

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year.

No. 463.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 6, 1907.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND THE HOP CROOKS;

OR, THE HIDDEN MAN OF CHINATOWN.

By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE



Then suddenly came an explosion; the whole window of the Chop Suey Shop was blown out. Old King Brady sprang in front of Alice. Out the Chinks came tumbling, Harry in his disguise leading. "Keep away," he said by a secret sign.

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No. 463. JOHN A. BREZNEVIC, NEW YORK, DECEMBER 6, 1907.

Price 5 Cents.

R, 1026 JAMES ST.,
CHAPTER I,
HAZZLETON PA,

TWO CORPSES FROM HAVANA.

Early one cold, December morning—to be exact, it was at half-past seven o'clock on the day before Christmas—an undertaker's wagon came rattling down Wall street, in the City of New York.

The wagon was one of the open kind, and was empty, save for a tarpaulin, which lay on the bottom.

Instead of making for the big gates of the Brooklyn ferryhouse, it turned aside on South street and went down upon the Ward Line pier, adjoining where the Havana steamers tie up.

This was a few years ago, when the pier in question was being reconstructed.

To-day it is closed in by a large shed. Then it was open, with two or three temporary, frame shacks upon it, and everything in confusion.

Gangs of carpenters were at work in various places, huge piles of freight and lumber lay about.

The steamer Santee was tied up on the north side of the pier, and the stevedores had already begun the unloading.

It was a scene of confusion, which was probably somewhat enhanced by the nipping cold.

The undertaker's wagon pulled up alongside one of the shacks, which had along the roof a sign reading, "Wharfsinger."

The lean, red-faced driver jumped down and opened the door.

"Want to see the wharfsinger!" he called out.

There were two men inside, hugging the little, cylinder stove.

"What do yer want?" demanded one, with the true New York snarl, which seems to be a part of the business along the docks.

"I want de corpse," was the reply.

"Are you from Merrill?"

"Yair."

"Where's yer papers?"

The driver took off his hat and from within the crown produced the necessary permits.

"Dis way," said the wharfsinger's assistant—the boss had not yet shown up—and, followed by the man from Merrill, he led the way down the wharf.

They brought up at another of the little shacks, which the wharfman proceeded to unlock.

"Dere's two of dese corpses," he said, "and both are de same name, which is kinder queer."

"De name of mine is J. C. Lee, Care Merrill," said the driver.

"I understand dat," was the reply. "De name of de other is J. C. Lee, too; but de address is 22 Bowery. I sent dem a notice, and a man came down. He said he'd have a man here last night to get it, but nobody came, an' you folks said de same ting."

"Couldn't get here last night," retorted the driver. "All our teams was out, but I'm here extra early dis morning and dat order do."

The wharfman threw back the door and gave an exclamation of surprise.

And well he might, for the whole side of the shack toward the water had been torn away.

The shack was away out at the end of the pier, beyond the steamer's bow.

Still, it was difficult to see how this could have been done without attracting the attention of those upon the deck of the Santee.

"Gee whiz!" cried the wharfman. "Somebody has swiped one of de corpses and carried it off in a boat during the night!"

"Tain't mine, den," said the driver, consulting the card on the remaining coffin box. "Dis reads straight—'J. C. Lee, Care of Merrill, Sixt' avner.' Dis here is mine."

"And the Bowery one is gone!"

"I don't care nothing about de Bowery one. All I want is me own corpse."

"Your own corpse, you mut! What do you talk dat way for, when you hain't dead yet? It's like tempting fate."

The undertaker's man laughed coarsely.

"Oh, say, boss," he retorted, "if youse was as used to handling corpses as I am, dere wouldn't be no superstition into you, no more dan dere is into me. Who do you s'pose pulled off de job?"

"Don't know. How should I?"

"Hain't you got no watchman on dis wharf?"

"He was drunk last night."

"Den it means his finish, all right. But, say, can I have de corpse?"

"Yes, I suppose so. Your papers seem all right. Perhaps I orten to let it go, dough, under de circumstances."

"Well, decide."

"I have decided—take it along."

"Anybody to lend me a hand gettin' it into de wagon?"

"I'll help."

"All right, den; I'll back up here."

The undertaker's man then backed up his wagon, and the remaining corpse from Havana was lifted in and he drove away.

He had not been gone ten minutes, when Mr. Brown, the wharfsinger, arrived.

Learning what had occurred, he was, naturally, thrown into a state of great excitement.

While he was "letting off steam," to the disgust of his assistant, two men came bustling into his office and displayed the shield of Secret Service detectives.

"You have a corpse up from Havana," said one. "Name, J. C. Lee. We want it. Here is an order from the collector. You will have to give it up!"

"Can't," retorted the wharfsinger, whose temper was in no way improved by this sudden visitation.

"But you must! It's Government orders."

"Can't help it. Can't give up a corpse twice."

"Has it been taken away?"

"Which one do you mean?"

"I told you—the name was J. C. Lee."

"Look here, officer! Come down to earth for a minute. There came two corpses from Havana on the Santee, and, as it happened, both were marked, 'J. C. Lee.'"

"Two!"

"And now you begin to get it into your head. What was the address of your Lee?"

"Well, we haven't that."

"What about the corpse?"

"We have positive information that the coffin contains opium, and no corpse."

"So? Well, that's no affair of mine."

"Are both gone?"

"Yes."

"Who got them?"

"Merrill, the undertaker, on Sixth avenue, got one, and the other was stolen during the night, thanks to a drunken watchman, who was found asleep by this stove when my man opened up this morning."

"There'll be trouble about this."

"Well, you can't ring me into it, then. You ought to have come sooner. The Santee has been docked for twenty-four hours."

"We came as soon as we got the tip."

"You came too late."

"What was the address on the stolen coffin?"

"'J. C. Lee, 22 Bowery.' Want to see how the job was pulled off?"

The Secret Service men did, and went to see, and they were shown.

Thereupon they departed, after looking over the papers of Undertaker Merrill's man, which they found to be perfectly correct.

They went away, still threatening the wharfsinger, who relieved his own feelings by being particularly savage to his assistant for the rest of the day.

But the fun had only just begun.

The Secret Service men hustled up to 22 Bowery.

Here disappointment again met them.

Nobody could be found who knew, or had ever heard of, J. C. Lee.

Doubtless somebody lied, as the notification sent to that number brought a man to look after the corpse, as has been related, but the Secret Service men could make nothing of the business.

They next went to the extensive undertaking rooms of Merrill, the "Funeral Director."

Here they were met by a bland individual in black, who, having seen their shields and heard their story, said:

"Yes, we have the remains of Mr. J. C. Lee here, but

everything is perfectly regular, gentlemen; perfectly regular, I assure you."

"We don't know about that," replied the talker of the detectives. "Have you opened the coffin yet?"

"I have not," was the reply. "I have been too busy to attend to that matter yet."

"Who is this J. C. Lee? Did you know the man?"

"I did not know him personally—no; but his father is an old customer of mine, Mr. Henry Lee, of No. 5—Fifth avenue. The son went to Cuba for his health, and died there. His remains were shipped to me. Everything is perfectly regular, gentlemen—perfectly regular, I assure you."

"Just the same," persisted the detective, "we have to see what is in that box."

"And so you shall," answered the undertaker, "and that right now. Step this way, please."

And Merrill took the detectives into his little morgue, where the coffin box lay upon the floor, just as the man had received it from the Ward Line pier.

It was lifted upon two horses, and the undertaker proceeded to remove the lid.

"Why, how is this!" he exclaimed, the moment he caught a view of the interior.

For within the box was no expensive metallic casket, such as he had ordered, but instead a cheap coffin, without even a name plate.

"And now you begin to sit up and pay attention!" sneered the talking detective.

Just then the undertaker was called to the shop.

"Be patient a minute, gentlemen, and I will return and open this coffin," he said. "There is something wrong here." The casket I ordered by cable was of an entirely different description, and no such cheap outfit as this one."

He departed and presently returned with a grave-looking gentleman, whose whole appearance seemed to indicate that he was a man of extensive means.

"This is Mr. Lee," he said, introducing. "He has come just at the right time, and I have explained to him the object of your visit, gentlemen. We will now proceed to solve this mystery, if we can."

But the opening of the coffin only served to deepen the mystery.

It contained no corpse.

At both ends were stones, carefully packed in excelsior, to make weight.

The entire centre of the coffin was filled with packages of opium, wrapped in the Chinese style.

"This is what we want!" cried the talking detective, gleefully. "We confiscate these goods!"

It was all right for them, but it was hard on Mr. Henry Lee.

Where was the box which contained the remains of his son?

The Secret Service man assured them that it had probably fallen into the hands of some gang of Chinese "hop crooks."

In his grief and excitement, Mr. Lee offered them the case at their own price, but only to be informed that they were Secret Service men, and could not undertake it.

Later in the day the smuggled opium was removed, and

Undertaker Merrill was out on an unavailing hunt for the missing corpse.

In the meantime Mr. Lee consulted the police.

He went directly to the commissioner, with whom he happened to be personally acquainted.

"This is a case for a private detective," said the commissioner.

"And whom would you recommend?" asked Mr. Lee.

"The best detective in the country to-day is Old King Brady," was the answer. "He is at the head of the Brady Detective Bureau on Union Square. If he is not able to undertake the case personally you will fare just as well at the hands of his partners, Young King Brady or Miss Alice Montgomery. They have had many cases among the Chinese in New York and elsewhere. Moreover, they are particularly adapted to the work, for the reason that Miss Montgomery speaks Chinese, something very unusual, especially in a woman. I should say the Bradys, by all means."

"And Mr. Lee, taking the commissioner's advice, bent his steps toward Union Square.

He was making no mistake, for the Bradys stand to-day foremost in their profession.

They are by long odds the most skillful detectives in the United States.

CHAPTER II.

OLD KING BRADY ON THE CHINESE BULLETIN.

Mr. Lee had consumed considerable time during his visit to the Police Commissioner, for whom he was obliged to wait, so it was nearly noon before he turned up at the office of the Brady Detective Bureau on Union Square.

Inquiring for Old King Brady, he was ushered into an inner office, after sending in his card.

Here he found himself in the presence of a tall, elderly man of striking appearance.

This was emphasized by certain peculiarities of dress, which consisted of a long, blue coat, with brass buttons; an old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar, and when on the street a large, white felt hat, with an extraordinarily broad brim.

"Be seated, Mr. Lee," said the old detective. "As it happens, I am already informed of your troubles. You have come, I presume, to talk the case over with me?"

"I have come to put it in your hands," was the reply, and the name of the Police Commissioner was mentioned.

"I am glad you called," said Old King Brady. "As it happens, I have already been ordered to take up this matter for the Secret Service Bureau."

"I should prefer to have you work directly for me," answered Mr. Lee. "Any price you may name for your services I will cheerfully pay."

"It will be impossible and also unnecessary," said Old King Brady. "While we are not, strictly speaking, Secret Service people in this office, our business is largely confined to work for that bureau. In this instance, as your case is identical with the one we have assumed, you need no other detectives, unless it suits your pleasure. To us you will have nothing to pay."

Mr. Lee then detailed his case.

It was substantially what has already been told.

The matter will receive our closest attention," said

Old King Brady. "Indeed, one of my partners has already gone to No. 22 Bowery to investigate the situation. You have a telephone in your house, I presume?"

Mr. Lee had a telephone.

"Then I will call you up, just as soon as there is anything to report," said Old King Brady, whereupon the retired banker—for such Mr. Lee was—left.

That afternoon there was a consultation at the office of the Brady Detective Bureau.

There were present Old King Brady, Young King Brady and Miss Alice Montgomery, the accomplished female partner of the firm.

It was the first Old King Brady had seen of his partner since his return from the Bowery.

"And what is the report, Harry?" he asked.

"No report," was the reply. "I could find no one at 22 Bowery who would admit that they had ever heard of a person named Lee."

"The name undoubtedly means a Chinese case," replied Old King Brady.

"Decidedly."

"Did you see the drunken watchman?"

"No. I went to his house, but he has not shown up there. It was hopeless to try to look him up."

"Decidedly so, for to-day. As this is the middle of the week, it would be interesting to know where he got the money to get drunk with."

"Probably from those who stole the corpse."

"I have little doubt of it. Did you see the shack on the pier from which the corpse was taken?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"The whole side, toward the water has been ripped out. I don't see how it is possible that the work could have been performed without making a big racket."

"You went aboard the Santee?"

"Yes. There was but one watchman on deck after midnight. The mate was very obliging and took the man in hand. He forced him to admit that he was inside the chart house most of the time. It was a very cold night you know."

"I know. Neglect of duty on all sides; but that is the style of the times. Now, how to begin is the question. Evidently there is a new gang of hop crooks at work in New York, as we were informed by the Secret Service Commissioner two weeks ago. The despatch from Havana, which caused him to act and send those fellows to the Ward Line pier, does us no good, as it merely states that the discovery had been made that opium had been shipped in a coffin bearing the name J. C. Lee. It fails to tell how the discovery came about, and I am in no mood to waste time trying to get help from the Cuban officials. We want to jump right in and get to work for ourselves."

"The point is here," said Harry. "These hop crooks, whoever they are, have a corpse on their hands that they will find it difficult to dispose of. I was thinking, as I came up on the subway, that one of us ought to see Reilly, the undertaker, on Elizabeth street, who attends to most of the Chinese funerals. He may be able to give us a tip."

"That's a good suggestion. "I'll attend to it. You and Alice will have to get to your old job."

"Of disguising as Chinks and trying to buy opium?"

"Yes."

"But, Governor, it is so old, and we are so well known in Chinatown now. Can't we think of something else?"

"But what?"

"May I make a suggestion?" said Alice.

"Certainly," replied Old King Brady. "You know how highly we value your suggestions, Alice. Go ahead."

Suppose I disguise as a servant and go down into Chinatown alone to-night? I can pretend to be employed by the Lees, and that on account of my ability to speak Chinese they have sent me to Chinatown to look up the corpse; I can say that they have found the opium and, not wishing to bring the police into the matter, are willing to give it up if the corpse is delivered at Mr. Lee's house, in which case no questions will be asked."

"That's rather a comprehensive suggestion," replied Old King Brady. "It will bear thinking over a bit. To whom would you go?"

"To the different Chinese bankers on Mott and Pell street."

"That would be all right. The chances are that some one of them is backing up these hop crooks; but how would you account for your ability to talk Chinese?"

"I will fix up my face a bit, and pretend to be a half-breed."

"I think I can offer an amendment," said Harry. "Suppose we advertise for the corpse?"

"Ha! An original idea—in the Chinese newspaper, you mean?"

"Yes. Alice can write out what is necessary. We will disguise as Chinamen and post it on the wall at the corner of Pell and Doyers street, and thus watch the Chinks who read it."

"The trouble is, you would have to be in evidence for a considerable time."

"Suppose we do both?" suggested Alice. "Harry can do the watching while I make the rounds of the bankers."

"Your scheme is a dangerous one, Alice."

"Decidedly so," added Harry.

"Well, let me disguise as a Chinaman, then. It is within the bounds of possibility that the Lees should keep a Chinese male servant who has not yet become acquainted in the Mott street colony."

"I like that," said Old King Brady. "That appeals to me."

"And the advertisement?" demanded Harry.

"I think we will cut that out," said Old King Brady. "We will try Alice's scheme first. You can go with her, in your usual Chinese disguise."

"I prefer to go alone," said Alice.

"And I decidedly prefer that you should not," replied the old detective, firmly; "but Harry can remain on the outside if you wish. One of us certainly should see where you go in."

"Decidedly," added Harry.

Alice yielded.

It was now decided to postpone the business until four o'clock.

Shortly after that hour all three of these famous detectives turned up in Chinatown.

They came down on the Third avenue surface road together, but sat apart, and pretended to pay no attention to each others.

Leaving the car at Pell street, they entered single file into Chinatown.

Alice and Young King Brady are most expert in making up as Chinamen.

The latter, owing to his inability to speak Chinese, always poses as a deaf mute.

And Harry has met with considerable success in investigations undertaken while playing this difficult part.

But Alice's Chinese work cannot be surpassed.

The daughter of a missionary and born in China, her knowledge of the language is so perfect that never yet has she been detected on account of any peculiarity of speech.

Old King Brady went ahead and Harry trailed behind, intending to keep Alice in sight so far as was feasible.

Their first stop was at the dead brick wall at the corner of Pell and Doyers street.

Upon this one always sees dozens of little red strips of paper pasted, bearing Chinese letters.

These posters state the public wants of the Chinese colony.

They are notices of meetings of the different Chinese guilds, of death, of politics which concern the colony, of fresh importations of goods from China and many other things.

This wall is known as the Chinese newspaper, or bulletin board.

Here Alice paused and looked over the notices, Harry remaining behind her, while Old King Brady kept on his way to the undertaker's.

Almost at the instant the old detective went past a young Chink, who had been leaning against the wall, shot a sudden glance at him, and then, with an equally keen one at Alice, he whipped out a strip of red paper and a little brush, and rapidly posted the slip on the wall.

Then, turning down Doyers street, he darted in through the door of the Chinese theatre, and disappeared.

Alice and Harry took this all in.

The former, reading the newly posted slip, turned on Harry and said, in a hurried whisper:

"We want to follow Mr. Brady right up. You can walk beside me and I will explain."

"What now?" demanded Harry, as they hurried up Pell street.

"Why, Mr. Brady is advertised for."

"You don't mean it! On the bulletin board?"

"Yes."

"Singular business! What do you mean by advertised for?"

"Precisely what I say, Harry. The advertisement reads: 'If the old detective, with the big hat, will consult the hidden man, he will get the corpse of his friend. Midnight. No. — Pell street, chop suey house. Ask for Hing Jock.'"

"It beats the band! It looks as if these hop crooks knew we were working on this case."

"They are very, very shrewd, Harry. You see John

Chinaman shuffling about, with his hands in his sleeves, and you have no idea what he is thinking about; but, as I have often warned you, his wits are all there every time."

"Oh, I know. That young Chink who posted the notice seemed to recognize us."

"He certainly did. It is just as I said at the office, when we had our talk this afternoon, we have prowled about here in Chinese disguise so often that the Chinks are onto us. It is next to impossible to deceive one who has had occasion to come up against us before."

"I think you are right," replied Harry. "But let us hurry up. We want to catch Old King Brady at the undertaker's, if we can."

And they did.

The old detective was still talking with the undertaker when they entered the place.

By a secret sign he asked them not to reveal themselves.

So they merely nodded to him, and stood waiting.

"Reilly," said Old King Brady, "these two Chinamen are helping me in this business. They have something to tell me. Could I use your back room for a few minutes?"

"Sure," replied the undertaker. "Step right in. You need have no fear of evesdroppers if youse is goin' to talk Chinee."

"Which you may be very sure we are not," laughed the old detective. "It's little enough Chinese that I understand."

"An' it's my opinion that you understand the haythen very well," retorted Reilly. "I hear you can speak every language under the sun, and Chinee to boot. You can't fool me, Brady."

"Thank you for your good opinion, Reilly, but I'm not that wise," laughed the old detective, and he led the way into the back room.

Here, in the lowest of whispers, Alice told what had occurred.

"Singular business!" said Old King Brady. "Who ever heard of this hidden man?"

"I haven't the least idea what it means," replied Alice; "but the same words mean fortune teller, in one sense. I have translated them literally. They also mean hidden man, or man inside of himself. There are several ways of twisting it."

"One thing is sure—the Chinks are dead onto us."

"You would think so if you could have seen the look which the fellow who posted the bill gave you," replied Harry. "There can be no doubt whatever that you are the person to whom the advertisement refers."

"Oh, I don't question that. I am thinking what we ought to do."

"Suppose Harry and I go into this chop suey joint and have a look around?" suggested Alice.

"Not you," replied Old King Brady. "You must go with me to interview the hidden man, and in your usual dress. I shall surely need an interpreter there."

"I'll go alone," said Harry, "and play the dummy. I may be able to pick up something."

"Do so," replied Old King Brady. "You will find us somewhere about Chinatown. Meanwhile Alice and I will go down to Quong Lee's. There she can change, and, in-

identally Quong may be able to tell us something of the hidden man."

CHAPTER III.

OLD KING BRADY AND ALICE START ON A PERILOUS TRIP.

Quong Lee is the keeper of a basement opium joint on Chatham Square.

Years ago Old King Brady found it in his way to do the old rascal a very considerable favor, and since that time he has considered himself under the deepest obligations to the old detective.

Never yet has Quong Lee refused Old King Brady information, and often when giving it has been to the detriment of his own countrymen.

And toward the opium joint Old King Brady and Alice now wended their way.

But it was only to meet with disappointment.

Nodding to the outside man, who always stands guard in front of the opium joints, Old King Brady and Alice descended the steps and passed through a long corridor boarded up on both sides in the Chinese style.

A door opening into the joint was passed.

Here sat another guard.

"Is Quong in his office, Ching Fow?" demanded the old detective.

"Nope," replied the fellow, in a singularly stolid way, Old King Brady thought, for he knew him perfectly well.

"When will he be in?"

"No sabee."

"Is Loy Moy in?"

"Yair."

Loy Moy was a young man whom Quong Lee, who was reputed to be fabulously rich, had associated with him in the business.

But Old King Brady was not in the least inclined to trust Loy Moy.

He and Alice passed on and entered the office, if the dirty, little den could be so styled.

Loy Moy sat at a table, working the sampan or counting machine and writing in a tissue-paper book.

"Loy, where in Quong Lee?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Him go San Flisco, Mlister Blady. Him no comee back one, two, t'ree week."

It was discouraging.

The old detective pressed Loy Moy further, but could not get much out of him.

Quong Lee had gone away on business, and that was all he knew, he declared.

Old King Brady introduced Alice, and asked the privilege of having her change her clothes in Quong Lee's sleeping room, which was at the head of a narrow flight of stairs.

Loy Moy opened his eyes.

"What! Dat feller Misse Alice?" he exclaimed.

Alice spoke to him in Chinese.

"Belly good—belly good!" adding something in his own language.

"What does he say?" demanded Old King Brady.

"That I can use the room," laughed Alice. "And he added that I was such a perfect Chinaman that I could

go into the Imperial Court at Peking and never be suspected."

"And, upon my word, I think he is right," said Old King Brady.

For the old detective is exceedingly proud of Alice's accomplishments.

He considers her the most wonderful woman on earth.

Alice now went upstairs; she had used the room before and knew her way, and after a few minutes came down dressed in female attire.

The clothing she wore was part of an outfit which the Bradys always keep at Quong Lee's to enable them to make quick changes when working in Chinatown.

And thus it will be seen how perfect Alice's Chinese disguise had been, for even Loy Moy, who had often seen her disguised as a Chink, had failed to recognize her.

The question now was how to put in time until Harry looked them up.

Old King Brady suggested that they go up Pell street to the Tuxedo restaurant and eat a dish of sharks' fins, a Chinese delicacy of which Alice is very fond.

As they were passing the chop suey house at which they had the midnight appointment they saw a Chinaman who was shuffling on ahead of them suddenly raise his hand and send a newspaper package, which he carried, crashing through the window, whereupon he took to his heels.

Then suddenly came an explosion; the whole window of the chop suey shop was blown out.

Old King Brady sprang in front of Alice.

Out the Chinks came tumbling, Harry, in disguise, leading:

"Keep away!" he said by a secret sign.

One of the Chinamen fell almost at Old King Brady's feet, with his face all cut and bleeding.

The others scattered, Harry going with those who ran toward Doyers street.

"Mercy on us!" cried Alice.

"Highbinders' work!" echoed the old detective. "Come away! This is no place for us!"

Nor was it, for a crowd was already collecting.

"What is it, Mr. Brady?" demanded a policeman, who came hurrying down Pell street.

"A Chink threw a bomb in the window," replied the old detective.

"Blame them tengers!" growled the policeman, and he rapped the pavement with his club for help.

Old King Brady hurried Alice around into Mott street.

"Could that bomb have been meant for Harry?" demanded Alice, who clung nervously to the old detective's arm.

"Oh, I don't think so," was the reply. "Most likely some of their own quarrels. I have no idea that Harry can have given himself away, but here he comes to speak for himself."

Harry was approaching on a slow walk.

"We will go down Park street," said Old King Brady. "I don't care to attract attention here."

It was not until they were out of Chinatown that either spoke.

"And now what was all that about?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Blest if I know!" replied Harry. "Somebody threw a bomb through the window. The place is a wreck. I thought you and Alice ought not to get mixed up in the business, so I told you to keep away."

"You were right. Anybody killed?"

"There were two behind the counter, who went down, and then there was that fellow who tumbled on the sidewalk. I didn't stop to investigate, I assure you."

"How near were you to where the bomb struck?" demanded Alice.

"Oh, I was away over at the other end of the room," was the reply. "I had just finished a dish of chop suey."

"Strange business!" said Old King Brady. "Did you pick up anything in there?"

"No. It was all Chinese talk. No one came near me. My visit was simply a waste of time."

"I hope Hing Jack isn't one of those who were knocked out," said Old King Brady. "If so, we have to begain over again, I presume."

They passed on to the City Hall and, taking the subway, rode far uptown to kill time.

It was decided that Harry should pull out, for Old King Brady did not approve of too many crowding in on the "hidden man."

So Harry started for home, and at midnight the old detective and Alice again turned up in Chinatown and walked up Pell street.

The window of the wrecked chop suey shop was now boarded up, and the door was fastened by a new padlock.

"This settles our case," remarked Old King Brady, disgustedly. "Nothing doing to-night, I am afraid."

He was about to turn away, when a young Chink suddenly shot across the street and stood at their side.

Alice instantly recognized him as the same person who had posted the notice on the Chinese bulletin board.

He looked at Old King Brady and then, turning to her, said something in Chinese.

"Shall I answer?" Alice asked the old detective by a secret sign.

"Yes," replied Old King Brady, and Alice immediately began talking to the Chinaman.

They conversed for some minutes.

Alice then drew the old detective aside.

"He says that Hing Jock was killed by the bomb," she said. "He says further that he will guide us to the hidden man, but that we shall have to be blindfolded."

"Tell him no," replied Old King Brady, emphatically. "I won't go that way."

Alice repeated this in Chinese.

The young Chink seemed greatly disturbed, and talked rapidly in Chinese.

"He assures me that no harm shall come to us," said Alice. "He says that this is all for your good."

"Put the case plainly to him. Ask him if he will show us the corpse, and how we are going to get it if we don't know where we are going?"

Alice tried it again.

"He says that there will be nothing doing unless we go," she said. "And if we do go, we will surely get the corpse. I'm not a bit afraid, Mr. Brady. The fellow seems to be perfectly sincere."

"Well, we will risk it," said the old detective, after a few moments' reflection. "There is always risk in the Chinese detective cases, anyhow. We have put lots of them through to success, and have managed to survive up to the present time."

Alice translated to the Chinaman, who spoke a few rapid words, and then hurried away.

"What are we to do?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Go to the top floor of No. — Mott street," replied Alice. "There we will be told what to do next."

They went around on Mott street.

Now, Old King Brady is a man who, once he undertakes to do a thing, wastes no time in useless talk.

He had determined to assume the risk of this interview with the hidden man, so he said no more about it, but boldly entered the Mott street tenement, and made his way upstairs.

Here there were six doors opening into the hall.

The building was actually two old-fashioned houses which had been raised several stories and joined together, forming what is called in New York a "double-header," that is, a tenement house with a central stairway and separate sets of apartments on each side.

"Where are we to knock?" whispered Alice.

"That's a problem," was the reply. "Let me see. I believe I will wait a few minutes. Probably we are expected. Somebody may open a door."

But the question was speedily settled by the coming upstairs of the young man who had posted the notice.

He nodded and led the way to the rear door on the left.

This he proceeded to open with a key, and the Bradys were ushered into a vacant room.

"Now I will blindfold you," said the Chinaman to Alice in Chinese.

He produced two large, new, white silk handkerchiefs, which he securely tied over the eyes of the detectives.

Then they heard him lock the door.

Next he shuffled across the room, and a gong bell rang out sharply.

There was a brief wait, and then Old King Brady became sensible of the presence of other persons in the room.

He did not hear them come, and they did not speak.

Just how he knew they were there it would be hard to explain, but he was positive of it, and in a minute his suspicions were confirmed by the shuffling of several pairs of feet.

Some one took his hand and something was said in Chinese.

The old detective was led forward, then round and round in a circle for a few minutes.

Then it was forward again, and a Chinese voice said: "Puttee your hand aglaint the wall, Mr. Blady. Now we go dlownstlairs."

The descent was a long one.

Old King Brady was satisfied that they were being conducted into some one of the underground dens with which rumor credits Chinatown of many.

At length they came to the end of the stairs and moved along on the level.

Doors slammed behind them, and they could hear bolts shot and keys turn.

Old King Brady began to grow seriously alarmed, not so much on his own account as Alice's.

At last he became aware that they had entered a brilliantly lighted room, and here the halt came.

Something was said in Chinese.

"We are to count a hundred and then remove the bandages ourselves," said Alice.

Old King Brady counted aloud.

As he did so it seemed to him as if he could hear a chuckling laugh.

As he spoke the words "one hundred" he pulled off the handkerchief, and found himself facing—

But we have reached the limit of our chapter, and for further disclosures the reader must wait.

CHAPTER IV.

HARRY'S ADVENTURE ON THE BOWERY.

Harry, although he took his sidetracking quietly enough before his chief, inwardly resented it.

What was more, he determined not to submit to it.

So, instead of going home, as he had been ordered to do, he went to the office, and, entering the costume room, disguised himself in a seedy suit, with hat and shoes to match.

He then returned to Chinatown, and started to watch for the reappearance of Old King Brady and Alice.

But it was not with any idea of joining them.

He was strangely restless, and when Young King Brady gets these fits upon him he wants to be ever on the move.

He went first to the wrecked chop suey house and found it closed up, as Old King Brady and Alice had seen it.

It was now half-past twelve, and, as the old detective and Alice had already started on their adventure, Harry did not run into them, although he made the complete rounds of Chinatown.

At last he drifted up the Bowery, which of late years has become, perhaps, the shabbiest business street in New York.

It was getting on toward one o'clock and the bread line was collecting before the mission, for at one bread is given out free to each applicant, and here the scum of the great city congregates.

It was a pitiful sight to watch these wrecks of humanity standing in line and shivering in the frosty air.

Many of them were in rags, scarcely one had an overcoat, and not a few wore thin, summer suits and straw hats.

It did not improve Harry's restless fit any to watch them; in fact, it made him worse, for Young King Brady has a profound sympathy for these people.

That their own folly has brought them into their wretched condition, as a rule, has no influence with him.

For there they stand, night after night, deserted by all the world; the most abjectly wretched company of human beings to be found anywhere on earth.

As he walked past the bread line Young King Brady

spotted one young fellow, who seemed to him an object of the profoundest sympathy.

He could not have been more than twenty-four years old; his face was singularly striking. But his cheeks were hollow and sunken and the skin seemed to cling to the bones.

His great, black eyes wore an expression of utter misery. He was wasted almost to a shadow, and he tottered as if he was about to fall.

"Morphine fiend!" thought Harry, who knows the signs well. "Probably hits the hop, too. I wish I could help him; but I suppose his is a gone case."

The thought had no more than taken form when the young man suddenly stepped out of the bread line, although his position was almost up at the head.

He glided across the street, and stood leaning against the pillars of the elevated road.

Impelled by both curiosity and sympathy, Young King Brady crossed the Bowery diagonally and came up behind him.

As he did so he observed the young man take a small bottle out of his vest pocket.

He removed the cork with trembling hand, and was just about to raise the bottle to his lips when Harry shot up behind him and snatched it away.

The young man turned fiercely upon him.

"Say, give me that bottle back!" he snarled. "What business have you to butt in? Give it back, I say!"

Harry sniffed at the bottle.

"Majendies solution of morphine," he said, quietly. "What are you trying to do—kill yourself?"

"Yes, I am," retorted the other, fiercely. "What's that to you?"

"A whole lot," replied Young King Brady, flinging the bottle into the street, where it was shattered to atoms. "You are a little too young to die, and I stand ready to help you to live."

The young man's eyes filled with tears. All morphine fiends weep on the slightest provocation, but the words were kindly spoken, which may have helped.

"I don't want to live," he muttered. "Can you ask why?"

"You look pretty rocky; but there is always a chance for a young man, like you."

"There is no chance for me—I'm a dead one!"

"No, you are not. Look here. I am going to make you an offer. Are you hungry?"

"Starving—that's all!"

"Then come with me, and I will feed you. I'll get you a comfortable room and pay the rent for a week. Tomorrow I'll rig you up with a new suit of clothes and try to get you a job."

"Useless;" was the reply; "but just the same it is very kind of you to offer all this."

"You are an opium fiend?"

"You don't have to ask. Anybody can see that."

"I'll pay your way through a cure. Now, then, how does that strike you? Will you come along with me?"

"Who are you?"

"My name is Brady. I am not what I appear to be. I am a detective in disguise."

"You mean to arrest me for trying to commit suicide. That's your game."

"That is unjust, also foolish, for if I had wanted to arrest you I should not have gone about it as I have. Brace up! Try and be a man. You may have years of happiness before you yet."

The young man seemed to waver—morphine fiends always waver.

"I was dead wrong," he said. "I own it. I am sure you mean kindly. You have deprived me of the means of death, which I have kept by me for weeks. As I can't get more morphine, I suppose I shall have to yield; but I shall die if I don't have my regular dose."

It was the same old story.

A moment before ready to end life and now fearing death!

But Harry had met with more than one such case, and he understood.

"You shall have your dose," he said. "Come with me."

"On one condition only. If you cannot humor me in that I will not go."

"Name it."

"That you don't ask me my name nor any past history. I will reveal neither. I had sooner die first."

"I accede willingly. But give me a name to call you by for convenience sake."

"Call me Fred."

"Right. Now, come."

"Just a minute more. I have begun to believe that there is hope for me. I'm going to stick to you."

"That's what I want."

"Wait. You don't understand. I want morphine now, but I can wait for the food. In fact, I had rather. In the meantime, if you are a detective, I can tell you something which may interest you, and in a way repay you for the kindness you propose to show me."

"What is that?"

"Don't ask me now. Give me the morphine first."

Harry took him to a notorious drug store, which stands on the Bowery, with doors open night and day.

Needless to state the nature of the business which keeps it alive.

Opium for the opium fiends, cocaine for the cocaine fiends; but to obtain the drugs one must be known in a way at least, and Fred beseeched Harry to let him go in alone.

"They will refuse me, surest thing; if you don't," he said.

"You promise me not to take more than your usual dose?" demanded Harry.

"I promise faithfully," was the reply.

"Then take this dollar and go on."

It was all Young King Brady could do, but even now he felt it a risk.

But Fred was true to his word.

He came back with his big, black eyes sparkling like diamonds.

"Now I am good for an hour," he said. "After that I will eat and go to bed; but you don't have to get me a room. I have one, and the rent is paid till the end of the week. I am going to take you there now—see?"

"And why?"

Fred took Harry's arm.

"There has been a murder committed," he whispered. "The corpse lies in the next room to mine. I have been trying all day to muster up courage to report the case to the police, but I could not bring myself to do it. If you are a detective it may add to your laurels to be the first to discover the crime."

"I will go with you. Who is the dead person?"

"A young man. I don't know who he is. They didn't kill him there; at least I don't think so. They brought him into the room in a box last night. They chopped the box up and burned it. I couldn't sleep. I heard all their talk, but it was in Chinese, so I could only understand a few words."

"You understand some Chinese, then?"

"Yes, a little; but no matter about that. They are all Chinese in that house."

"How came you to go into such a house to room?"

"Now you are asking me questions, and you promised that you wouldn't. I just can't tell you, but I will say this much: I went there with a Chinaman, and we had the room together for a while; but he is dead now, and I stayed behind. Will you go?"

"Sure. Are you certain the corpse is still in the room?"

"It was this evening. I bored two peepholes in the door and got a sight of it."

"Who is the tenant in the room?"

"There has been nobody in there this long time. I don't understand the business any more than you do; but the case ought to be looked into. Will you go now?"

"In just a minute. Come across to that little restaurant and get a cup of strong coffee and some bread or butter and cakes."

Fred demurred at first, but finally allowed himself to be persuaded.

Harry got further particulars out of him while he ate, and among others the number of the building on the Bowery in which he had his room.

What this number was, we do not propose to state, further than to say that it was within a stone's throw of Pell street and on the borders of Chinatown.

And thither Harry and his peculiar companion now went.

Fred led the way up to the second floor and opened the door of a small hall bedroom in the rear.

"Make no noise," he whispered. "They may be in the other room now."

They had come upstairs on tiptoe, and he closed the door with all caution.

The room contained only a dirty bed, a washstand and a chair.

A door opened into the larger room beyond, and Fred whispered that it was bolted on both sides, and at the same time pointed out the gimlet holes he had bored.

But the other room was dark, and Harry could make out nothing.

"I'm going to break in," he breathed, "but I will do it from the hall."

"Wait!" whispered Fred. "It seems to me that I hear footsteps coming upstairs now."

Harry opened the hall door slightly and listened for a second, then closing it again.

"You are right. There is somebody coming," he whispered.

They waited breathlessly and heard three men enter the room beyond.

Young King Brady had now become intensely interested.

Of course, he was thinking of J. C. Lee all the while.

Had he located the missing corpse?

If so a large reward seemed certain.

Besides this, it might let them out on the hop crooks' case.

"Fred," he whispered in his companion's ear, "this is a very important matter, and I have a strong idea that the mystery is connected with the very case which brought me to the Bowery to-night. Will you lend me a helping hand?"

"Sure," was the prompt reply.

"Then slip downstairs and watch. I have an idea that the intention is to carry the corpse out of the house. If so, I want you to follow these fellows, as I may not be able to do it."

"I'll do the best I can, but there isn't much left of me. Where shall I report?"

Harry slipped him a card bearing his home address.

"You know where that is?" he asked, as he mentioned the street and number.

"Oh, yes."

"Then be off with you. Softly now."

Fred slipped out.

Meanwhile a light had appeared in the room beyond and came streaming through the peepholes.

Harry peered through one of them.

The room appeared to be bare of furniture.

Lying on the floor he could see the body of a young man, manifestly dead.

Two roughly dressed white men stood over it, talking in tones too low to enable Harry to distinguish words.

Just then a third spoke from nearer the door, and louder.

"Come on," he said. "What's the use waiting all night?"

Then the two men picked up the corpse between them and started for the door.

Was it the corpse of the missing J. C. Lee?

CHAPTER V.

OLD KING BRADY AND ALICE INTERVIEW THE HIDDEN MAN.

What Old King Brady and Alice saw when they removed the silk handkerchiefs from their eyes was a shabby room, with little furniture, and that in the Chinese style.

It was lighted by a colored, hanging lantern, and over in one corner was a rude sort of cage or cabinet, built of rough boards.

In the upper part of the closed door was a little, grated window, behind which hung a curtain of thin, red material.

Upon the door were several Chinese characters.

There was no one in the room but the detectives, and within the cabinet all was silence.

"What do those characters mean?" Old King Brady asked.

"To open this door means death," replied Alice.

"Very well," said Old King Brady, "then we certainly won't open the door."

It seemed as if he could hear a low chuckle behind the door of the cabinet, but he could not be certain.

Several minutes of absolute silence followed.

Growing impatient, Old King Brady exclaimed:

"Come, come! Start business here, whoever you are!

Immediately a voice behind the curtain said something in Chinese.

Alice answered.

"What does he say?" demanded Old King Brady.

"I am the hidden man of Chinatown," replied Alice.

"And, 'since you have an interpreter, it saves me the necessity of supplying one. I speak only Chinese.'"

"Tell him that I will talk that way, but that each thing he says must be translated, and I will dictate your reply."

Alice repeated this in Chinese, and the hidden man answered.

"He says that will be all right," Alice said.

And then followed the conversation, which we propose to give just as though it had taken place between Old King Brady and the hidden man direct.

"Who are you, and why have you brought me here?" demanded Old King Brady.

"I am the hidden man of Chinatown. I have brought you here for no other purpose than to help you along in the difficult and dangerous case which you have undertaken."

"Will you tell me your name?"

"I will not, but I will tell you other things which are sure to interest you more. You want the corpse which was stolen by mistake from the Ward Line pier last night?"

"Yes. Where can I find it?"

"You will find it lying on one of the steps of the Thalia Theatre at two o'clock."

"Two o'clock, this morning?"

"Yes."

"That is very satisfactory. What else?"

"You want the men who tried to smuggle opium from Havana in the coffin?"

"I certainly do. Can you help me to get them?"

"I can."

"Who are they, and where are they to be found?"

"I cannot tell you who they are, nor where they are to be found in Chinatown."

"What, then?"

"Wait. I can tell you how to catch these hop crooks in the act."

"Well?"

"Watch for the arrival of the steamer Furnam Castle, which is daily expected. After she is docked the hop crooks will go to her secretly at night to get opium, which is to be smuggled in. They will receive it from the Chinese steward of the steamer. If you are sharp and right on hand you can catch them in the act."

"What about getting in ahead of them and arresting the steward?"

"I don't care how you do it!"

"Why do you tell me all these things?"

"Because you once did me a service, and I want to repay you?"

"You are a New York Chinaman?"

"No matter. To you I am the hidden man of Chinatown. That is enough. I want to see you safely through this case."

"I am very much obliged to you."

"That need not be mentioned."

"There was a bomb thrown in Chinatown to-day, in through the window of the chop suey shop of Hing Jock, where I was directed to go."

"Yes, I know."

"Hing Jock was killed."

"I know."

"Has his killing anything to do with this case?"

"Nothing whatever."

"Is there anything more you wish to say?"

"No; except that in case of failure you are to come to me again."

"And how shall I reach you? Remember we were brought here blindfolded."

"You will post a notice in Chinese on the bulletin wall, saying that you wish to see me."

"And then?"

"I shall find means to communicate with you and make an appointment. You will be brought in here again as you were before."

"Very well. I am going now."

"Go. Goodbye and good luck!"

The voice ceased to speak, and a bell suddenly rang outside of the room door.

It was immediately unlocked, and the young Chinaman appeared.

"You are ready to go?" he asked Alice, in Chinese.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Very well. I will blindfold you again."

He did so.

As soon as the handkerchiefs were adjusted Old King Brady and Alice heard others enter the room.

They were now taken out as they came in, and their mysterious journey ended when they found themselves in the Mott street room once more.

There was no one present but the young Chinaman.

"Did you get what you wanted?" he asked Alice, civilly, in Chinese.

"I think we did," replied Alice.

"I am glad. I am going now. In five or ten minutes you can follow."

Alice translated.

Old King Brady handed the young Chink ten dollars.

He accepted it with a pleased expression and, bowing, left the room.

"Well, upon my word, this is a very singular piece of business," exclaimed Old King Brady.

"Oh, the Chinese are nothing if not mysterious," replied Alice. "You have many friends in the colony; probably it is just as the hidden man says, you have helped him, and he wants to help you in return."

In ten minutes Alice and the old detective left the house.

More time had been consumed than they supposed. It was now after one o'clock.

"We will go around by the Thalia Theatre and have a look," said Old King Brady; "but I must confess I have

not the fullest confidence in the promises of this hidden man."

"I have," replied Alice. "When a Chinaman says he will do a thing, he does it. I believe it will prove so in this case."

"His intentions may be good, and yet he may be mistaken. I fail to see how he can actually know that the body will be on the theatre steps, unless he is one of the gang who have it in charge."

"He may be that, even, and yet anxious to help you."

They passed the Thalia Theatre, but there was no corpse in evidence.

Still it was long ahead of time.

"We can't hang around the Bowery this cold night," said Old King Brady. "We will take a ride uptown on the elevated and return here at two o'clock."

This was done, and promptly on time Old King Brady left the elevated at the Canal street station.

"And now for our corpse," remarked the old detective. "I am very curious to see if what the mysterious one says will come true."

"Look!" exclaimed Alice. "There seems to be some excitement over there by the Thalia."

Sure enough, in front of the ancient theatre, once the pride of the Bowery, quite a crowd had collected, but they were now beginning to disperse.

They were a shabby looking lot, for the most part from the bread line.

A policeman came up the Bowery as Old King Brady and Alice crossed the street.

He happened to be a man whom Old King Brady knew.

"Good evening, officer," said the old detective.

"Oh, good evening, Mr. Brady," was the reply. "You are a little late, aren't you? Usually you are right on the job."

"What do you mean? What is the occasion of this crowd?"

"Why, there was a corpse found lying on the steps of the Thalia. Your partner said you knew all about it. He is just after taking it away."

"My partner! Oh, yes. Where did he take it to?"

"Merrill's undertaking shop on Sixth avenue. One of Reilly's wagons did the work. I s'pose by rights I ought not to have let him do it; but he assured me that you knew all about it; and that the man died down in Havana. He said you would see me straight."

"Quite right, officer. Much obliged."

"What's it all about, anyway?" demanded the policeman, curiously.

Old King Brady told him the story of the corpse, feeling that there was no reason why he should not.

"Ah, them Chinks is up to every trick," said the policeman. "Well, so long, Mr. Brady. I'm glad you got it, anyhow."

"Well done, Harry!" exclaimed Alice, as they turned down Canal street and started across town.

"He should have done as he was ordered," replied Old King Brady; "but seeing that he has won out I suppose I have nothing to say."

"It looks as if the hidden man meant business."

"Well, yes. He got the time wrong, though. I hope it proves to be the right corpse."

Old King Brady was puzzled, and just a bit vexed that Harry should have taken the bit in his teeth, so to speak.

But he wisely determined to say nothing about it, so he changed the subject, and, with Alice, hurried to Merrill's private morgue.

This extensive establishment is open at all hours.

Merrill himself was not present, but a civil assistant met the detectives, and Harry was with him in the office.

"What's all this?" Old King Brady demanded. "You have cut in ahead of us, it seems."

"Yes, by accident."

"What accident?"

"I will tell you later, Governor. First thing is to determine if we have the right corpse. I have sent a messenger for Mr. Lee. I expect him any minute now. Did you see the hidden man?"

"Yes, we did; but all that will keep. I want your story now."

"You shall have it, then," replied Harry, and, drawing Old King Brady and Alice to one side, he proceeded to tell of his adventure on the Bowery.

"And you followed those men out of the house and saw them deposit the corpse on the steps of the Thalia Theatre?" demanded the old detective.

"Yes."

"What sort of looking fellows were they?"

"Just ordinary toughs."

"How did they manage the job?"

"Why, they got the corpse by the arms between them and dragged it along, as if they were carrying a drunken man."

"You did not attempt to shadow them?"

"No. I was perfectly satisfied that the dead man was young Lee, so I stayed by and left my morphine friend to do the shadowing."

"It is to be hoped he will make something out of it. You have not seen him since?"

"No. I had all I could do to settle with the policeman, who came along, and to keep back the crowd. Then I had to go around to Reilly's and arrange to have him bring the corpse here.

"I see. Well, if it proves to be all right I shall be glad; but here comes Mr. Lee now."

The door had opened, and the old banker came hurrying in.

"And you have really found the remains of my unfortunate son?" he demanded.

"We hope so," replied Old King Brady. "It is for you to decide."

And the decision was quickly rendered.

The banker at once identified the dead man as his son, J. C. Lee.

CHAPTER VI.

HARRY MAKES A STRIKE.

Mr. Lee drew a liberal check for the Bradys right there at the private morgue.

Thus, at the outset of their case, the detectives were compensated for the trouble they had been put to.

And that ended the work of the night.

Of course, Old King Brady told Harry all about the hidden man before they retired.

"Shall you follow up the lead about the Furnam Castle?" Harry asked.

"Such is certainly my intention," was the reply; "but we must work independently of that. I am not depending upon my hidden man."

Harry looked to see Fred come to him in the morning with a report, but the morphine fiend did not appear.

The first thing done was to consult the papers and see if the arrival of the Furnam Castle was reported, but it was not.

After opening his morning mail Old King Brady went downtown to look up the steamer's record, to find out who were her owners, and to whom she was consigned.

Alice had other business to attend to, and Harry, about ten o'clock, started for Chinatown to look up Fred.

He went to the house on the Bowery and ascended to the hall bedroom.

The door was locked and there was no response to his knock.

Harry got out his skeleton keys and readily opened the door.

There was no one in the room, but the bed had evidently been slept in.

What puzzled Harry was to find Fred's old clothes scattered about.

Everything was in evidence, even to the hat and shoes.

It looked very much as if the occupant of the room had dressed himself in other clothes and decamped.

Harry sat down in the chair to think.

He could not understand the situation; but then, he thought, perhaps, after all, the young man was not what he seemed.

While he sat there thinking footsteps were heard on the stairs, and in a moment some one knocked on the door.

"Come in! The door is open!" called Young King Brady.

The door was then thrown back, and a Chinaman dressed in American clothes looked into the room.

"Hello! You are not the man I want," he said, speaking in almost perfect English.

Harry had adopted his disguise of the night before, and now he had reason to congratulate himself upon having done so.

"No; I'm the other fellow," he replied, coolly.

"Oh! Fred's friend?"

"Yes."

"Will Fred be in soon?"

"I am expecting him every minute. Won't you sit down and wait?"

"Yes," replied the Chink; "I think I will wait a little while."

He sat down on the edge of the bed and looked Harry over curiously.

"You seen Fred since last night?" he asked.

"Yes," ventured Harry, determined to draw the fellow out as well as he could.

And the Chinaman's appearance was such as might well excite suspicion.

He was not merely well dressed; his clothes were of the most expensive kind and made in the latest style.

He wore a heavy gold chain and a big diamond stickpin glistened in his four-in-hand tie. In addition he had in his cuffs a pair of diamond buttons, worth five hundred dollars at least.

In short, the fellow looked to be suspiciously prosperous.

"He either knows how to hit the races or he is a hop crook, one of the two," Young King Brady said to himself.

What had the wretched morphine fiend to do with such a man?

But all these thoughts were a matter of seconds, and the Chinaman went right on talking.

"You will go?" he asked.

"Certainly. That's all arranged," replied Harry.

"Good! I will pay you promptly. You get your hundred dollars just as soon as the job is pulled off."

"That's all right. Fred explained all that."

"Very good. What's your business?"

Chinamen are the most curious people on earth, as is well known.

But the asking of personal questions is not altogether curiosity with them.

It is a matter of training. The Chinese consider that the highest compliment they can bestow upon a stranger is to express the utmost interest in his personal affairs.

Harry fully understood this, and he answered:

"Oh, I do any old thing."

"You have no regular business, then?"

"No."

"Are you married?"

"No."

"You know how to sail a boat all right?"

"Sure."

"You pull off this job good and I'll stake you and Fred."

"All right. You know Fred pretty well, it seems?"

"No; not so well. He was my brother's friend. My brother is dead. He smoked too much hop. Bad job!"

"Yes. It fetches them all in the end. You don't smoke?"

"No, no; neither do you."

"No; I never touch the stuff."

"So much the better. That's the trouble with Fred—he smokes too much; he takes morphine, too. But he promised me he'll brace up now. All the same it needs one who uses hop and one who don't to make a good team. You do right by me, and I do right by you—see? You drinkee whisky sometimes—yes?"

"I never touch the stuff."

"That's very good. I think you make good salesman. I like your looks. Fred says you are all right. He's straight, anyhow, if he does take too much morphine. My brother say so; I believe my brother every time. He was very smart. He study in college in California—see?"

"And you, too, I think, from the way you speak English."

"No, only high school; I speak pretty good, though."

That's where my brother meet Fred—in college. Too bad they get to take hop. It kill my brother, and so it kill Fred bime bye, unless he stop off."

"He promised me that he would try to give it up."

"Yes. He tell me so, too. I'll wait for him. He says he go and take the cure. I'll wait. I want to help Fred because he was my brother's friend."

What did it all mean?

That Fred had suddenly discovered a friend in this Chinaman there could be no doubt; but what was this mysterious business to which the fellow kept alluding?

That it was in some way connected with opium smuggling Harry felt sure.

But just at this juncture the strain was relieved by the sound of footsteps on the stairs.

"Mebbe there comes Fred now," said the Chinaman.

And so it proved.

The door opened, and the morphine fiend came in.

But what a change!

He was dressed in a new suit of clothes, had a new hat and new shoes.

He looked the gentleman all over.

That he was still under the influence of morphine was evident, but he had perfect command of himself, and Harry could not but admire the coolness with which he handled the situation.

"Why, hello, Ping Ding!" he exclaimed. "You here already? Hello, Tom! This is the fellow I spoke to you about, Ping."

"Yes," replied the Chinaman. "I have been talking with him. I like his looks. I think he'll do."

"You bet he'll do! He's the best fellow to handle a boat ever—and, as for the other business, you will find him a dandy!"

"I hope so. If it all goes right. But this is Christmas. Come around to my place, Fred, and have a drink with me."

"Sure," replied Fred. "And Tom goes, too?"

"Yes."

"Very good."

Harry and the Chinaman arose to depart.

"Look here," said the latter, turning to Young King Brady, "I'll get you a new suit of clothes after this job is done—see? You don't need them now, of course."

"Oh, no," replied Harry. "I don't need them now. Much obliged."

"You will thank me before you get through," said Ping Ding. "You will make big money out of this if you are straight."

They went downstairs and around on to Pell street.

Here they entered a bric-a-brac store.

Harry knew the place perfectly well.

The stock carried was extensive and valuable, but the name on the sign was not Ping Ding.

If Shakespeare had been a Chinaman he might well have said, "What's in a name?"

It is a well-known fact that the Chinese in America seldom use their true names.

They consider it a disgrace to be known by them in a foreign land.

Ping Ding led the way back through the store into a back room.

Here several Chinks were sitting around, smoking tobacco in long-stemmed pipes.

They nodded to Ping Ding and spoke in Chinese to Fred, who answered them in words unintelligible to Harry, whether they were Chinese or not.

There was no introducing.

Ping Ding, bidding Harry sit down, went to a closet and brought out a bottle of champagne.

One of the others produced glasses and they drank all around.

Ping Ding then took Fred into another room and had a long talk with him in private.

One of the other Chinks gave Harry a cigar, which proved to be an exceedingly good one; but there was no attempt made to talk with him.

At last Ping Ding and Fred came out, and the latter, motioning to Harry to follow him, they left the shop together.

"I suppose you are wondering what all this means?" demanded Fred, as soon as they were out on Pell street.

"Well, naturally," replied Harry. "It is something of a mystery to me, I will admit."

"Well, you are responsible for it all."

"I responsible?"

"Yes."

"But, how?"

"It grew out of me shadowing those fellows last night."

"Is that so? Where did they go?"

"Into the same place out of which we have just come."

"After their pay, probably. They were just a pair of ordinary toughs."

"That's what they were, and that is what they were after, no doubt."

"But the rest?"

"Brady, that man is the brother of my dead Chinese chum."

"So he said."

"His brother and I were schoolmates, and, although he was nothing but a Chinaman and certainly did lead me into bad ways until I became the wreck you see me now, I loved him like a brother."

"But——"

"Oh, I'm coming to it all. I watched the men go in, and I waited to see them come out. Ping Ding was with them, and as he parted from them at the door I heard him say in Chinese, of which language I understand more than I led you to believe last night: 'You have got your pay, now keep away from me if you expect to do another job for us.' Then he looked up and saw me, and out of the recognition which followed all this came."

"All what?"

"This change. He took me in there and kept me all night. This morning he bought me these clothes up the Bowery. You are saved that much expense, at all events."

"Fred, you are keeping me in suspense. What is this mysterious scheme which Ping Ding has on hand? Are you his friend, or are you mine? Speak!"

They had come around into the Bowery, and now halted before the door of the house in which Fred had his room.

"His friend!" Fred exclaimed. "I am his bitter enemy. He went back on his brother and was the cause of his

death. He thinks he can use me in his schemes, and I let him think so. You came into the room in the nick of time."

"He seemed to expect to see me there."

"Yes. I rung you in on him. The job needs two to pull it off—one who can speak Chinese and a stout fellow who can sail a boat, which I assume you know how to do."

"I certainly do. But, Fred, you are still keeping me in suspense. What is this mysterious business? Speak out!"

"What is it? Why, it's hop smuggling. If you are a detective, as you told me last night, then this is the chance of a lifetime. You saved my life, and I want to make some return for it. I am going to put you next to the slickest gang of hop crooks that ever flourished in New York."

Harry was triumphant.

"That will suit me all right," he said. "What is more, it will pay you. Let me tell you now that I am more than an ordinary detective—I am a Secret Service man, and opium smugglers are my especial game."

"Well, you will get them," replied Fred. "That is, if you can play your cards well. But now come up into my room and I'll tell you all about it, and I think you will have to admit that I am something in the detective line myself."

CHAPTER VII.

OFF FOR THE SOUTH SHORE.

When Old King Brady got back to the office, shortly after twelve o'clock, he found Alice out, and Harry had not yet returned from his Chinatown trip.

The old detective had been singularly unsuccessful.

On the Maritime Exchange he had learned the names of the consignees of the Furnam Castle, it is true, but when he called at their office he found that both partners had gone out of town during the Christmas holidays, and the singularly stupid young woman in charge either could not or would not give him the slightest information concerning this English tramp steamer.

The old detective sat down at his desk and was engaged in writing a letter when the clerk announced that there was a Chinaman in the outer office, who wanted to see him.

The caller proved to be the same young man who had acted as guide the night before.

Then he had declined to converse in English, but now he had to come to it.

He looked around and said:

"Where is she?"

"The lady who speaks Chinese?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Yair."

"She is out just now. You can talk English all right, it seems."

"Me talkee belly bad. She comee soon?"

"I can't tell you."

"Me waitee."

"No, no; you can speak English well enough. Tell me what you have to say."

"You sabee hidden man?"

"Of course. Well?"

"Him wantee see you again light away, quick!"

"Oh, he does, eh? When?"

"Four o'clock. Him say you no blingee gal dliss time."

"But how can I understand him, then?"

"He havee man dere, he talkee you."

"Shall I meet you at the same place?"

"Yair."

"Four o'clock?"

"Yair. You be dere?"

"Yes."

"Belly 'portant. You sure comee?"

"Yes; but why don't he want me to bring the girl?"

"Too muchee danger. Him say you bling levolver."

"All right. But if it is so dangerous, why don't he come here and talk to me?"

But this seemed to be too much for the young Chink, for he only shrugged his shoulders and made for the door.

"All right. Tell him I'll come," said Old King Brady.

The Chinaman left and he had scarcely gone when Harry and Alice came in together.

"Well, what's all this?" laughed Old King Brady.

"Have you two lovers been off on some Christmas trip instead of attending to business?"

And this was not altogether a jest.

Harry has long been devoted to his fair partner, but Alice, while she certainly returns his affection in a way, has not as yet given him much assurance upon which to base hope of a closer relation.

The fact is, Alice is too much in love with her profession to be willing to entertain the thought of settling down to prosaic home life.

"You wrong us both," said Harry. "We only met in the elevator. Where Alice has been, I have no idea; but as for me I have been working hard on our case."

"And with what results?"

"The very best, I think you will admit, when I tell you that I am next to these hop crooks."

"Who are they?"

"One Ping Ding, No. — Pell street, is one of the bunch, but whether the head man or not, I can't say. However, I am engaged to work for them. To-morrow morning I expect to get a consignment of hop off the Furnam Castle."

"Indeed! That's interesting! Let it come, Harry."

And Harry went ahead and told of his interview with Ping Ding.

"Come!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "Your falling in with this young man seems to be leading to good results. And what did Fred tell you after you got back into the room?"

The story had proceeded to the point where Harry and Fred went upstairs together.

"Why," continued Young King Brady, "he told me the plan as far as he knows it. It would appear that the gang feel that they have been betrayed by one of their own number."

"The hidden man, perhaps."

"I thought of that myself. Anyhow, they don't propose to wait until the steamer is docked before going after the opium. It seems that she is expected along to-morrow morning in the early hours. Fred and I are to go down

on the south side of Long Island to-night to a certain place, which will be told us later. We are to run out in a sailboat and meet the steamer, pretend to be in distress, and try to get them to take us aboard. The rest of the scheme is to be arranged with the steward. They expect detectives at the dock, and it is up to us to sound the warning and get the hop off as best we can."

"A crazy scheme, as you tell it. It will never work."

"It don't sound very feasible to me, but whether it succeeds or fails it throws us in with the gang, all right."

"Was anything said about the Bradys?"

"No. The name was not mentioned once."

"Question is, if you can trust Fred?"

"I have already settled that point in my own mind. I think I can."

"You don't know the full programme about getting out to the steamer?"

"No, I do not; nor does Fred. He is to be told just what to do later in the day."

Old King Brady pondered.

"It would seem to me that some other Secret Service men must have got wind of the intentions of these hop crooks," he said. "I can't believe that the scare refers to us in any way, for we have not got far enough along in the case."

"So it seems to me, Governor. I wish you could see Fred and have a talk with him. I'd like immensely to have your opinion of the fellow."

"It is not feasible. I have another call from the hidden man to attend to at four o'clock. Besides, your judgment is good enough, and I see no use in butting in on your affairs. Go ahead, Harry, and see how you can solve the problem. It looks to me as if some Secret Service man had got next, and was striking for graft, as I said before. Still, it may not be so."

"I don't see how we are going to identify the steamer, I must say."

"It is possible that the captain is in the deal, and that a previous arrangement has been made for him to slow down and signal when he is passing the point to which you are going. This plan to be used or not, as occasion requires."

"There may be something in that."

"There is one thing certain," said Alice, "no Chinaman ever tells all he knows. You can rest assured that this Ping Ding has something up his sleeve."

"I don't like the idea of you going to that place alone, Governor," said Harry.

"Well, I have to do it, at all events, so the subject is not even open to discussion," was the reply.

And shortly afterward Harry returned to the Bowery and met Fred in his room.

The morphine fiend was asleep when Young King Brady knocked on the door, but he jumped up and opened it.

"Oh, I'm so glad you have come!" he exclaimed. "I had a fit of the horrors on me just now, and when it passed I must have dozed off. I am dying for companionship. If you were in my situation you would know what I mean."

"I think I can understand," replied Harry. "We will stick together for a while, anyhow. I want to see you

well through with this business and started on the road to better things."

"You have given me hope, I will admit," said Fred. "But still I have my doubts if the future really has anything in store for me. But that has nothing to do with the present; we must put this business through. At least it will give me a little money, whichever way the cat jumps."

"It is bound to. If you don't get it out of your man, Ping Ding, you will out of me, if we succeed in getting away with the hop, which is my hope. Have you heard anything more?"

"Not a thing. I am expecting Ping Ding any minute now."

"Is it not possible that you are mistaken, and that this Chinaman really knows your true feeling toward him?"

"I think not, and I am sure you would agree with me if you knew my whole story. Still, it may be so. These Chinamen are far shrewder than the world gives them credit for."

"Oh, I know that all right. I have had a lot to do with the Chinese. But I hear some one on the stairs now. Perhaps our summons has come. Tell me one thing, quick—did you get the names of any other Chinks in this gang?"

"No."

"Hush! He is here!"

Then there came a knock at the door.

Harry opened it, and, greatly to his concern, he found himself facing the messenger of the hidden man of Chinatown—the young Chink who had posted the notice on the bulletin board.

"What does this mean?" he asked himself. "This fellow surely can't be working on both sides. If the hidden man is really Old King Brady's friend, why is he here?"

But Harry felt safe in his disguise, which was an unusually good one, and differed materially from any which he had lately used in Chinatown.

And the hidden man's messenger proved to be Ping Ding's also.

He gave Fred ten dollars and told him to take the four o'clock train for Bayville, Long Island, at which place they would be met by another Chinaman, who would furnish further instructions.

And what made Harry still more nervous was the fact that the fellow spoke excellent English, whereas when talking with Alice he had pretended to be able to speak only Chinese, and his English, when he called at the office of the Brady Detective Bureau, had been most broken.

"This fellow is a fraud, surest thing," thought Harry.

He casually asked the Chinaman his name, on the chance of wanting to identify him later, and was told that it was Wee Woo.

Wee Woo soon left, and Harry and Fred prepared to pull out.

"I want to telephone my principal," said Harry, after they got out on the Bowery.

"Is he Old King Brady?" inquired Fred. "I've been wondering."

"Yes, he is."

"I have heard a lot about his doings. You are Young King Brady, I suppose?"

"That is me."

"I am so glad to have met you. I suppose you want to let Old King Brady know that we have actually started?"

But Harry wanted more than that.

He was greatly disturbed to find Wee Woo mixed up with his end of the game, and he was most anxious to caution Old King Brady, whom he now felt ran a serious risk in paying a second visit to the hidden man.

He telephoned the office, but he failed in his purpose.

He got Alice on the wire, who informed him that Old King Brady had already left, and that he said he intended to keep his appointment before his return.

Not wishing to alarm Alice, Harry merely told her about Wee Woo, but said nothing as to his fears.

With Fred, he crossed the Thirty-fourth street ferry and at Hunter's Point took the Long Island train for Bayville.

It was a dreary ride through the dreariest stretch of country to be found anywhere around New York.

During the first ten miles Fred talked incessantly, after the manner of morphine users. Then Harry saw him slyly slip a pill into his mouth, after which he was still livelier for a few minutes, and then he fell asleep and did not wake up until their station was reached.

During the ride the weather had undergone a change.

All day it had been growing warmer, and now it was almost like a spring day.

But rain had set in—a dreary drizzle—and when they left the train in the dark they found that there also was considerable fog.

The few who had left the train with them hurried off, and they remained waiting.

"I see no one who seems to be interested in us at all," remarked Harry. "I wonder what we ought to do?"

They were still debating the question when an old beachcomber came up to them and said:

"Wa'al, I reckon you fellers mought be looking for me?"

"And who are you?" demanded Harry.

"A friend of the Chinks," replied the man, lowering his voice to a whisper.

This was to be the password, as given by Wee Woo.

"I guess we are the men you want, neighbor," replied Harry. "What's the word?"

"I've been paid to drive you down to the shore. Are you ready to go?"

"All ready—anytime."

"This way, then," said the beachcomber, and he led them around behind the station, where stood a rickety, old wagon, drawn by a single horse.

Into this they got, and the beachcomber drove off in the drizzle.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RAID ON THE HIDDEN MAN.

At the appointed time Old King Brady again turned up at the Mott street house, and alone.

He ascended to the same room, seeing nothing of the young Chink.

Here he waited for some minutes, when the fellow appeared.

"You comee—yair?" he said, with that innocent smile which only a Chinaman can put on his face. "Allee light. Now, light away, quick, you see hidden man. Me blindee you eyes again—see?"

He produced a handkerchief and Old King Brady submitted to the blindfolding act.

Then the same process was repeated. The bell rang, the shuffling of feet was heard, and the detective was whirled around, as before.

Then it was down the stairs and through the secret passages, and in the end Old King Brady found himself in the underground room again.

When he removed the handkerchief he found a young Chinaman present, who wore a mask on his face, made of red silk.

"Mr. Blady, how you do?" he said. "Me 'terpreter—see?"

Old King Brady looked him over.

The mask did not deceive him. He knew that he was looking at Loy Moy, old Quong Lee's young man, for he recognized the voice.

Light began to dawn on him.

"This is some of Quong Lee's work, surest thing," he thought. "The old rascal is betraying his friends for my benefit. Well, I'm sure I am very much obliged to him, but he need not have gone to so much trouble about it."

"All right," he said, carelessly. "Here I am now; when can I talk to the hidden man?"

"Light away, quick!" said the mask. "He comee belly soon."

They waited some minutes, and then there was a stir in the little cabinet, and the voice began talking in Chinese.

Old King Brady tried to identify it with the voice of the old joint keeper, but when Chinamen talk Chinese to American ears their voices sound pretty much alike, and he could see no resemblance in this voice to Quong Lee's broken English.

The conversation between the hidden man and the interpreter continued for some minutes before there was any translating done.

At last the mask began:

"He say you no must waitee for steamer come. You must go meetee steamer—see?"

"And why?" demanded the old detective.

"Because company breakee up—see?"

"What do you mean by company breaking up?"

The voice of the hidden man rang out sharply.

Old King Brady would have given much to have known what was said.

"Dley go back on eachee oder," said the mask.

"Oh, I understand. The hop will be delivered before the steamer gets in?"

"Yair. Two bunchee go get."

"There are two bunches after it?"

"Yair. He say one bunchee have Slam Laney workee wid him."

"Slam Delaney!" cried the hidden man.

"I understand," said Old King Brady. "Has Sam Delaney gone out to meet this steamer?"

"Yair," cried the hidden man, showing that he understood English well enough.

And thus were Old King Brady's suspicions verified.

This Sam Delaney was an ex-Secret Service detective, who formerly had much to do with Chinese opium smugglers.

But the man took to using opium himself, and had been dismissed from the force several years before the date of this story.

As Old King Brady well knew, he was now a professional crook, and had been in prison for a year for mixing up in a Highbinders' brawl.

That he was an unscrupulous and dangerous man, Old King Brady also knew.

"That is all right," exclaimed the old detective. "I will go right after the steamer. And now to get out of here, just as quick as I can, for——"

His remarks were interrupted by the sound of the bursting open of a door.

Immediately there was a scuffle inside the cabinet.

"Help, Blady! Help!" shouted the now recognized voice of Quong Lee.

Old King Brady drew his revolver and made a rush for the cabinet.

At the same instant the door of the secret room burst open and four Chinamen, led by a masked white man, came in.

All carried revolvers, and Old King Brady thus found himself at bay.

"Surrender, old man, or you're a dead one, and don't you doubt it!" the mask called out.

"To you, Sam Delaney, with pleasure!" sneered Old King Brady, throwing down his revolver.

"Keep your remarks to yourself!" retorted the mask. "They are out of place here! Search him! Quick!"

The noise in the cabinet had ceased.

Had they killed the hidden man, Old King Brady asked himself.

But he had quite as much as he wanted to attend to with his own affairs.

The Chinamen now closed around him, and made the search while the mask and one other held the old detective covered.

They did not get much.

Old King Brady's secret pockets are invincible.

Meanwhile the mask had been torn from the face of the interpreter, and Old King Brady saw that he had been right in supposing the fellow to be Loy Moy.

While the search was going on nobody paid much attention to Loy Moy, but now he was tied up, too, and, both prisoners, being blindfolded, they were led through various passages.

What became of Loy Moy, Old King Brady had no means of knowing.

For himself, he wound up in a small, unfurnished room, on the floor of which lay a Chinaman, with his clothes all torn and his face bloody.

It was Quong Lee.

The old detective's bonds were now removed and the door locked upon him.

The two prisoners were left in the dark.

"Oh, Blady—Blady!" groaned the divekeeper. "Dlose

Highbinders most killee me! See what I gette for tly helpee you!"

"And you were the hidden man, Quong?" replied the old detective.

"Yair."

"It was very kind of you to try to help me. Cheer up! We will work out of this. Are you much hurt?"

"Dley push in my face."

"Let me see."

Old King Brady produced his flash lantern, which had escaped the search, and proceeded to examine his damaged friend.

"It is nothing serious, Quong," he said. "Get up. Are you hurt elsewhere? Can you stand on your feet?"

Quong Lee discovered that he could stand perfectly well.

He had a beautiful black eye, and his face was cut in one place, but that was all.

He seemed to be hurt in his feelings most, and he sputtered away, breathing threats upon certain Chinaman, of whom Old King Brady had never heard.

"Pull yourself together, Quong, and tell me all about it," said the old detective. "We shall never have a better chance."

Quong then began a rambling story, which had best be condensed.

It appeared that a syndicate had been formed to smuggle opium and that several lots had been brought in, through means which differed in each case.

The lot in the coffin was one, but how the blunder had been made in putting the wrong tag on the box, and the right one on the box containing Mr. Lee's remains, Quong did not know.

He frankly admitted that he was in the deal, and he claimed that his partners, of whom Sam Delaney was one, had sold him out.

Ascertaining this for a fact, he resolved to betray them into the hands of Old King Brady, so he had taken the part of the hidden man, with a view of doing this without betraying himself.

The cabinet, he claimed, belonged to a Chinese fortune teller, who was often consulted by his own people, but whose name he declined to give.

And this was Quong's story in a nutshell.

"You catchee all hands, Blady, and send dlem plison, den I be glad—see? Dat's why I done it. Dey cheat me. I hate dlem. I know you no go back on me."

But this was trying the old detective's friendship a little beyond the limit.

Although he did not say so, for now there was no need, Old King Brady felt that if he had caught Quong Lee redhanded he could have done nothing to save him from his fate.

But could he do anything as it was?

Just then it did not look so.

"We are in the soup together, Quong," he said. "It would have been better if you had given me the tip and did the talking in your own place."

"Dat's so. I see it now," admitted the divekeeper. "Too blame bad! What we do?"

"You know where we are, I suppose?"

"Yair. Dis Highbinders' place. You can goe out by Pell street or by Mott street, either one."

"Who do you suppose went back on you?"

"Slam Delaney."

"And Ping Ding?"

"Well! You sabe Ping Ding?"

"Yes."

"Well, him, too. He get outs with Slam Delaney, too."

"Then your syndicate broke in three parts?" inquired Old King Brady. "You, one; Ping Ding, another, and Sam Delaney, a third?"

"Yair; but dley have a whole lot of fellers with dem and me allee lone, makee great big loss," grumbled Quong.

There was more of it, but the quarrels and treachery of a bunch of Chinese opium smugglers hardly make interesting reading.

Old King Brady was able to straighten matters out in his own mind.

Chinamen are always trying to smuggle opium, and are always succeeding, as is well known.

Sam Delaney and Ping Ding, Old King Brady saw, were the people wanted in this case.

But just now the old detective was in no shape to arrest any one.

He reflected for a few moments, and decided to keep his mouth shut about Harry and Ping Ding.

He tried the door and found it as firm as a rock.

"What do you suppose they mean to do with us, Quong?" he asked at last.

Quong did not know, but they both found out after a little.

The door was flung open, and six masked Chinamen appeared.

While three held them covered with revolvers they were again tied up and blindfolded.

Quong Lee did a lot of talking in his own language, and the others answered him freely enough.

At last they were led out of the place, and, having ascended stairs and passed through doors, they at last found themselves in the open.

Suddenly Old King Brady was seized by strong hands and lifted off his feet.

He landed in the bottom of a wagon.

The next he knew Quong Lee was tumbled in beside him.

Both had been gagged before they were taken out of the secret room, as we should have mentioned, so they were powerless to raise any alarm.

But Old King Brady had his ears to rely on, and he put them to good use.

He heard a gate open just as the wagon started.

They passed out and went down a little incline to the street.

There was but one such place in Chinatown.

This was a coal yard in Pell street, and into that yard Old King Brady knew that they had been brought by the secret passages.

Thus he was able to trace their route.

He knew when they struck the Bowery by the noise of the elevated trains.

They went down Oliver street.

This he knew because they passed under the elevated a second time.

Now they kept straight on down to the river.

They turned to the right on South street and then went down on a wharf.

And here the wagon ride ended.

The old detective and his Chinese fellow sufferer were taken out of the wagon and carried on board a tug, where they were deposited in a stuffy, little cabin.

Here the eye bandages and gags were removed by a tough looking white man.

He immediately departed, and, locking the door behind him, left the prisoners to themselves.

"Dis de limit, Blady!" growled Quong Lee.

"Not quite the limit, Quong," replied the old detective, calmly. "Prepare for the worst, old man. This is Sam Delaney's work. He hates me, and I strongly suspect that he intends to dump us into the sea when the tug comes to a good place."

"Mebbe, p'laps. Never mind, Blady. You old man now; so me. We only once can die, yair?"

"Once is enough, Quong."

"Yair. Heap plenty. But, say, Blady, me tellee you slomething."

"Out with it, Quong!"

"Loy Moy, him gette way."

"From these crooks?"

"Sure ting."

"Good! Will he be sharp enough——"

"Him belly sharp. He lookee out, sure ting. He folly wagon, an' go telle Hally, sure ting. Mebbe we can hope."

And Old King Brady, sparing the feelings of his good, but rascally, friend, did not inform him that Harry was probably down on Long Island, attending to the business of Ping Ding.

"But he may strike Alice," he thought.

And at least it afforded a ray of hope.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CRUISE OF THE JULIA BROWN.

The tug soon started, but whether it went up or down the East River Old King Brady could not make out, owing to the turns it made in getting clear of the slip.

Off they went into the night, and for the next two hours the voyage continued.

Meanwhile Harry and Fred were being driven shoreward by the Baysville beachcomber.

What their destination was to be, they could only guess.

At last they began to see the water, and then they came out upon a long stretch of beach, which they followed for a considerable distance.

Harry knew that the water must be the Great South Bay.

The journey ended at a little hut, which proved to be the residence of the beachcomber.

"You'll find your Chinese friend here," he said, speaking now for the first time. "There's my boat down there by that little pier. She has everything aboard which you are likely to need, and that's all I've got to do with the matter. Don't ask me to take you outside, for I simply won't."

"All right, neighbor," returned Harry. "We sha'n't bother you."

"Tain't ther bother, it's the resk," retorted the beach-comber. "Mind, now, if you get ketched and ring my name in, I'll find means to make it hot for you. I've got some almighty powerful friends in New York, I have."

Secretly smiling at these vaporings, Young King Brady made no response.

They got out of the wagon and entered the hut.

A slatternly woman in the back room was frying pork, and the place smelled horribly, besides being full of smoke.

A Chinaman in American dress sat in one corner as they entered.

He immediately arose and came forward.

"You are from Ping Ding?" he said, in broken English.

"Yes; you have seen me before, Hong," replied Fred.

"Yes, I know you, all right. Who sails the boat?"

"I do," replied Harry.

"So? Come and see her now."

"All right. Do you go out with us?"

"No. I get seasick; I can't go. You do the job alone."

"Do you know anything about the steamer?"

"Yes. She has been spoken; she will be along between this and morning; sure. You will get out by the bar and watch for her."

"But how shall we know——"

"Oh, that's all arranged. The captain is in the deal. He will send up a rocket."

"Oh, I see. It has been arranged that we should meet her here?"

"Yes. That was arranged in China. They will be on the watch for you. When the rocket goes up you are to send up two in return. They are in the boat."

It was no pleasant undertaking.

Fred looked about dubiously.

"I don't know how I'm going to stand it!" he growled.

"I can go alone, for that matter," Harry said.

"No, no! It won't do," protested the Chinaman. "You see, the captain won't admit that he knows anything about the hop. All he has agreed to do is to stand in toward the bar and send up the rocket. The rest of the business must be done secretly with the Chinese steward on board, and it needs some one who can talk Chinese."

"That's me," said Fred. "I see I shall have to go."

"Of course, you will have to go," replied Hong. "You have taken Ping Ding's money, and if you go back on him now you want to keep away from New York or he'll kill you, sure thing!"

They went to the boat.

It was a fairly good sailboat of rather a large model.

The name astern was the Julia Brown.

In the little cabin were overcoats, oilskins, a small supply of food, the rockets, a lantern, and other things.

"And what's to be done with this boat?" demanded Harry. "If we go aboard the Furnam Castle are we to abandon her?"

"Yes," replied Hong. "That's all understood. You just send her adrift. That man has been paid full price for her. If he gets her again, which he probably will, that will be so much more to the good."

"I suppose we ought to start right along," said Harry.

I see we have a compass here. I hope I can find the inlet through the bar."

"It lies right in that direction," replied the Chinaman, pointing. "It is a pity it is such a bad night; but this happens to be the night on which the business has to be done, and the sooner you get at it, the better, I suppose."

Harry thought so, too, and within fifteen minutes the Julia Brown sailed away, leaving Hong standing on the little pier, wishing them good luck.

It was a strange undertaking for Young King Brady.

He would have had a little better understanding of it if Hong had told him that there were rivals in the field, as Harry was to learn later, and as Hong himself undoubtedly knew.

Nor did Fred suspect this.

It is ticklish work dealing with Chinamen, who are secretive to the last degree.

"Brady," said Fred, once they had started, "I am never going to be able to stand this exposure. I hate to bother you, but I really don't know how I can stop out here in the rain."

"Of course, you can't," replied Harry, "and I was just about to tell you to get inside. You go right into the cabin and stay there."

"But it seems kind of mean to leave you alone out here in the rain."

"What good can you do? You can't stop the rain, I suppose. Your part of the job will come once we get aboard the steamer, if we ever do."

"Do you think there is danger?"

"Oh, not particularly; no. There is no wind of any consequence. The only thing we have to fear is fog."

"Do you think it likely that a fog will set in?"

"Yes, I do. I am quite sure we shall have fog before morning. These December warm rains usually end up that way along this coast. But get inside. I'll put on the oilskins and shall be all right."

So far Harry had trusted to his hat and overcoat, but he now put on a complete suit of oilskins, took his seat in the cockpit and stood for the inlet.

He reached this in safety and, finding that the bar was very narrow here, he determined to remain inside, where he could better keep out of the way of the breakers.

So he lay to and waited.

It was dreary work, but soon after this the rain ceased, which relieved the situation somewhat.

Several times he looked in on Fred.

In the early part of the evening the morphine fiend, who was lying in the only bunk which the boat contained, spoke cheerfully enough, but when Harry looked in on him at about eleven o'clock, he found him asleep and breathing heavily.

Still it did not occur to Young King Brady then that Fred might have taken an overdose of his drug.

Midnight came, and with it came the fog.

Young King Brady was in despair as it came rolling in upon him.

Of course, a whole fleet of steamers, all sending up rockets, might pass the bar now and he never know.

Still he determined to hold on and see if it did not lift, which, after a while, it did.

This was at about one o'clock.

Harry now went into the cabin to tell Fred, after taking a good look around and seeing nothing.

As he opened the cabin door he was startled at not hearing the young man's heavy breathing, which before had been so pronounced.

"Fred!" he called, hurrying toward the bunk. "Oh, Fred!"

There was no answer.

Harry looked down upon him.

His face seemed a natural color.

He hastily listened at the sleeper's lips, but could hear no sound.

"Great heavens! He has taken an overdose—he is dying!" thought Harry.

He was terribly stirred up, for he had actually begun to like the unfortunate young man.

He seized his hand and tried for the pulse, but could find none.

Harry flung his arms about Fred and lifted him up bodily.

The head dropped.

Harry dragged him out of the bunk and tried walking him around.

But there was no such thing.

Letting him down on the floor, he stripped open his clothes and listened at his heart.

It was beating faintly.

Poor Harry had his hands full now.

"He must have coffee at once," he thought.

Coffee, or its derivative, caffeine, is the only known antidote for morphine.

Fortunately the fire in the little coal stove which warmed the cabin had been kept up.

Harry had coffee ready in no time, but it was impossible to make his patient swallow.

After many attempts he gave it up, and again listened at Fred's heart.

It was all over now!

Perhaps a skilled physician could have saved the unfortunate young man, but Harry could do no more.

He managed to get Fred back in the bunk, and went back to the cockpit, lonely enough.

It seemed as if a terrible blow had been dealt him.

But was death due to accident or design?

This was something which Harry could not tell, nor did he ever learn.

And there he was, away out at the bar of the Great South Bay, alone with a corpse!

When Harry got outside he found that the fog had not returned.

But the night was the blackest he had ever seen, he thought.

The roar of the surf oppressed him terribly.

Every time a wave broke the sound seemed to shape itself into a thunderous voice, uttering the word:

"Dead!"

"But, perhaps, after all, it is for the best," thought Harry. "He might have braced up, but it is doubtful. Dear me! This is a strange world."

He now began to think of his own situation.

Should he be able to put the job through alone when he could speak no Chinese?

"But perhaps the steward could speak English. If not, then he would have to make the captain understand what he was after. To get the opium, if such a thing was possible, he was resolved.

Just then Harry, who happened to look southeast, spied a light.

In a moment he saw that it was moving in his direction, and with some speed.

Listening, he could hear nothing at first, but after a while he caught the puffing of a tug.

But there was nothing suspicious in this, for tugs are often cruising about these waters on various sorts of business.

Harry watched the light for some time.

The tug passed the inlet, but he could not distinguish her outlines.

Now he had to look in the opposite direction in order to follow the light.

All at once he caught the lights of a larger craft.

Could it be the steamer?

Harry got his rockets ready.

He soon became convinced that, not only was it a steamer, but that she was standing in toward the bar.

Then, all at once, from between the lights, a rocket soared skyward.

"The steamer at last!" thought Harry.

He whipped out his matches and attempted to light a match, but it went back on him.

Before he could get one going he saw a second rocket rise.

It came from the tug and was immediately followed by another.

What could this mean?

Had somebody else been posted?

Young King Brady did not know now whether to send up the rockets or not.

He decided against it, for he could not see what good it would do.

But he immediately ran out of the inlet and made for the steamer.

He passed the breakers safely and was doing well when, all at once, the light breeze which had been blowing died away.

Harry was now in a bad fix.

The steamer appeared to have stopped, and he could see the tug making for it.

But, bad as the situation was, it soon became worse, for within a few minutes the fog came rolling in again.

The light vanished and the Julia Brown became enveloped in an impenetrable cloud.

CHAPTER X.

ALICE TO THE RESCUE.

Loy Moy had escaped, just as Quong Lee said.

Watching his opportunity, while in the room to which the hop crooks took him, Loy slipped his bonds and sneaked out through the secret passages, which he knew perfectly well.

But the divekeeper's clerk did not have to go and hunt up Alice or Harry.

Alice was right on the job that day.

She felt nervous and troubled about Old King Brady going to the quarters of the hidden man alone, and when by seven o'clock he had not returned Alice got into her Chinese disguise and started for Chinatown to look him up.

She had scarcely turned into Pell street when a young Chink came up alongside of her.

"Say, you Mliss Old Kling Blady?" he asked, in a whisper.

Alice recognized Loy Moy at once.

"Yes, yes!" she replied. "You are Quong Lee's boy?"

And the remainder of the conversation, which was in Chinese, translated, ran as follows:

"You have come right," said Loy Moy. "I was just going to look for you. There is trouble."

"What's the matter?"

"The hop crooks have captured Old King Brady."

"Just as I was afraid. Tell me all about it, Loy, and tell it quick."

"You come to Quong's," replied Loy Moy, and they went to the opium joint, where, in Quong Lee's little office, Alice got the story of the raid.

"And so the hidden man was Quong himself?" said Alice. "It is a great pity that he didn't come to the office and give us his warnings there, instead of trying to do it in secret."

Loy shrugged his shoulders.

"He was afraid," he replied.

"Well, it can't be helped now," said Alice. "What are we to do?"

"We must go after them," replied Loy.

"But we will be captured ourselves if we try to enter that secret room."

"Oh, they are not there," said Loy, who seemed to enjoy stringing out their disclosures to the utmost possible limit.

"Then, where are they?"

"I watched. I knew they would take them away out by the coal yard, and so they did."

"How?"

"In an express wagon."

"Did you follow?"

"Sure."

"And where did they go? Tell me, quick, Loy Moy!"

"To the river, to the wharf at the foot of James street. They took them on board a tug, and it sailed away with them."

Alice was in despair.

She inquired the name of the tug, but Loy could not read English, and did not know.

"We must act at once," said Alice. "Will you come along with me, Loy Moy?"

The boy was more than willing.

Alice went upstairs and changed to a white male disguise, using the Bradys' Chinese costume closet, which they keep ever ready at Quong Lee's, once again.

She then hurried to the Elizabeth street station, accompanied by Loy Moy.

There was no trouble.

The sergeant at the desk, who is an old friend of the Bradys, recognized her at once.

Alice told as much of her story as she cared to divulge.

"I'll send a plain clothes man right down to the wharf with you," said the sergeant. "The officer on the beat will surely be able to get something out of the watchman on the pier about the tug."

And so it proved.

When tackled by the officer and the plain clothes man, the watchman promptly curled up and admitted that he had seen two drunken men, as he chose to put it, carried on board the tug J. H. McCracken.

At first he denied that he knew her destination, but when threatened with arrest he admitted that he had talked with one of the crew, who told him that the tug had been engaged by a white man to go to Wicks's Beach, down on the Great South Bay.

Alice now flew around.

Down by the South Ferry, where the tugs tie up, there are several captains whom the Bradys often have occasion to employ when their business takes them out on the river or harbor.

Alice promptly engaged the tug Lillie W., and within half an hour of her unpleasant discovery she had started for Wicks's Beach, accompanied by Loy Moy.

Once they were in the cabin with time on their hands, Alice tried Loy Moy again, and attempted to draw from him some particulars as to the plot of the hop crooks.

But it was useless.

Even Alice's skillful handling of the Chinese language was not sufficient to make the young Chink tell, if, indeed, he knew anything about the matter.

It was a dreary sail.

Alice, in her agitation, could scarcely contain herself.

At last she went to the pilot house and sought the company of Captain Snow, a very intelligent man, whom Old King Brady frequently found occasion to employ.

"Where are we now, captain?" she asked.

"Where do you think, Miss Montgomery?" was the reply. "Not that I object to telling you, but you really ought to learn the coast and its lights. If you knew it as well as Old King Brady knows it, now——"

"Old King Brady has been cruising about New York harbor many years, captain. I can't be expected to know as much as he does."

"Surely not. Rely upon it, I'll do my best. To lose Old King Brady would be a bad job for me and a calamity to the whole country. Do you really think the danger is so great?"

"It is just as I told you, captain. Old King Brady has been carried off by the orders of a crook named Sam Delaney, who, indeed, may be with him. The matter is so serious that I greatly fear the old man may already have been put out of the way."

"Let us hope for the best."

"I'm doing that, all right."

"You are a brave woman, Miss Montgomery, and really I must compliment you on your disguise. No one would even suppose that you are not a man."

"Captain Snow, kindly tie a string around your compliments and hang them up. How about those lights? Where are we now?"

"Just coming off Rockaway Inlet, Miss. That light you see there as I point my finger is on Barren Island. The

bellbuoy you hear ringing marks the shoals. The lights beyond are those of Rockaway, of course."

Alice stood looking out of the window.

"And how much further have we to go?" she asked at last. "Or, rather, what time will it take? Put it that way, rather than in miles."

"It will be a matter of an hour to Wicks's Beach. That is, if we don't get caught in the fog."

"Mercy! Don't tell me it is going to be foggy?"

"It certainly is; but it may not come until we strike the beach."

"Do you know the place well enough to find your way in?"

Captain Snow shuffled his feet.

"Well, Miss Montgomery, I am going to tell you the truth," he said. "I'm in a bit of trouble over that end of the business."

"What on earth do you mean, captain? Speak out plainly, so I may know where I am at."

"Why, the fact is, Miss, I sent my compass to be repaired this morning, and——"

"And you have no other?"

"No, Miss."

Alice was in despair.

Still she did not think it well to criticize Captain Snow, which would only have made matters worse.

"And what shall you do if the fog comes?" she asked.

"There is nothing to do but to stand well outside and wait for it to lift, Miss."

"Well, do the best you can," said Alice. "But now, as to another matter, my fear is that Sam Delaney will simply throw Old King Brady and his Chinese friend overboard. If such is his intention, of course we can do nothing; but should he intend to hold them prisoners where on Wicks's Beach or in its neighborhood would he be likely to take them, do you suppose?"

"Oh, there are dozens of places, Miss. It is all salt meadows back of the beach. There are salt creeks backing in everywhere and lots of little huts where fishermen and beachcombers and their kind live."

"I see. It makes the case look so very hopeless."

"That's what I told you at the start, Miss. I can't help that—all we can do is to look along until we get sight of the tug."

Alice was in despair.

It seemed such a perfectly hopeless undertaking.

Tired of the society of Loy Moy, she remained in the pilot-house, listening to Captain Snow's long-winded stories.

They passed East Rockaway and Long Beach and were off Jones's Beach when the fog came rolling in on them.

"Well, we are up against it, Miss," remarked the captain, after waiting for Alice to speak.

"So it would seem. Are you going to stand out?" was the reply.

"Not yet. The fog may go out again. We will keep on as long as we are going a bit longer. It is perfectly safe."

And the captain was right.

The fog soon rolled out seaward.

But it rolled in again before they reached Wicks's Beach.

"Now we have to go out," said the Captain. "There

are dangerous shoals and bars ahead of us. But don't worry, Miss. If we can't get in they can't get out, and if Sam Delaney meant to kill old King Brady he has done it long ago. I don't believe there will be anything lost by the delay."

So the captain stood outside and slowed down.

An hour passed.

The fog was by no means thick. Indeed, they could see lights shining through it in places.

After a while a steamer passed them. They could see her lights distinctly and—some little time before this happened—they saw rockets ascending.

This puzzled Captain Snow not a little, and he kept talking about it.

Shortly after this a tug passed them on the inside, going west.

They could see her lights distinctly.

Alice talked about hailing her, but Captain Snow could see no use in this.

"The McCracken must have tied up long ago," he said. "There are tugs coming and going all the time."

And so they let this one pass them in the fog, which seemed to grow thicker as they advanced.

"I shall now put about and go the other way," said the captain. "We must be well past Wicks's Beach by this time."

He began the operation, and was perhaps half way through, when suddenly Alice caught the outlines of a sailboat right ahead of them.

"Look out! You will run those people down!" she screamed.

But the accident was an accomplished fact before the words were fairly spoken.

The tug struck the sailboat amidships, and as she did so a young man arose from the cockpit with a shout.

The next instant and he had vanished, while the sailboat disappeared in the fog.

CHAPTER XI.

SAM DELANEY PUTS A PROPOSITION.

Old King Brady was wrong in his idea that Sam Delaney meant to drown him and Quong Lee as soon as they got into deep water.

And this he learned from the hop crook's own lips, for the McCracken had not yet passed Sea Gate when the door opened and the renegade Secret Service man entered the cabin.

He carried a lantern, which he flashed in the faces of his prisoners.

Evidently he had been hitting the whisky pretty heavily, but this was probably an everyday occurrence.

Certainly the man was very far from being drunk.

The first thing the vulgar wretch did was to deliberately hit Quong Lee in the face and shower upon him a torrent of vile abuse.

"Welcher," "fraud," "informer"—these are a fair sample of the epithets which he bestowed upon the luckless divekeeper.

Quong made no answer.

Lying tied up upon the floor as he was, he could do nothing, and Chinamen seldom waste breath.

Tired of baiting the helpless man at last, Delaney

turned his attention to Old King Brady, whom he had known for years.

"I suppose it will be safe to set you free," he said. "I know very well that you can't swim a stroke, so I don't suppose you will try to commit suicide. I know you well enough, also, to know that you are not fool enough to try an attack on me."

"Quite right, friend Sam," replied Old King Brady. "I shall take it very kindly of you if you will set me free, and if you will also favor my friend, Quong Lee, in the same way the obligation will be increased."

"Not on your life! You are the same old palaverer, Brady, but you can't talk me in to showing any favor to that dirty welcher. The worse he suffers the better I'm pleased!"

"Never mind, Blady," said old Quong, stolidly. "Don't you never mind me. You try flix it up with Slam."

"Fix nothing!" snarled the hop crook. "I'll slam you if you don't get my name straight!"

He gave Quong a kick, and then, opening the door, clapped his hands.

Two deckhands immediately appeared.

"Carry that dirty Chink out of here and chuck him in the oil closet or anywhere!" he said.

"I tought youse was goin' to chuck him overboard, boss?" said one.

"No; I've changed my mind about that. Simply drown-ing is too easy a death for the blamed welcher! I've got another plan."

The pair carried Quong off, and then Sam got down on his knees and, untying Old King Brady, lent him a hand to rise.

"Sit down," he said. "I'm not going to do you yet, Brady; and whether I do you at all or not depends entirely upon yourself."

Old King Brady dropped wearily on the cushioned bench which ran around the cabin.

This was one of the times when he began to feel his years, and to wonder if the time had not come when he ought to permanently retire from his dangerous profession.

The one thing he had to congratulate himself upon was that Alice was not involved in this deal.

Delaney now produced cigars and handed his prisoner one.

"Brady," he said, after they had lighted up, "do you know I don't blame you a bit for coming across my track in this business?"

"It is all in the line of my own business, which was once yours, Sam."

"Just so, and that is why I say what I did. As soon as I heard about that fiasco with the corpse I said to my partners, 'This spells the Bradys,' I says, 'and we have to look sharp.' I says."

"How about that, Sam?"

"Don't ask me. The blamed tags on them boxes must have got changed down there in Havana. When I swiped the box off the pier I never doubted that the coffin into it contained the hop. You got the corpse, by the way?"

"Harry did."

"It's all the same. I don't care. Somebody had to get

it. You know all about the shipment by the Furnam Castle, I suppose?"

But here, for Quong Lee's sake, Old King Brady expressed ignorance.

In vain Sam Delaney pressed him.

It was evident that the desire to gain this information and to find out what the Secret Service men were doing in the matter supposed to be on the steamer, had actuated him in setting Old King Brady temporarily at liberty.

Foiled in this, Sam began to grow savage; but the old detective was unyielding.

At last the talk took a different turn.

"Look a-here, Brady," said the ex-detective suddenly, "I am getting blame tired of the life I am leading. If I succeed in getting this hop off the steamer—and I own up that's what I am out for to-night—I shall be on Easy street for a while, anyhow. Now, I am going to put a proposition up to you."

"All right," replied the old detective. "You know me well enough to be aware that any one can put up a proposition to me; but whether I accept it or not is another thing."

"Exactly. It's this—I want to get back into the fold."

"Into the Secret Service, Sam? My dear fellow, that's impossible!"

"Of course, I know that. I am not talking about the Secret Service. What I want is to get out of New York. Here everybody knows me, and sooner or later it's the stone jug for mine again."

"I think you size the situation up about right; but what can I do?"

"A lot. I want you to start a branch in San Francisco."

"And put you in charge?"

"That's it."

"H'm! Well—er——"

"Now, don't turn me down offhand, Brady. Am I a good detective, or am I not?"

"Sam Delaney, I will say to your face without flattery that when you started in the field I considered your prospects exceptionally bright. You certainly are a good detective, but then, my dear man, you don't need me to tell you how things went with you. I have often thought of establishing a California branch, but can I put it in the hands of a crook?"

"Hear me out, Brady. If you will do this I propose to cut loose from all my old associates, to reform and assume another name. There is a little dame in this town who is ready to marry me any time I'll stop drinking."

"And smoking hop?"

"I have cut that out already."

"How did you manage?"

"By keeping my skin so full of whisky all the time that I have no desire for the hop."

"The remedy is as bad as the disease."

"No; I can taper off on the whisky. But now what do you think of my proposition, old man?"

What Old King Brady actually thought of it was that if he could trust the fellow he could ask for no better man.

But he felt that he could not.

He knew Sam Delaney too well.

While professional crooks certainly do sometimes reform, the number of such cases is few and to be represented by such a character the old detective considered as a thing impossible.

However, he did not tell Sam Delaney that, but let him talk on.

"I'll take it into consideration," he said.

"Right," replied Sam. "Now, as to this business in hand, I'd begin right now and turn the hop on the Furnam Castle, which I expect to get to-night, over to you if the thing was possible; but there are too many others mixed up in the job, and everything is at cross purposes, owing to the welching of Quong Lee and another blamed Chink."

"Ping Ding, by name."

"Ha! I see that you know more of the case than I supposed you did. But I suppose Quong Lee told you. That's right. The syndicate broke in three parts. Now I'll tell you straight, Brady, you owe your life to me. If I had not interferred and carried you off, the Chinks would have killed you on the spot. Bear that in mind, old man."

"I certainly shall, Sam," replied the old detective; "but one thing I must insist upon if I am even to consider your proposition."

"And what is that?"

"That you spare Quong Lee and set him free."

"With you, yes; but not otherwise. All the same, it will do him little good. The Chinks will do him if he goes back to New York."

"Perhaps not. Let him take his chances."

"It's a go. You both go free if you agree to my proposition."

"And if I refuse?"

"Don't tempt me, Brady."

"Well, all right, Sam. I'll think it over. In the meantime where are you taking us?"

"To a little crib alongshore here, which I have hired for the occasion. You can't escape, Brady. It's the ocean on one side and miles of salt marsh on the other. Once there was a road leading to the hut, but that was washed out a couple of years ago, and now the place is only accessible by boat. But remember what I tell you, old man—it was to save your life that I brought you here."

And later on Old King Brady became convinced that this was so.

The tug sped on, and Old King Brady and the renegade Secret Service man continued to talk to the end of the voyage.

At last they ran into a little inlet and tied up at a ricketty pier, back of which, right in the marshes, was a small hut.

Here they were received by a wild-looking fellow and two Chinamen, neither of whom Old King Brady could recollect ever having seen before.

It was just as Sam had said.

Old King Brady saw at a glance that escape from this place without a boat would be impossible.

There was nothing to do but to make the best of the situation.

Having told Sam in the most positive manner that he would not even consider his proposition unless Quong Lee was released from his bonds, this was done.

The result was a heated argument between the dive-keeper and the Chinamen. At one time it looked serious, for revolvers were drawn, but Sam made the hop crooks put them up.

At last he went away with them in the tug, and Old King Brady and Quong Lee were left alone in the hut with the beachcomber, who was such a hopeless proposition that the old detective did not tackle him with any attempt at bribery for release.

He saw also that he was the kind who would simply take his money and then laugh in his face, so he felt that he would rather trust to Sam Delaney.

And now the fog settled down over the marsh.

Old King Brady and the "hidden man of Chinatown" sat down by the little stove and waited for what was to come.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Harry determined not to send up his rockets.

With the fog all around him, it would have been useless in any case.

As for the people on the tug, he could only assume that they were in some way connected with the hop crooks.

Of course, if he had known about the breaking up of the syndicate, the case would have been plain.

And now Harry was in a bad fix.

Return through the inlet, he could not.

He would almost certainly have missed it, and to get caught in the breakers spelled death.

Thus all he could do was to stand out to sea, and even that, without a compass, was dangerous and without wind impossible, but the tide was on the ebb, and he felt safe from the breakers, at all events.

And now there came whistling from the steamer and answering toots from the tug.

To all this Harry listened intently.

But there seemed to be nothing doing.

In a very few minutes he heard the steamer start.

The sound appeared to be so close to him that it almost took his breath away; for the minute he thought he should certainly be run down.

Evidently the tug had failed to connect, for she passed him soon afterward.

His situation was so hopeless that he had almost a mind to shout and make his presence known.

And this he probably would have done, but as the tug drew near he caught the sound of voices on board.

The speakers on the tug were talking in Chinese.

This settled it.

Even if the Chinks did not recognize him, the chances were all in favor of them doing so with the dead man in the little cabin.

So Young King Brady let them go, and for some time he remained bobbing about in the fog alone with his dead.

He now lashed the helm and went into the cabin and looked Fred over again.

The boy was surely dead. He was already growing cold.

Harry straightened the limbs and laid him out the best he could.

He next went through his pockets in the hope of finding something which might reveal his identity and throw some light upon his past.

But nothing of the sort turned up.

The only hope of learning anything of Fred was through Ping Ding.

Harry was still in the cabin when he was suddenly startled by hearing the puffing of a tug.

He darted out into the cockpit, but it was only to see that death was close upon him.

Then came the crash!

The whole side of the sailboat was stove in, and the little craft immediately filled and sank.

If Harry had remained in the cabin another minute his fate would have been sealed.

As it was, he grabbed the big rope fender that hung over the tug's bow and held on desperately till he recovered his wits, when he climbed over on deck.

Two men, as he thought, were leaning out of the pilot house window.

One gave a scream, but it was in a woman's voice.

"There he is! There he is!" came the cry. "Oh! Thank God!"

Harry threw up his arms and made a secret sign.

For it was Alice's voice he had heard.

It was a question if she recognized the sign in the darkness and fog, but she knew him without that.

"Harry!" she screamed, and came out of the pilot house.

Acting upon the impulse of the moment, Young King Brady caught the girl he loved so dearly in his arms and strained her to his breast.

"Alice! Oh, Alice!" he cried. "What ever brought you here?"

Alice yielded to the embrace for an instant, and then, disengaging herself, said:

"No more of that just now, Harry. I came out for Old King Brady, and I have got you, it seems."

"This is Young King Brady, Captain Snow," she added. "Perhaps he can help us out of our dilemma."

She drew Harry aside along the deck.

"Have you got the hop?" she asked.

"Business first, every time with you, Alice. Do you know, I came very near death?"

"Indeed I do, my dear boy! And I want you to understand that it would have meant death for me if you had died that way. But Old King Brady is in trouble and we must act. Where is Fred?"

Dead, and gone down with the sailboat."

"Heavens! You don't mean it? And I am responsible for his death?"

"Not at all. He has been dead these two hours, but come into the cabin, Alice; it is too damp out here."

"Quong Lee's boy, Loy Moy, is there; but I don't suppose that makes any difference."

"And what about Old King Brady?"

"He and Quong Lee were carried off in a tug by Sam Delaney."

"That wretch! Then they are as good as dead!"

"I am hoping against hope, Harry. But let us compare notes and see what can be done."

And this they did in the cabin of the Lillie W.

Meanwhile the fog held its own.

It was two o'clock next morning before there was any let up.

Captain Snow did nothing but beat about during that time.

Of course, Harry now knew all, and he assured Alice that they must not get far away from Wicks's Beach.

At last, while they were still talking in the cabin, they heard the bell in the engine room ring sharply, and the tug started off at full speed.

"What now?" cried Harry. "Has the fog lifted, then?"

He threw open the door and, looking out, saw, to his great satisfaction, that the stars were shining.

"It is all over, Alice!" he exclaimed. "Let us be on the move. We want to understand what Captain Snow is driving at."

They hurried to the pilot house.

The captain dropped the window.

"They have sent up a couple of rockets over there, Mr. Brady," he said, pointing off toward the salt meadows, which seemed of endless extent. "I believe they are signalling the McCracken, which has no doubt lost its way in the fog."

"Then that should be the place where they have Old King Brady and Quong Lee confined, if indeed they are still alive," replied Harry.

"That's what I am thinking," said Captain Snow. "Shall we run in there at that inlet? I believe this is Wicks's Beach, but I admit that I have become so turned around that I cannot be sure."

"Look! Look!" cried Alice. "Another rocket!"

It rose off at sea at a considerable distance away.

"There's your McCracken!" exclaimed the captain. "They made a worse fist of it in the fog than I did. If we are quick we may accomplish our purpose before these fellows can get in here."

"Just what I was thinking," said Harry. "Fire away, captain! How many men have you aboard?"

"Counting self, the engineer, the steward and two deckhands—five."

"And with me and Miss Montgomery, who if it comes to a pinch is as good as a man, seven. It is scarcely possible that we can have any such force to contend with. Go ahead!"

"Correct!" said the captain.

"How about revolvers!"

"I have one, so has the engineer, as I happen to know. Can't answer for the other fellows."

Harry inquired, and found that none of the others were armed.

As he and Alice each had a spare revolver, they were able to arm the two deckhands, and it was arranged that the steward should stay by the tug.

But all these preparations were wholly unnecessary, as the reader is already aware.

They made for the inlet and ran up to the hut.

The beachcomber came out to meet them.

"Gee whiz! 'Twas a bad night——" he began, and then, catching sight of the name on the pilot house, he

gave one frightened exclamation of: "Revenue officers!" and, running down to the edge of the salt creek, jumped into a rowboat and pulled up into the marsh as rapidly as he could work his oars.

At the same instant the door of the hut opened and, to the great relief of Harry and Alice, out walked Old King Brady!

Then there were congratulations all around.

"And where is Quong Lee?" demanded Harry, after the first brief explanations had been made.

"Asleep inside," replied Old King Brady. "The old rascal is about done up. I fancy he misses his usual pipe, although he hasn't said a word. And now to understand all this fully, Harry, did you get the hop?"

"Got left most beautifully!" replied Harry. "But I don't think any one got the hop."

"And where is Fred?"

"Dead!"

"Well, well! And how did that happen?"

"Oh, all those details will keep, Governor. The other tug is coming, and the caretaker here has sloped. Question is, what we are to do?"

"Arrest Delaney, or not?" mused the old detective. "It is a problem. He claims to have saved my life, and in a certain sense that may be true. Come in, hear my story and tell yours, and we will decide."

They entered the hut and notes were hastily compared. Captain Snow was called into consultation.

It was decided that he should do the talking in case the McCracken, the captain of which he knew and disliked, should be bold enough to run in.

So the Bradys, Alice and the two deckhands waited in the hut.

In a short time the McCracken hove in sight.

She made straight for the inlet, but stopped when the captain caught sight of the Lillie W.

There was a brief wait and then Old King Brady, who was watching in the doorway, saw her start ahead.

He closed the door on the crack and all heard the conversation which followed.

"Lillie W. ahoy!" was shouted from the McCracken. "That you, Cap'n Snow?"

"Right you are, Jim Fox."

"What are you doing there?"

"Got in here by mistake in the fog. What brings you here?"

"Business. I'll explain."

And the McCracken pulled up alongside the Lilly W.

"Who you got aboard, Cap?" demanded Captain Fox.

"Nobody but my crew," was the reply.

"I have three passengers. They will cross you."

"All right. Let them come."

In a moment Sam Delaney and the two Chinamen were seen on board the Lillie W.

Old King Brady closed the door, and they stood back and waited for the climax, which promptly came.

When Sam Delaney threw open the door five revolvers confronted him.

"Gee whiz! The Bradys to the bat!" he gasped.

"That's all, Sam!" said the old detective. "Surrender and you shall be shown every consideration. We have that proposition of yours to settle yet, you know!"

What Sam might have said under other circumstances is a question, but when he heard Captain Fox yell: "I'm down and out, boss! I don't stand for this!" he surrendered at discretion.

A word from Captain Snow to the effect that this was the time the McCracken stood fair to lose her license sent Captain Fox on the back track, and he got out of the creek as quick as he could.

And this ended it, of course.

"Am I arrested, Brady?" demanded the crestfallen hop crook.

"No," replied the old detective. "I'll tell you what I'll do, Sam, if you'll give away the gang and help us to get the hop on the Furnam Castle quietly, you and these men shall go free, and, as for your proposition, we'll take it under consideration later."

"Done!" said Delaney, and practically that ended the case.

Quong Lee was now awakened, for he had slept through it all, and all hands went on board the Lillie W. and returned to New York.

Old King Brady was as good as his word, and he freed his prisoners as soon as the tug touched the wharf.

And so was Sam Delaney as good as his word.

He and one of the Chinamen met the Bradys that morning and the smuggled opium was delivered up to them on the wharf at which the Furnam Castle had tied up.

Arrests in Chinatown followed, but Ping Ding escaped and was never seen again.

Thus all chance of learning poor Fred's history vanished.

To this day the Bradys do not know who he really was.

The arrested hop crooks were heavily fined.

Quong Lee found it convenient to disappear for a while.

He went to San Francisco and was gone some months, but he finally returned, and is still running his dive on Chatham Square.

Old King Brady took Sam Delaney in hand and kept him employed for six weeks.

The man married during that time, and seemed to completely reform.

Later the old detective sent him to San Francisco with a letter of introduction to a well-known detective agency.

And in the employ of this concern Delaney still remains, and has accomplished some very effective work.

But he passes under another name, and his employers have no idea that he had any connection with the case of "The Bradys and the Hop Crooks."

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS' DOUBLE DEATH TRAP; or, AFTER THE ST. LOUIS SEVEN," which will be the next number (464) of "Secret Service."

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ITEMS WORTH READING.

Lincoln's greatest legal triumph was the acquittal of an old neighbor named Duff Armstrong, who was charged with murder. Several witnesses testified that they saw the accused commit the deed one night about eleven o'clock. Lincoln attempted no cross-examination, except to persuade them to reiterate their statements, and to explain that they were able to see the act distinctly because of the bright moonlight. By several of the prosecuting witnesses he proved the exact position and size of the moon at the time of the murder. The prosecution there rested, and Lincoln, addressing the court and the jury, announced that he had no defence to submit except an almanac, which would show that there was no moon on that night. The State's attorney was paralyzed, but the court admitted the almanac as competent testimony, and every witness was completely impeached and convicted of perjury. The verdict was not guilty.

The recent discovery that army posts are thriving places for mosquitoes because these insects breed in old cannon and in the piles of old cannon balls may be supplemented by another discovery which women attached to these posts made in the Philippines with regard to mosquitoes. An officer's wife at Fort Slocum told about it the other evening when some men visitors wearing low shoes and black hose were slapping their shins. "If you were here long you would notice," she said, "that every woman around here wears white hose. It is not because it is the fashion, but because mosquitoes rarely bite through white stockings. We learned that in the Philippines. Black hose seem to attract these pests. There is something about white that repels them. Tell your women folk that when they visit an army post in mosquito time and expect to be out of doors to be sure to put on white stockings. It will save them a great deal of annoyance. A woman rubbing her ankles together because of the misery of mosquito bites is not altogether attractive."

Our trail still leads to the north along the great Government road from Whitehorse to Dawson, a gold-seeker writes in Hunter-Trader-Trapper. It is about 350 miles, well timbered all the way with spruce, poplar and cottonwood; some jack pine just starting in thick masses of many acres. Forest fires ten years ago drove most of the game and fur to other parts, yet we see fresh signs of bear and fox in the dusty road every day for miles and miles. Some duck, mostly mallard, canvasback, and black duck, geese and swan show up nearly every day's travel. This is the middle of May—the grass is

four inches high, blue and white flowers along the roadside, some strawberry blossoms, and yet a pane of glass frozen in our camp kettles each morning. Fruit is killed 1,000 miles south. This Government road is a solitude in summer, not a person for a hundred miles, but in winter, when the ice tops travel on the mighty Yukon river, then this road is a wide-awake, thriving, bustling, hustling, get-there runway for the traders and miners. Great four- and six-horse stages slam through this road night and day from both ends. Change horses every twenty-two miles at hotels called roadhouses. The charges at these roadhouses are \$1.50 for each meal, \$1 for bed, \$1 for handout lunch; beer, etc, 25 cents per drink; hay and oats 5 to 10 cents per pound. The hay comes from Spokane, and the oats from Manitoba, both points about 1,500 miles away. Both articles are first class. We were overtaken on this road by four droves of beef cattle of 125 head in each drove. They were shipped from Calgary, Canada, and Seattle, Wash., 500 miles by rail, 1,000 by sea, then 120 miles by rail, 140 miles on foot, then by boat 250 miles to Dawson, 1,200 miles to Fairbanks. Feed, both oats and hay, averages \$160 per ton. The first cost of cattle is about \$70 per head. They are stall-fed until three years old, and weigh from 1,600 to 2,200 each, the best in the land. The freight on each is more than \$100, the feed and care another \$100. They sell in Fairbanks for \$350 to \$400 each. The man who works the pick and shovel pays for all. Chuck steak, 65 cents; T-bone steak, 90 cents; best cuts, \$1 per pound. One herd lost five head through the ice; the next day the next herd lost nine head at the same place. They went under the ice in twelve feet of water. The miner must pay for this loss also. The hay each herd of 125 eats about \$200 each night on the road. One herd was short a man to drive, so the younger of us two gold-hunters went for five days at \$10 per day and expenses to help out.

WITH THE FUNNY FELLOWS.

"I say, old chap, could you lend me \$5 for a day or two?" "My dear fellow, the \$5 I lend is out at present, and I've several names down for it when it comes back."

"Say, paw." "Well, son?" "What is a diplomat?" "Well, son, I'm a diplomat whenever I succeed in making your mother believe what I tell her."

Lady—And how is your husband now, Mrs. Stodge? Mrs. Stodge—'E still be a bit queer in 'is 'ead, Miss. Since 'e took on so with them folks at the Ebenezer 'e do get them hallucinations so bad.

Bill Nye, the humorist, once had a cow to sell, and advertised her as follows: "Owing to my ill health I will sell at my residence, in township nineteen, range eighteen, according to the Government's survey, one plush raspberry cow, aged eight years. She is of undoubted courage, and gives milk frequently. To a man who does not fear death in any form she would be a great boon. She is very much attached to her present home with a stay chain, but she will be sold to any one who will agree to treat her right. She is one-fourth shorthorn and three-quarters hyena. I will also throw in a double-barrel shotgun, which goes with her. In May she usually goes away for a week or two and returns with a tall red calf with wobbly legs. Her name is Rose. I would rather sell to a non-resident."

STORIES OF SHOPLIFTERS.

By COL. RALPH FENTON.

A devoted little mother with a two-months'-old baby on her shoulder recently entered an uptown store. Over the baby's embroidered robe a long double cloak was wrapped, and the child seemed to require a great deal of attention beneath his cloak, all of which was given by the mother with many smiles and caresses. As she was about leaving the store she was quietly invited into a retired apartment, and beneath the baby's cloak was found secreted something like \$80 worth of goods. She began on shoes and finished on Easter eggs, eight chocolate eggs being stowed away together with handkerchiefs, dolls, rattles, some velvet, and a piece of lace. Of course she cried, and the baby cried in concert, and altogether a damp, depressing scene followed.

At the close of a dull day, as the detective in a large store was about leaving, he saw a prettily-dressed lady take from the candy counter two ten-cent bars of molasses candy.

"I didn't want to prosecute the woman," said the detective, "for I surmised that she had a baby at home or an unusually sweet tooth herself, so I summoned my woman assistant and said loud enough for the lady to hear: 'That woman will have to go before the inspector before she leaves.' The color instantly foresook the lady's face, and a deathly pallor ensued. She flew nervously from one counter to the other, casting furtive glances about to find some place to deposit her stolen goods, and at last dashed frantically into one of the small rooms. My assistant followed and beheld the poor woman hastily devouring the candy. Occasionally she would stop and burst into tears, and then resume her hurried repast. She might have thrown the candy away, but in her fright it did not occur to her, so she devoured the whole lot. I wouldn't have eaten that candy for ten dollars, and I thought that meal, with its probable resulting acute cholera morbus, was sufficient punishment, so I let her go.

"A beautifully dressed woman," the detective added, "tried to carry out some concealed goods one day. She seemed to have plenty of money, and, in fact, had spent a considerable sum, but when search was instituted, what do you suppose we found? Two bright pink silk undershirts. Now, why in the world that respectable middle-aged woman wanted to steal those giddy pink shirts, to wear for the admiration of her pious old husband, I couldn't imagine; but, thinking such wifely devotion should be rewarded, I let her go after she had given up the stolen property.

"Another stylish lady used to come in here with a very elaborate parasol decorated with lace and ribbon, and having a heavy silver monogram on the handle. She had a preference for the notion counter, and as she sat there one special sale day when the people crowded about the counter I took the parasol from her reluctant hand and opened it suddenly. A shower of little articles fell, covering a large circle on the floor, and in the stir that followed my lady escaped. When I looked around she was gone, and I had only the parasol left. I have it still, lace and frills and silver monogram and all.

"Yes, a great many children are sent to help themselves to things, and a great many appropriate things without being sent. I always watch the lunch counter for evidence against cash girls about whom my suspicions are aroused. They don't dare buy ribbons and trinkets to take home, so they gorge themselves at the lunch counter and patronize every apple and peanut stand on the way home. That was the way I first suspected Lillian Smith, the little girl pickpocket, about which so much was said in the papers a few years ago. She was a beautiful little girl, with an innocent, sweet face, whom you would never suspect of anything crooked. I saw her de-

vouring a sixty-cent lunch one day, and immediately I watched her, and after a little found that she was taking eight or nine pocketbooks a day. The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children took up her case, and Mr. Gerry may well feel proud of her, for she has entirely reformed from her bad habits, been adopted by a wealthy family, and is growing up into a beautiful girl.

"A rather pathetic little incident occurred here at Christmas time. The wife of an actor of very good reputation in the city took articles of considerable value from the fancy work department. When detected she made full confession of her guilt, and stated, with many tears, that her husband had been ill for some time—that she had no money to make Christmas presents to her friends, as was her custom, and that she hated to let them know she was so poor. In her pocket was a check from the Actors' Relief Association which partially corroborated her story, and she was finally excused.

"All the way from \$10,000 to \$50,000 a year are lost to proprietors of large stores through shoplifting. In some of the Sixth avenue stores where no detectives are employed three, four, and even five sealskin cloaks are stolen in a day, and rarely do the detectives in stores where they are employed search a person for stolen goods that they do not find concealed about them articles belonging in other stores all along the avenue. In some of these stores a plumber is regularly employed to keep the ladies' toilet in order, for into the sinks are thrown pocketbooks from which the money has been taken, small parcels, when the shoplifter finds she is being watched, cards and tags on goods, and a whole piece of lace or embroidery is sometimes crowded down out of sight to avoid detection.

"About 90 per cent of the pilferers are women. In a store where 470 prosecutions are recorded for one year, only 43 of the culprits were men.

"There are three classes of shop thieves, professional shoplifters, habitual pilferers, and a class of people who, under strong temptation or through great need occasionally commit petit larceny. The latter class are almost invariably excused on confession, apology, and return of the stolen goods.

"The first class mentioned rarely appropriate anything except sealskin cloaks, pieces of silk, velvet or lace, and jewelry. They usually wear a long fur-lined circular in winter, and carry a muff and an umbrella, and always travel in pairs, one watching the floorwalkers and the other covering the shop girls. If a piece of silk, lace or velvet is selected worthy of their efforts, they ask the shop girl for another piece not on the counter; while her back is turned in search of the goods, they slide that which they have selected under their cloaks. Another scheme is to push something off the counter in such a way as to scatter or unfold it, and while the girl bends to pick it up they appropriate what they desire. Sometimes they lay a dainty handkerchief carelessly down over valuable jewelry or laces and carefully take up the object with it. A shoplifter slides her muff on her left wrist, quickly passes the small article she desires into her left hand, then slips the hand into her muff. Umbrellas are favorite places for concealing small articles, and another favorite scheme, particularly in summer, is to carry on the arm a shawl or wrap, which is carelessly thrown down on the counter over a piece of valuable goods and afterward picked up with the goods inside.

"Sealskin saccos are usually hooked on a large hook fastened for that purpose inside a shoplifter's circular, near the neck. Recently a detective, watching a lady board a car, saw, as one foot was lifted to the step, a sealskin cloak hanging from beneath her dress, and he kindly relieved her of it.

"A lady came down the stairs of a large store with a sealskin jacket carried boldly over her shoulder. She was seen tearing the tag off, suspicion was aroused, and she was de-

tained. She claimed to have brought the cloak down to show to a friend, but as the friend could not be found, she was 'rough shadowed' about the city through the day, and seen bringing a handsome cloak out of one store and a valuable shawl from another, in the same way, which she gave to her accomplice outside.

"Two little children conceived an ingenious method of stealing ribbons, which consisted in carrying a little basket with holes in the bottom, through which an end of ribbon was passed and pulled until they had taken the entire roll."

MAKING PLATES FOR UNCLE SAM'S CURRENCY

It can safely be said that not one out of a hundred people who handle banknotes know how much trouble it takes to make them. The "making" in this case, of course, is understood in the sense of producing the attractive specimens of the engraver's art in green, orange, and black. Otherwise the "making" comes quite easy for more people than the average citizen is aware of. Even the more or less crude work of the counterfeiter is the result of laborious and painstaking efforts of many weeks. In detective stories one is wont to read that artists of the highest standing frequently lend their genius to the production of the "queer," but this is indignantly denied by the legitimate artists.

"During my long career I have heard of but two or three good engravers who had to do with counterfeits," said L. J. Hatch, formerly of the Government Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and now connected with the Western Bank-Note Company. "The good engraver would scorn to engage in such work. His standing as an artist and a citizen is too high for that sort of thing."

One can readily gain an idea of the minuteness of bank-note work when it takes a good engraver from twenty to thirty days to complete the vignette—portrait or scene—alone.

"Each portrait required a different combination of lines and dots to harmonize with the features of the man to be portrayed," said Mr. Hatch. "There is no system of portrait engraving. If an artist would attempt to employ a settled method he would distort the features. In fact, each engraver puts his own individuality into his work, and his production is as characteristic of him as the signature is of a writer. So much is this the case that one engraver in this line will be able to tell the work of another at a glance."

Truly, the lot of a bank-note engraver is that of a patient toiler. Day after day he plods away with his assortment of diamond-pointed gravers, some of them as fine as the finest needles. Line by line and dot by dot he carves into the shining steel plate before him a miniature of the design to be reproduced. The days lengthen into weeks and the weeks into months before his work is finished, yet each line and dot is of his own creation until the minute carvings blend into one beautiful production—a speaking likeness of the design, and still so widely different in the execution. That part of the plate, however, is not the one from which the note is printed. The lathe worker and the letterer have been busy on their parts of the design while the portrait engraver was working. Each artist works on a separate piece of steel. These pieces are hardened, and form the die. From the latter the design is transferred to a steel roll of softer nature by applying an immense pressure; actually impressing the design of the die to the roll, on which, of course, the parts sunk in the die will be elevated and the elevations depressed.

This part of the work, though mechanical, requires the greatest degree of nicety and exact adjustment of parts in the complicated machinery. Its results, speaking by comparison, are to a stereotype matrix what a steel engraving of modern

times is to an ancient wood cut. The steel roll, containing now what may be termed the matrix of the note, or rather one side of it, is hardened in turn, and from the roll the design is transferred to a softer plate of steel by the same process of pressure. The latter plate is the one from which the printing is done. Inasmuch as not more than from ten to twelve thousand impressions on paper can be taken from one steel plate, it is clear that numerous printing plates have to be made from the original engraving, which is known as the "bed piece."

The plates used for printing are immediately destroyed when the impressions begin to show flaws. The "bed pieces" are preserved in a vault of the Treasury, and temporarily transferred to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing when it becomes necessary to make new printing plates. All this is done under the strictest supervision, of course, yet it has happened that wax impressions got into the hands of counterfeiters. These wax impressions have been treated with chemicals known only to the producers of the "queer," until every line, dot, and filament of the genuine original was transferred to the counterfeit plate. Of course, in such cases nothing remained for the Government but to retire the entire series of genuine notes from circulation. It happens not infrequently that counterfeiters produce a small number of the "queer" stuff with obvious defects. Then, after the press, or the so-called counterfeit detectors have called public attention to the faults, the latter are corrected, and what may be termed a revised edition of the counterfeit is issued in large numbers, more dangerous than the first issue.

Photography has seen its best days in counterfeiting. There are special points in each genuine note, notably the tints of different color, which the photographer cannot produce. But there are methods of operating on steel plates which expert counterfeiters know to handle with great dexterity and no mean workmanship. Two methods are especially dangerous, because they produce the original design with such exactness that only the quality of the engraving—like in the recent five-dollar silver certificate—furnishes a criterion to determine whether a note is counterfeit or genuine. All this is, of course, said without reference to the quality and texture of the paper. For the experienced counterfeiter, especially if he works in the smaller denominations of currency, the paper is not much of an obstacle. He knows how to "age" the bills so that they have the appearance of having been much handled. In the case of bills of smaller value which are not very closely scrutinized this artificial "aging" is usually sufficient to preclude detection.

The professional counterfeiter rarely, if ever, places his own work into circulation. He sells to what is known as the "second party," and the latter in turn to the "shover."

Experienced detectives claim that the "second party," as a rule, pays about thirty per cent of the face value for his "queer" stuff, and he in turn sells to the "shover" at an advance at from fifteen to twenty per cent. The "shover" generally travels in company with a "pal," who carries the bulk of the "queer." This is done in order that if the counterfeit is fastened upon the "shover" and his arrest follows, and no other counterfeit be found on his person, it relieves him, in a measure, from the suspicion of being a "professional." The prices paid vary, of course, with the greater or lesser degree of workmanship in the counterfeit, and so is the manner of circulation adapted to the circumstances. Smaller notes are pretty generally circulated without regard to unison in action, but if big bills have to be floated arrangements are made by which a bulk of the "queer" can be put in circulation simultaneously—down to the minute—in every large city and in numerous places of each city. This is done to circumvent any telegraphic "pointers" sent from one city to another of the discovery of counterfeits.

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