

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

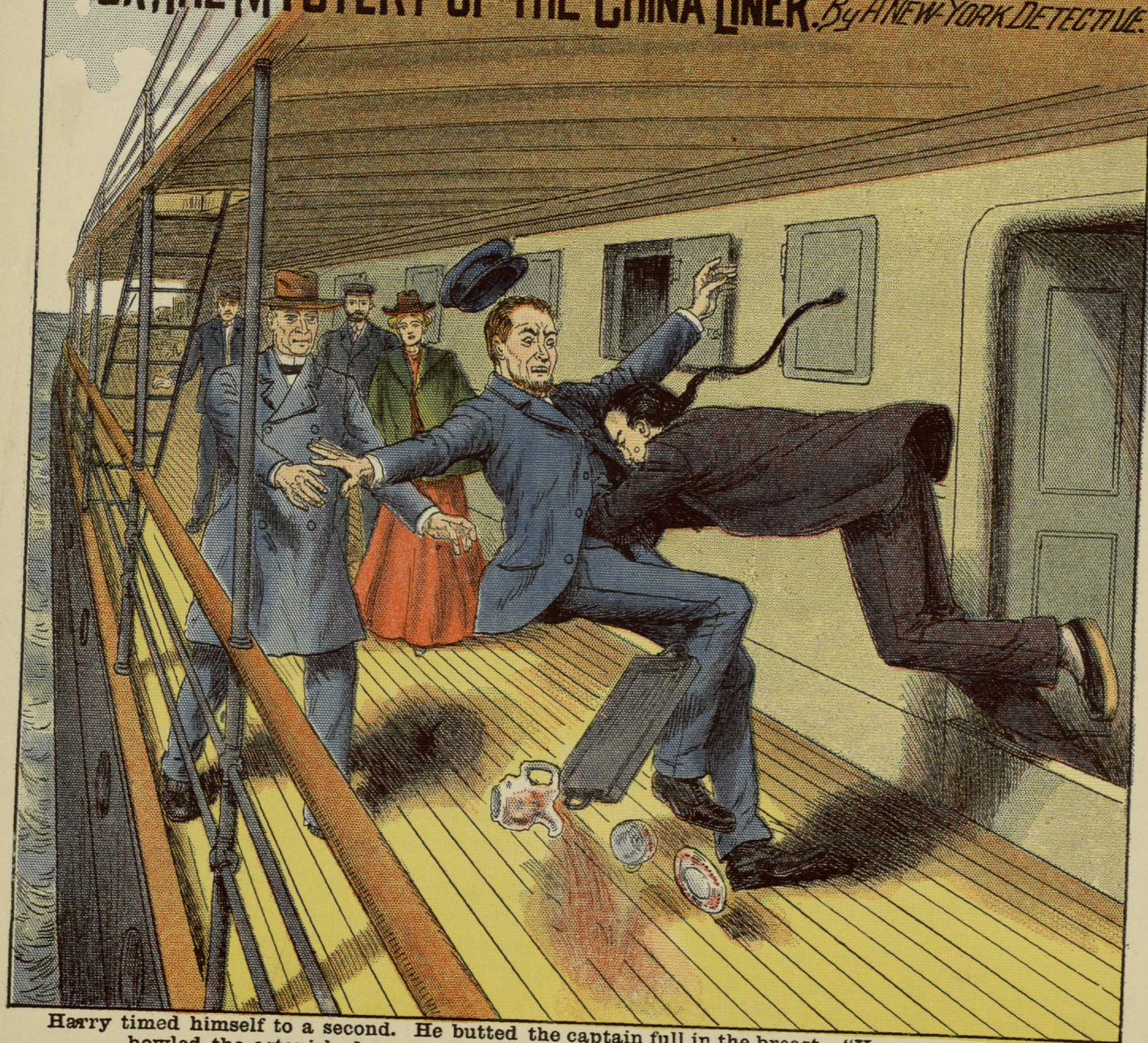
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No. 418.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 25, 1907.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND CAPTAIN DARKE; OR, THE MYSTERY OF THE CHINA LINER. *By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.*



Harry timed himself to a second. He butted the captain full in the breast. "You wretched Chink!" howled the astonished man. "What's the matter, Captain?" cried Old King Brady, pressing forward. Several passengers looked wonderingly on.

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CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERY OF THE INDIAN QUEEN.

"What desolation! It is simply horrible!"

It was the world-famous detective, Old King Brady, who thus exclaimed. With his partner and former pupil, Young King Brady, the old detective had been roaming through the streets of San Francisco. The remark was made while the Bradys were standing in Portsmouth Square looking up the hill towards Chinatown. Here was the scene of many noted cases worked through to a successful finish by these famous detectives. But all was changed. Vanished was the wonderful Dupont street, that queer bit of old China dropped down in the Pacific coast. Everywhere was wreck and ruin.

The scene of desolation was broken in places by new buildings in the course of construction. On their left the skyscrapers on distant Market street loomed up like great towers with nothing intervening to break the view.

It was the Bradys' first visit to the city of the Golden Gate since the earthquake and fire. They had but just arrived. It was yet early morning, and they were taking things in. As the famous Lick House, which Old King Brady had for so many years made his headquarters on the Pacific coast, was no more, the detectives went to the new Palace Hotel. The squatty little two-story building which has succeeded the tall Palace looked strange enough to them. But here they were able to obtain one good room and glad enough they were to get that, for at first it looked as if they were destined to be left out in the cold.

Breakfast over, the detectives reported to Secret Service Commissioner McDougold. They had come to the coast on a hurry call from the Secret Service Bureau in Washington. What the nature of the business upon which they had been summoned was they did not know. They found the commissioner located in a temporary frame shack and were invited into a roughly-finished office in the rear.

"And what do you think of our city?" was Mr. McDougold's first question.

"I think she is grand in her desolation," replied Old King Brady.

The commissioner laughed.

"Very well put," he said. "But wait. You will soon see a new city grow up here which will so far eclipse the old one that you will be simply amazed. But now to business. Are you prepared to go to China for the bureau?"

"Certainly. What is the nature of the business?"

"We will call this case 'The Mystery of the China Liner,'" replied the commissioner, "and a mystery it certainly is. Four different secret service men attached to my staff have tackled it and all have been forced to admit that they can make nothing of it."

"Explain, please."

"The story I have to tell is disgustingly simple. The Indian Queen of the China Line, San Francisco to Shanghai, Canton, Hong Kong and other ports, is the steamer.

"Like all these liners, she has a treasure-room. This room has been five times entered in some mysterious way and gold and silver have been abstracted. The robberies appear to have taken place just before the steamer made port in every instance. The hauls made by the thieves have not been particularly heavy. They appear to be a timid lot, for in no case have they taken enough to make it really pay for the risk. Twenty thousand dollars at one time, forty thousand at another, the highest fifty thousand, and once it dropped as low as ten thousand.

"The last time they took a mail pouch. Captain Renwick always carries his mail in the treasure room. This throws the case up to us, and I started the detectives on it four months ago, but, as I said before, they have met with no success. That's your case, Mr. Brady. Now put your usual questions."

"Which will not take long," replied Old King Brady. "First, tell me if these robberies have taken place on the voyage out, or vice versa."

"Both ways."

"Has it been observed that any particular individual has been going back and forth who had always been on the steamer at the time a robbery took place?"

"No. I understand not."

"Have the robberies occurred on two successive trips, or has there been a break between each?"

"Always a break."

"When was the last?"

"On the Indian Queen's last voyage out."

"How much was taken?"

"Thirty-five thousand."

"Where is the steamer now?"

"She is expected in to-morrow."

"Have the robberies been of bullion or coin?"

"Both."

"Entire boxes or bags taken?"

"No. That is the odd part of it. The bullion boxes or the bags of coin have been emptied and leaden counters put in to make weight."

"Important. Then the robberies have only been discovered after the contents of the strongroom has been delivered to the consignees?"

"Exactly."

"Then it is by no means certain that the robberies actually took place on board the Indian Queen?"

"That's the way Captain Renwick puts it. We are satisfied that the robberies did take place on board the Queen."

"In the case of the mail pouch, was the pouch taken?"

"Yes. It was the Hong Kong pouch. It was missing when the steamer reached Hong Kong."

"And what does Captain Renwick say to that?"

"He declares the pouch was probably never put aboard."

"And the postoffice people here say that it was?"

"They are positive of it."

"I don't know that we have any further questions to ask, M. McDougold. You understand, I suppose, that there are three of us now?"

"Three? How is that?"

"We have admitted a lady to our firm, Miss Alice Montgomery."

"I heard that you had a female assistant to whom some romance was attached."

"She is now a member of the firm. It is more of the nature of a mystery than a romance to which you refer."

"I should be pleased to know more of it if you have no objection."

"Not at all. It is soon told. We found this lady lying unconscious in a burning cellar in New York's Chinatown. The fire had evidently been started for the purpose of destroying her life. We rescued her, and she was taken to the hospital, where after a time she regained consciousness, but she was entirely unable to remember her past, or even her name."

"Very singular. I have heard, however, that there are Chinese drugs which will produce such a condition."

"We understand such to be the case. We believe that such a drug was administered to Miss Montgomery. The fact that she speaks Chinese fluently helps to bear out that theory."

"But how came you to admit her to the firm?"

"Because she has proved herself a skilful detective and has been exceedingly useful to us. She recollects having been trained to the business, and there is no doubt that such is the case."

"And you propose to use her in this case?"

"Most certainly. If we are to go to China she will be invaluable."

The Bradys now proceeded to arrange certain business details with the commissioner. They then withdrew prepared to take right hold of the mystery of the China liner.

Alice had not accompanied the Bradys to San Francisco, as she was working on a case in New York. This was now completed, as the Bradys knew, for they had received a telegram to that effect upon their arrival at San Francisco. They accordingly wired Alice to join

them without delay. Next day the Indian Queen passed the Golden Gate at noon. The Bradys, with Commissioner McDougold hurried on board, and the detectives were introduced to Captain Renwick.

"I am very glad to meet Old King Brady," said the captain, a bluff Scotchman, as he shook hands. "I should have known you anywhere, sir. I am glad you are going to take hold of this mystery, for it is high time it was solved."

Old King Brady made some commonplace response, but Harry smiled at the captain's remark.

It was not at all strange that Old King Brady should have been so readily recognized by the captain of the Indian Queen. When not in disguise Old King Brady affects a peculiar dress. He wears a long blue coat with brass buttons, an old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar and a big white felt hat with an extraordinarily broad brim. The reason why Old King Brady persists in this peculiarity is known only to himself.

Commissioner McDougold now put the all-important question to Captain Renwick: Had any light been thrown upon the mystery of the China liner?

The answer was in the negative.

"Have you much money on board?" Old King Brady asked.

"There is a little short of a hundred thousand," replied the captain; "it is all in gold and silver coin."

"May we look into the treasure-room before any of the packages are taken to the bank?" asked Mr. McDougold.

"Certainly," was the reply.

"First, I would like to see your passenger list, captain," said the old detective.

This conversation took place in the captain's state-room. The Indian Queen had already been docked and the passengers were going ashore. The captain touched a bell and sent the steward who answered for the purser's list. Old King Brady ran it over hastily.

"Is there the name of any person here who has crossed at the time of any of these robberies?" he asked.

"One," replied Captain Renwick.

"And who is it?"

"Mr. Richards."

"What is his business?"

"He represents Duncan & Co., of San Francisco. He is a buyer of teas."

"You are personally acquainted with him?"

"Oh, yes. He often sails with me."

"The robberies have occurred when he was not on the steamer?"

"Certainly. He was only on one when a robbery took place. That was the time before the last."

"I see."

"He is a perfectly respectable gentleman, Mr. Brady. That I'll guarantee."

"In working out a case like this, Captain Renwick, we must take nothing for granted."

"Oh, of course."

"Is there anyone who has sailed twice with you when there has been a robbery?"

"Let me think. Yes, Captain Darke."

"And who is he?"

"An Englishman. He is a naturalist. He collects birds and bugs and things. He is a wealthy man, Mr. Brady, and as perfect a gentleman as I ever met."

"When was he with you last?"

"He went to China in June and laid over one trip, returning with me the next."

"From where?"

"I left him at Shanghai. He got on next trip at Hong Kong."

"And there were robberies both times?"

"Yes, but there have been six of these robberies altogether. Captain Darke was only with me those two trips."

"I thought it was five?"

"I so told you," said Mr. McDougold, "but I found out my mistake afterward. There were six."

"If you would like to look at the strong-room we will go now," said the captain.

Old King Brady assented, and they were conducted below by the captain. The strong-room of the Indian Queen was rather peculiarly situated. It was not amidships on the cabin deck, but in the hold directly below the cabin itself. The entrance was by a secret door in stateroom No. 111, which opened on an alley off the cabin.

"Who occupies this stateroom?" asked Old King Brady as they entered it and the situation was explained.

"Nobody," replied the captain. "It is never sold, and I keep the key myself."

"It has positively never been occupied on trips when robberies have occurred?"

"Positively. Its only occupants since I have had command of the Indian Queen have been the detectives who have tried to solve this mystery."

"Oh, they have occupied it?"

"Yes."

"Has any robbery ever occurred when there was a detective on board?"

"Twice."

Old King Brady said no more. Captain Renwick now swung the berths out into the stateroom. All three came out together, being operated by a secret spring. Behind the berths was the hidden panel. This was now opened and they descended into the strong-room by a steep ladder with broad steps instead of rounds. The room was about ten by fifteen and was sheathed with steel plates on all sides. The ceiling and floor were similarly protected.

The room appeared to be security itself. Here were the mail bags and numerous bags of coin.

"Who owns this money?" asked Old King Brady.

Captain Renwick explained that it belonged to different Chinese banks, which had shipped it to America to make good their balances. Old King Brady spent some twenty minutes examining the strong-room in silence.

"Have the detectives who have been working on this mystery had free access to this room at all times?" he suddenly asked.

"Certainly," replied Captain Renwick. "That is why they were put into 111."

"And to the hold outside of this room?"

"No. Nobody is allowed in the hold after the hatches are closed."

"Is it all open space around this room?"

"Yes."

"And the steamer's cargo is piled around it?"

"Yes."

"What is below this floor?"

"The lower hold."

"These steel plates rest upon the floor of the upper hold?"

"Yes."

"Is there no way of getting into the upper hold except by the hatches?"

"Yes. There is a connection from the engine-room, but it is never used."

"By a door?"

"Yes. It is kept locked and I have the key."

"If we take this case the key must be turned over to me and we must have access to the hold at any time, night or day."

"That can be arranged. I will do anything to clear up this mystery, but the other detectives who worked on the case never asked for that."

"We are different from other detectives."

"I shall throw no stones in your way."

"Very well, captain," said Old King Brady. "Then that is all for the present. We sail with you next trip?"

"What do you think of Captain Renwick?" asked Mr. McDougold as they walked up the pier.

"He seems a bluff old seadog."

"And an honest man. He is held in great esteem by the line."

"In regard to that," replied Old King Brady, "I must say to you, Mr. McDougold, what I say to him—we take nothing for granted when we handle a case like this mystery of the China liner."

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERIOUS CAPTAIN DARKE.

The Indian Queen was booked to sail from San Francisco in one week after her arrival.

Of course the first care of the Bradys was to see if any robbery was reported from the money bags in the strong-room. Such proved not to be the case.

On the third day after the cargo was practically all ashore the Bradys spent several hours in the hold. They carefully examined the sides of the strong-room, even going under it into the lower hold and continuing their search beneath the floor. But the result of all their investigations was nothing at all. As far as the detectives were able to make out the treasure-room was absolutely

secure. On the fifth day Alice arrived. Harry met her at Oakland wharf. The instant she stepped from the train he observed her agitation and inquired the cause.

"Harry," said Alice, "it came to me when we struck Sacramento. I instantly recognized the city. I knew that I had been there before, and it is the same here."

"Good! Your memory is returning, it would seem."

"If I could only think so, Harry."

"It will come in time, Alice. But you must not hope to recognize San Francisco; as a matter of fact, there is very little left to recognize."

It proved so. Alice could see nothing familiar when she landed on the other side of the bay. But the hills on the opposite shore, Tamalpais and Monte Diablo, she declared were perfectly familiar to her. This was as far as it went. Next morning there was a conference in Mr. McDougold's office. It was arranged that Alice should go aboard absolutely unknown to the steamer's officers. It was to be the same with Harry.

Captain Renwick was to be told that Old King Brady had decided to go across alone. Meanwhile the old detective had been busy. He had secured stateroom No. 109 for Alice. This adjoined 111. No. 112, directly opposite, he had secured for Harry under the name of Cecil Turner.

Alice was to go out as Mrs. Wimans, and was to pose as a widow. Old King Brady had gone to the expense of buying all three berths in each stateroom, but this was chargeable to the government. Captain Renwick seemed rather disappointed when he heard that Harry was not to go.

"A bright young lad," he said. "I was in hopes something might come of having him with us."

"Which is as much as to say that you expect nothing to come out of having an old man like me with you," laughed Old King Brady.

"I dinna say that," retorted the captain. "It was just that I took a fancy to the lad. By the way, you will meet the man you were asking about. I understand that Captain Darke has engaged passage to Hong Kong."

"Indeed!"

"Yes."

"Have you seen the captain?"

"No. I saw his name on the passenger list at the office."

"You don't happen to know where he is staying?"

"No, I do not."

"What number is his stateroom?"

Captain Renwick named it. The room was amidships and opened on the deck. The deck staterooms were, of course, the superior ones, and commanded a higher price than those in the cabin. Old King Brady went directly back to the Palace Hotel after making this discovery.

"We must find out where this Captain Darke is staying," he said. "If we can look him up before we start it will be a great thing."

"Do you suspect him of being concerned in the robberies?" asked Alice.

"I suspect nobody and I suspect everybody," replied the old detective, and there you are."

And so, through a police detective, Old King Brady applied at the steamship office for the desired information.

He was doomed to disappointment.

Captain Darke, it appeared, had engaged passage by telegram from Chicago. He was not expected to arrive in town until the day of sailing. And so there was nothing the Bradys could do until the Indian Queen left her dock. The passenger list was a long one, every stateroom being taken. There was also a large steerage complement of Chinese. The Bradys and Alice all went aboard early and at different times. After much reflection Old King Brady had determined to adopt no disguise nor to attempt in any way to conceal his identity.

Harry demurred at this.

"No," said Old King Brady; "it is best so. A secret which is in the possession of one man beside yourself is no secret. Captain Renwick knows and everybody else shall know. I am bound to work it that way."

There were the usual scenes on the wharf at the hour of sailing. The Bradys stood together at the rail, but to all appearance paying no heed to each other. It was just before the gangplank was pulled in when a cab was driven furiously down the wharf. A man sprang out, dragging four heavy grips after him. There were two large trunks strapped on behind, which were hustled aboard.

Old King Brady, happening to glance at Alice, saw that she was deathly pale and was clinging to the railing as though she felt faint.

He hardly knew what to do, and, as it was, he did not do anything, for at the same instant Captain Renwick touched his arm.

"There he is, Mr. Brady," he said, pointing to the late arrival, who was struggling up the gangplank with two heavy grips, while a porter followed him with the other two.

"Who?" inquired Old King Brady.

"Captain Darke."

"Ah! That man?"

"Yes."

"Thanks. Introduce me when you have a chance."

"Very well. I shall do so."

The captain moved away. Turning, Old King Brady saw that Alice had disappeared.

"She has gone below," Harry said by a secret sign.

Then by another he added:

"There is something wrong with her. Shall I go down and see?"

"No," was Old King Brady's sign.

He had absolute confidence in Alice's ability to take care of herself. He could not help fancying that she had recognized Captain Darke and so, indeed, it proved.

But the Bradys got no chance to find out then.

The steamer pulled out and was soon outside the Golden Gate. The sea was as smooth as a mill pond. Such is the Pacific in its normal condition, and hence its name.

For days, yes, sometimes for weeks, it presents this appearance. But when a storm does strike and the Pacific gets down to business the Atlantic is not in it with her sister ocean. But that night the sun descended upon a clear sky.

Once the steamer had sailed the Bradys, each separately, of course, looked around for Alice. They saw nothing of her, however. She did not even appear at the supper table. The old detective began to feel somewhat alarmed.

The arrangement had been that the three detectives should decline to make each other's acquaintance; that even if they were introduced by such acquaintances as they might chance to make, they should religiously snub each other next time they met. Communication was only to be held after dark and in each other's staterooms or by secret signs. Old King Brady went to 111 after supper, and, shutting the door, knocked twice on the partition. This was a signal to Alice to unfasten her door so that he could slip in. The answering knock came promptly. Old King Brady stood in the alley, and, watching his chance when no one was passing, slipped into Alice's room.

"What is it? What is the matter?" he asked in the lowest of whispers, after fastening the door.

"You mean what was the matter with me that time?"

"Yes; you seem to be all right now."

"And I am. Mr. Brady, the last man to come aboard this steamer is the same man who carried me off that night in Chatham Square."

For a moment we must digress to explain what Alice meant. After the Bradys found her in the cellar Alice took hold with them on the Chinese case upon which they were then working. This called for her to go through Chinatown alone, but with the Bradys shadowing her.

While the detectives had their attention diverted for the moment a tall, dark man wearing diamonds suddenly seized Alice in Chatham Square and put her into a cab.

Here she was chloroformed and came to her senses in an old mansion in the Bronx, where she met an old woman all ablaze with diamonds. After some mysterious talk on the part of the woman, Alice was abandoned in the house.

Here the Bradys rescued her, finding that the people who had given an assumed name had moved out during the night. They left no clew to the mystery of Alice behind them, but they did leave \$50,000 in greenbacks, which a note stated was a free gift to this girl without a memory. There was also a Hindoo servant mixed up in the affair. Once again Alice met the tall dark man, but she learned nothing of her identity nor anything concerning the mystery which surrounded her. And it was this man whom she had now recognized in the person of Captain Darke.

"So?" said Old King Brady. "That is what ailed you, was it? Know who that man was?"

"No."

"Captain Darke."

"Mr. Brady, you don't mean it!"

"That is the name under which he is known on this steamer."

"He is as dark as his name, as dark as the mystery which surrounds my past."

"And which shall now be solved, Alice. That man shall never leave his seamer until he has disclosed the secret. That I promise you."

"Of course he will instantly recognize you. I wish you were disguised."

"I don't then."

"This business may spoil our case, Mr. Brady, for which I shall be awful sorry."

"Never mind. Your welfare, Alice, is of more interest to me than the success of a dozen cases."

"You are so kind to me, Mr. Brady."

"Not a bit more kindness than you deserve has been shown to you. But why have you stuck close to the stateroom? Why did you not go out and meet this man?"

"I thought it better to wait until I had a chance to speak to you. I did not know what you would want me to do."

"Face him boldly. He can't carry you off while we are on the Pacific Ocean. I hardly think he would dare to throw you overboard when he knows Old King Brady is with you. Besides he may not recognize you. Remember your wig and the rest of your disguise."

He looked right at me, Mr. Brady, but he did not seem to recognize me."

"Take it easy, Alice. A lot may come out of this."

"I do hope he proves to be the thief!" cried Alice. "I'd just like to see him go up for twenty years for the way he served me."

"Hush, hush!" said Old King Brady. "Not so loud. I'm going now. Too bad you missed your supper. I want to see you on deck very soon."

He opened the door slightly, watched his chance and slipped out.

CHAPTER III.

OLD KING BRADY MAKES THE ACQUAINTANCE OF CAPTAIN DARKE.

When Old King Brady got on deck the Indian Queen was just off the Farrelone Islands.

It was a beautiful moonlight evening and there were many persons pacing the deck.

Old King Brady had quite a hunt for Harry, but at length he located him leaning over the rail, watching the gulls. The old detective turned his back to the rail and in plain sight of Harry scribbled in his memorandum book. He then tore the leaf out, and crumbling it up, pretended to throw it overboard. In reality he palmed the paper, and in a moment it was slipped into Harry's hand. Old King Brady walked away. Harry got next to an electric light as soon as he could. The paper read as follows:

"The last man aboard was Captain Darke. He is also the man who abducted Alice and had her imprisoned in

that old house in the Bronx. Cultivate him. Of course he will know me, so I am down and out. It is up to you to find out who and what he is."

Harry tore the paper into bits and flung it overboard. "Now we know what the matter was with Alice," he said to himself. "It is very strange."

He started to look up Captain Darke. After a long hunt he located him on the lower deck in the extreme stern talking with Gus Philips, the purser. Harry lit a cigar and kept his distance. He had already spoken with the purser, introducing himself as Cecil Turner, and he hoped that the man would introduce him to Captain Darke. But this did not come about. Harry was too far away to hear what was passing between the two men, and he could not well crowd in on them. They seemed very well acquainted. This, of course, was not strange, seeing that Captain Darke had made two trips on the Indian Queen. At last Philips left him, and Harry thought his chance had come, but Captain Darke immediately walked off in the opposite direction. Later Harry looked him up again, but he could find nothing more of him that night. Soon after leaving Harry Old King Brady encountered Captain Renwick.

"Come to my stateroom, Mr. Brady," he said. "I have a few spare minutes and we want to compare notes."

Old King Brady assented.

"I suppose you know," said the captain, when the door was closed, "that we have quite a lot of gold and silver bullion aboard?"

"No, I did not. I was waiting to talk with you on that subject," was the reply.

"Yes. There is half a million in silver going out to China for their new coinage. There is much more in gold."

"A million altogether?"

"A little over."

"Good chance for the thieves?"

"Well, it won't make much difference to them if they happen to be on board, I fancy. Of course they can't get away with more than a certain amount."

"That is true. It must be either carried out by hand or in trunks."

"That is the way it looks to me. Here is the key of the door in the engine-room which I showed you. I have posted the engineer. You can go through at any time."

"There will be nothing doing to-night, captain, nor for several nights to come."

"I suppose not."

"By the way, have you heard any comment upon the presence of Old King Brady on board the Indian Queen?"

"Yes; the officers are all talking about it."

"And the passengers?"

"One of the passengers has expressed the greatest interest in the matter."

"Which one?"

"Captain Darke."

"Ah! He spoke to you about me, then?"

"Yes. First chance he got."

"And what did he say?"

"Asked how you came to be here. Asked where your partners were, particularly your female assistant, Miss Montgomery."

"And you told him?"

"That Young King Brady was obliged to return to New York. I never heard of Miss Montgomery."

"She is an assistant of mine. I will tell you now, captain, that I recognize Captain Darke as a man I have had to do with in the past. He has a particular reason for feeling an interest in Miss Montgomery."

"So? How is that?"

"I could not tell you if I would and I would not if I could."

"So? A mystery?"

"Decidedly. I do not know his reason. If I did know it I am certain that Miss Montgomery would prefer that I kept it a secret."

"Then Captain Darke is a crook?"

"That I do not say. Indeed I do not know that he is such."

"A suspicious character, at all events."

"Decidedly so."

"Still it don't follow that he is the treasure-room thief?"

"Not at all. We must watch out and see what we run up against. Of course there is always the possibility that the thief is not on the Indian Queen this trip."

"I hope he is, then."

"And why?"

"Because if Old King Brady can't trap him then nobody can."

"You flatter me, captain."

"No, I don't. Not from what I have heard."

The conversation was further prolonged. At about ten o'clock Old King Brady sought his room. Harry soon tapped on the door and was admitted.

"Anything doing?" he asked.

"No, I can't say there is," replied the old detective. "What did you want? It is altogether unsafe for you to come in here."

"I wanted to ask about Alice."

"She's all right again. She is fully on the alert."

"She is sure that this is the man she ran up against in New York?"

"Positive, and in a matter so important she is not likely to be mistaken."

"Oh, certainly not."

"Were you talking to him?"

"No. At first he was in for a long chin with the purser. Afterwards he gave me the slip. I think he must have turned in. What number is his stateroom again?"

"Fifty-nine. Try to remember. I told you before."

"I know you did, but it slipped me. What is his full name?"

"Captain G. Dickson Darke is the way he signs himself."

"What is he captain of?"

"The horse marines, I guess. Really I don't know, and I am sure Captain Renwick does not know, or he would have told me."

"Well, we must lay for him. I have an idea he will prove to be the thief."

"And why, with nothing to build on except his mix-up with Alice?"

"Oh, I don't know. I don't like his face anyhow."

"And that is no reason at all. But you must not stop here, Harry. It is only half-past ten and Captain Renwick may find something to say to me and look in. For the first few days at least we can't be too careful."

"Oh, pshaw! Even if we were caught together, what would it amount to?"

But Young King Brady left then, and it was most fortunate that he did so, for he had not been three minutes in his stateroom when there came two gentlemen down the corridor. They were Captains Renwick and Darke.

The former rapped smartly on Old King Brady's door.

"Just a minute if you haven't retired, Mr. Brady," he called.

Old King Brady opened the door and saw what he was up against.

"Oh, walk right in, captain," he said.

"I want to introduce my friend, Captain Darke," said Captain Renwick. "Captain, this is Old King Brady, the famous detective."

They shook hands.

"I've heard so much about you, Mr. Brady," said Captain Darke, "that I feel anxious to make your acquaintance, and as Captain Renwick was good enough to offer to introduce me, here I am."

"Glad to know you," replied the old detective. "Take that chair. The stool is yours, Captain Renwick. No, no, that's all right. I can make myself perfectly comfortable on the edge of the bunk. Rather close quarters, but we shall do very well."

"Is this your first trip to China, Mr. Brady?" inquired Captain Darke.

"Oh, no. I was there some years ago. In fact, I have been there several times."

"A wonderful country!"

"It is indeed. A great pity that we Americans have so slight an understanding of it."

"Well, I hardly come under the head of we Americans," laughed Captain Darke. "The fact is I am an Englishman."

"I took you to be such. I should not have used the expression we Americans, perhaps, for the fact is I am an Irishman by birth, but I have been in America so long that I have almost forgotten the old sod."

"And I am a Scotchman," laughed Captain Renwick. "But I canna stop long with you, gentlemen," he added.

"Allow me provide the necessary sociability for the occasion and I will leave you to get acquainted."

He pressed the electric bell, saying as he did so:

"What shall it be, Mr. Brady? Captain, name your poison, please."

"I sometimes drink a bottle of Bass before retiring," replied the old detective.

"Bass's ale will suit me very well," added Captain Darke.

A China boy appeared in answer to the call.

"Three bottles of Bass's ale," said Captain Renwick. "Go to my stateroom and bring me the unopened box of cigars which you will find on the locker. Mind you lock the door after you now. Here is the key."

"Permit me to put up the cigars," said Old King Brady.

"Not at all," replied Captain Renwick. "This is a box which was presented to me by the head of our house, and they ought to be particularly fine. We will sample them anyhow."

The China boy departed and presently returned with the ale and cigars.

Captain Renwick remained no longer than to drink a glass of ale and pass the cigars around. Captain Darke declined the latter, saying that he did not often smoke, but Old King Brady and Captain Renwick both lighted a weed.

"Excellent," said the old detective.

"I think so," replied Captain Renwick. "Help yourself to two or three and smoke them later. I'm taking the box away with me."

But this Old King Brady declined. After Captain Renwick had departed Old King Brady had a long talk with Captain Darke. He found him a man singularly well informed on all topics. He explained that he was writing a book on the natural history of the Far East and that he had made many trips to China, Japan and other Eastern countries. The conversation was decidedly an agreeable one. Not a word was said about Alice, however. Old King Brady did not introduce her name.

"There was time enough with the long voyage ahead of them," he thought.

One thing was certain, in handling Captain Darke the utmost precaution must be observed, for they had to deal with a shrewd and highly intelligent man.

Just before he left Captain Darke drew out a handsome gold-mounted cigar case.

"I declined Captain Renwick's cigars because I am very particular about my smoking, Mr. Brady," he said. "I seldom touch an American-made cigar, for I regard them all as very inferior smoking. Try one of mine and let me know to-morrow what you think of it."

Old King Brady accepted the cigar and Captain Darke lit one himself.

"And what do you think of the flavor?" he asked, after Old King Brady had taken a few draws.

"I must admit that I prefer Captain Renwick's," was the reply.

Captain Darke laughed.

"Everyone to their taste," he said, and soon after he left the stateroom.

They had talked a long time. It was now nearly twelve o'clock. Old King Brady had intended to take a look into the treasure-room before retiring, but he was tired and he concluded to postpone it until morning. He felt particularly at peace with himself and the world. As he undressed he thought of Alice and her mysterious past.

"I must have it out with that man," he said to himself, "but how to go about it is more than I can see for the moment."

Still smoking Captain Darke's cigar, he crawled into the lower berth. He smoked the weed down as low as convenient, and then placing the butt on the stool, he rolled over and was soon asleep. When Old King Brady awoke it was broad daylight. He had been aroused by a low tapping on the door. Again the knock came, and in a peculiar fashion which told him that it was Harry who was outside. He slipped out of the berth and opened the door.

"In with you, quick," he said. "Didn't I tell you that you mustn't do this?"

"But, Great Scott, Governor, I didn't know but you were dead."

"Dead? Why should I be dead?"

"Do you know what time it is?"

"No. Have I overslept?"

"Overslept! I should say you had. It is almost one o'clock in the afternoon."

"Harry, you don't mean it."

"Yes. At first I thought you must be working in the treasure room. Then I saw Captain Renwick knocking on your door about eleven o'clock, but as there was no excitement I supposed you must be all right. I know Alice is as worried as I am, but I haven't found a chance to speak to her about it. I never knew you to sleep so."

Old King Brady pulled on his trousers, for he had been dressing.

"Now that you are here, stay here," he said. "Bolt that door. We will take a look into the treasure room together."

"Is it safe? Somebody may come?"

"They can't get in with the door bolted. If I have slept through from midnight until now there is only one conclusion to draw."

"Which is?"

"That I was drugged by a cigar given me by Captain Darke."

CHAPTER IV.

THE TREASURE ROOM ROBBED RIGHT UNDER OLD KING BRADY'S NOSE.

"You don't mean it!" exclaimed Harry, dropping on the stateroom stool.

"Yes; he was in here last night with Captain Renwick, just after you left."

"What for?"

"Oh, he asked to be introduced to me, and I had asked Captain Renwick to introduce me to him. The captain—Renwick, I mean—blew us off to Bass's ale and cigars. Darke refused to smoke then, but after Renwick had gone he produced his own cigar case, and I smoked one of the weeds."

"Governor, you really ought to have been more careful."

"Why, he lit one himself, Harry. I did hesitate for the moment, but when I saw him light up I lost my doubts."

"Did the cigar produce any unpleasant effects?"

"Not at all. On the contrary, it was mild, and of remarkably fine flavor. Botheration! There's somebody at the door now."

A loud knocking was heard on the door.

"Mr. Brady, Mr. Brady!" Captain Renwick's voice was heard calling. "Is anything the matter with you in there?"

Old King Brady pressed his finger to his lips, and went to the door, but did not open it.

"Nothing at all, captain," he said.

"But, man, it's afternoon! I've been here twice trying to get some word from you! Thought you might be ill."

"Not at all. I was very tired last night, and I have just been taking a little extra sleep."

"Shall I send you in some lunch?"

"Thanks, no. I need nothing, and shall have all the better appetite for my dinner. I will see you shortly, captain."

"Oh, very well. Excuse me for disturbing you. I was beginning to get a bit alarmed."

Captain Renwick then withdrew.

"This is really very annoying," growled Old King Brady. "I never felt so chagrined in my life."

"Shall you tell Renwick what happened?" Harry asked.

"Certainly not. You know I never go into details on a case with anyone."

"Well, hurry up and let's get down into the treasure-room. This is our chance to do it undisturbed."

"Just a minute now, and I'll be with you. How did you sleep last night?"

"Fine."

"Hear any noise in my stateroom?"

"Wasn't awake after eleven o'clock. When I turned in I could hear you talking with someone in here."

"Both captains were here then. Let's see, how does this thing work? Oh, confound it, there's somebody else at the door."

"It's Alice, I guess," said Harry.

A low knock had been heard.

It was instantly repeated, and this time in a way which showed the Bradys that it certainly was Alice.

"Open the door, quick, Harry," said the old detective. "This will be as good a time as any to give Alice a look at the treasure room."

Young King Brady made haste to open the door, and Alice slipped into the stateroom.

"You needn't be a bit afraid that I was seen?" she said. "It is a perfectly charming day, and everybody is on deck. Is anything the matter with you, Mr. Brady? I have been greatly worried at not seeing you around."

"Nothing is the matter now," replied the old detective. "I overslept, and I suspect the cause to be a drugged cigar, presented by your friend, Captain Darke."

"My friend! He has been trying all the morning to scrape an acquaintance with me. He recognizes me, I'm sure. I knew it would be so."

"Has he actually spoken to you?"

"No, but he has constantly put himself in my way."

"Let him make your acquaintance."

"Very well. But now, Mr. Brady, do you mean to tell me that you actually slept from the time the talking stopped in your stateroom last night until just now?"

"I do. It was one o'clock when Harry woke me up by knocking on the door."

"Then you walked in your sleep, for there was someone moving around here at three o'clock in the morning—that's sure."

"Alice! Do you mean it?"

"Certain. I was very wakeful. I distinctly heard them."

"What were the sounds like?"

"There was a creaking sound, and then it seemed as if a door was gently shut."

"Did you hear anyone moving in the alley outside the stateroom?"

"Once I thought I did, but could not be certain that it was so."

"This is very important. Stand back out of the way, please."

Old King Brady touched the secret spring, and the tier of berths swung outward with a creaking sound.

"Was the noise like that, Alice?" asked Harry.

"Something like it."

Old King Brady pushed the berths back again.

Again the creaking sound was heard, and when the berths went into place it was like the shutting of a door.

"That was precisely the sound," declared Alice, "only it is louder in here."

"I am afraid that there is no doubt that I was dead wrong in thinking the thieves would wait until we were further on our voyage before trying their tricks," said the old detective, "but we shall see."

"If they don't try it again it will be next to impossible to put the job up to them," said Harry.

"Never mind. No one can tell which way the case may turn. Come. We will descend into the treasure room now."

"There is one thing I want to ask," said Harry. "Suppose we were to find the thief? What about arresting him?"

"The deck of an American vessel is the same as American soil. We can arrest him on board the Indian Queen."

"But not if he goes ashore?"

"No. But we might induce the authorities to hold him in that case."

They descended into the treasure room. There was a greater display of money-bags than the Bradys had seen before. There were also many small kegs which the detectives judged contained Mexican dollars. The mail-bags were also there.

"It does not look as if anything had been disturbed here," said Alice.

"As this is the first time we have been in here on the outward trip, of course we cannot immediately decide that point," replied Old King Brady. "But let us take a good look about us."

Over at one end of the treasure room there was a stationary table fixed against the wall.

This was probably used when tallying off the bags. It was Alice who made a discovery at the table.

"See here," she exclaimed. "There are drops of sealing wax on the table. Is this right?"

Old King Brady looked at the hardened drops, three in number.

"It seems to be fresh," he said. "I am positive that there were no such marks on this table when I saw it before."

"So am I," added Harry. "I looked the table over particularly."

Old King Brady examined the wax through a powerful magnifying glass.

"It is fresh," he declared. "It is my belief that those tiny drops of sealing wax were allowed to fall on that bench last night."

"Look at those bags," said Harry; "all are sealed. Can it be that the seals of some have been broken, and were then sealed up again with the leaden counters inside?"

"That's the way the job was done," said Old King Brady. "They told us at the bank of California, you will remember, that all the fake bags had been resealed."

"Suppose we open a bag or two. Have we the right?"

"I shall assume the right, but it had best be done in the presence of Captain Renwick."

"Will you go for him? Shall you do it now?"

"No. You and Alice can't be in it. I must attend to that job alone."

"There does not seem to be anything I can do, really," said Harry.

"I am not so sure about that," replied Old King Brady. "I may decide to introduce you to Captain Renwick. I have several ideas floating through my brain, but at present we will close up here."

They returned to the stateroom.

Alice and Harry watched their chances, and got out separately. Old King Brady left the room at two o'clock, and went on deck. He was deeply puzzled at the turn affairs had taken. As a matter of fact, the old detective

really did not know what to do. He looked about for Harry and Alice, but at first he could see neither.

A little later he spied Alice at the stern of the promenade deck. She was standing looking off on the whitened streak of foam left in the steamer's trail by the propellers.

By her side was Captain Darke.

"He knows her, all right," thought Old King Brady, for he could see that the two were talking in low tones.

"Well, I won't butt in, or I might spoil everything," he said to himself. "Now for Captain Renwick. I believe I will let him make his own discoveries in the treasure room if he will."

He had already observed that the captain was not on the bridge. So he walked to his stateroom and knocked. The door was opened by Captain Renwick himself.

"Busy?" asked Old King Brady.

"No," was the reply. "Not particularly. I was writing up my log. Will you come in?"

"For a few moments, yes. What do you think of the weather?"

"Mr. Brady, you are a very observing man, and that question shows it."

"Why?"

"What do you think of the weather?"

"There is going to be a heavy storm."

"So I think."

"Is it certain?"

"Certain that it is near us. The glass is falling rapidly. Still, we may just skim along the edge of it. I cannot tell. How did you judge?"

"Those low-lying clouds are wind-caps, captain."

"That is what they are. Still, there is nothing to fear. The Indian Queen is staunch. She will bowl through it all right, but unless I am greatly mistaken there are a good many aboard of her who won't show up at the supper-table to-night. Will you have a cigar?"

The captain reached for the same box he had brought away from Old King Brady's stateroom the night before.

"Now to prove which cigar did the business," thought the old detective.

Not that he in the least suspected Captain Renwick of duplicity.

Still, it was his regular rule in cases like this to trust nobody.

To prove to his own satisfaction that Captain Renwick's cigars had nothing to do with the condition into which he had fallen the night before, he was even willing to risk falling into a similar condition again.

So Old King Brady accepted the cigar, and lighted it from the captain's match, for that gentleman started to smoke himself, taking a cigar from the same box as he had done the night before.

"Do you know, Mr. Brady, you gave me quite a scare," he said. "I went twice to your stateroom and knocked before the time you answered me. Not that I care if you

want to sleep all day, but it seemed strange when the morning passed and you did not appear."

"It was strange, and there was a reason."

"Ah!"

"Yes."

"Were you ill?"

"I was asleep. I slept until one o'clock this afternoon. I am an exceedingly early riser. I don't know that I ever did such a thing before."

"People are sometimes affected that way when they first go to sea."

"It was not so in my case, I assure you. My somnolence, I am satisfied, was from an entirely different cause."

"What do you mean?"

"Captain, I mean that I believe I was drugged by a cigar."

"Ha! Did Captain Darke give you a cigar after I left?"

"Yes, and I smoked it down to the butt. I have that butt. I shall have it analyzed, although I doubt if that will do any good."

"This is serious. Is there anything more?"

"Yes."

"You think there was a robbery in the treasure room last night?"

"Yes."

"Have you been there?"

"I have, and I wish you would come with me now."

"I certainly shall go if you wish it. Bless me! I was loath to suspect Captain Darke, but I do most heartily hope we are on the right track at last. It would be a bold piece of business if these thieves tried on their game the first night out."

"Let us go now, captain. I want to open a few of those bags, and I want you to be with me when it is done."

"That will be all right. The cashier of the Bank of California told me that he had given you permission to open any part of their shipment."

"Yes, and I have the same permission from the Bank of Nevada."

"Good! Have you the latter in writing? I have no instructions from the Bank of Nevada."

"I have both in writing. I will show you."

"Oh, never mind. Perfectly willing to take your word for it, Brady."

"I prefer that you should see my instructions," said Old King Brady, and he produced them.

"All correct," said the captain. "Let us go ahead."

They at once descended to the treasure room.

"What do you see here which makes you think the bags may have been tampered with last night?" Captain Renwick asked.

"I never expose my hand," replied Old King Brady. "My clews are my own property."

"I beg your pardon. I merely asked."

"And I merely answered, without the slightest disposition to give offence. Now, captain, which is the Bank of California's pile?"

"There it lies," said the captain, pointing.

"You open the bags."

"I have no authority."

"Then I will do it, and you stand as witness."

"Very well."

Old King Brady picked up a bag, broke the seal, and opened it. It was filled with English sovereigns.

"All serene here," he said. "Let's try another."

He tried three others, selecting them from different parts of the pile.

All contained gold coin.

"Begins to look as if you were mistaken," said Captain Renwick.

"Let us try one from the Bank of Nevada's pile," replied Old King Brady.

He did so.

"Ha! Now we see that I have made no mistake!" he exclaimed. The bag was filled with leaden counters, the size and shape of double eagles.

"Well, well, well!" exclaimed Captain Renwick. "They are at it again!"

CHAPTER V.

HARRY'S BRAVE ACT.

Alice did not have to seek Captain Darke. That gentleman sought her. It happened just before Old King Brady saw them talking together at the stern of the Indian Queen.

Alice had looked around for the captain after she came on deck, but she did not see him, nor was she aware of his presence until he laid his hand lightly upon her arm.

She turned and faced him.

The color left her cheeks. She would not have been a woman if under such circumstances she had been able to entirely retain her self-control. But she regained it in a second.

"Did you wish to speak to me, sir?" she haughtily asked.

"Alice! You know me all right. It is useless to pretend that you do not," replied Captain Darke in a low tone.

"Well?"

"And I know you in spite of your excellent disguise. I did not at first, I will admit. But this morning at the breakfast table I recognized you. It is no use denying your identity."

"I shall not attempt to do so. I know you, Captain Darke."

"Captain Darke! Why call me by that name?"

"Is it assumed?"

"Of course it is. Do you mean to tell me that you have not regained your memory yet?"

"Such is the fact."

"Well, well! These Chinese doctors are wonderful people. Our American herbalists could learn much from them if their conceit did not prevent."

"Was I drugged into this condition by a Chinese herb?"

"You were."

"Are you going to tell me who I am, to disclose my shrouded past?"

"Nothing was further from my thoughts when I came aboard this steamer."

"And now?"

"I haven't had time to get over the surprise of meeting you yet."

"I trust you may get over it soon, then. Meanwhile, am I to regard you as my enemy or my friend?"

"Oh, as your friend. Steadily your friend. But really, don't you think it is better to let sleeping dogs lie?"

"No, I don't."

"You are contented in your present situation?"

"Oh, yes. More than contented."

"You still have part of the money left which was given you. If you need more it will be forthcoming."

"I have scarcely touched the interest of the \$50,000 which was left in that room in the old mansion in the Bronx for me. I have been working steadily ever since, and at good pay."

"And at your chosen profession with two of the most skillful detectives in the country. Really, Alice, what more do you want?"

"Would you like to be in my situation?"

"As a partner in the far-famed Brady Detective Bureau? Why, yes, I should like it first rate."

"You are making sport of me."

"No, I am not, and you would know that I was not if—well, I've said enough."

"Tell me one thing, Captain Darke. Is there any way of restoring my memory?"

"I understand that there is. The cause is a change wrought in your brain by this Chinese herb. At the time it was administered I was told that any Chinese doctor could prescribe the antidote."

"Why on earth didn't some of us think of that before," Alice said to herself.

Naturally her excitement was great, but she steadily endeavored to show it by no sign.

"Shall we walk?" inquired Captain Darke. "We are attracting attention here, I have no doubt."

"I don't mind. I hope you will make up your mind to tell me all."

"Not yet; but I may see reason to change my mind between this and the time we touch at Honolulu. Now, tell me what is the nature of the case you and Old King Brady are working on at the present time?"

"Why, bless me, Captain Darke, do you imagine that I am going to give away Old King Brady's business to you? You must be crazy."

"As you will; but of course I know."

"As Bobby Burns, or some other Scotchman says: 'Many ane spears the gait he knows fu weel.'"

"Never mind Bobby Burns; the case is that of the robberies which have taken place in this steamer's treasure room, all right."

"I have no secret belonging to the Brady Detective Bureau which I propose to communicate to you, Captain Darke."

"Be it so. But let me tell you one thing: my compliments through you to Old King Brady, and tell him that he had better be most careful. He is walking on thin ice of the thinnest kind if I know anything at all."

"Really?"

"Yes, really."

"I shall certainly tell him what you say. But now, Captain Darke, would it not be just as well to close this interview, seeing that nothing definite is likely to come of it. If you have anything to tell me concerning my past I am at your service as a listener at any time, night or day."

"I understand."

"But other than that I really think we had better meet as strangers."

Captain Darke turned his remarkable eyes upon Alice, and for a few moments regarded her fixedly.

"Be it so," he said, very seriously. "But remember what I tell you—the day may come when you will regard me in a very different light."

"It is up to you, Captain Darke," replied Alice, coolly. "You may bring that day on as soon as you please."

She turned and left him.

"He never mentioned Harry," she thought, "and that's a good thing, too."

She had not gone ten steps along the deck before just what she had most wanted came to pass.

A busy woman who had cultivated her acquaintance came along with Harry at her side.

"Oh, Mrs. Wimans, permit me to make you acquainted with Mr. Cecil Turner!" she cried. "Mr. Turner, Mrs. Wimans. I do think we are the most unsociable lot of passengers that I ever sailed with, and I have been out to China five times. But I'll soon change all that if I can have my way. Now, Mr. Turner, don't be bashful, but just make yourself acquainted with Mrs. Wimans. If you find her as charming as I have you will be well repaid."

Thus saying the introducer fluttered her hand to Alice, and sailed away.

There was no one within hearing.

"I am so glad to get this chance," said Alice. "I hope Old King Brady won't mind."

"I don't care if he does. Say what you have to say. One can't lay down cast iron rules in a situation like this."

"That's what I think. Did you see who I was talking to just before you came up?"

"Yes; Captain Darke."

"Exactly."

"You are sure he is your man?"

"Oh, yes. He admits it. He spoke to me himself."

"Very good. Anything come of it?"

"Nothing came my way. He knows why Old King Brady is here, however."

"Not surprising that he should guess it. These robberies have been newspaper talk. Did he tell you nothing about yourself?"

"Nothing of any consequence. He did say that my loss

of memory was due to a Chinese herb, and that any Chinese doctor could cure me."

"Why, bless me, Alice, I regard that of the highest importance. We shall have you all right when we get to China, then."

"If you can believe him."

"I shouldn't wonder a bit if it was true. I wonder we never thought of applying to a Chinese doctor before. Did he allude to me?"

"Never said a word about you."

"Good! I am glad that one of us can remain incog. Where is the Governor?"

"Last I saw of him he was going down into the cabin with Captain Renwick."

"I suppose they are going to inspect the treasure room. I am most curious to know the result."

But it was not until after dark that Harry had that satisfaction.

Meanwhile the storm had broken.

There was no rain—just wind, which is often the case on the Pacific. And such a blow Harry had never witnessed. To describe the waves as mountains high would scarcely be an exaggeration.

The Indian Queen showed her sailing qualities then.

She rolled tremendously, it is true, but she kept steadily on her course.

As Captain Renwick had predicted, there were very few passengers at the supper table.

Poor Alice was seasick and had to retire.

At the table where, as it chanced, Old King Brady and Harry sat side by side, there was not another passenger on their side, and nobody immediately opposite.

"I think we may venture to talk," said Old King Brady; "if we speak as I am speaking now nobody can possibly hear."

"I am glad of the chance," replied Harry. "Were you in the treasure room with the captain?"

"Yes."

"Anything doing?"

"In the discovery line? Oh, yes."

"Well? Don't keep a fellow in suspense."

"We opened a number of gold bags. In four belonging to the shipment of the Bank of Nevada we found the leaden counters."

"You don't mean it! Had all the gold been removed?"

"Yes."

"That alone would be a good haul."

"Indeed it would."

"How did Captain Renwick take it?"

"He seemed to be glad rather than sorry. He said that now it was up to me to show my detective skill."

"Neatly put. I only hope you may be able to deliver the goods."

"We must certainly hustle, Harry. I am glad that the climax has come thus early in the voyage. If we could solve this mystery before we touch at Honolulu it would be a great relief, for we can jail our prisoner there."

"We must hustle, as you say. I was talking with Alice. We were introduced."

"Well? Has she anything to report?"

"She was talking to Captain Darke."

"I saw them. Did anything come of it?"

Harry told what Alice had said.

"I shall have to get after the gentleman myself. By the way, I don't see him at his place at the other table."

"No; perhaps he is seasick."

"Few can hold out in a blow like this. I was expecting to see you fall down."

"I don't feel a qualm. How about yourself?"

"Oh, as for me, I can truly say that I was never seasick in my life."

As Captain Renwick had suggested, the Indian Queen only struck an edge of the storm.

By nine o'clock she had entirely run out of it.

The sky cleared, and the stars came out.

But there were only a few passengers on deck.

Seasickness leaves its results. Indeed, in some cases even the cessation of the rolling does not bring the nausea to an abrupt end.

Harry was walking the deck when, drawing near stateroom 59, he suddenly saw Captain Darke, only partially dressed, come rushing wildly out. He leaned over the rail, and proved in an instant that he was one of the kind to whom seasickness is apt to cling.

Harry stood and watched him.

"By jove, he's got a dose for fair," he thought.

And the thought had scarcely occurred to him when something more serious happened.

Captain Darke had leaned much further over the rail than was safe.

All at once Harry saw his heels go flying in the air. A sudden lurch of the steamer sent him toppling over the rail.

Harry's resolve was taken on the instant.

"With the mystery of Alice in his possession, we can't spare that man," he said to himself.

He kicked off his shoes, and throwing aside his coat and hat, sprang upon the rail and dove into the deep.

CHAPTER VI.

YOUNG KING BRADY GETS NEXT TO CAPTAIN DARKE.

It was a brave action on the part of Young King Brady. Still, Harry can swim like a duck, and the ocean had now practically resumed its usual calm. The moon had come out, and it was very light.

Harry sank deep, and when he came to the surface they were shouting "Man overboard!" on the deck of the Indian Queen.

The steamer was forging right ahead.

A sickening sense of fear clutched at Harry's throat. Would Captain Renwick refuse to stop? He had heard of captains who were thus heartless. But he instantly pulled himself together and looked for his man. At no great distance away a hand was raised above the water.

"Hello, there! Hello! Hold hard and I'll be with you in a second!" Harry yelled.

The hand was waved back and forth.

Bravely dismissing all thought of the steamer, Young King Brady with a strong, powerful side stroke, struck out for the hand. He was soon alongside his man. But at first glance he could scarcely believe that it actually was his man. An amazing change had come over Captain Darke. Instead of the heavy mass of glossy black hair, his head was covered with a stubby growth of hair which was fiery red.

His beautiful wavy mustache had also vanished. The man was lying on his back, the very safest position he could have assumed.

"Hello!" he shouted. "Don't be afraid that I'll drown you. I'm a poor swimmer, but I learned to float this way long ago. I'll do just whatever you tell me, and you may trust me to keep my head."

"Good! You're all right!" cried Harry. "Just stay as you are for a second. I want to get a look at the steamer. I am afraid they are not going to stop for us, in which case we are both in the soup."

Harry trod water, turned, and faced the steamer. She had stopped, and a boat was being lowered.

"It is all right. They are coming after us," he said.

"Good!" replied Captain Darke. "What am I to do?"

"Can you hold yourself upright in the water for a moment?"

"I think so. I must make the try."

"Do it. Seize me by the hips, or grab the waistband of my trousers, and then don't do a thing but hold yourself so, and try to keep your legs as much out of the way of mine as you can."

"All right. I think I can manage it."

"Your safety depends upon it; mine, too, for that matter."

Captain Darke made no reply, but did just as he had been directed. In a moment Harry was swimming with a steady overhand stroke, towing his charge toward the boat.

Old King Brady had been in the smoking room when the cry of "Man overboard!" went up.

There was only one other man present, and both rushed out on deck. There was some excitement. The mate was on the bridge, but Captain Renwick had run out of his stateroom at the first alarm.

"Hold on! Don't stop till I give orders!" he shouted. "Who is it?"

"Captain Darke, sir!" replied the mate.

"Go ahead; we can do nothing."

"A passenger jumped after him, sir. Young Mr. Turner."

"Go ahead, I tell you! We can do nothing!" roared the captain. As he spoke Old King Brady's hand fell upon his arm.

"Captain Renwick, I am astonished!" said the old detective sternly. "Stop this steamer! Order a boat lowered instantly, or there is trouble ahead for you."

"Ha! I see! It is not as I thought. I can do it!" stammered the captain. "Stop her, Mr. Smith! Lower away! Pardon me, Mr. Brady, I must go on the bridge!"

This is what happened on the steamer. Old King Brady was deeply puzzled.

"What on earth has come over the man?" he asked himself. But he was not worrying on Harry's account now. He knew his partner's fearlessness and skill as a swimmer far too well for that. And so the Indian Queen was stopped and a boat lowered in command of the second mate. The steamer's searchlight was thrown upon the scene. Old King Brady stood leaning over the rail taking it all in.

"It will give Harry a big hold over him," he thought. "If they only do get safely aboard it will be great."

He saw them safely board the boat, and he saw them brought aboard the steamer. In some way Captain Darke had managed to lose his trousers. Altogether he was a sorry looking object. It was with the deepest interest that Old King Brady noted the change in the man.

"Disguised, eh?" he said to himself. "It was a splendid piece of work, that wig and mustache. I never for an instant suspected it."

He knew that outside of Paris no such perfect materials could be obtained. And now the old detective went back to the smoking room. He did not wait for Captain Darke to pass him, as he would have been obliged to do if the old detective had maintained his position at the rail. The steamer started on her way. But few had witnessed the accident, as almost everyone was seasick that night. Fortunately for Harry, his wig had held in position, and he was thus able to come aboard looking somewhat as he did when he jumped into the sea. Captain Renwick followed Old King Brady into the smoking room very shortly. He found the old detective seated there alone, looking over a magazine.

"Well, we've got to the end of that flare-up!" cried the captain, flinging himself into a chair. "I hope, Brady, that you don't consider me altogether a monster in human form."

"I confess that I don't quite understand your hesitation, Captain Renwick. For the moment it looked as if you intended to leave those two to drown."

"Of course, it looked that way," replied the captain, lighting a cigar. "But you must understand my situation. I am in charge of this steamer. There are many lives in my care. The situation required thought, and I am a bit slow."

"How did it happen? Which fell overboard?" asked Old King Brady, although he well knew how the case must have stood.

"It was Captain Darke. Say, Brady, would you have believed that red-headed rooster young Turner brought back with him was the same man?"

"It was a great change. The man has evidently been in disguise right along.

"I wouldn't have believed it. Still, it's well to know."

"Decidedly."

"Looks as if he might well be our gold thief."

"It certainly does."

"Still, there were robberies committed when he was not aboard."

"If the man can assume one disguise I suppose he can another."

"Quite so."

Captain Renwick was silent for some time.

"What do you propose to do about it?" he asked at length.

"I shall have to give the matter more thought than I have been able to do yet before I can answer that question, Captain Renwick," was the reply.

"His baggage ought to be searched."

"Where is he booked for?"

"Hong Kong."

"The last port you make. Time enough. Let us see what he does in the way of disguising himself again."

Captain Renwick left, and soon afterwards Old King Brady went to his stateroom. He watched his chance and knocked on Harry's door.

There was no response, however.

"The boy is with Captain Darke," thought Old King Brady. "He was complaining that he had nothing to do, but it strikes me that he has got his hands full now, all right. I can only await results."

It was true. Harry had got himself right into business.

"See me to my stateroom. I want to speak to you,"

Captain Darke had whispered while they were in the boat.

Harry was not surprised. He saw that the man was terribly shaken up, and was trembling all over. Harry followed him to his stateroom. A steward was on hand to assist.

"You want a good drink of whisky. Have you any?" he asked.

"No," replied Captain Darke. "I never use the stuff."

"But you must on this occasion," said Harry. "Get him some, steward."

The steward departed.

"Strip," said Harry. "I'll rub you down with these coarse towels. Your life depends upon restoring your circulation as quick as possible."

"I—I know it," chattered Captain Darke. "I—I'm a very sick man, I'm afraid. I—I was sick before. You—you won't desert me? I—I have this room to myself. Sleep here to-night?"

"Yes."

"Thanks. My name is Captain G. Dickson Darke. I haven't the pleasure of knowing yours."

"Cecil Turner."

"I shall never forget it. I—I have not thanked you for saving my life, and I am not going to. There are some things for which a fellow really can't find words. This is one of them. I owe my life to you."

He had been undressing while this conversation went on, Harry assisting. When this was accomplished, Young King Brady gave him a good rubbing down. The steward

came with the whisky, and Captain Darke took his dose with the air of a man by no means unfamiliar with the stuff. Harry saw him safely in his bunk, and covered him up.

"I'm going to look after myself now, Captain Darke," he said.

"And about time, too," added the steward, under his breath.

"You will come back?" questioned the captain.

"Yes. Shall I send the surgeon to you?"

"No, no! I don't want him."

Harry wondered as he left the room how it was that the surgeon had not already put in an appearance. He learned later that the man was locked in his stateroom, and had refused to answer the messenger Captain Renwick sent to him. That he was drunk and asleep there could be but little doubt. Shortly after Harry left Captain Renwick called to inquire if Captain Darke would like to see him, but the latter through the steward, who had agreed to remain until Harry's return, begged to be excused.

The captain called at Harry's stateroom before he had finished dressing. Young King Brady's first act had been to restore his face to its original appearance, so he was ready, and he opened the door and let the captain in.

"Shake hands, young man!" cried the Scotchman, in his bluff way. "You have performed a noble deed."

"Oh, I don't know about that," Harry said. "I'm at home in the water. There wasn't the least danger, really."

Captain Renwick sat down and this to Harry's disgust, for he wanted to get rid of him as quick as possible.

"It's a singular thing about that man, Mr. Turner, isn't it now?"

"What?"

"He went overboard with a head of black hair, and came back a redhead."

"He wore a wig, I suppose."

"That's just it, but why?"

"Why, really, captain, I find that I have all I can do to attend to my own business. If the man chooses to wear a wig it's none of my affair."

"And that's true enough. Then there was the mustache, too."

"I didn't observe whether he wore a mustache or not."

"He wore one before he went overboard."

"He did, eh?"

"And he had none when he came back."

Harry made no answer.

Seeing that he did not seem to be disposed to talk, Captain Renwick presently withdrew. Harry finished dressing. He was jubilant over the prospect of putting in the night with Captain Darke.

"It will go hard if I don't find out something about the fellow now," he thought. He delayed a bit, hoping Old King Brady would come, but he did not. Coming out, Harry listened at Alice's door, but he could hear nothing. He looked into the cabin. It was deserted. Returning to

Alice's door, he ventured to knock, giving the secret signal of the firm.

"That you, Mr. Brady?" Alice's voice called.

"Harry. Come to the ventilator. I want to whisper something."

"I am here, Harry," Alice's voice called after a few seconds. Harry, with his mouth close to the ventilator, said:

"Tell Old King Brady if you can that I shall not be in my stateroom to-night. I am going to sleep with Captain Darke."

"Oh, Harry, do be careful how you have anything to do with that dreadful man!"

"It is all right, Alice. I'd explain if I could, but I can't do it. Good-night."

"Good-night, Harry, and good luck."

Harry made his way to stateroom 59. As it happened, he met no one. Entering, he found Captain Darke apparently asleep. The steward was sitting patiently on a stool waiting.

"So you have come, sir. How are you feeling now?" he said.

"I'm all right," replied Harry. "I see he has gone to sleep."

"Yes; you notice how he breathes?"

"I do; that sounds like pneumonia. We ought to have the surgeon."

"It would really be no use, sir. To tell the truth—of course, you won't give me away—the surgeon is quite drunk to-night."

"Is he, the beast! Well, I will stay here and do the best I can. Here is a five-dollar gold-piece for you, steward. By the way, you needn't mention that I am here to anyone."

"I understand, sir. Good-night."

Young King Brady locked the door after the steward.

He had scarcely done so than Captain Darke opened his eyes.

"So you are back, Turner," he said. "I was not asleep. Don't worry about me. I will be all right, but I am a sick man, and I am thankful that you have come."

CHAPTER VII.

ALICE DOES SHARP DETECTIVE WORK.

As soon as Harry had gone Alice, who now that the sea had calmed down was feeling much better, got up and dressed. It seemed to her that this was to be a critical night. She determined to be ready for whatever might come about. But she was destined to wait some time before Old King Brady came. The old detective had become really interested in his magazine after Captain Renwick left. Moreover, he was inclined to wait awhile and see if Harry would not drop into the smoking-room. It was now about half-past ten. Strange to say, he still had the smoking-room to himself. The male contingent among the passengers on the Indian Queen seemed to have been unusually hard hit by the storm. At a quarter to eleven a fussy old gentleman came in and smoked up

one cigar. He evidently regarded the old detective with profound contempt, for he took pains to sit with his back to him and never spoke a word. At eleven fifteen he took his departure, and Old King Brady began to think about turning in, when the door opened and to his surprise in walked a person whom he had never seen before. He was a tall, blonde man, very much of the athletic build of Captain Darke. He was dressed in an ill-fitting suit of English tweeds, evidently the output of some swell London tailor. In his left eye a monacle was squeezed. He looked altogether the howling swell. But where had he come from? That was the question.

The Indian Queen was now two nights out from San Francisco. Old King Brady had carefully sized up all the passengers, but he had not seen this man before. He dropped into a chair and proceeded to light a cigar with that ancient device, a flint and steel and a tinder tape, which is still in use on the Pacific steamers. Having accomplished his purpose after several trials, he dropped into a careless attitude and began puffing away. Naturally Old King Brady eyed him. This after a moment the stranger seemed to resent.

"Beg pawdon!" he drawled. "Did you speak?"

"No, sir," replied Old King Brady, quietly.

"Beg pawdon! I—aw—I thought you did."

"No, sir; but I can talk if occasion requires."

"Aw, I daresay. Beast of a storm while is larsted, was it not?"

"Quite a blow. It seems to have had a lasting effect upon our passengers. There appear to be very few of them around."

"Yaas. It had a still more odd effect upon me."

"Indeed. How was that?"

"Why, I had been beastly seasick from the time we pulled out, doncherknow, but when this storm struck us, what do I do but begin to get well."

"Fortunate for you, sir."

"Very. Beg pardon, but haven't I seen you in London?"

"England?"

"Yaas."

"Not lately."

"Aw, I thought I had. Going out to China, I daresay?"

"Yes."

"So am I. Beastly country. The very thought of what I have to encounter makes me quite sick. If we are both bound for the same destination, we may as well be acquainted. Here is my card."

The man produced a yellow leather card case and handed Old King Brady a pasteboard, which read:

"Mr. J. Talbot Tams."

"Pleased to make your acquaintance," said Old King Brady. "As it happens, I have no card with me. My name is Brady, James Brady. I hail from New York."

"Oh, indeed. A beastly hole."

"Sorry you don't like my city, Mr. Tams. New York is much changed."

"How can one like a town where the buildings are so tall that one can't see their tops without breaking one's neck?"

"You must take the tops for granted."

"Where one finds old-fashioned horse trams still in service, when all the world has adopted electric trams long ago."

"I will admit that to the stranger our horse cars must look peculiar, but they run mostly on streets where it is very difficult, if not impossible, to run electric cars."

For a few moments the conversation lagged. Old King Brady threw away the butt of his cigar. Out came Mr. Tams's cigar case on the instant.

"Will you try one of my weeds, Mr. Brady?" he asked.

Old King Brady saw no reason why he should not, and he lit the cigar. The conversation turned to China. Mr. Tams looked at his watch at last.

"Midnight," he exclaimed. "How the time has flown. This is my first appearance outside my stateroom. Hope to meet you again, Mr. Brady. I must turn in now."

He left the smoking-room, but Old King Brady did not immediately follow him. He felt singularly tired, and yet he could not muster up energy enough to go to bed.

And this feeling had come over him within the last half hour. He seemed to realize that something was the matter with him all of a sudden.

"Come, come!" he said to himself. "I had better get to bed. It is not likely that I shall be disturbed again to-night. Whatever is keeping Harry I can't imagine. Perhaps I shall find him below."

He passed out of the smoking-room. Then came a revelation. No sooner did Old King Brady strike the cold air than his brain began to whirl and his legs to double up under him. He was like a man who had been drinking too much hot liquor in a warm room.

"Drugged again!" thought the old detective. "What on earth shall I do?"

He was almost past doing, although he did not know it.

It came dimly to him that he had better make for Captain Renwick. The situation was very serious.

Old King Brady had now not only lost his head, but his legs into the bargain. He had taken but a few steps when he went down with a crash. He did not rise again, but lay unconscious on the deck.

Alice waited up till after midnight. She wondered what had become of her chief, and about quarter past twelve she found out. There was a shuffling in the alley.

She heard suppressed voices talking in Chinese. Alice threw open her door and stepped out regardless of the consequences. Two Chinese room stewards—bed makers, by rights—had Old King Brady between them. They were carrying him, neck and heels, while an officer, whom Alice now recognized as Gus Philips, the purser, was directing the operation.

"What is the matter?" she exclaimed. "Such a noise! Really this is disgraceful! Is the man dead or injured in any way?"

"Dead drunk, ma'am," said Philips, raising his cap.

"How scandalous at his age! Is it really no worse?"

"Oh, no, ma'am. He's merely drunk," said the purser, opening the door. "There is nothing uncommon about it, I assure you."

He told the Chinamen to lay Old King Brady in the lower berth.

Alice retreated to her stateroom and heard them depart. She was terribly alarmed. What if Old King Brady had been poisoned? She waited a few minutes, and then stealing out, she let herself into Old King Brady's stateroom and carefully secured the door. She ventured to turn on the electric light at the risk of being discovered.

She then bent over the old detective and tried to ascertain his condition. There was no smell of liquor about him. He seemed to breathe regularly and his heart and pulse were strong.

"He has been drugged again by one of those dreadful cigars," thought Alice. "I can't understand how he came to be so careless. What in the world shall I do?"

Now Alice is one of those clear thinkers who are usually able to hit off a delicate situation right.

"If he came out of it before he will again," she reflected. "Probably they intend to tap the treasure-room again to-night. If I wait I may catch them in the act."

She resolved to chance it, for she was sure Old King Brady would approve of such a course.

She turned out the light and slipped over into Harry's stateroom. In all these cabin stateroom doors there were little slatted ventilators at the top.

Alice produced a sharp knife and deftly cut out one of the slats in a very few minutes. She then prepared herself for a long wait. And she got it. Time seemed to crawl on leaden wings. One o'clock came, then two, the half hour passed and still there was nothing doing.

Alice had just about made up her mind to go across and see how it fared with Old King Brady when suddenly the cabin light at the end of the alley went out. What could it mean? This light was supposed to burn through the night. Alice now heard footsteps in the alley. She pressed her face to the opening she had made and peered out. A man stood with his back to her, fumbling at Old King Brady's door. It was so dark that Alice could but just make out his presence. The door opened and he passed into the stateroom, closing it behind him. Alice was all in a tremble. It seemed to her that she really must do something. Should she go to Captain Darke's stateroom and try to get Harry? Should she call Captain Renwick? Should she attempt to tackle the man herself?

All these questions the brave girl asked herself, but she could find no answer to any of them. Something seemed to tell her that the proper thing was to wait.

And wait she did for fully ten minutes. Not a sound was heard. There was no movement within the stateroom.

At last she could stand it no longer.

"He has gone into the treasure-room, whoever he is,"

thought Alice, "and perhaps I can get a look at him if I am sharp."

She took out her skeleton keys and drew her revolver. "If the door is bolted I am done for," she thought as she fitted the skeleton to the lock.

But the bolt had not been shot.

The intruder had contented himself with locking the door and carrying off the key. In an instant she had the stateroom door open. Up the secret stairs a light came streaming. Alice crouched down upon the floor and tried to get a look into the treasure-room. This, with difficulty, she managed to do, but she could see nobody at first.

Someone was moving about below, however. Scarcely daring to draw her breath, the brave girl waited.

Then in a few minutes came her reward. Suddenly the intruder passed across the line of her vision. Was it possible for Alice to mistake her enemy? It would seem not.

Back to Harry's stateroom the girl retreated firmly, believing that the man she had seen was Captain Darke.

CHAPTER VIII.

ALICE COMES TO THE CONCLUSION THAT CAPTAIN DARKE IS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE MYSTERY.

"What seems to be the matter with you?" Harry asked of Captain Darke. "How is it that you feel sick?"

"It is my lungs. I am so stuffed up I can scarcely breathe."

Captain Darke sank back and covered his face with his hands. It was some minutes before he removed them.

When he did so Harry could perceive that there was a look of grim determination in his face.

"Turner," he said, "you saved my life once to-night, save it again. Go and get me two bottles of whisky, like a good fellow."

"Two bottles, captain?"

"Two bottles, as I said."

"But I'm not drinking."

"For which I am sorry, for misery loves company. I knew it. If I had supposed you were drinking I should have made it four."

"Can't I persuade you to be satisfied with one good drink?"

"No. It's the whole hog or nothing."

"Very well. I am not your keeper. I will do as you say."

It was too late to ring for drinks. Harry knew that it would be necessary to apply to the purser, who, outside of regular hours, had the liquor in charge. So he went below to Gus Philips's office. The purser was just closing up.

"Can I get two bottles of good whisky, Mr. Philips?" he asked.

"I suppose so," was the reply. "Do you want them for yourself?"

"No, for Captain Darke, who went overboard. He's in a bad way."

Philips said nothing, but went into the room behind his office and came out with a bottle of whisky in each hand.

"By the way," added Philips as Harry took the whisky, "you went overboard after the captain, I am told?"

"Yes."

"It was a deuced brave act."

"Oh, not at all. I am perfectly at home in the water."

"Is the captain badly knocked out?"

"Yes, he feels pretty rocky."

"Has he been drinking?"

"Only one drink."

"And do you propose to stop with him while he tanks up?"

"He asked me to sleep in his stateroom to-night and I have promised to do so."

"So? Well, it's none of my business, but I warn you that you will have an interesting time of it. I've seen Darke tank up before."

"Is he violent?"

"Oh, no; he won't hurt you unless he talks you to death—there's real danger of that."

Harry left the purser not altogether ill-pleased.

"Perhaps I can switch him onto Alice," he thought.

He returned to the stateroom. The captain was up in his pajamas, sitting on a stool.

"Good! You have got it!" he exclaimed. "My brand, too; Gus Philips knows. Did you bring a corkscrew?"

"By Jove, I forgot it!"

"What in thunder are we to do? I can't draw the cork with my teeth, then."

"I'll go back."

At the same instant there came a tap on the door.

"Who is there?" demanded Captain Darke. "I'm abed and sleepy. I don't want to see anybody here."

"It is I, Gus Philips."

"Oh, open the door, Turner, please."

"I've brought you a corkscrew," said the purser with a grin. "Thought you might need one."

"You have saved my life," cried the captain.

Harry took the corkscrew.

"Have a drink, Gus?" demanded the captain.

"No, thanks. I'm not hitting the stuff these three weeks. How do you feel?"

"Blamed rocky. If it hadn't been for our friend here there would be no feeling left in me."

"You had a narrow escape," said the purser, and he withdrew.

Harry now drew the cork, and, placing the bottle on the washstand, was about to wash the tumbler, when Captain Darke seized the bottle.

"Never mind that so long as you aren't going to drink," he cried.

He put the bottle to his lips, and when at last he removed it the contents was reduced one-half.

"I suppose you are horrified," chuckled the captain, crawling back under the covers. "Never mind, old boy, I know what I'm about. Now talk to me, for heaven sake."

It is hard work for anybody to talk to order. Harry

started in to ask the captain if he felt in the least seasick after he went overboard.

"No," was the reply, "and that was the strange part of it. My seasickness vanished the instant I went over the rail. I suppose the salt water must have washed it away."

"It was more likely that it was the nervous shock."

"Something did the business."

He did not seem to be in the least affected as yet.

Harry understood the situation. He knew that Captain Darke must be one of those heavy drinkers who have become so saturated with whisky that it takes a barrel to get them drunk. The talk now began in good earnest.

The captain began to tell about adventures of his own in China and Australia. Liquor is supposed to bring out a man's true nature. Captain Darke, after a little, called for the bottle and turned down the balance of the stuff.

This had no other effect than to loosen his tongue a little more. But in all his talk he never mentioned bugs, beetles, birds or beasts once. Considering that the man was supposed to be writing a book on natural history, this seemed a bit strange. The evening wore on. Captain Darke finished the half of the second bottle. This seemed to do the business. His speech began to grow incoherent.

"I'm going to sleep now, Turner," he said. "I've got there. Shan't want any more. Go to sleep now. Better turn in yourself—yes?"

"I think I will," replied Harry.

"Shay, ole man," cried the captain, "gimme your hand."

Harry took his hand and had his fingers fearfully squeezed.

"Bless you," said the captain. "You done me greatest shervice one man can do another. You shaved me. Bless you, my boy; bless you!"

With that he fell over asleep. It had not been nearly as bad as Gus Philips predicted. But, on the other hand, Young King Brady's scheme utterly failed. Again and again he tried to turn Captain Darke upon the subject of Alice, calling her Mrs. Wimans, of course. It was simply useless. The captain admitted that he had formed Mrs. Wimans's acquaintance. He acknowledged that he considered her a very attractive woman. He asked Harry if he wanted an introduction to her and promised to give him one. But each time he bit the subject off short.

Harry partially undressed and lay down in the middle bunk. At first he resolved that he would not go to sleep. But, like many another good resolution, this one was taken only to be broken. After midnight Young King Brady slept. As a rule Harry is a light sleeper, but he was very tired after his exertion, and the gentle roll of the steamer helped, no doubt. At all events, he soon sank into deep slumber, from which he was at length aroused by some slight sound, he knew not what.

Opening his eyes, Harry was puzzled to see that something had been hung over the front of the berth which entirely cut off his view. A dim light penetrated the blanket, for such the obstruction was. Harry pulled his wits together at once. He had no other idea than that it

was Captain Darke up to some drunken trick. He tried to softly drag himself up on the pillow so that he could look around the edge of the blanket. Scarcely had he made a move when he heard whoever was on the other side of the blanket approach the bunk. Young King Brady shut his eyes and lay perfectly still. It was well that he did so, for at the same instant the blanket was snatched away. Out of the corner of his eyes Harry saw, as he supposed, Captain Darke. The man, who held the electric light in his hand, stood looking at him. All at once he flashed the light in Young King Brady's face. Harry never winced. The captain was fully dressed, even to his hat. Just for an instant he looked at Young King Brady, and then softly opening the door, passed out of the stateroom.

"He has finished the second bottle and is gunning for more drink," thought Harry.

Not yet did he entertain the least doubt that it was Captain Darke that he had seen.

Harry slid out of the berth and felt for his coat, which he had hung on a hook. As he did not find it where he supposed he had left it, he turned on the electric light.

"Great Scott," muttered Harry, looking down at the lower berth in blank surprise.

There lay Captain Darke sound asleep.

"Are there two of them?" Harry asked himself. "Is this a trick?"

He hurriedly dressed, and turning out the light, opened the door. He was ready for business, too, in case of an attack. So suddenly did he throw the door back that a person who was standing on the other side of it had no time to get out of the way. It was Alice. She had wrapped a light cloak around her, and her face was partially concealed by a cheap hood. She drew back in some alarm at the sight of Harry. But she instantly recovered herself, and making a sign for silence, glided off along the deck. Harry carefully locked the door with the proper key, which he had found lying on the floor, and followed on. He had some slight difficulty in finding Alice.

At last he located her standing against the rail in a corner forward by the bow of one of the lifeboats.

"Alice," he whispered, "what in the world are you doing up here at this time of night?"

"Wondering," was the brief reply.

"You had better have said wandering. Were you walking in your sleep?"

"Not at all. I've had no sleep to-night. When you came out I was just wishing that you might do so. It seems almost as though you had been able to read my thoughts."

"My coming out at that moment had nothing at all to do with you."

"Is Captain Darke in the stateroom?"

"Yes."

"Asleep?"

"Yes."

"Have you been able to learn anything of my past from him?"

"Nothing at all. He headed me off at every turn. But have patience, Alice. I'll yet force him to speak."

"I don't know. We are dealing with a desperately bad man, I am afraid."

"And I don't know. It seems to me from what I have seen of Captain Darke that we are rather dealing with a fool."

"Don't you believe it. Know what has happened to Old King Brady?"

"Why, no. Nothing serious, I hope."

"He has been drugged again."

"Where is he?"

"In his stateroom."

"Has the treasure-room been touched again?"

"It surely has, Harry."

"Great Scott! And who is responsible for all this?"

"Who? Why who should it be but Captain Darke?" cried Alice. "Now, will you sit up and pay attention, Harry? Now, will you listen to me? Now, will you believe that we are fighting a desperately bad man? I saw him in the treasure-room with my own eyes!"

CHAPTER IX.

WHO IS J. TALBOT TAMS?

"Softly, softly," said Harry. "You are getting nervous, Alice, and someone may overhear us. Let me tell you that you are laboring under a mistake."

"A mistake! What do you mean?"

"Tell me first just what you mean. Describe in detail what has actually occurred."

And Alice told what the reader already knows, adding that she had continued to watch in Harry's stateroom and had seen Captain Darke come out of Old King Brady's room, after which she followed him to stateroom 59, which he entered.

"How did he open the door?"

"How did he open the door? With a key, I suppose."

"Was he long about it, Alice?"

"Well, now you come to mention it, he was a little slow."

"He pushed out the key and then turned the lock with a skeleton."

"Why should he do that, when he must have had the key? Have you been asleep in there?"

"Yes, Alice, I was asleep."

"Ah! That accounts for it."

"Accounts for what?"

"For your being fooled."

"You are jumping at conclusions. I don't think I have been fooled."

Harry then related what had happened.

Alice looked at him in a puzzled way.

"Well, well! It is very strange," she murmured.

"It is a sure thing that Captain Darke never went out

of that stateroom since I landed him in there. He drank himself drunk, and asleep he has been ever since."

"Well!"

"You see now that someone is personating the captain, Alice."

"It must be so. I have been fooled. Harry, I give up."

"You surely have been fooled. There is a deeper game being played aboard this steamer than any of us imagined. It is up to us to catch on to it, that is all."

"And you say Captain Darke as I knew him and as we have seen him is a man disguised?"

"That's right. Instead of a stylish black-haired gentleman, his hair is as red as a carrot. You would never know the man if you could see him now."

"Let me see him, Harry—if you are sure he won't wake, that is."

"I don't think there is the least danger. Well, you shall see him. Come on. Then we must see what can be done for the Governor."

Harry led the way to stateroom 59 and opened the door. Of course due care was taken to avoid observation.

Harry was sure that no one was watching them before he made the move. He closed the door and turned his flashlight upon the sleeper's face for the instant.

Alice gave a slight scream and clasped her hands.

"Harry, get me out of here," she said. "I feel quite faint."

Harry lost no time in getting her back to their old position by the lifeboat.

"What is it?" he asked.

"My memory returning, I guess," replied Alice.

"Good!"

"Oh, I haven't got it yet. I just remember that man, that is all."

"But what do you remember about him?"

"That's the trouble. It is all so dim. I can see in my mind's eye a house which looks as if it might belong to a Chinaman. I am there and that man is there. He has me by the throat. I am struggling desperately. He wants me to take a dose of some drug. That's the way it comes to me."

"He must have been the man who drugged you."

"I am sure of it now. Think how he served me in that cab in New York? Probably he is an expert at the business. I believe he drugged Old King Brady, I do indeed."

"The first time yes, but it is impossible that he can have done it the second time."

"I am not so sure," replied Alice.

Womanlike, she would not give up her argument.

"If there are two Captain Darkes then the fact is we don't know which is which," Harry said. "Meanwhile let us get to Old King Brady's stateroom and see what we can do."

"I'll go first," said Alice. "We must not be seen together. You can come along in a few minutes."

There was no light burning in the cabin now, and yet it was three o'clock."

To say the least, this indicated a lax state of affairs.

Alice found the old detective lying just as she had left him. The secret door had been closed by pushing the bunks back into place. Harry came in after a moment and they looked Old King Brady over together.

"I don't believe there is anything serious the matter with him," declared Harry. "You must remember that he has been drugged lots of times before and so have I. I am as sure that he will come out of it all right as I am that I have not been drugged myself this trip."

"Did you say anything to Captain Darke about his being disguised?"

"No. I thought I would hold off on that, and he did not mention it."

"I really don't know what to do, Harry. I watched him come out. I followed him to 59."

"Well, then I'll tell you what to do, Alice, and I hope you will do it. Go to bed."

After some persuasion Alice consented. Harry now made another examination of Old King Brady. He could find nothing alarming in his condition. He turned the light out and climbed into the upper bunk. Purposely he had left the door unfastened. If there was to be another visit from Captain Darke, either the real or the bogus, Harry wanted to throw no obstacle in his way.

He rolled over as close to the wall as possible, so as to avoid being instantly seen by anyone who might come in.

And once more Harry resolved not to go to sleep, and with the same result, for he was soon slumbering.

If Alice could have seen him now she would have been more certain than ever that he had been drugged.

Harry must have slept nearly an hour, when again he was awakened by a slight sound. He opened his eyes to find the stateroom lighted. There was someone standing in front of Old King Brady's berth. Harry, as he lay, could just see the top of an officer's cap.

"Not Captain Darke this time," he thought. "Can it be that Alice sent for the surgeon while I slept?"

He rolled gently over and looked down. Now was the time he wished he had been a second sooner. There stood Captain Renwick with a spoon in one hand and a small bottle in the other. There was no mistaking the situation. He had been giving Old King Brady a dose.

But of what? Harry determined to take the bull by the horns.

"Ahem! Good morning, Captain Renwick!"

The captain gave a violent start. The bottle slipped from his hand and the odor of concentrated coffee filled the room, for it broke when it struck the floor.

"Mr. Turner! You here!" he stammered. "I—I didn't know."

"I have been here right along," replied Harry, climbing down. "What are you doing to Mr. Brady, may I ask?"

"Well, sir," replied the captain haughtily, "inasmuch as I am master of the steamer, I don't know that it is any of your business what I am doing with Mr. Brady. How came you in this stateroom, instead of your own?"

"Why, I was called in by Mr. Brady himself about two hours ago," he said.

"Well?"

"He seemed to be suffering terribly. He told me that he had been drugged by a cigar. He acted more like a drunken man to me. He begged me to stay with him. I managed to get him back in his bunk and then I climbed up here and fell asleep."

Captain Renwick looked relieved.

"That is all right, sir," he said. "His condition is then not as serious as I feared it might be. I did not suppose that he was able to walk and talk. Pardon my abruptness of speech, Mr. Turner. You rather took me by surprise."

"I suppose you did not see me?"

"No."

"I was lying over against the wall. Now, captain, what have you been giving this man? Under the circumstances I surely have a right to know."

"And I have no objection whatever to telling. The purser informed me about half an hour ago, when I came on deck, that Mr. Brady had been discovered dead drunk near the smoking-room door and that he, with the help of two Chinamen, had taken him to his stateroom."

"Ah! I thought it was just a plain drunk."

"Permit me to inform you of your mistake, young man. This is a case of morphine. I recognized it as such at once, and that is why I gave him a dose of the antidote to morphine, which is caffeine."

Harry was satisfied that he spoke the truth.

"It should fetch him around in a few minutes, you think?" he said.

"It ought to."

"We will wait and see. Isn't there a surgeon on the Indian Queen?"

"There is, but he happens to be ill. I explained the situation to him and am acting strictly under his orders."

Old King Brady was beginning to move a bit. Harry stood back out of the way lest, seeing him when he first awoke, he might betray himself.

Presently one eye was opened and the other followed.

"Captain Renwick, you here?" the old detective faintly gasped.

"Yes, Mr. Brady, your neighbor, Mr. Turner, and I are here with you," was the reply.

"Mr. Turner! Oh, very kind of him!"

"He says you called him in."

"Yes, yes. It is all right."

"What in the world happened to you, Mr. Brady?" demanded the captain then.

"I—I don't know."

"Had you been drinking? Don't be afraid to own up to it if you had. Accidents are liable to happen to any man."

"No, no. I had drank nothing."

"Had you seen the party we spoke of? Had you any reason to believe that you were drugged by a cigar?"

"No, I have not seen him."

"Then it is a mystery. But how do you feel?"

"Oh, I am feeling all right. Really there doesn't seem to be anything the matter with me except that I have been taking a long sleep."

"It is worse than that, Mr. Brady."

"How do you mean?"

"You were found unconscious on the deck."

"I am beginning to remember," said the old detective, after a little. "It is all coming back to me now."

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed Captain Renwick. "Good, man! Good. Let's hear about it now!"

"I was in the smoking-room."

"Yes."

"I did smoke a cigar offered me by a passenger, but he was such a perfect gentleman I can't imagine any reason for his drugging me."

"And who was he?"

"Mr. J. Talbot Tams. He gave me his card."

"J. Talbot nothing!" cried Captain Renwick. "Mr. Brady, you have been fooled again. There is no such man on the passenger list."

CHAPTER X.

PUTTING IT UP TO CAPTAIN DARKE.

Old King Brady did not immediately reply to the exclamation of Captain Renwick.

"Perhaps we had better leave him, Mr. Turner," the captain said.

"Yes, go both, and many thanks for your attention," replied Old King Brady. "I am satisfied that I shall be all right very soon."

They left the stateroom.

"A singular case, Mr. Turner," remarked the captain when they found themselves outside the door."

"I can't understand it at all," replied Harry. "Why didn't you ask him more about this man Tams?"

"My dear Mr. Turner, believe me, there is no man Tams," replied the captain, dropping his voice.

"Do you mean to say——" began Harry.

"Yes; that is just what I mean. Rat in his garret."

"Who is this Mr. Brady anyhow?"

"Why, is it possible you have never heard of the great Old King Brady?"

"The New York detective?"

"Yes. He is the man!"

"Oh, and why is he here? Is he doing detective work?" Captain Renwick shrugged his shoulders.

"Between ourselves, I don't think he is in condition to do very much in the line of work," he said. "You ask me what his business on board the Indian Queen is. Well, you ask me too much, for I do not know. But I have been watching the man and I am satisfied that he is almost constantly under the influence of morphine. This time he took an overdose, and but for me getting onto the truth he would now be dead. Good morning, Mr. Turner. We will talk of this later, sir."

Thus saying, Captain Renwick withdrew.

Harry went into his stateroom for a minute and then slipped across the alley and entered that of his chief.

He found Old King Brady sitting on the stool holding his head in his hands.

"Do you feel so very bad, Governor?" Harry asked kindly.

"I feel wretched, Harry," was the reply. "I got an awful dose."

"What do you suppose it was?"

"Some Chinese preparation of opium, no doubt."

"I have something to tell you."

"Your conversation with Captain Renwick is what you refer to?"

"Yes."

"I heard it all. I was standing at the ventilator listening."

"A very singular thing that he should talk that way, Governor."

"Well, Harry, I have been thinking about it. I don't know that it is."

"Why, he called you a morphine fiend. He declared he didn't know what you were here for."

"He could not tell you anyhow. His interest was to conceal the real situation. He may have felt that he was taking the best way."

Old King Brady then gave Harry an account of what had really happened to him.

"If it is as the captain says, then Tams must have been a man disguised," Harry said.

"I suppose it is so," was the reply, "but it never once entered my head. Harry, I am getting old. I am beginning to lose my grip."

"Nonsense! You are discouraged and half sick, that's all. Things can't always go our way."

"That is so. Of course the treasure-room has been overhauled again."

"I have no doubt of it from what Alice told me."

"Alice! Was she mixed up in it, too?"

"Oh, yes. You have got a lot to hear yet, Governor."

Harry told all that had happened then.

Old King Brady seemed somewhat relieved.

"Come!" he exclaimed. "We have got an impersonator on board this steamer, it would seem, and a pretty skilful one at that."

"Doesn't it look so? About this Tams, would he make up into Captain Darke?"

"Very readily, I should say."

"Have you been relieved of anything, Governor?"

"I haven't looked to see, of course, but I will do so now, and then we must go down into the treasure-room."

Old King Brady went through his pockets. Nothing had been disturbed.

"We have got to look for a deeper motive than mere robbery," he said.

"That's right," replied Harry, bolting the door.

They swung the berths around and went down into the

treasure-room. There was nothing to indicate that anyone had been there to Harry's eyes.

But Old King Brady read a different story.

"The bags in the Bank of California's pile have been disturbed," he said. "I arranged them in a certain way, and I am sure of it."

"Shall we open a few?" Harry asked.

"Yes, one or two. I don't care to make a long job of it."

They did not have to, for they struck leaden counters in the first bag they selected.

They opened five altogether, finding the counters in three.

"Whoever personated Captain Darke got in his fine work," said Old King Brady.

"But you had better get back to stateroom 59," he added. "I am curious to see what your next report of that man will be."

Harry now returned to 59.

Here he found the situation quite unchanged.

Captain Darke was still asleep. Harry crawled into the middle bunk and remained awake until the captain began to stir. He expected two things. First, that the captain would be terribly broken up after his debauch; next, that he would start right in drinking again. Neither happened.

The man got up and stretched himself. Then stripping, he proceeded to take a cold water sponge bath.

This finished, he drank nearly a pint of cold water and then returned to his berth. Harry, who had pretended to be asleep while this was going on, now came to life.

"Hello, captain, are you awake?" he called.

"Yes."

"How do you feel?"

"First rate."

"Your cold?"

"Is all gone. I am hungry. A cup of hot coffee, that's all I am thinking about now."

"I'll get up and see what I can do about getting you something to eat."

"I should be awfully obliged, but it is a shame to make a waiter out of a friend."

"Never mind. Did you sleep all right?"

"Never opened my eyes until just now. And you?"

"I had rather a broken night."

Harry adjusted his clothes and put on his hat.

"Turner, do you know that I consider you in some respects other than your swimming a remarkable man," said Captain Darke.

"In what respect?" asked Harry.

"I am a very different man from the person you went over the rail to save.

"So I see."

"Now I want to ask a particular favor of you."

"Well?"

"There is a detective on board the Indian Queen."

"Is there?"

"Yes. Did you notice an old gentleman with a blue coat and brass buttons and a big white hat?"

"Certainly. You refer to Mr. Brady?"

"Yes. He is Old King Brady, the detective."

"Indeed! Can't say I ever heard of him."

"Well, he is the man. I can't tell you why I was disguised very well, Turner."

"I don't ask you to, captain."

"You are very good. But I must not appear as you see me now. It is impossible. I have got to get a black wig and a false moustache by hook or by crook."

"And you want me to ask this detective, Brady, to loan you one."

"Not at all. I'll do the asking if you can only persuade him to call upon me here in this room."

"I will try it on."

Harry left the stateroom, and after a little returned with something for his charge to eat.

"I saw Old King Brady," he said. "He will look in on you by and by."

"Ha! Good. What was this you were saying to me about that widow last night?"

"Oh, you mean Mrs. Wimans?"

"Yes."

"I told you that I considered her a very handsome woman."

"Yes, yes! She is good-looking."

"You're acquainted with her, I believe you said?"

"Did I say it? Well, I don't remember whether I did or not, but I am acquainted with her."

Was it coming?

"Where is she from?"

"She was born in China and lived there all her early life, she told me. Daughter of a missionary, the Rev. Mr. Montgomery."

It seemed so strange. The name Montgomery had been given to Alice by Old King Brady for want of a better cognomen. It seemed almost a fatality that he should have selected a name which was once, if not now, her own.

"I should like to know more of the lady," said Harry. "Really I have become quite fascinated with her."

"If that is actually a fact, then there is one thing about her which I ought to tell you right now," Captain Darke gravely replied.

"What is that?"

"She is a detective."

"Oh, bags!" thought Young King Brady. "Is this his great secret, then?"

"Yes," continued the captain, "she is a detective, and it is my opinion that she is working with this Old King Brady."

"Where did you get acquainted with her?"

"Oh, it was out in Sydney, Australia. She has traveled all over."

"She looks it."

"Yes; she is very intelligent. She speaks half a dozen

different languages. She can talk Chinese to beat the cars, the only white woman I ever knew who could."

Harry tried him on several other tacks. It was no use.

Not a word of real information could he draw out of Captain Darke. All that he told him about Alice he had known or suspected before.

"I'll introduce you," said Captain Darke. "You can work up an acquaintance with Alice yourself."

"Her name is Alice, then?"

"Yes; she calls herself Mrs. Wimans. In my opinion, this is merely a name assumed for the occasion. If Alice ever married I never heard of it, and I don't believe she ever did."

It was as far as Harry could get, and he gave it up.

Leaving Captain Darke to eat his breakfast, he sought Old King Brady. He found the old detective on deck, looking rather poorly.

"I can't go there, Harry," he said. "Matters have taken a new turn."

"Which is?"

Captain Renwick has been to me and I told him of the latest robbery. He insists that we search Captain Darke's stateroom. He says that the mere fact of the man being aboard the Indian Queen in disguise is sufficient to stamp him as a suspicious person and to justify his being put in irons."

"And you have agreed to make this search?"

"I simply could not refuse."

Harry thought for awhile.

"Would it be best for me to warn the captain of what is coming and so keep on the blind side of him?" he asked.

"No," replied Old King Brady, "I think not. I am inclined to make the search myself, and if we get the man in irons I may find it easier to draw from him what he knows of Alice."

"I have nothing to say. Did Captain Renwick say anything to you of the conversation he held with me?"

"Not a word."

"Governor, I distrust that man."

"Harry, you are right. To be candid with you, I have distrusted him from the first. He rings false, but distrust is not proof. We know enough of Captain Darke to make it absolutely certain that he is not what he seems to be. There is no doubt that the time has come to put these robberies up to him. We may not prove anything, but it will bring matters to a head."

"Very well. When will this matinee come off?"

"Ten o'clock is the hour selected by Captain Renwick."

Harry now told of Captain Darke's request.

"I had better see him," said Old King Brady. "Suppose I go to his room now?"

"I would."

"I'll do it," said the old detective, and he started forthwith.

But he was stopped by Captain Renwick and Gus Philips, the purser, before he could reach stateroom 59.

"Look here, Mr. Brady," said the captain, "I've deter-

mined to go right ahead with this business. You can join me or not as you like, but I am going to put it up to Captain Darke."

"Why not wait until the appointed time?" replied Old King Brady quietly.

"Why should I? When I have anything to do I like to do it and be done with it."

"The captain has sent for me. He wants to talk with me. I may learn something."

"Upon my word, I should think you had learned enough about him as it was. You have had two experiences with the man. I should not suppose you wanted a third."

"Ha! So you attribute my trouble last night to Captain Darke?"

"I certainly do."

"But Mr. Turner, who was with him most of the night, declares that he was too drunk to leave his berth."

"He does, eh? Well, I'll tell you what, I am pretty well convinced that this fellow Turner is the captain's confederate. Detective work is proceeding mighty slowly on board the Indian Queen, Mr. Brady. I shall have to take matters into my own hands. As for Mr. Turner, he will do well if he don't find himself in irons along with his friend, Captain Darke."

Old King Brady bit his lip.

"Very well," he said, quietly, "if you want me to go with you I'll go."

"Come along," replied Captain Renwick.

They walked on to stateroom 59, and the captain thundered on the door.

CHAPTER XI.

SAM FOX AGREES TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF ALICE.

Harry hovered in the distance and saw them enter the stateroom. He did not hear the remarks made about him by Captain Renwick or he might have been somewhat disturbed by the new turn taken by the case.

Meanwhile Captain Darke was taken all by surprise.

Not that he imagined for an instant what was going to happen. He was writing at a little swing table when the summons came.

"Come in," he called.

He was evidently deeply troubled as he arose to receive his visitors.

"Why, how do you do, captain?" he said, adding:

"How are you, Gus?"

Philips glared at him, but made no reply.

"Captain Darke," said Captain Renwick, "this gentleman is Old King Brady, a detective in the employment of this company. He will explain the nature of our business here."

"Pleased to make Old King Brady's acquaintance," said Captain Darke, extending his hand.

Old King Brady ignored the hand.

"We are here to search your baggage, Captain Darke," he said. "You will open that steamer trunk under your berth, please. Also your two grips."

"But why? On what authority——"

"No demurring. Do as I request, or——"

"Or what?"

"Or you go in irons!" thundered Captain Renwick.

"Indeed! A man has a right to know of what he is accused."

"Not a man who sneaks on board my steamer in disguise, as you have done. You have forfeited all rights."

"Do you suspect me of being a thief?"

"Frankly, such is the suspicion, Captain Darke," said Old King Brady. "A robbery has been committed on this steamer. You are suspected of being the man."

"What has been stolen?"

"Gold coin from the steamer's treasure-room."

"Indeed! Very well, gentlemen. You may search my baggage all you please. You will find no gold coin in it either stolen or otherwise. Here are my keys. Help yourself."

Old King Brady was watching everybody when he took the keys. He knew that Harry had not told Captain Darke of the midnight intrusion into his stateroom.

Alice, who had seen one purporting to be Captain Darke in the treasure-room, had followed this individual to the door of stateroom 59, where she had seen him enter.

The mystery of the China liner was a deep one. It seemed to Old King Brady that there was at least a possibility that it might be solved. On the whole, he did not regret that matters were about to be brought to a head.

Captain Darke stood aside with folded arms.

Old King Brady observed that he gave Gus Philips a peculiar look. He also observed that Philips studiously avoided looking at Captain Darke.

Old King Brady tackled the trunk first. In it was found over a thousand gold pieces, some English sovereigns, others United States five and ten dollar coins.

They were scattered all through the trunk. It looked as if they had been dumped in loosely out of bags.

Captain Darke gave a start when the gold first came to light, but he never spoke a word.

"Now we see," cried Captain Renwick, triumphantly. "It takes me to bring these matters to a head. Mr. Brady, do your duty, sir, or I'll do it for you. At last the mystery is solved."

"You will find no hesitation on my part about doing my duty, Captain Renwick," replied the old detective, coldly.

He produced a pair of handcuffs.

"Hold out your hands, Captain Darke," he ordered.

Silently the captain obeyed, and the handcuffs were snapped about his wrists.

Purser Philips looked triumphant, but he never said a word.

"Very good," said the prisoner. "May I now speak?"

"You may say what you please," replied Old King Brady.

"Very well. Then I have this to say. I am the victim

(Continued on page 26.)

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Out To-Day

Out To-Day

of a plot. I did not rob the treasure-room of the Indian Queen. I do not even know in what part of the steamer the room is located. I did not put that gold in my trunk. I am absolutely innocent. That is all."

"You go into irons," said Captain Renwick.

"We'll examine the grips first," added Old King Brady.

This was done, but nothing was found. The grips contained but little. It was a suspicious fact that they were stuffed with old, worthless clothes to give them the appearance of being full. And such was the outcome of putting the mystery up to Captain Darke. He was taken below and heavily ironed.

Captain Renwick was jubilant.

"I suppose you will jail him at Honolulu, Mr. Brady," he said. "You can catch the return steamer back to San Francisco."

"Yes," replied the old detective. "Honolulu will be the best place to land the thief."

"And what you want to do now is to watch this man Turner," said Captain Renwick. "His baggage must also be searched, but we can postpone it for a day or two. Just before we make Honolulu will be the time."

"Very well," replied Old King Brady. "I will cultivate his acquaintance. Really, Captain Renwick, I must congratulate you upon your detective skill."

"Nothing like bringing matters to a head, sir," replied Captain Renwick, and he walked away.

This conversation occurred on the promenade deck.

Old King Brady sought Harry out. Now he could talk freely to him without fear of injury to the case.

"Well, what happened?" demanded Young King Brady.

"We are just after landing Captain Darke in the brig in irons."

"So? Was anything found?"

"Yes, his trunk was half full of gold. I made the discovery myself."

"What did he say?"

"He asserted his innocence. He declared that someone must have put the gold in his trunk."

"And that's what was done. The man who personated him did that very thing, and I slept through it all."

"Not at all, Harry. You woke up just in time."

"What shall we do?"

"Think. The captain suspects you of being his confederate."

"He does, eh? Then I suspect the captain of standing in with the real thief."

"And so do I."

"At last we are getting there. Would Gus Philips, the purser, make up like your J. Talbot Tams?"

"Easily."

"And just as easily like Captain Darke."

"Exactly."

"What became of the gold?"

"Philips took charge of it."

"Did you count it?"

"Captain Renwick declared that it was unnecessary; that he and Philips would attend to that."

"Very suspicious, Governor."

"Very; there is no doubt of it at all."

"We must get next to that outfit."

"Harry, it is a most difficult thing to do. But think it over. Perhaps your ingenious brain may devise some plan. In the meanwhile I am going to have an interview with Captain Darke."

Old King Brady had asked Captain Renwick for a key to the Indian Queen's brig, or lock-up, and had received it without hesitation. Indeed the captain could not have well refused. And so Old King Brady soon found himself closeted with his prisoner.

Captain Darke was as cool as a cucumber.

"Right glad to see you, Mr. Brady," he said. "I knew you would come, and I know also that you do not believe me guilty of this crime."

"I do not," replied the old detective, seating himself. "Just the same you are in a bad box, my friend."

"I am, but not in the way you suppose. With your help I can easily obtain my release at Honolulu. Without your help my plans not only run the risk of being upset, but it is possible that I may be held for this robbery."

"My help is to be had, but it has its price."

"How much?"

"It has no money value, my friend."

"I will not waste time by pretending not to understand you, Mr. Brady. You will help me if I disclose the mystery which hangs over your partner, Miss Alice Montgomery."

"You have said it."

"And I can only submit. I never swore not to reveal the facts in that case, although I tacitly agreed to keep silent. My silence shall be broken now."

"Good!" cried Old King Brady. "Try a cigar. It is not drugged."

"Drugged? What do you mean?"

"I'll explain later. Now, my friend, out with it. We have everything to lose by standing apart and everything to gain by getting together, so proceed."

"To begin with," said Captain Darke, after Old King Brady had given him a light, "I must tell you who I am. My name, Mr. Brady, is Sam Fox."

He looked as if he expected to see the old detective faint. Old King Brady hesitated a minute and then said:

"You are the famous English detective who has so successfully handled many cases in the British possessions in the Far East?"

"I am."

"I begin to see light. Glad to meet you, Mr. Fox."

"You believe me, then? I could prove my identity if my hands were free. I have my shield and certain papers concealed about me——"

"It is all right. I believe you."

"Good! Now before we get down to Alice's affair, let

me tell you something. I am working on a case at the present time."

"Well?"

"A year ago the Bank of Hong Kong was robbed by a trusted clerk of nearly sixty thousand dollars. His name was Alfred Rogers. I have been working a long time on the case, for the bank is bound to jail him. The man is on board this steamer. Can you guess who he is?"

"Easily, from the way you looked at him at the time of your arrest. He is Gus Philips, our purser."

"Right! He is a man disguised as he stands. He is a professional criminal and the slickest card ever. He knew me only as Captain Darke. I made two trips trying to locate him, and at last succeeded in verifying my suspicions. I should have arrested him upon our arrival at Hong Kong. My unfortunate tumble deprived me of my disguise. Philips recognized me as Sam Fox. So undoubtedly did Captain Renwick. Hence my present trouble. I know nothing of these treasure-room robberies except in a general way."

"Then know all that I know," said Old King Brady, and he proceeded to detail the whole case from beginning to end."

"It is all plain," said Fox when he had finished. "It was Renwick's cigar which was drugged. I'll swear it wasn't mine. I came to your stateroom that night, Mr. Brady, for the purpose of taking you into my confidence and should have done so if I had not found the captain there."

"And Philips, as we will call him, must have made up like you and also personated this Tams?"

"Exactly. He caught you slick. He and Captain Renwick are as surely the thieves as it was Philips who put the gold into my trunk, as young Turner tells."

"This young Turner, by the way, is my partner."

"Young King Brady?"

"Yes."

"I am not surprised. I suspected it from the way in which he tried to draw me out about Alice. What shall you do?"

"Fox, we have no proof."

"That is the unfortunate part of it. Still the gold these scoundrels have stolen must be in their rooms. Such people never trust each other. No doubt they have already divided up."

"It is probable. Now solve the mystery of Alice and I will think up some plan to trap this beautiful pair."

"All right," replied Sam Fox. "Here goes. The mystery of Alice shall be solved."

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

"Alice Montgomery," began Sam Fox, "is the daughter of the Rev. Samuel Montgomery, an English missionary, for years located at Canton, China. He was one of the most expert linguists I ever knew. Alice was his only child, born at Canton, and after the death of her mother,

which occurred when she was only six years of age, her father devoted much of his time to teach her French, German, Italian, et cetera. Especially was she instructed in Chinese. When she was quite young her father's health failed and he quit Canton for Sydney, Australia, where he died soon after, leaving his daughter penniless.

"Circumstances threw her in the way of Mr. J. K. Thomas, manager of our secret service detective bureau there. Realizing what a prize he had in a person who could speak Chinese, Thomas persuaded her to become a detective. He trained her thoroughly and sent her to Europe on several cases. Once she went to San Francisco; she was several times in China on detective business before her last trip. We worked together on two cases there. She knows me perfectly well."

"And such is her history," said Old King Brady. "Now for the mystery."

"You have heard of the Duke of Abercorn—the old duke, I mean?"

"I know there is such a peer."

"Yes. Well, his second son, the Hon. Charles Edward Traneaur, went wild and landed in Australia. There he got into a banking house, swiped something a little less than a hundred thousand and skipped. Alice and I were put on the case because it was said he had gone to China. We located him in Peking and arrested him. I was just about to start for Sydney with my prisoner when I got word from the bank people that the old duke and his eldest son had been killed in a railroad accident. That made Charles Edward the duke."

"Yes."

"Well, he was a high roller, Brady, and almost dead with drink. His mother settled with the bank and the case was dropped. Alice and I got word to go to New York with our man and that the duchess would meet us there and give us a handsome reward. Charles Edward was delighted. We all three started post haste. He tried to make love to Alice, but she wouldn't have any of it. He offered to marry her. That was when we were nearing New York, but she refused, and he swore to be revenged.

"He had been in China and knew a lot about Chinese ways. He was a drunkard and an opium fiend, a bad lot altogether. Meanwhile the duchess and her managing man, bailiff they call him, had hired an old mansion in upper New York, which they furnished. The duchess was bound not to be known; the house was taken under the name of Smith—the bailiff's name, you see."

"Yes. Go on."

"Well, when we arrived at New York we did not know where the duchess was, and unluckily it was a couple of days before we found out. We were short of funds and had to stay at an obscure hotel. The first night the duke proposed that we visit Chinatown, and Alice was taken along as an interpreter. I don't know just how it came about, but—well, I got drunk, that's the truth of it. I am much to blame. Charles Edward was a wretch—a fiend. He was determined to be revenged on Alice. He

got a Chinese doctor to give her this memory destroying drug, and the last I saw of her she was asleep in a Chinese den in Pell street. She claims that an attempt was made to burn her alive, I believe. That must have been his fiendish work."

"Such was certainly the case. She was rescued by my partner."

"And a good job it was. Anyhow she fared better than Charles Edward. He never came off that spree. After a long search I found him dead in an opium joint."

"So! And why did you abduct Alice that night you met her in Chatham Square?"

"The duchess wanted to see her. She wanted to make sure that her memory was really gone. She was a fearful woman in some respects, but liberal. She left \$50,000, you know. I got as much more when I found the duke. We buried him. I felt that Alice was all right in your hands. The duchess wanted me to ring off, Brady, and so keep the matter quiet. I did so—that's all."

"And the duchess?"

"She's dead. The estate has gone to a cousin."

And this was the mystery of Alice! Old King Brady left Sam Fox not altogether believing his story.

The mystery of the China liner now demanded the full attention of the detectives. After Harry heard all his chief had to tell he suggested a scheme.

"You can do nothing, Governor," he said, "and Alice can do nothing. It is up to me."

"And what can you do?" inquired Old King Brady.

"What we really want is to find out if Captain Renwick or the purser have gold hidden in their staterooms."

"Well?"

"Charley Wing, our Chinese room steward, I notice also takes care of the captain's stateroom; all the rest of the deck staterooms being cared for by white stewards."

"Yes. It's a queer arrangement, but I have noticed that they have Chinese stewards for the cabin staterooms and white ones for the deck rooms. What about that?"

"The what about it is that the day before we are billed to reach Honolulu you and I must capture Charley Wing and lock him in the treasure-room. I will disguise and take his place."

"Terribly risky."

"I will try it. That will give me the entree to Captain Renwick's stateroom."

"Settled. We will work on those lines."

"Now about this story of Alice which Sam Fox has told you. Do you believe it?"

"Half believe. The titled English are a queer bunch. They will pay a lot to keep scandals in the dark."

"What do you propose to do about it?"

"To take Alice to a Chinese doctor in Honolulu and see what he can do for her."

The second day following was the day upon which the Indian Queen was expected to arrive at Honolulu, and they were due in the early morning. It was consequently necessary for Harry to get in his work the day before.

The Bradys were both in stateroom No. 111 when Charley Wing came to the door to do it up.

"Come right in," said Old King Brady.

He took the Chinaman by the arm and pulled him in, while Harry bolted the door. At the revolver's point they overcame him. While Harry stifled his cries, Old King Brady bound his hands behind him. The berths were then swung out and he was taken down into the treasure-room, gagged and bound, and it is scarcely necessary to say scared almost out of his wits. Harry now went for Alice and brought her down.

The Chinaman's little eyes actually grew big when he saw himself surrounded with the gold bags. When Alice tackled him in his native tongue his surprise knew no bounds. In dealing with such people Old King Brady has long since found that it pays to be liberal.

Through Alice he told Charley Wing that they were detectives and that Harry wanted to get into a certain stateroom disguised as a Chinaman. He further told him that if he would lend Harry his clothes and remain secreted in the treasure-room while Harry operated and keep his mouth shut that he would be helped to leave the steamer at Honolulu and receive \$100 cash for his share of the work. The Chinaman consented readily.

So Harry rigged himself up as a Chinaman in Charley Wing's clothes. The main trouble he might have expected was with the pigtail, but he had a Chinese wig with pigtail attached with him. Thus when he had finished his work and Old King Brady had made up his face his disguise was perfect.

Harry went about his work. He went on deck and shuffled about. Captain Renwick was on the bridge and Harry knew that under ordinary circumstances he would not leave there before one o'clock. So, watching his chance, he got into the captain's room, secured the door and began his work. Harry worked with great rapidity.

Lockers, cupboards and boxes were opened, but nothing was discovered. At last Harry tackled the floor. And with this success came. In a secret hiding place under the floor, very clumsily concealed, he discovered a number of bags of gold. Harry effaced all traces of his work and got out in a hurry. He determined to take a look at the vacant stateroom adjoining, and he slipped in there.

Producing a gimlet, he bored two holes in the partition, locked the door and waited, for it was now nearly one o'clock—time for Captain Renwick to come off the bridge. In a few minutes he heard the adjoining door open and Captain Renwick's voice said:

"Come in, Gus. We will talk it over now."

He heard the door shut and locked.

"Well," demanded Gus Philips's voice, "what is it you want?"

"You know."

"I won't do it."

"Then we dissolve partnership, and when Sam Fox strikes Honolulu you are done for, and I'll give you up." Harry heard the purser groan.

"Can't you trust me, Cap?" he asked.

"No, I can't. Look here, I know you to be a bank defaulter and an all-around scoundrel, and you know me to be much the same sort of thing. If you are nipped by Old King Brady—and Sam Fox may have told him who you are—I have got to protect myself against you, that's all there is to it, Gus."

"Well, what is it you want, again?"

"I want you to give me a written confession that you helped rob the treasure-room and I'll give you the same. One will act as a stand-off against the other. You won't dare to give me away and I won't dare to give you away—see?"

"Cap, you're very hard on me, considering the way we have pulled together since we started in on this game."

"No more talk, man. It's now or never. Sit down at that desk and write."

And it was done. Harry could not see much, but he caught a glimpse of Captain Renwick when he folded up the paper and saw him put it in the inside pocket of his coat. Captain Renwick then wrote a similar paper, which satisfied Philips apparently. After a little the purser withdrew. Harry's brain had been busy trying to concoct a scheme to capture the purser's confession. What he did must now be told. He unlocked the stateroom door and waited until he heard Captain Renwick prepare to leave the room, and then out he came, carrying a pitcher and a couple of plates, which happened to be in the stateroom, in his hand. Purposely he stumbled over the threshold and the crockery fell, crashing. Harry timed himself to a second. He butted the captain full in the breast.

"You wretched Chink!" howled the astonished man.

Several passengers looked wonderingly on, Alice being among them. But Harry neither knew nor cared what they thought. Nor did he care for the captain's hearty kick. For in the mix-up he had contrived to thrust his hand into Captain Renwick's pocket. When he shuffled away at last the purser's confession was up his sleeve.

Practically the case was ended. The Indian Queen tied up at Honolulu, and Old King Brady took Sam Fox, alias Captain Darke, ashore a prisoner. Captain Renwick went with him to back up the charge.

The climax came in the office of the chief of the Honolulu police, where Old King Brady suddenly turned the tables on the crooked officer by announcing that Sam Fox was the celebrated Australian detective; that he was innocent, and that he held proof of the purser's guilt, and that of Captain Renwick as well. It was a startling denouement. Then Gus Philips' confession was produced, and the captain wilted and withered as he listened to Old King Brady's story of how it had been obtained.

With the chief of police and an officer, Old King Brady returned to the Indian Queen. Sam Fox went with them, and the purser was nabbed. He proved to be a sorry coward. When he learned that Captain Renwick had been locked up he promptly offered to confess all.

And a part of his confession told how he had personated Captain Darke and J. Talbot Tams, and how Old King Brady had been drugged by cigars which he had specially prepared.

The Indian Queen sailed with a new captain and purser hurriedly picked. Sam Fox sailed with her, carrying Alfred Rogers, alias Gus Philips, in his charge.

Before Sam Fox left he went with the Bradys and Alice to a famous Chinese doctor. This man, after inquiring into Alice's condition and hearing Fox's story of how she had been drugged, declared that her cure was a matter of no trouble at all.

The doctor mixed a strange decoction of herbs and gave Alice some of the liquid to drink.

Alice drank off the contents of the glass. Sleepiness instantly came upon her. She laid down upon the doctor's Chinese couch and the Bradys and Sam Fox sat smoking and watching. Promptly on the hour the doctor wakened her, and she declared she remembered all.

Alice then told the same story Sam Fox had told the old detective.

"Good!" cried Old King Brady. "It was a tough case for you, but fifty thousand was a good fee."

"Just the same that man betrayed me into the hands of the enemy," said Alice, with a contemptuous look at the alleged Captain Darke.

Sam Fox offered no defence. He bade them a civil good-by and took himself off. The Bradys never saw him again. They returned to San Francisco with their prisoner by the next steamer. Captain Renwick was tried, convicted and received a long sentence to San Quentin prison. The steamship company was liberal and the Secret Service Bureau paid the usual fees.

So the Bradys and Alice returned to New York. They had put two important matters through to a successful finish. Alice had no desire to make a change.

"I am in love with the detective business," she declared, "and I think I can make myself more useful than ever, now that I have recovered my memory as one outcome of the case of 'The Bradys and Captain Darke.'"

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS AND THE CANTON PRINCE; OR, WORKING FOR THE CHINESE MINISTER," which will be the next number (419) of "Secret Service."

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