

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

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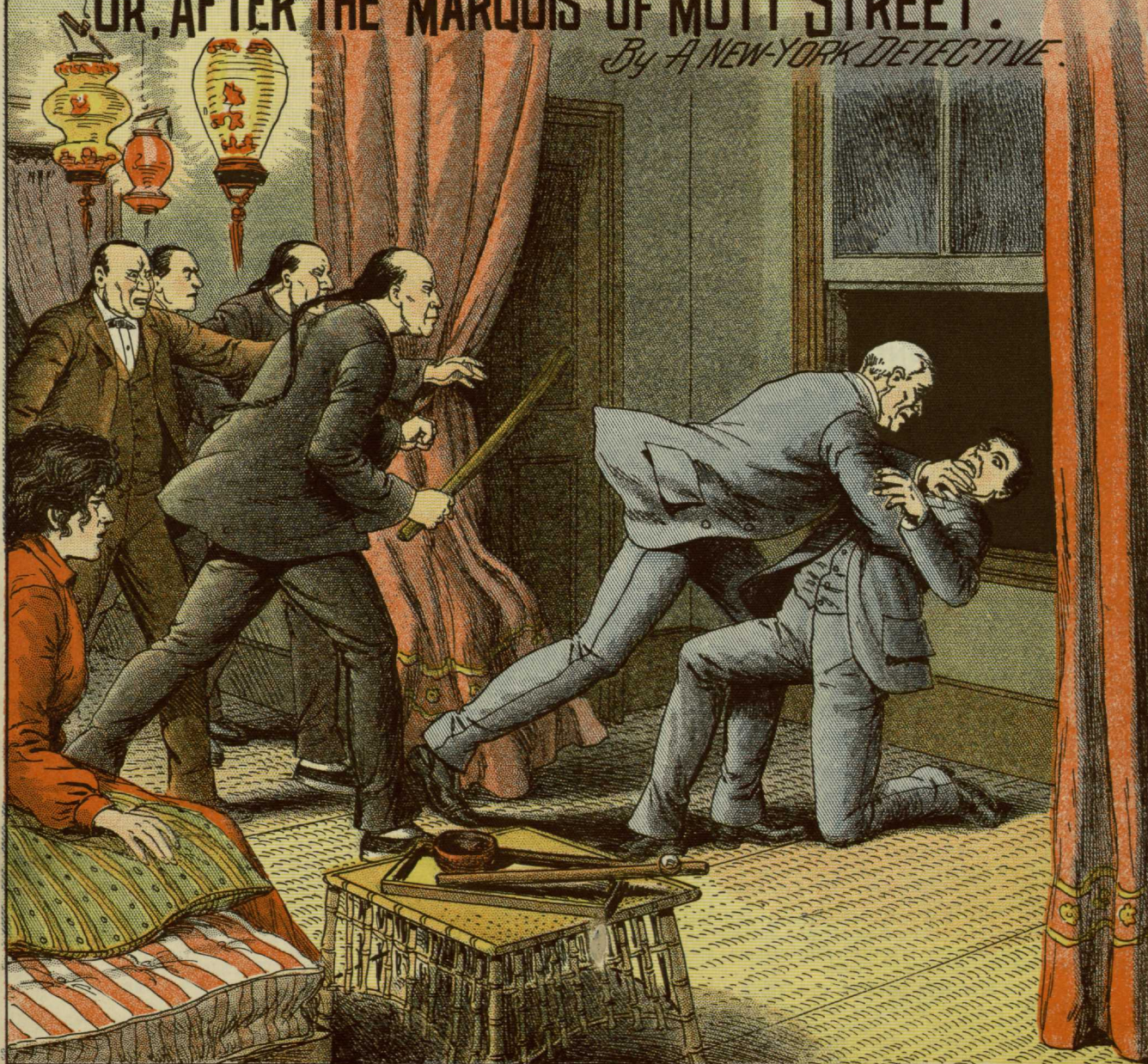
NEW YORK, MARCH 3, 1905.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND THE OPIUM SYNDICATE;

OR, AFTER THE "MARQUIS" OF MOTT STREET.

By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.



Instantly Old King Brady rushed upon Harry and seizing him by the throat forced him back towards the open window. "Help! Murder! Save me!" Harry yelled for all he was worth. Then the Marquis and the Chinamen closed in.

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(Continued on page 3 of cover.)

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No. 319.

NEW YORK, MARCH 3, 1905.

Price 5 Cents.

The Bradys and the Opium Syndicate

OR,

After the "Marquis" of Mott Street.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERY OF ROOM 13.

The Bradys, those famous New York detectives, whose doings have excited such widespread interest of late, do not often have the experience of seeing two cases merge into one, but this nevertheless sometimes happens, and it was so with the events which we propose to use as the basis of this story.

These events occurred several years ago, shortly after Harry Brady associated himself with Old King Brady.

Several of the persons concerned in them are now dead, and the old hotel which plays so important a part at the beginning has since been pulled down to make way for a modern business block.

With Harry the case began while he was in Albany, where he had gone to shadow a crooked politician suspected of taking bribes.

He had been at this work more than a week, and was growing heartily tired of it, when one morning upon going to the desk at Stanwix Hall the clerk handed him a letter from Old King Brady which read as follows:

"Dear Harry: You can quit now and come in. I daresay you have secured evidence enough against Mike L. — to satisfy the district-attorney; if not, you will have to get the balance some other time. I have been called on an opium smuggling case for the Custom House. It appears that a great deal of low-priced opium is being offered in all the principal cities, and the Custom House suspects smuggling on a large scale. They have tried to locate the headquarters of the smugglers in Frisco, but so far without success. To-day they called me in council and I suggested that the Marquis of Mott Street might have broken loose again. You don't remember this man, for he figured before your time. His real name is Jack Dillon, I believe, al-

though he goes by a dozen aliases. I rounded him up in San Quentin prison, California, years ago for opium smuggling. Later he was pardoned through his big political pull, and I understand he went to China. Since then nothing has been heard of him. The Custom House people jumped at the suggestion, and are to put the papers covering what has been done in the matter into my hands to-morrow, or at the latest on Friday. As some of them have to come from Washington, there may be a little delay. Meanwhile I want you to come down and take an extensive run through Chinatown. You may be able to pick up a few points. Take the first train you can and come direct to the office.

Yours,

O. K. B."

Upon receipt of this Harry hurried through with the business he had laid out for himself that day, and took the two o'clock express for New York.

The day had been a cold one, and it grew colder as it advanced.

It was six o'clock when Harry struck the Grand Central station, and he hurried down to the shabby little office on Park Row which the Bradys made their headquarters, only to find it deserted and another letter waiting for him, which read thus:

"Dear Harry: I waited until five o'clock and now have an engagement. There is further delay with the papers relating to the opium case. It may be several days before they come to hand. In the meantime I have accepted another case which certainly ought not to be a long one—if it is I shall have to drop it. You are to come to the Susquehanna House, on West street, corner of — street. Fix yourself up so as to look like a railroad man, brakeman, or something of the sort, and engage a room for the night. Don't come before ten o'clock. You will find me in room No. 13, but don't inquire for me unless you are refused a room, in which case you may ask for me under my own

naine. In case you get a room, as you probably will, just rap on my door, being careful to put the light in your own room out, and to lock the door behind you. This is all. If there is any particular reason why you can't conveniently come it is no great matter. I daresay I can get through with what I have to do without help:

"Yours, O. K. B."

Harry went out and got supper, after which he donned a blue flannel shirt, a rough suit of clothes, and an old slouch hat, which gave him a very different appearance from usual, as Young King Brady is noted for his correct dressing.

He then walked across town, facing the stinging wind, and jumping on a West street car, soon found himself in front of the Susquehanna Hotel.

This was one of that class of houses once so plentiful in New York, but now rapidly disappearing.

It was a house which had been popular with Jersey farmers and market gardeners away back in the '40's, and in its day had done a large business.

And even yet it seemed to have its share and to be well kept up, for its walls were freshly painted, and the windows were well lighted.

The office, however, had given way to a full-fledged, modern corner saloon, the hotel entrance being through a little door on the side street.

Adjoining the hotel on this side street was a ruinous structure, which looked as if it had at one time been a factory.

Now, however, it was a tenement house, with cheap stores on the ground floor.

The one next adjoining the hotel was occupied as a Chinese laundry; next to that was a barber's shop, and beyond that a small grocery, and so on.

The windows of that part of the building immediately over the Chinese laundry were dark and some of them had been broken.

Behind them Harry could see bales and boxes, and he came to the conclusion that this end of the building was used for storage.

All these particulars he took in at a glance, following the custom of the Bradys, who, when working on a case, invariably familiarize themselves with the surroundings of a strange house before entering.

Harry hurried up the stairs, entering a large room fitted up for the hotel office.

"Can I get a room here to-night?" he asked of the elderly man who acted as clerk.

"You can," was the reply. "Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"How long shall you probably want the room?"

"Just for to-night."

"All right. No. 14. One dollar, please."

Harry paid his dollar, and was shown to a small room on the third floor, somewhat to his surprise, for New York hotels do not usually begin numbering at the top of the house, as was evidently the case here.

This room was at the end of a corridor, and No. 13, in which a light burned, was directly opposite.

After he was rid of the boy Harry extinguished his light, locked the door behind him, and rapped at No. 13.

"Well?" called the deep voice of Old King Brady within.

"Governor!" breathed Harry, at the keyhole.

Then the door was immediately opened, and Harry passed in.

Old King Brady was in his usual quaint dress.

He wore the famous long blue coat with brass buttons, the old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar; the big white hat with its broad brim hung from a peg against the wall.

"Glad to see you, my boy!" he said in a low voice. "We will put in the night together here. Be particular not to do any loud talking. I have no means of knowing who our neighbor is in the next, and while I doubt if he could hear what we are saying even if we shouted, I don't care to take any chances in that regard."

"All right," replied Harry. "I'll be careful. What's it all about, anyhow? Why do I find you shut in here?"

"I'll tell you in a minute," replied Old King Brady. "By the way, those papers came after all. They were handed in just after I wrote the letter when I was leaving the office. You had better look them over before we go to bed."

"Do they throw any light on the opium case?"

"Not a ray. These secret service men are such a muddle-headed lot, Harry. As a matter of fact, the papers are a great mass of words which mean nothing. If we are to do business in this matter we shall have to build up the case on our own account."

"I'll postpone the reading till later then," replied Harry. "Now, about this hotel job. What is it all about?"

"Unlucky room."

"Ha! No. 13!"

"Yes."

"Where does the bad luck come in?"

"Oh, it's very serious, Harry. Within the past year three persons have disappeared in this room."

"You don't say! And never heard of again?"

"Never!"

"What kind of people, Governor?"

"Young men, all of them."

"Strange we have heard nothing about it."

"Well, it appears that in two instances these disappearances have been reported to the police."

"And nothing has come of it?"

"No."

"Haven't the friends of the vanished put up a kick?"

"It would appear that they had no friends."

"Tramps?"

"Strangers out of work."

"Who are they?"

"The names they signed on the hotel register were Rodney Smith, Peter West, and Nate Wood. I give them to you in the order in which they disappeared."

"Tell me all about it, Governor. This seems to be one

of your old-time mysterious cases, and I am interested in it."

"Well, it is like this: I received a call from Mr. Jas. F. Martin, landlord of this hotel, only this afternoon, and he made known the facts in these disappearance cases. In each instance these young men have come to the hotel asking for No. 13, and each in expressing a desire for the room have stated that they have occupied it before."

"And had they?"

"The clerk declares not; that they were all strangers to him."

"And about the disappearances?"

"Well, in the case of Rodney Smith, he occupied the room three nights, vanishing on the third. His traps, which amounted to but little, were left behind him, and his door was found unlocked."

"Then he might have gone anywhere."

"Just so; and nothing was thought of the matter at the time, but wait till you hear the end. Smith had paid each night for the room, and when he did not return for his clothes Mr. Martin dismissed the matter from his mind, and never thought of it again until the second disappearance took place."

"When was this?"

"Smith vanished last January; Peter West, the second, in July; and Nate Wood, the third, in October."

"West's case was different?"

"On the contrary, it was just the same. He turned up at the hotel, registering from Chicago, and asking for room No. 13. He got it, and occupied it for two nights. On the third night he also vanished. Again the door was found unlocked, and the man's clothes left behind him. It was this similarity which attracted Mr. Martin's attention. It seemed very strange that two such cases should have occurred in one room."

"Very. Any developments in the West case?"

"None. He never returned for his clothes, and nothing was ever heard of him. In October along came Wood. When he asked for room 13 he was refused."

"And in the meantime it had been occupied by others?"

"Oh, yes; many times. You can see for yourself that it is a good enough room."

"That window overlooks the side street?"

"Yes. It is the corner room. That dead wall there is up against the old distillery."

"Oh, that odd looking building was once a distillery, then?"

"Yes; during the civil war it was so occupied. I remember it very well. After they stopped distilling whisky in New York, which was along about 1870, it took its present form."

"Well, about Wood?"

"Mr. Martin refused the room to the young man, and was particular in his inquiries as to why he wanted it; but he did not succeed in getting anything out of him. The fellow stayed in room 14 three nights."

"The room I have to-night."

"Ah!"

"Yes."

"Well, on the morning of the fourth day, when the chambermaid entered No. 14 she found that the bed had not been occupied. Later it was discovered that No. 13, which had not been occupied for several days, was locked up. Woods' things had all disappeared from No. 14, and it was at first supposed that he had merely gone off without notifying the hotel clerk, but when they came to open the door of No. 13, there they found that someone had slept in the bed, and an old dress-suit case belonging to Wood stood in one corner."

"He had evidently changed rooms on his own account."

"Yes. Well, he was never heard of again."

"Stranger than ever."

"It is. They overhauled the dress-suit case, and among the man's belongings, which amounted to nothing, and showed his extreme poverty, was this letter. Here, read it for yourself."

The letter handed to Harry was postmarked New York, and the date was early in October.

It read as follows:

"Mr. N. Wood, Chicago:

"Dear Sir.—Your reply to our ad. duly received. From the way you write I should think you might answer our purpose; at all events we are disposed to give you a trial, and enclose herewith P. O. order for \$25, which will cover your expenses to New York. Upon your arrival you are to go directly to the Susquehanna Hotel, No.— West street, and engage Room No. 13, paying in advance. There you will hear from us further, but understand that if you give the slightest hint of your business to the hotel people there will be nothing doing, and you will go away no wiser than you came. It will be the same if you fail to take room 13. You may, however, accept some other room at first, if necessary, but on the third night you positively must occupy room No. 13. This is all. Trusting that there may be no hitch in this matter, we remain,

"Very truly yours,

"T. K. Taylor & Co."

"A very remarkable letter, Governor!" exclaimed Harry, handing it back.

"Very," replied Old King Brady.

"What was done about it?"

"Mr. Martin reported the case to the police, and placed the letter in their hands; the one you saw is merely a copy."

"They could make nothing of it?"

"Nothing whatever. Mr. Martin finally had to let the matter drop perforce, but the other day his attention was called to it again by— Hello! Come in!"

Suddenly Old King Brady had been interrupted by a knock on the door.

The door was locked, however, and when the old detective opened it who should walk in but Mr. Martin himself.

"Oh! How are you again!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "Let me introduce my partner. This is Young King Brady, Mr. Martin."

"Glad to see you," said Mr. Martin, carefully closing the door.

"Mr. Brady," he hastily added, "it is most fortunate that you came to-night, it would seem. There is a young fellow downstairs at the present moment asking to be assigned to room No. 13!"

"No!" cried Old King Brady, springing up.

"Oh, it's so. I told the clerk to hold him until I could inform you."

"Good!" exclaimed the old detective. "This is downright luck."

"What shall we do?"

"Do? Why, assign him to room 13, by all means. Send him right up here."

"I'll do it!" cried Mr. Martin, and he hurriedly withdrew.

CHAPTER II.

OLD KING BRADY DISCOVERS THE HOLE IN THE WALL.

"Governor, this is the greatest streak of luck ever!" exclaimed Harry, as soon as the hotel proprietor had gone.

"It is very strange."

"We ought to find out what it all means now."

"We certainly ought. But let me make haste and finish what I was about to say. The other day Mr. Martin, chancing to look over a Cincinnati paper, came across this ad. Read it, please."

Old King Brady pulled out a newspaper cutting, and Harry read as follows:

"Wanted.—Young man for confidential position. Work requires good physical strength, but education not necessary. To the right man we will pay a salary of \$200 per month. No canvassing. Address, stating age, financial situation, family connections, whether married or single, etc., T. K. Taylor & Co., Gen'l Delivery, N. Y. P. O."

"Heavens! That ad would catch hundreds!" cried Harry.

"I have no doubt that whoever inserted it got a bushel of answers," replied Old King Brady. "You will perceive that the name is the same as that signed to the letter found among the belongings of young Wood."

"I see that it is. When was this published?"

"About two weeks ago."

"Then possibly this young fellow is the selected one."

"Just what I was thinking. Ha! Here we have Mr. Martin again!"

The hotel proprietor entered without knocking this time.

"Bad luck take it, Mr. Brady!" he exclaimed. "The bird has flown!"

"What! Gone!"

"Yes; gone when I got down. My clerk, like a fool, persisted in questioning the fellow, and he pulled out."

"And the clerk let him go?"

"He went when the clerk's back was turned."

"Too bad! Too bad!"

"It's a sin and a shame!" sputtered Martin. "Here, just as a chance comes to lift this hoodoo off my hotel, Jim Grace has let it slip through his fingers. He ought to be bounced."

"Never mind, Mr. Martin," said Old King Brady, hopefully. "I have an idea. It strikes me that after all this may be for the best."

"I don't see how you figure it out."

"Why, if the fellow was so scary the chances are that he would not have told anything, and very likely he had nothing to tell. But my partner, here—"

"Ha! I catch on."

"So do I," laughed Harry, "and I must confess I don't particularly relish the job. I suppose I am to take this young fellow's place and sleep in room 13."

"You shan't unless you want to, Harry," said Old King Brady, quickly.

"Oh, bless you, I want nothing else. I am wild to get at the bottom of this mystery. I was only joking when I said that."

"Then that is your work," said Old King Brady. "See, we will rig up a thread leading over the transom into No. 14, where I will stay. You can pull it first alarm."

"It is a very good idea," said Mr. Martin. "But now, Mr. Brady, tell me honestly what do you think of this?"

"As I told you before, it is quite impossible for me to express any opinion," was the reply.

"Oh, I know. You don't just understand me. I mean about the way these fakirs enter the room. This house is a very old one. During war times it is said to have been largely frequented by Confederate spies. There may be secrets in this room of which I know nothing."

"You mean secret panels and the like?"

"Yes."

"I have examined the walls and floor carefully."

"You found—"

"No trace of anything of that sort. By the way, who owns the adjoining property?"

"It belongs to the Knickerbocker estate, the owners of this house."

"The room on the other side of that wall is used for storage, I believe?"

"Yes; wool is stored in there, and a pretty penny it costs me for insurance on that account."

"You have never heard rumors of any suspicious persons holding out in there?"

"Never."

"I can throw no light on the mystery as yet, Mr. Martin,

but I suggest that we occupy these rooms three nights, same as the other disappearing ones have done."

"It is up to you to do exactly as you please, Mr. Brady. I haven't a word to say."

"We'll do it," replied Old King Brady, and for two nights Harry slept in room No. 13, while Old King Brady occupied No. 14, but nothing occurred to break the rest of either.

During the next morning Old King Brady readily found a pretext to visit the wool storage room next door.

The visit resulted in nothing, but the detective learned that there was no watchman employed on the premises, and that the room was seldom opened, the wool contained in it being damaged stock, and slow to market.

During this day Harry, having gone over the papers in the opium case, spent much time in Chinatown, trying to pick up information bearing on the case, but without success.

At last the third night came.

The Bradys, whose true character was known to no one but Mr. Martin and his clerk, once more took up their quarters in rooms 13 and 14.

A strong brown thread almost invisible ran over the transoms.

To the end in Old King Brady's room was attached a little bell.

It had been arranged that the latter should keep his door unfastened, according to the direction found in the letter to young Wood by the mysterious Taylor & Co.

That evening the detectives remained together in No. 14 until after ten o'clock, but heard no suspicious sound.

At that hour Harry retired, and shortly after Mr. Martin knocked on Old King Brady's door.

"I'm filled with curiosity to see what this night brings forth," said the hotel proprietor, seating himself on the bed.

"Hard to say," replied Old King Brady. "The sudden departure of that young man may have queered the whole thing."

"Indeed it may. Have a cigar, Mr. Brady?"

"Thanks; don't care if I do. Have you given orders not to interfere with any suspicious character who may try to sneak upstairs?"

"I have. They will be allowed to pass."

"Have you any permanent lodgers here, Mr. Martin. I have been meaning to ask."

"Well, there are a few. Why?"

"It only occurred to me that this mysterious Taylor might actually reside here."

"That is impossible. The people I refer to are all either connected with the Washington Market or the different ferries on the North river side."

"That would seem to bar them out. Still, it is hard to say."

"What can be the object in bringing these young fellows from the West?"

"If you ask my idea of that then I say that the object is

undoubtedly a crooked one. These fellows are to be used in some game where it is necessary to have entire strangers, whose faces cannot be known to the police. There can be no other cause."

"I believe you are right. But why on earth should they select my hotel?"

"Near the ferries, for one thing. Easy to find."

"Mr. Brady, you don't believe that is all the reason."

"Frankly, I don't. I still believe in the secret communication with the wool house next door, in spite of my inability to find it."

"You did not tell me that you thought that."

"Didn't I? Well, perhaps I didn't; but it is the truth."

"I can't believe it."

"Very possibly I am wrong."

Just at this instant the bell suddenly gave a jerk, and rang once. It was but a small affair, and made very little noise.

It was enough to bring Old King Brady and Mr. Martin to their feet, however.

"Heavens!" gasped the old detective, "something doing at last."

He threw open the door, and followed by Mr. Martin, rushed into room 13.

One glance was sufficient to show them that Old King Brady's scheme had succeeded only too well.

The bed was a bit tumbled up, as though Harry had been lying there in his clothes.

But there was no Harry.

The room was vacant.

With the same mystery which had attended all the other disappearances, Young King Brady had also disappeared.

"This beats everything!" exclaimed Mr. Martin. "Where has the young fellow gone?"

"Here you are!" cried Old King Brady.

Close over by the wall which separated the room from the wool storage lay a key.

"This is the signal!" cried Old King Brady. "We thought of this possibility, and I told my partner to drop that key in case the wall opened and he was carried through before I could get to him."

"Then there is a secret door."

"There must be!"

Old King Brady struck the wall.

It seemed solid enough; he had tried it many times before.

"What can be the secret," he said, moving up and down along the wall, and sounding it here and there.

"This wall shall be chopped down to-morrow," cried Mr. Martin, excitedly. "I must and will know the truth."

"That will do us no good to-night, however, and in the meanwhile I am thinking of my partner's danger."

"And he is in great danger, I am afraid."

"These people may have caught on to us, if so the danger is real enough. Ha! What have we here?"

Old King Brady had been running his hand over the wall as he spoke.

Now suddenly, and when he least expected it, he had made a discovery, and this in spite of the fact that he had gone over the same ground a dozen times before.

The wall was covered with an old-fashioned paper of large pattern.

This showed no signs of being broken in any way, which had been deceiving to the detective.

Now he had discovered behind the paper a projection which as he pressed it caused the carpet over in one corner of the room to rise slightly.

"I see nothing," exclaimed Martin.

"Wait! There is a secret button here," replied Old King Brady. "Watch that carpet over there when I press it!"

"It seems to bulge up."

"Pull it up!"

Mr. Martin did so.

Again Old King Brady pressed the button, or whatever it was behind the paper.

Immediately a square of the floor boards rose up like a trap door.

"Eureka!" cried Mr. Martin. "Whoever the scoundrels may have been, they came in this way!"

"Never! What are you thinking of, man?"

"But, Mr. Brady——"

"Stop! Wasn't that carpet nailed down tight? Didn't you just rip it up yourself?"

"Why, surely! I spoke without thought."

"Of course you did, and we must think. Mr. Martin, we have found one of the secret ways out of this room, but there must be another."

"You think that?"

"I am sure of it. Here! I think I have it now!"

Old King Brady hurried to the opposite corner of the wall.

"Yes, yes!" he cried. "The carpet is loose here! How long is it since this has been taken up and shaken?"

"Oh, a long while—several years."

"And here you are!"

Throwing aside the loose corner of the carpet, a similar condition of the floor boards was revealed.

They had been sawed through at a point about four feet away from the wall."

"A trap door!" cried Mr. Martin.

"Nothing else. Here, we waste no further time in looking for the secret spring which controls it."

From one of the innumerable secret pockets in the old blue coat Old King Brady produced a flat piece of steel which folded up with several brass hinges.

Straightening this out to its full length the old detective had a powerful tool something on the order of a burglar's jimmy.

Inserting this in the crack he had little difficulty in prying up the boards.

Beneath, between the floor and the ceiling of the room below, there was a space of unusual depth.

It was lined with sheet iron, which appeared to extend into the wall.

"Here's your secret passage!" exclaimed Old King Brady, kneeling down and peering into the opening. See, it runs right through the wall. That's the way these scoundrels have carried off the boy, and perhaps to his death!"

CHAPTER III.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HARRY.

If there is one thing which Young King Brady loves more than another it is to be connected with an out-and-out mystery.

Indeed, Harry has been known to go to great lengths to bring this about.

It was so in this case.

Harry had not been forcibly abducted, by any means.

He had simply gone off with his captors of his own accord, anxious to solve the mystery of Room No. 13, and confident of his ability to take care of himself no matter what might occur.

This was the true state of the situation, and the way in which it came about was this.

As Old King Brady had surmised, after putting out the gas, Harry threw himself upon the bed without removing his clothes, as he had done each previous night.

Drawing a light blanket over him he lay there thinking, ready to sleep whenever sleep should come.

Whatever was to happen would have to happen that night, or Old King Brady was prepared to give up work on the mystery, for the time being at least.

It was necessary for the old detective to get to work on the opium smuggling case, and he had no more time to spare for this.

Thus Harry was devoutly hoping that there would be something doing before the dawn of another day.

Perhaps he did drop off into a doze; he never could feel quite sure, but at all events he was suddenly aroused by a slight sound over in one corner.

In the dark he could see nothing, but he seemed to feel the presence of someone in the room.

"Who is there?" he cried, sitting up on the bed.

At the same instant a light streamed up from the floor.

"Tom Rexford, you are summoned!" a voice exclaimed.

"Make no noise, please. Do not stir off the bed."

Harry's heart beat fast.

It was just a little awe-inspiring, and cold chills seemed to run down his spine then.

The light increased, and all at once a man rose up from behind the foot of the bed.

He was in no sense an extraordinary looking person, but Harry needed only one glance at his face to feel certain that he was a crook.

He was rather a small man with dark hair and black eyes.

His cheeks were sunken, and his skin had a yellowish tinge.

"An opium fiend," thought Young King Brady, and Harry has seen too many such to admit of a mistake.

The man was dressed in a plain business suit, and carried a dark lantern in his hand.

He now stepped around in front of the bed.

For the minute Harry was tempted to pull the thread, but something seemed to hold him back.

Somehow he was seized with the idea that his own interests lay in the direction of temporizing with this intruder.

The man now turned the lantern full in Harry's face for a minute, surveying him in silence.

"You are Tom Rexford?" he asked then.

"That's me," replied Harry, rejoiced to get the name of the vanished come-on thus easily.

"You are rather light for the work. I understood from your letters that you were a larger man."

"I did not intend to misrepresent myself then. I am stronger than you might think."

"Well, let us hope so. It is too late to change horses now. At all events you shall be given the chance to try your hand."

"I am ready."

"You don't seem a bit startled at my sudden appearance. That shows courage on your part."

"I think I have as much courage as the average. But how did you get in here?"

"The same way you are going out, unless you want to back out, which you may do if you choose."

"I'm not backing out."

"All right, then. Rise and follow me!"

And Young King Brady did it.

He had fully made up his mind to take this very step, although he had not so informed his chief.

"Old King Brady will be right after me," he thought. "Between us we shall surely down these scoundrels; but I must give him the steer."

As he rose he pulled the thread.

Of course, if Old King Brady should get into the room before they got out of it there would then be nothing in the lines Harry had laid down for himself.

But on this he was taking chances.

It went the other way.

The second trap door was raised when Harry got around the bed.

"Down there! Crawl through—quick!" said the man. Young King Brady obeyed.

He had only time to drop the key as arranged with his partner.

The man was after him in a moment, and Harry heard the trap-door close behind them.

Two seconds later Old King Brady and Mr. Martin were in the room, but their coming had been delayed just long enough to prevent the man from knowing how the case stood.

Meanwhile Harry was crawling through the sheet-iron lined passage with the light flashing behind him.

He passed through the party wall, and came up through another trap door into the store house.

Here bales and bags lay heaped up all around him.

The man, crawling out, pressed some secret spring set in the wall and the trap-door closed.

"Now, young fellow, we are all O. K.," he said, "and I suppose you are wondering what all this is about."

"Naturally," replied Harry.

"And you shall know. As we wrote you, our business is a bit shady."

"I understand that."

"We have to be on our guard against the police."

"Of course."

"We do business in a place which has never yet been suspected, and that is this very building where you are now. To have you enter from the street would not suit us, so we adopt this plan—it may seem a little singular to you."

"It does. Did you make that secret passage on purpose to accommodate your business?"

"Bless you no! That was made before you were born. It's this way: this old building used to be a distillery in the days of the civil war. Of course, there was more or less crooked business done, and the men who ran the place had that passage made so that they could slide out at a moment's notice, in case the revenue officers jumped on them—see?"

"I see; but how did you ever find it?"

"Through an old fellow who used to work in the distillery whom we happen to know."

"I see."

"Good. Are you satisfied now?"

"I am not asking questions. It is you who are pressing this information upon me. I am ready to go ahead with the deal."

"Right! That's the way to talk. I only want to make you understand that everything is open and above board. Now you can follow me."

The man led the way down a rough stairway, and upon reaching the ground floor conducted Harry into a small room which he at once perceived must be the living apartment of the Chinaman who ran the laundry on the side street.

It was rudely furnished, after the style of these laundrymen.

There were two bunks against the wall, a cook stove, a rough table, and a couple of chairs.

On one side of the table sat a young Chinaman, and facing him was a second white man, an ill-looking fellow so far as his face was concerned, but dressed like a gentleman.

His yellow, dried-up skin and ever-shifting eyes at once showed Harry that he also was an opium fiend.

The instant they entered Harry made a discovery.

This second man looked up quickly, as did the Chinaman.

The glance which he threw upon Harry was merely one of curiosity, but there was intense hatred in his eyes when he turned to look at his companion.

Everyone would not have noticed this, but Young King Brady did.

"These two fellows can be made to play against each other," he thought. "Just let them wait till I get the chance to try that game."

As for the Chinaman, the moment they entered he arose and passed out into the laundry in front.

"Hello, Charley!" exclaimed No. 2, in tones as soft as oil, and which completely belied the look he gave his companion, "so you have brought our new young man with you. How are you, young fellow? Tom Rexford is the name, I believe?"

"That's me," replied Harry heartily. "Now, then, what is my work to be? I am here and I want to know."

"And so you shall," was the answer. "But you will have to wait a minute. The boss hasn't come yet. It won't be long."

"All right," replied Harry. "Any time."

"Sit down there," said No. 1, pointing to a chair in the corner. "We will step out and look for him. Don't you stir till we come back."

Harry dropped into the chair, and the two men passed out into the laundry.

"What can be their game?" thought Young King Brady. "It must be something in the opium smuggling line. In here with a Chinaman, I don't see how it can be anything else. What if it should prove that these are the very men the Governor is after. That would be odd enough."

The moments passed, and nobody came into the room.

Harry began to fidget in his chair, and get nervous. Just then the Chinaman popped in.

"Hello, Charley, you get tired waitee so long?" he asked, with a grin.

"Yes," replied Harry. "How soon will they come back, John?"

"Belly soon," said the Chinaman, who was now rummaging in a closet.

He took out a cigar-box in which there were three cigars.

"You smokee, Charley?" he asked, and at the same time he put one of the cigars into his own mouth, which had the effect of averting any suspicions which Harry might otherwise have had that all was not right.

But as a matter of fact, Harry had no such suspicions then.

At that time his ambition was greater and his experience less than it is now.

He lighted the cigar with a match which the Chinaman handed him, and began to smoke.

The cigar was an excellent one.

It had, however, a peculiar spicy flavor which Young King Brady had never tasted in a cigar before.

The Chinaman, leaving the box on the table, passed out of the room.

He had scarcely gone when Harry began to experience strange sensations in his head.

For the moment he thought that they were due to the strength of the cigar.

He took a few more whiffs, and feeling worse, laid the cigar on the edge of the table, and rose from his chair with the intention of walking up and down the room.

No sooner was he on his feet than everything began to swim around him.

Then Young King Brady knew.

"Drugged, by thunder!" he gasped.

He made for the door, but never reached it.

Before he had taken two steps poor Harry reeled and fell heavily to the floor.

He had indeed been drugged.

All in an instant consciousness left him.

And it was at this precise moment that Old King Brady stumbled upon the secret passage in room 13.

CHAPTER IV.

OLD KING BRADY MAKES ALL KINDS OF DISCOVERIES.

Old King Brady was by no means slow in divining the meaning of the secret passage in room 13.

"This was never constructed by any modern crooks!" he exclaimed.

"I can't believe it," replied the hotel proprietor. "I've been in this house twenty years. I'm ready to swear that it was never built in my time."

"It dates back to the days of the old distillery. I am inclined to think it must have been intended as a means of escape in case of a raid by the revenue officers. There was a lot of that sort of business going on during the war."

"I suppose that's so."

"Of course it's so. But now to investigate. I must find out what has become of my partner at any cost."

"Are you going through?" demanded Mr. Martin, excitedly.

"Certainly."

"Hadn't you better wait then and let me get some of my men to help us?"

"Not at all. If you will do as I wish you will say nothing about this business to any of your people. The safety of my partner may depend upon your silence."

"But, Mr. Brady! Stop and think! The police ought to be notified."

"Nonsense, man! Is there anyone on the police force with more experience in detective business than I have had, or any more earnestly interested in finding my partner? I guess not. Take my advice, and keep your mouth shut. The police would be certain to queer the whole game."

"Mr. Brady, I am in your hands. I will do whatever you say."

"Go back and put the light out in No. 14; then come back here and lock yourself in and wait till you hear from me."

Mr. Martin lost no time in obeying.

When he re-entered No. 13 the trap door was still open, but Old King Brady had disappeared.

"Come, another bowled out!" gasped the landlord.

He got down on his knees, and called through the opening:

"Brady! Brady! Are you there?"

A deep growl was heard in the distance.

An instant later and Old King Brady's head came up through the trap door.

"For heaven sake man, can't you keep quiet?" he exclaimed in a whisper.

Mr. Martin was highly offended.

"Evidently you can get along better without my help," he said.

"There, there, my dear sir, I apologize. I was too hasty," said Old King Brady. "But really, Mr. Martin, we must work in silence."

"All right," was the grumbling response. It was quite evident that the landlord was not going to get over his pet in a minute.

"I suppose you would like to know where this passage ends?" said Old King Brady in his most affable tone.

"Naturally."

"In the wool warehouse."

"So I supposed. Were you there?"

"Yes. I succeeded in forcing up the trap-door on the other side."

"Anything doing?"

"I didn't have time to find out."

"Oh, you think I called you back?"

"My dear sir, I didn't know what you might do next. We must observe the greatest caution in whatever move we make."

Mr. Martin hauled in his horns then.

"Come, Mr. Brady, I'll be good," he said, with a short laugh. "I suppose it is a fact that I know more about running a hotel than doing the detective act. I place myself in your hands."

"Very good. I am going through again now. You can follow."

"All right."

Old King Brady dropped on his knees, and producing his little electric dark-lantern, an ingenious contrivance which he always carries, once more crawled into the hole.

Mr. Martin followed, and in a moment they found themselves in the wool warehouse.

"Here are stairs," said Old King Brady, "we will sneak down and see where they lead to."

Noiselessly they descended to the lower floor.

Here they found the place pretty well partitioned off.

There was evidently another store-room in the rear.

Through the partition in front light came streaming, for it was only a rough board affair papered on the inside, and the paper was broken in many places.

Old King Brady put his eye to one of these breaks, and saw two Chinamen drinking tea at a table.

Through an open door beyond he could see the Chinese laundry which fronted on the side street.

He was prepared for this, for he had already caught the voices of the Chinamen, who were talking excitedly.

Stepping back, Old King Brady motioned to Mr. Martin to look through the hole.

"I will go in and talk to them if you wish," breathed the landlord. "I know them both very well."

"On no account," was the answer. "Follow me."

Old King Brady then turned and led the way back to room 13, carefully closing the secret trap-door behind them.

"Well, it looks as if the Chinks were at the bottom of this business!" exclaimed Mr. Martin then. "Aren't you going to do anything about it?"

"Give me time to think. What do you know about those same Chinks?"

"They have been there for some time. I know nothing futher about them except that I collect their rent."

"Oh, you collect for the Knickerbocker estate?"

"From this piece of property—yes. The agent is an old man. He is afraid of those people around there, and so leaves it to me."

"Nothing suspicious about those Chinamen?"

"I never heard that there was."

"Many people coming and going at their shop?"

"Of course."

"Suspicious looking men, I mean?"

"Not that I ever heard of. Some of my men would certainly have caught on to it if it was so. I should have heard of it long ago."

"Then we will let the Chinks rest for the present, and continue our investigations. There is one thing I have observed which I daresay may have escaped you."

"And what is that?"

"The party wall here is at least two feet thick."

"An unusual wall. Still, I suppose it was needed for the distillery."

"It is wide even for that, and it excites my suspicions. But we shall soon know whether I am right in my guess or not."

Old King Brady went over to the other corner of the room.

Once more pressing the secret spring, the first trap-door discovered flew up.

"We'll tackle this one now," he said.

"All right. Fire away," replied Mr. Martin.

Old King Brady crawled into the opening, but before he got his legs through he came backing out again.

"What's the matter?" demanded the landlord. "Why didn't you go on?"

"Can't go that way," replied Old King Brady. "As I supposed, there is a secret stairway built in the wall."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes."

"But is there room?"

"It's the narrowest thing you ever saw in the way of a stairway, and its meaning is plain enough to me."

"Dodging the revenue officers?"

"Yes. If coming in here to this room did not prove sufficient there was still another avenue of escape."

"But to where can it lead?"

"That we must learn."

"But your partner could never have been taken out that way. Remember the carpet was nailed down."

"I see you don't forget. There may be some other way of getting at these stairs, however."

"Of course. Well, how do we go?"

"It is necessary to back in, and then one will find himself right on the stairs."

"Go ahead," said Mr. Martin, "and I shall follow you. My curiosity is aroused now, and I am anxious to see this thing through."

Old King Brady now tackled the secret passage feet first.

"All right!" he called in a minute, and the light flashed through the hole.

Mr. Martin then joined him.

The stairs were so narrow that they both had to stand sideways.

So far as Old King Brady could discover, there was no opening through the wall on the other side.

Thus it was evident from all the surroundings that this mysterious staircase could not in any way be connected with Young King Brady's disappearance.

Old King Brady was nevertheless determined to push his investigations further.

He sidled down the stairs, followed by Mr. Martin.

When they reached what Old King Brady felt must be about the level of the ground floor of the old distillery, another discovery was made.

This was a door set in the wall on the distillery side.

It was locked, but Old King Brady felt certain that it must have been recently opened, for there were footprints in the dust which had accumulated on the stairs.

They hurried on down, and upon reaching a point below the level of the cellar they came upon a vaulted opening leading in the direction of the river.

Into this pipes projected from above, and it ran back under the building.

"An old sewer connected with the distillery, and they have taken the boy through it, I am very much afraid," the detective said.

"And that means his death!" added the landlord, dismally.

"It don't follow. Why should they go to such trouble to inveigle a stranger to New York merely for the purpose of drowning him in the North river? No, no; there is something else at the bottom of all this."

"There is plenty of mud on the bottom of this sewer," growled Mr. Martin. "The tide comes up here."

"And luckily for us it is low tide now," replied Old King Brady. "Come on. We are almost through."

They pressed forward, their feet sinking in the slimy ooze.

Others had preceded them, leaving a plainly marked trail behind.

"There were two persons who went this way," exclaimed Mr. Martin. "Your partner and one other, I suppose."

"You are sharp in your observation as far as it goes," replied Old King Brady. "Still, I see it differently. My partner was carried through here by two men."

"How on earth do you tell that?"

"Look closely at the footprints. Theirs are more widely spread than ours. They were carrying a heavy load."

"You are right. But here we are at the end."

"And under the wharf at the foot of — street," said Old King Brady. "Well, well. They went off in a boat, it seems."

"How do you know?"

"My dear sir, how else could they have gone unless they swam for it? There are no back tracks in the mud and the mouth of our sewer is a good two yards further on."

"You are right again. I shall have to do a lot of studying before I make a detective, but just the same I see something else."

"What?"

"The mud is all trampled here. It was done when they pushed off the boat."

"And put the boy aboard. You have hit it this time, Mr. Martin. It is so."

"And this is the end."

"On the contrary, it is only the beginning. Remember it is my partner who has been carried off in this boat, and until I find out what has become of him everything else must stand aside."

CHAPTER V.

WHERE HARRY WENT.

That Young King Brady was somewhat foolish to follow his strange visitor there is no denying, but just such bold moves have brought success to the Bradys.

It was precisely what Old King Brady would have done himself, and Harry knew it.

And this had a great deal to do with his action, for he also knew that Old King Brady would never ask him to do anything involving so much risk.

The Chinaman's cigar must have been heavily drugged, for Harry did not return to consciousness until the next day.

He awoke suddenly, and without feeling the least ill effect from the poison he had inhaled—not even a headache troubled him now.

He was lying fully dressed upon a cot-bed in a small, ill-furnished room.

Outside he could hear the wind blowing fearfully, the building trembled, and the window-sash rattled constantly,

making so much noise that Harry lay wondering why it had not wakened him before.

The room was stifling hot, but the frost-covered panes showed Harry that it must be very cold outside.

He kicked off the old comfortable which had been thrown over him, and was just going to get up when his attention was held by a loud voice calling out:

"I tell you no, Charley. I have stood for three murders, and I won't stand for a fourth. It is horrible. Such a fine young fellow, too."

"Oh, thunder, are you going to make trouble with that infernal sentiment of yours?" answered another voice. "What will the Marquis say when I tell him?"

"And you will tell him?"

"Sure I will, Pete Crotty. You and me can't work together, that's flat. I'm kicking, and I am going to keep right on kicking. I'll never try it with you again."

"All right for you," growled the first voice, and then there was silence.

Harry dropped back on the bed and drew the comfortable over him.

The voices came from the adjoining room through the half-open door.

That they were discussing Harry's case there could be no doubt.

"Come, this is 'serious,'" thought Young King Brady. "Where on earth am I? What a fool I was to smoke that infernal cigar, and yet it has led me up against the Governor's opium case, surest thing."

The mention of the Marquis had been enough to tell Harry that.

There was but one Marquis of Mott Street.

When Old King Brady alluded to this noted opium smuggler in their conversation in room No. 13, Susquehanna Hotel, it was not for the first time, by any means. Harry had often heard him speak of the man before.

"Two cases have run into one," thought Young King Brady. "It is dead certain that I have come up against some opium gang, and more than likely it is the very one the Governor is after. A whole lot may come out of this."

A "whole lot" was destined to come out of it right then and there, as Harry was soon to learn.

As Young King Brady lay quietly listening, the talk began again.

"Then you don't propose to send the boy out to the ship?" he heard a voice say.

This time he recognized it as the voice of the man who had so suddenly appeared in room No. 13.

"I didn't say that," was the growling response. "He'll go out if he can get out, though I hardly see how he is going to do it if this wind holds."

"It may go down by night."

"Of course."

"But you refuse to do him up in the usual way afterwards?"

"I refuse to do him up or to have him done."

"You do?"

"Yes, I do."

"Say, Pete, listen to reason. What else are we going to do with him? Turn him adrift to inform on the gang? Well, the Marquis won't like that very well."

"Let the Marquis go to thunder."

"You wouldn't say that if he was here."

"Who was telling you?"

"Pshaw, man! It is impossible to prevent it. Take another drink and forget it."

"That's all right."

"No, it isn't all right, either."

"Oh, come off, will you, and let me alone."

Someone got up then and began pacing the floor.

Harry closed his eyes, thinking that the man might look in on him, and it was well that he did so, for in a minute he heard him in the room.

"He's still in the dope," said the known voice a minute later.

"Like enough he is doped to death," the voice of "Pete Crotty" replied.

"And that's no dream, Charley Carver," Pete added, in a minute.

"The deuce he has! You make me tired."

"You mean to kill him anyway."

"Do I want to kill him before the job is done? That last pipe of hop drove you crazy, I guess."

"You lie!"

"What! You tell me I lie!"

"Look out!"

"Help! Murder!"

It was serious business now!

All in an instant a fight was on.

The interesting pair in the other room were scuffling.

It was too much to be endured.

Even at the risk of his own life Young King Brady determined to interfere.

He sprang from the bed, and rushed into the room.

Before this he knew that he had not even been searched, and that he had his revolver with him.

But he did not draw the weapon—he wanted to be sure of his ground first.

Through the door he saw the two men whom he had seen in the laundry locked in each other's embrace.

One clutched a knife—the one who had entered room No. 13.

The other was doing his utmost to prevent him from using it.

To repeat what was said is needless.

Horrible imprecations filled the room.

And at the instant Harry looked through the door the man whom he afterwards knew to be Pete Crotty went down on his back on the floor.

"Help! Murder! Don't stick me, Charley!" he yelled.

And he had need for his fear.

Charley Carver, having gained the advantage, planted his knee on the fellow's breast, and was about to plunge the knife into his heart when Harry jumped on him.

Seizing Carver by the head, he pulled him back and threw him over on the floor.

Both went down together.

And that was the time when Young King Brady found himself about as near death as he cared to come.

Carver instantly disengaged himself, and turning upon Harry was about to plunge the knife into him when the finish came.

With fearful hate burning in his shifty eyes, Pete Crotty had leaped up, and now with the spring of a tiger buried his own knife in the back of the infuriated man.

Harry closed his eyes, sick with horror, as Carver, with a deep groan, sank down upon him—dead.

It was an awful scene.

Poor Harry nearly fainted.

Indeed, he was never quite sure that he did not lose consciousness for a moment.

At all events, when he pulled himself together Carver's body had been dragged away, and Pete Crotty was tugging at his hand trying to raise him to his feet.

"Are you hurt, Tom?" he kept calling. "Are you hurt? Did he stick you—say?"

"No, I am all right," replied Harry, sinking into a chair. "But that man is dead!"

"So he is, burn him! So would I have been if you had not saved my life."

"It is the same with me."

"That's what! It turns you sick, does it, kid?"

"It does," replied Harry, faintly.

"Well, then, don't let it. Know what that man is?"

"N-no."

"A murderer ten times over! He used to boast of it. A bigger wretch never lived on earth. I'm not a bit sorry for what I've done."

"You could hardly help it."

"You're dead right. After he had killed you then I should have found myself up against it for fair. We have been quarrelling a long time, Tom Rexford. One of us just had to die."

Harry was silent.

"It will be my turn next if I don't speak this man fair," he thought.

Summoning all his resolution and trying to appear calm, he said:

"Boss, I'm not used to this sort of thing. I——"

"Of course you are not used to it," broke in Pete Crotty.

"This isn't what you hired out for. You don't understand."

"No."

"You shall in a minute, though. Tom, I've taken a big fancy to you. Did the first minute I laid eyes on to you in the Chink's wash-shop. You owe your life to me in more ways than one."

Harry shuddered.

"I guess I have had a close call," he said. "I have been awake some little while. I heard your talk—I——"

"You did, hey! Then you know that this here fight was over you."

"Yes."

"It is just as well. I'm your friend for life now. There hain't a-going to be no secrets between you and me. But

first we want to understand each other. We can't stop here in this hut forever. Swear that you will never sell me out for this job I've just done."

"I swear to that!" cried Harry heartily, and he meant just what he said.

And Pete Crotty was evidently satisfied that this was so. "We'll talk later," he said. "First off, to make sure that Charley is dead, and then to dump him. This job must be forgotten right now forevermore!"

That the man spoke with a certain solemnness went to show that he was somewhat sorry for what he had done.

We pass over succeeding events rapidly.

It is not a pleasant subject to dwell upon; still it is a part of our story, and must be told.

Crotty now examined Carver's body and pronounced him dead.

He then proceeded to empty his pockets.

"Not that I want his stuff, Tom," he explained. "It must all be thrown away except his money, and that will slip through my fingers fast enough."

He pocketed a fat roll of bills as he spoke.

The man's watch, rings, scarf-pin, and other belongings he tied up in a handkerchief, and opening the door, went out.

Harry looked through the door and saw that he was in a small hut standing upon a lonely sand-spit.

Ten rods away the waves were breaking upon the beach with great fury.

It seemed to Young King Brady that he had never seen such mountainous rollers.

Not a house was near, but in the distance Harry caught sight of a large summer hotel.

"We are down on the south shore of Long Island somewhere," he thought. "Heavens! Shall I ever live to get safe out of this? I had about as soon have a roaring lion for a friend as that man. Lucky he does not guess who I am. I should be as good as dead if he did."

Pete hurried down to the beach and tossed the bundle far into the sea.

And we cut the rest of it short by simply recording that ten minutes later the body of Pete Carver, his clothes stripped of any identifying mark, followed the dead man's belongings.

Harry saw it swept seaward by the retreating wave, and then turned away, faint and sick.

Pete Crotty caught him by the arm and led him back to the hut.

"Now forget it, Tom," he said, thrusting big pieces of drift-wood into the stove as he spoke.

"It had to come, I suppose," said Harry.

"It did. This is no new growl between us. It has been brewing a long while. I suppose you wish you had stopped out in Cincinnati, boy."

"I do that, Mr. Crotty."

"Ha! You are onto my name, I see. You will do well to forget it. Call me Pete—plain Pete."

"What does it all mean, anyhow?" asked Harry, feeling

that no better time could come to learn the secrets of the band to which this man belonged.

"What do you s'pose it means?" demanded Pete, filling a pipe.

Harry, who had already discovered an opium layout upon a shelf in one corner, was glad that it was to be nothing worse than tobacco now.

"I haven't the faintest idea," he replied. "Was it you who wrote those letters to me?"

"Nope!"

"Who then; or perhaps I must not ask?"

"The boss."

"Ask who he is; or no, you needn't. He is the Marquis of Mott Street, the biggest opium smuggler in America at the present time."

"Oh!"

"Yes. Ain't you surprised?"

"I don't think anything could surprise me to-day. I suppose that cigar I smoked was doped with opium."

"Stronger stuff than that knocked you out. How to make cigars that way is something what only Chinks know."

"It fixed me all right."

"It did for fair."

"And am I to go on this opium lay?"

"That's what you was hired for."

"When and where do I go?"

"Wait till the right time comes and I'll tell you."

"Are we working for this Marquis of Mott Street?"

"Son, we were, but things is changed. I shan't never dare to go back there now, so I guess we had better write it down that we are working for ourselves—see?"

"I suppose that is so."

"Of course it's so. Wait till you know all about it. One thing I s'pose you don't know?"

"Where my two hundred a month is coming from, do you mean?"

Pete laughed harshly.

"Oh, that's all in your mind. Forget it! There never was no two hundred a month."

"You don't say! Then I've come all the way from Cincinnati to be fooled like this."

"Aw, say, come off, will yer, and give a feller a chanst to talk."

"Go ahead, then."

"Well, it don't make a blame bit of difference what jay town you've come from, 'twould have been all the same. Them ads is just a notion of the Marquis. Kinder fad, don't you know."

"Then it's all a fake?"

"Fake nothing. Will yer let me speak?"

"Go ahead."

"Well, then, boy, I'm telling you that the Marquis couldn't do anything straight, or like other folks even if he tried. He'd just have to twist it somehow. His fad is never to have the same feller work twice for him on these jobs—see?"

"I think I understand. He hires a stranger each time there is to be opium smuggled in."

"Yair. That's it."

"And I heard enough to know what happens afterward."

"From me and dat blamed guy what's gone, you mean?"

"Yes. When my job is done then I'm to be done. Is that it?"

"That was it. It ain't it now. See here, Tom, you hain't quite as bright as I gave you credit for. Times is changed. As I told you before, I can't never go back to de Marquis now, and so what? Well, you and me gets dis hop what's coming and skip to Frisco. Dere we'll go into business on our own account—see?"

"And where do I come in? Is all I get out of the deal a little opium?"

"A little opium. Boy, you're green. Do you know what this lot of hop what's coming is worth?"

"No, I haven't the least idea."

"Well, then let me tell you. It's worth five thousand dollars!" cried Pete.

He pounded his fist on the table and repeated.

"Five—thousand—dollars! See?"

CHAPTER VI.

OLD KING BRADY AMONG THE PANHANDLERS.

Harry had learned a lot about the fakirs who operated in room No. 13, but Old King Brady was still in the dark.

The old detective was not as much disturbed over Harry's disappearance as one might suppose.

Long experience had taught him that where one is careful and knows his business there is always a way out of trouble, providing always that one keeps a clear head.

This Harry could be relied on doing, and as he had been thoroughly instructed in his business by no less a person than the old detective himself, Old King Brady had strong hopes that the boy would come out all right in the end.

But just the same something had to be done to find him, and Old King Brady formed his line of action while returning with Mr. Martin to room 13.

Here he announced his attention of immediately-departing.

Mr. Martin took the opportunity of complimenting him on his work.

"I do hope it goes all right with your partner, Mr. Brady," he said. "It is such a pity that he fell into this trap. Only for that I should consider your work done and well done, for I can easily nail up those trap doors, and prevent further trouble in room 13."

"That is so," replied Old King Brady. "As far as you are concerned the incident is closed."

"And what do I owe you?" asked the landlord, pulling out his pocketbook.

"We will let that rest for the present."

"But I'd sooner settle with you now."

"Oh, you need not be afraid that I shall raise my price in case my partner never turns up," said Old King Brady grimly. "I want to see the end of this business before I make up my bill. There is no telling to what this night's work may lead. It may even leave me in your debt. But I must be going, for I have still much to do to-night."

The old detective then hurriedly left the hotel.

He went right around on the side street, determined to begin his work by interviewing the Chinaman whose place he felt satisfied had been used by the gang.

But it did not come out that way at all.

The scene of the detective's operations was to be speedily transferred to Chinatown.

As he approached the laundry he saw a Chinaman coming out of the place.

Now, as is known to all detectives, the Chinese seldom move about the streets of New York after dark except in their own quarter.

He at once recognized, therefore, that this particular Chink must have special business to take him out at this late hour, and it seemed to him that the chances were all in favor of that business being to report to somebody the doings in room 13.

"So I'll follow you, my man," thought Old King Brady. "Chances are I shall learn just as much that way as by stopping to interview your partner in the laundry. Here goes!"

It is an easy matter to shadow a Chinaman, for he never looks behind him, whatever the reason may be.

Old King Brady followed the Chink straight to Mott street.

Avoiding the fan-tan dens and the opium joints, the man pushed on up Mott street almost to its junction with Pell, and then ran up the steps of an old brick dwelling and disappeared through the door.

Old King Brady was disappointed.

If the man had gone into one of the opium joints it would have been much easier for him.

As it was he could not for the moment think just what to do.

Consequently Old King Brady did nothing but wait.

And the wait was not a long one.

Inside of half an hour the Chinaman reappeared, and hurried back toward Chatham Square.

Again Old King Brady took up the shadowing, but he did not keep it up long.

Before he had covered many blocks he became satisfied that the Chinaman was merely returning to his laundry.

"It is just as I thought," reflected the detective. "He came here to report Harry's capture. Well, my work lies in that house, and through it I have to go at any cost or else—ah! I have it. I'll look up Canton Eddie, if he can be found. What he does not know about Chinatown isn't worth knowing. It may be just the thing, and for me to butt in there as I am would be very likely to spoil all."

Old King Brady then returned to Chatham Square, and looked in on his old friend Quong Lee.

This man kept an opium joint in a cellar not far from Doyers street.

Assisted when in trouble by the old detective, he became his sworn friend, and as everybody knows there is no such staunch friend as a Chinaman if you can only make one out of him, which is a very difficult thing to do."

Descending into Quong Lee's joint, he found the old Chinaman doing guard duty inside the door.

"Blady, me glad to see you!" he exclaimed, thrusting his hand at the old detective. "Where you been dis long time? You never come to see me no more."

"Well, I'm here now, Quong," replied Old King Brady, shaking hands, and taking a hurried survey at the smokers in the bunks, who seemed to be unusually numerous that night. "How have you been?"

"Oh, me belly well, Blady. How you?"

"First rate."

"And what want? What I can do for you?"

"You can put me next to Canton Eddie, Quong. Is he on the island, or where?"

"Oh, he no on de island. I seen him lesterday."

"He comes here right along?"

"Yes. He here last night."

"Then he is around tending to business."

"Oh, yair."

"And the Marquis, Quong?"

"Me no see him."

"I heard he was back in Chinatown again."

"P'laps, mebbe. Me no know."

"I'll step out and have a look for Eddie. Perhaps I can find him on the Bowery."

"Say, Blady, you look for boy."

"Ha! He is working with a boy?"

"Yair. Red hair. Little kid."

"All right, Quong. I'll look for the little kid with red hair."

Old King Brady then left the opium joint and turned into the Bowery.

The man he was after was a notorious panhandler, and a well-known frequenter of the opium joints.

It was Eddie's game to lay for the slummers who are usually liberal in proportion to the amount of champagne they have consumed.

Old King Brady knew that his work was generally confined to the lower Bowery.

To be sure, he might have changed his base of operations, and if so the attempt to find him would be hopeless.

Old King Brady walked up to Bayard street, and entered the notorious Panhandlers' Hall.

In this saloon, one of the lowest of its kind, hundreds of panhandlers pass in and out of a night.

There were a dozen or more here now.

Men with bandaged arms and on crutches, the lame, the halt, and the blind.

Some may have been really such, but most of them were mere fakes.

Among the crowd at the bar were three fake man-of-war's men.

Their sailor uniforms were perfect, but their caps bore no name of a warship, which should be sufficient to condemn them in the eyes of the charitable, but is not, for these fake sailors begging for money enough to get them "back to their ship" are well known to be among the most successful panhandlers operating in New York.

Conversation at the bar ceased when Old King Brady looked in, for the old detective is known to almost everyone in this part of town.

He passed out immediately, for Canton Eddie was not to be seen.

Crossing under the elevated road Old King Brady now strolled back down the Bowery, and was just about turning into Pell street when he saw a wretched-looking boy, bare-headed, in rags, and with his arm bandaged across his breast, leaning against the wall.

And now Quong Lee's hint came into play.

The boy's head was fiery red.

"Here we are," thought Old King Brady. "I don't see Canton Eddie, but I guess all I have to do is to wait."

He stepped into a doorway, where he could watch the boy.

The little fellow was shivering with the stinging cold—there was no fake about that.

"Come!" thought Old King Brady. "These poor wretches work hard for what they get, but what a shame that with all the money spent for charity in this great city there should not be some way of preventing such wretches as Canton Eddie from making use of children to do their dirty work. But I must be careful. I don't doubt that Eddie's eyes are right on me now."

He looked up and down, trying to locate the "watcher," for he knew that the boy could not be alone.

He could see nothing of him, however.

Just then a cab stopped at the corner of Pell street.

Two gentlemen in long overcoats, followed by two elegantly dressed women, alighted.

"A slumming party steering for a chop-suey house," thought Old King Brady. "No doubt they have an appointment with Mr. Chuck Connors, or some of the other Chinatown guides there."

The red-headed boy spotted them instantly.

His shivering immediately increased in violence.

It seemed as if the little fellow must shake to pieces.

Great tears rolled down his cheeks. He looked the very picture of woe.

"Oh, Charley, do look at this poor little boy!" exclaimed one of the women, as the group approached. "He's dying of cold."

"Aw, come on," replied her escort roughly. "Can't you see that he is only a fake?"

"I don't see anything of the kind!" cried the woman, fumbling for her purse.

"What's the matter with you, little boy?" she demanded. "Why don't you go home this cold night?"

"I hain't got no home, mum. Me mudder is dead, an' me fadder got on de island. De landlord he chucked me

an' my little sister out to-night and—and—boo—hoo! boo—hoo!"

It was beautifully done, but it did not fool Charley.

"Why don't you go to work?" he said, gruffly.

"I can't work, mister. I burned me arm. I'll show you me sore," blubbered the boy.

"Ah, gwan!" cried Charley, with the true Bowery accent, which showed that fine feathers did not make fine birds, and that he probably needed no guide to Chinatown.

"For shame, Charley! How can you be so hard-hearted?" exclaimed the woman.

She opened her purse, and producing a bill, thrust it upon the red-headed one, saying:

"Here, little boy, you take that and go right away and get a night's lodging somewhere. You'll freeze to death if you stay on the street."

The boy grabbed the bill.

"God bless you, missus, God bless you!" he whined, as Charley, with a sneer, dragged his companion after the other couple who had gone on ahead.

"And now for Canton Eddie," thought Old King Brady. "He's due."

It was so, and he came!

The instant the quartette of slummers were well out of sight a dapper little fellow who might have been taken for a drygood's clerk suddenly appeared on the scene, though where he came from Old King Brady was not quick enough to discern.

He made a dart at the boy and snatched the bill away from him.

"Say, boss, let me get inside an' warm me feet?" Old King Brady heard the boy ask, in a piteous tone.

"Ah, gwan! Dat'll warm you up!" cried the panhandler, dealing the unfortunate wretch a stinging blow.

This time the boy's tears were genuine.

And as he sniffled and sobbed, Old King Brady glided up behind the grafter, and laying a heavy hand on his shoulder, said:

"Come, Eddie, this don't go. You're too rough with that boy."

"Old King Brady!" gasped the panhandler, falling back.

CHAPTER VII.

HARRY STARTS OUT AS A SMUGGLER.

"Five thousand dollars! You don't say!" cried Harry, at Pete Crotty's announcement. "I didn't suppose opium was worth so much as all that."

"Which only goes to show that you don't know how much opium there is coming," said Pete. "There's a good lot of it, though, and you will have to get it. You haven't got no kick to put up, I suppose?"

"No; I'll do my best."

"Good for you. I knowed you were the right sort as soon as ever I laid eyes on you."

"How is it coming?"

"In the ship Three Brothers, direct from China. She's due here any time. There! Now you know."

"Where are we, anyhow?"

"Down near Long Beach, between that and Far Rock-away."

"I don't know those places," said Harry, innocently.

"This is Connecticut, I suppose?"

"No, it isn't Connecticut, either; it's Long Island."

"Oh!"

"I suppose you would like to know how you got here?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, you were carried out of that room through a secret passage what leads under a pier."

"Yes?"

"Yes. There we had a boat, and we rowed you out to a tug."

"I see."

"You want to understand, for you'll have to meet that tug again."

"Yes, yes."

"Yes, sir. It is engaged by the Marquis of Mott street, as we call the boss. He runs the opium syndicate."

"Oh, there is a regular syndicate, is there?"

"Yes, there is. The Marquis has agents in every city in this country, pretty near. When he gets the hop he divides it up, and sends a little here and a little there to be sold. Him and his agents form a company, the Opium Syndicate we call it. They do a big business. You'd be surprised."

"But how do you know the opium is coming on this ship?"

"How do we know? Why, the Marquis has his agents in China. They write him same as any business man. Boy, you're blamed green."

"I suppose I am. Put me wise."

"Well, I guess I've told you about all."

"And what kind of a man is this Marquis of Mott Street? Is he a Chink?"

"Chink nothing. His name is really Jack Dillon. He was born right on Mott street, and has lived all over the world. He was in China three or four years, but say, he dresses like a Chink now, and can talk Chink talk. He's a wonderful man, he is. The Chinks think a whole lot of him, but I say he's too blamed sly to last. The secret service men will get on to him some of dese days, surest ting you know."

"And is he Taylor & Co.?"

"Aw, say, Tom, you're too new. You gimme a pain, you do. Say, can't you ketch on? Dere hain't no Taylor and dere hain't no Co. The Marquis, dat's his idea. He wants new ones every time, so that in case they get ketched the secret service men won't know them, and they won't know themselves who the hop belongs to."

"I see. And what they don't know they can't tell."

"That's it."

"A great scheme; but it seems to me that the Marquis goes a pretty roundabout way to get his green men."

"Dat's what I was tellin' yer. He couldn't go straight if he tried. But I must say it has worked all right so far."

"And does each feller get killed when he has landed one lot of the hop?"

"Boy, that's what it's been with three of 'em what's gone before you. The Marquis has only worked the game three times."

"And how——"

"How do they do it?"

"Yes."

"Well, it's dis way: You go out in a boat to the ship what'll signal us."

"Yes."

"You get your hop over the side, and the ship goes on about her business."

"Yes."

"You lay dere and in a minute the tug comes along and takes you aboard."

"Yes. And the boat?"

"Oh, never mind about the boat. Dat goes adrift, and you goes to New York."

"With the hop?"

"Naw. The tug captain takes the hop. He lands you in New York, and gives you a ticket which you take to a certain Chineese laundry on —— street."

"Where I was before?"

"Sure. Dere we were supposed to meet you—me and the dead one, I mean."

"I see. And then what?"

"Why, den you're a dead one. We drug you again, carry you out to the end of the secret passage, and chuck you in the river with weights on your feet. You don't come back no more."

"Well, well; and this would have been done to me?"

"Surest ting you know, only for me. That was the programme, boy, and it would have been carried out; but we'll have to do it different now."

"How shall we do it?"

"It's dead easy. You see, the tug always holds back until the ship is well under way; you are supposed to wait. Well, you don't. You get a move on right off, and pull back here. Then we light out—see?"

And this, then, was the secret of it all.

Harry could not help admiring the ingenuity of the Marquis of Mott street.

Each time a new agent; each time the agent put out of the way forever.

An innocent tug bringing in the opium; the China tea ship parting with the stuff long before the custom-house officers could board her.

No wonder the Opium Syndicate flourished and the secret service detectives wagged their heads in vain.

But oh, the dreary day which followed!

It was horrible to Harry to be alone with his murderer in that lonely hut.

When he looked out on the heaving sea he wondered how he ever could pull a boat to the ship when she came, and the work was expected to be done in the dark, too.

But to refuse to act, or to have shown any sign of fear would have been simple madness, for his desperate companion would surely turn on him in that event.

And then it would either be a case of kill or be killed. But the day wore itself out at last.

Pete Crotty did not seem to feel the least remorse for his crime.

He drank whisky and smoked several opium pipes.

But he did not press the drink on Harry.

As for the opium smoking, he gave him a solemn warning against it.

"It will kill you in the end, kid, surest thing you know," he said. "I'd give anything if I had never hit my first pipe. No man living can buck against the hop and come out alive in the end."

"And why don't you stop it, then?" asked Harry.

But to this question Pete merely shrugged his shoulders and declared that it was "too late to stop it now."

Sundown came at last, and with it came the end of the wind.

It seemed to die away all at once, and though the heavy swell continued for a while, the sea grew calmer with the falling of the tide.

Pete informed Harry that the signal from the Three Brothers would be a blue light burned at her bow.

She might come that night, or she might not come till the next, but she had been reported off the Delaware break-water, and so was known to be due.

But whenever she came it would be in the night, as the captain would hold back so as to pass the sand spit under the cover of darkness.

At six o'clock Pete cooked supper, and after he and Harry had made way with it Pete cooked another opium pill, and proceeded to smoke it while Harry sat at the window and watched out over the sea.

Pete was soon in a sound sleep.

It would have been Young King Brady's chance to make his escape then if he had been so disposed.

But much as he dreaded his companion Harry had no idea of making any such attempt.

He had gone into the business with the firm determination to see it through, and he resolved that nothing should turn him aside from his work.

As he sat there by the window thinking, he could not help but be lost in wonder at the peculiar way in which he and his partner had fallen into the case, which at first had seemed so puzzling.

Did Old King Brady guess the truth?

Harry was wondering about that when all at once his eyes caught an intense blue light out at sea.

"Pete! Pete! Wake up!" he shouted.

"Hello!" growled Pete, arousing more easily than Harry had anticipated. "What's the row?"

"The signal!"

"Thunder no! So soon?"

"Yes, yes! Look there."

"Blamed if it hain't. Why, we waited three days last time, and now we catch it on de fly."

He sprang up and opening a closet produced a heavy ulster.

"Put that on, kid," he said. "You'll freeze to death if you don't. Here's gloves for you, too. Now to get the boat out. I hope you are a good hand at the oars."

"This question must have been asked in the letters of 'Taylor & Co.,' " Harry thought, for surely no applicant would have been selected who could not pull a boat.

He assured Pete that he was all right on the oars, and they went outside then.

The boat lay in a little salt creek behind the hut.

It was a strong dory, and Pete produced a good pair of oars.

Meanwhile the signal light had disappeared.

The night was bright with stars, but there was no moon.

Harry peered off over the water, but in the distance the gloom was impenetrable; he could see no ship, and he said as much to Pete.

"All the same she's there," said Pete. "Hold on a minute till I touch off a Bengal light to let them know we are coming; then she will signal again."

"It might be the revenue officers putting up a job on us," remarked Harry, "just as a blind."

"It might be any old thing, but it isn't," growled Pete. "It is just the Three Brothers signaling."

He hurried back to the house, and a moment later was burning a Bengal light on the beach.

To some of our readers this may seem a bold way for smugglers to work.

Such must understand the nature of the place where the hut stood.

The nearest human habitation was Long Beach Hotel, three miles distant, and now closed.

Behind lay the salt marshes; it was five miles across to the Valley Stream road.

On the right was the inlet with the Rockaways beyond.

It was as isolated a spot as one could find within a hundred miles of New York.

The signal of the burning Bengal was promptly answered by one from the ship.

"It's all right," said Pete, "and now, Tom Rexford, it is up to you to do the rest."

"I am ready," replied Harry. "Shall I start now?"

"Right now. Remember all depends upon you dodging the tug and coming back here."

"I see. I won't forget."

"Hold on before you push the boat off. You want the password, I suppose. You won't get the hop without it."

"Oh, sure."

"Hooray for the Marquis of Mott Street."

"Is that it?"

"Yair."

"Don't I get any password back?"

"What do you want one back for? You get the hop back—that's what we want."

"Right. I'm off now."

"Hold on a second. I kind of hate to have you go."

"Why?"

"Suppose—suppose—"

"Well, suppose what?"

"Suppose you should meet the dead one out there."

"No chance."

"I guess not. I wouldn't go out there for a thousand dollars, all the same. Say, if anything goes wrong and you don't find me here when you get back, come on to New York and inquire for Canton Eddie, at Panhandler's Hall. He'll tell you where I hang out."

"All right," thought Harry. "If all goes well with me I shall certainly inquire. You may be very sure of that."

With the help of Pete Crotty he pushed off then, and throwing out his oars, pulled the boat down the creek.

"Good luck!" shouted Pete. "Wish I had a horseshoe to fire at you."

"So-long!" Harry called back. "See you later, old man!"

In a minute he was out on the ocean.

CHAPTER VIII.

HARRY DOUBLES ON THE HOP SMUGGLERS.

If Pete Crotty had not been full of whisky and opium his suspicions would certainly have been aroused by the masterly manner in which Harry pulled the boat.

When it comes to rowing Young King Brady knows his business.

Not only on the Atlantic, but on the Pacific he has had much practice in that line.

And so Harry pulled steadily out to sea.

As yet he could not see the ship, but he had noted carefully the point where the blue light had been displayed, and he made as near a straight course for that as he could.

Pete still stood on the shore of the creek watching him.

After a little he walked down on the beach, and waving his hat to Harry, stooped down upon the sand.

In a moment another Bengal light flashed up.

Harry turned his head and soon saw the answering signal from the ship.

And now he could make her out.

She was a big four-masted schooner.

All sails were furled. The captain was evidently doing his best to hold his position.

After that Harry did not lose sight of her

In a few minutes, getting further out, he caught sight of a tug hovering beyond the ship in the direction of the big hotel.

"That's my boat," thought Harry. "For better or worse I'm going in her. Wonder if I shall have any trouble with them on board?"

But if trouble was in store for him on the tug Harry certainly had none in accomplishing his mission.

To be sure it was hard pulling, and he felt that if the blow had continued it would probably have been impossible for him to reach the schooner.

At last he came up alongside.

For some time now men on board had been watching his approach.

Harry, who kept looking around to make sure of his course, had singled out as the captain a large man with a big beard who wrapped in a long coat paced the deck.

He was probably right, for as he came up alongside this man shouted:

"Throw him a line!"

The line came and Harry made fast.

"Well, boy, what's the word?" called the big man, looking over the side.

"My word is 'Hooray for the Marquis of Mott Street!' " cried Young King Brady.

"Right," said the man. "Just stay as you are."

Harry waited about five minutes, drifting with the schooner.

One of the sailors looked over the side, and asked him how the November elections had gone in New York.

Harry was explaining when the big man returned with a bale done up in gunny cloth.

Although the bale was not very large, it appeared to be quite heavy.

The man lowered it over the side, saying as he did so:

"You understand that you are to keep a sharp watch out on that thing, my lad. There is big value there."

"I understand," replied Harry, stowing the bale away forward. "This is all?"

"That's all."

"Good-night!"

"Good-night!" called the captain, and casting off, Young King Brady pulled away.

He was too far from the beach now to see Pete Crotty. Indeed, he could not even make out the hut.

But the tug was distinctly visible, and Harry could see that it was moving his way.

The deep voice of the captain could now be heard ordering the sails set.

Harry turned toward the tug and pulled with vigorous strokes, watching the big sails as they went up.

In a few minutes the schooner was forging ahead toward the lower bay.

The tug now came rapidly forward.

"I'd like to see Pete just about now," thought Harry. "I'll bet he's hopping mad!"

Now Harry began to feel nervous about his reception on board the tug.

But there was no need.

Soon he was up with it.

"What's the word?" shouted the man at the wheel.

Harry could make out the name Indian on the pilot-house.

It was a tug he had often seen before.

"What's the word with you, brother?" answered Harry. not certain just what he ought to say.

He seemed to have hit it all right, though.

"My word is 'Hooray for the Marquis!' " cried the man. "What's yours?"

"My word is the whole thing. 'Hooray for the Marquis of Mott street!' " answered Harry.

"Right," said the man. "You understand that you are to come on board?"

"Yes."

"Bill, throw the boy a line!"

The line came over the side, and Harry made fast.

The bale of opium was then hoisted on board, and Harry followed it.

"Cast off the boat!" shouted the man in the pilot-house.

It was done, and in a moment Harry found himself with his bale in the little cabin on his way to New York.

"I wonder if this fellow has anything to do with the killing—if he knows what my fate is supposed to be?" Harry asked himself, as the tug forged ahead past Far Rock-away.

He was soon to have that question answered for him.

Everything seemed to be coming Harry's way that trip.

It was while they were off Coney Island that the man came into the cabin.

He was a rough-looking proposition, but there was a kindly look in his eyes as he seated himself at the table opposite Young King Brady.

"Say, bub, have a smoke," he said, producing cigars.

Harry accepted the weed and thanked him.

He assumed that this was the tug captain, but he made up his mind to do as little talking as possible.

The captain looked him all over and then suddenly broke out with:

"How's Pete?"

"He was well when I left him," replied Harry.

"And Charley—was he there, too?"

"Yes, but he went away."

"Did, eh? Say, bub, who else have you seen?"

"Nobody else."

"You came from where?"

"Cincinnati."

"Did, eh? You answered that advertisement of Taylor & Co.?"

"Yes."

The captain chewed on the end of his cigar for a moment and then said:

"You know what's in that there bale?"

"Yes; they told me."

"Did they? And they told you that I was to tell you the rest?"

"Yes."

"Was yer skeared when you got doped?"

"Yes, I was. I didn't know that I was going up against anything like that."

"S'pose not. You was looking for your two hundred a month."

"Yes."

"Say, bub, you're a bright looking chap, and—and—say, if I was to give you a dead open and shut steer for your own good will you swear to do just what I say?"

"Yes, sir. I will."

"And I tell you why I do it. You are a good-looking

young chap. You're just about the age of my boy. I—I—er—I've taken a fancy to you, and don't want to see you get yourself into trouble. Understand?"

"Why, is there a chance of that, sir?"

"A chance! Yes. It's a dead certainty, in fact. I hope I can trust you. I'm running a big risk talking to you like I do."

Harry assured the captain most earnestly that he would never betray him.

"If you do, boy, I'll follow you to the end of the earth, but I'll have your life," said the captain fiercely. "I'm going to stand your friend, and I'm doing it at an almighty big risk, but it hain't nothing to the risk you'll run if you go back on me."

Again Harry gave the captain the assurance that he could be trusted.

"Well, then, here's your steer," said the captain. "When we get to New York you take that there bale, which I shall fix up in a little different shape from what it's in now, and go where I tell you—see?"

"Yes, sir."

"When you get there you will find out that it is the same Chink laundry what you was in before, only you may not recognize it from the outside—see?"

"Yes, sir. I'm following you," Harry replied.

Never was there anyone slower to get to the point than this man, but Young King Brady was assured that his intentions were kindly.

He was to know how kind the man really meant to be a moment later.

"Mebbe you've been told to go in there with your bale, and that then you'll get your two hundred," continued the captain.

"Yes, sir; that was it."

"Just as I thought. Well, let me tell you the truth. You won't get your two hundred; you'll get it in the neck, same as other fellers have before you. I hain't going to stand for no more of it. I'm giving you the steer. You just open the door, dump your bale in, and run for your life. Don't you never come back no more, and don't you never open your mouth about what has happened to you. The very best thing that you can do is to slope just as quick as ever you can out of New York. Get back where you belong, and lose yourself—see?"

"I'm sure I thank you for the steer," said Harry, "but when you talk about getting back to Cincinnati, it's something easier said than done."

"What! What!" cried the captain. "Are you thinking of going to the police? If you squeal you're as good as dead!"

"I don't mean that at all, cap. You've got my promise. I never go back on my word."

"Then what do you mean?"

"It's a long walk to Cincinnati."

"Humph! What's the fare?"

"About twenty-five will take me through."

The captain pulled out a roll of bills, from which he detached two tens and a five, and handed them over to Harry.

"There," he exclaimed. "That'll take you home again. Git there and see to it that you don't answer no more ads of Taylor & Co."

That this all came from the man's kindness of heart Harry felt well assured.

"You have probably saved yourself some trouble, my friend," he thought. "When the Governor and I come to sum up we will leave you out of our calculations, which would not have been otherwise done."

As for the rest of Harry's adventures in the opium smuggling line, they may be briefly told.

The Indian ran on to Gravesend Bay, where the anchor was dropped and there they lay until just about daylight.

Then again getting under way, Harry, who had fallen asleep, was awakened by the captain.

The bale had now been wrapped around with a lot of soiled clothing carelessly covered with newspaper which had been broken in places, showing the clothes within.

The tug ran up the North River and tied up at the wharf at the foot of the street on which the old distillery was located.

Harry then took his bundle and went ashore, having bid his friend, the captain, an affectionate farewell.

He felt certain that he was being followed, but he did not dare to look around.

"It will be impossible for me to give them the slip altogether, and I shan't try it," he said to himself.

He walked on, staggering under his heavy load, until he reached the corner of West street, and then set the bale down on the sidewalk and looked back.

It was just as he had supposed.

There stood the captain at the head of the wharf.

He motioned to Harry to go up the street, but instead Young King Brady picked up his bundle and made a bolt into the Susquehanna Hotel.

Mr. Martin himself was behind the desk.

With the exception of the sleepy porter there was nobody else in the room.

"You!" cried the landlord, throwing up his hands. "For goodness sake! Where have you been? What have you got there?"

"No matter!" replied Harry! "here I am. Where is Old King Brady? Gone, I suppose."

"Long ago! Then they didn't kill you?"

"No; as you see, I'm very much alive. Mr. Martin, have a cab called at once. I'll tell you all about this later on."

And Harry never had a more difficult task than he had then to restrain the landlord's curiosity; but he would tell nothing, and twenty minutes later he rode off in his cab.

When he looked down the wharf he saw that the Indian had gone.

"There's one man who is sorry he attempted to do another a kindness," he thought. "Of course he will notify the Marquis. That can't be helped; all the same I think we will get him in the end."

Harry went directly to Washington Square, where he and Old King Brady keep bachelors' hall together.

Here he hoped to find his partner, but early as was the hour, Old King Brady had already departed.

So Harry stowed away his bale and sat down to a comfortable breakfast, well satisfied with the outcome of his adventures in the opium smuggling line.

CHAPTER IX.

LYING BACK FOR A SPRING.

"Say, Brady, don't pull me in. I'll do anything you say."

It was that notorious panhandler, "Canton Eddie," who spoke, and he made the appeal with the typical beggar's whine.

"What are you doing with that boy?" demanded Old King Brady, fiercely. "Look out, there! If you take to your heels, my lad, it will be all day with Eddie!"

The boy had started to run, but he returned now at a sign from his "watcher."

Meanwhile the detective kept a firm grip on Eddie's shoulder, from which he did not try to disengage himself.

"Am I arrested?" whined the panhandler. "This hain't in your line, Mr. Brady."

He leered at the old detective and added:

"Mebbe it's only pointers you want? If dat's it, count on me every time."

"That's what," replied Old King Brady. "I see you are as sharp as ever, Eddie."

"I thought so. Well, what's doing?"

"Nothing on the street. Where's your hangout, Panhandlers' Hall?"

"Yair. Me and dat kid is roomin' togedder dere."

"Did you paint a bug on that boy's arm?" demanded the detective.

And by this question, be it understood, Old King Brady meant a fake sore.

He was using the vernacular of the panhandling fraternity, which he very well understood.

"Yair," replied Eddie; "dat's right."

"Who is the kid?"

"We call him Red Mike. I don't know as he has any other name, have you, Mike? Tell Mr. Brady de trute."

"Me name is Mike Scanlon," whined the boy. "Say, is wese pinched?"

"No," replied Old King Brady, "not only that, but I'll make this night's work pay you better than panhandling if you two will do as I say."

"Right," replied Eddie. "Boss, give us de word."

"Get to your room, both of you. Order some supper for that kid and I'll pay. I'll be with you in a little while, but don't you try to double on me or I'll make it hot for you both."

"Bank on me," said Eddie, and while he and the boy hurried off in one direction, Old King Brady took another.

He ran the risk of losing them, of course; still, he had little fear of that.

Returning to his office, Old King Brady now rigged himself out in such shape as to present a most excellent imitation of a panhandler.

No one suspected that he was anything else, when a little later he came shuffling up to the bar of Panhandlers' Hall with a patch over his left eye and his right arm in a dirty sling.

But the bartender looked curiously at him as a newcomer.

"I want to see Canton Eddie," whispered Old King Brady in a hoarse voice. "Say, he's expectin' me."

"Dat's right," replied "de barkeep," with a grin. "Eddie told me to look out for you."

"Which way do I go?"

"Trou dat door an' up two flights. You'll find Eddie in No. 102."

And Old King Brady shuffled on upstairs.

He easily found the room, and Canton Eddie opened the door in person in response to his knock.

There was the remains of a supper on a tray which rested on the floor in one corner.

Red Mike was in bed and sound asleep.

Eddie was smoking some abominable cigarettes, and the air of the closed-up little room fairly reeked with their stench.

"Say, Mr. Brady, yer immense!" cried Eddie, admiringly. "It beats de band how you do manage to get yourself up."

"Yes, and I suppose you would like to paint a bug on my arm right now," retorted the detective, removing his eyepatch and throwing aside the sling.

"But come, Eddie, this won't do," he added. "Open your window at the top and let in a little fresh air. Never mind the cold, man; you can put on your hat. I shall suffocate in here."

The panhandler obeyed and Old King Brady then got down to business.

"What do you know about the Marquis of Mott Street?" he demanded, abruptly.

Eddie gave a start.

"So dat's your lay?" he exclaimed.

"That's my lay."

"It's dangerous business, Mr. Brady.

"For you or for me?"

"For us both."

"The Marquis is back in town?"

"I understand he is."

"Be definite, Eddie, if you want to make a stake out of this."

"What'll the stake be?"

"Twenty-five."

"It's wurt fifty."

"You don't get it, but you will get it in the neck if you don't do it for twenty-five. I'll give you away to the Gerry Society about that boy."

"Say, I treats de kid well, Mr. Brady; don't spoil me lay."

"Look out! I'm not here to talk long. You know me and you know that I know you."

"Well, den, de Marquis is here. He come back from China more'n a year ago. He keeps himself disguised as a Chink now, and he can talk Chink talk. He's married to Annie Ryan, and dey lives in Mott street up near Pell. Dat's every blessed ting I know."

"Don't you know what the Marquis is driving at?"

Eddie shrugged his shoulders.

"How should I?" he replied. "I didn't never work wid him. He's away above me. He hain't in my class at all."

"Don't you know what he's driving at?" repeated the old detective, emphatically.

"Well, I s'pose it's de old lay."

"Hop smuggling?"

"Yair."

"Do you know this?"

"Honest I don't. De man never speaks to me. He passes as a Chink, and he won't answer any of his old pals when dey try to touch him."

"What name does he go under?"

"Hip Duck."

"Does he smoke in the joints?"

"Never. He's livin' as close as anything you can imagine."

And this was the sum of Canton Eddie's information.

After some further questioning Old King Brady became satisfied that the man knew no more.

"Now, then, you'll come and point out the house where the Marquis lives, Eddie," he said. "After that you get your twenty-five."

Eddie took him up Mott street and pointed out the very house in which the laundryman had disappeared.

And then Old King Brady knew that his two cases had merged into one, and that he was hot on the trail of the Marquis of Mott Street.

Giving Canton Eddie his twenty-five dollars, he parted with the panhandler and returned home.

"If they have done up Harry it is too late now," he thought; "but something tells me that they haven't. I'll wait over one day in the hope of hearing from him. If no word comes then it will be time to make a move."

And, following out this resolve, Old King Brady lay back on his oars during the succeeding day.

He arose early on the following morning and hurried down to the office.

But there, much to his disappointment, he found no word from his partner.

"There's nothing for it but to arrest the Marquis," thought the old detective, and this he determined to do, and undoubtedly would have done so if it had not happened that just one hour later the office door opened and in walked Young King Brady as large as life.

"Good boy, Harry!" cried Old King Brady, springing

up to greet him. "Where in the world did you spring from? Well, well!"

"I'm right here, Governor," replied Harry, triumphantly.

"But where have you been?"

"On an opium smuggling expedition. I have been working for the great opium syndicate, headed by the Marquis of Mott Street."

"Oh, indeed!"

"Yes, indeed. Lucky thing for you that you took up with the hotel case. It has run right into the other. There hasn't been a minute lost."

"I know that, so far as my own case is concerned, and I'm glad to hear that it is true with yours."

"Oh, it is! I'm dead onto the whole racket."

"You were carried off out of that room?"

"On the contrary, I went off of my own accord."

"With whom?"

"With one who will never help along the disappearance act in room No. 13 again."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"I mean that the fellow who enticed me away is dead."

"Dead!"

"Yes. He was murdered right before my eyes."

"Well, well! But tell me all about it, boy."

Harry then proceeded to tell his story.

That the old detective listened with intense interest need scarcely be said.

"Heavens! What a narrow escape you have had!" he exclaimed, "and do you really mean to say that you have got five thousand dollars' worth of opium up at the house?"

"I've got a lot of opium and a lot of dirty clothes, Governor. What it's worth I wouldn't undertake to say, but there's one thing, you'll have to jump in mighty quick if you expect to catch the Marquis of Mott Street and this man Crotty. They'll get warning from the captain of the tug, sure."

"I don't know about that."

"Then let me tell you that you can bank on it."

"Harry, go slow! That captain through his soft-heartedness in trying to help you has lost this valuable shipment of opium. Is he going to face the Marquis? More likely he will go on the run."

"That depends upon whether he owns his tug or not."

"There isn't one chance in a thousand that he does."

"And what do you advise, Governor?" asked Harry, then.

Old King Brady rose and paced the floor for some moments before making a reply.

"My idea is to let the matter rest for a month and lull these people to sleep," he then said.

"It's a long wait."

"I know; but as matters now stand their suspicions must be all aroused. Possibly the Marquis has already gone on the run. He may even be on his way to Frisco. When Charley Carver don't turn up there'll be more trouble. Pete Crotty of course will have his yarn to tell when he and the Marquis next meet, which they are bound to do sooner

or later. Taken all in all, I think it best to wait until all this blows over. Meanwhile we will watch out, of course."

"And the secret service people?"

"I shall report to them that I am gathering evidence and making good headway. I shall advise delay."

And as there was no appeal from Old King Brady's decision it was so; not one month, but two passed before in the matter of the Opium Syndicate the Bradys made their next move.

CHAPTER X.

TWO MONTHS LATER.

The next events in the Opium Syndicate began with a conversation held between the two detectives one afternoon in their office on Park Row.

Old King Brady had just returned from Washington, whither he had been on Secret Service business.

It had been a two weeks' absence, and after they had conversed for a while on the particular business which interested them at the time, Old King Brady turned to Harry and said

"Well, and what have you done in the matter of the Marquis of Mott street?"

"He's back again, Governor," replied Harry.

"Ha! You are sure?"

"Yes. Just as you suspected, he jumped the town the very day I got back with the opium. Yesterday he returned."

"And how did you learn this?"

Harry looked wise.

"From the best source possible," he replied. "From his wife, Annie Ryan, as she was formerly known in Chinatown."

"Ha! Have you been getting next there?"

"Not exactly—yes, and no. I have seen her and talked with her. She suspects me, however."

"Of being a detective?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"She told me to my face."

"Where did you meet her?"

"In Wing Toy's hop joint. I've been pretending to smoke there off and on for the past two weeks in the hope of getting this very chance."

"Who introduced you?"

"Introduced myself. A young Chink I know pointed the woman out to me."

"I understand that she fled with the Marquis."

"So she did, but she came back ahead of him to spy out the land."

"I see. How did you tackle her? On what ground, I mean?"

"Well, it was like this, Governor. I turned on her suddenly and began to talk. Of course, after what Pete Crotty

had told me I was eager to show a whole lot of knowledge about the opium syndicate, and I——”

“Pardon me for interrupting you, but have you seen Pete?”

“Not a trace of the fellow can I find.”

“All right. Go on.”

“Well, you see, I asked Annie to put me next to the Marquis. I pretended to be a come-on from Chicago. I wanted a chance to handle some of the hop.”

“And she agreed to help you?”

“She did at first. She told me that her husband was in town; then suddenly she turned on me and said that she believed I was a detective.”

“And you?”

“Laughed at her and tried to turn her away from the idea. We parted good friends.”

“I am inclined to think that it would have been better if you had left her alone. Still, I’m not kicking. We will take right hold of the case now.”

“What’s your plan, or haven’t you got any?”

“Yes, I have formed a plan. I think I shall try to sell our hop to the Marquis of Mott Street.”

“Talk about bold games, if that isn’t one of the boldest! Governor, it will never work.”

“What’s the reason it won’t?”

“Why, he will surely see through your disguise. Do you forget that you once put that man away?”

“Not at all. I don’t intend to disguise. I intend to deal with him in the open. Now, see here, Harry, we want to do more than get the Marquis of Mott Street. We want to nab the whole syndicate, and in order to do this we must get a list of its members.”

“The man will never believe that Old King Brady has gone crooked.”

“Pshaw! You don’t know crooks yet, it appears. When a man turns crook he soon comes to believe that everybody else is crooked. That it is so with the Marquis of Mott Street I would be willing to wager. However, we shall see.”

“And what is to be done? Do we get right at it?”

“Yes. Go to Chinatown again to-night, make the rounds of every opium joint and see if you can’t locate this Pete Crotty.”

“He’ll kill me if he catches me, sure.”

“Don’t you believe it. Bluff him. By the way, did you inquire of Canton Eddie about him, as he told you to do?”

“Never got the chance. Eddie quit Panhandlers’ Hall right away after you put the Sisters onto that boy Red Mike, and they took him away. I don’t think he is in town now. Anyhow, if he is I can’t locate him.”

“Try it again.”

“All right. Whatever you say goes.”

“I think I will tackle the Marquis to-night. I shall do it in the open, and of course run no risk. I will tell you to-night how I succeed.”

And, following out his plan that evening, Old King Brady paid another visit to Chinatown.

This time he went directly to the house on Mott street to which he had shadowed the laundryman and rapped on the first door he came to.

It was at once opened by a young Chinaman, who started when he saw the detective, who, even among the Chinese, is very generally known.

“What want?” he demanded, holding the door on the crack.

“Hip Duck,” said Old King Brady.

“Me no sabee Hip Duck.”

“Come, John, come, John! You sabee me?”

“You.”

“Well, who am I?”

“You Ole Kling Blady.”

“Right. Then you want to get a move on right away and sabee Hip Duck. I don’t come to arrest him. I come as a friend.”

The Chinaman then slammed the door in the detective’s face and the key was heard to turn in the lock.

Old King Brady waited at least ten minutes in the hall.

Twice the door at the lower end of the passage opened slightly and somebody peered out.

At last the other door opened and the Chinaman showed his face again.

“You no go way let?” he cried, angrily.

“No, John. I no go away. I stay here all night, or till I see Hip Duck. You tell him Old King Brady wants to see him—he will understand.”

Again the door slammed.

“The Marquis is here, all right. I must be patient,” Old King Brady muttered.

He pulled out a cigar and just had it well going when the rear door opened and a tall young woman with a shawl over her head came into the passage.

“You are Old King Brady, the detective?” she demanded, as she came sailing up the hall.

“Yes, Missus.”

“Who is it you want to see?”

“Hip Duck.”

“There is no such person in this house.”

“Pardon me, but I know better. He has other names. Yours, by the way, is, or was, Annie Ryan.”

The woman tossed her head scornfully.

“What of that? Who denies it?” she said. “Every detective around Chinkville knows me.”

“But they don’t all know that you are married to John Dillon, alias Hip Duck, alias the Marquis of Mott Street.”

“You put my husband away once, Brady.”

“Yes; but I don’t want to do it again. You go and tell him so. You go and tell him that this is straight goods with me. Tell him I have a proposition to put to him that there is big money in, and that he needn’t be afraid of me. Tell him that I have known for months that he was back here disguised as a Chinaman. Tell him there is nothing laid up against him, and that if he knows when he is well off he will see me.”

Annie eyed the detective for a few moments in silence.

Then, suddenly turning her back upon him, she retreated into the room.

Still the patient detective waited.

It was fully fifteen minutes before there was anything doing, and then the Chinaman appeared again.

"You comee in," he said, beckoning. "Now, you see Hip Duck."

Confident that there could be no danger so long as he had been publicly seen in his usual dress, Old King Brady followed the Chinaman into the room.

It was well furnished, after the manner of the richer Chinese.

A narrow counter ran across one corner and behind it was a big safe, while on the wall was a Chinese sign of many gilt characters extending from floor to ceiling.

Plainly some regular business was carried on here.

Out of this room the Chinaman passed into another, which was sumptuously furnished in a style half Chinese and half American.

In one corner of this room a winding iron staircase had been built so that one could go to the rooms above without passing into the hall.

"Plenty of cash in this shop," thought Old King Brady, as he followed the Chinaman up the stairs.

Here he found himself in a bedroom furnished in the same style.

The fittings were rich and costly.

The place was lighted by several paper lanterns carrying lamps inside which produced a decidedly oriental effect.

There was no one present but the woman, who motioned Old King Brady to a chair, the Chinaman at the same time retreating down the stairs.

"Well, do I see your husband, Missus?" asked the old detective.

"Yes, in a minute," was the reply.

"You have fine quarters here."

"Yes."

"It has been a beautiful day."

"Don't try to talk to me, old man. I won't stand for it," the woman cried.

"Ha! I see. Very well. I shall not try."

"You are trying now. If my husband had followed my advice he wouldn't see you, not if you stopped downstairs in the hall all night."

"But in this case I didn't choose to follow your advice, my dear," spoke a deep voice behind a heavy portiere which separated this room from the one beyond.

The curtain was thrown aside and a tall man entered, advancing toward Old King Brady with outstretched hand.

He was to all appearance a Chinaman, and yet Old King Brady was able to recognize his former acquaintance, Jack Dillon, alias the Marquis of Mott Street.

The man wore the Chinese dress even to a false pigtail which hung down from his shaven head.

Naturally of very dark complexion, with little black eyes set under drooping almond-shaped lids, the deception was rendered more complete.

Nature had done much toward aiding the "Marquis" to transform himself into a Chinaman and fancy had done the rest.

Old King Brady and the Marquis shook hands like old friends.

"Brady," said the latter, seating himself opposite the detective, "I won't say I am glad to see you, although there are others who I should care to see less. I am curious, however, to know why you are so anxious to see me."

The Marquis spoke like a man of education, as indeed he must have been.

At the time of his arrest, years before Old King Brady had recognized that fact and had tried to learn something of the man's early history, but in vain.

"Jack, you and I are old acquaintances," replied Old King Brady. "Why shouldn't I look you up when I want a favor which happens to be in your line?"

"Well, you put me away, old man."

"Through me you got a shorter sentence than you otherwise would have received."

"I know that. But never mind the past. What is it you want?"

Old King Brady glanced at Annie, saying at the same time:

"Jack, you make a splendid Chink; there isn't one person in a thousand who could tell you from the real thing."

The Marquis chuckled, evidently flattered.

"And why not?" he said. "I lived for years in China. Here it is the fashion to despise the Chinks, but I have found better friends among them than I ever did among white people, let me tell you. I call myself a Chink now, and I mean to remain one until I die."

As he said this the Marquis turned to Annie and made a sign for her to leave the room.

The woman immediately passed behind the portiere.

At last Old King Brady had come up with the Marquis of Mott Street, but that he was being spied upon, and that every word he was about to speak would be overheard and carefully noted, he felt well assured.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW HARRY STUMBLED INTO LUCK.

Harry had rather a startling adventure that evening which must now be related, as it was destined to have a very important bearing on the case of the Opium Syndicate.

Young King Brady started out upon his trip to Chinatown without much hope.

Personally, Harry had never seen Canton Eddie, so he had only Old King Brady's description of the panhandler to go by.

As for Pete Crotty, Harry had given him up long ago.

He felt satisfied that the opium smuggler had jumped the town.

There seemed to be no other way than to make the rounds of the opium joints, and Harry started in to do this.

Where he was acquainted he inquired for Canton Eddie by name; in other places he merely kept his eyes open watching and listening.

Several times he passed the old red brick house on Mott street.

Each time he looked at it curiously, wondering how Old King Brady was making out.

The last joint Harry called at was the notorious Hop Toy's.

As the detective was in his usual dress and known to the proprietors of all the joints, it was useless to waste time in pretending to smoke.

All Harry did was to carefully scan the countenances of the smokers in the bunks where he was not acquainted, and to talk a little where he was.

At Hop Toy's he merely spoke a few words to the proprietor, looked over the smokers and was about to withdraw when two men who had evidently been hitting the hop pretty freely came out of the private room.

Instantly Harry recognized one of them as the captain of the tugboat Indian. The other was apparently a Chinaman, the tallest specimen of his race Harry had ever met excepting a giant whom he had once seen in a dime museum.

As the men brushed past him the Chinaman said in perfect English:

"I tell you, Cap, I know my business. Pete's in town, and there must be something doing, for——"

He looked up and caught Harry's eye upon him.

Immediately he ceased talking and hurried the captain toward the door.

Young King Brady passed out after them.

He could hear his own heart beat, he was so excited.

"Of course they were talking about Pete Crotty," he said to himself. "Did the captain know me? I think not; as for the other——"

Harry cut his own sentence short.

"No Chinaman ever spoke English like that!" he thought. "That man isn't a Chinaman. He simply can't be. He is in disguise."

He was on Pell street now and the two men were walking slowly ahead of him.

Harry slid over to the other side of the street.

"What if my disguised man should be the Marquis of Mott Street!" suddenly popped into Harry's head.

The idea grew with him, for he remembered what Canton Eddie had told Old King Brady.

The men appeared to be in no hurry.

Once they looked back.

Harry was peering in at the window of a Chinese bric-a-brac store then.

They moved on, Harry still shadowing.

Had Old King Brady already seen the Marquis, if this was the Marquis?

It was all guesswork.

Young King Brady did not know what to do.

Still watching, he saw the two suddenly slide in at the doorway of a ruinous old frame house, about the last of its kind on Pell street.

Nearly all the houses on that narrow thoroughfare were of that sort when the Chinese first came, away back in the '70's.

Actually these Mongolian invaders have improved Mott and Pell streets in spite of what people say.

Harry again crossed the street and took a survey of the house.

He perceived at once that it was condemned property.

With the exception of the store on the ground floor it appeared to be unoccupied.

There could be no doubt that the owners were about to pull it down.

"And why have they gone in there?" thought Harry.

He could only keep guessing, of course.

Slipping into a doorway, he stood watching for a few minutes, but the two men did not reappear.

Harry now began to put this and that together as he stood looking around.

"Surely that house is in the rear of the house where the Marquis is supposed to live," he thought. "I must prove that. Whatever they are up to it isn't likely I can catch onto it to-night. Queer, though, the captain should have turned up again."

Of course, Old King Brady had taken the opportunity to investigate the tug captain a bit during the two months of waiting.

That is, he started in to do so, but he only got one step forward, for he at once discovered that the captain, whose name we don't care to mention, had thrown up his job and left town.

Restless beyond all telling, Harry now felt that he just could not stand there any longer waiting for the pair to come out, so he went around on Mott street carefully measuring distances.

It was as he suspected.

The house of the Marquis was immediately in the rear of the old wreck on Pell street.

"I shall not see them again to-night," thought Young King Brady. "Well, I must go ahead with my work."

He returned to Pell street and entered the side door of the old house.

It is the Bradys' iron rule in a case like this to follow up each clew as it offers itself.

Harry now groped his way up the narrow stairs.

There was not a ray of light anywhere.

To all appearance the upper part of the house was entirely unoccupied.

Young King Brady ventured to use his little electric dark-lantern and went into each room on the second floor,

carefully shielding the light so that it would not be seen on the street.

The rooms were not only untenanted, but reeked with dirt and filth.

"This is a harboring place for tramps of the lowest description," thought Harry.

He looked out of the rear window, which did not contain a single unbroken pane of glass.

There was a short backyard and beyond was an extension connected with the Mott street house.

Here the windows were all lit up, but they were hung with heavy curtains.

There was nothing to be discovered in the Marquis' house from this point of observation.

Looking down, Harry saw that the three lower windows of the extension opened on the yard of the house where he was.

There was no fence.

It would be the easiest thing in the world for anyone to reach the Mott street house this way.

"That's where they went," thought Young King Brady; "there is probably nothing for me in this joint; all the same I may as well take in the floor above."

He ascended the last flight of stairs now, and as he did so smelled smoke.

"Heavens! There is surely fire somewhere here," he thought.

Flashing the lantern about, he caught sight of a thin line of smoke curling through the keyhole of the door of the back room.

He jumped to the door and found it fast.

The smoke seemed to be on the increase.

Harry shook the knob and pounded on the door, but got no response.

"This won't do!" he thought. "Something has got to give!"

Up went Young King Brady's foot and in went the door.

Then Harry knew that he had not acted one instant too soon.

Stretched upon a dirty bed lay a man in a profound slumber with an opium layout resting upon an old chair by his side.

From under the bed smoke was pouring, dense and suffocating.

Harry paused only to throw up the window and close the door, and then kicking away the chair, he seized the sleeper, and, shaking him roughly, shouted:

"Up! Up! This place is on fire! Wake up, man, and save yourself!"

The wretched victim of opium aroused then.

"Wha—what's the matter?" he gasped, staggering to his feet.

"Pete Crotty!" cried Harry.

Suddenly recognizing the man, for once Young King Brady had been thrown off his guard.

"Well, that's me! Who in thunder are you?" retorted Pete, coughing and choking.

"Help me put this fire out!" cried Young King Brady, "then we'll talk!"

Pete, thoroughly aroused now, jumped for a pitcher of water which stood beside an old washstand, while Harry dragged the bed away.

Beneath it was a lot of old clothes, which now that the air struck them, began burning briskly.

Pete was about to dash the water upon them, but Harry snatched the pitcher from his hand.

"We must go slow with this," he said. "Here, let me do the work!"

He sprinkled the water over the burning mass, both stamping out the fire at the same time.

In a moment they had extinguished it.

Stooping down then, Harry picked up an opium lamp which stood among the burned rags.

"That's what did the business!" he cried.

Pete's bleary eyes grew big.

"Did you put that there?" he shouted. "Come, I know you now, Tom Rexford! Were you trying to burn me to death?"

He made a spring for Young King Brady then and there might have been trouble, but Harry was too quick on the draw for that.

Instantly he covered Pete with his revolver, exclaiming: "None of that! Instead of trying to kill you, Pete Crotty, I have saved your life! Who put that lamp under the bed among those clothes? I can't tell you, but it wasn't me."

Pete dropped upon the bed.

"And you are a detective!" he gasped, for Harry had displayed his shield.

"I am. Luckily for you."

"That's what the Marquis said. Oh, my head! My head!"

The man was shaking with nervousness.

He was but a wreck of his former self.

"When did you see the Marquis?" demanded Harry.

"I won't tell you."

"But you must. Look here, Pete, I'm not going back on you."

"You did before, then."

"That was in the line of my business and could not be helped. What happened in the hut that day I have never told to a living soul except to my partner, and he will never tell it. We are gunning for the Marquis of Mott Street—not for you."

"Are you Young King Brady?"

"I own that I am."

"So he said."

"The Marquis?"

"Yes."

"Do you consider him your friend?"

"No, no, no! My worst enemy. He has turned me down in every way. He has even threatened to kill me, and he will do it, too."

"Then listen to me. It was he who put the lamp under that bed, unless you did it yourself."

"I—never! I left it on the chair when I went to sleep. What do you mean?"

"Is the Marquis a tall man disguised as a Chink?"

"Yes."

"Then just such a man, along with the captain of the Indian, came into this house only a few minutes ago."

"You don't say!"

"Yes, I saw them. Did you leave your door unlocked?"

"I—I don't know. I don't think so."

"Did he know you were here?"

"Oh, yes; he got me this room."

"Where is the key to the door? It is missing. It was those two who lighted the fire under your bed and locked you in here to be roasted to death. Pete, you have been trying to blackmail that man!"

"Well!"

"Own up if you want my help."

"Then yes. I have threatened to give him away unless he comes down with the dough."

"As I thought. What do you want?"

"What do you mean?"

"How much money are you striking for?"

"I only asked him for a hundred to pay my way back to Scotland, where I belong. I am a dying man, and I want to die at home."

"I'll give you that much, Pete, and home you shall go if you will turn the Marquis into my hands."

"And—and——"

"You are thinking of what happened in the hut?"

"Yes."

"It shall never be brought up against you."

"Right. Then I'll go yer. What am I to do?"

"Come with me."

"Where?"

"To my house."

"Shall I see Old King Brady?"

"Yes, but he won't bite you. Come!"

"Oh, I can't; I can't. Let me stop here."

"To be murdered by the Marquis? Don't be a fool."

"But there's another reason."

"I know. You want your hop. Well, you shall take your layout along and I'll supply the hop. You shan't be interfered with in your smoke."

"I'll go yer!" cried Pete, brightening up then. "Say, after all, it was lucky you came. I'd give anything in this world to put the Marquis of Mott Street behind the bars."

Ten minutes later and Young King Brady stole out of that wreck of a house, followed by the wreck of a man.

Pete was almost too weak to walk, so Harry engaged a cab in Chatham Square, and they were whirled away to Washington Square.

But when they entered Old King Brady's house they found that the old detective had not returned.

And that night the wretched opium fiend slept in luxury, filled to the brim with his favorite dope.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

It was after Old King Brady's interview with the Marquis of Mott Street that Harry saw him at Hop Toy's opium joint with the captain of the Indian.

For Harry had made no wrong guess when he penetrated the disguise of the pretended Chinaman.

Left alone with his man, Old King Brady came to the point at once.

"Jack," he said, "I want your help, and I don't think you will refuse me. It's a simple matter. I've got a big lot of hop left on my hands, and I want to sell it. Do you know anyone who will buy?"

"No; how should I? I'm not in the hop business now."

"I'm not asking you your business, but of course you know about the hop trade, all right."

"How did you get this lot?"

"It was captured by a secret service man named Munford about two months ago. He is dead now, poor fellow. He brought this stuff to me four weeks ago and asked me to hold it. He was a sick man then; he died soon after. Just before his death he sent to me and made me swear to dispose of the hop for the benefit of his wife and children."

"Come, Brady, what are you giving us?"

"Straight goods."

"Then the secret service man wasn't straight."

Old King Brady laughed.

"Let's have a smoke, Jack," he said.

They smoked and talked of indifferent matters for a moment.

Old King Brady was waiting for his bait to do its work.

And the work was done in exactly the way the old detective anticipated it would be.

Suddenly Jack turned on him and said:

"How much have you got?"

"Between four and five thousand dollars' worth."

"So? Now, let me tell you, old man, I don't believe a word of your yarn. You got that hop yourself from some poor fellow what put up good money for it, and you are afraid to sell it in the open market."

"What!" cried Old King Brady, pretending to be highly offended.

"Oh, yes! I know you detectives. Talk about crooks, we ain't in it alongside of you. Perhaps you are putting up a job on me; if not, then it is just as I said."

"Jack, you're a sharp one."

"I know. I could tell you just how you got that hop if I chose."

"What!"

"Come, now; come now! What about the Susquehanna Hotel and the tug Indian? Ha, man! That fetches you, I see."

"Jack, you have got me foul."

"Haven't I? Why didn't you turn that stuff over to the custom-house revenue agents? Pshaw! You're as shallow

as a saucer in spite of all your boasted shrewdness; but you don't get me!"

Old King Brady threw up his hands.

"For heaven sake, don't report me, Jack Dillon!" he said. "I've lost money lately in Wall street speculations. I'm all tied up. I—I must have cash."

"You thought you had a case against the Marquis of Mott Street. Ha, ha, ha,"

"Well, I didn't. I think I'll be going now."

"Stay. What's your price on the hop?"

"I was going to say half the market, but I guess we had better not try to trade now. All the same, I've got to get rid of the stuff somehow. It would never do to have it found in the house if—if——"

"If I report you to the revenue service—eh?"

"I suppose it would give you a lot of satisfaction to put me away, Jack?"

"Oh, I don't know. I'm out for business. Of course, you may be fooling me, but—well, I'll chance it. If you'll come here alone to-morrow night and bring that hop with you I'll pay you a quarter market price for it."

Old King Brady left soon afterward.

He was not altogether satisfied with his work.

He had not one atom of proof against the Marquis; he knew no more of the other members of the opium syndicate than he had known at the start.

"It won't do," he said to himself, as he ascended the steps of his house on Washington Square. "What I need is a witness against that fellow. For me to sell him the opium would be nonsense. Ten to one he means to do me up if I come and is fully prepared for that job. If I bring him the opium and come alone he will never let me get out of that house alive."

And so Old King Brady as he opened his door had written down his work that night as a failure.

Harry met him in the library with his face all smiles.

"Well, how did you make out?" he exclaimed.

"I've located the Marquis, if that amounts to anything, but it does not seem to me that we are much nearer the end of our case."

"How so? Tell me all about it!" cried Harry, flinging himself into a chair.

Old King Brady, lighting a cigar, took his time in telling of his interview with the Marquis.

"It will all go for nothing, I'm afraid," he said. "What we need is a witness, and we don't seem to be able to get him. Besides that, we want to know those who are in this opium syndicate, and that is going to be most difficult to learn."

"You seem to be down in the mouth, Governor."

"Harry, I am. I own it. I just don't know what to do."

"Then read that!"

Harry drew a paper from his pocket and tossed it over to Old King Brady.

The old detective put on his glasses and exclaimed:

"What's this? What's this? List of members of the

Opium Syndicate. Where on earth did you get these names, boy?"

The list covered Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Buffalo, Chicago, St. Louis and every other large city in the East.

Some of the names were Chinese, but others were those of wholesale drug firms supposed to be reputable.

"Where on earth did you get it?" repeated Old King Brady, lost in surprise.

"From Pete Crotty," replied Harry.

"Crotty! That man! If we only had him for a witness, then——"

"And then we have got him, Governor. At the present moment Pete Crotty is deep in the dope upstairs."

* * * * *

The next night was cold and blustery.

The wind was blowing a gale when the Bradys parted at their office on Park Row.

"Remember, Harry," said the old detective, "I shall jump on you for fair, and you must yell murder. That will be the cue."

"I understand," replied Young King Brady, and he then hurried away.

It was nearly half an hour after that when Old King Brady left the office.

The old detective carried a heavy bundle done up in brown paper.

He started in the direction of Chinatown, but just as he reached the Brewers' Exchange he suddenly turned and looked behind him.

Two Chinamen were close at his heels.

Old King Brady paused and allowed the men to pass him, then walking slowly on.

As he came in sight of the house of the Marquis he saw one of the pair running up the steps.

Looking behind him again, he saw that he was still being followed by the other, however he got there.

He could see no one watching at the door when he entered, but he felt certain that he was being spied upon just the same.

This time there was no delay.

The same Chinaman who had received Old King Brady before opened the door now and bade the detective pass up the winding stairs.

Here Annie stood ready to receive him.

"So you have come!" she said, sneeringly. "I told my husband you would."

"Where is he?" asked Old King Brady, with a great display of nervousness. "I've got the goods, but I'm sure I've been followed. I—I want to get out of this quick."

"I am here," spoke the deep voice behind the curtain.

Then the Marquis of Mott Street stole into the room, still in the Chinese disguise.

"Oh! I am glad you're on hand, Jack!" exclaimed the detective. "Here's half the stuff. Examine it. I suppose you have scales to weigh it on. I haven't had a chance to weigh it myself."

"I'll attend to that," growled the Marquis, and, picking up the bundle, he carried it into the other room.

Annie dropped upon the lounge. It seemed to be all she could do to keep awake.

Old King Brady walked to the window and looked out.

Old King Brady leaned against the window, slyly turning its fastening; then he began to pace the floor.

The woman was certainly asleep. He saw that now.

A moment later and the Marquis entered the room.

"Well, I've weighed the goods, Brady," he said. "I'll give you six hundred dollars for this lot."

"Why, man, it's highway robbery!" cried the detective. "What is the weight?"

"Come and see for yourself."

The Marquis pushed aside the curtain and Old King Brady entered the room.

There was a pair of scales here standing on a table, and the opium in little canvas-covered sacks was piled upon them.

Beyond was a curtain. Old King Brady distinctly saw it move. He was satisfied that Chinamen were hiding there.

He examined the weights.

"Well, I suppose I shall have to be satisfied," he said.

"You accept my offer, then?" demanded the Marquis.

"I shall have to."

"All right. It's a go. Will you hit a pipe yourself?"

"No, no. I never smoke the stuff."

"Nor do I now. I took the cure and have cut it out forever. I suppose you wonder what sort of business I do here?"

"Oh, you needn't tell me."

"I don't mind. We are partners now, so to speak. I run a private bank; I make loans to laundrymen to start new places. I'm making money by the hatful. Come downstairs and I'll show you my bank."

"No, no. Let's finish this business up, Jack. I'm nervous about it. I want to get out."

"Pshaw, man! You nervous! What nonsense. Old King Brady nervous! Ha, ha, ha! Say, I heard you tell Annie that you had been shadowed. Who did you see behind you, now?"

"Two Chinks."

"They were my spies. I warned you against them. I know now that you actually did come alone."

"Give me my money, Jack, and let me go."

"Well, then, you shall have it!" shouted the Marquis, and to this he added some words in Chinese.

On the instant the curtain was thrown aside and three Chinamen armed with knives sprang out.

"Give this man his pay, boys!" cried the Marquis, suddenly producing a short club.

Old King Brady sprang back through the curtain.

The window was up and there stood Harry.

"You are all under arrest here!" he cried.

Instantly Old King Brady rushed upon Harry, and seizing him by the throat, forced him back toward the open window.

"Help! Murder! Save me!" Harry yelled for all he was worth.

Then the Marquis and the Chinamen closed in.

"Do them both!" bawled the Marquis. "This is some trick. I know that fellow! He is Young King Brady, the partner of this man!"

He rushed upon the old detective with his club, but instantly fell back, for there in the window, standing upon the extension roof, were three policemen with drawn revolvers.

At the same instant there was a noise below, and others came swarming up the stairs.

It was the Bradys' triumph then. The carefully arranged plan had worked.

Both turned upon the Marquis.

"Arrest all here, gentlemen!" cried Old King Brady, adding:

"And now, Jack Dillon, I think I am well paid for my hop!"

* * * * *

It was a complete triumph.

Later Old King Brady knew that the three Chinamen were Highbinders. The Marquis of Mott Street had intended nothing less than his death.

It didn't work out that way, however, for the Marquis himself got twenty years for the attempted murder of Pete Crotty and other crimes afterwards proved. Annie and the other Chinamen went free.

The captain of the Indian was never caught.

Pete Crotty, after turning state's evidence, took the cure through Old King Brady's help, and went to Scotland a reformed man.

No mention was ever made by the detectives of the Carver affair.

The Secret Service Bureau paid the Bradys their usual fees and complimented them on their work.

Every member of the syndicate was arrested and all were heavily fined.

The case was kept quiet and did not make much stir.

Landlord Martin was the man most astonished when he learned what the disappearances in Room 13 of the Susquehanna Hotel really meant, which, of course, he knew when he came to hear the whole story of The Bradys and the Opium Syndicate.

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS AND 'GENERAL JINKS'; OR, AFTER THE CARD CROOKS OF THE 'KATY FLYER,'" which will be the next number (320) of "Secret Service."

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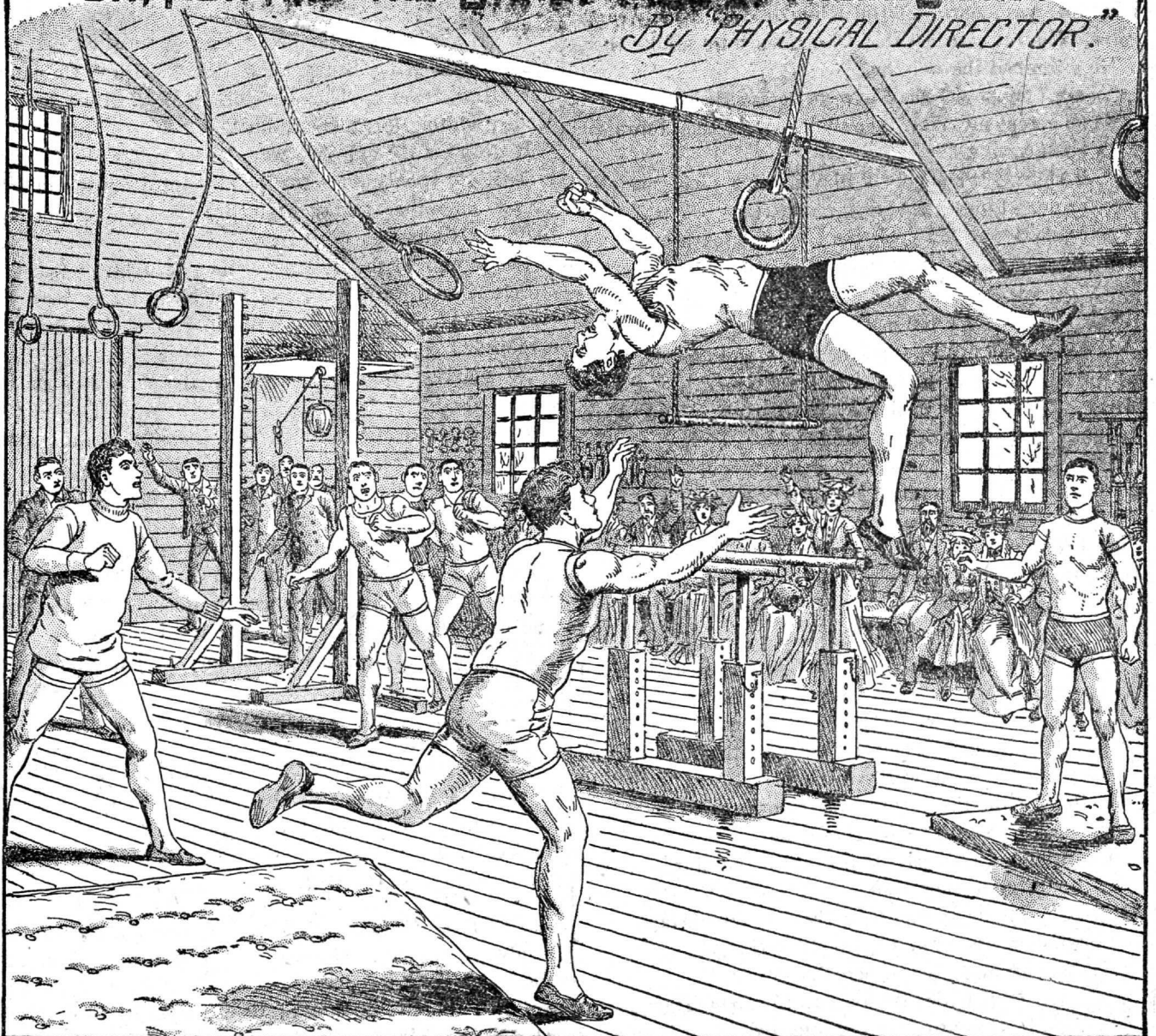
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