy determinedly.

And so saying he began to draw himself up by Ching Foo's pigtail.

The agonized dwarf yelled furiously.

It felt as if every hair in his head was being pulled out, his neck was stretched and he gripped the top of the masonry frantically to prevent the boy from dragging him into the cistern.

Shriek after shriek burst from his thick lips and he let out a volley of Chinese words that Harry could not understand.

Old King Brady chuckled when he saw the situation.

It would have been laughable if their situation was not so serious.

"Hang on, Harry," he shouted encouragingly. "Don't let go till you reach the top. If you do our last chance is gone."

"I'll pull the braid out of his half-shaved head before I'll let go!" panted the boy quickly. "I'll bet he's sorry he came down to gloat over our misery!"

Up he went, inch by inch, each moment getting a fresh strong grip on the screaming Chinaman's tough hair.

In the course of a minute he reached the top.

While he was trying to swing up a knee to get it on the masonry, the Chinaman got hold of a knife and blindly struck out at him.

The keen blade cut through Harry's sleeve.

He felt its sharp edge graze his flesh, but did not flinch.

"You may cut, but you won't stop me!" he cried in exasperated tones.

"Leavee mee go!" howled Ching Foo. "Me killee you!"

"Not on your life!"

Just then Harry got his knee on the ledge, and that relaxed the awful strain upon the dwarf's head.

Ching Foo tried to get up as Harry rolled over on the cellar floor free, but the young detective still clung to his pigtail.

He gave the Chinaman a kick on the wrist that wrung another yell from his throat and sent the dagger flying across the cellar.

"Oh, I murder you," howled the dwarf savagely.

"You won't get the chance, now," panted Harry.

He sprang at Ching Foo, who had risen.

The dwarf darted aside to avoid him and in the gloom stepped into the hole.

"Look out below!" shouted Harry warningly.

Down plunged the dwarf and he landed in the cistern on his back.

The blow almost killed him.

It completely knocked the senses out of him.

"Hello, down there!" cried Harry.

"It's all right. He landed," laughed Old King Brady.

"Killed?"

"No. Stunned."

"Good enough. Wait, now."

He had some matches and lit one.

Across the cellar was a wooden flight of stairs leading above, and among the trash on the floor were numerous pieces of clothes line.

They had evidently been used by the laundrymen.

Securing a number and knotting them together, Harry made a long strong rope and tied one end to a girder post.

Dropping the other end into the hole, he sung out cheerily:

"Can you climb up that?"

"Easily," answered Old King Brady, picking up his lantern.

"Going to leave Ching Foo there?"

"Got to. Haven't time to bother with him, now."

"Well, we can leave the rope down so he can climb out, when he come to, as we don't want to leave him here to perish of hunger."

Old King Brady climbed up the rope.

Joining Harry he uttered a sigh of relief and muttered gladly:

"Safe, so far."

"We may have a tussle in the hop shop."

"Come right up and don't hesitate to use your gun."

They drew their pistols and glanced around.

Above, the trapdoor in the floor had closed immediately after the detectives were dropped through it.

The Bradys made a rush for the stairs and went up.

Finding the door unlocked at the head of the stairs, they pushed it open and passed through into the opium den.

The place was completely deserted, but the two laundrymen were sprinkling clothes by blowing water from their mouths, then rolling the laundry up in parcels.

As the Bradys dashed out, with their revolvers in their hands, the two Chinamen yelled with alarm and dove under the ironing table.

"Evidently they knew that we were prisoners," said Old King Brady as he stepped out into the street with Harry.

"Of course. And they feared arrest."

"Well, we are out."

"Luckily."

"Let's get right over to the Tombs."

"We'll be too late to balk them."

"I know that, but I'm anxious to learn whether Craven has escaped."

They hurried over to Centre street.

Going to the Franklin street entrance they met the doorkeeper who was acquainted with them, and eagerly asked:

"Is the warden in?"

"Yes. He's in Bummers' Hall."

He referred to a room in which tramps, vagrants, vagabonds and drunks were kept over night. The drunkards' section was called the "Ten-Day House."

"Has any prisoner escaped to-day?"

"No, indeed. They never get out of here."

"You'd better summon the warden. I fear there's been an escape."

Alarmed the man hurried away.

In a short time he returned with the prison keeper.

This individual looked very much worried when he greeted them and he lost no time about asking:

"Who do you imagine got away from here, Mr. Brady?"

"Charles Craven," answered the old detective.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ESCAPE FROM THE TOMBS.

The warden smiled and a relieved look came over his face when he heard the name of the person Old King Brady mentioned.

"Your fears are groundless," he remarked. "Craven is in his cell. I just passed No. 40 on the second tier, and saw through the grated door that he was fast asleep in his cot. People never escape from this prison."

Old King Brady was not satisfied.

He knew what a sharp gang he was dealing with.

"Was anybody here to see him to-day?" he asked.

"Oh, yes. His wife, Nellie. When she first came within the flash of the police lantern, she was budding into a skillful shoplifter some two years ago."

"We know her very well, and have reason to believe she put up a job on you to get her husband out of this jail. Calls often, don't she?"

"Every day since Craven was locked up. Brings him baskets of fruit, flowers, books, and cigars. Her conduct is

most exemplary. To-day she called with a lady friend dressed in deep mourning, wearing a veil."

"At what time?"

"Ten o'clock. We give each visitor a ticket which they have to show to the several keepers when they go out. The cells on the ground floor are for men under sentence. We confine on the second tier those who are brought in charged with such offenses as murder, arson, and so on. Craven is in No. 40 on this tier. His wife remained talking to him to-day till the gong sounded for visitors to depart at two o'clock. Her friend left an hour earlier."

"Was anyone else here to-day?"

"How about it, Nick?" the Warden asked the doorkeeper.

"Well," said the old fellow, who was an ex-policeman.

"I'm puzzled. I generally count the visitors. To-day I only counted two going in, Craven's wife, and Mrs. Dalton. But strange to say I counted three coming out."

Old King Brady smiled and winked at Harry.

Then he asked abruptly.

"Who was the third party?"

"A woman in mourning. She was big and clumsy, too."

"Veiled?"

"Heavily. Wore crepe."

"That so-called woman was a man in disguise."

"What!" roared the warden, in startled tones.

"I'm sure of it. I'm positive it was Craven."

"Nonsense! How about her having a pass ticket?"

"You've got a forged one, mark what I tell you."

The warden frowned with annoyance.

He was visibly affected by a secret fear that Brady spoke the truth.

"We can quickly tell. We have the three used tickets aside yet. Let us examine them, and I'll soon find out."

The three tickets were procured.

Two were old and worn, and the third was fairly new.

"Queer!" exclaimed the warden, his fear increasing. "We haven't a new ticket in the bunch, and yet here is one, sure enough."

"Compare the printing," suggested Harry.

The warden complied.

A cry of alarm escaped him.

"This ticket is a forgery!" he shouted. "See!"

They observed at a glance that the type used while similar to that on the real tickets was just enough different to be noticeable in making a comparison.

"I fear the alleged woman in mourning who turned in this ticket was Craven dressed in a suit of Mrs. Dalton's clothes which she smuggled in under her dress to the prisoner," said Old King Brady. "He has a slim girlish figure, white smooth face and is an actor. Therefore he could pass you without exciting much suspicion."

"Let's have his cell examined," said the warden feverishly.

He sent an alarm through the prison to examine all the cells, and after a while he received word that a dummy figure in men's clothing was found under the covers of Craven's cot, and that the man himself was gone.

The Bradys and the warden visited Craven's cell.

It was found to be in a state of neatness and order.

He had used his own clothing to make the dummy in the bed, put on the disguise handed in the forged ticket, and walked out of the prison unrecognized!

To do this he had to pass down the corridor, through the two lower gates and then out the main entrance.

The Bradys left the Tombs very rapidly.

Officer Reilly, who patrolled Franklin street from Centre to Elm that day, was accosted hurriedly by the detectives and said:

"Yis. I did see ther loikes av a quare-lookin' woman lave ther Tombs at half-past wan. She joomped aboard av a Second avenue car, goin' uptown, an' bedad she had ther shoes an' fût av a man."

"This woman wore a thick, black veil?"

"She did that, an' it's ther ongainly walk she had, too."

They questioned him further, then found a public telephone.

Ringin' up the Second avenue car barn Old King Brady asked:

"What Second avenue car passed the Tombs at 1:30 to 1:35, to-day?"

"Number 380 passed there about 1:34," was the reply.

"How soon will it pass here again?"

"It must be up at Park Row, now."

"Thank you. That is all."

He rung off and told Harry what was said; then he added:

"Come, we'll try to find out from the conductor if he carried that peculiar-looking woman and where she alighted."

They hastened up Centre street.

Meeting the car coming toward them, they boarded it.

The conductor was a good-natured old fellow, and when Harry described the disguised fugitive, mentioned the time and place "she" boarded the car and asked for information, he said quickly.

"Oh, I remember that gawky woman very well. She sat in the rear corner there, and got off on the corner of Stuyvesant Place and Tenth street."

"Did you notice which way she went?"

"No. She stood opposite of the church till I turned into Second avenue. Then I lost sight of her by going around the curve."

"Did she meet anybody?"

"Yes. I saw a dark complexioned young girl join her."

"How was she dressed?"

"In a blue shirt waist, black dress and white sailor hat."

"Nellie! That fits her description exactly, Harry."

"True," assented the boy with a nod.

"Perhaps we can trace them by going up there."

"We can try, at all events."

They rode up to Tenth street and alighted.

Casting about until they met the policeman who patrolled that post, Old King Brady accosted him and explained what his business was.

After a moment's thought, the officer said:

"Yes, I saw them."

"Where did they go?"

"Got in a coach."

"Was it waiting for them?"

"Yes, apparently."

"Do you know whose it was?"

"No, but what attracted my attention was the team."

"Anything peculiar about the horses?"

"They were pure white."

"Describe the carriage."

"Oh, it was just an ordinary coach."

"From a livery stable?"

"Yes. It was too clean for a public hack."

"How about the driver?"

"A big man in green livery. He had a red mustache."

"Those are valuable clews. I'll try to locate that outfit."

Resorting to a telephone he rung up numerous livery stables and finally was directed to one in Twenty-seventh street near Second avenue where it was said such a driver and rig were located.

The last call brought this response:

"Yes, that was my rig and my driver."

"Is the man in?"

"Yes."

"Let him get that rig ready for us."

"Right away?"

"Decidedly. We'll come right up and get it at your stable."

When they were in the street, they boarded an uptown car and rode away. Reaching the stable, they found the man and carriage ready.

"Do you recollect taking on two ladies at Tenth street, to-day?" asked Harry.

"Very well, sir," responded the coachman promptly.

"You know where you carried them to?"

"Of course I do, sir."

"Then take us to the same place at once."

"Jump in, sir. I'm ready."

The Bradys entered the coach and were driven away rapidly.

"We are on their trail, now," remarked Harry cheerfully.

"This driver will doubtless carry us right to their hiding place," said Young King Brady, "and we ought to nab the pair!"

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE SECRET PASSAGE.

The coach was driven downtown at a rapid pace, and the Bradys observed that it turned into Chatham Square and was heading for Mott street.

"Right back to the Chinese quarters," remarked Harry hopefully.

"Just as I expected," replied Old King Brady. "It's a funny thing, but once a person becomes addicted to the use of opium, he can't keep away from the Chinese joints."

Just then the carriage paused and the detectives alighted. They were in front of a tall, brick building with several balconies having ornamental iron railings up the front.

Hanging from the different stories were yellow, red, and blue banners and streamers, marked with Chinese characters.

A sign over the door said, "Chinese Restaurant," and underneath the words, Chop Suey and Yockamay.

"Those two women went in here," said the coach driver pointing at the house.

"Wait here for us," replied Old King Brady briefly.

The driver nodded and they ascended the iron stoop.

In the doorway stood a sleepy-looking Celestial in black pants, blue blouse, a black felt hat, and a pair of sandals.

He had a white-and-green onyx ring bracelet on his wrist, his braid was coiled under his hat, and he looked as if he was half dozing.

But there was a keen, watchful glitter in his snaky eyes as he watched the two detectives, and he planted himself right in their way and asked lazily:

"Whatee want?"

"Going in the restaurant," said Harry.

"Oh," grunted the Chinaman, moving aside.

"What's upstairs?"

"Joss house."

"No white men admitted?"

"Only China."

"More than likely a hop shop."

"No," said the Mongolian. "Joss. Listen."

The squeaky and hideous sound of a one-string fiddle came down through the hall which at intervals was interrupted by a clash of cymbals, the banging of a drum, and a tattoo upon hollow pieces of wood.

It made a most horrible discord.

Perhaps, though, it was music to the Chinaman.

Entering a dirty hall, the Bradys opened a door and strode into a big room filled with tables and chairs. The walls were festooned with Chinese signs.

A waiter approached and asked:

"Chop suey?"

"Yes, for two," said Harry.

The Chinaman brought them the queer-tasting food, a teapot, with tiny bowls for drinking the beverage, and a small saucer of molassas-like sauce.

While disposing of the food they kept their eyes and ears wide open.

The waiter eyed them suspiciously and Old King Brady called him.

"Who lives upstairs?" he asked.

"Ching Foo," readily answered the Celestial.

"Can we hit the pipe?"

"Sure."

They paid him, and went up without attracting the sentry at the door.

On the next floor they paused and Harry whispered:

"By thunder, the yellow dwarf has a good many homes."

"He'll be surprised to see us back," chuckled Old King Brady.

"That villain is a power in Chinatown. I'll bet he leads the Highbinders."

Harry referred to a secret society among the Mongolians which was very much like the Mafia of the Italians.

Old King Brady agreed with his opinion.

They pushed open the first door they came to and stepped into a room.

Just as Old King Brady suspected, it was an opium joint, and the big room was crowded with Chinese who chiefly patronized it.

Most of them glanced up at the white men, and their chatter of talk suddenly ceased and they eyed the newcomers closely.

"Where's the boss?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Wait. I callee," said one of the men.

He opened a door and passed into an adjoining room.

After a few moments Ching Foo stepped from the room and found himself staring down the muzzle of Old King Brady's revolver.

"Caught!" cried the detective.

"Blady! No shootee!" roared the dwarf in affright.

His horrible face was contorted into a most demoniacal expression, and he went down on his knees betraying the liveliest fear.

Instantly the rest of the Chinamen began to jabber.

Then there was a stampede and they feared he was going to shoot at them.

Diving under bunks, behind tables and chairs and even behind each other, the cowardly slaves of the opium pipe betrayed every evidence of alarm.

Harry barred their exit from the door.

Seeing that he was master of the situation Old King Brady demanded:

"Where's Craven and his wife?"

"In dat loom," replied Ching Foo tremulously.

He pointed at the apartment from which he had just emerged, and the old detective strode to the door and said:

"Cover him till I search the place, Harry."

The boy obeyed with alacrity.

As he held Ching Foo at bay the old detective entered the room. It was so dark he could hardly see a yard ahead.

Just as he passed the threshold a man who stood concealed behind the door brought down a club on his shoulder.

The blow was intended for his head and barely missed it. But it was sufficiently heavy to knock the detective down.

"Treachery!" he cried so Harry could hear him.

The boy darted into the room, and Ching Foo scrambled to his feet and rushing over to the door, he pulled it shut with a loud bang.

It was a massive door and had no knob on the inside.

The door fastened with a spring lock and the man who hit the old detective disappeared through a hidden panel in the wall.

The detectives were prisoners but did not know it.

Lighting a match Harry found his partner lying on the floor groaning.

"What's the trouble?" he asked anxiously.

"Someone hit me on the shoulder with a club," groaned his partner.

"There's nobody in this room besides ourselves."

"My assailant must have made his escape, then."

"You might have expected some crooked work."

"So I did; but not so sudden as this was."

"Let's get out of here."

"I can't move. I'm stunned."

"That's bad. Who closed the door?"

"Ching Foo. I saw him."

"Then I'll open it, and help you out of here."

A moment later he discovered that there was no way to open the door and it sent an unpleasant sensation through him.

Lighting another match, he glanced around.

There was no other mode of exit.

"I'm afraid we're in a trap," he muttered.

"Can't you open the door?" asked Old King Brady in startled tones.

"It has no knob and is locked."

"Blast that Ching Foo. He's at the bottom of this."

Harry had a dark lantern, and having lit it, he carefully examined the door and said to his partner:

"We'll have to break it down to get out of here; as it's a mighty strong door and you are crippled, I can't manage it alone."

"Oh, I'll be all right in a few minutes. Look at the walls."

Harry complied and found them made of wood.

In a few moments his keen eyes detected the concealed panel, and he pushed it open and observed a narrow passage between the walls.

"A hidden passage!" he exclaimed.

"That's where my assailant escaped," replied Old King Brady.

"In that case we ought to get out the same way."

"We can explore it and see."

In ten minutes the old detective felt like himself again, and except for a slight pain in his arm he suffered no inconvenience.

He lighted his own lantern and said:

"Follow me."

Then he passed through the open panel with Harry at his heels.

They found themselves in a narrow, musty space, and a few steps ahead saw a steep flight of stairs which they quietly descended.

A small landing was encountered on the ground floor.

Here they paused.

The hum of voices reached their ears.

It came from the other side of the wall, and as they flashed the lights from their lanterns upon the wall, they observed a small door which probably opened in the wainscoting of a room beyond.

Listening intently a moment Old King Brady whispered:

"Harry, I recognize those voices."

"Whose are they?"

"The voices of Craven and Nellie the shoplifter!"

CHAPTER X.

SEVENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

"Harry," whispered Old King Brady. "Craven and Nellie are in that place on the other side of this partition. As we have only descended one flight it must be on the same floor as the Chinese restaurant."

"These stairs are longer than the ones in the hall," replied the boy, "so we must be in the basement. Recollect we had to ascend a stoop from the sidewalk to reach the restaurant. Therefore the basement must be half under and half above the street level."

"Sure enough," admitted the old detective, as he took a chew of plug. "I did not think of that before. Can you make out what they are saying?"

Both pressed their ears against the wall.

The murmur of voices inside continued, and they heard Craven saying:

"Ching Foo says it's the Bradys."

"They came in the same carriage we drove here in today," replied Nellie's voice.

"I see through it! They've found the driver who brought us here, and got him to fetch them to the same place he carried us."

"That shows they're hot on our trail, Charley."

"No doubt they're anxious to get me back in the Tombs."

"But they can't do it now."

"No. Ching Foo got them into a neat trap."

"He can hold them as long as he likes, too, Charley."

"I wish he'd cut their throats!" exclaimed the fugitive maliciously. "They are a pair of demons. Once they get after a man, they don't let up on him till he's caught. What is to be done with them?"

"Ching Foo will have to decide that. They are his prisoners. He owes them a grudge, so you can depend that he won't have much mercy on them," replied the girl with a harsh laugh.

Old King Brady nudged Harry and smiled.

The boy was closely examining the panel door with the aid of his dark lantern, to find a means of opening it.

Just then Craven demanded:

"What have you got wrapped up in that paper?"

"The money box you tossed from the bridge," replied the girl.

"Good!" he cried delightedly. "Haven't you opened it yet?"

"No. We've got to smash the lid, as it's locked."

"I'll attend to that. What's more, I'll divide the swag with you. There's \$70,000 in that box, Nellie, and we are made for the rest of our lives, now."

"One thing sure, old Leland will never see it again."

"No, indeed. I was wise in grabbing all I could get"

hands on. The old fellow found out I was an opium smoker and was going to disinherit me anyway. That's why I wanted to get all I could out of him before he cut me adrift entirely, my dear."

"You've got a level head," she commented admiringly.

"Oh, I knew on which side my bread was buttered. Hand me that hatchet. I'll soon cut open the lid and get the money out. With all the cash we need, it will be an easy matter to keep out of the hands of the police."

"I'm sorry your temper got the best of you and made you shoot Leland."

"Well, I ain't," growled Craven, "and if he hit me again as he did, I would do the same thing over again."

"Do you know what the Chinaman did with his body?"

"I think he has got it in his house."

"Hidden?"

"Of course."

"Why don't you ask him where?"

"I've done so, but he absolutely refuses to divulge his secret."

"The old man is dead, isn't he?"

"I'm at a loss to know. But I'd like very much to find out."

"Have you any special reason?"

"Yes indeed. I'm his only heir. If he's dead, I could sue for his fortune."

The girl laughed heartily at the audacity of the man and said:

"For cheek, you'll do famously."

"Look out of the way till I open this box."

A moment later there came a metallic banging and the detectives became quite restless, as the time for action had arrived.

Old King Brady whispered:

"Have you located that trapdoor, yet?"

Harry answered:

"Yes. Here's the latch, too."

The lantern light gleamed upon it.

Getting a grip on his pistol the old detective muttered:

"Fire it open and jump through."

Pulling back the fastening Harry swiftly opened the panel, and at one glance observed a very handsome living room on the other side.

It was furnished in Oriental style according to the best taste of the Chinese owner of the place.

Upon a table stood the fatal money box.

Nellie was sitting on a wicker couch, and Craven, clad in a new suit of clothes and having his face cleanly shaven was standing beside the table with a hatchet in his hand.

With this implement he was trying to break open the box.

The detectives had pocketed their lanterns.

They were not required as the room was brilliantly lighted with gas.

Into the apartment sprang the Bradys, as the panel door went open with a bang and Nellie gave a shriek of alarm.

Casting one frightened glance upon the intruders, she cried:

"It is the Bradys!"

"Douse the glim!" roared the man.

The gas meter was near her hand and she turned off the flow of light.

In an instant the room was cast in dense gloom.

Old King Brady leaped toward the table, and struck up against the figure of Craven in the darkness.

The escaped prisoner had the money box in his hand, but the shock knocked it to the floor with a loud crash.

Craven muttered a fierce imprecation.

The next moment he swung the hatchet aloft to deal the old detective a blow with it, and brought the blade down with awful force.

Old King Brady had recoiled a few paces.

The hatchet shot by his head and struck the table such a terrible blow that it was smashed to pieces.

Had the detective got it, he must have perished.

"Flash the lantern, Harry!" he cried.

The boy produced his light and its dazzling rays cut through the gloom in every direction but failed to reveal the couple.

Craven and the shoplifter had vanished like ghosts.

Finding the meter, Harry turned on the gas and lit the jets.

"They've escaped!" he cried in disgust.

"Yes, but see what they've left behind," said Old King Brady picking up the money box from the floor. "We're in luck!"

"They must have gone up those stairs."

"Follow them, Harry. We may nab them yet."

Dashing up the stairs they emerged in the restaurant kitchen and Old King Brady seized the coolie cook by the neck and shouted in excited tones as he brandished his revolver:

"Where did that man and woman go?"

"Outee door," gasped the startled Chinaman pointing at the exit with a frying pan. "Just leab allee samee."

"After them, Harry!"

When they reached the street, and glanced around they not only failed to see the pair they were after, but also missed their coach.

A policeman stood leaning against a lamppost, idly swinging his club, and Old King Brady approached him and exclaimed:

"Hello, Rooney."

"Hello, Old King Brady."

"Did you see a man and woman just emerge from the restaurant?"

"I did. They were in a hurry too."

"What became of them?"

"They got in a coach and drove away."

"Did they say anything to the driver?"

"Yes. The man said, 'Your two passengers sent us out to use the carriage. Take us toward police headquarters in Mulberry street as quick as you can.' The driver nodded and drove away like fury."

"Well, they've beaten us, for they won't go two blocks before they'll stop the horses and change that order, on account of you hearing it."

"What's the matter?"

"Did you hear about Craven's escape from the Tombs to-day?"

"Yes. The evening papers are full of it. There was extras out."

"Well, that man was the escaped prisoner."

"Holy smoke!"

"Ring up police headquarters at your signal box and I'll send in an alarm. When the night force goes out on post they may see the coach and arrest the fugitive before he makes his escape."

"The policeman complied and Old King Brady telephoned the station.

When this was done he turned to Harry and said:

"Come on to the Central Office. I want to open this box and see if the stolen money is intact."

Wishing the policeman good night, they hastened away.

CHAPTER XI.

RAIDING THE FAN-TAN PLAYERS.

Well knowing that the police could look out for the fugitives without their aid, the Bradys made their way to the Secret Service office.

The chief was in and greeted them cordially:

"Well," he laughed, "my telephone has been buzzing all day, Old King Brady, and the substance of all the call related to your case."

"We've been having a hot time of it," replied the veteran.

"So I imagine. The escape of Craven from the Tombs is the only one on record."

"We had him in our hands less than an hour ago, but he gave us the slip."

"I heard the general alarm you had sent out for him."

"Bad luck as we had, we found some encouragement."

"And what was that, Brady?"

"We've recovered the stolen money box, and here it is."

He held up the article in question.

It was badly battered from the hatchet in Craven's hands. But the lid had not been knocked off yet. The chief examined it critically.

"So this is the bone of contention, eh?" he asked at length.

"That's the box Craven stole from his uncle, William Leland."

"And it is supposed to contain \$70,000, isn't it?"

"Yes. But I haven't seen the money yet, sir."

"Perhaps we could open it."

"Got any skeleton keys?"

"Yes. Here's a bunch. Try to pick the lock."

He opened a draw in his desk and withdrew the keys.

Setting the box upon the desk, Old King Brady worked assiduously at the lock with the skeleton keys for some time.

Finally he unlocked it and flung open the lid.

They all peered in.

The box was full of greenbacks of all denominations, and Old King Brady took them out and said:

"Here's the money, sure enough. I'll count it."

Going over the packages of banknotes with the accuracy and speed of an expert, he soon had the amount counted.

"Well?" asked the chief curiously.

"Not a dollar missing."

"Good enough. Now, let's hear your story."

Old King Brady replaced the money in the box and detailed what had happened.

The chief listened intently, and when the detective finished his narrative, said:

"You certainly had an exciting time of it. It's clear that Craven stands in with the heathen of Chinatown. Ching Foo seems to be aiding and abetting him in every way possible. It will be to your interest to arrest the yellow dwarf as soon as you can. You will thus get rid of an annoying factor. Craven will lose his best friend and assistant. It will then be easier to catch him."

"I don't agree with you, sir."

"In what particular?" queried the surprised chief.

"Why, if we get Ching Foo out of the way, we will not find Craven. The fugitive sticks to the dwarf. It's easy to locate the hunchback. His deformity gives him away. Wherever he is, we are apt to find Craven."

"Very true. I never thought of that feature of the case."

"Moreover," added Old King Brady, "we are not sure Leland is dead. The Chinaman has got his body concealed. Once we do away with Ching Foo we forfeit all chance of finding Leland. If the old man is dead, it would not matter. On the other hand he may be alive and held a prisoner by the Chinaman. In that case he might be left to starve to death with the Mongolian unable to care for him. It is very important for us to learn Leland's fate. Craven's life depends upon it. If Leland is alive Craven won't go to the electric chair, whereas if he was killed by the ball from that Derringer, Craven will have to pay the penalty of murder."

The chief was impressed with the force of this reasoning. It was clear he could not advise the Bradys. They understood their business too well to make a success of the case by being directed at a distance how to act.

So he said as he lit a cigar:

"The best thing I can do will be to mind my own business and let you work out the case according to the way you find things."

"You've taken a sensible view of the situation, sir."

"Then clear out and leave your money box with me for safe keeping. I can't help you. In fact you're better off without my suggestions. You needn't come back till you've learned Leland's fate and arrested Craven."

The Bradys departed laughing.

Next day they were astir early and returned to the livery stable.

Meeting the coach driver he told them what the policeman in Mott street had already mentioned and said in rueful tones:

"I was fooled cleverly."

"Where did you carry them to?" queried Harry eagerly.

"Nowheres."

"How's that?"

"Cause they told me to carry them to the Grand Central—"

"Well?"

"When I reached Forty-second street, the carriage was empty."

"Ah! They quietly alighted and left you driving ahead, eh?"

"Yes, and they left while the coach was in motion, too."

"Oh, that's an old game."

"It made me mad as thunder."

"That isn't surprising. You don't know, of course, about where they alighted?"

"Ain't got the faintest idea."

"Here's your money for our fare."

Paying the driver they hastily left the stable.

"Duped him," commented Young King Brady as they walked away.

"I feared as much," replied his partner. "Now we've got an aimless hunt. We don't know in which direction to look for them."

"They are bound to lay low for awhile till the fuss blows over."

"Of course. In the meantime we'd better devote our time and attention to trying to locate Mr. Leland. If he's on earth, Ching Foo may have him."

"We might search the Mott street joint."

"Good plan."

"Then let's get a squad of policemen."

"We'll need them when we stir up a riot among the Chinks."

First they procured a search warrant.

Next they secured the services of half a dozen patrolmen and a wagon. Getting aboard they dashed into Mott street about noon time.

It presented a gala appearance.

Chinese flags, banners and decorations, fancy lanterns, Chinamen in their most gorgeous apparel, and a large quantity of fire works to exorcise the evil spirits, made up a festive scene in the Chinese quarter.

It was a holiday among the heathens—the Feast of the New Moon.

They flocked up and down the street by the hundreds.

When the police patrol dashed up to the restaurant and poured out its cargo of bluecoats, a scene of excitement occurred.

Every Celestial rushed to the spot.

In dashed four of the officers with the two detectives, while the remaining two policemen remained outside to keep the crowd back.

Commencing on the top floor and searching every nook and corner, the officers stumbled upon a game of fan tan and arrested the players.

Locking them in the room where they were gambling, they continued to search the house and finally worked their way down to the cellar.

But nothing was seen of Mr. Leland.

Nor was anything seen of Ching Foo, Craven, or Nellie.

Hop Sing and Hi Lung had been running the game and fell into the police drag net with a dozen more Chinese gamblers.

As the policemen marched out their scared prisoners and dumped them into the patrol wagon, an enormous crowd of Chinamen surrounded the vehicle and choked up the street.

The ugly looks upon their yellow faces plainly showed how angry they were to see their fellow countrymen arrested.

When the wagon was filled, Old King Brady shouted to the driver:

"They're all in. Go ahead."

"I can't budge the horse, the Chinamen are so crowded around."

"Charge on them, boys, and clear the way."

The policemen drew their clubs and yelling at the scowling crowd, they made a rush at them, ordering the mob out of the way.

Not a Mongolian moved.

Exasperated by their stubborn show of resistance, the policemen hurled themselves straight into the midst of the crowd.

This was hardly done when a riot began.

Some of the Chinamen struck the policemen and a fearful dim of jabbering tongues arose on all sides.

Furious, the officers began to use their clubs vigorously.

"Crack! bang! went the locusts upon the shaven heads of the mob as the plucky officers led by the Bradys forced their way right into the thickest of the crowd.

Wild yells now arose and in an instant there flashed many an ugly-looking knife in the hands of the Chinamen.

Hemmed in on all sides by the angry, murderous crowd, most of whom were Highbinders, the detectives and the policemen were in a fair way to get cut to pieces as they were vastly outnumbered.

CHAPTER XII.

IN THE CHINESE THEATRE.

"Look out, Old King Brady, or you'll get killed!"

It was Harry who uttered this warning cry. The old detective sprang back. He was just in time. A gleaming knife blade darted toward him. It was held by the horrible Ching Foo. There was an evil grin on the yellow dwarf's face.

Luckily the detective was just beyond reach.

The point of the dagger cut through his coat.

"Rascal!" he muttered in angry accents. "So you escaped from the well, eh?"

"Me killee muchee blame quick!" hissed the dwarf.

He was pressing forward to complete the job when Harry grabbed a policeman's club and brought it down on the Chinaman's head.

The thump could have been heard a long distance off.

It made the Mongolian stagger and yell hoarsely:

Harry darted forward to seize him.

Slippery as an eel, Ching Foo wiggled into the crowd, like a flash, and they closed in around him and prevented Harry reaching him.

Thus he escaped.

Seeing that the yellow denizens of Mott street would not hesitate to stab them, Old King Brady shouted to the policemen:

"Draw your guns!"

"All right, sir," a patrolman replied.

"Fire right into the crowd if they attempt to use those knives."

Out came the officers' revolvers and as they pointed them at the Chinamen the crowd suddenly fell back leaving a clear space around the officers.

"Drive through them!" shouted Old King Brady to the man handling the horses.

He nodded and started the animals at a gallop.

Straight toward the rioters he drove the horses and the yellow men scattered.

Some who obstinately held their ground, determined to hold up the wagon and rescue the prisoners, were knocked down and run over.

The rest got scared at this.

"Fire over their heads!" ordered Old King Brady.

Bang! Bang! Went a volley, and with screams and howls of fear the Chinamen rushed pell mell to get under cover.

They were panic stricken.

Every man expected to get a bullet in his hide.

Seeing he had them on the run Old King Brady cried:

"Another round, boys!"

Once more the pistols rang out, and the fleeing men redoubled their speed, while policemen on adjacent posts hearing the shots, now came rushing to the scene with drawn clubs.

"Charge on them!" shouted Harry. "Divide in two forces."

The policemen obeyed, and many Chinamen in that vast throng went home with sore bodies, broken heads and no further desire to fight policemen.

They learned the important lesson that it does not pay to resist a New York policeman in the discharge of his duty.

When the last Chinaman was seen speeding away, the officers halted and the two Bradys met, and burst out laughing.

"Quite a scrimmage, Harry."

"They're a bad lot, Old King Brady."

"Ching Foo nearly had me."

"He certainly tried to put his knife in you."

"I'd like to have him in my clutches for five minutes."

"Could you see where he went?"

"No. The dirty little demon moved under cover of his companions."

"Let's clear out of this, and come back to-night. There was nothing of Mr. Leland to be found in the restaurant building so we haven't done much."

They went away to a costumer's place on Third avenue. As the man was acquainted with them, he asked smilingly:

"I suppose you are after a special disguise?"

"We are," assented Old King Brady, "and we are going to tax all your ingenuity. We want you to fit us out as two Chinamen. The wigs and costumes must be perfect. So perfect, in fact, that we can go right among the Chinamen without fear of having our disguises penetrated."

"That will be a very difficult matter," said the costumer hesitatingly.

"Oh, we don't want you to make us up."

"You merely want the outfit?"

"That's all."

"In that case, I can fix you up easily."

"No made-up rigs."

"Oh, no. I've got some I bought from Chinamen right in Chinatown."

He fitted them with all they required.

Then they went home.

Waiting until the next night, to let the excitement abate caused by the raid, the Bradys donned their costumes and made up for their parts.

At this work they were experts.

No actor could beat them at disguising and making up their faces, then acting out the characters they were assuming.

Old King Brady wore a pair of sandals, white silk stockings, loose black pants and a black figured silk tunic without a collar.

Harry's costume was the same, excepting that the material was of blue jean, with round brass buttons.

They darkened their hands, arms, faces and necks to a brownish yellow tint, adjusted coarse black hair wigs, with queues coiled on top and wore black felt hats.

Cosmetics narrowed their eyebrows and slanted them, and attachments under the wigs clutching the kin on their temples drew it up, slanting their eyes. They even gave their noses a broad, flat look, with cosmetics and Old King Brady hid the color of his eyes behind a big pair of steel bowed spectacles.

The transformation was marvelous.

They were so skillfully made up, that they defied a close inspection.

"My only fear is," said Harry, as they left the house, "that some Chink may speak his lingo to us. We won't be able to understand or reply."

"Don't let that worry you. I'm a deaf mute, and you are tongue-tied."

They laughed and went down to Pell street.

The hour was late, but the slums were in full blast.

Very tough-looking citizens and numerous Chinamen thronged the dirty sidewalks, and lurked in the dark doorways.

Sounds of revelry came from some of the low grogeries and houses, and the queer strains of Mongolian music reached their ears.

It came from a building at the intersection of Doyers street.

"The Chinese theatre," commented Harry. "Shall we look in?"

"By all means. We're as likely to find Ching Foo there as anywhere."

Each paid a quarter at the door, went down several steps and found themselves in the darkened auditorium which was filled with Chinamen.

Sitting down, they glanced around.

It was a small batch of orchestra chairs with wooden seats and backs.

The stage was so elevated that they had to look upward.

A drama which extended through several weeks, was being enacted, for a Chinese play is given like the chapters of a novel—one chapter each night until some fifteen or twenty chapters have been acted.

Two musicians squatted on the stage and the gorgeously dressed actors, some of whom personated women, frequently stumbled over the fiddler and drummer.

A boy was peddling sugar cane, maple sugar, popcorn and candy to the audience and some of the Chinamen lounged in the aisles against the wall and down in the pit under the stage, jabbering about the play.

Numerous paper lanterns were strung around the stage, and the emperor in the drama was just then cutting off his rival's head with a curved sword while the heroine told him what a mighty monarch he was.

Just at this moment a door under the stage opened, and the Bradys saw Jack Dalton emerge, and come up in the auditorium.

"Craven's friend, the opium smoker," whispered Harry quietly.

"He seems to be looking for somebody," answered Old King Brady.

"There must be an opium joint in this place."

"My dear boy, you'll find one everywhere where you'll find a Chinaman. It's just as natural for them to take dope as it is for a Kentucky colonel to drink whisky."

"Dalton seems to be pretty much at home here, to go behind the scenes."

"It might pay us to shadow him, Harry."

They watched the sallow-faced young man with the big nose, and saw him make a motion to a pair of Chinamen with pock-marked faces.

He then made his way out of the theatre.

The Bradys recognized the two Mongolians as a pair of the worst men in Chinatown, who had often caused the police a great deal of trouble.

Following close at Dalton's heels, they quitted the auditorium.

"Come on," muttered Old King Brady.

They went out after the Chinamen who had now ranged up to Dalton and the detectives saw them heading for the Square.

Crossing to the New Bowery, they proceeded to Roosevelt street and turned into that thoroughfare.

The Bradys saw them pause before a small brick house, in

the middle of the block, then they ascended the stoop and entered the place.

"Do you recognize that house, Harry?" asked the old detective.

"Yes. It's a cheap faro bank, run by Dublin Mike, ain't it?"

"Just so. Dalton didn't bring those Chinks here for nothing."

"Can we go in rigged in this outfit?"

"Yes. There are plenty of Chinks go there to gamble. Come on."

They boldly went up the steps and pushed the door open and entered.

CHAPTER XIII.

SWEATING GOLD.

Dublin Mike's faro bank was a squalid place frequented by a gang of ruffians, low in the grade of professional crooks.

The detectives passed into the apartments in which the gambling outfit was in full blast, and looked over the crowd.

Some were Chinamen, but not the pair the detectives were after, and Jack Dalton was nowhere in sight.

"Queer," thought the detectives. "Where is he?"

Old King Brady passed into the back parlor, and a burly fellow with fiery whiskers slapped him heavily on the back and cried:

"Hello, John, goin' ter shoot any craps ter-night, me bye?"

"Me nea'ly go bloke," replied Old King Brady meekly.

"Git out! Yer can't flam me wid yer fairy stories. I niver seen a Ching wot wore silk as didn't have der dough be ther bushel. Come, now, git inter thot game, an' quit yer kiddin'."

"Waitee while," replied the supposed Chinaman. "Watchee game. Mebbe play soon, allee samee ploker, Mike."

"There do be a good game goin' on upstairs, sure."

"Go lup?"

"Yes. Go ahead."

Old King Brady beckoned to Harry and they passed out into the hall.

It was gloomy and uncarpeted, and they ascended the stairs. In the upper hall they saw an open door. A view of the poker room was thus obtained. It contained several tables, around which men were sitting in their shirt sleeves, wooing the fickle goddess.

Just as they were about to pass into the room, a peculiar jingling sound met their ears coming from one of the other rooms, the door of which was tightly closed.

They listened, and Old King Brady held up his finger to enjoin silence upon Harry.

It was a sound of clinking gold, and Old King Brady

stole over to the door, placed his head against the panel and listened intently.

The sound of low voices reached his ears and he recognized Dalton's voice saying:

"Sam Wah, you're a fool! Why don't you shake the bags this way?"

A steady, violent jingle followed these words, then a Chinaman began to jabber, and said in angry tones:

"Allee light. Now see Quong Kee no bettee me."

"I'll attend to his case in a minute. If you don't do this work right the coins will get dented and suspicion will be aroused."

"Sam Wah mindee blisness!" growled the other Mongolian. "Mee do light nough, now. Lookee, Dalton, gotee blag plenty glold!"

The old detective peered through the keyhole and saw a small room in which there were only two chairs, a table, and a dim lamp on it.

Each of the Chinamen were sitting at the table, violently shaking the small canvas bags they held in their hands.

Upon the table were numerous eagles and double-eagles, some of which the man Dalton put in the canvas bags.

The jingling sound came from the coins in the bags.

As soon as Old King Brady saw the odd performance he realized what the crooks were doing and a grave look crossed his face.

"Sweating gold!" he muttered.

Then he motioned Harry to look in and the boy complied.

What they saw was a very serious offense.

By shaking the new gold coins in the bag, they naturally wore each other out and the gold dust that resulted was deposited in the bags.

When the sweating process was completed, the coins looked as if they were well worn, as they lost considerable in weight, and yet were not so badly worn but what they could be passed anywhere.

The gold dust deposited in the bags was carefully preserved, and sold.

Expert gold sweaters have been known to make huge fortunes in this manner, and cause the Government a great deal of trouble.

"Do you understand the game, Harry?" queried Old King Brady.

"Yes. This must be the way Dalton makes his money."

"Oh, he probably gets the coins from Dublin Mike and after sweating them, he returns them and Mike passes them on his patrons again. The gambler very likely shares the profit and pays the Chinamen a salary."

"Let's rake in Dalton and his coolies."

"Decidedly. We may be able to pump him about Craven."

"This door must be locked. It won't do to try it."

"No. They'd hear the slightest sound, Harry."

"We can burst it in and surprise them."

"Very well. That's the safest. Come down here."

They retreated a dozen paces from the door.

After a slight pause Old King Brady muttered:

"Now!"

They rushed at the door.

Both struck it with their shoulders at the same time.

With a bang and a splintering crash it flew open and the two detectives shot head first into the room.

Startled, Dalton and his men glanced up.

The white man frowned when he saw it was only what he thought were two Chinamen, and he yelled savagely:

"What did you do that for?"

The Bradys leveled their pistols at the trio and Harry said:

"For fun, Jack Dalton! Throw up your hands."

"What! Going to rob me?"

"No. Arrest you!"

"Thunder! Detectives!"

"Yes, the Bradys, and we've got the drop on you, too!"

Dalton turned as pale as death and the Chinese crooks dove under the table when they heard who the officers were.

"Brady—" began the man in alarmed tones. "I—"

But Harry cut him short by exclaiming:

"Out with your hands!"

"With a gesture of despair, the man obeyed, and Young King Brady put the handcuffs on him in a twinkling.

Old King Brady now poked the two Chinamen from under the table with his revolver and as they were scrambling out he shouted:

"I want you!"

"No shootee!" howled Sam Wah dismally.

"Get on your knees, or I'll send you to the land of Confucius Kao!"

In a moment more the two terrified little Chinamen were kneeling side by side, wildly begging for mercy.

Old King Brady linked them together by their wrists.

He then said to Harry in quick sharp tones:

"Shoot the first one who moves."

"All right," replied the boy.

He began to sway his pistol in a dangerous way and the old detective swept the coins from the table into the pockets in his pants.

This was hardly done when Dalton said:

"You can keep those coins if you let me skip."

"Thank you, I won't accept your offer," said the old sleuth.

"Going to pinch me?"

"Of course. You'll get five years for this."

"Oh, you haven't got any proof!"

"I have. We saw you having the coins sweated, when we peered through the keyhole before we broke in the door."

Dalton looked dismayed and said despairingly:

"It's all up with me."

"You've got one chance."

"What's that?" he asked eagerly.

"Lead us to Craven and we'll let you go."

"I can't. I don't know where he is."

"Don't lie."

"Oh, I wouldn't let a good chance slip."

"Do you know where Mr. Leland's body is?"

"No."

"Then we'll have to jug you. Come ahead."

Dalton's brows were scowling and he did not budge.

He had a desperate plan in his mind, and said doggedly:

"You ain't going to get us without a fight, Brady."

"I don't see what you can do handcuffed."

"This house is full of my friends."

"Very likely. But they can't stand up against this persuader," said Old King Brady flourishing his pistol. "Now come along."

And he seized Dalton by the collar and tried to force him to the door.

The rascal flung himself to the floor, and exclaimed stubbornly:

"You'll have to drag or carry me, old man. I ain't walking."

The two Chinamen followed his example and the detectives were the picture of disgust over this new difficulty.

But they were not to be beaten.

They shoved, pulled and hauled their prisoners out into the hall. Without any hesitation, they pushed them down the stairs.

A fearful racket arose as the three handcuffed men went rolling and bumping down the steps, yelling with pain.

The row brought all the gamblers and crooks rushing out into the hall.

CHAPTER XIV.

FIGHTING FOR THE PRISONERS.

Old King Brady and his partner started to run downstairs after the falling bodies of the three prisoners and the former exclaimed:

"As long as they wouldn't go down on their feet, they're welcome to go down on their necks. See what the rumpus has done for us, Harry."

"Brought all their friends to their aid," commented the boy quietly.

"We may have to fight our way through the bunch."

"I'm ready for a scrap. But we'll take those prisoners!"

The first man to reach Dalton and the two Chinamen at the foot of the stairs when they landed was Ching Foo.

It astonished the Bradys to see the yellow dwarf there. They knew he was the owner of several opium joints. But they had no idea he frequented Dublin Mike's gambling house.

The dwarf darted over to the two manacled Mongolians and spoke to them.

"You get away!" shouted Old King Brady threateningly.

"Dese my fiends," growled the ugly little wretch glaring balefully at the officers. "Me takee allee samee. You not allest dem, Blady."

"We'll run you in, too, you monster."

Ching Foo pulled out his dagger and waved it in the air.

"You clum down, me stickee knife in you heart," he declared.

"Oh, you will, eh? We'll see."

The old detective fired a shot from his revolver at the dwarf.

He was an expert marksman and caused the ball to graze the dwarf's head.

Ching Foo set up an awful howl, clapped one hand to the wound and firmly believing he was going to die, he rushed away crying wildly:

"Oh! Oh! Oh! You killee. Ching Foo soon die."

"Get back there, the rest of you!" roared the detective at the crowd.

None of them were afraid of Chinamen.

But when Dalton cried:

"It's the Bradys. Help me, boys," they fled into the faro room.

That name had a terror to them which was simply fearful.

Down the stairs dashed the officers and Old King Brady caught Dalton by the neck, and dragged him toward the front door saying:

"By thunder! I'll kill the first man who interferes!"

Harry now drove the bumped and bruised Chinamen ahead of him, and they had just landed their prisoners on the sidewalk, when Dublin Mike rushed out with a club in his hand and yelled:

"Leave go av thim min!"

"Oh, so you are taking their part, eh?"

"I am, begorra!"

"Then I'll pull you in, too!"

And Old King Brady rushed toward him.

The dive keeper aimed a blow at Old King Brady with the club, and the officer dodged it and sprang in close quarters.

Hauling off his clenched fist, he gave Mike an uppercut on the point of the jaw which knocked him flat on his back.

The man was stunned.

"Any more?" defiantly cried the detective.

Many of the gamblers and loafers were crowded in the doorway. None dared to venture out. They were afraid to. The Bradys scared them.

Dalton now thought he could sneak away.

His plan was detected at once.

Old King Brady rushed at him and hurled him to the ground.

He rolled over near the stunned Dublin Mike and as quick as a flash the old detective pinned him down and loosened one of Dalton's handcuffs.

In a moment more he had Mike fastened to Dalton.

"There! Two prisoners instead of one, now," he cried.

It made Dalton furious and he raved like a maniac.

"Harry, summon a cop!"

"There's one on the corner, now," said Harry, blowing his whistle.

A policeman came running toward them, and demanded:

"What's the trouble here?"

"We are Secret Service men," explained the boy. "We are arresting these crooks and had trouble with the gam-

blers in that den. Summon a patrol wagon as quick as you can."

"Yes, sir. I'll be back in a minute," said the policeman as he rushed away to the nearest signal box.

He had hardly gone when Ching Foo and a gang of twenty or thirty ruffians rushed out of the house bent upon rescuing Dublin Mike at any risk.

They were desperate and everyone of the rascals were armed.

Depending upon their overwhelming numbers, they braved the detectives' revolvers and made a combined rush at them.

"Back, or we'll fire!" yelled Old King Brady.

"Fire!" retorted the yellow dwarf recklessly. "Me no clare."

"Give it to them!" cried Harry.

Bang! Bang! went the revolvers and several of the gang fell, but the rest pressed right ahead with grim daring.

The next moment a club hit Old King Brady a fearful thump on the head and knocked him to the pavement stunned.

Harry sprang astride of his partner's body.

"I'll kill the first man who moves!" he shouted.

In no wise intimidated the ruffians made an effort to close in on the plucky boy and Harry picked up his partner's pistol.

The next moment both weapons were belching fire and smoke and another yelling gambler fell and several more ran back wounded.

Fast and furiously the boy continued to discharge the brace of pistols, and Dublin Mike's friends recoiled in dismay at Harry's recklessness.

Several pistol shots were fired at the daring young detective, but the gang were so nervous and such poor shots that they failed to hit him.

A perfect hail of bullets whistled around the boy.

Observing that he had them scared, he coolly aimed at the dense pack and continued to pour in a deadly fire.

The boy took care to aim so low he would not kill them, but many a leg received a painful wound which plainly told its owner what a very dangerous proposition Young King Brady was.

Hearing the shots, several neighboring policemen came running to the scene of the fray and the first policeman returned at top speed.

Seeing these reinforcements coming the gamblers scattered and ran in all directions, some dodging into hallways, others up alleys and a few made a wild rush to pass the approaching officers.

Old King Brady arose.

He felt dizzy and had a headache, but he was ready for action in a minute and asked quickly:

"Did they get the prisoners, Harry?"

"Not a man. There they lay."

"Good. That big fellow all but knocked me out."

"Just collar the prisoners."

The old detective complied and as four policemen joined them the boy pointed at the fallen men and cried:

"Seize them. We are detectives and shot them."

There were three of the gamblers lying groaning on the pavement and the policemen hastily took charge of them.

"I've ordered the wagon," said the panting patrolman who had just come back. "It will be here in a few minutes, and we'll get the bunch who ran back in Mike's."

The four prisoners taken by the Bradys were bunched with the three wounded ruffians and the patrol wagon came dashing down the street.

A dozen reserves were in it.

The Bradys explained matters, and when the seven prisoners were hustled into the wagon the officers entered the gambling den.

Here half a dozen more of the gang were picked up, hiding in various places, and were arrested and brought out.

All the gambling outfit was seized and two policemen were placed in charge of the raided house.

Then the prisoners were driven away and locked up.

As the Bradys left the police station Harry remarked:

"It paid us after all to don these disguises."

"Yes, but they are useless now."

"Don't you believe it. I've got another plan in view."

"What are you going to do, Harry?"

"Go to the joss house. We can't get in unless we look like Chinamen. Christians are not admitted to the Chinese's god. Ching Foo is obliged by his religion to go and worship the shrine of his deity. He's bound to go there sooner or later and there we are bound to catch the beggar."

"By Jove! you are right! We'll go there by all means."

"It's the surest place in the world to find him. We've got to get that viper out of our way. He's a detriment. He's always helping our enemies. Once he is under lock and key we will have easier sailing on this case."

"But suppose he's got Mr. Leland alive——"

"We can't let that interfere. After Ching Foo is out of the way I believe we'll run across the missing man and clear up the mystery of his strange disappearance."

CHAPTER XV.

THE HUNCHBACK AND THE IDOL.

On a dark rainy night several days later the Bradys in their Chinese costumes made their way to the Chinese temple in Mott street.

This was their third visit to the place since the night they pulled in Dublin Mike. They had thus far seen nothing of the yellow dwarf.

By this time the Celestials who frequented the place had become familiar with the two silent strangers, and paid no heed to them.

The Ching-Hwang-Miau, or city's guardian temple, was a tall brick building with a big gilt ball on top, and iron-railed balconies at each floor.

As they paused before it, Old King Brady muttered:

"There won't be many worshippers out such a night as this, Harry."

"If we don't persist, we won't catch Ching Foo," replied the boy.

"Well, come on and get your burnt sacrifices."

At the door they bought of an attendant some red wax candles, a bunch of incense-sticks, and a quantity of silvered and gilt paper.

These were to be given to the Buddhist priests inside the temple, who burned them as an offering to their hideous god.

A few moments later they entered the room where the idol stood.

It was a huge apartment with matting on the floor, innumerable lanterns, banners and Chinese flags hanging around and rich, yellow-silk draperies.

The walls and ceilings were blackened from the incessant burning of the candles, incense and colored paper. At the end of the room was a pagoda, and under it was a dais with several steps leading to the top.

On this platform stood the ugly idol in a sitting posture, on a square pedestal of ebony wood, covered with Mongol inscriptions.

The idol was magnificently gilded, and several priests were attending to the ceremonies, while a few Chinamen knelt on the steps before the image.

A strong aroma of the burning incense filled the joss house.

Having turned over their offerings to the priests, the Bradys prostrated themselves on the steps, and with clasped hands bowed several times till their foreheads touched the floor.

While apparently attending to their devotions, the detectives were keenly eyeing the inmates of the temple and observed several well-known faces.

They were men the detectives had seen in Ching Foo's opium joints, and Old King Brady nudged his companion and whispered:

"Do you recognize them?"

"Yes. The dwarf's friends."

Just then one of the yellow curtains near the altar was swept aside, and a thrill shot through the detectives as Ching Foo came from behind them.

The detectives were between him and the door.

"Tackle him, Harry!" exclaimed Old King Brady, bounding to his feet.

In an instant Young King Brady had risen, ready for business.

The dwarf saw them and uttered a startled exclamation and paused.

He had seen them before in that disguise and recognized them at once.

"De Bladys!" he gasped.

A tigerish glare shone in his black eyes and his huge face wore a fiendish expression as he crouched back with convulsively working fingers.

It seemed for an instant as if he was going to fly at them like a wild beast and tear them to pieces.

But he changed his mind when he saw their revolvers, and gave a yell that brought all the priests, worshippers and attendants rushing toward them.

Then he recoiled up the steps toward the idol.

In a moment his back was against the black pedestal.

Old King Brady reached out his hand to grasp the monster when a big panel in the pedestal opened, Ching Foo disappeared in the opening and the secret door slammed shut in the detective's face!

"Baffled!" cried Harry in exasperated tones.

"Not yet," replied his partner.

He tried to push open the panel.

It refused to move, as it was now secured on the inside.

Just then the inmates of the temple crowded up around the two supposed Chinamen and began yelling at them excitedly in their own language.

Of course the Bradys could not understand a word they uttered, but Harry pointed the pistols he clutched and they fell back in alarm.

"Get away from here, you old chopstick workers," cried the boy in good plain English. "Stand back if you don't wish to get hurt."

"I can't open the panel!" panted Old King Brady in disgust.

"Smash it in then!" cried Harry.

"Hold those Chinks off a moment."

He ran to a corner and picked up a big piece of heavy joist.

With the end of this he struck the panel a fearful blow, there came a crash of splintering wood, and then the hidden door was broken in.

This action wrung an angry yell from the Chinamen.

All thought he was trying to destroy the idol and they pressed forward again wondering if the two alleged Chinamen were not crazy to so desecrate the stand of their ugly god.

Harry's pistols under their flat noses brought them to a quick pause, however, and he ordered them back once more.

"You'll get hurt in a minute!" said the boy threateningly.

"The pedestal's hollow and there's a ladder inside leading downward," cried Old King Brady. "I'm going down, Harry."

"Go ahead, and I'll keep these chaps back," replied the boy.

Down the ladder crept the old detective.

He was in the gloom, and made no noise.

A dozen feet below he touched bottom and felt a powerful pair of arms flung around him in a bear-like hug.

With one arm free he pulled out his already lighted lantern, flashed its rays around and saw that Ching Foo had hold of him.

The rays of the light caught the gleam of a knife.

Ching Foo was just upon the point of running the long, keen blade into him, when Old King Brady seized his wrist and checked the blow.

"No you don't, old man!" he exclaimed.

"Dlopee hand!" hissed the dwarf, struggling fiercely to get away. "You no glet away alibe, now. You makee too much tlouble, Blady!"

He had the strength of a giant.

Old King Brady dropped his lantern to the floor.

It required all his strength to hold the opium smoker, and he seized Ching Foo with a terrible grip and wrenched the dagger from his hand.

Falling to the floor of stone, the knife was out of the dwarf's reach and he seized Old King Brady with both hands.

A terrific struggle now ensued for the mastery.

They reeled around the small, dungeon-like room, sometimes falling to the floor, where the deadly struggle continued furiously.

Old King Brady was as strong and active as his opponent.

He resorted to every grip of an expert wrestler and finally got a strangle hold on the dwarf and hurled him over.

With one downward pressure of his forearm on the Chinaman's head he could have broken Ching Foo's neck.

But he had no such deadly design.

It was his aim to take the Chinaman alive.

For a moment he got astride of the yellow dwarf's body. Then the squirming wretch hurled him over sidewise, and the next moment he was clutching Old King Brady's throat with both hands.

He pinned the detective to the floor.

Choking and gasping for breath, the old detective fought with the fury of despair to throw off those awful hands.

He lay in such a way he could not carry out his purpose, however, and the Chinaman clung to him tenaciously.

Old King Brady tried to call for help.

Not a sound could pass his lips, however.

The brutal Chinaman was slowly but surely strangling him to death and the blood began to congest in the detective's head.

He seemed to hear a dull roaring in his ears, and his eyeballs began to bulge from their sockets, while his tongue protruded.

Through a crimson mist which seemed to gather before his vision he could see the demoniacal face of the Chinaman bent down close to his own peering at him with a gloating expression.

"He's killing me!" flashed through the detective's mind.

"I can't stand this much longer. I can't breathe."

He could feel his senses leaving him.

His brain was reeling.

In a few moments he would perish.

As this thought entered his mind, he summoned all his strength and made a furious attack upon the yellow dwarf.

He beat Ching Foo with his fists, and used all his efforts to throw him over, but did not succeed in dislodging him.

A low chuckle escaped the dwarf.

"You die, now!" he hissed vindictively.

The detective collapsed.

He could do no more to save himself.

In a moment more everything seemed to gradually fade from his physical and mental vision.

He felt as if he were floating off into space.

As his senses were leaving him he faintly heard the dwarf laughing at him, and thought dreamily:

"This is the end of me!"

Then there came a sudden and violent awakening.

The detective found that the murderous grip on his windpipe had relaxed, and he was regaining his breath.

He sat up.

An awful din reached his ears.

His lantern was in easy reach and he seized it.

Turning the rays across the room, he saw Harry fighting with the dwarf like a madman, and observed that the boy was getting the best of him.

The old detective staggered to his feet.

Rushing over to the pair, he saw Harry pummeling the Chinaman with his fists and observed that the boy had him groggy.

"Come on, you gorilla!" the young detective was shouting, as he let drive another blow that knocked the dwarf against the wall. "I'll give you all the fight you want!"

Ching Foo was dazed.

He charged on Harry, and the boy drew back his fists.

Biff—bang! went the two lightning-like blows.

The first one caught Ching Foo on the lung and a right hand smash struck him right behind the ear.

The yellow dwarf was knocked out.

He dropped like a log, and rolled over on his back senseless.

Old King Brady burst out laughing.

"Good shot!" he exclaimed. "He's done for!"

"Oh, hello! That you? Glad to see you up. I thought you were dead."

"I'm worth a dozen dead men, Harry. You came down just in time."

"So I noticed. I was attracted here by the row you made while fighting him. We've got him at last and I'm going to secure the villain before he revives, so he can't do any more mischief."

Then he handcuffed the senseless Chinaman and glancing around he failed to see any avenue of exit.

CHAPTER XVI.

SAVING THE PRISONER.

"Old King Brady, we'll have to carry Ching Foo up the ladder."

"I can sling him over my shoulder and do that alone, Harry."

"Very well. Then I'll go up ahead, to clear the way."

"Give me a hand first, to get him over my back."

Young King Brady aided his partner.

He then went up into the pedestal, and peering through the broken panel, he saw the temple full of excited Chinamen discussing the fight.

They fled before the young detective's pistol, and he shouted:

"Come on, Old King Brady."

"I'm nearly up now," came the reply.

"Need any help?"

"Oh, no. I can manage him alone."

He soon reached the top with his burden and they left the dais and headed for the door, driving the Chinamen ahead like a flock of sheep.

Once or twice the inmates of the temple made a faint attempt to stop the detectives. A liberal display of the revolvers and threats to fire upon the first man who interfered had the desired effect.

The Bradys reached the street with their burden.

By this time Ching Foo recovered his senses.

His wild yells and the cries of the priests soon brought a crowd swarming out of the houses and stores into the rainy street.

"Run for Chatham Square with him," said Harry.

"I'll have to hurry or we'll get mobbed," replied the old detective.

He clung to the struggling and kicking dwarf and ran as best he could with the increasing mob of Chinamen chasing them.

Finding the Mongolians gaining fast, Harry suddenly paused and aiming over their heads he fired several shots toward them.

The crowd suddenly paused.

Some rushed away to hide in doorways and cellars.

This diversion gave Old King Brady a chance to reach the Square, and as he caught view of a passing cab, he called it.

When the vehicle paused at the curb, the detective flung his captive inside and said to the driver as Harry joined him:

"To the nearest police station, as quick as you can go."

"It will cost you two dollars, for the three of you."

"Confound the fare. Go! Don't you see that gang after us."

"All right, John," said the driver, and he started his horse.

Seeing that they were going to escape, the angry, yelling crowd began to hurl missiles at the cab, and some came racing after it.

The windows were smashed with stones and the woodwork dented.

In order to save himself from getting hurt, the driver had to lash his old horse into a gallop, to get out of range.

They finally left the Chinamen far behind.

When the police station was reached, they told the driver to wait and they would pay for the damage.

Ching Foo was then dragged into the station, yelling and struggling like a demon, and they locked him up.

Well pleased with their success thus far, the Bradys returned to the cab, told the driver to carry them home and departed.

At their house they paid him liberally and dismissed

Once inside, divested of their wet disguises, the detectives sat down to talk over the exciting events they had passed through.

A plan of action was then devised.

"This is the beginning of the end," said Old King Brady, as he took a fresh chew of tobacco. "Ching Foo is under lock and key, we've got the stolen money box, Dalton is locked up and we've pulled in a number of the yellow dwarf's lieutenants. We have now only to find Nellie and Craven, and try to ascertain Mr. Leland's fate."

"There's only one place to look for Craven and his wife."

"And where may that be?"

"As they are so strongly addicted to the use of opium, we will be sure to locate them in one of the dens."

"Very true. I suppose our only course will be to search everyone of them that we know of, until we find them."

"Such must be our course of action."

"I quite agree with you, Harry."

"Now, about Mr. Leland's fate. He must be found, dead or alive, and I've got the impression he's yet in the Doyers street den."

"What gives you that idea?"

"Common sense reasoning. If the old gentleman was killed, the dwarf would hide his body. If alive, Ching Foo would not dare to remove him for fear someone would see the game and give him away to the police."

"It remains then for us to search the Doyers street joint."

"Exactly so. You know as well as I do what secret passages, buried vaults and similar hiding places the crooks of Chinatown have in their abodes to escape the police. It stands to reason then that the yellow dwarf would have some of the same sort of resorts about his place as he had more reason than any man in Chinatown to fear us."

"That shows you expect to find Leland thus hidden?"

"I do. It's a theory worth looking into."

"Well, it won't cost much trouble to try the plan."

"I'm sure it will give good results."

"To-morrow night will tell the tale. We will have to call on the police for help to storm the place and clean it out."

"Is it running again?"

"Yes, in full blast. One of the dwarf's men is running it."

"So much the better. We'll have no trouble to get in."

On the following day, they disguised themselves as a couple of sailors, and made a round of the opium dens.

Nothing was seen of Craven or his wife, however.

Toward nightfall, they secured the services of several policemen, and made a raid on Ching Foo's place.

All the fiends were driven out, and the young Chinaman who was running the den was put under arrest and sent up into the store.

Here the Bradys were waiting for him.

Surrounded by policemen, handcuffs on his wrists, and a feeling of terror in his heart, the young Chinaman was a pitiable sight to behold.

He fell on his knees before Old King Brady and begged to be released.

Noticing that he spoke good English, the detective said to him sternly:

"What's your name?"

"Lee Toy," answered the Celestial.

"Now, listen to me. I will let you go, if you will help me."

"What do you want?" eagerly asked the youth.

"I want to find the body of the old man who was shot some time ago, in the street, in front of this store. I know it is hidden in this house, and I'm going to find it if I have to have the whole house pulled down."

"Ching Foo not kill dat man."

"I know he didn't. Charley Craven did it. I saw him. Ching Foo only hid the body so we could not send Craven to the death chair."

"You not blame Ching Foo for dat?"

"Certainly not. But I blame Craven. You know Charley, don't you?"

"Oh, yes. He heap smoker."

"Now do you know where Ching Foo hid that body?"

"You let me go, I show you?"

"I will. Do you know where the man's body is?"

"Sure. Me know all about him."

"Then you show me the old man's body, and I'll set you free. If you don't, I'll have you sent to Sing Sing for ten years."

The idea of languishing in prison is more than any Chinaman can stand. It means the direct disgrace, for when imprisoned they have to have their pigtailed cut off. Sooner than suffer such a calamity as that a Mongolian would prefer to perish outright.

It therefore was no wonder Lee Toy shuddered and said quickly:

"Oh, I show de place. Come with me."

Leaving the policemen in the store, the two detectives followed the Chinaman down into the smoking room in the cellar.

It was illuminated by numerous colored paper lanterns hanging from the ceiling and the walls were draped with Turkish portieres of variegated hues. Some of the furniture was upset from the raid.

Lee Toy went to the rear.

Seizing one of the portieres, he moved it aside.

A small door in the wall was thus revealed.

Drawing back the bolts, the Chinaman flung it open, and taking one of the lanterns he stepped down a short flight of stairs.

The detectives followed him closely.

He was leading them into a dark, damp vault under an extension to the house. The walls were wet with slime and green moulded from dampness.

The bottom was merely the bare muddy earth, and a terrible odor filled the heavy air.

As Lee Toy raised the lantern above his head, the detectives saw all that was left of old Mr. Leland.

His emaciated form lay on the floor.

A steel band around his ankle and a short rusty chain

fastened him like a wild beast to an iron ring in the stone wall.

He was yet alive.

The light caused him to weakly raise his head, and ask in hoarse tones:

"Who is that?"

"Friends, come to liberate you," replied Harry.

Electrified by these words the old man struggled to a sitting posture, and a cry of pity escaped Old King Brady when he saw the half-starved bony figure, the shrunken cheeks, hollow eyes and unshaven face.

"Thank Heaven!" they heard him cry in tones of glad surprise. "I knew it would come sooner or later. The wicked cannot prevail. My prayers have been answered. Who are you men?"

"Detectives."

"Can you rid me of this chain?"

"Yes. Lee Toy, unfasten that padlock."

The Chinaman had a key and did as he was ordered.

Old King Brady helped the exhausted man to his feet and asked kindly:

"Have they been starving you?"

"Yes. I sometimes got nothing to eat for several days at a time. It only happened when they chanced to recollect I hadn't been fed. Then the food was nothing but rice and water and very little at that."

"How about the wound on your head from Craven's pistol?"

"It was only a flesh wound and merely stunned me. When I came to my senses, I was here—secured as you just found me."

"Did Ching Foo abuse you?"

"No. When he gave up feeding me this Chinaman took care of me as best he could. He was better than the dwarf and acted under the orders of Ching Foo. I don't blame him so much."

"Come. We'll get out of this horrible place."

They assisted the old man upstairs and told Lee Toy he could go.

The relieved young Chinaman darted away, delighted to escape, and he never was seen in New York after that night.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONCLUSION.

While the police were busy seizing the opium-smoking outfit, the Bradys procured a carriage. Mr. Leland was then taken to the hospital by the detectives. They heard during the journey how the old gentleman learned of Craven's villainy and cast him off. Then they told him how they had recovered his money box. He was delighted at the changed aspect of affairs, and thanked the Bradys over and over again.

They left him at the hospital, where they were informed

that he would soon recover his health and strength by receiving proper care.

As the detectives drove down to Headquarters, Harry said:

"Craven will escape the death penalty, now."

"He's lucky. But if we nab him, he'll go up for a long term."

"We haven't got him yet, you know."

"It's only a matter of time for him to fall into our clutches."

Reaching the Secret Service office and finding the chief in, they gave him a detailed account of their work.

He listened attentively and weighed up all they said.

At the end, he asked:

"Have you tried any of the high-toned opium joints?"

"Not yet. We are going to search them to-morrow. Why do you ask?"

"Simply because I received a report to-day from the captain of the Tenderloin precinct that a man and woman answering the description of Craven and his wife have been seen going in the White House in West Fortieth street, just off Broadway."

"But that's a gambling den, isn't it?"

"Yes. But there's an opium joint on the top floor, set apart for any of the aristocratic patrons of the place who wish to use it. A big Chinaman is kept there to work the dope pipes."

"We'll give the place a call."

"Better get around there to-night."

"Why? Won't to-morrow do?"

"No. The newspapers in the morning will have an account of your raids and your recovery of Mr. Leland. It will reach Craven's ears. He may skip and you'd lose him altogether."

"Very well. We'll go right up there, now, sir. How do you get in?"

The chief explained, and the Bradys abandoned their disguises and departed.

In a short time they reached the tall white house, and a liveried negro admitted them to the magnificently appointed hall.

Thousands of dollars had been spent equipping and furnishing this den.

The main gambling room occupied the whole length and breadth of the second story. It contained several faro layouts, a double roulette table, and a sideboard laden with choice wines and cigars.

Magnificent paintings adorned the silk-covered walls, rich carpets covered the floors, and elegant draperies and bric-a-brac abounded.

On the ground floor was a poker room, well filled with the elite of the city, and crowds in evening dress thronged the faro tables.

The Bradys paid no heed to them.

They went straight upstairs.

On the top floor another negro attendant met them.

"Anything I can do for you, gentlemen?" he asked politely.

"Yes," said Old King Brady. Show us into Sing Hop's room."

"I fear all the couches are occupied, gentlemen."

"That's nothing. We'll go in and wait."

"Well, I'll see."

He opened a door and they followed him into a room reeking with the fumes of opium, and the detectives gazed around in astonishment.

It was the most magnificently appointed den they ever were in, and a big Chinaman in his native silk costume was cooking the opium for the fiends who were lying about on the beautiful divans smoking and dreaming.

The lights in the room were dim, a quiet air prevailed, and the opium smokers were enjoying a sense of security from police interference which is never felt by the frequenters of the lower dives.

As the Bradys shot a keen glance from one smoker to the other, they observed that most of them were expensive clothing, valuable diamonds, and other evidences of being people of wealth and culture.

But they were hopeless physical wrecks.

The curse of the opium demon was gripping them fiercely.

A smile stole over Old King Brady's face and he pointed at a big Persian divan where a man and a woman, half reclined, stupid from the drug yet smoking still.

"There is Craven and the shoplifter!" he exclaimed.

Young King Brady nodded and stepped up to the pair.

Happy in the soothing dream of the drug, neither of them paid any heed to him.

The young detective dexterously handcuffed them together.

"Wake up!" he yelled in Craven's ear.

The opium smoker glanced up languidly at him.

Gradually it began to dawn upon his befogged mind who Harry was.

He gave a wild shout of alarm, dropped his pipe, sprang to his feet, and started to rush away. The handcuff anchored him to Nellie and she was pulled off the couch to the floor. The bang she got brought her to her senses.

Then she too began to scream.

The noise alarmed the other inmates of the room, and the manager of the gilded dive came rushing breathlessly upstairs to quell the row.

"Keep still!" he cried. "What is the meaning of this noise? We don't allow it here."

The negro with a scared look glided out of the room.

Old King Brady now exclaimed:

"You mind your business! This is an arrest."

"Oh—I see. Are you going to pull the house?"

"No. But I am going to take these two criminals."

"I did not know they were, or I would not have let them in."

"The man is Craven, who escaped from the Tombs. This woman is his wife—the one who aided him to get away. She's a noted shoplifter."

"And you are detectives, I presume?"

"We are the Bradys."

"I've heard of you. But we are promised immunity or protection as you call it."

"By whom?"

"I refuse to say."

"But the Captain of the Tenderloin ain't molesting you, is he?" sneered Old King Brady.

The gambler smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

He was not telling all he knew.

"The commissioners may change all this unexpectedly," said the old detective. "I advise you not to feel too sure of your security."

He then turned to the prisoners.

Harry had a grip on them.

"You are under arrest," said the old detective to the pair.

"Oh, you've won at last," bitterly replied Craven.

"Yes. We saw you shoot Leland, steal his money box, toss it from the bridge, and go to jail. We've recovered the money box, pulled in Ching Foo and Jack Dalton, arrested the Chinaman's lieutenants, recovered Mr. Leland, and caught you."

"What! Is Leland alive?" asked Craven in pleased surprise.

"Yes. Your friend, the yellow dwarf, had him a prisoner in Doyers street."

"That's mighty lucky for me, Brady."

"Indeed it is."

"What charge can you hold me on, now?"

"Robbery."

"Well, it's no use kicking."

"And you, Nellie?"

"Haven't got a word to say," she replied promptly.

"Then we'll go."

"Say," said Craven, "don't disgrace us by dragging us through the streets, will you? I've got a coach waiting outside. Use it, won't you?"

"It's all the same to me, so long as we land you."

"Call my carriage, boy," roared Craven to the darky in the hall.

"Yes, sir," replied the attendant and he dashed downstairs.

Ranging on each side of their captives, the Bradys led them out of the house and pushed them into the waiting carriage.

Old King Brady ordered the driver where to go and got in with Harry.

The door slammed shut and they were whirled away to the police station.

When the precious pair were locked up Harry rung up his chief on the telephone and as he answered the call the boy said:

"It's Harry Brady."

"Ah. Anything wanted?"

"I have to inform you, sir, that we have just locked up Charles Craven and his wife, and our cose is nearly finished."

"Have any trouble with them?"

"The easiest arrest we ever made, sir."

"Very good. I congratulate you. Where were they?"

"In the White House as you surmised."

"What have you now to do?"

"Nothing but prosecute them."

"Glad to hear it, for I want you just as soon as possible upon another case which just came in. It's an important case, too."

"We shall be at your service after to-morrow, chief."

"Then report here as quick as possible."

He rung off and Harry said to Old King Brady:

"Let's go home. I'm worn out!"

And home they went.

Next day they appeared in court against their prisoners and Craven, Nellie and Ching Foo were indicted, heavy bail was asked, and as nobody came to their aid they were locked in the Ludlow street jail to await trial.

Ching Foo and his Chinese friends were tried later on and convicted of running opium joints and were sentenced for their misdemeanor.

Craven, his wife and Dalton soon followed them on charges of gold sweating, and felonious assault on William Leland, who appeared against them, and all went to Sing Sing.

Not until the last man was disposed of did the Bradys feel as if their work was finished on the opium smokers' case.

Old Mr. Leland was a grateful man.

He wanted to reward the detectives, but they refused his gifts.

The detectives were busy men those times.

Their chief had a remarkable case for them to work up, about which he had spoken to Harry over the telephone.

An account of it will be found in the next number of this series, and it will certainly prove of interest, for the case was without an equal in police annals. As it has no bearing on this story, however, we cannot detail the facts here.

Leaving our good friends, the Bradys, launched upon a series of the most thrilling adventures in their new task, we will leave them here for the present.

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS' STILL HUNT; OR, THE CASE THAT WAS WON BY WAITING," which will be the next number (67) of "Secret Service."

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