

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post-Office, March 1, 1899, by Frank Tousey.

No. 386.

NEW YORK, JUNE 15, 1906.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND PRINCE HI-TI-LI; OR, THE TRAIL OF THE FAKIR OF 'FRISCO.

By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.



It certainly looked as if Old King Brady, at least, was done for. He lay with closed eyes and parted lips, to all appearance dead. As Harry bent over him the Chinaman suddenly shut the secret door.

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CHAPTER I.

THE BRADYS TAKE UP A CHINESE CASE.

It was the "Blossom Storm," in the month of May, 190—.

All New York was deluged not only from the sky above, but from the sea beneath.

Extraordinarily high tides had forced the water back into sewers and cellars until some streets ran like rivers, bringing misery and discomfort everywhere.

It was a good day to stop indoors, and almost everyone who could avoid the streets did so.

There are some strange beings, however, who love to be abroad in a storm.

To such the war of the elements and the unusual conditions attending are like a stimulant.

Their pleasure is to go prowling about downtown streets, watching the changes wrought by the storm in the everyday routine of life in the great metropolis.

Such a person surely was the tall, elderly man who passed up Wall street at about three o'clock on the afternoon of this Blossom storm.

Seen under an umbrella very much the worse for wear, this old gentleman presented a striking figure.

His age might have been anywhere between sixty and seventy-five.

He wore a big white felt hat, cowboy style, with an extraordinarily broad brim.

For this the rain might have accounted, but it could hardly account for the long blue coat of most peculiar cut, with a double row of flat brass buttons down the front; nor for the ancient "stock" and high, pointed, stand-up collar, which he also wore.

And all these things taken together only tended to make the appearance of this solitary wanderer in the storm more marked.

As he passed along the south side of the block between William and Broad streets, a shabby little man with snow-white hair and general insignificant appearance came out of the Mechanics Bank, and started across the path of the person of whom we have been speaking.

Their umbrellas would surely have come into collision if the storm wanderer had not pulled back.

The shabby little man shot one glance at him, and then popped into a handsome private carriage which stood at the curb.

"Van Gordon," muttered the old gentleman, passing on. "Who would ever guess that such an insignificant bit of humanity was worth fifty millions at least."

His allusion was to one of New York's richest men, a person who has figured in all kinds of frenzied financial transactions.

Some called him the "Wall Street Sphinx," and many stories were told of his merciless, cheese-paring methods in business.

And it would be quite safe to add that John Van Gordon was not only one of the richest, but also one of the most unpopular men in the city of New York.

But the old gentlemen under the shabby umbrella cared nothing for him.

He himself was considered very wealthy by many, and yet, as a matter of fact, he was a person who was absolutely indifferent to wealth.

So he dismissed the shabby little man from his mind and passed on.

But it was only to come up against him a few minutes later, for just before he reached Broadway he saw that the carriage had stopped.

As he was passing it the door opened, and the man of many millions popped his head out.

"I beg your pardon, sir!" he called; "may I speak with you a minute?"

The old gentleman stepped up to the carriage door.

"My name is Van Gordon," said the shabby little man; "you, if I don't mistake, are Old King Brady, the detective."

"That is who I am," was the reply.

"I thought so. I am desirous of consulting you about a private matter which is troubling me. Could you make it convenient to call at my house this evening? I will give you my card."

"I don't think I could, Mr. Van Gordon," replied the world-famous detective.

"I am very sorry to hear you say so. Are you at present engaged on a case?"

"No."

"Then why——"

"Don't press me for my reason, sir! You would not like it if I gave it to you in the blunt fashion in which I usually speak my mind."

"Perhaps you don't care to work for a man of my reputation, Mr. Brady?" said the other, eyeing him keenly.

"Is that it?"

"To be perfectly frank with you, Mr. Van Gordon, it is."

"I don't know that I blame you. Still, I am good pay."

"I do not doubt it."

"I will take it as a particular favor if you will accede to my request."

"I don't care to do it, sir. If you have any business to transact with me you may come to my office on Park Row, if you happen to know where it is. If you don't I will give you my card."

"I know where your office is, Mr. Brady. May I ask if you are going there now?"

"I am."

"Very well, sir. Good-day."

Then Mr. Van Gordon drew back into the carriage and slammed the door, whereupon the liveried coachman touched up his horses and drove away.

Now, this way of doing business was quite in keeping with Old King Brady's usual style.

The keen old detective is an odd fish in many ways besides the matter of dress.

Under no circumstances will he ever "knuckle down" to the pompous rich man of the present day, and such persons have to come to his terms if they desire his services.

But there had been no evidence of pomposity in Mr. Van Gordon's manner—quite the reverse.

And this had its effect on Old King Brady's mind as he walked on up Broadway.

It was the first time he had ever come in contact with John Van Gordon, although he had seen his picture in the papers.

He had not failed to be impressed with a certain subdued manner which the old multi-millionaire displayed.

"And after all, what does one know about the private lives of his neighbors?" thought Old King Brady. "Van Gordon may not be as black as he is painted. Who can tell? I wonder if he means to go to the office, after all? If he does, and he strikes Harry, as he probably will, he will be received with open arms."

The allusion was to Young King Brady, pupil and partner of the old detective.

The last part was an exaggeration, however.

Harry is no more prone to humble himself before the rich than his partner, but he holds the natural veneration of the young for wealth and station, and is not inclined to be as abrupt with such people as Old King Brady is.

The Bradys' place of business is a shabby little office located over a saloon in one of the old-time buildings on Park Row, between the Brooklyn Bridge and Chatham Square.

As Old King Brady drew near the place he saw Mr. Van Gordon's carriage standing in front of the door.

"Ah, ha!" he muttered. "So he has come to me! This is better. Now we will hear what he has to say."

He hurried upstairs, and entered to find Mr. Van Gordon seated in an old cane-bottom chair, talking with Young King Brady about the big storm.

Harry, as Old King Brady always calls his partner, immediately arose and said:

"Governor, this is Mr. Van Gordon. He wishes to consult you about a case."

"I have already met Mr. Van Gordon," replied the old detective, putting his dripping umbrella in the wash-basin, and seating himself at his desk.

"Now, sir," he added, "if you have anything to say to me I will listen to it. Proceed."

"But this is a strictly private matter. Can I not see you alone?"

"I have no secrets from my partner, Mr. Van Gordon. You will have to talk before him."

"But it concerns a lady—my daughter, in fact."

"It is before him or not at all, sir."

"You are very hard on me, Mr. Brady. Still, I must have your services."

"Did you think of me before you met me in the street?"

"I did not. I am a man who comes to prompt conclusions. As soon as I saw you I made up my mind that you were the man I wanted, and I wondered that I had not thought of it before."

"Let us get to business."

"I shall have to yield to your wishes. Listen attentively now, for I have a terse method of expressing myself which not everyone finds it easy to understand."

"Proceed."

"Mr. Brady, I am a very wretched man. The world despises me, but they little know the life I lead. I am a mere money-making machine. I have not so much pleasure out of life as an ordinary day laborer. Surrounded by all the luxuries which wealth can procure, I am the slave of circumstances, personified by my wife, who really has always been the brains of my business. She controls me in everything. She rules with a rod of iron. She is absolutely merciless, and yet society bows down to her as a queen, as a philanthropist, as the saving grace of a miserly scheming husband, as—as——"

Here the shabby little old man of millions shed tears.

"Brace up," said Old King Brady. "Be a man!"

"It's too late!" replied Van Gordon, dolefully. "But never mind about all this. We have but one child, a daughter. Inez is her name. She came out in society two years ago. You may remember. Created a big sensation at Newport and Tuxedo, and then suddenly dropped out of sight."

"Well?"

"And this is the explanation and my pitiful secret. Poor Inez while at Newport fell in with a young Chinaman, an attache of the Chinese legation, Prince Hi-Ti-Li, he was called. She became perfectly fascinated with the fellow, and instead of discouraging the wretched business, as she should have done, my wife encouraged the fellow, because of the enormous wealth he was reputed to possess."

"And which was all a myth. The man proved to be a

mere adventurer from San Francisco, who was exposed, and driven out of Newport."

"Yes; and when he went my unfortunate daughter followed him. They were married, and they disappeared together. That was last September. We have concealed the sad truth. Society believes Inez to be traveling abroad. Her mother has utterly cast the poor child off, but I—I love her as deeply as ever, and long to find her; to separate her from this wretch, and—and——"

"I see. But why have you brought the matter to my notice now? Surely you have not waited all these months to begin work on this matter at this late date?"

"No. I spent thousands of dollars on detectives during the winter, but all to no purpose. The reason I have made this appeal to you now is because I have been informed only to-day that Inez has been seen in San Francisco with her Chinese husband within two weeks. The poor girl is being used as a bait to lure young men into his gambling den. It is dreadful. If you can save her, Mr. Brady, you shall name your own reward."

"We have had similar cases to deal with before, Mr. Van Gordon," said the old detective. "If the young woman wants to be saved it may be done, but if she refuses to leave her husband, what then?"

"In that case, of course, you can do nothing. But at least you can try?"

"We can and will, if you say the word."

"I do say it. I place the matter absolutely in your hands if you will accept it as a strictly confidential commission, and under no circumstances let it get to the ears of my wife."

"We accept."

"I cannot tell you how grateful I am."

"Waste no time in trying."

"If you desire a retainer I will give you my check right now for a couple of thousand."

"Not necessary. We will render a bill of our expenses later. Who told you that your daughter had been seen in San Francisco?"

"The information came from my nephew, Jack Bentley. He saw her there."

"The girl's own cousin?"

"Yes; my sister's son."

"Was he speaking with her?"

"Yes. She refused to listen to him. He seems to think that she was under the influence of opium or some other drug at the time."

"Where did he see her?"

"In a Chinese gambling house. I can get you the exact address."

"Do so, please, and also your daughter's photograph."

"You shall have both."

"Will Mrs. Van Gordon receive your daughter in case we are successful in persuading her to return home?"

"She never will!"

"And yet she would cheerfully have seen her marry this Chinaman if he had actually been a Chinese prince?"

"She would. Because he is what he is she has cast Inez off forever. It will be useless to argue with her; but there are other ways of providing for Inez. Only find her. Bring her to me and—and I will try to do the rest."

"Very well; we will try also," replied Old King Brady. And here ended all that there is of real interest in the interview.

The rest of the conversation concerned details alone.

It was not the first time by several that the Bradys have been called upon to act in similar cases.

There appears to be a horrible fascination about the Chinese for some young white women.

It is seldom, of course, that such cases occur among the rich, but instances are not wanting where they have occurred.

Old King Brady had entirely altered his opinion of Mr. Van Gordon.

He saw in the multimillionaire now merely the weak tool of a bold, designing woman.

He had come to feel a sincere sympathy for the old man.

And so it came about that once more the Bradys found themselves engaged upon a Chinese case.

CHAPTER II.

AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

"And this spells Frisco, Governor?" remarked Harry, once Mr. Van Gordon had departed.

"So it would seem," was the reply. "But we must first make sure that this Prince Hi-Ti-Li is still in San Francisco before we go rushing out there."

"That's so, too. Such fellows as he are necessarily fly-by-nights. He may have pulled up stakes and got out long before we can get there."

"Exactly. But we shall soon know."

"Going to telegraph the chief of police?"

"Yes; as soon as I get the address of this gambling den."

"What's the matter with all the women? How on earth could a young-society belle and heiress to millions commit such an act of folly?"

Old King Brady shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, don't ask me," he said. "It seems to be the style of the times. When I was young——"

But Old King Brady's reminiscences were interrupted by the entrance of a friend of Harry's, and thus for the time being the matter dropped.

Early next morning the Bradys received a photograph of Inez Van Gordon by special messenger, together with an address on Dupont street, San Francisco.

Within ten minutes Old King Brady despatched a telegram to the chief of San Francisco's police, who happened to be an old friend of his.

This done, there was nothing further to do but to wait for an answer.

It came between five and six o'clock, and read as follows:

"Man you want here at address given. Will arrest and hold him in response to your wire."

In return the old detective wired the chief:

"Am coming. Make no arrest."

First thing on the following morning Old King Brady called on Mr. Van Gordon and had a long talk with him.

At three o'clock the Bradys started for San Francisco, arriving there on the evening of the fifth day.

(The reader will please bear in mind the fact that this story was written some time before the earthquake and fire occurred which so nearly wiped the city out.)

As usual, the detectives put up at the Lick House.

"Right away after supper, Harry," said the old detective, "we will take a look in at Prince Hi-Ti-Li's joint, and then we will call on the chief and learn all that he has to tell about this Frisco fakir. That will give us a fair start."

And while the Bradys are refreshing the inner man, we may as well, for the benefit of those to whom the matter is new, say a few descriptive words about that most remarkable of all queer localities, the Chinese quarter of San Francisco.

Those who only know the Chinese quarter in New York would be amazed at this.

Chinatown in San Francisco covers many squares, and shelters a population of between seventy-five and a hundred thousand.

Thus it will be seen it is a city in itself.

Its streets are narrow and dark, abounding in alleys, underground passages, and secret rooms, so it is said.

Here every sort of trade and business is carried on.

It is like a bit of Canton or Shanghai transported from China, and dropped down in the midst of the California metropolis.

Day and night the streets swarm with countless throngs of Chinese men and women.

It is not as in New York, where a Chinese woman is seldom seen on the street.

Here they swarm in thousands; queer, dwarfish creatures, dressed like the men, and scarcely distinguishable from them were it not for the elaborate way in which they do up their hair, which is plastered together and stands out in great wings from the head, stuck full of paper flowers, and hung with tinsel ornaments.

Such in a general way is Chinatown, San Francisco; Dupont street is its principal thoroughfare, and thither in the evening the Bradys bent their steps.

"The same old place, Governor," remarked Harry, as they turned into Sacramento street from Kearney, and started up the hill past the Chinese market.

"Doesn't change a bit," was the reply. "Looks just as it did when I first saw it thirty-five years ago."

On either side of the street here there are open stalls in which every sort of Chinese eatables are displayed.

Whole hogs smoked and varnished; wonderful cheeses, merely to glance at which makes one long for wings or an automobile attachment to hasten his departure; baskets loaded down with dried fish, supposed to be imported from China, but really coming from no further than "over the bay"; these and many hundreds of edible commodities, a description of which would be wearisome.

The "China market" in San Francisco is indeed a queer place.

The gambling house in question was supposed to be located on Dupont street, between Jackson and Pacific.

It was known as the "Mon Lay Ong Club," whatever that means.

Old King Brady glanced at a memorandum of the number as they turned into Dupont street, in order to refresh his memory, and they continued to elbow their way through the crowd until they reached the block in question, when the old detective suddenly paused.

"Bless my soul, Harry! Why, there has been a fire here!" he exclaimed.

"Evidently!" was the reply. "And it seems to be suspiciously close to the number of our Mon Lay Ong."

Ahead, on their left, one of the old gray stone buildings so common in Chinatown could be seen completely gutted.

The Bradys pressed on, and coming abreast of it, saw that it indeed bore the number they sought.

"That puts the kibosh on our plans, Governor," remarked Young King Brady.

"It certainly does, boy. But still— Ha! Here comes Charlie Ching!"

Old King Brady had pronounced the name of one of the most noted Chinese detectives, a young half-breed, who is employed in Chinese cases by the police of San Francisco, New York, and other cities.

That this individual was well known to the Bradys need scarcely be said.

They had, indeed, employed him in several cases of their own.

Greetings having been exchanged, Old King Brady came at once to the point.

"Charlie, we were looking for a joint called the Mon Lay Ong," he said. "It seems to have been there."

"Yair," replied Charlie, in his terse fashion. "Burned out."

"So it appears. When did it happen?"

"Night before last. Two or three burned up in there."

"Chinks?"

"Yair. One white woman, too."

"Who was she?"

"Wife of Prince Hi-Ti-Li, as they call him. He big fakir, Brady. He run that place. They say he was burned up, too. Nobody see him since."

The Bradys looked at each other in dismay.

The shrewd little Chinaman caught this exchange of glances.

"Him your man, Brady?" he asked.

"I won't deny it, Charlie."

"Then you won't get him. Mebbe he dead, mebbe he skip the gutter. I dunno."

"What sort of a joint did he keep?"

"Regular gambling house. Lots of rich young fellers played there. No fan-tan. Melican games. Faro, poker—you know. He used to put out a Chinee supper at mid-night. Oh, he make a bag of money, yair."

"Then why in the name of sense did the place burn?"

"Dunno! It was four o'clock in the morning. There was an explosion. Nobody know what happened right."

"Did you know this prince, Charlie?"

"Sure, yair. I know him. He no prince. He just a fakir. Don' you 'member he catchee him wife at Newport. She rich gal. He make out he Prince Hi-Ti-Li. The real prince he went back to China before, oh, yair. He was a slick card. He fool lots of people here, too. Mebbe he Chink, but I think he was part Jap."

By this time Old King Brady had been able to collect himself.

He pressed for further details concerning the fire, and got such as Charlie Ching had to give.

These did not amount to very much, however.

Charlie admitted frankly that he had never come up against the prince in the course of his detective work, but had only met him in a casual way.

"But about this wife of his?" asked Old King Brady, being careful not to express any undue interest in the subject. "We may be asked for information about the woman when we get back to New York. What was her name?"

"Dunno," said Charlie. "Her father big rich man on Fifth avener, yair."

"Where was the body found?"

"In bed."

"Badly burned?"

"No. She choke with smoke mebbe. No burns on her, so they say."

"Where did they take the remains?"

"What?"

"The body."

"Oh! They take her round to Chinee undertaker's on Jackson street. Some Chink he come along and pay the bill."

"Is she buried yet?"

"I dunno. Mebbe not. Want to find out, Brady?"

"Yes, I'd like to."

"All right. Let's go around and see."

So Charlie Ching led the way to the Chinese undertaker's.

It proved not to be on Jackson street, but up the alley. This was as Old King Brady had suspected.

The Chinese undertakers never make any display of their business, in which, it must be admitted, they are more sensible than the whites.

Charlie Ching knocked at a door opening on the alley,

which was presently opened by an ugly-looking Celestial with a face horribly pockmarked.

Some conversation in Chinese took place between them, after which the Chinese undertaker threw the door wide open, and ushered his visitors into a rear room.

It looked more like a carpenter's shop than anything else.

There was a long work-bench, upon which stood three coffins in process of construction.

The floor was littered with chips and shavings; over in one corner lumber was piled, while in another a cheap coffin stood upon two trestles.

"Dere she is," said the undertaker. "Dlat de gal out of de fire. You wantee see?"

"Yes," replied Old King Brady. "Let's see her, John."

"How muchee you pay?" demanded the Chink. "You no police."

"G'wan!" cried Charlie Ching. "Yes, we are police, too. You show her now, and no fuss."

But Old King Brady settled the controversy by slipping the Chinaman a couple of dollars.

Then the coffin lid was raised.

Inside lay the remains of a plain-looking white woman. She was evidently a foreigner.

Her age must have been at least thirty-five.

Charlie Ching gave one quick look and turned away.

Old King Brady, however, was more deliberate in his examination.

"Enough. Close her up," he said at last.

They left the shop, and neither spoke until they found themselves on Jackson street.

"Well, Charlie! And what struck you?" Old King Brady demanded then.

"Say, Brady, that not the woman!" cried the Chinese detective. "I no butt-in. It none of my business, but that not the woman who was married to Prince Hi-Ti-Li."

"So?" said Old King Brady. "How about this one, then?"

He produced the photograph sent to him by Mr. Van Gordon, and handed it to Charlie Ching.

"That the woman!" Charlie instantly exclaimed.

"Good! Well, you saw one thing in there. I saw something else."

"What?"

"That woman was never suffocated in the fire, Charlie. She has been dead several days."

"So I say!" put in Young King Brady.

"It is certainly so," replied the old detective. "We are up against some deep plot here."

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG MAN WITH THE YELLOW HAIR.

The Bradys and Charlie Ching had been standing together at the corner of Jackson street and the alley, talking in low tones.

Crowds of Chinese men and women went surging past them.

No one but those who have seen for themselves can imagine the number of people who are always on the move in the early evening hours in Chinatown, San Francisco.

But the crowd was not made up exclusively of Chinamen, by any means.

There were many white people on the move that night.

Stummers in San Francisco don't visit Chinatown in big "rubber-neck" wagons, or in large bands piloted by detectives, as they do in New York.

On the contrary, people go into the Chinese quarter there as freely as they would visit any other part of town.

The streets which compose it lie between the business part of San Francisco and the great residential quarter on the hills.

Sixty per cent of the population have to pass through Chinatown twice a day, going and coming from business.

Thus everybody is used to the place, and nobody is afraid of it.

Of course, when it comes to prowling about the alleys that is different, but Dupont and Stockton streets, with Washington, Sacramento, Jackson, Pacific, etc., crossing them, are all thoroughfares, and here one meets people from every part of the known world, for San Francisco is the most cosmopolitan city in the universe, as everybody knows.

Old King Brady and Charlie Ching now fell to talking about another matter, in which they were mutually interested.

For this Harry cared nothing, and he began watching the crowd and trying to pick out the different nationalities who passed him.

He saw French, Spanish, Italians, Mexican Greasers, several Indians, two Armenians, Jews, and Germans, of course, but not one colored man—the latter in California are decidedly scarce.

Chinese and Japanese didn't count.

They were going and coming all the time.

All at once there came along up the hill a pair so ill-matched and so peculiar in appearance and action that Young King Brady's attention was attracted at once.

One was a young white man of powerful, athletic frame, the other an East Indian, of some sort whose face was as black as a negro's.

The white man had a head on his broad shoulders so small as to be most remarkable. He wore a sort of yachting cap, and from beneath it protruded an immense mass of yellow hair.

His head was raised, and instead of looking forward his watery blue eyes were fixed upward.

The Hindoo had him by the arm, and was leading him.

If the latter had been white he would have been positively handsome.

Such eyes, such glittering white teeth Harry had never seen.

They were walking very rapidly, and as they passed

Young King Brady, who was staring, it must be admitted, the Hindoo turned and looked at him.

Involuntarily Harry turned his head away with a shudder.

It was just as though he had looked into the eyes of a serpent.

For a moment he almost lost himself, and when Old King Brady spoke to him it seemed as if his voice came from a long way off.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded the old detective.

Harry came back to earth with the question.

"Blest if I know," he replied. "Where's Charlie Ching?"

"He's gone. Are you sick?"

"Oh, no!"

"What are you staring like that for, then?"

Harry told his experience.

"Look out!" said Old King Brady. "Those Hindoos are queer fellows. You stared at him and he stared at you, and the stare of a Hindoo spells trouble sometimes. Come on."

"Where are you going now?"

"To police headquarters. I want to get an order to have that woman's body held."

"Where has Charlie gone?"

"Oh, I didn't ask him. He has promised to look into this Prince Hi-Ti-Li business for me, and I guess he will do it. Charlie is all right, and what he don't know about Chinatown isn't worth knowing. We have a very peculiar case to deal with, Harry, and we need all the help we can get."

"What do you think about it? What's your idea?"

"Why, of course it is too early in the game to form a theory, but it looks to me probable that this fire was a put-up job to cover the disappearance of Prince Hi-Ti-Li and his wife."

"Can it be that they got wind of our coming?"

"I don't believe it had anything whatever to do with it. According to Charlie, the prince is a dangerous man and a most clever fakir. My idea is that he is putting up a job on somebody. For all we can tell he may have gone back to New York."

The Bradys were on the move now, and in a few minutes they turned up at the City Hall on Kearny street, and there made their way to the office of the chief of police.

Fortunately they found that official in, and he received them with his usual cordiality.

"You should have let me arrest that man, Mr. Brady," he said. "I could have got him then; now it is too late."

"I am told that he was burned to death in the fire," replied Old King Brady.

"If you will believe it," answered the chief. "There were three Chinamen burned. One of my men investigated. Neither was the prince. I took particular pains to ascertain that fact. I supposed you would be wanting to know."

"This is positive?"

"It is. His white wife lost her life, though. She was found suffocated in her bed."

"Did you ever see her?"

"Yes. I have been in Hi-Ti-Li's place. She was on exhibition most every night. A beautiful girl, wherever he picked her up. She used to move around among the gamblers. Some women frequented the place. There was a bridge game on there every night. As a rule Mrs. Prince looked after it."

"Is this the woman?"

Old King Brady produced the photograph.

"That's the article!" cried the chief. "Who was she, do you know?"

"Yes. Daughter of Van Gordon, of New York."

"The millionaire?"

"Yes."

"The deuce! How came her family to permit her to marry this Chink?"

"She ran away with him. The mother has cast her off. The father wants to get her back. That's our case."

"Then it is finished before it was fairly begun, seeing that the woman is dead."

"We don't feel so sure that she is dead. We have visited the Chinese undertaker who has charge of the remains. The dead woman we saw is not the original of this picture—that is certain."

"What!" cried the chief. "Some monkey business? I'll get one of my Chinese detectives and we will go right around there. We'll soon get to the bottom of this."

Old King Brady raised no objection.

It seemed to be the quickest way to settle the matter.

A shrewd-looking Chinaman was called in, and the chief explained the case to him.

"We want to go there now, Ah Jack!" said the chief.

"We must know what this means."

"He tellee me allee light, boss," declared Ah Jack. "Comee on!"

The four then hurried to the undertaker's.

Ah Jack banged on the door in an authoritative way.

It was instantly opened by the undertaker himself.

He bent almost double when the Chinese detective introduced the chief of police.

They were taken into the shop, and once more the remains of the dead woman were exhibited.

"That's not Madam Hi-Ti-Li!" the chief instantly exclaimed.

Ah Jack took one look and went for the undertaker in Chinese.

"Let them talk," whispered the chief. "Ah Jack will worm the secret out of him if anybody can."

"He says he got orders to bury dis woman ffrom de PPrince his ownself," announced Ah Jack, after a minute.

"So!" cried the chief. "He admits then that the prince is alive."

"Yair."

"When did he see him?"

"Last night. He comee here disguised."

"So? Where is he now?"

"He say he no know. I know dlat woman allee light, dough."

"Who is she?"

"Oh, she hang around Chinatown. She married twice times to Chinaman. She nobody at all."

Old King Brady took the chief aside.

"There is evidently some plot here," he said. "What we want now is to get on the trail of this fakir. Tell Ah Jack to make the fellow tell where the prince is if he can. I'll give a hundred dollars if the information is correct."

"No, you won't," retorted the chief. "Ah Jack gets his pay, and he has got to do his work. As for this undertaker, I'll lock him up and put him out of business into the bargain if he holds anything back."

But in spite of all their efforts they could get nothing further out of the undertaker than what he had already told.

Ah Jack declared that he was telling the truth.

And this ended the Bradys' efforts for that day.

The chief parted from them with the promise that every detective in Chinatown should be instructed to look into the matter.

So the Bradys returned to the Lick House, and shortly afterwards retired.

That night Harry dreamed of the Hindoo and the young man with the yellow hair who kept his eyes up in the air.

Many times he awoke, but as soon as he dropped off asleep it was only to dream of them again.

Having thus had a wakeful night, Harry naturally overslept himself next morning.

When he awoke he found a note from Old King Brady lying on his clothes, which he had thrown carelessly over a chair.

The note simply informed him that the old detective had gone out on business, and probably might not be back before dinner time; it wound up by requesting Harry to meet him then.

So Young King Brady breakfasted alone.

Picking up the Morning Call while he waited for his chop, Harry carelessly scanned its columns.

One was devoted to an account of the arrival in San Francisco of a young English nobleman, the Viscount Dalkowise.

The account spoke of the young man as being possessed of enormous wealth. It went on to say that the viscount's father, the Earl of Penrose, being imbecile, the young man was practically in full possession of the estates, and was now globe-trotting. He had just finished doing India, and was about to take in the United States.

Accompanying the account was the viscount's picture.

It was about as bad a production as newspaper portraits usually are.

"Seems to me I have seen that face," thought Harry, as he studied the picture.

Then all at once it came to him.

"Why, it is! It surely is!" he muttered.

Again he was thinking of the young man with the yellow hair.

Finishing his reading, he noted that the viscount was staying at the Palace Hotel.

After completing his breakfast he strolled down there.

The proprietor of the cigar stand was an old acquaintance, and Harry asked him about the viscount.

"Yes, he is stopping here," said the cigar man. "Why do you ask?"

"I saw a fellow in the street last night who struck me as peculiar. The picture of the viscount in the Call seemed to tally."

Harry went on to describe the young man with the yellow hair.

"That certainly sounds like the viscount," said the cigar man. "He might have been strolling through Chinatown. Was he alone?"

"No; he was with a Hindoo."

"There is no such person stopping with him. He is traveling alone with a Japanese valet. Something unusual for an English lord."

"The man who was with him last night was unmistakably a Hindoo."

"May be so," replied the cigar man, "but if you want to see the Viscount Dalkowise all you have to do is to look behind you, for there he is standing at the desk now. He came off the elevator just as you spoke."

Harry swung around and faced the desk.

It was as he had suspected.

There, talking to the clerk, stood the young man with the yellow hair.

CHAPTER IV.

OLD KING BRADY LOCATES THE PRINCESS HI-TI-LI.

Hunting for a Chinaman in Chinatown, San Francisco, is worse than the oft-cited simile of looking for a needle in a haystack.

Dress a Chinaman in their native clothes and it is certainly not easy to tell them apart.

Thus, if Prince Hi-Ti-Li chose to retire from the gambling-house business and pose as a dead man it was all very easy so far as the police and the detectives were concerned.

He had only to dress like an ordinary Chinaman, change his name, and take a room in some other part of Chinatown, and the trick was turned.

Old King Brady, as well as Harry, passed a wakeful night, but the old detective was not dreaming. He was trying to think out some plan of action which would be

likely to start him on the trail of this shrewd fakir of Frisco.

Old King Brady was starting out on the theory that Prince Hi-Ti-Li would never have gone to the trouble of concocting a plot which involved the burning of his place of business, the palming off of a dead woman as his wife, and the starting of a rumor of his own death unless he had some powerful reason for so doing.

It was to attempt to discover this reason that the old detective regarded as his best point of beginning, and he started out to do this while Harry slept, feeling that there was little to be hoped for either from the chief of police or from Charlie Ching.

"The matter is too deep for them both," Old King Brady said to himself. "I've got to make a beginning on my own account."

And so the first thing Old King Brady did was to go to the tax office.

Anyone may be excused for exclaiming: "And what in the world took the good man there?"

What Old King Brady did will explain.

Picking out a young clerk behind the railing, the old detective approached him in a confidential manner, displayed his shield, and said:

"Look here, young man, I am a detective. It is worth a five-spot to me to be informed who owns No. — Dupont street, and I want the information right away. Can you help me out?"

The young man thought he could, and he did.

Within a very few minutes Old King Brady had a slip of paper handed to him, which bore the name and address:

"Mrs. Estelle Fairchild, No. — California street."

Old King Brady paid his five, and withdrew.

He had acquired the information at the one place where the fact of his having acquired it was practically certain not to leak out.

Old King Brady recognized the name as soon as he saw it.

Mrs. Fairchild he knew to be the widow of a man who had suddenly grown rich in mining a few years back.

This went for but little, however.

Old King Brady had made up his mind to interview the owner of the burned building about Prince Hi-Ti-Li.

He now was ready to do this as soon as he had posted himself a little as to what sort of a person Mrs. Fairchild was.

And again the old detective went about it in a queer way.

Instead of going up on Nob Hill, as the part of California street where Mrs. Fairchild resided was called, Old King Brady went to the biggest intelligence office in San Francisco, Mrs. Wheeler's, on Montgomery street.

If you want to find out about the true character of a rich woman ask her servants—there is no better way.

As it happened, Old King Brady had been brought in contact with Mrs. Wheeler before.

He had, therefore, only to send in his card to be admitted to that lady's private sanctum.

He found, as he knew he should find, a stout, matronly woman, rather overdressed, who greeted him as though he was an old friend.

"Well, well, Mr. Brady, it is ages since I have seen you," exclaimed Mrs. Wheeler as the old detective entered the room. "Where have you kept yourself these last three years?"

"Here, there, and everywhere," was the reply. "You know my ways, Mrs. Wheeler. I don't have to tell you."

"Of course I do," laughed the woman. "I know them so well that I am perfectly aware that it is no love of me which has brought you here to-day. What are you after? Want me to give you a detective to place in some millionaire's family to spy out the land?"

"Perhaps. It wouldn't be the first time we had worked together that way."

"And that's so, too. Come, tell me all about it, and perhaps I can post you."

"It is a very simple case. I want information concerning Mrs. Fairchild."

"You mean Jim Fairchild's widow up on California street?"

"The same."

"What has she been doing?"

"Nothing that I know of. I'm merely looking for a clew."

"Well, I won't try to pry into your secrets. I think I can tell you all about the lady. She always gets her servants through me. You want her whole history?"

"I do."

"Well, then, her maiden name was Rosy Burns; she was the daughter of a washerwoman up at New Westminster, British Columbia. Later she graduated from the washtub to the dignity of bar-maid in a saloon at Victoria—they have such creatures up there, you know."

"I know. Mrs. Fairchild can hardly be called an aristocrat, it would seem."

"Hardly. But everybody don't know this, remember. Later she married Jim Fairchild, and lived in the Stickem diggings with him. After several years' hard pegging her husband struck it rich, and my lady landed on Nob Hill, where she is now. There you have her history in a nutshell."

"Exactly. How much is she worth?"

"Not over a couple of millions."

"Does she put on style?"

"Tries to. It's hard work, though, on account of her failings."

"She has them?"

"Surely. Who has not?"

"What do they run to?"

"She dopes."

"Ah!"

"She is an inveterate bridge player."

"So?"

"And the worst is she won't confine herself to her own house when she indulges in these things, but will persist in going slumming in disguise. She runs to Chinatown, Brady, and there you are. Her case is hopeless. It is all I can do to keep a servant in her house, she abuses them so."

Here was very important information.

Old King Brady felt that he was on the right track.

"What you tell me is very interesting," he said. "Now, what I want to get at is this: Mrs. Fairchild owns a building on Dupont street which was occupied in part as a Chinese gambling house, and I have no doubt an opium joint was run there, too. Did she go there at times? This is the all-important question. If you can answer it I shall be everlastingly obliged."

"Well, I think I can. You are a lucky man, Brady."

"How so?"

"Because at this present moment there happens to be a woman outside waiting for me to place her who two years ago was lady's maid for Mrs. Fairchild. She, if anyone, ought to know."

"It is rather far back."

"Yes, but she may know her present maid, and I am inclined to think she does. Shall I bring her in and let you interview her?"

"I had rather you would do it. Here's ten dollars. I suppose she will tell all she knows for that."

"Yes, and for half of it, or for nothing at all, for that matter. She wouldn't dare to refuse me. Excuse me a few minutes, Brady. I think I can find out what you want to know."

Mrs. Wheeler then bustled out of the room.

She was gone only a few moments and when she returned her face wore a look of triumph.

"You are right," she said. "She did not go to that place in Annie's time, but the girl has it straight from her successor that she has been shadowed there of late. Trust a bunch of servants to find out what the mistress is about, especially when there are no children, as in this case."

"And you believe all this?" asked Old King Brady.

"Implicitly," replied Mrs. Wheeler. "Annie would not dare to lie to me. I have been placing her for the last five years. She told me something else which she got from Mrs. Fairchild's present maid, too."

"And what is that?"

"Mrs. Fairchild has a niece living with her now; a very beautiful woman. She arrived day before yesterday. The talk is that they are expecting to leave town in a day or two."

"And that is all?"

"That's all, Brady. Don't you think it is a good deal to find out in a few minutes' time?"

"It's all right, and so are you. If I wanted to get at this present maid of Mrs. Fairchild can you fix it?"

"I can. Her name is Fanny Foncelle. She poses as

French, but she is really a Canadian. I placed her. She'll talk if I say the word."

"I may ask you to have her meet me here or to fix it so that my partner can call at Mrs. Fairchild's and see her there."

"Oh, you shrewd old man!" laughed Mrs. Wheeler. "You know enough to send a good-looking young fellow like your partner on such an errand instead of going yourself. I see."

"I know my business, and so do you," was Old King Brady's reply, as he left the intelligence office.

A great point had been gained.

Unquestionably Mrs. Fairchild must have known Prince Hi-Ti-Li if she was in the habit of frequenting the place.

Old King Brady walked the streets for an hour, pondering.

Just what to do next he did not know.

Naturally his wanderings took him up on Nob Hill, where he could get a look at Mrs. Fairchild's house.

It was a big, white frame building, built after the San Francisco style.

There was a garden attached, enclosed by a fence, and there were stables in the rear.

"I've a good mind to disguise and try to pump the coachman or hostler," the detective thought.

But somehow the idea did not appeal to him.

It was a windy day, and there was a good deal of sand blowing about, as is very often the case in San Francisco in the summer time.

A piece blew in Old King Brady's eye just then, and he stopped to get it out.

He had just succeeded in this when a big express wagon stopped in front of Mrs. Fairchild's house.

"Hello! What is going on now?" thought Old King Brady.

He went on to the end of the block, and posting himself on the corner of California and Taylor street, stood observing.

A dozen or more big trunks were brought out of the Fairchild mansion, and loaded upon the express wagon, which then drove away.

"I fancy madam is on the move," thought the detective. "I am too late to accomplish much here, I guess."

He was provoked at himself for not taking a nearer station and so ascertaining the destination of the trunks.

It was too late for this now.

Before Old King Brady could turn away he saw that he had other observations on his hands.

The big gates of the Fairchild place were thrown open, and a handsome carriage drawn by a team of splendid black horses came slowly out and drew up before the door.

Old King Brady walked up on the other side of the way.

He had a long wait on his hands, however.

The moments passed, and nobody appeared.

"Confound these women, they are never ready on time!"

thought the old detective. "I can't stand here without attracting attention. What shall I do?"

The question was settled for him in a very simple and highly satisfactory manner a minute later.

Up to the door of a house some little distance down the block a cab came rattling over the boards which in most of the residential streets of San Francisco take the place of paving blocks.

A young man alighting, the cab came on toward the old detective.

At the same instant the door of the Fairchild mansion was thrown open, and a pompous butler in tawdry livery came out, carrying bags and parcels.

Behind him followed a woman of peculiar appearance, who will be described later, and following her was a younger woman, richly dressed, whose beauty rivetted Old King Brady's attention at once.

But it was not the young woman's beauty alone.

One glance was sufficient to show Old King Brady that at last he had struck the trail of his Frisco fakir.

The face was identical with the face of the photograph. Old King Brady saw before him the "Princess" Hi-Ti-Li!

CHAPTER V.

HARRY GETS NEXT TO THE VISCOUNT.

Harry surveyed the Viscount Dalkowise attentively.

"Is that your man?" demanded the cigar dealer.

"That's the duck," replied Harry. "Well, now that I have seen him that's all I care about. Peculiar looking fellow, isn't he?"

"He has got the body of a giant and the head of an idiot," was the reply.

Harry walked away then, and going to the desk, pretended to consult the directory.

Thus he was not only able to get a good look at the viscount's face, but to overhear what he was saying.

The young Englishman no longer carried his head in the air, but held it like ordinary mortals.

The face was not unhandsome, but it was pitifully weak. The nose and mouth were absurdly small, and there was almost no forehead.

The eyes were the principal feature.

These were faded blue in color, and large out of all proportion to the rest of the face.

Something seemed to be the matter with the tear ducts, for the eyes were suffused just as Harry had seen them the night before.

In his hand the viscount carried a white silk handkerchief, and he wiped his eyes three times while Harry stood there.

"Yas," he was saying, "me Japanese valet has left me, doncherknow. Really, I am quite lost to know what to do, being a stranger in town."

The clerk named an intelligence office where he would be likely to hear of a valet.

"But I don't want another Jap," said the viscount. "I—I grew quite afraid of the fellow during the voyage over. I—I would have dismissed him, only I was afraid. I—I am glad he is gone."

The clerk made some appropriate reply.

But the viscount paid no attention, apparently.

"I say!" he broke out suddenly, "would—would it be considered very odd if I engaged a Chinaman?"

The clerk thought it would.

"Would you admit him to the hotel?" demanded the viscount.

The clerk thought this would be all right, provided the valet confined himself to his master's suite.

This seemed to satisfy the viscount, and he withdrew.

Harry had hung over the directory all the while, but he was now seized with the notion of shadowing the young man.

"The Governor has left me no directions. I might as well do that as anything else," he thought.

The viscount had gone out on Market street, meanwhile, and Harry could see him standing at the door.

In a few moments he started off, walking with a queer, shambling gait.

"What on earth is the matter with the fellow? He must be a half idiot," thought Harry, who was close at his heels.

The viscount turned down Kearney street, and walked on to Portsmouth Square.

Here he seated himself near the fountain, and producing an English paper, tore off the wrapper and proceeded to read.

"He must be waiting for somebody," thought Young King Brady. "Nothing else would bring him here, surely."

He took a seat at some little distance away, and waited himself.

An hour was passed in this fashion.

Again and again the viscount consulted his watch.

He seemed to grow very uneasy.

At last Harry's attention was attracted by a young Japanese who came along and who suddenly paused near the bench where he was sitting, and stood eyeing the Englishman.

At this time the viscount was deep in his newspaper.

He did not seem to see the Japanese.

Suddenly the Jap started for him.

He had almost reached the bench when the viscount sprang to his feet, his face white with fear.

He had caught sight of the Jap.

And evidently he had good cause to be afraid.

As soon as he perceived that he was discovered the Jap gave a strange cry of "Banzai," and made a rush for the Englishman, catching him by the throat.

Harry saw his chance, and sprang to the rescue.

He fully expected to see the Jap try some jiu-jitsu trick and throw the viscount.

Evidently the Jap was not up in that sort of business, for he confined himself to plain choking.

The viscount yelled murder.

A policeman came running, but not until Harry had felled the Jap with one stunning blow.

The viscount, almost black in the face, fell half-fainting into his arms.

But he instantly recovered himself.

"I—I—I don't want to make any complaint!" he stammered. "Get rid of the officer if you can."

The Jap staggered to his feet just in time to be captured.

Young King Brady flashed his shield.

"This is a private matter, officer," he said. "If you will just fan that fellow and send him about his business it will be all right. There will be no complaint."

"All right," said the policeman.

He ordered the Jap to leave the park, and the fellow hurried away.

"We must get out of this, too," Harry whispered to the viscount.

"Y—yes. I—I see. Will you walk with me a few squares? I—I feel a little shaky."

"Certainly."

"M—may I take your arm?"

"If you will."

They walked on in silence for a few minutes.

The young Englishman was breathing hard.

His excitement was intense.

They left the Square and turned up the hill into Chinatown. This quarter has since all been burned down.

"You have saved my life," said the viscount. "Will you allow me to reward you? It would give me great pleasure."

"Certainly not," replied Harry. "I am not that sort."

"Oh, I say! I didn't mean to insult you, doncherknow. But you have done me a big service. You have saved my life."

"What I did was nothing."

"But you are a detective. I—I saw your badge."

"It is nothing, I tell you. I don't belong in this town."

"But you have done me a big service. Not for the world would I have gone before the court against that fellow."

"Why did he try to strangle you?"

"He was me valet. I dismissed him, doncherknow. It was a matter of revenge."

"I see."

"May I ask your name?"

"Certainly. My name is Harry Brady."

"Oh, indeed! I am the Viscount Dalkowise, son of the Earl of Penrose."

"Is that so?"

"Yas. I have so many names that upon me soul I sometimes forget them meself. You can call me Arthur. I

hate the Dalkowise, and I don't get the Penrose till me father dies."

"I see. Where are we going?"

"Oh, I say, I suppose I ought not to tell. I was waiting in the Square for a Chinaman who was recommended to me as a valet, but he didn't come, so I think I'll go to the man who recommended him. Will you come along?"

"I don't mind. I've nothing to do."

"Do you know, Harry, I wish you wasn't a detective," said the viscount, after a few minutes, with a burst of familiarity.

"And why?"

"Well, that is to say, I'm glad you are a detective, but I wish you would be my valet just for a few days."

"For what reason?"

"Because I am afraid I shall get into trouble in this town. I—I need a companion more than a valet. Really, that's what I want. Some nice young fellow to be with me all this time. I—I would pay you well. I—I wouldn't want your services at all, doncherknow."

"I don't understand you, my lord."

"Oh, say! Come now, don't go to calling me me lord. I get enough of that at home, doncherknow. I—I—but never mind. We will talk about that later. You will stick to me this morning, anyhow?"

"Yes, I promise you that; but I shall have to leave you for a short time at noon. I have an engagement then."

"That's too bad. I wanted you to stay with me all day. I'm stopping at the Palace Hotel. Perhaps you will come and dine with me this evening. Say you will."

To humor the fellow Young King Brady promised.

"What on earth is he driving at?" Harry asked himself again and again.

And well he might.

Although the viscount appeared to be but a few degrees removed from an imbecile, there was still a persistency about his manner which clearly showed that he had some definite purpose in view.

It was this which puzzled Young King Brady.

He felt that he was wasting his time following up this adventure, and yet something which he could not understand seemed to impel him to go on with it.

In the meantime they had been walking along Dupont street.

Now the viscount turned up Jackson street.

He continued on to Stockton, talking all the while in a vague fashion about the good times Harry would have if he stuck to him.

At the corner of Stockton street he suddenly halted, and pulling out a fat roll of bills, exclaimed:

"Oh, I say! Wouldn't you like some money? Not as a reward, but just as from one friend to another, doncherknow? I'd just as soon give you forty or fifty pounds as not."

"For heaven sake put up your money!" said Harry. "Don't you know it is as much as your life is worth to show that roll here?"

"Oh, all right, just as you say," replied the viscount, with an inane chuckle. "We will wait till we get to the room and talk about it there."

"What room are you talking about? Where is it we are going?"

"Oh, it is close here. A Hindoo gentleman—a friend of mine. I'm just from India, doncherknow. One meets queer people in the East. You will like Swami when you see him. I'm sure you will."

"Hello! We take in the Hindoo," thought Harry. "This grows more interesting every minute. I am curious to see where it will all end."

Their walk ended at a small frame house on the lower side of Stockton street, between Jackson and Pacific.

Here the viscount pulled the bell, and in a minute the door was opened by a little, dried-up old woman whose face was as black as a negro's.

She wore a queer turban on her head, and her features were unmistakably those of a Hindoo.

At the sight of the viscount she made a low bow, and stood aside for them to enter.

The viscount did not speak, but pushed past her, and opening the door of the rear room went in.

Harry, who closely followed him, had all he could do to keep back an exclamation of surprise.

The room was furnished with Oriental magnificence.

A costly Persian rug covered the floor, the walls were hung with heavy tapestry richly embroidered with gold, picturing a jungle scene where a tiger hunt was in progress.

The picture was continuous and passed all around the room, comprising one scene as a whole, containing many figures of men and beasts.

In the corners were low divans, upon which silken cushions of gay colors were piled.

There was no furniture, properly speaking, but each divan had its low Turkish table, which seemed to indicate that the place might be an opium joint.

This idea was dispelled, however, by the wonderful display of pipes which filled a niche alongside the chimney.

These were not opium pipes.

Some had stems a yard long, and hung upon a rack.

Others were smaller, and lay upon shelves.

The bowls were all made of some dark wood. Some were trimmed with silver, others with gold, others again being elaborately carved, while the bowls themselves were of all sorts of fantastic patterns.

Taken altogether, it was the most marvelous collection of pipes which Harry had ever laid eyes upon.

Meanwhile the old woman stood at the door grinning.

"You are too early for the master," she said in perfect English. "Will you wait?"

"He has not risen yet?" demanded the viscount.

"He has gone out," replied the woman, "but he will soon return."

"We will wait," said the viscount. "You may leave us now."

"But the strange gentleman? The master does not like strangers here."

The viscount turned upon her fiercely.

"You tell your master that this gentleman is my friend!" he cried.

The woman retreated, closing the door.

This cut off the daylight, leaving the room illuminated only by an elaborate hanging lamp, all studded with false gems of every color of the rainbow.

"What a strange place," exclaimed Harry. "Why do you come here?"

"Oh, I have business with the Hindoo who occupies these rooms," was the careless reply. "We may have to wait some time. Will you join me in a smoke?"

"Now, then, we get down to business," thought Young King Brady. "I knew it would end in something of this sort."

CHAPTER VI.

SHADOWED TO MONTEREY.

The elder woman of the pair who came out of the Fairchild mansion Old King Brady rightly took to be Mrs. Fairchild herself.

She was a tall, spare woman of more than fifty years.

Her features were large and coarse, her brown hair was probably false; her face was the whitest Old King Brady had ever seen. It looked for all the world like the face of a corpse.

Such a person could not help being in marked contrast to the decidedly beautiful young woman who accompanied her.

"That old hag dopes in some way," was Old King Brady's instant conclusion, "and it don't look to me like a case of opium-dope, either."

But there was no time to study the case now.

To ascertain where the pair was bound was the main point.

Old King Brady, who had spotted the cab, made a sign to the driver, who drew up at the curb.

"Engaged?" demanded the old detective.

"No, sir."

"I engage you then—see?"

Old King Brady displayed his shield.

"A detective," said the driver.

"Yes. You see that carriage across the way?"

"Sure."

"I want to follow those people to their destination. You have done such work before?"

"Sure! I can fix you off, sir. Jump in."

"One minute. Do you know whose carriage it is?"

"That is Mrs. Fairchild's, sir."

"And the old woman is madam herself?"

"Yes."

"All right. Keep a sharp eye out."

Old King Brady got into the cab.

The butler in the meanwhile was packing away the various articles which he had brought out of the house in the carriage.

This completed, the driver touched up his horses, and they moved on down California street, with Old King Brady in his cab trailing behind.

"I've got to shadow these people through to their final destination," thought Old King Brady. "I wish now I had brought Harry along. I shall not be able to keep my appointment with him at noon, that is sure."

The old detective was not pleased with the prospect.

Mrs. Fairchild and her companion might be starting for Europe for all he could tell.

The first stage of his journey ended at the Southern Pacific railway station.

Here the ladies left the carriage, and were met by a young man who looked as if he might be a footman.

He took charge of the parcels, and escorted the ladies to a parlor car on an outgoing train.

To learn their destination was easy.

The ticket puncher at the gate when he saw Old King Brady's shield informed him that the ladies and their escort held tickets for Monterey.

Finding that he still had ten minutes before train time, Old King Brady jumped in and made the most of it.

When at last he found himself seated in the same parlor car with the women he had been shadowing, he had ascertained through the baggage room that their trunks were checked for the Hotel del Monte, and had also sent Harry a telegram ordering him to come on to Monterey at once, unless he received orders to the contrary.

The run to Monterey was made without adventure.

The only thing the old detective observed during the journey was the fact that while Mrs. Fairchild talked constantly to her companion in a loud, coarse voice, the other scarcely troubled herself to listen, much less to reply.

Seen at close range the younger woman was by no means as good-looking as Old King Brady had at first supposed.

Hers seemed to be a beauty which had faded.

There was the same deathly paleness about her face wherever its real color showed, but it was a face so artistically colored that this was not observable at first.

That she was actually Mr. Van Gordon's daughter Old King Brady had not a doubt.

He found several opportunities to compare her face with the photograph.

The young woman looked slightly older, but otherwise her face was the same.

Arrived at Monterey, the footman reappeared, and escorted the ladies to a carriage which stood in waiting for them, and they were driven to the hotel.

Old King Brady followed at his leisure in the regular hotel conveyance.

There was no haste now.

Everything could be done with due deliberation.

Old King Brady registered as "Dr. J. T. Brown, San Francisco."

As the clerk was about to assign him a room he displayed his shield, and named his business.

"I want to see the manager," he said. "I may want a special room. You need not place me now."

"The manager is engaged at present," was the reply. "Won't our private detective do?"

"No, he won't. I want to see the manager."

"You may have to wait some time."

"I will wait, then; but don't make it any longer than necessary."

After half an hour Old King Brady was summoned to the manager's private office.

The old detective had not taken the trouble to disguise himself.

So far as he can he always likes to stick to his quaint dress.

And thus it happened that Mr. Norris, the manager, recognized him at a glance.

"You are Old King Brady!" he exclaimed. "Why didn't you send me your card?"

"There was no haste. So you know me, I see?"

"By sight only. I was manager of the Grand Pacific Hotel in Chicago two years ago. I used often to see you there."

"And I often go there. Now, Mr. Norris, I am engaged on a very important case. You have a Mrs. Fairchild stopping here, and registered with her is a Miss Llewellyn."

"Yes."

"I am shadowing those women."

"Is there anything wrong with them? Mrs. Fairchild is a very rich woman. She has frequently stopped at this house."

"Nothing which need affect you. I, however, am shadowing them, as I said. I want to get a room as near their suite as possible."

"I can give you one adjoining or one opposite, as you wish. I shall be very glad to assist."

"Does the adjoining room communicate?"

"No. All our suites are entirely separate."

"Then I prefer the room opposite."

"It is at your service."

"How is it that no ladies' maid accompanied these women?"

"One follows in the next train, I believe. A room is reserved for her."

"Good! And now, Mr. Norris, I am going to explain my case to you. It may be that you can help me."

This frank and open course Old King Brady invariably adopts where it seems feasible.

The result has been that it has made him many friends.

Mr. Norris listened with close attention.

"There is certainly something strange about Mrs. Fairchild," he said. "She is very eccentric, and I must say

you have hit upon one of her eccentricities. She always comes here without a ladies' maid, and pretends that one is going to follow her, but the maid never puts in an appearance. You mark my words. It will be so this time."

"Is that so? And what do you make of it?"

"Well, Mr. Brady, I'll tell you what we make of it. Of course, it is none of our business, and we hotel people never interfere with our guests unless they overstep the bounds of propriety, but in this case the motive is plain enough. She is in the habit of going out disguised as a servant. She wants no spies over her. We have seen her leave the hotel so disguised many a time."

"This is very important. Has she ever been shadowed?"

"She has. She goes to the Chinese quarter. I guess she likes adventure. I guess that is all there is to the mystery when you come to boil it down."

"She goes usually at night, I suppose?"

"Always at night. Sometimes she returns and sometimes she don't. Chances are this young woman will go with her. I should judge by her face, painted though it is, that she is losing her beauty."

"Very likely. Give me the room opposite to these ladies, and I will do the rest."

"It is yours, Mr. Brady. It is dreadful, the way some of these society women go on these days. If I can help to restore that young lady to her home before she becomes a hopeless drug fiend I shall be only too happy. You see, I am a married man, and have daughters of my own."

"By the way, what about that footman who came with them?" asked the old detective.

"Oh, he went back to Frisco, as he always does," replied the manager.

Just then a boy entered the room.

"Well?" demanded the manager.

"We just had a telegram from the Viscount Dalkowise, sir. Mr. Jones wanted me to tell you," replied the boy. "He is not coming until to-morrow. He wants you to be sure to hold the room."

"Oh, all right."

The boy departed.

So did Old King Brady a minute later.

Not then did the old detective imagine that the doings of the Viscount Dalkowise had any interest to him.

He was destined to know to the contrary later on.

And now Old King Brady took possession of a room opposite to the suite occupied by Mrs. Fairchild and her friend.

Here he watched through a partially opened door for several hours, having first ascertained that the ladies were still in their rooms.

But there was nothing doing.

Both Mrs. Fairchild and her friend appeared at the supper-table.

Their toilettes were of the most elaborate description, and they attracted a great deal of attention.

Again it was as it had been on the train.

Mrs. Fairchild did all the talking.

The younger woman seemed scarcely to listen.

Never once did the faintest suspicion of a smile cross her face.

They retired to their rooms immediately the meal was over.

Now once more Old King Brady went on the watch.

It was fearfully tedious business, but a kind in which Old King Brady has had years of experience.

At last at a little before eleven o'clock the old detective's patience was rewarded.

The door opposite softly opened, and a tall woman dressed like a servant came gliding out.

Her face was red, and her whole appearance common to a degree.

She glided through the hall and started down the stairs. But quick as her move was, Old King Brady caught on.

He instantly recognized Mrs. Fairchild in her disguise. Hurrying down by the elevator, Old King Brady made for the servants' entrance of the big hotel.

He was just in time.

One minute later Mrs. Fairchild came out.

She gave one hasty glance, but failed to discover her shadower, who had concealed himself behind a tree.

Then she started down the street on a rapid walk.

Old King Brady stole after her.

As Manager Norris had predicted, the woman made a bee-line for the cluster of old adobe houses down by the water front.

These houses in early days had been occupied by the Spanish population of Monterey.

Now, for the most part, they are given over to Chinamen.

Old King Brady saw Mrs. Fairchild slip into a Chinese grocery and provision store.

"There she goes!" thought the old detective. "I suppose it is opium she is after. But never in all my experience did I see an opium fiend with a face such as that woman carries about with her.

The old detective was right.

As is well known, the faces of opium fiends always have a yellow tinge.

Mrs. Fairchild's face, as we have mentioned before, was as white as the face of a corpse.

CHAPTER VII.

HASHEESH DREAMS.

"Oh, look here, Arthur," said Harry, turning upon the viscount. "I'm no opium smoker. I don't go in for that sort of thing at all."

The viscount raised his yellow eye-brows with every appearance of genuine surprise.

"Why, my dear boy, neither do I," he exclaimed. "Whatever put such a ridiculous idea into your head?"

"What do you smoke, then?"

"Why, tobacco, of course."

"Oh, that is different. This place looks suspiciously like an opium joint, just the same."

"But it isn't. The gentleman who occupies these apartments is an educated Hindoo. His name is Swami Vivaya, I had a letter of introduction to him from a friend in India. He is a wonderfully intelligent man. You will be pleased to form his acquaintance, I am sure."

"I think I saw you on the street with him last night, now that you come to speak of it. You were here last night?"

"Yes. Where were you?"

"Oh, I was standing on Jackson street when you two passed. But it is no wonder you did not see me. You were looking straight up in the air."

The viscount shot a searching look at Young King Brady.

He appeared rather confused.

"Oh, that is a way I have when I am thinking," he replied. "But never mind. If you won't smoke I will. These pipes are wonderful. Did you ever see such a collection. This long-stemmed Turkish fellow is my favorite."

Thus saying, the viscount took down from the rack a pipe with a gold-mounted bowl, the stem of which was considerably more than a yard in length.

"It's a beauty," said Harry, examining it.

"There's the mate to it," added the viscount, pointing to the rack. "You had better try a pipe full of Swami's tobacco. It is fine."

"Let's see it," said Harry.

The viscount took a gold inlaid tobacco box from a shelf and opened it.

"Just smell that!" he said.

The aroma of the tobacco was indeed delicious.

It appeared to be some sort of a Turkish mixture, and looked particularly mild.

Harry's fears were allayed.

"There's no dope in this, that is sure," he said.

"No, indeed!" replied the viscount. "A fellow might smoke fifty pipes full and it would do no harm."

He proceeded to fill up, and then, flinging himself on a divan, stretched out at full length, and resting his pipe on the floor asked Harry to light it.

Young King Brady did so, and the Englishman began with a long pull.

The odor of the burning tobacco was singularly pleasing. Young King Brady put aside his suspicions and filled a pipe for himself.

"Lie down here with me, Harry," said the viscount. "There's plenty of room. Don't go over there in the corner by yourself."

The divan certainly was wide enough for two, so Young King Brady made no objection.

"How the deuce am I going to get a light?" he laughingly asked.

"Oh, I'll attend to that. Shove the pipe this way."

The viscount struck a match, and lighted the pipe, after which Harry stretched himself on the divan at his side.

"There; isn't that fine?" demanded the Englishman.

"It is the most delicious tobacco I ever smoked," replied Harry.

And it seemed so.

There was a peculiar fascination about it, too.

As they lay there pulling on the pipes the viscount began talking about his travels.

To Harry's surprise he proved to be a very interesting talker, and some of his stories about life in India were really fascinating.

The pipes, smoked out, were refilled, and this was repeated three times.

And now at last Young King Brady began to feel himself getting drowsy.

He could hear the viscount still talking, but his voice sounded as if it came from far away.

"Great Scott, there is dope in this stuff!" murmured Harry, and he let the pipe slip out of his hand and tried to rise.

In an instant his companion's arm was thrown about his neck.

"Lie still! Don't you move," said the viscount. "The best is to come."

"What do you mean?" gasped Harry. "You said there was no dope in this stuff."

Instead of replying in words the viscount began to sing.

And such a voice! Never in his life had Harry listened to anything so heavenly.

It seemed to him as if the singing had been going on for hours—it was a dreamy love song—when suddenly it ceased, and the voice whispered in his ear:

"This is what I want. An intelligent companion to travel through Elysium at my side. Sleep, dear brother! Sleep, and awake in Wonderland! Sleep!"

Whatever the stuff might have been that he had smoked, Young King Brady neither knew nor cared.

For at that moment he felt his senses slipping away from him.

Oblivion followed.

How long the time was before he awakened Harry did not know.

But with the awakening came a wondrous change.

Young King Brady opened his eyes upon a new world.

He was still lying on the divan, and his companion's arm was still on his neck.

The viscount was slumbering peacefully; his yellow hair was tossed back, and his face wore a seraphic expression.

It seemed to Young King Brady as if he had never seen a face so beautiful. It was like the face of an angel.

And yet he felt that he must tear himself away lest the fascination become too great.

Disengaging the viscount's arm, Harry staggered to his feet.

The instant he did so it seemed as if the whole scene changed.

He felt as if he was floating in the air above a vast forest.

"This is India," a voice seemed to say in his ear.

He saw darting among the trees hundred of tigers, chased by men on foot and men on horses.

One horse came dashing by without a rider.

"Oh, if I could only join them!" Harry said to himself.

The wish was no sooner expressed than he dropped into the vacant saddle, and went dashing off after the tigers with the rest.

He could hear the shout of the men, the neighing of horses, the snarl of the wild beasts, and the crack of rifles.

Then suddenly a vast ball of light seemed to descend from the heavens, and drop directly in his path.

It exploded with a loud report, and in the same instant Young King Brady returned to his senses to find himself running around the room shouting like a madman.

Filled with terror, Harry pulled up and tried to think.

He knew now what he was up against, for all this had been most vividly described to him by Old King Brady, who had once been through a similar experience.

"I have been smoking hasheesh!" thought Harry. "Great Scott! What shall I do? According to the Governor the effects of the infernal stuff holds for hours. These visions come again and again."

For the moment he felt all right, and he was inclined to make an attempt to leave the place.

With this idea in his mind he started to look for his hat.

As he did so his eyes fell upon the viscount.

He was sitting upon the divan staring.

"Harry, dear boy, don't go!" he cried. "Stay with me! You'll like it after you get used to it."

It was too late!

Again all Harry's strange sensations seemed to return with a rush.

"Help me up!" cried the viscount. "Give me a hand!"

Harry caught him by the hand.

As the viscount rose from the divan he seemed to grow taller and taller.

It was as though his legs were unfolding in sections.

Harry tried to let go his hand, but it was impossible.

And now to his horror he found himself growing tall, too.

"Why, you're a hundred feet high, Arthur!" he shouted.

"So are you!" came the answer, accompanied by a silly laugh. "Up! Up we go! I'm bound for the moon! Hold on, brother! Hold on tight! Oh, isn't this fun!"

They continued to rise—we must speak as though these

strange sensations were real in order to make ourselves understood.

There was nothing above them now but the sky.

"On to the moon!" shouted the viscount.

"On to the moon!" echoed Harry, and though he knew he was a fool for saying it, he could not have done differently to save his life.

Higher and higher they seemed to rise.

At last Harry found himself with his head up in the air, and the viscount's head was turned the same way.

Above him he could see the moon.

Its size had enormously increased; it looked as big as a cartwheel.

"On to the moon! On to the moon," they were both shouting.

Bigger and bigger it seemed to grow, until it filled all space, and the sky was blotted out.

Harry could see vast mountain chains, but they were upside down.

Now he perceived a city of immense extent, every house standing on its head, as were the people, a strange dwarfish race which swarmed the streets.

And still they seemed to rise when all at once Harry looked down at his companion's legs.

They were miles and miles high.

He looked at his own.

They were the same.

"Oh, look at your legs, Arthur!" he shouted, and then broke out into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

The viscount joined in the laugh.

They looked up again.

The mountains and the city had vanished.

It was night, and myriads of stars were shining above them.

"Come down! Come down!" a voice shouted below them.

Harry looked down, and saw far beneath him a black man with white glittering teeth.

It was the Hindoo.

He recognized him instantly.

"Come down! Come down!" the voice repeated.

Then all in an instant Harry felt his legs give way beneath him.

He was standing on nothing, still clutching the viscount's hand.

They were falling through space.

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD KING BRADY OVERHEARS A PLOT.

Little dreaming what a singular experience Harry was having, Old King Brady stood outside the Chinese grocery in Monterey, wondering how he should next proceed.

For an adobe the building was quite a large one.

It was but one story high, as all these old adobes are, and was built around an interior court.

Only one end of the front was occupied by the Chinese store.

To what the remainder of the ancient structure was devoted Old King Brady could only guess.

Evidently this house had been the residence of some fine old Spanish family in the early days.

The windows of the residential part were guarded by iron bars, and Old King Brady, if he had been of an imaginative turn of mind, which he is not, might have fancied that he could see the pretty donas of the olden time peering out at him.

But the old detective is not the man to waste time in such nonsense.

He walked around behind the house.

There was an alley here.

The wall facing it had no window; the rooms in this part of the house faced the court.

"If a body could only get on the roof," thought the old detective. "These houses usually have open skylights, and I have no doubt this one has. In that case I might be able to catch a glimpse of what is going on inside there."

But the wall was fifteen feet high, and the case seemed hopeless.

Old King Brady began to think of taking some local detective into his confidence.

This plan, however, was promptly rejected.

He strolled along down the alley, wondering what he ought to do.

In a few moments he came to a cross street.

Here the alley ended.

The cross street led down to the water front.

Old King Brady followed it, scarcely knowing where he was going. He was looking for a ladder.

But in a minute he came upon something which gave him hope.

It was only a carpenter's shop standing back in a yard.

It was enclosed by a fence, and over the top of this the ends of a couple of short ladders projected.

"The very thing I want!" thought the old detective. "If I could only borrow one of those ladders now."

Old King Brady is a man of many resources.

He looked into the situation, and promptly discovered that the gate of the fence was secured by an ordinary padlock.

Feeling in his pockets, Old King Brady produced one of those "universal tools," as they are called, a hollow handle containing tools of various sorts which can be screwed into it.

The old detective inserted a screw-driver into the handle, and promptly pried off the staple which held the padlock in place.

He opened the gate, stole in and was out again in a minute, carrying a short ladder.

He had captured the very thing he wanted.

The detective glanced up and down the street, but could see nobody.

Starting on a run then, he was back in the alley with his ladder in a jiffy.

This he placed against the wall of the old adobe and climbed upon the roof.

This was constructed of earthen tiles, imbedded in asphalt.

Lying flat the old detective looked over the roofs which surrounded the interior court.

He found, as he supposed he would, that there were several small skylights in these roofs.

All were raised to admit air.

"This is easy," thought the old detective. "I certainly ought to be able to catch on here."

He did not attempt to stand upright lest he should be seen from the street.

So he wriggled his way over the tiles like a snake, and peered down into the room beneath the first skylight.

This was merely a Chinese opium joint.

It was fixed up in the usual style, with rough wooden bunks.

Four Chinamen were in the bunks.

Two were smoking, and two were sound asleep.

Old King Brady passed on to the next skylight.

Here he found himself looking into a room furnished in the Chinese style.

An old Chinaman with very few clothes on sat at a table working his abaccus, or counting machine, and making entries in a tissue-paper book.

"Probably this is a regular rabbit warren for Chinks," thought the old detective. "There are all sorts of things going on here."

He crept on to the next skylight, and looked down.

This time it was a gambling room.

Half a dozen Chinamen stood around a table playing fan-tan.

They were too deeply interested in the game to look up.

Indeed, if they had it is doubtful if they would have seen anything, for Old King Brady exercised every care.

Still continuing his journey over the roofs, he came to the next skylight.

And here he struck exactly what he was looking for.

Peering down, he saw a small room most elaborately furnished in the Chinese style.

Its only occupant was Mrs. Fairchild.

She lay stretched upon a heap of cushions, smoking a pipe with a big bowl and a stem over a yard long.

"What on earth is she up to?" thought Old King Brady. "If I know anything about the dope smoking business it can't be done in that way."

Old King Brady was puzzled.

The smoke from Mrs. Fairchild's big pipe came curling up through the skylight.

He got a whiff of it.

"No opium in that," he said to himself. "It seems like extra fine tobacco to me."

The woman lay there with her eyes half closed, and seemed to be enjoying herself immensely.

"Can it be hasheesh?" Old King Brady asked himself.

He knew that the drug was sometimes reduced to a tincture and put upon tobacco.

As he lay there thinking about it, he made up his mind that it probably was hasheesh.

He knew that the face of the confirmed hasheesh smoker assumes a deadly whiteness.

He remembered Mrs. Fairchild's face, and even now, by the light of the red-shaded gas jet he could see that same whiteness beneath the woman's paint.

"That's what she is—a hasheesh fiend," thought the old detective. "This is something rare among the Chinese, but there are a few of them who have lived in India who have learned to use the drug."

He made up his mind to take it easy and await results.

For fifteen minutes he lay there and never moved.

"It is probably her first pipe," he said to himself. "As I understand it, a confirmed hasheesh fiend has to smoke several before there is something doing. Unfortunate creature! How did she ever come to get such a habit as that? It would account for her white face, though, and for the girl's, too. Hasheesh fiends are said to be most vindictive people once they turn against a person."

Just then Mrs. Fairchild put down the pipe, and touched an electric call bell, which rang out sharply.

In a few minutes the heavy curtains which hung against the walls were thrust aside, and a young Chinaman entered.

Here was another white face.

It was the whitest Old King Brady had ever seen on a Chinaman.

"Madam wants another pipe?" he said, bowing politely.

"Yes, Wang," replied the woman, in a harsh, disagreeable voice, "but not for a few minutes. Before the stuff gets into my head I want to talk."

"Madam's pleasure is my pleasure," replied the Chinaman, in faultless English.

"I want to ask about Prince Hi-Ti-Li," was the answer. "When do you expect him here?"

"At last I am on the trail of my Frisco fakir," thought Old King Brady. "This is all right. Couldn't be better. I am going to find out something now."

"I expect him to-morrow, madam," said Wang.

"When did you hear from him?"

"To-day."

"Has he got next to the viscount?"

"The telegram which I had said yes."

"That is good. He promised to see me before I left, but he did not come. I expected to meet him here. Does he come as the viscount's valet?"

"Yes, madam. He has so worked on the Japanese valet as to make him furious against his master. All is going well."

"I am very glad to hear it. You know, Wang, that all

depends upon you. The viscount is a confirmed hasheesh fiend. In fact, he is worse than I am. Through Swami we learn that his one wish is to get a wife who also uses the drug."

"Which you have arranged for him, madam."

"Yes; or rather the prince has. He gives up his own wife, you know."

"Oh, I know! It is more than I would do."

"And more than most men would do, Wang. You are an intelligent man. I can talk to you. You know how close the prince and I are. What I want is to get away from San Francisco; to get into English society, where my money will carry me through. For me to attempt it myself would be a hopeless case; but as the chaperon of a beautiful woman about to marry a viscount it can be done. Of course, you understand that the viscount will never marry her. That is understood. Once I get the crazy old earl into my clutches and have worked my way into society, I— But there, Wang! I am not going to tell you all my plans."

"Madam does not have to," replied the Chinaman respectfully. "I go with you as your servant. It is enough. I am satisfied with the money you have promised me. But let us talk no more now. Have your smoke, madam. You should get back to the hotel to-night."

"I don't go back to-night, Wang."

"I am sorry. Soon they will come to suspect you. Then there will be trouble. You know I promised Mr. Fairchild that I would keep a watch over you."

"Bah!" cried the woman fiercely. "As though you could or I would let you! Jim thought a lot of you, Wang, but you mustn't step out of your place. That won't do. Now fill me another pipe."

"But the girl, Mrs. Fairchild. Is it safe to leave her alone? You know what Prince Hi-Ti-Li's wife is. She also has had a taste of the hasheesh. Next thing you know she will be knocking at my door and making trouble for us all."

"No, she won't. I fixed that. I gave her a dose which will keep her asleep till morning. Fill me another pipe, Wang, and let me have my dreams, but don't you let me out of here until just before five o'clock. Then have the bath ready, and I will be on the move and slip in when the servants begin to stir."

Wang nodded but made no reply.

Taking a square ebony box from a shelf, he filled the long pipe with the tobacco which it contained, and proceeded to light it.

Then, as Mrs. Fairchild lay back upon the cushions and began inhaling the drugged mixture with every appearance of satisfaction, he silently withdrew.

And Old King Brady did the same.

The cat was out of the bag now.

The old detective had no desire to witness the antics of a hasheesh fiend.

Crawling back over the roofs, he descended the ladder, and restored it to its place in the yard of the carpenter's

shop, and walked back to the hotel, pondering as to how he should act.

To forcibly attempt to separate the "Princess" Hi-Ti-Li from her companion he knew would be useless.

"I must get a chance to talk to the poor girl privately and at a time when she is free from the drug," he said to himself.

But how was this to be done?"

Next day the young woman's Chinese husband was due, and there would also be an English lord to deal with.

"I must have Harry here," Old King Brady determined.

It was after midnight when he reached the hotel, but in spite of that he decided to attempt to get Young King Brady on the telephone.

After some difficulty he got into communication with the night clerk of the Lick House.

"It is Old King Brady," he called. "I want to speak with my partner. Have him wakened if he is asleep, and let him come to the phone."

But the answer was decidedly disappointing.

"I am sorry I can't oblige you, Mr. Brady," replied the clerk, "but your partner has not been in since morning. His key is in the box now."

Here was startling intelligence.

"What on earth can have happened to the boy?" Old King Brady asked himself.

But he did not worry about it, well knowing that Harry was fully able to take care of himself.

Finding that he could do nothing further, Old King Brady went to bed.

CHAPTER IX.

DEATH.

The effects of hasheesh are not like opium.

With the latter drug there is a continuous train of fantastic visions while the effects of the drug lasts.

It is different with hasheesh.

The visions and delusions are spasmodic, and are not accompanied by sleep.

An old hasheesh user can go on about his business, and scarcely be detected if he don't take too much of the drug.

But everything he sees around him is distorted in the most fantastic fashion.

The beginner does not understand this. He believes in his visions.

But the old hand, while secretly enjoying the excitement, knows that what he sees is not real.

At first the visions are rather pleasant, but if an overdose is taken or the excitement prolonged they become of the most horrible description.

Fearful deeds are often committed in India by the victims of "chang," as hasheesh is called by the Hindoos.

Usually it is taken internally by those who are addicted to its use.

The smoking of tobacco saturated with the tincture rarely leads to the fearful visions mentioned.

But the habit is even worse than opium. Once acquired it is next to impossible to give it up, and insanity is almost certain to be the final result.

Young King Brady's vision ceased on the instant.

He found himself sprawled on the floor, with the viscount on top of him panting for breath.

They were in the same room, and the Hindoo whom Harry had seen on Jackson street was bending over them.

"You fool!" he cried. "Didn't I warn you? Your heart won't stand it. You must not smoke for several days!"

He seized the viscount by the collar, and with an iron grip lifted him to his feet.

"Don't scold me, Swami," whimpered the viscount. "I had to do it, you know."

"I know that you are a fool, and will spoil all our plans. Remember what I promised you! Who is this young man?"

"A friend of mine."

"And you brought him here without my permission? That was not right, my lord. But here, take a pill, both of you. This thing must end right now."

The Hindoo produced a little ivory box, and opening it passed it to the viscount, who took out one of the pills which it contained and swallowed it.

"You have been smoking, too?" demanded the Hindoo, glaring at Harry.

"Yes."

"Take a pill! It will neutralize the drug."

Harry obeyed.

He scarcely knew what he was about

Already the Hindoo had begun to grow tall before his eyes.

He seemed to tower above him like some black demon.

But almost as soon as he had swallowed the pill the man shrunk back to his natural size.

"You two must go into the bath at once," declared the Hindoo. "We must break this right up. Strip!"

Harry could not refuse to obey.

He felt that this strange man was his absolute master, and that he must do just exactly as he was told.

It seemed to be the same way with the viscount.

He also immediately began to undress.

Pulling aside the curtains, the Hindoo opened a door. Here there was a bath-room with shower, needle bath, and a tank filled with cold water set in the floor and lined with white porcelain tiles.

"In with you both!" cried Swami. "Dive! Head-first now!"

A cold bath is very efficient in counteracting the effects of hasheesh.

Swami Vivaya knew his business, it would seem.

Harry plunged into the water.

It was wonderfully cool and refreshing.

The viscount followed his example, and they swam about for a few minutes.

Harry was rapidly returning to his normal condition.

"Hi-Ti-Li!" he heard the Hindoo call.

"Hello! The prince is here!" thought Harry. "This isn't so bad. Instead of wandering away from my business I am right up against it. I am mighty glad I came."

He came out of the tank, and went into the needle bath.

The viscount followed him.

"It's a shame that he should interfere with us just as we were having such fun," he growled.

Swami had vanished, and now in his place a young Chinaman entered.

"Well, my lord, you try the pipe early in the day," he said with a grin.

"Rub me down, Hi-Ti-Li," replied the viscount. "Give my friend a towel and he can rub himself."

The Chinaman had several Turkish towels thrown over his arm.

He gave one to Harry, and selecting one for himself, threw the rest on a chair, and began to dry the viscount with all the skill of a practised Turkish bath employee.

"I have got rid of the Jap, Hi," said the viscount. "I am going to engage you in his place."

"Yes, I know," replied the Chinaman, who spoke perfect English.

"I waited for you in the Square, Hi, but you didn't come," continued the viscount, reproachfully. "Why was that?"

"Couldn't," replied the Chinaman. "Turn around, please."

The viscount turned and continued talking in the most familiar way to the Chinaman.

"You will go with me to Monterey, Hi?" he asked.

"Sure."

"I am so anxious to meet this lady Swami has been telling me about. I think—ah!"

He gave one wild cry, clapped his hand to his heart, and would have dropped to the floor if Prince Hi-Ti-Li had not caught him in his arms.

The Chinaman seemed scared to death.

"Ring the bell!" he cried. "It is there in the corner of the other room. He is dying! The hasheesh has struck his heart!"

Harry darted into the other room.

There was an electric button against the mantel, and he pushed it.

In a minute Swami burst into the bathroom.

But it was too late.

Harry and Hi-Ti-Li were holding the unfortunate Englishman.

"He's dead!" cried the Hindoo. "I warned him! The fool! Now all our plans are destroyed."

"Worse than that!" groaned the prince. "We will have to get out of this."

"I will—that's sure."

"Shall we call a doctor?"

"No, no! It's no use. I told you, Hi-Ti-Li, that I am a full-fledged physician. His heart was weak. I warned him last night. What on earth shall we do?"

They carried the viscount into the other room, and laid him on the divan where the fatal smoke had been indulged in.

For fully fifteen minutes Swami continued to work over him.

At last he gave it up.

"He is dead, and that is all there is to it," he said. "Now what on earth shall we do?"

Prince Hi-Ti-Li glanced at Harry, who in the meantime had dressed and stood quietly by.

His head felt light, and as he watched the strange pair they occasionally seemed to expand, but there was no other effect from the drug remaining.

"I'm up against some plot or other," thought Harry. "I suppose I had better get out of this. I wonder if they will let me go?"

This thought had recurred to him several times.

Now the Hindoo turned and said:

"What is your name?"

"Henry Johnson."

"How did you come to fall in with this man?"

Harry told about the incident in Portsmouth Square.

Hi-Ti-Li at once grew excited.

"I'll fix that Jap!" he cried. "How does he dare——"

"Shut up!" broke in Swami.

"Johnson!" he added, "I suppose he told you who he was."

"Oh, yes."

"Have you ever smoked hasheesh before?"

"Never! I didn't know what was in the tobacco or I would not have touched it."

"I suppose you don't want to be mixed up in this business?"

"Naturally I don't."

"You would like to go?"

"I should."

"All right. Follow me."

Swami pulled aside the hangings and opened a door. Instantly Harry perceived that it was not the door leading into the main hall.

"Is this the way?" he asked.

"This is the way to the rear of the house. I am going to let you out on the alley," was the reply. "Go on."

Harry stepped into a narrow passage, and went down a winding stairs, with the Hindoo close behind him.

He had his doubts, but there seemed to be no help for it.

The only way was to humor the man.

At the foot of the stairs there was a door, and the Hindoo told Young King Brady to open it.

Scarcely had Harry done so when he received a violent push on the back.

He lost his balance and fell on his face.

Instantly the door was slammed behind him, and the key was turned.

CHAPTER X.

HARRY JOINS FORCES WITH THE PRINCE.

Young King Brady's troubles had but just begun, it seemed.

His fall almost stunned him.

He picked himself up in the darkness, with his head all swimming again.

"Confound the luck! I'm in trouble now!" he thought. "That black wretch! Can he suspect?"

There had been chance enough for Swami to inspect his clothes and discover his shield while he was in the bath.

Harry feared the worst.

He felt for his shield.

It was in the secret pocket, where he had placed it upon entering the hasheesh den.

"Perhaps he did not find it," he said to himself. "All I can do is wait."

He now flashed his little electric dark lantern about.

He found that the place in which he was confined was merely a cellar.

The walls were boarded up in San Francisco style, for there stone is hard to obtain.

Where the little window should have been plates of iron had been screwed.

It was not an easy place to escape from, as Harry after several trials proved.

Half an hour passed, and then the door at the foot of the stairs opened, and Prince Hi-Ti-Li entered.

In one hand he carried a small lamp, in the other a revolver.

He closed the door behind him, and a key was heard to turn.

Harry was sitting upon an old box at the time.

He did not move nor try to draw his revolver, which he found intact.

He was anxious to see where all this was going to end.

"Well," said Hi-Ti-Li, with a grin, "you are here still, it seems?"

"You see me. Why don't you let me go about my business?"

"It can't be done."

"You speak pretty good English for a Chinaman."

"Why not? I was born here. I was educated in an Eastern college. I never was in China in my life."

"Is that so?"

"It is. But that has nothing to do with the present case."

"Well?"

"Look here, Johnson, that man upstairs and I have nothing against you."

"I don't know why you should have, I am sure."

"We have not, but we are in trouble in more ways than one. We don't propose to let you send the police here. That's why we took time to think."

"Why should I send the police. I am an old fakir myself. My running up against that poor fellow was the merest accident. I am sure his death was not brought about by you."

"Now is the time he will tell me that I am a detective if he knows it," thought Harry.

But the Chinaman said nothing of the sort.

"Of course, we had nothing to do with his death," he replied. "It is the greatest misfortune which could have happened to us. It hits us in two ways."

"I don't understand."

"Of course you don't, and I am not going to try to make you until I am sure that we can come to an understanding."

"Well?"

"I'm going to put a proposition to you, Johnson. I want to see how you take it. After that I will be able to decide what is to become of you."

"Put it, then. Don't be bashful. I am good for any old thing."

"Suppose I was to let you in on a scheme which might make your fortune. Would you kick at a little risk?"

"Not on your life. I'm out for the dust. I told you I was a bit of a fakir. Just try me—that's all."

"I am going to. You may think that because I am a Chinaman I am necessarily a fool, but——"

"But I don't think anything of the sort. I have already sized you up for a mighty shrewd fellow."

"Well, I know a few things. Here it is in a nutshell. That Englishman was half an idiot. He learned to smoke hasheesh in India. He was far gone. His father, the Earl of Penrose, is an imbecile. The young man was in charge of a vast estate. His income was enormous. All this Swami knows through friends of his in England. How would you like to step into his shoes?"

"How could I? Do I look like him?"

"Certainly not. You couldn't go to England and openly take his place, of course. That would be impossible."

"I should say so."

"And it is not proposed to have you do it; but you could draw all kinds of drafts and get the money before you were discovered."

"Ah! I follow you."

"But that isn't all. There is at the present time stopping at the Hotel Del Monte at Monterey a woman who is worth a couple of millions. She has with her a beautiful girl who passes as her niece, but is not. She, the old woman, I mean, is expecting the viscount at the hotel today. She means to marry him off to the younger woman, or at least interest him in her. She means to go to Eng-

land with them, where she hopes to get into high society through the viscount's influence and social position. She is ignorant and vain, and she smokes hasheesh. She can be easily fooled. We could work a hundred thousand or so out of her as easy as turning over one's finger. Now, do you catch on?"

"Did she ever see the viscount?"

"Never. She is expecting me to bring him there. She will believe me when I tell her that you are the man."

"What is her name?"

"Names come later. Do you want to go in on this deal?"

"You bet I do! If I could only trust you I'd jump at the chance."

"We are equal on that score. How do I know that I can trust you?"

"That's so."

"You don't know me, and I don't know you."

"I know you in a way."

"Ha! How?"

"I heard you called Hi-Ti-Li. Didn't you run the Mon Lay Ong which burned on Dupont street the other night?"

"You know that much, eh?"

"I do."

"Do you belong in this town?"

"I don't. I come from New York. I just happened to be in your place—that is all."

"Have you friends in Frisco?"

"Not one. I'm good for this game, Hi, if you will take me on."

"Well, we have either got to do that or give it up. We can't get that body out of here without attracting attention. It is impossible. Now I'll be perfectly frank with you, Johnson."

"I wish you would."

"I'm going to be. Swami's business hasn't paid. He fitted up this place at a big expense, but the sports didn't catch on. I had a hasheesh room, too, but it didn't pay. I got next to this old woman, who owned the building. We heard the viscount was coming, and I persuaded her to go into this scheme. I fired the place with her consent, and gave it out that my wife and I were burned in it, but we were not. It is my wife who is now posing as her niece. She was to be used as a bait to catch the viscount. Now do you catch on?"

"You don't expect me to marry your wife?"

"I'd like to see you try it? Oh, no! The old woman thinks that's the game, but it isn't. I propose to work her for all she is worth, and draw on the Penrose estates for all they are worth. That's my plan."

"And where do I come in?"

"Half if you will join me and play your part well."

"Is your wife a Chinawoman?"

"You bet she isn't. She is a beauty. Her father is one of the richest men in New York."

"Well, I'm willing if you are."

"I say let's try it. Swami is going to skip. I shall see

him paid for what he has done. He proposes to hide the body in this cellar, and then close the place up. He would have killed you and left your body here too only for me."

"I'm sure I am very much obliged to you for saving my life."

"You see now just how we are situated. This scheme may foot up half a million if you can get next to the old woman and borrow of her."

"You haven't told me her name yet."

"I'll do that when we strike Monterey, by which time we ought to be better acquainted. Now, is it a go?"

"It is as far as I am concerned."

"Good! Shake! We are partners now, and you will find that when you get a Chink for a partner you get a square one. Now come upstairs."

Harry shook hands heartily, and followed the prince out of the cellar into the smoking parlor above.

To his immense relief the body of the unfortunate viscount had been removed.

Young King Brady felt sincerely sorry for the unfortunate young man.

Still, there was nothing for which he could blame himself in connection with his death.

It was plain that the original plan of the fakir had been to keep the viscount well doped with hasheesh, and not only to bleed him for all he was worth, but to bleed Mrs. Fairchild as well.

The question was how deeply was his wife involved in the plot.

The experiences through which he was passing were all very interesting to Young King Brady, but he felt less hope than ever of being able to close up the case successfully as far as Mr. Van Gordon's interests are concerned."

The prince now continued to discuss his plans, and after a little Swami came into the room.

"So you two have fixed it up between you," said the Hindoo.

"That's what we have," the prince replied.

The Hindoo looked Harry over doubtfully.

"It is strange that you should happen to drop into this business," he said. "As far as I am concerned I wouldn't trust you, but the death of the Viscount Dalkowise puts me down and out, so I have nothing to say except to you, Hi-Ti-Li."

He shot a fierce look at the Chinaman as he spoke.

"Well, say it," replied the prince.

"It is this," continued Swami. "Don't you go back on me, or you will regret it—that's all."

The prince gave a sneering laugh.

"Don't you fear!" he answered. "We are too closely tied up together to even think of going back on each other. But now to come down to business. We have got to get the viscount's baggage out of the Palace Hotel some way, and for my part I don't see how it is going to be done."

"I can't help you there," replied the Hindoo. "My

color stands against me. There is absolutely nothing that I can do."

"And what am I to do? Who will listen to a Chink?" said the prince.

"Unless we can get hold of his things and ship them to Monterey there will be nothing doing," replied the Hindoo. "We need his private papers. We must have them."

"Put them in my hands," added the Chinaman, "and we can raise fifty thousand dollars in short notice. I can exactly imitate the signature of any man who ever breathed."

It seemed to be Young King Brady's chance.

"There won't be the least trouble about all that," he said.

"Hello!" cried the Hindoo, "and what have you got to suggest?"

"Well, there are two ways. The viscount told me that he told them at the hotel that he was going to engage a Chinese valet."

"He did, eh?" cried the prince. "Then I could go there and order his things shipped."

"Better let me telephone that you are coming. If you can imitate any man's signature, then I can imitate any man's voice, doncherknow!"

The last part of this sentence Harry gave in the voice of the viscount.

The imitation was perfect.

"Good! Good!" cried the prince. "Look here. I rather begin to like this. I believe I had rather deal with you than with the viscount himself."

Young King Brady laughed, and shortly after they left the house together, leaving the gloomy Hindoo to take care of the body of the unfortunate Viscount Dalkowise as best he could.

On their way down Jackson street the first person they ran into was Charlie Ching.

The shrewd Chinaman merely glanced at them, and to Harry's immense relief passed with no sign of recognition.

They went down on Kearny street, where Harry telephoned the Palace Hotel.

The prince, who stood behind him as he called, afterwards declared that his imitation of the viscount's voice was perfect.

There was not the least trouble.

Harry told the hotel clerk that he had engaged a Chinese valet, who would call in half an hour to pack up and ship his belongings to the Hotel del Monte at Monterey, and he asked him to give the Chinaman free entrance to his rooms.

"The way is clear now, so go ahead," he said to the prince when they passed out on the street.

"And I suppose we have to part," replied the Chinaman, with some suspicion.

"What else? I can't go with you."

"Where shall I see you again?"

"Wherever you say. You had better bring the prince's

dress-suit case along with a suit of his clothes. You see how I am dressed. It won't do."

"That's right. Where are you staying?"

"In a cheap furnished room over on Mission street."

"Shall I come there?"

"I don't think you had better. Can't I meet you somewhere in Chinatown?"

"No; as I explained to you, I am in disguise myself. I don't want to be seen around Chinatown any more than I can help."

"All right. Suppose I take a room at the What Cheer House on Commercial street? You can come there. I will register under the name of Smith."

This was agreed to, and they parted.

About two hours later the prince turned up at the hotel with his dress-suit case.

Harry would have liked to have gone to the Lick House in the meanwhile.

His fear that he might be watched was too great, however, and he concluded that it would be wiser to keep away.

The prince reported success.

"I had no trouble at all," he declared. "I have secured all the viscount's private papers, and his trunks are already on the way to Monterey."

"Do you propose to raise any money on his account before you start?" asked Harry.

"What do you think?" inquired the fakir. "I am beginning to have a lot of confidence in your opinion."

"If it was me I wouldn't do it. I would make my draft at Monterey, and cash it with some banker there."

To this the prince agreed.

It was now one o'clock, and at four Young King Brady, in the guise of the Viscount Dalkowise, started for Monterey with Prince Hi-Ti-Li.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BRADYS JOIN FORCES AGAIN.

Old King Brady did not hurry himself the morning after his adventure on the roof of the Chinese opium joint.

He made up his mind that Mrs. Fairchild would scarcely be about early.

Descending to the office, he looked over the register.

Here he saw that late the night before the Viscount Dalkowise had arrived.

Old King Brady had already made up his mind that he would make an effort to see the viscount and have a talk with him.

"If I can put him wise as to the plot that has been concocted against him by this Frisco fakir it may simplify matters," he thought.

He went again to the manager and took him into his confidence.

"Why, yes; the viscount and his Chinese valet arrived last night," said Mr. Norris.

"So that is their game, is it?" he added. "This Fairchild woman is half crazy, no doubt. She was out again last night, as you say. She came in about six o'clock this morning."

"Is it known that there is an opium joint run in behind Wang's store?" the old detective asked.

"Of course it is," replied Mr. Norris. "But what can you do about it? It is the same here as it is in Frisco. Somebody pays."

"Don't you think we had better see the viscount? If what I overheard is true, then this Chinese valet of his is no less a person than the notorious Frisco fakir, Prince Hi-Ti-Li, who ran the Mon Lay Ong gambling joint on Dupont street."

"We can easily settle that question through our hotel detective," said Mr. Norris. "Shall I call him in? He knows all that kind of cattle perfectly well."

"I think you had better."

The manager rang his bell, and instructed the boy who appeared in answer to send in "Mr. Dowd."

In a few minutes a sedate looking old gentleman—the very last person one would take for a hotel detective—appeared.

"Mr. Dowd, this is Old King Brady, the famous New York detective," said Norris, introducing.

"Oh, I know," replied Dowd. "I caught on to you last night, Mr. Brady. The name you signed to the register didn't fool me."

They shook hands, and Old King Brady said:

"Now, Mr. Dowd, I am sorry that I can't give you my full confidence in this case, but it is strictly confidential. I want your help though."

"Anything Mr. Brady wants he gets," said Mr. Norris.

Dowd bowed and Old King Brady added:

"Were you around when the Viscount Dalkowise arrived last night?"

"I was."

"You saw his Chinese valet?"

"I did. You see, Mr. Brady, I am not going to try to butt in. I merely answer your questions, and will do anything in my power to help you out."

Evidently Detective Dowd was just a little miffed at having only a half confidence bestowed upon him.

Without paying any attention to this, Old King Brady asked if he knew the Chinese valet.

"I do," was the reply.

"Who is he?"

"He is a notorious Chinese fakir from Frisco, who has been a long time under the eye of the police. He ran an opium joint and gambling house on Dupont street. It was known as the Mon Lay Ong. It burned recently. They say they used to smoke hasheeh there as well as

opium. This fellow passes under the name of Prince Hi-Ti-Li."

"You were right, Mr. Brady," said Norris.

"I see I was. Now, Mr. Dowd, I want to get a private interview with this viscount. Will you ascertain when the valet leaves him, and instantly let me know?"

"Well, now will be your time, then," was the reply, "for Hi, as we call him in Frisco, went out about half an hour ago. I have no doubt that the Englishman is alone in his rooms at the present time."

"So! Then I will send up my card."

Detective Dowd was gone only about ten minutes.

"The viscount is alone up there, and will see you any time," he said.

"I will go right up," replied Old King Brady. "I look to you to keep the Chink from following me in case he comes in."

"Great Scott! You!" exclaimed Old King Brady, when he entered the room.

"Here I am, Governor!" cried Harry, for it was he.

"And you are the English lord, then?"

"All there is left of him, poor chap!"

"Hello! He is real, then?"

"Was. He is dead, and I have taken his place."

"Harry, you are great! Upon my word, I must congratulate you. You got next to Prince Hi-Ti-Li?"

"Indeed I did."

"You have succeeded in playing into my hands then in the most beautiful fashion."

"And you into mine. It was a delightful surprise to receive your card. I was just wondering how on earth I should be able to communicate with you when it came up."

"Hurry up now, and tell me all, and we will compare notes."

The Bradys then told each other their stories.

"This is a strange business," said the old detective, "and the strangest part of it is it does not appear to help our case a bit."

"What we want is to get the girl to go back to New York."

"Exactly. But from what you tell me I judge that she is in the plot, too."

"There isn't the least doubt about it. I have no idea that she would go if she was asked."

"One of us must try it on, however."

"Which shall it be?"

"I was intending to do it, but now that matters have taken this turn I think you are the best one for the job."

"I knew you would say that. Well, I shall have to undertake the commission."

"How do you expect to be introduced to her?"

"The prince will introduce me to Mrs. Fairchild. She will do the rest."

"I see. Has he seen Mrs. Fairchild?"

"Yes. She is in bed, and will remain there till afternoon. You know what is the matter with her?"

"Too much hasheesh?"

"Yes. She eats it as well as smokes it. After she got in this a. m. she took a couple of pills. She is anchored until evening, all right."

"Did the prince see her?"

"He saw his wife. Poor soul! He was telling me about her. She smokes hasheesh. I'm afraid she is a goner. We could easy expose these people and land the prince in jail, but I don't see how it is going to help us about the girl."

"Let us hope for the best. Where has the prince gone now?"

"To visit some of his Chinese friends. Probably it is this fellow Wang."

"I haven't a doubt of it. Well, we can do very little to-day, I see. We shall have to wait until evening, and the next move is yours. Meanwhile I propose to keep out of the way."

"And I shall have to remain here until the prince returns. I promised that I would."

"I should like to introduce you to Mr. Dowd first. You might have to call upon him. He had better know who you are."

"Shall I go down then?"

"No; I will call him up on the office telephone first, and see how matters stand."

Old King Brady went to the telephone and in a minute got into communication with Dowd.

The prince had not yet come in, he said.

As he felt sure that his assistant would be able to handle the Chinaman, Old King Brady asked him to come upstairs, which he did, and was introduced to Harry.

And now Old King Brady concluded that it would be best to take Mr. Dowd fully into his confidence, so he told him all.

"It's just like Hi," said the hotel detective. "He is good for anything like that. Big scheme! That wife of his has helped him to fool many a young fellow. For my part I should doubt if she was worth saving."

"That is neither here nor there," replied Old King Brady. "It is a matter we have nothing to do with."

"Oh, of course not."

"Certainly not. We are out after the girl, and we propose to get her if we can."

"Well, if you want any help, either of you, why, just call on me," said Dowd. "Of course, I am right in with the police of this town."

Old King Brady left with the old detective then.

Harry's rooms were on the same corridor with his own and Mrs. Fairchild's.

As they neared the door of the latter suite it opened, and the "Princess" came out.

"She was dressed in a plain red walking costume, and appeared to be going out on the street.

"I think I'll do a little shadowing, Dowd," whispered Old King Brady. "So long."

Old King Brady accordingly went down on the elevator with the princess.

Aided by the mirror in the elevator, he was able to study the young woman's face with some attention.

"She is given to hasheesh," the old detective said to himself.

And he mentally added:

"She hasn't a bad face. I don't believe it is too late. If the poor creature could only be taken away from her Chinese husband I believe she might yet be saved."

He fell behind when they passed into the street.

It was no surprise to Old King Brady when he saw her enter Wang's place.

The old detective followed right in.

The store was a public place; he saw no reason why he should not.

The princess was standing in the rear talking with Wang.

And now Old King Brady received something of a shock.

The Chinaman looked very different from what he did the night before.

His face was deathly white, and his head was turned upward.

He was talking in a low tone to the princess, and every now and then he would lower it and fix his eyes upon her.

The expression which came over his face then was absolutely fiendish.

"Great heavens! that man is far gone under the influence of hasheesh himself," thought Old King Brady. "He looks like a lunatic. What am I to do?"

It did not appear that he could do anything just then.

The princess now vanished behind a red curtain, Wang following her.

Meanwhile Old King Brady had been pretending business with a sickly-looking Chink who tended the store.

He made a few purchases, and hurried away.

"There is nothing to be done. If she is in there for a smoke she has got to have it, I suppose. But the face of that Chink! It was positively murderous! Heavens! I wish I could get it out of my mind."

But it was still in his mind when he returned to the hotel to learn from Detective Dowd that Prince Hi-Ti-Li had not yet come in.

And this made it all the more impossible for Old King Brady to interfere.

If the princess had gone into Wang's place to meet her husband then what could anybody do?

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

The continued absence of Prince Hi-Ti-Li puzzled Harry quite as much as it did the old detective.

On the way down from San Francisco Young King Brady had become quite thick with the fakir.

That he did not entertain the least suspicion that he was a detective Harry felt well assured.

When he left he stated that he would surely return inside of half an hour.

He wanted Harry to show himself about the hotel, and seemed very anxious about it.

He particularly asked him not to do this until his return.

Old King Brady went up to Harry's room and they talked it over.

"If you could have seen the face on that Chink you would feel as I do," said the old detective. "I don't think it is safe to trust that young woman in his clutches, husband or no husband. For all we know he may have had a quarrel with the prince and have done him up."

"Do you think we ought to make a move, Governor?" Harry asked.

"I do."

"It may spoil all our plans."

"That is even so."

"You say the girl went directly there?"

"She did. There is no doubt that she knew where she was going."

"She must have had a lot of experience with hasheesh fiends."

"That is certainly so, and it is what makes me hesitate about doing anything."

"Suppose we wait until after dinner, and then decide."

"All right. We will leave it so. We have got to decide one way or the other."

And so the Bradys dined before making a move.

Harry was at one end of the big dining room and Old King Brady at the other, so there was no chance for any talk during the meal.

The old detective kept a sharp eye out for Mrs. Fairchild, but she did not appear.

Right after dinner Old King Brady came to Harry again in his room.

"Well, he hasn't shown up, and I am going down there," he said. "The girl hasn't come back, either, it seems."

"You mustn't go alone, Governor."

"We will arrange it this way. I will go in first. You can disguise and remain on the outside. If I don't turn up inside of half an hour you can act."

"How act? Shall I take the police with me?"

"Not that. I will speak to Dowd. He can be on hand with a couple of assistants. That will be all that we shall need."

Harry said nothing.

He secretly made up his mind that there would be no half-hour's wait so far as he was concerned.

"I'll give him just fifteen minutes inside there," he said to himself. "Either he has to turn up then or I'll break in—that's all."

This, however, he kept to himself.

Old King Brady never likes to be dictated to or interfered with.

But that the old detective is too rash at times, and prone to take big chances is certainly a fact.

It was half-past two when Old King Brady left the hotel.

It had been arranged that Harry was not to start until he was out of sight.

Old King Brady hurried to the grocery store, and entering found Wang seated there alone.

The Chinaman's face still wore the same strange look.

It was rather intensified than anything.

It was the look of a man mad from hasheesh.

Old King Brady felt sure of it.

He knew all about the effects of the drug.

He was aware that a confirmed hasheesh fiend can temporarily control himself, even though he is seeing strange visions, if he choses.

He also knew that at any instant such a person is liable to break out in a murderous fury.

There is no species of dope-fiend more dangerous to deal with than one who persistently uses hasheesh.

And so Old King Brady was, or rather ought to have been, prepared.

"Look here!" he said sternly, at the same time showing his detective's shield, "I am a detective from the Hotel Del Monte. I want to know what has become of that young woman in the red dress who came into your place several hours ago."

A change came over Wang's face instantly—such a change as a Chinaman alone can bring about.

The fiendish look disappeared, and an expression child-like and bland took its place.

"Oh, you detective, eh?" replied Wang. "Well, what about it? The lady want see friend. She come here to get him. Up at the hotel they know very well where to come if they want."

"Is she here now?"

"Yes, she is."

"I must see her at once."

Old King Brady expected some objection.

To his surprise there was none made.

"Very well," replied Wang, in the same excellent English that Old King Brady had heard him use when he listened at the sky-light. "If you want to see her all right. So you can."

"You can tell her to come here?"

"I can tell her, but she won't come."

"Why not?"

"She is asleep."

"Take me to her," said Old King Brady, in his reckless fashion.

He was determined to see the end of the mystery, no matter what it might lead to.

Wang made not the least objection.

"Follow me," he said.

"You leave your store?"

"That's all right. Come."

Old King Brady had his revolver ready, and felt no fear. Wang pushed aside the red curtain, and Old King followed him into the back room.

It was arranged the same as any room in a Chinaman's dwelling.

Wang opened a door which communicated with a flight of steps leading into a cellar.

Evidently his smoking room was not the one Old King Brady had seen through the skylight in another part of the house.

Following the Chinaman, the detective crossed a cellar to a short flight of steps on the other side.

Wang ascended and opened a low door, which was more like a shutter at the top of the steps.

He stood aside and beckoned to Old King Brady.

"She is there!" he said. "You can go in and see her now."

And there, sure enough, as he looked in through the shutter, Old King Brady saw the princess.

The room was well furnished in the Chinese style.

The unfortunate woman lay stretched upon a couch quite unconscious.

Beside her, upon a Chinese stool, was a hasheesh layout, which told the tale.

It was quite a step down into the room, but Old King Brady covered it with a bound.

"That girl must come out of here!" he cried.

He was going to say more, but at the same instant the shutter was closed with a bang.

But before it went to Old King Brady was treated to the most diabolical laugh which he had ever heard proceed from the lips of mortal man.

"Trapped, confound it!" muttered the old detective.

He made a rush for the shutter, but it was fast.

There was nothing to take hold of. It fitted tight.

"I shall have to depend upon Harry," thought Old King Brady. "Meanwhile, to revive this unfortunate creature. Upon my word, she looks as if she was dead!"

He bent over the girl, listened to the beating of her heart and felt her pulse, finding that it was not so.

Producing his little medicine case, he administered a tablet of caffeine, the antidote for opium, and stood back to watch its effects.

It was at this instant that he perceived a smoke rising through the crevices of the floor.

He had felt a tickling in his throat, and now he began to cough.

"Great Scott! It's charcoal smoke!" cried the old detective. "That yellow fiend is trying to smother us both."

And it was so!

All in vain were Old King Brady's efforts to move the shutter or make his voice heard.

The moments passed, and the smoke grew thicker and thicker:

Thicker too than Old King Brady realized, for while he

was still at work on the shutter it suddenly overcame him. There is nothing so insidious as the smoke of burning charcoal.

This underground room was as tight as a bottle.

Before he fully realized that his danger was so great, Old King Brady sank unconscious to the floor.

* * * * *

If Harry had followed the orders of his chief and waited the half hour, he would have found a dead detective.

But he followed close on Old King Brady's heels.

"We had better break in there at once and have them out," said Dowd. "That fellow Wang is a bad one. From what you tell me it is my belief that he has done for Prince Hi-Ti-Li."

"I'll go ahead," said Harry. "If I am not out in five minutes you follow."

Harry entered the store.

Wang stood in the middle of the floor, with his eyes raised to the ceiling.

"Look here! Where is that old man who came in here a few minutes ago?" Harry demanded.

"Hello, Charlie! You mean the detective?" replied Wang, looking down. "You are, too?"

Harry had shown his shield.

"Yes, I am. Where is he?"

"He is down in the smoking-room talking with a lady. You want to see him?"

"Yes. Right now."

"All right; come along."

Wang caught up two wet towels.

Harry wondered what they were for.

He followed the Chink into the cellar, and smelled the burning charcoal.

He tossed one of the towels to Harry, and immediately tied the other over his mouth and nostrils.

"You scoundrel! If there is anything wrong with that old man you will suffer!" cried Harry.

Wang, without reply, ran on up the steps.

Harry tied the towel in place and followed.

The shutter was thrown back.

Wang pointed.

Harry saw the girl on the couch and Old King Brady stretched out upon the floor.

The room was filled with charcoal fumes.

Without an instant's hesitation Harry sprang through the opening and bent over the old detective.

He lay with closed eyes and parted lips, to all appearance dead.

As Harry bent over him the Chinaman suddenly shut the secret door.

"Great Scott, this spells murder!" thought Harry. "We are a pair of fools, both of us, but fortunately there is help close at hand."

At the same instant a fiendish yell was heard outside.

Sounds of a scuffle followed, and then came a shot.

A second later the shutter flew open, and Detective Dowd appeared in the breach.

"Out of that! Quick!" he shouted. "That yellow fiend is raving mad. He tried to put a knife into me! He has a burning charcoal furnace under this floor!"

Harry needed no one to tell him that.

Meanwhile the detective's assistants had dragged the little furnace out of a close cupboard, and run it upstairs.

There was no one to interfere.

Wang had attacked Dowd, and the detective shot him in the leg.

The hasheesh fiend lay raving like a maniac on the cellar floor.

Old King Brady was taken out.

So was the princess.

An ambulance was called, and both were taken to the hospital.

Here Old King Brady soon revived to hear from Harry that Prince Hi-Ti-Li had been found in another room shot through the heart.

It had been a quarrel between him and Wang.

Days passed before the life of Inez Van Gordon was put beyond danger by the doctors.

Meanwhile Mrs. Fairchild fled.

Old King Brady, not a bit the worse for his experience, was in constant attendance at the hospital.

He finally persuaded the unfortunate girl to return to her father, which she did.

Harry went to San Francisco and brought about the arrest of the Hindoo.

The viscount's body was taken charge of by the authorities, and his people notified of the manner of his death.

Wang died in the madhouse a year later.

It was a case of jealousy between him and Prince Hi-Ti-Li, as his ravings proved.

Mr. Van Gordon took charge of his daughter, and she subsequently became a respectable member of society, although her mother would never receive her.

Later Van Gordon died, and left his daughter millions. Then she married and is now abroad.

The detectives were treated most liberally by Van Gordon, and the case proved a very profitable one.

Old King Brady saw that Detective Dowd was fully paid for his efficient work, but for which there might have been a very different ending to the case of The Bradys and Prince Hi-Ti-Li.

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