

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

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No. 453.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 27, 1907.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND THE CHINESE JUGGLER; OR, THE OPIUM FIEND'S REVENGE.

By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.



Gripping the juggler's arm, Old King Brady got him by the throat. Alice flew to Harry's rescue. There were six of the knives about his head. Neither saw the curtain thrust aside and another Chinaman come stealing out.

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CHAPTER I.

A PECULIAR ADVENTURE IN CHINATOWN.

Old King Brady, the world-famous detective, and his partner and former pupil, Young King Brady, at one time had an adventure in New York's Chinatown, which we propose to describe.

We do this because the same people are involved as we shall find mixed up in the case which forms this story.

The adventure, however, occurred some months before the case came to hand.

It was a rainy night in April, cold, raw and most disagreeable.

But detectives may not heed the weather if they expect to make and keep a name for themselves, and thus we find the Bradys crouching on a certain roof in Pell street, with no other protection than the chimney.

They were listening for the snap of a match, and, incidentally, had become wet to the skin.

But this was nothing.

The old detective was contentedly chewing on the butt of a cigar, which would not keep lighted in the rain, at the same time whispering a tale of former adventure in the ear of his young partner, whom he regards with all the affection of a son.

But, though talking, Old King Brady was also listening.

The match could never have snapped and he not have heard.

The location of the proposed snapping was in the room on the top story of this Chinese tenement, immediately beneath a skylight which was directly in front of where the detectives sat uncomfortably on a couple of bricks apiece, which they had taken from the chimney.

This skylight was slightly raised—the detectives had done it—and they were expecting the sound of the snapping match to come out through the opening.

As for the party whom they expected would strike the match, he was a certain Chinaman who was mixed up in an opium smuggling case, upon which the Bradys were working.

They had every reason to believe that, sooner or later on that rainy night, this Chinaman would turn up in the vacant room below the skylight.

As the room was dark, his first move would necessarily be to strike a light, and then the detectives proposed to pounce upon him.

But he never came, and we may mention right here that the Bradys learned later that their man was then

on his way to San Francisco, where he was subsequently taken.

So much for the reason of the detectives' presence upon the roof; now for what happened.

It got along towards one o'clock when Old King Brady remarked that it began to look as if their man was not going to show up, after all.

He got up and shook himself.

"Tedious work, Harry!" he said.

"It is that, and rather wet work," replied Young King Brady. "Going to give it up?"

"I'll give him another hour."

"By that time we shall be washed away, I'm afraid. But, Governor, don't it seem to you that you can smell smoke?"

"Why, yes; now that you call my attention to it, I certainly do. It's the chimney, probably."

"No; I've been smelling the chimney right along. It isn't that. Ha! Listen!"

A loud shout was heard below them, followed by a succession of wild cries.

At the same moment a cloud of smoke began rising over the front cornice.

"Bless my soul, this building is on fire!" cried Old King Brady. "We want to get busy, boy!"

They hurried to the front cornice and looked down.

Sure enough, smoke was pouring out of a window on the second floor below them.

Chinamen were swarming into the street by the side door.

Pedestrians—for Pell street is never without them, day or night—were gazing up at the building.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" some one shouted.

In a moment Pell street would be in an uproar.

"Our game is blocked," said Old King Brady. "Even if our man comes he will give this house a wide berth. We must get down at once."

He hurried to the scuttle, through which they had come up on the roof, and pulled it up.

A cloud of smoke arose through the opening.

"Looks as if we might be cut off," said Harry. "Wonder what can have occurred?"

They never certainly knew, for business called them elsewhere next day, and they neglected to look the matter up.

But cut off they were, for when they got to the floor below they saw that the second flight of stairs was in flames, and the smoke was so dense that they were glad to get back to the roof.

By this time the fire engine had arrived, and the hook and ladder could not be far behind it.

Of course, the Bradys knew that a rescue by the fire-

men was fairly certain, but there was the risk, and for certain reasons they did not care to have their presence on the roof known in the Chinese quarter, as it certainly would be if they waited for the ladder.

"Drop to the next roof, Harry," said Old King Brady. "We can probably get down that way."

The adjoining building on the east was a story lower than the one they were on.

Then came a building a little higher—beyond that they could not see.

They dropped to the lower roof and tried the scuttle, but only to find it fastened.

"Next!" cried Old King Brady, and they climbed up on the higher building.

But here the scuttle was also locked.

The building beyond that was ten feet lower, and the one next beyond as much higher again.

"We will go on," said Old King Brady. "If we fail down there you can stand on my shoulders, Harry, and we will tackle the next one. You can pull me up, I guess."

So they took another drop, and once more tried the scuttle, which proved to be unfastened.

There was no ladder, and the detectives had to drop, which they did, with more noise than they cared to make.

Old King Brady came down last and found himself in a closet.

"Confound the luck! This door is locked!" cried Harry.

"You have your skeleton keys, I suppose; get to work."

"But, unfortunately, I haven't."

"Hark! Some one is unlocking the door."

Involuntarily Old King Brady laid his hand upon his revolver, but he did not draw it, as he always believes in treating the Chinese like men, and not like wild beasts, as some seem to consider necessary.

The door opened, and a Chinaman wearing green silk pajamas appeared before them.

The scuttle opened from a closet in this man's room.

"Hello! You burglars?" he demanded, with the utmost coolness.

The room was comfortably furnished after the Chinese fashion.

Over in one corner, lying upon a bamboo couch, was a long-haired white man, engaged in hitting the opium pipe, who stared at them languidly, but did not speak.

"No burglars, John," replied Old King Brady, displaying his shield. "Detectives."

"Detectives! Yair. Who wantee?"

"Nobody in this house. We were caught on a roof up the street. The house is on fire. We could not get down that way, so we came along over the roofs until we found a scuttle unfastened, which happened to be in your closet. All we want is to get into the street."

"So? Belly well. Comee in. Me know you. Me see you Slan Flanclisco. You Old Kling Blady, yair?"

The old detective laughed and admitted his identity.

There was nothing strange in the recognition.

Old King Brady is well known in the Chinese quarters in the different cities of the United States.

Moreover, he is readily recognized by the peculiar style

of dress, which, when not in disguise, he always affects. These peculiarities consist of 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.

But it was a very wet and bedraggled Old King Brady who appeared before the Chinaman.

The detectives entered and the Chink closed the door.

"So you allee wet," he said. Lookee here, come lodder room. Takee off you close, puttee on dry close; me dry you close by fire. You eatee slupper with me."

Most people would have instantly declined.

But the Bradys are used to the Chinese.

A good fire burned in the cook stove and the table was spread.

The Chinese are most hospitable as a race, and, feeling that it might be well to know this man, Old King Brady signified his assent, and introduced Harry.

"Me namee Wee Woo Wah," said the Chinaman, shaking hands. "Me hear lot about Ole Kling Blady. Me glad to help."

He did not introduce the white opium fiend on the couch, however, who was now apparently asleep.

In the bedroom beyond the Chink bustled about and produced two suits of underwear, which, if not exactly a fit, still served the occasion, and these, with the trousers and blouses provided, the detectives proceeded to put on.

When they returned to the other room they found their wet garments hung on chairs in front of the stove and the meal ready on the table.

Wee Woo Wah bade them draw up chairs and fall to, which they did, he joining them.

But the long-haired opium fiend on the couch was not disturbed.

The supper was an ideal one, after the Chinese fashion, and, as is well known, the Chinese are the best cooks in the world.

The detectives thoroughly enjoyed it, but the meal proceeded pretty much in silence.

Wah's English was poor, and he did not appear anxious to exert himself to talk.

After they had finished Wah produced a bottle of Sam-schu, or rice brandy, and a box of cigars.

"You smokee, you dlinkee," he said. "And now we show you somet'ing."

The excitement in the street had by this time died away, and, as the detectives had heard the engines returning, they determined to stick it out with the hospitable Chinaman until their clothes were dry, at all events.

Wah now shook up the opium fiend.

"Dlocter, me allee leddy!" he called several times.

The long-haired man roused up and, sitting on the edge of the couch, for the first time seemed to become aware of the presence of the detectives.

"Who are these men?" he growled.

"Flends of mine," replied Wah. "Dley stoppee here allee light."

A grunt was the only answer.

The man appeared to be but half awake.

Wah cleared the table and moved it out of the way.

He then placed the light on a shelf between the win-

dows and went into the other room, near the door of which the table had been placed.

He was gone some little time, during which the long-haired man sat blinking stupidly on the edge of the couch, never uttering a word.

When the Chinaman returned he was dressed in a suit of yellow fleshings, barefooted and bareheaded, his arms naked to the shoulders.

The Bradys naturally began to wonder what they were up against.

Wah sprang upon the table and, bending down seemed to roll himself up into a ball.

Suddenly, still maintaining this position, he began turning somersaults with marvelous rapidity.

Over and over he went, until the Bradys felt themselves growing dizzy watching him.

Such tumbling they had never witnessed, even in the Chinese theatres in San Francisco.

But the Chinese are the greatest jumpers and tumblers in the world.

Suddenly, with each turn of the Chinaman's body, he seemed to rise in the air.

Higher and higher he went with each successive turn until he struck the ceiling, then lower and lower until all at once, to the amazement of the detectives, he suddenly vanished, and there was nothing on the table.

Harry declared afterward that he saw the Chink fly between the curtains which cut off the other room.

But Old King Brady, who felt as if he had been half-hypnotized, affirmed that he saw nothing of the sort.

At all events, Wee Woo Wah went through the curtains, for he suddenly appeared between them, looking none the worse for his remarkable gymnastic feat, and said:

"Can he do dlat?"

"Yes," replied the opium fiend, speaking for the first time. "He can do that just as well as you."

"Allee light, dlen," replied the Chink, cheerfully. "Can he do ddis?"

He sprang up upon the table again and did what may be termed the well-known ribbon trick, practiced by jugglers of all nations.

But it must be remembered that this man was naked, save for a suit of white fleshings.

He had no sleeves to serve as hiding places—nothing of that sort.

Putting his left forefinger in his mouth, he wobbled it about for a moment, and then began pulling out a narrow strip of yellow paper, about the size and shape of stock ticker tape.

Faster and faster the stuff seemed to glide out of his mouth, and as it came Wee Woo Wah began to whirl about on one foot.

The yellow paper wound around him, yards upon yards of it, until it began to make a yellow paper man of him.

Still coming, even his feet were concealed, and then it began to fly upward and curl about his neck and head, until at last all the Bradys could see was a whirling mass of paper.

It made the detectives dizzy to watch it.

Again Old King Brady experienced a sensation of being half-hypnotized.

He swore afterward that the paper never left the table until the moment of its final disappearance, but Harry was positive that for a single instant it swerved toward the curtains, and then flew back again.

And now it began to collapse, still whirling, until it assumed the form of a round ball, inside of which it was simply impossible for a man to be concealed.

Then, suddenly, it left the table and flew in between the curtains, as if jerked by some invisible thread.

Instantly Wee Woo Wah appeared in the opening, looking as calm and confident as ever.

"Can he do dlat?" he asked again.

"Yes," replied the long-haired man in the same stolid fashion. "He can do it just as well as you."

"Allee light, den," replied the Chinaman. "Mebbe we do blizness so. Dlat all, Mlister Ole Kling Blady. You close dley dly, so now you go home."

And thus summarily dismissed the Brady proceeded to dress themselves and take their departure.

As they thanked the Chinaman for his hospitality, Old King Brady ventured to remark that he was a pretty good juggler.

"Dlat allee light," was the reply. "Me glad you like. Clome again. Good night."

And the Bradys went downstairs, feeling that not for a good deal would they have missed this particular adventure in Chinatown.

CHAPTER II.

THE BRAND OF THE FISH.

Business calling the Bradys elsewhere, they had no opportunity to follow up the acquaintance of their Chinese juggler.

Later the old detective asked a Chinaman in San Francisco about him, and was told that Wee Woo Wah was one of the most accomplished jugglers in China, but that he was very certain that the man had never visited America as a performer in any Chinese theatre.

This seemed strange.

Old King Brady described the man he had seen in Pell street to this person.

The Chinaman's answer was that the description certainly fitted the juggler, whom he had seen perform in Canton.

Returning to New York soon after, Old King Brady started to look up the juggler, but he found the rooms occupied by a Chinaman, who declared that he had lived there for two years, and that he had never heard of Wee Woo Wah.

All of which was very puzzling.

But no man knows better than Old King Brady that to Americans the Chinese are, and must ever be, a perpetual puzzle.

Their ways are past finding out.

And so matters stood some months later, when the

morning papers announced another murder in Chinatown, putting it down to the ever-warring factions of the Hip Sing Tong and the On Leongs.

The Bradys merely glanced at the heading when they read their papers at the breakfast table.

But the matter was to be brought more particularly to their notice the following day.

On this day, at about ten o'clock, the detective received a call over the telephone from the chief of the Secret Service Bureau at Washington.

It was to the effect that somewhere about noon a Chinese woman would call at their offices in Union Square and place a case in their hands, to which they were requested to give full attention, the expense being chargeable to the bureau, as the woman was the wife of one of the Chinese Minister's suite.

Turning away from the telephone, Old King Brady looked into the office adjoining his.

"Be on hand at twelve o'clock, Alice," he said. "There is a Chinese woman coming on from Washington to see us on Secret Service business. The first interview is your job, of course."

The person addressed by Old King Brady was Miss Alice Montgomery, the accomplished female partner of the Brady Detective Bureau.

Among her many accomplishments, Miss Montgomery is a most expert linguist.

All the prominent European languages, except Russian and Polish she has at her command, and in addition she speaks and reads the Cantonese language freely, having been born in China.

This is the variety of Chinese which is spoken by most of the Chinese who come to America.

Young King Brady was out at the time, nor did he turn up until after the coming of the Chinese woman, who arrived shortly after twelve.

She came in a closed carriage, escorted by a Secret Service man from Washington, who informed Old King Brady that he was merely instructed to act as the woman's escort, and that his orders were not to leave her until he had seen her safe back at the National Capital.

The woman was a person of about forty, undersized, and dressed in American clothes.

She spoke not a word of English, the Secret Service man declared, so all the old detective could do was to escort her into Alice Montgomery's office and leave them alone.

The interview was a long one—it takes the Chinese a long time to get down to business always.

At last Alice came into Old King Brady's office with a newspaper and a photograph in her hand.

"I want to see you alone a minute, Mr. Brady," she said.

The escort took the hint and retired to the outer office.

"This woman lost a son about three years ago, in China," said Alice. "He disappeared and was supposed to have gone away with an Australian theatrical troupe, which was exhibiting in the foreign quarter of Shanghai."

"Yes," replied Old King Brady. "And does she expect us to find him here in New York?"

"Wait. The boy, for he would only be twenty now, was double-jointed all over his body. This woman, then a widow and very poor, had him apprenticed to a juggler, who, it is believed, turned him over to the manager of the Australian troupe. Later she married a man who became private cook to the Chinese Minister and who followed him to Washington. Yesterday there was a murder in Chinatown, and this woman thinks that the murdered man may be her son."

"And why?"

"Because of a brand found on the back of the corpse, burnt into the flesh. It is the tiny image of a fish, and was the private mark of the juggler to whom her son was apprenticed."

"Do the Chinese brand their apprentices?"

"Not as a rule, of course. But this came out of an oath which the boy had to take to preserve his master's secrets. I don't profess to understand just why he was branded. She is a little obscure on that point; but at all events branded he was, and if you will read the account of the finding of this dead Chinaman you will see that the brand was on the body. Here is the young man's photograph, taken when he was eighteen."

"It is worthless to me. All young Chinks look alike to my untutored eyes."

"Then I will keep it. It is not so with me."

Old King Brady took the paper, which was a New York one, and ran over the published account.

The murdered man had been discovered in a vacant room in a Pell street tenement, shot in the back.

The corpse, it appeared, was clad only in a pair of old underdrawers, and lay face downward on the floor.

The murderer had fired three shots, one of which had penetrated the heart.

The account especially spoke of the fish-shaped scar upon the dead man's back, and went on to say that the remains had not been identified by any one in Chinatown.

"We must take this woman to see the body," said Old King Brady. "I see no allusion to the dead man's age here. That will be the quickest way."

"She wants to go," replied Alice. "She says that the Chinese Minister has promised to help her, and will pay any amount to capture the murderer, if the dead man proves to be her son."

"Yes? Well, we shall see. What is her name?"

"Mrs. Shan Dang, she calls herself."

"And the son?"

"Is Hing Ping."

"She shall go at once. I will telephone to the Elizabeth street station and find out where the remains are. By this time they have probably been removed to the Morgue."

Old King Brady worked the telephone and learned that such was the case.

He then went into Alice's office and had a closer look at Mrs. Shan Dang.

She was a large-footed Chinawoman, as are all of the working class.

She seized the old detective's hand and, kissing it, looked at him pleadingly, at the same time saying something in Chinese.

"What does she say?" demanded the old detective.

"That she will pray to her ancestral spirits to help you always if you will find her son, if this corpse does not prove to be him," said Alice.

"Let her ancestral spirits keep to their own business."

"She is sincere, Mr. Brady."

"Oh, I don't doubt that. But what can she expect?"

"Help her if you can."

"I certainly shall, Alice; you know that. Tell her to come with us. I hope her cab is big enough for all hands—this Secret Service man must go along, too."

"Ask him."

The cab turned out to be a two-seated affair, so it was dismissed, and in a four-wheeler the old detective and Alice carried the Chinese woman and her escort to the Bellevue Morgue.

Red tape in New York ever vanishes before Old King Brady's wide influence, and they were conducted to the gloomy death chamber, Alice alone remaining outside.

The Chinese woman merely glanced at the body, and turned away.

And well she might, for the remains were those of a man over forty.

Old King Brady gave her an inquiring look, and she shook her head.

"She don't know him, Mr. Brady," said the attendant.

"Evidently not," replied the old detective.

"Turn the body over. I want to see that brand on the back."

"Sure, it's just like a little fish."

"So the papers state. I want to see it. Have many Chinks been here to look?"

"Quite a few."

"Make anything out of their talk?"

"No. Youse never can wit' de Chinks. Dey wouldn't let on by so much as a look, even if a corpse was wan of their own brothers."

"Wait!" cried Old King Brady, suddenly. "By heavens, Murphy, I recognize this man!"

"You do?"

"I certainly do."

"But all Chinks of an age look so much alike, Mr. Brady, barring dat one might be fat or de odder t'in, or de like of dat. Coons is nothing to dem."

"Still, I recognize him. I am positive of it."

"And the name?"

"I am not giving it out just yet. I want Harry to see this corpse. It's best to be sure."

"And dat's so, too."

Murphy turned the body over and displayed the scar. It certainly did resemble a fish.

The brand was about an inch long, and was right between the shoulder blades.

Old King Brady called Mrs. Shan Dang's attention to it.

The Chinese woman nodded vigorously and let out a lot of unintelligible talk.

"That's all, Murphy," said Old King Brady, and they rejoined Alice outside.

Mrs. Shan Dang immediately went at her in Chinese.

"And what does she say?" demanded the old detective.

"That it is not her son and not Wee Woo Wah, the juggler to whom she apprenticed him."

"There she is wrong, if I know anything," replied the old detective. "Unless somebody assumed somebody else's name, the dead man, with the brand of the fish, is Wee Woo Wah."

CHAPTER III.

THE CLEW FOUND IN THE CHIMNEY.

It was not until he had looked several times at the face of the corpse that Old King Brady made his discovery.

Then his mind reverted to that rainy night in Pell street, when he and Harry had been treated to that wonderful free exhibition of Chinese jugglery.

He was absolutely certain that his remarkable tumbler and the dead man were the same.

And now the old detective began to get interested in what before he had regarded as a bothersome bit of Secret Service business, which would probably come to nothing in the end.

On the way back to the office the old detective put all sorts of questions to Mrs. Shan Dang, Alice interpreting.

But what he learned did not help matters any.

"If she is comfortably married again, why is she so anxious to find the young man, Alice?" he asked. "Is it just maternal affection or is there some other reason? It seems to me there must be some particular reason for her anxiety. If we could only get at it the situation might be made clearer."

"I cannot make her give any reason but affection," replied Alice. "I tried all that at the start."

"Try it again."

Alice talked for a long time with the woman.

As she did so Old King Brady watched her face carefully.

He was satisfied that he was right in his conjecture from the changing expressions which passed over the countenance of the Chinawoman, but Alice reported failure.

"Tell her to go back to Washington," said the old detective, "making her understand that we will do our best to find her son."

The woman appeared to be satisfied, and for some time remained silent.

Suddenly she broke out with a string of talk, which Alice answered.

Old King Brady saw by the expression of Alice's face that she was getting something important.

When the talk ceased Alice made a secret sign, of which the Bradys have a regular code.

"I will tell you later," was what it said.

"We will get out here," said the old detective, for they had reached Broadway.

"You will take this woman directly back to Washington?" he asked of the Secret Service man.

"Yes; I will take her to the station now," was the reply.

"I had rather keep her in the waiting room than be bothered with her anywhere else."

Old King Brady and Alice got out of the hack then.

"What did you find out? Anything important?" Old King Brady asked.

"Why, yes," replied Alice. "She suddenly broke out and informed me that her son's left ear was missing from birth, and that, having a disagreeable-looking hole in the side of his head, where the ear should have been, by which he could hear nothing, his father, when the boy reached the age of fourteen, had a silver plug fitted to the hole, around which the flesh subsequently grew to a certain extent, giving that side of the face a very peculiar appearance. It don't show in the photograph, which is a three-quarter view."

"Now, this is a very singular thing," said Old King Brady. "Why didn't she mention so important a point before?"

"I don't know."

"I tell you, Alice, there is something at the bottom of this woman's desire to find her son."

"It may be. I did my best to find out, however."

"It is so, and this silver earplug is mixed up in it, surest thing you know. At first she thought she would keep that a secret, but when she found that I really meant business she concluded to tell it."

"It looks so."

"Did you ask her if her son smoked opium?"

"Yes, and she said he did not when she last saw him."

"Well, we must get to work on the case. It is a Secret Service order, anyhow. We will get right down to Chinatown now."

"Alice," asked the old detective, suddenly, "did Harry ever tell you of the adventure we had in Chinatown one rainy night, some months ago?"

"Oh, yes. The dear boy tells me all he knows. You couldn't expect him to miss such a thing as that."

Young King Brady, be it understood, is deeply in love with his fair partner, but Alice's devotion to her fascinating profession is such that she will listen to no talk of an engagement, although there is little doubt that she secretly returns Harry's affection.

"Let me go over the story again," said Old King Brady. "I have a reason."

He ran over it in detail.

"I see what you are driving at," said Alice. "The dead man is the juggler you and Harry saw that night."

"Not a doubt of it."

Harry said that you were told in San Francisco that it could not have been the real Wee Woo Wah whom you met."

"Yes, so we were informed. Still that may be an error. The juggler may have come to New York non-professionally. That is what I propose to find out now, if I can."

"Who do you imagine the opium-smoking doctor could have been?"

"Impossible to tell. He was a most striking person. I should know him again in an instant."

"It is a mysterious business all around."

"Very. I can't see into it at all; but the first thing is to find out what is known of this Wee Woo Wah in New York.

"Evidently there was some other juggler involved. 'Can

he do that?' That's what the juggler kept asking the doctor. Yes, there must have been another."

They continued to talk, but nothing developed.

Reaching Chatham Square, Old King Brady went directly to the manager of the Doyers street theatre.

This man spoke but little English.

So Alice did the talking.

Old King Brady made her tell of the adventure he and Harry had in Chinatown.

"That man was not Wee Woo Wah; he could not have been," said the manager. "Wee Woo Wah had not been in America at that time."

"Is he now?" asked Old King Brady, Alice translating.

"Yes; he has just finished an engagement in California and is now on his way to New York to perform in my theatre," was the reply.

"Did you see the corpse of the dead man found in the Pell street house?" asked Old King Brady.

The manager had not seen the corpse.

"Do you know of any juggler being in New York at the time I met my man?"

The manager knew of none. If there had been a Chinese juggler in town he was sure he would have known of it, as well as everybody else in the Chinese colony. He had heard of no such person. He was positive that the man could not have been Wee Woo Wah.

Then Old King Brady questioned him about Mrs. Shan Dang's son, but nothing came of it.

Next it was the mysterious doctor who was put up to the manager, but the result was the same.

All this only added to the mystery, and Old King Brady pulled out, disgusted.

"We will go and take a look at the room where the corpse was found," he said to Alice, and they turned down Pell street.

"Why don't you take the manager of the Chinese theatre to look at the corpse?" asked Alice.

"He will go. I shall take means of getting at his opinion later, if he don't express it publicly," was the reply. "I'd rather he would go of himself."

Suddenly Old King Brady paused.

"Why, look here!" he exclaimed. "This is the house, and I see now that it is the house Harry and I were in that night when I called to look up the juggler later on. I made a blunder and went into the house next door."

"Yes. I came at night. I neglected to take the number the night Harry and I were here. I see now just how I made my mistake."

"And, as this corpse was found on the top floor, back, it must have been the very room you were in that night."

"It certainly must. Let us go upstairs."

They found the room open.

The house was one of the oldest on Pell street, and the lower floors were swarming with Chinese.

Old King Brady threw his electric flashlight around.

"Yes; this is the place," he said. "I am positive of it. Pity I had not cultivated the acquaintance of that Chink! It might come in handy now."

The room was entirely vacant and had been freshly cleaned.

A brown stain on the floor boards showed where the murdered man had fallen.

"He was certainly murdered here," said Old King Brady. "But how he came to be here with almost no clothes on is a mystery which I cannot fathom."

"The newspaper account expressly stated that he was unknown to any one in the house."

"That, of course, you cannot fully rely upon. No one identified him, at all events. But let us make a thorough search here, Alice. We may pick up some clew."

Now a thorough search with Old King Brady means all that the words imply.

Accustomed to his methods, Alice joined him.

The result showed how carelessly the search had been made before.

For, thrust into the chimney were the dead man's clothes, well covered with dried blood.

They were of American style—a good business suit and a derby hat, white shirt, a cotton undershirt, shoes and stockings, all complete save for the drawers found on the corpse.

"Come; this is business!" said Old King Brady. "Let's see what the pockets have to show."

They had evidently been rifled, for only a dirty handkerchief and a few pennies were found.

The inside pocket in the coat had a hole in the lining and Old King Brady, who had discovered the presence of the thing by feeling, thrust his hand through the opening, and pulled out a letter.

"A clew at last!" he exclaimed.

The letter was addressed:

"Mr. W. W. Wah,
"No. — Dupont Street,
"San Francisco, Cal."

"Now, then, who says I did not see the only original Wee Woo Wah that night?" exclaimed Old King Brady.

He hastily opened the envelope and pulled out the enclosure.

It was written in Chinese, with a pen, and not with a "stylus," such as the Chinese generally use.

"Your job," said Old King Brady, handing it over to Alice.

"No Chinaman ever wrote this," said Alice the instant she looked at the letter.

"And why?"

"It is full of mistakes."

"And what does it say?"

"Wait a minute."

"Is there any signature?"

"It is signed, 'Your old friend, the Doctor.'"

"By Jove! The long-haired opium fiend! Alice, things are getting warm."

"Looks so; but let me puzzle over it, Mr. Brady."

It took her some time.

"I shall not attempt to make anything like a literal translation of it," she then announced. "Here goes for the best I can do."

And Alice read as follows:

"Friend Wah—I am glad to hear that you intend coming to New York. I shall certainly go to see you perform.

In the meantime let us meet and talk, as we used to in the old days. I have given up my rooms in Pell street, but you can meet me there; they are unoccupied. I will take you to my present quarters. I will be there on Thursday night at eleven o'clock, and I shall bring you a present.

"Your old friend,

"The Doctor."

"And the present he brought him was a bullet," said Old King Brady, grimly. "This man is our game. We must find out who he is if it takes a leg. Meanwhile it is back to the theatre. I have changed my mind. The manager must go to the Morgue."

And the manager of the Doyers street theatre was only too willing to go when he read the letter.

Old King Brady called a cab, and they drove to the Morgue.

The manager had a photograph of Wee Woo Wah, which he had not thought necessary to show Old King Brady at the time of his first call.

But he brought it out after reading the letter, and the old detective at once recognized the resemblance to the corpse.

And thus came the identification of the dead man found in the Pell street tenement.

As soon as he saw the face of the corpse the manager of the Doyers street theatre was ready to pronounce the dead man the famous Chinese juggler, Wee Woo Wah.

CHAPTER IV.

HARRY SEES THE MYSTERIOUS DOCTOR.

"And what is to be the next move?" asked Harry, after he had listened to the story of the discoveries made by Old King Brady and Alice that afternoon.

They were seated in the old detective's office, having found Harry on hand when they returned from their second visit to the Morgue.

"The next move is arbitrary," said Old King Brady. "We must look up the agent of that Pell street house, and try to find out something about this long-haired doctor. I shall not be satisfied to arrest that man on suspicion. That Chinese juggler treated us well that rainy night, and as there appears to be no one else to take an interest in his fate it is up to us."

"And our Secret Service case?"

"Have we one? I think not. The dead man is not Mrs. Shan Dang's son. Our connection with the Secret Service Bureau would seem to end there."

"If you look at it that way, then so it does."

Just at this juncture the telephone rang.

Old King Brady answered the call, as it was again the chief of the United States Secret Service who wished to talk.

"Did the Chinese woman call on you?" was asked.

"Yes; she has been here and gone," the old detective replied.

"Was the dead man her son?"

"No."

"You may not regard this matter of much importance, Mr. Brady; but we are especially ordered by the President to follow it up. It appears that the Chinese Minister is practically interested in finding that young man, for some reason which I cannot understand."

"Do they know that he came to America?"

"They have reason to believe that he did. It appears that the Minister has employed detectives both in China and Australia to look him up. He claims that he sailed for America from Melbourne about a year ago in company with a rich and eccentric doctor, who had made a fortune in the South African gold fields. This man appeared to have taken a fancy to the young Chink and treated him like a son."

"Strange."

"Seems so to us, but there is no accounting for tastes."

"And this doctor's name?"

"Is not known to the Minister."

"That is a pity. I will tell you now that the mere fact that he was a doctor interests me. We have been looking into the murder of this Chinaman, and we have every reason to believe that it was done by an opium-smoking doctor. He may prove to be the same man."

"Can't help it. The Minister does not know the name."

"Why not cable the chief of the Melbourne police and see what he knows about it?"

"You do it and charge the cost to us."

"Very well. Let me see, this present Chinese Minister is a newcomer, I believe?"

"Yes; he has only been here two months. He speaks no English. He is bothering the life out of me about this business, and I cannot understand why, for the woman is only the wife of his cook. It does not seem possible that his anxiety can be solely on her account."

Some further talk followed, which had no bearing on the case.

"You get down to Chinatown and attend to the agent," Old King Brady said to Harry, after reporting his conversation with the chief. "I'll cable Melbourne and see what can be done there. Our two cases are now connected, and we must go ahead."

But a caller held Harry back, and it was not until five o'clock that he found an opportunity to attend to the matter.

Meanwhile Alice was called elsewhere, so Harry went alone.

There had been no to let bill on the Pell street house, or Old King Brady would have known the name of the agent.

Harry went into the grocery store and inquired there, learning that the house belonged to an old Irishman named McNamara, who lived in Elizabeth street, near Spring, and that he acted as his own agent, and was usually around the house every day or two.

So Harry travelled up Elizabeth street and readily found the old fellow, who lived alone on the top floor of a dirty tenement.

Incidentally he learned that old McNamara owned the whole row and much other property besides.

Young King Brady's first reception was not a pleasant one.

McNamara began to rave about the Pell street rooms being hoodooed, and how he could not rent them on account of the murder.

At last Harry combed him into shape and explained his business.

"What we want to get at is the name of the tenant who had those rooms last," he said. "Was he a Chink or a white man?"

"Sure he was a Chink. Wud a white man be after living in dat house?"

"What was his name?"

"I never axed him. I call all de Chinks John. Dey have to pay in advance; so long as I get me money what the deuce is it to me what their haythern names is?"

"I suppose you were in the rooms while he was there?"

"Yes, manny a time."

"What did he look like?"

"Like anny other Chink, so; but there was one queer ting about him—he always wore a black silk skull cap on his head."

"Did he have a pigtail?"

"Sure."

"Why did he wear the skull cap?"

"I never axed him. I s'pose it was to keep his head warrum, so."

"Did he wear it in summer?"

"Yes."

"Then there must have been some other reason."

"Mebbe so."

"Did he have any white visitors," asked Harry, who had now worked around to his main point.

He proceeded to describe the mysterious doctor.

To his great satisfaction, old McNamara recognized the man at once, and positively asserted that he had several times seen him in the rooms.

Here was a discovery of real importance.

McNamara further stated that the Chinaman with the skull cap was a sporty kind of fellow, who wore diamonds and always seemed to have plenty of money. He had moved out of the rooms at the end of the month previous to the murder. In fact, he had only been gone five days when it occurred.

Harry hurried back to Chinatown and looked up a certain Low Gow Gui—or Lobbygow, as the newspapers erroneously call the depraved white and colored boys who hang about Chinatown acting as errand boys for the Chinese and white wives of its male inhabitants.

Harry's Low Gow Gui was a mullato, and his name was Pete.

Finding him after a considerable search, Young King Brady began questioning him about the tenant of the rooms in question.

But Pete knew nothing of him.

He was sure there was no woman in the rooms.

He had seen the Chinaman with the skull cap and diamonds, but he did not know his name, nor that he lived in those rooms.

Harry tried another tack.

"When he moved out were you around?" he asked. "Do you happen to know who moved his things, and where they went?"

Pete was strong on this point.

"An Italian had done the moving," he said, "and his name was Joe. He lived on Mulberry street and made a business of moving Chinamen."

"Chase around there, Pete," said Harry. "Find out where that Chink moved to, and you get five dollars. I'll wait for you at the corner of Worth street and Chatham Square. If you don't find me there, and I might happen to be called away, come up to the office first thing in the morning and you get your money. See?"

The Low Gow Gui took to his heels and Harry strolled about Chinatown.

Meeting a Chinaman whom he knew, he struck oil again.

Speaking of the skull cap, this Chink at once recognized the man.

"He play de laces," he said. "Him makee bags of money. Wear big dliamond ring."

"Do you know his name?" demanded Harry.

"They callee him Charley Hing," was the reply. "I never talkee him. Him not be in New York so belly long."

"How long?" demanded Harry.

"Mebbe year—not more," was the reply.

But the Chinaman did not know where Charley Hing had moved to.

It remained for Pete to supply that information.

Harry met him, according to agreement.

"Up Mott street," said Pete. "I'll show you the house."

It proved to be one of the old rookeries near the corner of Park street.

Pete declared that Charley Hing's belongings had been moved into the back basement.

The Low Gow Gui got his five dollars, and Young King Brady walked into the Mott street house.

Detectives make themselves pretty free in Chinatown, and all doors are open to them.

Young King Brady tried the door of the back basement and found it locked.

He rapped several times and got no response.

Finding that there was no key in the lock, he deliberately opened the door with his skeleton keys and walked in.

But he had his labor for his pains.

The room was vacant and given over to rubbish and dust.

"It's plain enough," thought Harry, in disgust, "that Italian was paid to lie to any inquirers or else Pete misunderstood."

He thought of making inquiries on the other floors, but he concluded to leave that to Pete.

Coming out, he was just starting down Mott street when something impelled him to look behind him.

It was well that he did. There, walking with the Chinaman, was the long-haired doctor whom he had seen with the juggler, Wee Woo Wah!

There could be no sort of doubt about it.

The man's face and features, well impressed upon Young King Brady's mind originally, had been thoroughly recalled by the events of the day.

With the doctor walked a young Chinaman of particularly pleasing features from an American standpoint.

Harry could merely glance at the pair.

He slowed down and, allowing them to pass him, managed to get a good look.

The doctor was manifestly an Irishman.

Equally plain was it that he was an opium fiend, and pretty far gone at that.

He was fairly well dressed and wore no jewelry.

Harry was sure that the young Chinaman also smoked the soul-destroying drug, for his face was beginning to lose its plumpness.

These and other signs told the tale, the redness of the eyelids being one.

But the greatest discovery was that the man wore a black skull cap.

It was pulled down over his ears, and only showed behind under his derby hat.

He was well dressed and wore a huge diamond ring and another valuable stone in his scarf.

The pair were talking Chinese as they passed the detective.

Harry distinctly heard the doctor reply to his companion in that language.

Here indeed was a valuable discovery.

Perhaps they had come out of the house where Young King Brady had been; but here they were, and to shadow them was the next thing in hand.

"It's the doctor for mine if they separate," thought Harry, and he trailed after them to Chatham Square, where they shook hands and parted.

The Chinaman now turned back and the doctor climbed to the elevated road.

Harry got in the car on the Third avenue train with him.

He had little fear of being recognized.

The doctor had been far too dozy on the night of their meeting to remember his face, it would seem.

Evidently he had been smoking now.

His head kept dropping on his breast. It was just all he could do to keep awake.

Thus Harry had every chance to study him.

Evidently he was a man of intelligence.

The chief peculiarity was his long, brown hair, which came down around his shoulders.

Harry studied the hair question pretty thoroughly, and he made up his mind that it had been artificially curled at the ends.

This suggested a wig, but, as he could not see the back of the doctor's neck, it was impossible to tell.

At last the man sank into a doze, from which he did not arouse until the train was nearing the Eighty-sixth street station, when he awoke with a start.

He looked out of the window, got up and left the train when it stopped.

Harry trailed after him, having no trouble, as the doctor never once looked behind him.

He walked back to Seventy-eighth street and then,

turning west, kept on until they had almost reached Fifth avenue, where he ascended the steps of a handsome brown-stone house and, letting himself in with a latchkey, disappeared.

"Lives there, by Jove!" thought Young King Brady. "This is certainly great!"

Without the least difficulty, Harry had solved the problem which had appeared so difficult of solution a few hours before.

But who was the man?

Was it going to be such an easy matter to identify this opium-smoking doctor with the owner or occupant of the Seventy-eighth street house?"

The first thing was to find out what the neighborhood knew.

Harry pushed about until he found the policeman on whose beat the house was.

But the officer did not know who lived at the number in question.

He knew the house, however, and said that he had remarked that the inside window shutters were always closed, and the shades drawn, and that he never saw any one passing in or out.

"Go right for the folks next door, why don't you?" he suggested. "It's the quickest way to get at it. If you can't get at the lady the servants will tell you what you want to know."

And Harry decided to accept the suggestion.

Returning to Seventy-eighth street, he ascended the steps of the next house and rang the bell.

CHAPTER V.

THE CASE TAKES ANOTHER TURN.

Young King Brady's ring was answered by a butler, to whom the detective gave his card.

"You can tell me what I want to know, I dare say," he said. "And it will pay you to do it. A man with long hair entered the next house a few minutes ago. I want to know if he lives there and any other particulars you may know of him. See?"

"So, it has come around to that, at last," said the butler, with a self-satisfied grin. "I knew it was bound to come. No, that man don't live there, as far as I know; but I've often seen him go in. He might be living there, too."

"Who is supposed to live there?"

"Dr. Jenkins."

"Is he a practicing physician? I see no sign."

"No, he doesn't practice, so far as I know. He lives alone, unless the other fellow lived with him."

"With his servants? He has no family, you mean?"

"No, I don't mean that at all. He lives there all alone. He has no servants. There's no one but himself in the house."

"How long has he lived that way?"

"He bought the house about a year ago, they say. He has been living there ever since."

"But how does he get his meals?"

"Cooks them himself, I suppose. I don't know. But one thing is certain—he lives there like I told you before."

"And no one in the neighborhood knows anything about him?"

"Not a thing."

"Does he ever have any visitors?"

"Yes; men. Often of an evening—that is, not so very often; once in a while."

"Gentlemen?"

"Oh, yes. They come in cabs sometimes."

"No ladies?"

"Never saw one."

"Did you ever see a Chinaman go in there?"

"What put that into your head? You know something about the man, sure. Yes, I have seen a Chink go in there lots of times."

"Does he wear a black silk skull cap under his hat?"

"Yes; that's the fellow."

"You have only one question more to answer, and that is about the long-haired man. Did you ever see him go out of the house?"

"Sure—many a time. I think he must live there with the doctor. He has a latchkey, but I never heard any talking in there nor any noise of any kind. The house it always shut up, and is as silent as the grave."

Harry thanked him and gave him five dollars.

"What has he been doing?" was demanded then.

"Nothing that I know of," replied Harry; "but the long-haired man is suspected of something by somebody. I was asked to shadow him to-day and I have traced him to that house. It is all I know."

"There's sure something crooked about the both of them," said the butler, and with that Harry pulled away.

It was too late for the office, so Young King Brady went directly to the old house on Washington Square, where the Bradys have kept bachelors' hall now for several years.

Naturally, Old King Brady was greatly interested in his partner's fortunate discoveries.

"It's pure dumb luck," he exclaimed. "Of course, it is going to help us out a lot; but at the same time we must not think of arresting this man until we know more."

"And what must be the next move?"

"If Dr. Jenkins has people come to see him, we must find out who they are."

"What about the long-haired doctor being Dr. Jenkins in disguise?"

"Hard to tell. If it was a wig he wore that night we saw him with the juggler, then I did not notice it—and I am pretty good on detecting wigs, too."

"What about Alice and I disguising as Chinks and trying to work in with the skull-cap man?"

"Not yet. But say, Harry, are you blind or losing your wits, or what?"

"I am not aware that either of those calamities have attacked me. What do you mean?"

"The skull cap?"

"Well."

"Why does the Chink wear it?"

"By Jove! I tumble! It was a blind! To conceal the loss of an ear, of course."

"So it would certainly appear to me."

"And, if so, I appear to have made headway on both ends of my case."

"That's the way it looks to me. Really, I hardly know what to do next. We will think it over and see."

Old King Brady lit a cigar and settled himself down to read the paper.

Suddenly he gave an exclamation.

"Why, look here, Harry," he said. "Everything seems to be running to luck to-night."

"What now?" demanded Young King Brady.

"Here in the society column, Tuxedo notes: 'Dr. P. H. Jenkins, of New York, the South African millionaire, entertained at the week-end by Mrs. Hollis-Hunnewell, brought with him a most remarkable Chinese juggler, who gave a wonderful exhibition at the Hunnewell cottage last Saturday night.'"

"Well?"

"That would seem to settle it. We hardly need an answer to our Melbourne cable now."

They got it in the morning, nevertheless, and it did not help matters much.

"Name, Dr. Peter O'Leary," was the way it read.

This did not fit with Jenkins; but then what is in a name?"

And, after all, it amounted to something, for this singular case took an entirely new turn that day, which altered the whole situation.

The Bradys had scarcely reached the office and were waiting for Harry to put in an appearance when who should come rushing in but Bellingham O. Perry, the millionaire Wall street banker.

The man was in a great state of excitement, and demanded an immediate interview with Old King Brady.

As the old detective had handled successfully several cases for this person and also for his father before him, he was at once admitted.

"I want you to come with me at once," said the banker. "A friend of mine has been assaulted and robbed. It is a very serious matter. The poor fellow just telephoned me to come to him and to bring the best detective in New York. He may be dead by this time, for all I know."

"Where do we go, and how?" demanded Old King Brady.

"I have my automobile at the door. My friend is Dr. P. H. Jenkins, the South African gold king. You have heard of him, of course. He was about to make heavy investments through me. It will be a very serious loss to me if he dies. His house is on East Seventy-eighth street. I should like to have you go right up there with me now."

The mention of the name was sufficient, of course.

Old King Brady summoned Harry, and they got into Banker Perry's automobile and started uptown.

"By the way, I can't say I have heard of this gold king except in a general way, Mr. Perry," remarked the old detective, as they rolled up Fifth avenue. "Is he so very rich?"

"That is what we believe," was the reply. "He is supposed to be worth from fifty to seventy-five millions."

"Something of an eccentric, is he not?" demanded Old King Brady, determined to work the banker for information while he had the chance.

"Very much so."

"I saw in the paper that he was at Tuxedo last week and exhibited a Chinese juggler."

"That's right. He was at Mrs. Hollis-Hunnewell's week-end entertainment. I was present. The juggler was certainly a very remarkable young man. Jenkins has lived in China, and speaks the language like a native. This young Chinaman is a protege of his. You see, Jenkins is a bit of a juggler himself. It is his fad. He brought young Hing with him from the East and is studying Chinese jugglery under his direction. The tricks he can do himself are wonderful, but Hing has him beaten a mile. It is wonderful how they do it all!"

"He has never exhibited this Chinaman in public?"

"No; but very often in private since they arrived in New York, about a year ago. Jenkins is in every way a remarkable man, Mr. Brady. His collections of gems and Eastern objects are simply marvelous. I am not surprised that he has been assaulted and robbed. The only wonder is that it has not happened before, living alone in that house, as he does."

"Alone, with his servants, you mean? Then you think that this was an inside job?"

"No—I mean entirely alone. That is one of his eccentricities. He bought a house in Seventy-eighth street, fitted it up like a museum, and there he lives all by himself. It is a bait for crooks. All his friends have remonstrated with him, but it was no use. He would not listen. Now that it has been brought home to him, it is to be hoped that he will change his methods. Why, man, only last Saturday at Tuxedo, he showed me a big blue diamond rivaling the famous Hope, which weighs forty-four and a half carats. His weighed thirty-two, an eighth and a sixteenth carats. It is a royal stone, Mr. Brady. I was strongly thinking of buying it from him, or, rather, it was to be included in the trade we were about to make. It will be a bitter disappointment to me if it has been stolen, as I fear."

"He did not state when he telephoned?"

"No; the poor fellow was so weak that he could scarcely speak. He merely said that he had been assaulted and robbed."

"Where did he get this diamond?"

"I'm sure I can't say. Picked it up somewhere in the East, I suppose."

"You first saw it last Saturday at Tuxedo?"

"Yes; but it seems to me you are questioning me pretty closely, Mr. Brady."

"Oh, you know my methods. I am only trying to get at facts to build a case upon. You knew before Saturday that he had this big diamond?"

"Why, certainly. He has been talking about it for a year past."

"But would never show it?"

"As I told you before, I saw it for the first time on Saturday," said the banker, with considerable emphasis.

"Ah, yes," replied Old King Brady. "Now I understand."

The house to which they were taken was the one to which Harry had traced the long-haired doctor, of course.

And thus it appeared that, while Dr. Jenkins was a mystery to his neighbors, he was well known in high-grade social and financial circles.

But this is New York, where one may live in a house for years, and never know who lives next door.

Mr. Perry hurried the detectives up the steps and rang the bell.

The door was opened after some delay by a young Swede, who informed the banker that he was a trained nurse brought to the house by a Dr. Wilson, who had been summoned to attend Dr. Jenkins.

"I want to see Dr. Jenkins right away. My name is Perry. Take my card to Dr. Wilson," said the banker, in a tone of authority.

"I don't think the doctor will allow any one to see him," replied the nurse, doubtfully.

"You take my card," was the stern reply.

They stepped into what should have been the parlor and perhaps was so considered.

It was a veritable museum of curiosities from the Far East.

Ancient Chinese armor, weapons, works of art in the form of vases, pottery, paintings, embroidery and the like, were everywhere displayed.

The room beyond was a continuation of the display.

The Bradys perceived at a glance that a large sum of money was here represented.

"You see what sort of fellow he is, Brady," said the banker. "There is no end to the stuff he has gathered in his travels. He tells me that he has several hundred cases unopened in storage, filled with similar things. I am hoping to get some of this for the Metropolitan Museum, sooner or later."

"Is Dr. Jenkins an American?" Old King Brady asked.

"Irish by birth, I believe," was the reply. "Well?" This last was to the nurse, who had returned.

"Dr. Jenkins insists upon seeing you, sir," said the nurse. "You may follow me."

"I thought so," returned the banker, with a grunt of triumph.

"Wait here, gentlemen," he added, and left the room.

"And now what do you say to this for a strange turn in a strange case?" breathed Old King Brady.

"It beats the band," replied Harry, in a whisper.

"Mark my words, he will never confide in us."

"I agree with you."

"And here is another prediction: You will find before we are through that this big blue diamond is the underlying motive of this whole mysterious business. Just wait and see if I am not right."

CHAPTER VI.

LYING LOW FOR CHARLEY HING.

The Bradys spent half an hour examining the Oriental curiosities in Dr. Jenkins' Museum.

It certainly was a most remarkable display.

At the end of that time Mr. Perry came downstairs in an irritated frame of mind.

"He won't see you, now that I have brought you here," he said. "The doctor in charge is willing enough, but Jenkins won't hear to any detective being brought into the case."

"Strange!" replied Old King Brady.

"So strange that I can't account for it at all."

"How is the man injured?"

"He was shot in the back of the head. The ball deflected, but it must have stunned him. It did not even penetrate the skull. His theory is that the robber thought he was dead, and did not fire again."

"Then his condition is not as serious as he led you to suppose?"

"By no means. Dr. Wilson declares that he will be around all right in a few days."

"Of what has he been robbed?"

"Of his entire collection of gems, he first told me over the telephone. Now he says that only one diamond was taken."

"The blue diamond?"

"Mr. Brady, he says not; but I believe he lies. The fact is, the man is so deeply under the influence of opium in some form that he doesn't know what he is talking about. Dr. Wilson told me privately that he is certainly a professional opium fiend."

"Ah! And did you never suspect this before, Mr. Perry?"

"Never. I propose to wash my hands of the whole business."

"I strongly advise you to. Let me tell you a secret: This man is now being watched by Secret Service detectives for certain reasons. He is certainly an opium fiend, and probably a criminal."

"Great Scott, Mr. Brady! You should have told me this sooner. I wouldn't have my name get into the papers as being mixed up with him not for a million dollars!"

"I should not have allowed you to leave this house without the information, Mr. Perry. Better cut loose from him at once. You can do so without personal loss, I hope?"

"Yes; I can now. I could not have done so a week hence. I was just about to go into a big stock deal with him."

"We will leave," said Old King Brady. "I knew very well that he would not want to see me."

They got out of the house in a hurry, Banker Perry taking them back to the office.

"What's to be done now?" demanded Harry, when they found themselves alone.

"I shall report to the chief of the Secret Service Bureau," replied Old King Brady. "My advice would be the immediate arrest of Dr. Jenkins, or whatever his name really is."

So Old King Brady called up Washington and made a full report to the chief.

He omitted all mention of the big blue diamond.

Since the Chinese Minister had not seen fit to confide his full motive to the Secret Service Bureau, Old King

Brady felt that he had the right to keep the discovery of what he believed to be the motive to himself.

He was told to wait until the Chinese Minister was consulted.

An hour later the chief called up the Brady Bureau, and said that every effort was to be made to find the Chinaman with the skull cap, known as Charley Hing, as both the Minister and Mrs. Shan Dang believed him to be the man wanted.

He was to be arrested, brought to Washington and turned over to the Secret Service Bureau.

As for Dr. Jenkins, the Secret Service Bureau was indifferent. If his arrest was likely to produce Charley Hing quicker, then he should be arrested; if not, they did not care what the Brady Bureau did.

"We will see the chief of police," said Old King Brady to his partners. "If he thinks our having previously seen the doctor in that room and the discovery of the letter in the chimney warrants his arrest for the murder of Wee Woo Wah, then I say, arrest. I don't see how it is going to hinder us in the matter of Charley Hing, and it may prove a help."

So the chief of police was interviewed.

He proved quite indifferent, and tossed the ball back to Old King Brady.

"It's only the matter of a dead Chink, anyhow," he said. "Do as you please."

Old King Brady and Harry walked down Mulberry street in something of a muddle.

"And what do you propose to do now?" Harry demanded.

"Let me think," replied the old detective. "Remember we are dealing with an opium fiend, and consequently with a madman. I find it very difficult to make up my mind."

They walked blocks before Old King Brady spoke.

"Here is the way I figure it out," he said at last. "In all probability Charlie Hing is the person who assaulted Dr. Jenkins. Opium fiends have few associates—that is why Jenkins lives alone. His mixing up with these society people has been done simply for business reasons. His only intimate friend is probably this young Chinese juggler, whom he picked up in Australia, and with whom he has been closely associated ever since. Do you follow me?"

"Perfectly. And I agree with you."

"Very well. Now, assuming the blue diamond to be the motive, and that Charley Hing stole it, and tried to murder his rich patron? What will be the outcome? First in his rage the doctor telephones his friend Perry and wants detectives. He subsequently finds that he is not so badly hurt, after all. He wants his diamond; he wants revenge. The police can't help him. He is a murderer. He dare not call in detectives, lest they should detect too much. The Bradys come. Worse and worse. If he does not remember you he surely does me, on account of my striking appearance. He heard my name called by Wee Woo Wah. They discussed me that night after we left. I am the last man on earth he wants to run up against. Result—We are turned down. He denies the robbery to Perry. It was only one diamond, anyway, and

that a little one. He means to work the raffle himself. That's my theory, Harry. How does it strike you?"

"I agree with you in every particular. But what is to be done?"

"We go to Chinatown and look up Pete. I don't believe Charley Hing will stir a step out of his tracks. Chances are he knows who murdered Wee Woo Wah and does not fear the doctor on that account. It is all very interesting for a rich faddist to patronize a fellow like this Chink, but such people always kick out of the traces and turn on their patron in the end."

"And your hope is that Pete can locate him. Then what?"

"Prompt arrest of both Charley Hing and the doctor, I suppose; but I should mightily like to get next to that opium fiend in disguise and find out the true workings of this case."

"I don't see how you are going to do it, Governor. I don't deally."

"Nor do I just at present."

They boarded a car and ran down to Chinatown.

But this must have been Pete's day off, for find him they could not.

They visited the house where Pete had asserted that the Chinaman had moved in and went into almost every room, just as detectives often do in Chinatown, without giving any explanation.

Nothing came of it, though their hope had been to run into Charley Hing.

The rear room on the top floor was locked and they could not get in there.

"The only thing for you to do, Harry, is to hang around here and watch for Pete or the man with the skull cap," said Old King Brady. "I believe that he simply fooled the Italian carter, and that he actually lives in those closed-up rooms."

"It may be. I can watch. Shall I arrest him if he comes?"

"Yes. Run him around to the Elizabeth street station and telephone for me."

"And you?"

"I am undecided, but I must leave you now. Stay on the job till midnight. If he don't turn up by that time give up."

The Bradys parted and Harry began his disagreeable task.

To hang around Chinatown for twelve hours!

Such are the strenuous methods detectives often find it necessary to employ.

Sometimes standing and watching the suspected house from first one point and then another, sometimes pounding the pavements of Mott and Pell street, Harry put in time the rest of the day.

The Chinks knew him, and said nothing.

The police and plain clothes men knew him, of course; but professional etiquette prevented them from asking Harry what his business was.

The day closed in and night came, but still nothing had been seen of either the man with the skull cap or Pete.

Harry was thoroughly sick of his job.

Many times it occurred to him that the young juggler might be in hiding behind that locked door.

So, after dark, he determined to get up into the top hall of the old building and do a little listening.

He accordingly ascended the stairs and took up his stand at the end of the hall, where there was a window.

Harry sat on the window-sill quite a long time, listening for the slightest sound behind the door, but none was heard.

"I am afraid he has jumped the town," he said to himself at last. "This is a day wasted, surest thing."

But still he lingered.

Harry was thoroughly tired, and it was good to be able to sit down, if it was even on a window-sill.

The rooms in front of this floor were vacant, and Young King Brady might have taken up his quarters there if he had chosen, as the doors were open, but he preferred the hall.

Over and over again he listened to the shuffling footsteps of the Chinks, as they ascended to the floor below, but nobody came up his flight until at just about eight o'clock there were fobtfalls which, instead of halting on the floor below, started up the last flight.

"At last!" muttered Harry. He had his handcuffs ready.

He was determined to jump on his man and make short work of him after all the trouble he had been at.

But when he looked down the stairs he saw that it was not the Chinaman with the skull cap, but another, and still younger man.

Young King Brady drew back and resumed his seat on the window-sill.

The Chinaman came on, merely glancing at him.

Producing a key, he proceeded to unlock the door.

"Look here, John. I want to see Charley Hing? Does he live here?" demanded Harry, in his most reassuring tone.

"What want?" demanded the Chink.

"I have a letter for him."

"From Dr. Jenklin?"

"Yes; from Dr. Jenkins," replied Harry, jumping into the breach.

"Gimme," replied the Chink, extending his hand.

"No. I was told to give it only to Charley Hing. He lives here?"

"Yair. He go away."

"But he will come soon?"

"Pletty soon, I guess."

"Can I come in and wait?"

"Sure. Why Dlocter no comee?"

"He is sick."

"Huh! Too muchee hop."

"That's the trouble, I guess. I'll wait, if you think Charley Hing will be in soon."

"I flink so. Comee in."

And Young King Brady followed the Chinaman through the open door.

It looked dead easy if his man only came.

Harry had no fears that he might not be able to handle both Chinks.

He had done as much before.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ARMS OF THE SHANGS.

A man who habitually uses opium is of all creatures the most irresponsible.

He never knows his own mind for two minutes at a time, and when under the influence of the drug he will do the rashest things, even to imperiling his own life, as is well known.

But there are fiends and fiends.

The pipe-hitter likes to lie back and dream the hours away in a state of sodden intoxication.

But others who use morphine or eat opium are often restless to a degree, and want to be ever on the move.

In short, the drug never affects any one twice alike.

Those who can control the dose for awhile may succeed in fighting off the inevitable, and appearing sane to their friends for a few years.

Actually all habitual opium-users are more or less insane, and madness and death is sure to catch them in the end.

Knowing all this, it was no surprise to Old King Brady when he got back to the office to find seated there the young Swede whom he had seen in Dr. Jenkins' house.

"Hello, young man! And what brought you here?"

"The doctor sent me with this note," replied the nurse, producing a sealed letter.

"You mean Dr. Jenkins?"

"Yes."

"He cannot be so badly hurt, it seems."

"He is not hurt much. I've got the bounce."

"So?"

"Yes. He don't want me, he says. He gave me fifty dollars, and told me to deliver this note to you personally and then chase myself."

"I see."

Old King Brady tore open the envelope, and read as follows:

"Mr. Brady:

"Dear Sir.—I have changed my mind, and if you can pardon my refusal to grant you an interview this morning I would like very much to consult you professionally. I have met with an irreparable loss. Your skill as a detective is well known to everybody. If you cannot assist me I know of no one who can.

"Therefore, Mr. Brady, do me the favor to call on me at two o'clock. You will find me quite alone, as for reasons I prefer to live that way, as I have no doubt Mr. Perry has informed you. I am not so badly hurt as I at first imagined, and have consequently dismissed my nurse, as I have no use for him. He will hand you this.

"I enclose a hundred dollars as a retaining fee.

"Ring three times in quick succession, and I shall know that it is you, otherwise I shall not open the door, as I do not care to receive anybody else as I am feeling to-day.

"If you have no time to take up my case I am perfectly willing to pay for your advice.

"Very truly yours,

"Peter H. Jenkins, M. D."

Old King Brady read this epistle with less surprise than might be imagined, for he was, as we have said, thoroughly conversant with the vagaries of opium fiends. The letter, which enclosed a \$100 gold note, was written with a trembling hand, and badly blotted.

It was perfectly evident that the writer was under the influence of his drug at the time he penned it.

"All right, young man," said the old detective. "You appear to have done well enough out of our call, anyhow."

"Glad to be out of the place, boss," replied the nurse, with a grin. "The old fellow is clean bug-house. That's what's the matter with him."

"What long hair he has got," said the old detective, quietly.

"Who?"

"Dr. Jenkins."

"Why, you must be twisted. He keeps his hair cut close to his head."

"He has cut it lately, then," said the old detective, "for when I last saw him it was long."

"Harry was right. It was a wig, after all," he said to himself, after the nurse had departed. "But as to this business—shall I go?"

Alice was out, and Harry in Chinatown, so he had no one to consult.

He concluded to try it, hit or miss.

So, leaving a line on Harry's desk, stating where he had gone, Old King Brady again started for 78th street, but not until he had penned a note to Alice telling her to follow him, and watch outside of the house until he appeared.

How fortunate it was that he took this precaution will presently be shown.

Ringing the bell three times as directed, Old King Brady, who was prompt to the minute, heard someone moving inside at once.

The door was opened, and there stood the doctor, with long hair.

"Dr. Jenkins?" said the detective.

"No," was the reply. "I am his friend, Dr. O'Leary. Dr. Jenkins has just stepped out, and as I happened to step in he asked me to wait on you. Old King Brady, I presume?"

"Yes. I am to wait?"

"Certainly. Step right in. The doctor won't be long."

Old King Brady did not know what to think.

After all, there might be two opium using doctors, whose vicious habits drew them into close association

Then the name O'Leary.

It dove-tailed in with the cablegram from Australia.

It was hard to tell.

The man was evidently under the influence of a fresh dose of opium.

His eyes shone and were constantly suffused with tears, as is apt to be the case with some opium fiends.

He was full of talk.

"Walk right into the museum. The doctor has a wonderful display here. Collected these things all over the East. Very remarkable man, Mr. Brady. Very Speaks Chinese like a native. Really wonderful. He's a bit of

a juggler, too. Picked it up in China. By the way, speaking of jugglers, haven't we met before?"

"I think we have, sir. Indeed, I am quite certain."

"Rainy night last April. Pell street, Chinatown. You and a young man dropped down upon my old friend Wah, the Chinese juggler, who did a few tricks."

"Your memory serves you perfectly. We certainly did meet on that occasion."

"I wondered if you would recollect. I was telling Dr. J. about it when he mentioned that he expected you. By the way, I suppose you know that poor Wah is dead—was found murdered in those very rooms?"

Could any murderer speak of his victim thus coolly?

As Old King Brady well knew, an opium fiend could.

"Indeed?" he remarked.

"Yes. Hadn't you heard?"

"I knew there was a dead Chinaman found. Has he been identified as Wee Woo Wah?"

"So the papers state. He was found shot in the back. Singular business. He was a singular man. I first met him in Canton a year ago. It was not generally known that he visited this country several times in disguise. He had a special pass from the American Minister. You see, he was the court juggler. He used to get fearfully tired of his profession, and would go off incog for a long rest. He always refused to perform in America until this year, when he consented to take an engagement in the Chinese theater at San Francisco. He was booked for Doyers street this coming week. Pity. I looked forward with the greatest pleasure to meeting him again. Dr. Jenkins is really quite worked up over his death. Juggling and jugglers are a perfect fad of his. He is talking of offering a reward for his murderer. There would be a chance for you. But here I am rattling away. I suppose you wonder how I came to know so much about the Chinese, but you see I lived out there for years. Wonderful people, Mr. Brady. In this country we neither understand nor appreciate them. But I am simply talking you to death. Let me show you the curiosities. I am not as familiar with them as their owner, of course, but I know a bit about them. Glorious suit of old armor, this. Belongs to the Ming dynasty. Cost Jenkins a pretty penny. Look at these swords. Isn't the jade inlaying on the hilts superb?"

And so the man ran on, his tongue never stopping for an instant.

As he kept his hat on Old King Brady was at as great a loss as Harry to tell whether or not his long hair was his own or a wig.

For twenty minutes the doctor rattled on about the curiosities, and still no one turned up.

"He hangs fire," said the doctor, "but then that's Jenkins. Besides, he is not feeling up to the mark to-day, of course. Greatest wonder in the world he wasn't killed. The bullet seemed to glide over his skull. Ugly little wound. The fool doctor he called in didn't know his business, and I had to do the work all over again. But it's all right now."

"Has he any idea who his assailant could have been?" demanded the old detective.

"I think he has," was the reply. "But he did not seem

to want to talk about it, so I didn't ask him. He is very sore over the whole affair. But see this thing, Mr. Brady. It is a bronze sun of incredible value. Jenkins claims that it is at least three thousand years old. If you breathe on it something in the composition uniting with the oxygen of your breath causes the metal to assume a red-dish glow like the rising sun. Try it, my dear sir, try it. The experiment is well worth while."

The object in question was a big bronze plaque which hung against the wall.

It represented the radiant sun as a human face, surrounded by rays.

In order to reach it to do the breathing act it was necessary to step on a sort of platform, a part of a singular looking object consisting of two upright brass rods with curved brass bands standing out on either side.

There were six of these bands attached to each upright, three on the outside, and three on the inside.

Between the bands against the wall hung the bronze sun.

Old King Brady asked what the thing was.

"Blest if I know," replied the doctor. "There is so much stuff in here. I am not sure that I ever noticed it before."

To humor the man Old King Brady stepped on the platform.

And there was where the slyness of the opium fiend caught him.

Quick as lightning the brass bands closed upon the old detective.

The grip was terrible, but not sufficient to break bones.

Involuntarily Old King Brady gave a gasping cry, as well he might.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good joke!" roared the doctor. "I remember now. That is an ancient Chinese instrument of torture. Belongs to the Shang dynasty, B. C. 1102."

"Open this machine," said Old King Brady, with all the calmness he could assume.

"Really, I suppose you would like to have me open it," drawled the doctor. "Must be rather painful. I would open it if I could, Mr. Brady, but as I don't happen to know the combination, I can't. Sorry. I can't wait any longer for the doctor, either, for I have an engagement. Give him my regards when he comes, and say, please, that I will look in on him to-morrow. Good-day!"

"You scoundrel!" said Old King Brady, in the same calm fashion. "This is your innings. Wait! Mine will come!"

There was no answer.

Old King Brady's back was to the room, consequently he could not see what was going on behind him.

In a minute he heard the outer door slam.

Meanwhile those arms were pressing closer and closer.

They were certainly moving, it seemed, and if so they must crush him in the end.

CHAPTER VIII.

YOUNG KING BRADY BOTCHES THE ARREST OF CHARLEY HING.

Old King Brady was in a bad box.

The brass arms were controlled by two springs, one of

which, moving quickly, brought the arms in so as to clutch the person standing on the platform. The other, which wound up and was controlled by clock-work, moved slowly, working the arms in tighter and tighter, inflicting incredible torture until finally every bone in the victim's body was broken.

"That man is stark mad," thought the old detective. "Death seems pretty sure for mine, but how will he dispose of my remains? Dangerous work, this dealing with opium fiends."

Thus calmly did this brave man take a situation which could hardly be more serious.

For a long time Old King Brady has felt that the risks he is constantly taking might ultimately end in death.

He was alone in the big house, as far as he knew.

He had only one hope, and that was in Alice.

If she came into the office soon after he left and obeyed his orders to follow him up she might be outside now.

Possibly seeing the doctor hurriedly leave the house she might suspect trickery, and try to force her way in.

This was his hope, but Alice must needs be quick if she was to save the life of her chief.

Tighter and tighter those terrible arms were pressing in upon Old King Brady.

Breathing was becoming difficult.

He now gave himself up for lost.

No strength that he could exert amounted to anything.

At first he tried it, but now he was past that.

It was just as despair began to seize him that he suddenly heard someone at the outer door.

Keys were being fitted rapidly in quick succession.

"Alice with her skeletons!" thought Old King Brady. "But can she do anything with that modern lock? I doubt it. She will have to be quick, or she will find me a corpse!"

He was right!

It was indeed Alice. She had come into the office within a few minutes after Old King Brady left, and followed him right up.

Seeing the long-haired doctor hurriedly leave the house and look suspiciously up and down the street, and then walk rapidly away, Alice's fears were instantly aroused.

"Something has happened to Mr. Brady sure!" she thought. "I'm going into that house, hit or miss!"

She hurried across the street, and began work with her skeleton keys.

At first it seemed as if there could be no success, but at last she struck one which took hold.

"Alice! Quick! Help, or I am a dead one!" Old King Brady called as she opened the door.

Even then he could not be sure that it really was Alice, but Alice it was, and he was saved!

"For pity sake, Mr. Brady," she gasped, as she rushed into the room.

"Quick! I'm almost gone!" panted the old detective. "Use your eyes! See if there is not some way of turning off this terrible pressure."

"There's a handle here on the right."

"Pull it! Push it! Do something—quick!"

Alice seized the handle and gave it a turn.

Instantly the terrible pressure was relieved.

Another turn threw back the arms, and Old King Brady staggered off the platform, dropping weak and nerveless into a chair.

"What can I do for you?" demanded Alice. "What a terrible experience! Are your ribs broken, think?"

"No, but every one of them would have been crushed in a minute more! There is nothing you can do. I shall get my breath in a minute."

"Was it Dr. Jenkins' work?"

"It was my own folly, Alice. I should have known."

"But he put up the job on you?"

"Yes, certainly. The long-haired fiend!"

"I saw him light out in a hurry, and there was something in his manner which excited my suspicions, so I came right over."

"Luckily for me."

"Is he really Dr. Jenkins?"

"I'm sure I don't know whether he is or not, Alice."

"Are we alone in this house?"

"I fancy so. But there. I am better now. Let us explore."

They went all over the house.

Save for two bedrooms on the floor above and the kitchen, there was no furniture.

The detectives made a hasty examination of the room they took to be the doctor's, but nothing turned up to enlighten them in any way.

"We may as well pull out," said Old King Brady.

"Do you know I have got a nervous fit on about Harry," said Alice. "It just does seem to me that he needs our help."

"The poor boy has been watching that Mott street house all day, I suppose. If you feel that way let us get right down to Chinatown. Goodness knows that I should be a dead one now but for your impression about me."

So they left the house with the intention of going to Chinatown.

But once in the street the old detective thought of something that needed attention at the office, so they went there.

Here something else intervened, and after all they did not go, and the matter was forgotten.

They were delayed late at the office, and it was after dark when they started away.

"Now it just must be Chinatown," said Alice. "I got over my nervousness, but now it has me again."

"Let us go," replied Old King Brady. "We should have done it before."

If they had they would simply have found Harry pounding the pavement.

That it was to be different now will soon be shown.

Harry had but a short wait for Charley Hing.

The Chinaman with the skull cap came upstairs so noiselessly that Young King Brady did not hear him.

First thing he knew he entered the room.

Harry was on his feet in an instant.

"You are Charlie Hing?" he demanded.

The Chink looked startled, but he acknowledged the name.

"You are wanted," said Harry, showing his shield. "I am a detective. You go with me."

The Chinaman drew back.

"You detective!" he blurted. "What for?"

"I will explain later. You go with me—see?"

Perhaps this was a mistake.

Harry thought so afterward.

But his orders were to arrest the man, and he saw no use in making talk.

"Is this Dr. Jenkins' work?" demanded Hing, who spoke good English.

"No matter. You go to the station with me. Take it quietly now. I don't want to use force."

"Oh, I'll go," said Hing. "Just let me get some of my things together."

He wore American clothes, and his hand was in his pocket.

The other Chink, who was in Chinese dress, had retreated just inside the door which communicated with the inner room.

"Take your hand out of your pocket," ordered Harry, drawing his revolver. "You come quietly with me now. You can get your things later."

"Oh, I'll go," repeated the Chinamaa, and he withdrew his hand from his pocket.

There seemed to be something in the palm which he was trying to conceal.

Harry made a move toward the door.

He was managing the business badly.

Instantly Charley Hing threw up his hand, and Harry caught the glint of what looked like a copper disc in the palm.

Before he could make a move to prevent it the Chinaman rushed at him, and pressed the disc against his forehead.

It must have been something of the nature of a storage battery.

Harry experienced a shock which darted through his body from head to foot.

Unconsciousness instantly followed, and he dropped to the floor like a stone.

It was as singular an experience as he ever went through.

It seemed to him that he was floating through space with myriads of gibbering forms clustered about him.

But presently this sensation died away, and he began to hear voices.

Then he knew that the voices were talking in Chinese, but still he could not see anything.

At last consciousness came back to him all in an instant.

He found himself tied to a board nailed against the wall, into which two staples were set.

He had noticed this before, and wondered why it was there; but whatever its true purpose was it served to hold Harry a prisoner now.

Charley Hing was standing in front of him, regarding him with an amused smile.

He had changed his clothes, and was in full Chinese costume, with his pig-tail down.

The other Chinaman had disappeared.

And now, as Harry looked the fellow over, he saw, as the skull-cap was no longer on his head, that he was

indeed minus an ear, and in the side of his head was inserted a silver plug.

Beyond all doubt he was the man the Chinese minister was so anxious to get hold of.

"I have managed this business badly enough," thought Young King Brady, "and now I am in the soup."

He was disgusted with the situation and himself.

But such times must come in the lives of all of us.

"So you thought to arrest me, did you?" demanded the Chinaman with a grin. "You did not know who you were up against. You know now."

"I knew before," replied Harry, anxious now to make the best of a bad job. "You are Hing Ping, the juggler."

"That's me. How do you like my English—say?"

"It is as good as my own."

"I learned to speak it in Australia, and I am rather proud of it. That's why I asked. Now about this arrest."

"You have me foul. I should perhaps have explained —"

"Explained! As if a detective would deign to explain anything to a despised Chink. We are mere dirt in your eyes, young fellow. But that's all right. Now, what did you want to arrest me for—say?"

Harry determined to tell him.

Indeed, he now felt that he might have done it in the first place. He had certainly handled the case wrong.

"It is your mother who is in Washington. She wants you, and I was ordered to get you to her. That is all."

"My mother! Do you mean that?"

"Certainly. I am telling you the truth."

"What is she doing in Washington?"

"She is the wife of the Chinese minister's cook."

She is, eh? I think I understand. It isn't me she wants, Mr. Detective."

He gave a short laugh as he spoke.

"Oh, no! It isn't me," he repeated. "Why, my mother sold me to a juggler when I was a child. She cares nothing for me. She has learned something which she didn't know when she sold her son."

"I don't know anything about that. She seemed very anxious to get you."

"What is her name now?"

"She called herself Mrs. Shan Dang."

"Was she in New York?"

"Yes."

"Where is she now?"

"Gone back to Washington."

"Well, perhaps I will run down there and see her some of these days when I get time. Just now I'm too busy. Many thanks for this information. It puts me wise where I need it. Now I think I will give myself a little practice in my professional line."

He turned and went out of the room.

Harry was more disgusted with himself than ever.

It just seemed as if whenever this Chinaman turned his eyes upon him he had to do the wrong thing.

Now that he had told him he wished that he hadn't.

Harry felt as if he was half hypnotized simply by the juggler's glance.

Presently Charley Hing returned, carrying a handsome lacquered box which he placed upon a bamboo stand.

Opening the box he called Harry's attention to its contents.

It was a set of knives such as jugglers use for throwing. They were quite as elaborately gotten up as was the box.

"What is your name?" demanded the juggler, turning his peculiar eyes upon Harry again.

And Young King Brady immediately told him.

It seemed as if he just couldn't help it.

Never in his life had he come up with such a man!

"Well, Brady," said Hing, "if there is one thing in my profession I am weak in it is knife-throwing. I need practice. I am going to practice on you. If incidentally I should happen to kill you I daresay I shall regret it, for you seem a good sort of fellow. But what does death amount to? Nothing at all."

Harry said nothing.

The strange sensations which had taken such a strong hold upon him seemed to be increasing. He simply could not speak.

The next instant the knives were flying at him.

Charley Hing aimed at his head.

Six buried themselves in the wall about it when the spell seemed to break.

"Let up on that! Oh, let up!" cried Harry, despairingly. "It won't pay you to kill me!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE JUGGLER DOUBLES ON OLD KING BRADY.

Harry's cry was heard by his best friends.

Old King Brady and Alice, turning up in Chinatown at last, and seeing nothing of their partner, went to the Mott street house.

"We will make a try at the locked rooms," said the old detective. "It is the only thing we can do."

They reached the top of the last flight just in time to hear the cry.

"Harry! In trouble, as I thought!" exclaimed Alice.

Without even answering, Old King Brady put his shoulder to the door and burst it in.

The situation was sufficiently startling.

There was poor Harry tied to the wall with Charley Hing in the act of throwing another knife.

The old detective was upon the Chink like a flash.

Gripping the juggler's arm, Old King Brady got him by the throat.

Alice flew to Harry's rescue.

There were six of the knives about his head.

Neither saw the curtain thrust aside and another Chinaman come stealing out.

But Harry saw and shouted.

Alice whipped out her revolver, and covered the fellow, who was Charley Hing's friend.

He jumped back behind the curtain.

Meanwhile Old King Brady tripped up the juggler, and he now succeeded in handcuffing him.

Then he pushed in behind the curtain but it was only to find the other room deserted and the door open.

Closing the door and turning the key, which was in the lock he came back into the room.

Alice had cut Harry free, and Charley Hing lay on his back making no effort to move.

"He's the man with the silver ear all right," said the old detective glancing down at the juggler. "How did you come to let him get the best of you that way, Harry?"

"Don't ask me, Governor. I tried to arrest him and made a botch of it—that's all."

"I have a case of a similar kind to report myself. We must look sharp. We are dealing with dangerous people. Hing, you are the man who assaulted and robbed Dr. Jenkins last night."

No answer.

"Sulky, eh? Well, please yourself. Hold him covered, Harry. I am going to search him. Have you your revolver, or did he get it away from you?"

"It's gone!" said Harry, feeling, "but I have the other."

He referred to a small revolver which he always carries in a secret pocket and which he now produced.

While he held the juggler covered Old King Brady began to search the fellow's pockets.

"Here is your revolver," he said, and handed the weapon to Harry.

A moment later he got up with a triumphant exclamation.

"We win!" he cried. "Look here!"

In his hand he held a little leather box which he opened, and a superb gem was flashed before Alice and Harry.

It was a big blue diamond cut square—a stone worth thousands of dollars.

Charley Hing eying the old detective with an expression of the deepest hatred, never uttered a word.

"This is the key-note of the whole business," said Old King Brady. "Well, it certainly is an amazing stone. This is what you stole from Dr. Jenkins, my man."

"It is mine," said the juggler. "It was given me by my father. I don't care who claims it, the diamond is mine."

"We will see about that," said Old King Brady. "Meanwhile, I keep the stone."

He put it carefully away in his pocket.

"Now to get this fellow to Elizabeth street," he said.

"Better get the patrol wagon, Governor. He doubled me up. He may do the same thing again."

"Go for it. Alice and I will stop here."

Harry hurried away.

"Look here, Hing, do you know me?" the old detective asked.

"Yes. You are Old King Brady."

Suddenly a peculiar cry rang out in the other room.

It came again.

"Help! Murder!" was called.

Old King Brady whipped out his revolver and ran through the dividing door.

Alice followed him just inside the curtain.

"Fooled by a ventriloquist," growled the old detective. The room was unoccupied, as he had before seen it.

But the real surprise greeted him upon his return.

The handcuffs lay upon the floor locked, and the juggler gone!

That was the time Old King Brady used a bad word, even in Alice's presence.

He was out and downstairs like a flash, but he never saw his man.

"How on earth did he get the handcuffs off?" exclaimed Alice, when at last, having given it up, they found themselves alone in the room.

"Don't know how they do it," replied the old detective, picking up the handcuffs. "These are locked, and they have not been unlocked. I have seen the thing done on the stage many times. It's a trick that I never could fathom. Remember that man is double-jointed all over his body, according to Mrs. Shan Dang. He has certainly contrived to twist his hands out of the bracelets somehow. This is the time Harry has the laugh on us. I wonder if he has spirited the diamond out of my pocket?"

Alice was thinking the same thing.

But it was not so.

Old King Brady produced the diamond, and they looked it over again.

"This is what the Chinese minister really wants," he remarked. "But he don't get it until I understand this case clear through."

He restored the case to his pocket.

"What a shame that he slipped us," said Alice.

"Yes, my dear, but he is a juggler, and I'm an old fool," was the reply. "You are the only one who is right. When you said Harry needed us you just exactly hit the mark."

In a few minutes Harry and a policeman came into the room.

"Where is the prisoner?" demanded Harry, looking around.

Old King Brady shrugged his shoulders.

"It's one on me, for he has given us the slip," he said.

"But the handcuffs?"

Old King Brady produced them, still locked.

"He slipped them?"

"He certainly did."

"It beats the band!"

"It beats me all right. However, it can't be helped. Officer, I regret to say I have nothing for you to do here."

And so they had to send the patrol wagon away, and the crowd of Chinks and slummers who had collected were disappointed when the policeman came downstairs empty-handed.

The Bradys and Alice lingered a few moments in the room.

They were debating as to the possibility of the opium fiend paying a visit to the place.

They decided that it was very probable that he might do so, and it was finally decided that Old King Brady and Harry should put in the night there.

But first Harry was to see Alice safely home, and Old King Brady to remain alone.

To Harry was given the big blue diamond, with instructions to lock it in Old King Brady's safe.

Harry saw Alice to her rooms, went home, locked the diamond in the safe, and started back for Chinatown.

Old King Brady had nothing to report when he reached the house, and nothing came of their watch that night.

Shortly after daylight they gave it up and went to breakfast.

"I almost wish we had watched in Dr. Jenkins' house," remarked the old detective as they sat at table together.

"You will arrest that man on sight, I suppose?" asked Harry.

"Probably. I should say certainly, but I am most anxious to put the Wah murder up to him if it can be done."

"If both he and the juggler have jumped the town we may find ourselves with a dead case on our hands."

"True, but don't you worry. We haven't got to look for those people. They are going to look for us, surest thing you know."

But a week passed, and there was nothing doing.

Old King Brady hired two men whom he sometimes employs to watch the Mott street house.

The juggler, however, did not return.

First thing that morning the detectives went up to 78th street, where they found the house in the hands of professional packers, employees of a certain storage warehouse.

Hurrying there, they learned that Dr. Jenkins had arranged the day before to have his belongings put in storage.

His call at the warehouse had been made immediately after the long-haired doctor left Old King Brady.

The warehouse people describing him as having long hair, and stating that he gave the name of Jenkins, it seemed to settle the question that there was but one opium fiend.

He gave no address at the warehouse, stating that his movements were likely to be uncertain for a few days, and that he would send his address shortly.

"What an excitement it would have created if those packers had found you squeezed to death in that house, Governor," Harry remarked, as they were starting for their office.

"Exactly," replied the old detective, dryly. "But, thanks to Alice's promptness, I wasn't squeezed to death, and there you are."

And this was the last thing that happened in the case of the Chinese juggler for a week.

CHAPTER X.

THE BAITING OF THE TRAP.

It turned out just as Old King Brady had predicted.

About ten days later there came a letter to the office through the mail which read as follows:

"Boston, Oct. 10th, 19—.

"To the Brady Detectives, New York:

"Gentlemen.—I have learned from a certain source which I do not care to name that you recently slipped up on a secret service case in which a Chinese juggler is involved.

"Now, I happen to know that there is in this town today a young Chinaman who can do the most wonderful

tricks. If he is your man you will not find it difficult to identify him when I tell you that he has no ear on the left side, and has a silver plug inserted in the hole.

"What is it worth to you to get this man? I can put you in the way of doing so, I am certain, but I am not working for my health. You can wire your offer, and if it suits me I'll wire back instructions, upon which you must act promptly, for there is no telling how long the fellow may remain in Boston.

"Address John Smith, 12 City Hall Place, care of Cigar Store."

Old King Brady read the letter, and tossed it over to Harry.

"There's your bait, just as I told you it would come," he said.

Harry read the letter and agreed with him.

"I don't see how it can possibly be otherwise," he remarked.

"Certainly not. We haven't opened our mouths to a living soul about Charley Hing. Still, the police knew."

"That's so, too."

"So there is just that one chance."

"What shall you do?"

"Oh, appear to bite, of course. Wire the fellow, 'Will give you \$2,000,' and let it go at that."

"You fly high."

"No use to fly low. We were told to spare no expense. The Secret Service Bureau will have to foot the bill."

Harry promptly sent the depatch.

Later in the day the following answer was received:

"Come to No. — Harrison avenue at once. Receive instructions there.—Smith."

"Well, it's Boston for ours, it would seem," said Old King Brady. "We will go over by the Fall River boat tonight."

"Do I go?" inquired Alice.

"Certainly," was the reply. "Suppose I got hugged by another infernal machine of the Shang dynasty—should I not want my fair rescuer to be promptly on hand?"

So that night the Bradys took the Boston boat.

It was a beautiful evening, and unusually warm considering the season.

The detectives finding it agreeable on the deck remained there, listening to the music until ten, when Alice retired.

"I shall smoke another cigar," said the old detective to Harry. "Will you have one?"

"Yes, thanks. Look, there is that man again."

A tall man dressed in a peculiarly flashy suit was coming towards them along the deck.

His face was a peculiar one, and the Bradys had been noticing him at supper.

Old King Brady was sure he had seen him somewhere.

Harry was equally satisfied that the heavy white mustache which he wore, and which matched in color with his closely cropped hair, was false.

Altogether he was a very striking man.

He had not previously appeared to pay any particular attention to the Bradys, but now he walked directly up to them and asked for a light.

It was the first time Old King Brady had got a close look at him.

Seen now under the electric light he observed the peculiar pallor of his face, and a certain redness of the eyelids.

"An opium fiend," he said to himself. "Strange I did not notice this before."

He handed out a box of wind matches.

"Ha! Just the thing," said the stranger, and the instant he spoke Old King Brady knew him.

He could never forget that voice!

It was Dr. Jenkins, or O'Leary, minus his wig and plus a false white mustache beyond all doubt.

There was no chance to communicate his discovery to Harry, who could hardly be expected to recognize the man.

The doctor drew up a camp-stool and seated himself.

"Now that I have these wind matches I propose to embellish my smoke a bit," he said. "I had made up my mind not to do it, but the temptation is a little too strong."

He produced a small oblong box and a cigar.

The lid of the box appeared to be very tight. It took quite a wrench to open it.

The doctor laid it carefully on his knee, and the Bradys saw that it contained a brownish liquid.

Into this the doctor dropped the cigar, and rolled it about for some minutes, talking all the while.

"I suppose, gentlemen, you are wondering what I am doing," he said.

"Curiosity is a trait common to us all," replied the old detective.

"Quite so. This is a trick I learned in China. I am accustomed to use opium in moderation. This box contains laudanum. The cigar absorbs it, and I get my little smoke without going to the disagreeable necessity of smoking the drug in the usual fashion."

"Very clever, but how can you control the dose?"

"Practice makes perfect, my dear sir. I am an old hand at this business."

He took the cigar out, closed the laudanum box with a snap, and proceeded to light up.

The smell of opium became very apparent.

"That's the first time I ever saw anything like that done," remarked Old King Brady. "Do you find that it injures you in any way? I suppose not, or you would not do it."

"Well, I can't see that it does," was the reply, "but I presume sooner or later it must tell on me. However, I am too far gone to give it up now. In this way I don't find it necessary to increase the dose."

"I was about to ask that question. You have traveled extensively in the East?"

"Oh, yes. There is little to be seen in that quarter of the world which has not had my observation. At the same time, I recall nothing more charming than the trip we are making now."

"I have heard many old travelers enthuse over it."

"What can his game be?" thought Old King Brady. "Of course, he knows us. Is he in with the mysterious Smith?"

"Speaking of the East," broke out the doctor, "few people are aware of the truly wonderful tricks performed by Chinese and Japanese jugglers. Such as have visited this country have not shown their most wonderful tricks by any manner of means. Why, I have seen things done by them out there which would make your hair stand on end."

"Yes, sir."

"For instance, what?"

"Did you ever hear of a man turning into a woman while you stood holding his hand?"

"Actually?"

"Actually."

"It seems incredible."

"All the same I have seen it done."

"What else?"

"A man cut off a boy's head and put it on again, and the boy run around as well as ever."

"That's a Hindoo fakir's trick."

"The Chinese can double discount the Hindoo fakirs. Why, when I was in the lamasary of Shun Tang, in the province of Sze Chuen, I saw—but I am doubtless boring you, gentlemen. You care nothing for all this, while we think natural magic is a fad."

"Far from it boring me I am listening with the greatest interest. Proceed, please. I have read of the wonderful doings of the monks in these lamasaries."

"Can there be anything more wonderful than taking dry bones which have been dry for centuries and reinvesting them with a living body?"

"Have you seen that trick done?"

"I have."

"I read of it in a book of travels in China some years ago. Hypnotism, is it not?"

"Nothing of the sort. It is done on purely scientific principles."

"But does the being thus created walk and talk?"

"I have seen one walk, I never heard one talk. They only hold together a few minutes, and then relapse into bones."

"Incredible!"

"It is done by application of the electric current to the bones, my dear sir. Remember that in the Chinese lamasaries scientific knowledge is preserved which would amaze the world if it were to be given out, as it never will be."

"These are mere pipe dreams," thought Old King Brady. "So much for smoking a laudanum loaded cigar."

But aloud he added:

"I should greatly like to see something of this."

"Easily done."

"By going to China."

"That would be the last way. Were you to talk of these things in the China the world knows of they would simply laugh at you. To meet the possessor of these secrets you would have to travel a thousand miles into the interior before you could even reach these lamasaries, and when you did reach them the lamars would surely kill you."

"And yet you say—"

"That I have been there—that I have seen such tricks? Yes, it is so; but I speak five dialects of the Chinese language. I spent years among the Chinese."

"Might I ask your name?"

"Certainly. Here is my card."

"I cannot read it in this light. Hand it to my son, please."

Harry took the card and read aloud:

"Dr. Philip H. Jenkins. New York."

"By heavens, this man is either a lunatic or the boldest criminal ever," thought Old King Brady. "But I'll call his bluff."

"Possibly you know me," he said.

"I saw you in the dining-room this evening. I am not aware that I ever met you before."

"I am Old King Brady, the detective. This is Young King Brady, my partner."

Harry was listening in breathless interest.

The same thought was uppermost in the minds of both.

Perhaps after all there were two opium-smoking doctors.

"Old King Brady! Oh!" the man exclaimed.

"You have heard of me, doctor?"

"Why, certainly. You came to my house the other day with my friend, Bellingham O. Perry, the banker."

"I did, and again when you sent for me later."

"Pardon me; there must be some misunderstanding. I never sent for you later."

"By the nurse."

"I dismissed the nurse. I certainly never sent for you."

"Possibly it was your friend, Dr. O'Leary."

"Ah! Now I begin to see daylight. You have run up against O'Leary?"

"Yes."

"Then let me tell you that you are lucky to be here to tell it. Are you aware that the fellow is mad through the excessive use of opium?"

"I suspected something of the sort."

"He certainly is. I knew him in South Africa. I gave him the run of my house. What do you think the rascal did?"

"I'm sure I can't tell."

"Put all my things in storage, cleaned the house out completely, and incidentally robbed me of a collection of diamonds and other gems of incalculable value."

"That's bad!"

"Is it not? But tell me what did he do to you?"

"Kept me waiting in your house for you until I was tired."

"It is lucky that he did not strike you dead with one of my ancient swords or something of the sort. But I shall find him. I need no detectives. I am my own detective. I shall be revenged."

The wildness of his manner increased.

He had now smoked the laudanum-laden cigar down half its length.

Old King Brady shifted back to their former talk.

"You were saying, doctor," he remarked, "that you could show us some of this wonderful Chinese jugglery of which you speak."

"I can, and that without going outside of the city of Boston."

"There is such a juggler there?"

"There is."

"His name?"

"I prefer not to reveal it."

"Any favor in that line will be duly appreciated."

"I will see him, and if a sitting can be arranged it shall be. Where can I get at you?"

"We shall stop at Young's Hotel."

"Very well. I go to the Touraine. If you have time I should be happy to have you call on me there. Do you propose to stay long in Boston?"

"I cannot say how long, but I will certainly prolong my stay to suit your convenience if you can show me such tricks as you describe."

"We will see. Suppose you dine with me to-morrow evening, say at six. If I can work the plan at all it can be done to-morrow night."

"Very well. We shall consider that an engagement."

"Do so. And now, good-night."

The doctor tossed the end of his cigar overboard, and abruptly withdrew.

"Follow! Find out what the number of his stateroom is, and return," whispered Old King Brady.

Harry was back inside of five minutes.

"It's number 262," he said. "Great Scott, Governor, this is a bold piece of business. Do you think he can be our man?"

"The man we saw in Chinatown that rainy night?"

"Yes."

"What do you think? You saw him as well as I."

"I wouldn't undertake to say."

"But I will. Cleverly disguised he certainly is, but by his voice I know him. I am positive that Dr. Jenkins and Dr. O'Leary are one and the same."

"Shall you arrest him?"

"At first such was my intention, but now I feel impelled to give him a little more rope. He is trying to trap us, and the best and surest way to get at the truth of all this strange business is to let him think that he is going to succeed. So we will keep our appointment, and be governed by what occurs."

"Look out. You don't want another such experience as happened in the 78th street house."

"Oh, you can trust me," replied the old detective, throwing away his cigar. "Now I am going to bed."

CHAPTER XI.

THE BRADYS INSPECT THE TRAP.

When once Old King Brady's mind is made up there is no changing him, so Harry said no more about the matter.

He was up and dressed first when the boat reached Fall River, and finding Alice in the saloon, he told her what had occurred the night before.

"I think he runs a great big risk in taking chances on that man," said Alice. "The best thing he can do is to arrest him before he leaves the boat."

"Well, he won't do it. It's of no use to talk to him."

"We must look out for him, Harry. His rashness seems to increase with age."

"We can tell better what to do when we learn what his plans are."

"Do you think there can be two of these doctors?"

"Old King Brady is positive that there are not. As for me, I wouldn't undertake to say."

The coming of the old detective ended the discussion, and they boarded the Boston train.

Nothing was seen of the doctor in their car.

After they were once started Harry went through the train, and spotted him in the front car.

Reaching Boston, the detectives took a cab and were driven to Young's Hotel to breakfast.

Old King Brady then went out alone, and did not return until after ten o'clock.

He did not say where he had been, and seeing that he wanted to keep his own counsel neither Harry nor Alice asked him.

"Now to get to work," he said. "Harry and I will go at once to the Harrison avenue house. You, Alice, are to disguise as a man and shadow us. If we are gone inside too long or your suspicions are aroused in any other way, look around for a man with a black Derby hat and a red seal ring on his left hand. Attract his attention, and raise your left hand twice, keeping the forefinger curved. He will then come forward, and you are simply to say 'Brady,' and he will tell you what to do."

"Police?" demanded Harry.

"Yes."

"Glad to see that you propose to take some precaution."

"It is all right."

Giving Alice time to make her disguise, the Bradys went out together.

The number on Harrison avenue was just on the edge of Boston's little Chinatown.

This block looks more like a bit of the old Dupont street in San Francisco before the fire than anything in New York's Chinatown.

But the house the Bradys sought was on the other side of Sussex street, and had not been changed.

Harry rang the bell again and again, but got no answer.

"We are too late," said Old King Brady. "They looked for us to come here directly from the boat perhaps. I thought it might prove so, but I am going on just the same."

The lock was an old-fashioned affair, and he had it open in a minute with his skeleton keys.

They found themselves in a house deserted.

Passing from room to room they could find no trace of anyone.

They descended into the cellar.

It was piled high with earth and stones.

On the south side the wall had been cut away, and the opening was boarded up.

"Somebody is trying to make a secret passage here," said Old King Brady. "That's plain enough."

"Shall we pull away these boards? They seem to be fast?"

"No; let them alone. We will pull out and try it again later. If there is nothing doing then we will wait for the doctor to show his hand."

"Just the same I'd like to see what is behind those boards."

"Oh, well, if you insist then pull them away."

Harry got hold of the boards, but they were fast on the inside.

"Can't do it without ripping everything all to pieces," he said.

"Which won't pay. Let's pull out."

They left the house, and spying Alice on the other side of the way, Old King Brady gave her a secret sign to follow.

Once they were around the corner they stopped and waited for her to come up, as Alice had made a sign indicating that she had something to tell.

"Anything doing?" she asked.

"No; nobody in there," replied Old King Brady.

"Well, somebody came out, then, and it was your friend the doctor."

"Not out of that house, Alice?"

"Yes, out of that house, while you were there. If I had seen your plain clothes man I should have gone right in; as it was I was waiting for him to turn up."

"This is queer business," said Old King Brady. "We never heard a sound. How long ago was this?"

"Perhap ten minutes."

"We must have been upstairs at the time," said Harry. "If the doctor came out of the house he came out of the secret passage."

"Which means that it was fastened on this side, instead of the other."

"What about the secret passage?" demanded Alice.

"It is in the cellar," replied Harry.

"We go back and investigate," said Old King Brady. "Alice, come along, too."

They returned to Harrison avenue, and looked about warily, but could see no one watching the house.

So once more Old King Brady opened the front door, and they passed inside.

Back in the cellar the old detective gave the boards a little more attention.

"Ha! Here we have it!" he exclaimed. "We must have been blind!"

One of the boards—it was the middle one—was shorter at the top than the others.

Old King Brady got hold of it and pulled it up.

The board had been embedded six inches in the ground.

The whole thing opened readily then.

The boards were found secured by two cross-pieces, the middle one being tongued and grooved, and working free.

"As ingenious as it is simple," said Harry, flashing his electric light through the passage beyond.

It was in an unfinished condition, and led through into the next cellar.

Listening carefully and hearing nothing they passed through.

There was a big pile of earth here also.

But what interested the Bradys more was a steel cage formed by running a line of bars across one corner of the cellar.

This construction was new, and the bars embedded in

the floor above, and set in a piece of granite below were as firm as a rock.

"What can it mean?" queried Alice.

"The intention is to lock up somebody in there, that's a sure thing," replied Harry.

"Look!" said the old detective, pointing overhead. "A trap-door!"

It opened above the cage, and was secured by a steel bar from which an upright went up through the floor.

"Somebody seems to have been spending a lot of money here," said the old detective.

The words were scarcely uttered when a grating sound was heard and the steel bar dropped.

Quick as thought Harry turned off his light and pulled Alice back into the passage, Old King Brady following.

They were not a second too soon, for the next they knew the trap dropped and then voices were heard talking in Chinese.

Old King Brady pushed Alice in front of him so that she could listen.

The talk continued.

The trap door was pulled up and down and finally left hanging!

"Important?" breathed Old King Brady in Alice's ear.

"Of the highest importance," was the reply.

They waited a good fifteen minutes, the talk continuing all the time.

At last the trap-door was pulled up, and the bar shot back into place.

"Pull out," said Alice. "They are coming down into the cellar."

"Worth while remaining? Do we want to make an arrest?" demanded Harry.

"No, no! No arrest now," said the old detective. "Pull out, as Alice says."

They hurried through to the other cellar, secured the boards, and left the house.

Not until they were walking up Essex street did Alice get the order to talk.

"What was it?" she asked in answer to Old King Brady's question. "Why, it is simply a trap to catch us, if you please."

Do you mean it? Were our names mentioned?" Old King Brady asked.

"Not names, but the detectives, the two detectives, the New York detectives were alluded to over and over again."

"Is it possible! That cage and trap were never made by Chinamen."

"No; so they said."

"What were they doing?"

"Just practicing the working of the thing. They are going to fit up a fan-tan place in the house we first went into, the passage is to allow the gamblers to escape in case of a police raid. The cage is a different thing. According to what I heard it was built by the order of the white-haired doctor who throws money about like water. That's the nearest I could come to the name."

"Well! It's all plain enough. We are to be enticed into that house, dropped into the cage and kept until we give up the big blue diamond. It is as I said, the doctor

and Charley Hing, or Hing Ping, or whatever the juggler's name is, have got their heads together, and intend to treat us as the common enemy. Really, this is great."

"We ought to be good for them with that secret passage to help us out," remarked Harry.

"Decidedly," was the reply. "It's all right now. We shall trap the whole outfit. Now to get down to police headquarters and fix up our plans."

"And now who says I wasn't right in wanting to move those boards?" chuckled Harry.

"Decidedly," replied Old King Brady. "But it is a good job that we did not do it then, or we should not have we might as well have stopped at home."

The day passed, and at a quarter before six Old King Brady and Harry kept their appointment with the opium fiend.

They found Dr. Jenkins occupying one of the most expensive suites in the Touraine.

It was the first time the Bradys had seen the man when he did not have something in the way of an opium load aboard.

"You are punctual, gentlemen," he said. "I trust the business which brought you to Boston turned out successfully."

"We can scarcely say so," replied the old detective. "The truth is, it has proved a complete failure. Indeed, we might as well have stopped at home."

"So? That sounds discouraging, but I trust the little exhibition which I have planned for this evening will compensate you for your disappointment."

"We shall enjoy it, I am sure."

"I trust you may. But now we will have dinner. It is to be served here in this room."

The doctor rang the bell, and preparations for the dinner were immediately begun.

It was as good a dinner as the Bradys ever sat down to, and certainly the doctor proved a most entertaining host.

His stories of adventure in the Far East and of his gold discoveries in South Africa, out of which he claimed to have made many millions, were interesting beyond all telling.

For the time being the Bradys almost forgot that they were dealing with a dangerous criminal, probably a murderer, and certainly the man who had tried to murder Old King Brady only a few days before.

But at last he began on a story of adventure in the remote regions of western China, which was so fascinating that it was eight o'clock before they knew it.

"Why, it's growing late, doctor," said the old detective, consulting his watch. "If we are going to have that little exhibition it's time we were on the move."

"Decidedly," replied Dr. Jenkins. "Help yourselves to fresh cigars, gentlemen, and we will start at once. You are about to be introduced to the most remarkable juggler now living, the wonderful Hing Ping."

And the Bradys followed Dr. Jenkins from the hotel.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Just as they had expected the opium fiend led them straight to Harrison avenue, and ascended the steps of

the house next to the one where they had been in the morning.

The door was opened by a young Chinaman in white, who bowed almost to the floor before the doctor.

He led them into the front room.

The house was in the old Boston style, and had no basement.

They were now directly over the cellar, which was in front, a cellar kitchen taking up the rear.

The floor was bare, and the room cheaply furnished in the Chinese style.

The trap over in the corner where the cage stood beneath it plainly showed.

"Be seated," said the doctor. "My juggler has not yet arrived, but he soon will. Meanwhile let me tell you another of my little stories. Light up, gentlemen. Make yourselves at home."

The Bradys lighted cigars, and the Chinese boy vanished.

"This story concerns myself," began the doctor. "I come in at the end."

"Go on," replied Old King Brady, anxious to bring matters to a head.

"Once upon a time," said the doctor, "there lived a man in a certain Chinese city who by a sudden temptation which came his way turned thief. He was doing some repairs in an enormously rich shrine, temple, or whatever you like to call it, and there left alone for a minute he stole a sacred gem which had lain upon the altar before the god of the place for upwards of five hundred years. It was a blue diamond, cut oblong, a gem rivaling the famous Hope. This man managed to get away with it safely, but when he reached his home he was seized with fear, which increased upon him daily, although for some reason suspicion did not point his way. You follow me, I hope?"

"We follow you," replied Old King Brady quietly.

It had worked exactly as he thought it would. He felt that there was to be no exhibition of Chinese magic that night.

"This man," continued the doctor, "had a son who was born with an ear on the right side of his head and an ugly hole on the left side. About this time the son was seized with a fever, and for weeks lay delirious; all deserted him, even to his mother, but the father remained at his side. The boy recovered, and when he did so he found a silver plug inserted in the left ear-hole. His father informed him that should it ever be removed the fever would return, and death would surely follow. Soon after this the father died, and the mother sold her son to a juggler named Wee Woo Wah, a man whom you once met in my presence in rooms which I then kept on Pell street."

He paused and eyed the Bradys attentively.

"Go on, doctor," said Old King Brady. "We want to hear more."

"There are men outside the door," he said to Harry, by a secret sign.

"This Wee Woo Wah taught this boy many tricks," continued the doctor, "but they did not agree. On one occasion he struck the lad and nearly killed him. While the

boy was unconscious the juggler removed the plug from his ear, and what do you suppose he found inside?"

"The stolen diamond, of course," replied Old King Brady. "Go on."

"You are right. He swiped the diamond, as you would say. The boy he drove from him, and the lad joined another troupe, and went to Australia, where some time later he fell in with me."

"And his name was Hing Ping, alias Charley Hing," said Old King Brady. "Get along with your story, doctor. This is getting slow."

"It will be swift enough for you in a few minutes," replied the doctor, a fiendish look coming over his face. "But to resume. You have the name right. To this boy came his father in a dream, and told him about the diamond. This dream the boy told me after I became acquainted with him. I was stuck on his juggling, and adopted him as a son. We returned to New York together. I enticed Wee Woo Wah to come there from China. I had him in my rooms the first time on that night you butted in. I knew then that he had the diamond, but for certain reasons I did nothing. Later I enticed him to those same rooms again, no matter how——"

"It was by a letter," broke in Old King Brady. "For goodness sake, get on."

"You know too much for your own good," hissed the doctor, but he instantly controlled himself and resumed:

"That time I killed him and got the diamond, and then I was treated to a display of ingratitude which is beyond belief, for this boy, this juggler, stole into my house, in the dead of night, and tried to kill me. He thought he had done it. He stole the diamond, which I had done murder to obtain, and left me, as he believed, dead, and that after all the money and the favors I had showered upon him."

"The usual way," remarked Old King Brady. "But he certainly had a better claim to the diamond than you had, my dear sir."

"Perhaps! But how about your claim, you old scoundrel!" cried the doctor, breaking out into a roar. "I've had my revenge on that young ingrate, and now for my revenge on you. Ha! You would, would you! Look behind you! You don't arrest me! Your own fate is sealed. In the cellar of this house I have a neat little cage built expressly for your benefit. Into it you go, and in it you remain until the blue diamond is delivered into my hands!"

These words were shouted with ever-increasing fury.

The Bradys had drawn on him, but he did not seem to care, and he continued to rave.

Meanwhile the door had burst open, and four Chinks armed with revolvers came in.

"Two to one! Kill me and you die of horrible torture! These men are sworn to execute my will!" roared the doctor. "I have bought them body and soul!"

Old King Brady's answer was to stamp his foot three times upon the floor.

Harry was facing the Chink, and Old King Brady held the doctor covered when there was a rush in the hall, and the farce, which might easily have proved a tragedy, came to an abrupt end.

Enter Alice in her disguise with five policemen at her heels!

Old King Brady's signal on the floor did the business.

Alice and the officers had been since seven o'clock in the cellar and the secret passage waiting for that signal to come!

The Chinamen, finding themselves cornered, as is usual with their race, showed no fight, and were easily captured.

Old King Brady and Harry jumped on the doctor and pinned him against the wall.

He handcuffed him, and for the moment turned his back on the man to show the policemen the trap.

"Look out! He has taken poison!" shouted Harry.

It was too late!

Handcuffed as he was, the doctor contrived to get his fingers in his vest pocket, and clapped something into his mouth.

Then he leaned back against the wall.

"What have you taken, you wretched man?" demanded Old King Brady, inclined to believe that it was nothing worse than a morphine pill, his usual dose.

"A dose which will kill me inside of an hour. By-by, Brady. After all, you have done me a service. I am a confirmed opium fiend, growing worse every day. I'm a thief and a murderer. I am Dr. O'Leary, but not the real Dr. Jenkins, the gold king. He was my cousin. I killed him in South Africa and have personated him ever since. I'm tired of life, anyhow, and had just as soon die as live. That's my last word."

Nothing that Old King Brady could say could induce the doctor to speak again.

A few minutes later he sank unconscious to the floor.

They carried him to the Massachusetts General Hospital in an ambulance, and, as he had predicted, he died within an hour's time.

And so the case ended abruptly as far as Dr. Jenkins was concerned.

But where was Charley Hing?

Boston's little Chinatown was ransacked from end to end, but no trace of the Chinese juggler could be discovered.

At last the Bradys tackled the dirt pile in the cellar where the cage was.

They might have done it in the first place, and there is no denying that in this they were just a shade slow.

For beneath the earth they found a box, and in the box was the body of the wretched juggler rolled up like a ball, his double joints permitting this.

How it came about was never known.

The captured Chinamen maintained the stolid silence of their race, and denied all knowledge of the man.

But there he was, dead, and however the opium fiend managed it, this was his revenge.

The body was removed to the morgue, and Old King Brady, with Alice, went to New York, Harry remaining behind.

Here the Secret Service was telephoned, and a part of the story told.

But even then the big blue diamond was not mentioned, for Old King Brady likes his dramatic endings ever.

The answer came over the phone that the Chinese minister would arrive at New York next day, and for Old King Brady to hold himself in readiness to accompany him to Boston.

He came with a suite of five, and an interpreter, but Mrs. Shan Dang was not with them, nor did the Bradys ever hear directly of her again.

They went over to Boston by train, and tied up at the Touraine, where their coming made a huge sensation.

One might suppose that by this time the old detective was well acquainted with the minister.

But no! He was not even introduced to him. The interpreter did all the talking.

There was no moving the great man that night, but next day the whole outfit, including the Bradys and Alice, went to the morgue in carriages, and they were shown into the death-room.

The minister glanced at the corpse, and through the interpreter desired the attendant to retire, which he did.

Then, putting on a pair of gloves, the great and mighty one gingerly pulled the silver plug out of Charley Hing's head.

The look of disgust which came over his face when he peered into the cavity was ludicrous.

There was a great chattering in Chinese.

Then Old King Brady's time for his usual dramatic ending came, but on this occasion he delegated it to Alice.

Advancing toward the minister, Alice, with a profound courtesy, laid the little leather box in his hand, at the same time addressing him in Chinese.

Then there was a sensation!

The minister opened the box, and the diamond was revealed.

He bowed his head, and pressed the gem to his lips.

Then he talked for ten minutes to Alice, and wound up by taking a handsome jade ring from his finger and presenting her with it.

Before they left the room the interpreter gave Old King Brady two thousand dollars in new yellowbacks.

Then they all got into their carriages, and rode back to the Touraine.

And this ended the mystery.

The captured Chinamen got short terms.

The relatives of the real Dr. Jenkins eventually claimed his large estates, and recovered.

The case was kept secret at the time, and this is the first public mention of the matter of The Bradys and the Chinese Juggler.

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS AFTER '78X'; or, CAUGHT BY A SING SING CLEW," which will be the next number (454) of "Secret Service."

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ITEMS WORTH READING.

The peculiar pranks played by a bolt of lightning on an oak-tree attracted hundreds of people to Wissahickon Avenue, near Lincoln Lake, Philadelphia, Pa. The tree, which was fully 125 feet tall, was struck during an electrical storm and split down a distance of 75 feet, the halves falling in opposite directions. Fifty feet of the upper part was stripped of bark, and a most peculiar thing was that the roots were torn completely out of the ground and hurled a considerable distance, while a circle of bark four feet high was left standing.

About one mile east of the Country Club at American Lake, Oregon, is located a gravel pit owned by a rancher of Parkland, who is assisted by his two sons. The youngsters, while exploring the pit recently ran onto a nest of snakes and started out to kill them all. For more than an hour they fought the reptiles as they came from the cave, and when, at the end of the battle, the spoils were counted 211 garter snakes, ranging in size from 6 inches to 4 feet, were found. The fight waged hot for some time, the old snakes hissing and spitting, in an attempt to protect their young. Many of the snakes made their escape, but nearly all the big ones fell victims to the shillelahs of the boys.

The Samlag system in Norway gives power to municipalities to grant all the retail spirit licenses which it deems necessary to a company which would bind itself to carry on the traffic in the interests of the community, with a fixed annual return of not more than 5 per cent. on its paid-up capital. In establishing the system, the question of compensation does not appear to have presented much difficulty. When the Samlag was introduced, two kinds of licenses were in existence—(1) those granted annually or for a term not exceeding five years, and (2) privileged licenses, granted for the life of the licensee. In the case of the first, no compensation whatever was paid to those dispossessed of their licenses. In regard to the latter, compensation was granted in the form of an annuity equal to the average yearly profits for the three years preceding the suppression of the license. This provision is still in force. With these provisions the aims and principles of the Samlag are summarized as follows: The elimination of private profit and securing the monopoly value for the public; insuring highest quality of liquors sold; the reduction of the number of licenses; the easy enforcement of the law; the destruction of the power of the spirit trade, and the furtherance of all progressive measures of reform.

The arrival of the big steamer "Arizonan" at San Francisco the other day brought a harrowing tale of a battle between Frank Fonda, a member of the crew, and a shark in the waters at Salina Cruz, in which the shark, with its teeth, tore the forearm almost off the unfortunate sailor. Three fingers were ground in the massive jaws of the big fish, while Fonda's

right foot was almost severed. The tragedy occurred on a hot day while the "Arizonan" was lying at Salina Cruz. About forty members of the crew went in bathing among the breakers. Fonda's companions observed him waving his arms wildly in the air, as if to beat off something, and then sink beneath the waves. They thought, however, that he was playing the drowning joke, and laughed. Soon the water where Fonda had been swimming became dyed a blood-red, and the man's companions secured a boat and put out to save him. As they approached the spot where the blood colored the water there was a swish, and the shark, coming to the surface, rolled over, displaying its glittering belly. In the jaws the men could plainly see a piece of Fonda's foot. Two of the men beat the shark off with oars, and then, diving, brought to the surface the mutilated body of the fireman. He was taken ashore and found to be still living. A litter was made upon which Fonda was placed and taken to the hospital at Salina Cruz, fighting between life and death. His hair had turned from a jet-black to white. It is expected that he will lose his right foot and several of his fingers. The shark measured ten feet in length.

WITH THE FUNNY FELLOWS.

"You say she has her voice under perfect control?" "Quite."
"Then why doesn't she choke it off sometimes?"

Small Boy—"Ere, guvnor, yer 'orse 'as fell down. Cabby—
No, 'e didn't. Some of yer 'ave pushed 'im down.

"I never saw such friends as Tompkins's chauffeur and his auto are." "Explain." "Every time the chauffeur gets a jag, the auto wobbles out of sympathy."

The maniac was industriously scribbling with a nibless pen dipped from an inkless well. "What are you doing?" he was asked. "Hush!" he replied; "I am writing the unwritten law."

He—So Smythe has been run over by an automobile, eh?
How did it happen? She—The poor fellow was stooping over to pick up a horseshoe for luck.

Miss Kreech—He says my voice is very good. Miss Knox—
Indeed? He must have inside information. Miss Kreech—
How do you mean? Miss Knox—He must have a way of discovering that it's better than it sounds.

Snoggs—My daughter is going to marry young Scroggs.
Boggs—Why, I thought you hated him. Snoggs—I do. This is a scheme of mine to have my wife become his mother-in-law.

"Yes," said the tramp, who was explaining his method, "I always tell the lady of the house that I was injured on the field." "What field?" asked the inexperienced beginner. "Well, if a young lady, I say football field; an' if it's an old lady I say battlefield."

Hogan—I had to dispose av th' auttymobile I gave me son Terry. Dorgan—Shure, it wor only wan av thim har-rmliss toy wans? Hogan—I thought so; but after it killed two cats an' wan dog, an' broke a leg, an' ar-rm, an' a nose, I concluded it wor a baby-grand-tourin'-car-r.

A jury in Blankville were sent out to decide a case, and after deliberating for a time came back, and the foreman told the judge they were unable to agree upon a verdict. The latter rebuked the jury, saying the case was a very clear one, and remanded them back to the jury-room for a second attempt, adding: "If you are there too long, I will have to send you in twelve suppers." The foreman, in a rather irritated tone, spoke up and said: "May it please Your Honor, you might send in eleven suppers and one bundle of hay."

HIDDEN AMONG THE RAFTERS.

By HORACE APPLETON.

The Woodthorpe Corn Mill was silent at last. Looking through the latticed windows of the mill-house one might see Bessy Holmfirth, the miller's wife, talking to her only child, a girl of two years, while her husband sat before the fire with his head supported by his hands and his eyes gazing into the caverns between the bars.

At last the miller rose and came to his wife's side.

"Bessy," he said, "don't fret any more." I know how brave you are, and how you want to encourage me, but luck is against us. Never mind, I can work—I'm willing and able enough surely."

She looked up to him with her dim, tear-stained eyes full of admiration. There were many who would have agreed with her that the man who stood there stretching out his arms was one of the finest-looking fellows they had ever seen, and in spite of Bessy's trouble, she felt thankful for the day when she had left her father's well-stocked farm to become the wife of the "improvident and reckless miller," as her relations had designated him.

"It's not for my sake that I'm put about," she replied; "it's because you have to leave the home that has belonged to you for so long. I can never be afraid for myself while I have you, and, Tom, even if Lawyer Branstone is our enemy, he will never be able to touch us after we leave the mill to-morrow."

At this moment there was a quiet tap at the door, and Thomas opened it to admit a middle aged man, whose clothes were covered with flour, and whose head and gray beard presented the appearance of being frosted. This was Stephen White, known to all Woodthorpe Magna as the "miller's man." He had been in the service of the Holmfirths, father and son, for forty years. He looked round the room curiously, his bright, bead-like eyes shifting very quickly beneath his shaggy eyebrows.

"You'll none ha' long to stop here," he said, "an' I thought I might as well come in an' take a look at you. No, I thank ye, missis; I've been dusting top granary out, an' I'm none that clean to sit dahn. Have you heard any more news?"

"Nothing, except that we have to give up the place on Wednesday if we can't find the money. Lawyer Branstone has written this very morning to tell us he must take possession then.

The old man, as he turned to go away, remarked with an inward chuckle

"Where's a th' luck gahn? Why couldno' we find t' pot o' gold at such a time as this?"

Bessy made a sharp motion as though she would have stopped him, but was too late. The tradition about a pot of gold coins being concealed in some mysterious part of the mill was one that had often troubled her. Her husband had seemed always to place too implicit a reliance in its truth, and indeed, it was said that when his father had mortgaged the place to the lawyer, he himself had been filled with an insane belief that the money should be repaid out of the treasure-trove. But the years had passed without its being discovered, and now that the falling in of the mortgage was so near, the Woodthorpe corn mill,

with its grounds and its water rights, was going into the lawyer's possession.

As soon as they were alone again the couple began discussing their plans for the future. At the old man's words a quick hope had dashed through Holmfirth's mind, only to die as quickly. It was nothing but a lie that had been handed down, the suspicion of his great-great grandfather's fortune, and Gabriel Holmfirth, who had died in the same year that George I. was crowned, must have been unjustly stigmatized as a miser.

Meanwhile, Stephen was hurrying toward the town of Woodthorpe Magna. After a while he reached the High street, and knocked at the door of a dingy suite of rooms which overlooked a railed garden.

A stunted man, in shabby black clothes, with snuff-stained coat-lappets, opened the door. He gazed for awhile at the figure before him; then realizing from the outward appearance of his visitor that he was a miller, asked him to enter.

"You have come from Woodthorpe?" he said. "I saw you there the last time I went to look through the place. Have you come to see about being kept on; for if you have, you might have spared yourself the trouble."

Stephen went slowly to the door and having satisfied himself that nobody was eavesdropping, returned to a chair, and sat for some time chuckling until the lawyer, angrily asked him his business.

"Gie me your hand, lawyer, afore I speak a word," he said "an' promise to deal justly wi' me. Half of it I maun ha', or else I'll take it a'."

Lawyer Branstone gave a sudden exclamation of surprise. The purport of Stephen's speech was familiar. His dull eyes sparkled, and his fingers clutched air for an instant.

"Have you found it?" he whispered beneath his breath—"found Gabriel Holmfirth's money?"

The other nodded.

"Ay, after a' these years, just as young Thomas has to flit. I had looked everywhere, as I thought, time upon time, but this very day I relected as I hadna' searched t' rafters in t' wheel-room. Whay,' thought I, 'never wouldn't chap ha' hidden it there—just above all them great old engines as shook t' roof like a leaf!'"

"What was there?" the lawyer asked, speaking loudly in his excitement.

"The pot of gold!" the unfaithful servant cried. "Full o' golden guineas!—it was a sight to see—King George's head on each. Naught to hold 'm but a three-legged iron pot—such as gypsies boil water in—an' so heavy that, try as I would, it wouldn' budge."

Lawyer Branstone rose to his feet and placed his sickly, yellow hand again in the horny palm of the other.

"Let it be a bargain, Stephen, my friend," he said. "Quarter of that money shall be yours."

"I maun ha' half," Stephen cried. "I reckon young Thomas 'd give me quarter if I went straight off, an' then I should ha' the satisfaction o' doing him a good turn as well. Half or naught, say I."

Seeing that he had a man to deal with as cunning and as little likely to be overreached as himself, the lawyer decided that it was no use attempting to come to an agreement.

"Well," he replied, ungraciously, "what must be, will be.

We will get it on Wednesday. I can do as I like with the place then. Only two days, and then, Stephen, you and I will share."

"Eh, but I've come to-night to tell you as like as not young Thomas may find it out hisself to-morrow. As I went along t' beam a great wedge of wood smashed off and fell down t' floor. If he sees it he's sure to get up to look, an' there's not much chance for us. What I thought was couldna' we go to-night, you and me together? You take your trop an' fasten it at t' lane end. I've got a key as'll fit th' engine-room door, an' wi' some ropes an' a candle, we can easily manage to get it a' down, an' none be any the wiser for it."

"You're a fine fellow!" Branstone said, "and you shall stay to take some supper with me. What do you think would be the best time to start—twelve? The moon goes down then, and there will be less risk of us being seen."

And so the plot was made. At a few minutes after twelve the two men left the dusty sitting-room—the one slightly intoxicated with the strong libations of whisky, made purposely more fiery, as his host desired to slightly dull his reasoning faculties; the other as sharp and weasel-like as ever.

The road from Woodthorpe Magna to the mills is very secluded, passing through a long stretch of woodland, and with the Garthwaite brook babbling musically by the side all the way. The lawyer had miscalculated the time of the moon's setting, for she still rode high among the clouds; but her brightness was rapidly becoming overshadowed by a large halo, and by the time the conveyance reached the lane that led down to the cluster of old-brick buildings, she was only represented by a dim cloud.

In less than a minute the engine-room was reached, and the shade taken from the lawyer's lantern. A fear crept over Branstone that Stephen was going to spoil the whole, for the spirits he had drunk made him loud-voiced and merry, and once already during the drive it had been necessary to quiet him. But the ladder was soon fixed against the rafter, and the two men, one on his knees, and the other sitting with one leg on either side of the broad beam, moved slowly toward the place of concealment. Twice the lawyer almost fell; the first time as a bat, disturbed by his presence and the lamplight, swooped before him so closely that its horny wings struck his face; the second, when a barn owl, whose nest was in the thatch above, hooted loudly as she flew past.

* * * * *

Bessy Holmfirth could not sleep. The thought that this was the last night she was to spend in the mill-house, where the happiest days of her married life had been passed, disturbed her power of resting much more than it did her husband's. Men can sleep under much greater woes than woman can, the gentler nature always being more on the tension. After a time, weary of tossing in bed, she arose quietly, and taking a shawl, covered her shoulders and sat in the broad window-seat, looking out on the current as it glided under the sluice.

Suddenly she saw a faint glimmer pierce through the dusty windows of the engine-room. Knowing that it should not be there, for Thomas had locked up the place himself, she slipped on her gown and shoes and went quietly downstairs.

She paused before opening the door. In the district where Woodthorpe lies, there is still a faint belief in the existence of spirits, and for a short time she felt irresolute, but soon, with a light laugh at her folly, took down the keys and crossed the flagged courtyard to the door of the mill.

The loud sound of a man's voice almost petrified her as she placed the key in the lock.

"Pull hard!" it was saying sarcastically. "Ay, you may say 'pull hard.' I reckon my arm'll bear more nor your'n. Why, you're little better nor a shrimp. Now hard!"

Then she heard an indistinct reply in a muttering voice, and without any further hesitation she opened the door widely and stepped in.

The room was only dimly lighted from overhead, and as she crossed the threshold, she stumbled against a ladder that was standing there, and before she could put out her hand it fell down with a loud crash on to the machinery.

Two muffled oaths came from overhead as the men saw her. They were just in the act of lowering the tripod, which swung, like Mohammed's coffin betwixt heaven and earth.

Intuition told her what it was, and moreover, the lawyer's face frightened and angry, was looking down on her, distinctly visible, for the lamp light shone full on him. All his long-cherished schemes for the possession of the Woodthorpe Corn Mill were now fading into space.

Lower the iron vessel came, its weight as much as the two men could bear, until, with a slight crash, it struck the floor, and simultaneously the ropes by which it had been let down fell, too, and left them (as the ladder had fallen away) without any means of descending from their uncomfortable position.

Bessy did not lose any time, but ran off to waken her husband and tell him of the glad tidings, and before many minutes Thomas himself, half-dressed, entered the engine-room, and took possession of his long hidden heritage. Perhaps it is not to be regretted that in this case the miller's quality of mercy was strained; for the two would-be thieves were obliged to remain on the beam until noon of the next day, when Thomas, with his own solicitor, entered, and placing the ladder so that they could descend, paid off the mortgage and released them.

The pain of public exposure was spared Lawyer Branstone, for the Holmfirths held their peace but as the affairs of that night resulted in Stephen White blackmailing the lawyer, he was compelled to settle a small annuity on him, making the agreement that he should never be seen in the vicinity of Woodthorpe Magna.

As for the mill, it grew more and more prosperous, and thus the "Pot of Gold" brought wealth and happiness to Thomas and brave Bessy Holmfirth.



A persistent hawk has taken more than a hundred chickens from the premises of Walter Wade in Bloomfield, Conn. The bird is of the pigeon species, swift of wing and seemingly sure of its prize every time. The people about the house have endeavored to scare it away, but it invariably gets its prey. Once it starts on its upward flight all the small birds in the vicinity set sail for it, endeavoring to force it to release its victim, but the hawk soon outstrips them and gets away with its tender morsel.

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