

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

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No. 500.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 21, 1908.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS AND THE CHINESE IDOL; OR, THE CLEW FOUND IN PELL STREET. *By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.*



While the Chinamen were chattering excitedly, the big fellow suddenly got a move on. Seizing a hatchet, he went for the idol on the little altar, pushing the priest to one side. The Bradys and Alice made no attempt to interfere.

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PRICE FIVE CENTS.

CHAPTER I.

DIPPING INTO THE DOBBS MYSTERY.

The case upon which is founded the story we are about to relate is one that caused much excitement in the city of New York at the time of its occurrence.

It dates back several years ago at a time when the famous Chinese quarter, now open to any hayseed who cares to pay the price on the "rubberneck wagon," was much of a mystery, and little known to the outside public.

But included in the inside contingent were the world-famous detectives of the Brady Detective Bureau, of Union Square, who knew it then, as they know it now, from top to bottom, inside and out.

It was not supposed at first when that miserly old millionaire, John Frazer Dobbs, was found murdered in his office, that the case was in the least connected with the Chinese.

The police tried their hand at it and failed.

Three separate detective bureaus also went at it with profuse promises of success.

All failed.

Meanwhile the Bradys, engrossed in their own business, paid little or no attention to the matter.

Murders occur every day in New York.

Besides this, it was by no means certain that old man Dobbs had been murdered.

Several of the papers openly advocated the suicide theory, and the Coroner had been of that opinion from the start, and held it right along.

It was not until the papers stopped printing anything about the matter that the Bradys got their call, and it came one morning over the telephone shortly after the opening of the mail.

The bell rang sharply, and it was Young King Brady to the 'phone.

The conversation, beginning with the unseen speaker, ran as follows:

"Is this the office of the Brady Detective Bureau?"

"It is."

"Can I talk with one of the partners?"

"You are talking with one now. What is it you want?"

"I wish to have a little talk with Old King Brady about the Dobbs murder case."

"Who are you?"

"I am Dr. Peter Dobbs, brother of the deceased. I am an old man, and find it hard to get about. I will wait on Old King Brady at any time or place, but I should like to be sure of finding him when I call."

"Hold the wire and I will let you know."

Old King Brady was consulted.

"I don't recall any brother in that case," said the

old detective. "There was a dissipated, high-rolling son, who has taken charge of everything. There was also a crazy daughter, who is believed to be dead, but I remember no brother."

"What shall I tell him?"

"Oh, I will see him. We are not busy at present. I have paid no attention to the case, and should like to know for curiosity's sake what it is all about. If he is an old man we will wait on him, or he can come here, just as he likes."

Harry returned to the telephone and reported accordingly.

"I will call at your office any time you say," replied the voice at the end of the wire.

"Where are you stopping?" demanded Harry.

"Astor House."

"Can you come now?"

Dr. Dobbs said that he could, and he came.

A little man with snow-white hair and wrinkled face.

A mild man who spoke in a low, confidential way, and to whose voice it was pleasant to listen.

A person who impressed Old King Brady as a good man, and the old detective is a most excellent judge.

The whole firm were present to receive him.

That is: Old King Brady, Young King Brady, and Alice Montgomery, the female partner in the Bureau.

With the old gentleman came an odd little child, a girl of about ten years, rather good looking, but with features, hair and eyes which made her look strangely like a Chinese child, which naturally puzzled the detectives, for Dr. Dobbs was most certainly an American—that, anyone could see.

Dr. Dobbs was very business-like.

He presented his professional card, and the Bradys saw that he was located at Randallville, N. Y., a town which he explained was way up in the northern part of the State.

He informed the detectives that his branch of the Dobbs family belonged at Randallville, and that he was the last of his generation.

Having thus perfectly introduced himself, the doctor came to the child.

"And this little miss," he said, "is my grandniece, Ellen Dobbs Chung. I presume you are somewhat surprised at her appearance, so before beginning my story I will explain that part. She is the daughter of my brother's daughter, Ellen Dobbs. This lady, having become deeply interested in Chinese mission work, ended by deserting her father, who was a widower, and marrying one of her Chinese pupils, Fing Chung by name. This man took her to live in Chinatown. My brother cast his daughter off, and would have no more to do with her. Her brother, Archibald, my brother's other child, served her in the same way. For two years Ellen lived with her

Chinese husband, and then died. Shortly before her death my wife and I received the letter I am about to show you, which will explain about this little lady. Read that first and you will better understand the situation."

And the doctor produced a letter, dated back eight years, which read as follows:

"New York, Dec. 2d, 189—.

"Dear Uncle and Aunt:—I write to you on my dying bed to plead for my child, my little Ellen, all I have left in this world. You must have heard of the fearful mistake I made in marrying Fing Chung, my Chinese pupil. My husband treated me well enough in his Chinese way, but it is now a year since he went to California, leaving me with my baby, and I have never heard of him since. I am now dying. My father and brother have refused every appeal, and I turn to you. Dear uncle and aunt, take my little one. Save her from the horrible life she will necessarily have to lead in Chinatown, and heaven will bless you. For me nothing can be done. I may even be dead before this reaches you. Save my child!

"Your affectionate niece,

"ELLEN DOBBS CHUNG.

"No. — Mott Street."

"An affecting appeal," said Old King Brady, who had read the letter aloud. "Evidently you took the child."

"Yes; and I came to New York at once," replied the doctor, "but even so, I was too late to see my niece alive. I rescued the child, however, and here she is. I brought her with me that you might see her."

There was some further talk on this line, and the Bradys and Alice spoke with the child, who seemed a bright little miss.

Then the case was taken up again.

"The situation is this," said Dr. Dobbs. "My brother was found murdered in his bedroom in the office building at No. —, Broadway. Who killed him is not known. His effects have been thoroughly overhauled, but no will has been discovered. That he made one I will presently prove to you. My nephew, Archie Dobbs, is now preparing to claim the entire estate. I am determined that this child shall have her rights."

"And can she be denied them?" demanded Old King Brady.

"She has already been denied them," was the reply. "Archie claims that this letter is a forgery, that the child is not his sister's. It is up to me to prove the contrary, and this I am afraid I shall find it a difficult thing to do."

"I am afraid you will, if you have no better evidence than that letter," said Old King Brady. "But now, Doctor, instead of going on with your story let me question you. It will be the easiest way of getting at the facts of this case. To begin with, how much did your brother leave?"

"Between eight and ten millions."

"Of what does the property consist?"

"Mostly of lower Broadway real estate, the remainder in stocks and bonds."

"Mr. Dobbs was found dead in his room in the building. No. — Broadway. I understand that he lived there, Am I right?"

"Yes. After his daughter deserted him my brother sold his elegant home on West Fifty-third street and took up his quarters in two rooms in this old office building.

"One he used as a bedroom, the other as an office. Archie went to live at a fashionable hotel. My brother was a very close man, and he spent almost nothing on himself. Archie had an allowance of \$50 a week, and also property in his own right, inherited from his mother's people. He and his father saw little of each other. So they have lived for the last eight years."

"I see. Now about your brother's death, which I have not looked into in any way. How was he killed?"

"He was found in bed with a dagger buried in his heart."

"Anyone suspected?"

"First the janitor of the building; then Archie himself came under suspicion, but that seems to have fallen through. I have not heard of anyone else."

"And the janitor?"

"He proved a perfect alibi."

"Was there robbery connected with the murder?"

"I understand not. Really, I am not posted, Mr. Brady. All I know is what I have read in the papers. As for robbery, I doubt if there was much to steal; my brother lived very plainly there. He once told me that he never kept money by him, except just enough for his daily expenses."

"But his murderer may have thought otherwise."

"That is true."

"Did you attend the funeral?"

"No; this is my first visit to New York since the affair."

"Where did you last see and talk with your brother?"

"It is about a year ago. I visited him in New York at his office. That is what I am coming to. He told me then that Archie was a dissipated scoundrel, and that if he did not mind himself he, the father, would make a new will, cutting him off with a shilling. I asked him if he had made a will, and he replied that he had; that he had divided his property equally between Archie and little Ellie here. This surprised me, and I asked him to show me the will, which he did, so you see I know what I am talking about, Mr. Brady. He refused to see the child or to have anything to do with her, but said that she was still his granddaughter, and that he did not propose to keep her out of her inheritance. This is the reason why I have come here. My wife and I have learned to love this little miss, and I propose to see her rights maintained, and you will get your pay if you undertake this case."

"As I understand you, what you want me to do is to find the will rather than to solve the mystery of your brother's death."

"That is it, but with your well-known skill, probably you will do both, if you once take hold."

"What do you think of the suicide theory?"

"It is possible. My brother was a very melancholy man. In his younger days he ran away to sea, and was later mate of a trading ship. He married his first wife in India or China somewhere. There is much mystery about those years, which he never explained to me."

"Any children by that marriage?"

"He always assured me that there were none."

"How did he make his money?"

"When he quit the sea he took to speculating in Wall Street, and his fortune was accumulated in that way."

"I am almost done. What do his lawyers say about the will question?"

He had no regular lawyer. In his real estate transactions he employed first one and then another, as I understand. I think I have told you about all there is to tell, Mr. Brady, but if there is anything more you would like to ask I am at your service."

"Just one question," said the old detective. "In a case like this one is sometimes able to pick up a clue by looking into a man's fads. Had your brother any?"

"Never that I heard of," replied the doctor. "I think it would be safe to say that his only fad was making money and in hoarding it up."

"Did he collect anything?"

"Nothing but dollars."

"Nothing in the way of coins, curiosities, ancient arms, bugs, butterflies, anything in fact?"

"You are persistent about this point, Mr. Brady. If John was a collector I never knew it. The only thing I ever saw about him of that sort was a horrible old Chinese idol which he kept in his bedroom down there on Broadway. At the time I visited him he told me that he picked the thing up out in China."

"Well, we have located something," said Old King Brady, adding:

"You may wonder at my persistency, Doctor, and I really cannot explain why I did persist. The idea came into my head, and I wanted to work it out. And now let me suggest that we visit the scene of this tragedy and see what we can find."

"All of us?" demanded the doctor.

"Yes; my partners usually accompany me in these preliminary examinations."

"But the child. I would sooner she did not go."

"She can remain here; or perhaps you have some other place."

"No; I have none. I am accustomed to stop at the Astor House, so I went there. I find it much changed, and as it is now little else than a man's hotel, I propose to make a change to-day. I think I will look up lodgings and engage some responsible woman to look after Ellie when I am out."

"It would be as well," replied Old King Brady.

Leaving the child at the office, the Bradys with Alice and Dr. Dobbs started down town.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT YOUNG KING BRADY FOUND AT THE TOP OF THE LADDER.

No. — Broadway was one of a row of old buildings, practically the last of their kind below Old Trinity.

They found the business office and a man who introduced himself as "Mr. Davis" in charge.

The dead man's room was in the greatest confusion.

It had been so plainly furnished that it was hard to believe that it could have been the dwelling place of a multi-millionaire.

But now, even the few poor belongings which it contained lay tossed about in every direction.

Mr. Davis explained this by saying that it was the way Archie Dobbs had left things after the search made for the will.

"I see," replied the old detective. "Now, Mr. Davis, we are taking up this case rather late in the day, and I must ask a few questions if I don't intrude upon your time."

"Not at all," replied the lawyer, "but for whom are you taking up the case, may I ask?"

"For me," replied the doctor.

"Oh! I see. Of course I can't permit you to examine the books without an order from the surrogate."

"Which I can easily obtain if it is necessary," said Old King Brady.

"Very good," replied Davis. "Go ahead with your questions. I will answer as well as I can, but remember I did not come here until it was all over."

"Who discovered the body?"

"Jim Dowd, the janitor."

"Did he inform the police?"

"Yes."

"What time of day was it?"

"Ten in the morning. Mr. Dobbs was usually in his office at eight. Finding that he did not appear, the janitor started in to investigate."

"And found?"

"The old gentleman in bed with a dagger in his heart."

"Undressed? Lying on the outside of the bed, or how?"

"He was fully dressed, and lying on the outside of the bed."

"There must have been considerable blood flowing. I see no traces of it, but then the bed clothes are gone."

"They were stained, I believe. They were removed by the Coroner's order."

"How long did the doctor who was called say the man had been dead?"

"For some hours."

"You don't know exactly?"

"No; I don't."

"The janitor reported the front door securely locked, I presume?"

"I don't know. I suppose so. I really don't know much about the matter."

Old King Brady walked to the window and looked out.

There was a low extension roof behind the rear of one of the buildings on Trinity Place.

With a ladder it would have been easy for a man to have got up to the window from this roof.

Old King Brady noted the situation, and then turned to Dr. Dobbs.

"Where stood the Chinese idol you spoke of?" he added. "I see nothing of it here."

The doctor pointed to an elegantly inlaid ebony table, the only really expensive object in the room.

"It stood on that table when I saw it," he said.

"Was any such object found by those who first entered here?" Old King Brady asked the lawyer.

"Not that I have heard of," was the reply.

"Was the window here open or shut when the body was discovered?"

"I don't know."

"We shall have to get hold of the police who first visited here," said Old King Brady. "Meanwhile what about that very evident secret panel at the back of that closet."

"Hello," exclaimed Harry, who, following his usual custom, had remained quiet during this preliminary talk. "I was wondering if you would catch on to that."

"I really fail to see how anyone could very well miss it," replied the old detective.

"I confess I don't see it yet," said the doctor.

"I must also plead ignorance," added Davis.

"And yet it is plain enough," said Old King Brady. "Look here!"

He entered the closet, seized hold of a row of clothes hooks, gave a sharp pull, and out swung the whole back of the closet.

"Can't you both see," he added, "that the back of that closet stands at least two feet out from the party wall? Now see what we have here!"

It was a ladder fitted into the space behind the secret panel.

"Well, I am sure none of the other detectives caught on to that!" exclaimed Davis.

Truth told, the panel was not so very evident. But the Bradys have had to do with so many such arrangements that they saw into this one at a glance.

"It must lead up under the roof," said Harry.

"The ladder, yes," replied the old detective. "Well, I am glad we have struck something that the others missed."

Just then someone called from the other office.

It proved to be a man wanting Mr. Davis, and he went to attend to him.

"We must climb that ladder and investigate," said Old King Brady, "but in the meantime let us finish up here. There may be secret drawers in that table."

"It is evidently of Chinese workmanship," Alice remarked.

"No doubt of it, and a very expensive article," added Harry. "I once priced a table like that in a store on Pell street. The Chink only wanted two hundred dollars for it. He said that was cheap."

"If you can believe him," added Old King Brady, beginning to tumble the table about.

It contained one large drawer, which was empty.

Old King Brady turned the table upside down and showed that beneath was a closed-up space.

"There is certainly a secret drawer here. Give me a few minutes, Doctor. We can break this to pieces, of course, but I think I can open it up without that if I am given a little time."

"Take your time," replied the doctor. "I don't see where the hurry comes in."

Davis joined them then.

"Looking for secret drawers?" he demanded. "Your

methods are certainly a little more up to date than the methods of those who preceded you."

He had scarcely finished his sentence before Old King Brady had the drawer open.

Inside was a bunch of letters—nothing else.

They were addressed "Mr. Dobbs, No — Broadway, New York," in a very cramped hand.

"That writing looks like a Chinaman's attempt at English," said Alice.

"You are right," replied Old King Brady, taking one of the letters out of the envelope. "This is in Chinese. Here, Alice, your job."

Now, as it happens, Alice Montgomery can both read and write Chinese.

Not only that, but all the ordinary European languages are at this gifted young woman's command.

The daughter of a missionary, born and brought up in China, Alice came to be mistress of the most difficult language on earth.

"While Alice tackles the letters, I'll get up that ladder and see what's above," said Harry.

"Go," replied Old King Brady, adding:

"Certainly, Doctor, we are finding plenty of work here in spite of the failure of our predecessors."

"Quite so," replied the doctor. "There are detectives and detectives, it seems."

Meanwhile Harry had ascended the ladder.

Now he could be heard calling down from above.

Old King Brady stepped into the closet, for he could not catch what his partner was saying.

He found Harry looking down through a hatchway.

"Governor, come up!" he said. "We are just getting into business. There's a dead man up here!"

CHAPTER III.

OLD KING BRADY AND ALICE FIND A CLEW IN PELL STREET.

Old King Brady looked about the closet and said in a quiet way:

"Excuse me, gentlemen, but there is a matter demanding our attention at the top of that ladder. Alice, finish with your letters, please."

And Alice understood that she was not wanted overhead just then.

Old King Brady climbed the ladder.

"I've got to watch the office," called Davis. "I shall have to stay here."

"I'll go on and you can come later," replied Dr. Dobbs, and he started up the ladder after the old detective.

"Stoop or you'll knock your head," said Harry.

He stood stooping himself further along in a low passage directly under the roof.

Old King Brady followed him to a side door, which stood open.

"Now what made me say that the dead man was a collector," he muttered.

The room into which he looked was small, but high enough to enable Harry to stand upright.

It was filled with all sorts of odd bric-a-brac.

But the thing which attracted Old King Brady's attention as it had done Harry's, was the body of a man which lay stretched upon the floor, face downward.

He wore only a suit of underclothes.

Blood was in evidence everywhere, as well it might be, for there was a knife buried in the man's back.

But this was only part, and the rest we can hardly describe.

Enough to say that the man had been dead for many days.

It was all the Bradys and Dr. Dobbs could do to stand the foul odors which filled the little room.

"This is very serious!" cried Old King Brady, glancing about.

The room had another door and one window, both opening out upon the lower, or rear roof of the building.

Old King Brady threw up the window and tried the door.

It yielded readily. He saw that the lock had been sawed out, the work evidently having been done from the outside.

All hands stepped out upon the roof, glad to get the fresh air for a moment.

"What kind of detectives have you got here in New York that they should overlook such a thing as this?" cried Dr. Dobbs. "I don't think there is any doubt about that corpse having lain as we see it ever since my brother's murder."

"It is indeed hard to understand how it can have been overlooked," replied Old King Brady, "but such is evidently the case, and the situation of this room accounts for it."

He was right.

After a fire, which had taken place some years before, the rear of the building had been cut down one story.

The back part of the front was covered with tin, and there was a door leading in through it, but this rear room was an entirely separate institution like a little house built on the lower roof.

Old King Brady tried this rear door, and found it locked.

There was a standing ladder connecting the higher roof.

Such was the situation discovered by the Bradys.

Evidently the intruder had effected his entrance from the roof.

That the police and the detectives who had preceded the Bradys should have overlooked all this seemed strange indeed.

"Mr. Davis must be informed," said Old King Brady. "Harry, you go tell him. Explain to Alice that she must not come up."

Harry departed.

"I suppose your Coroner won't allow us to interfere with that corpse," said Dr. Dobbs, "but I should like to get a look at the face."

"By rights we ought not to move it," replied the old detective. "But we must strain a point. I also am curious to see what the man looks like, but let us wait for the lawyer. In the meantime to take in the full sit-

uation. You see, Doctor, that your brother must have been something of a collector. This room looks like a Chinese curiosity shop. It was also used as a bedroom, as the bed in the corner proves. Clearly that man was in bed when the attack came."

"That seems to be a sort of workbench in the corner there," remarked the doctor as they stood together looking in at the door.

"And let us see what was doing," replied Old King Brady, entering, for the fresh air had made the place endurable now.

But it was hard to tell what work had been carried on here.

There were various small tools scattered about the bench.

One was a steel mould with queer little round cavities in it.

There were several bottles containing chemicals.

Also a jar fitted with a white lustrous substance.

In a drawer which the doctor opened there were hundreds of fish scales.

Mr. Davis and Harry now entered.

The lawyer was greatly excited over the discovery of the detectives.

"Who can this fellow be?" he exclaimed after some general talk.

"I'll raise the head and we will get a look at the face," said the doctor.

He wrapped a towel about his hands and raised the head.

"Why, he's a Chinaman!" cried Harry, and such, indeed, was the case.

This only added to the mystery.

The man's clothes lay over a chair, and Old King Brady searched the pockets, finding them practically empty.

He also made a careful examination of the room, but nothing came of that either.

"And now, Doctor, let us pull out," the old detective said. "We have nothing to do with this business. But one question before we leave. Where did the Chinese idol you spoke of stand? I see nothing of the sort among this collection of arms, vases and bric-a-brac."

"It stood upon that inlaid table downstairs," replied the doctor.

"Can you describe it?"

"It was the sitting figure of a man with the legs folded under him in Chinese style. The features were particularly ugly. I recall a very large nose."

"Of what was it made?"

"Of bronze as near as I recollect, at least it looked like bronze."

"Have you seen anything like that around here?" asked Old King Brady, turning to Mr. Davis.

But the lawyer declared that he had not.

"Are you going to notify the police of the discovery?" he asked.

"I can if you wish," replied the old detective, "but it is all I shall do about it. I am working for Dr. Dobbs. I don't propose to mix up in the police end of the case at all."

They returned downstairs.

"Now, Alice, a word with you," said Old King Brady, and he took her to one side.

"Harry has explained his discovery," he said, "but he has not told you that the man turns out to be a Chinese."

"Indeed! I am not surprised."

"About those letters, which I suppose gave you the hint. They must either be left with Davis or given to the police. What are they about?"

"They are very important, Mr. Brady. They relate to the pearl business in which Mr. Dobbs appears to have had an interest. They are from three different Chinamen, one in Boston, one in Chicago, and one in San Francisco. Dobbs seems to have been selling them pearls."

"Genuine pearls?"

"There is no hint that they are not genuine, but now you speak of it, I think it very likely they are false, for the prices are astonishingly low."

"We ought to have copies of the letters, but I suppose we can refer to them any time."

"I have copied the names and addresses of the writers."

"By Jove, Alice, I believe that this pearl business is the key to the whole case, and that the pearls are false and were made upstairs. There is a workbench there, a jar filled with a white lustrous substance which looks decidedly pearly. There is also a drawer full of fish scales of which fake pearls are made."

"And this is done most skillfully by the Chinese. Really I should like to go upstairs and have a look."

"As you will. It is not a pleasant sight."

"But if there is a Chinese end to this case it is bound to be my end, and I ought to know all there is to know."

"Very well. Go then. Harry, take Alice upstairs."

While they were gone Old King Brady spoke to Mr. Davis about the letters, and told him frankly what their substance was.

"Shall I take them to the police or will you keep them?" he asked.

"I wish you would take charge of them," replied Mr. Davis. "I am all upset by this discovery. I suppose we shall have the place swarming with detectives again."

"I can't understand what my brother can have had to do with pearls, real or false," remarked the doctor, when upon the return of Harry and Alice they descended to the street. "But then I know so little of him that I suppose I ought not to say it."

"There is one thing certain," replied the old detective, "and that is that your brother must have been pretty well mixed up with the Chinese, which being the case, puts an entirely new face on the affair. I look for interesting developments, Dr. Dobbs, and I have no doubt they will come."

Harry and the doctor now returned to the office, while Old King Brady and Alice went to Police Headquarters with their report.

As soon as they were clear of the doctor, Alice sprung a surprise.

"I found something up there, Mr. Brady," she said. "Look at this."

She produced a slip of red paper with Chinese characters upon it.

"Where did you get it?" demanded the old detective. "I didn't see anything like that!"

"It was in the trousers pocket."

"And I overlooked it! I am getting careless."

"It was there. Harry said you searched the pockets, but I thought I would take a try at them."

"And what is it all about?"

"It reads: 'I am Ching Chop, of No. —, Pell street. If I am killed and this is found, notify my father, Ching Chop, Street of the Seven Willow Trees, Canton, China.'"

"Well! Evidently the fellow expected death. This gives us a start. We must go to Pell street as soon as we are through with the police."

Old King Brady cut it short at headquarters.

His announcement created considerable excitement. He was urged to take hold of the case for the Police Department, but he refused.

Nor did he go any further than to allow Alice to translate the Chinese letters.

He expressed no opinion one way or the other as to what the references to the pearl business meant, leaving the police to work that out for themselves.

As soon as they were free he and Alice hurried down to Pell street.

The number in question proved to be one of the oldest of the Chinese tenements there.

A grocery store occupied the lower floor.

Above, the rooms swarmed with Chinese tenants.

Alice did the inquiring, and they were informed that Ching Chop lived on the top floor in the rear.

They located the room and knocked on the door, but received no answer.

An old Chinaman poked his head out of the door of the room in front and Alice tackled him.

After a few minutes' conversation the man pulled in his head and shut the door.

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

"That Ching Chop is away most of the time," replied Alice. "He says that he hasn't seen him this three weeks."

"Did you ask the man's business?"

"Yes. He says he doesn't know; that Ching Chop travels a great deal."

"He is the dead man sure," said Old King Brady.

"It certainly looks so," replied Alice. "What are you going to do?"

"Did that man know me?"

"Oh, yes."

"Then we will go in and see what we can find."

No one else put in an appearance in the hall.

The Chinese, while the most curious of all races, are also the most timid.

The mere sight of a detective causes them to draw into their shell.

Doubtless through peepholes Old King Brady was seen by others, but the mere sight of his familiar figure was enough to make the tenants on that floor keep within doors.

With his skeleton keys Old King Brady opened the door, and he and Alice shut themselves in the room.

It was the rear chamber of that floor and of good size.

The place was fitted up as a bedroom, kitchen and workshop combined.

Along one side of the wall was a small workbench, but there were no tools and nothing to indicate what it had been used for.

Old King Brady judged that Ching Chop had originally carried on business here, but had moved his belongings to Mr. Dobbs's secret room.

A thorough search was made, and the one thing of interest which turned up was another bunch of Chinese letters.

There were so many of them that Alice did not stop to read any of them, but tied them in a parcel and took them with her for future examination.

As she was doing this another slip of red paper was found.

This she read, and it proved to be much like the one found in the dead man's pocket.

"I am Ching Chop," it ran. "If I am found dead, notify my father, Ching Chop, Street of the Seven Willow Trees, Canton, China. I am the originator of the secret process for making pearls which no man can distinguish from the real. For this I am much envied by my enemy, and his name is Ping Pank, priest of the secret Order of Ten. Avenge me, kind friends, for it will be he who has taken my life!"

"Good!" cried Old King Brady, when Alice finished reading this. "A clew at last!"

CHAPTER IV.

OLD KING BRADY KEEPS ON DISCOVERING THINGS.

That evening at the office, the Bradys discussed the value of the clew found in Pell street.

The letters, which had been carefully examined by Alice, offered no additional information of importance.

Few referred to the pearl business, and the references there contained were of no value to the case.

It appeared that Ching Chop had been a working jeweler in China, and that he had followed the same trade in San Francisco before coming to New York.

But above all this mass which took Alice so long to decipher rose the slip of red paper bearing the name of Ping Pank.

This was definite—tangible.

But where to look for this priest of the Order of Ten was the question.

The Bradys have friends enough in Chinatown to whom they could and did apply, but nothing came of it.

Not a trace could they find of Ping Pank.

No such man appeared to have been ever heard of in Chinatown.

It was the same with the secret Order of the Ten.

It must have indeed been a secret order, for nobody seemed to have ever heard of it.

Even old Tom Lee, head of the On Leong Tong, and generally known as the "Mayor of Chinatown," professed utter ignorance.

Old King Brady even went so far as to show him the paper.

Tom Lee gravely declared that it was a fake; that there was no such order.

But this was by no means satisfactory to Old King Brady.

He knew that if there existed any reason why Tom Lee might benefit by holding back the information that he would not hesitate to do so.

That evening the Dobbs murder case was revived again, and the papers were filled with the gruesome discovery of the Bradys.

Three days passed, and no light was shed upon the mystery.

On account of a Secret Service call the Bradys were not able to put in the time on their Chinese case which they would have wished.

But one thing the old detective did do, and that was to institute a search for James Dowd, the janitor.

This task he put in Alice's hands, but she utterly failed to accomplish anything.

No one seemed to know where the mah lived, nor what had become of him.

Meanwhile Dr. Dobbs had a run-in with Archie Dobbs, his nephew.

From some remark made the doctor jumped at the conclusion that Archie had found the will and destroyed it.

The Bradys made several efforts to see the young man, but failed.

Archie seemed to avoid them.

And so the case went during those three days.

On the morning of the fourth day Old King Brady declared that they must take hold in earnest as the Secret Service business had now been cleaned up.

"I propose to find that janitor if it takes a leg," he said. "You, Harry and Alice, take hold of the Chinese end. I have an idea that the old Chink we saw down there on Pearl street may know something. Suppose you two get down there and interview him."

"A better way will be for me to get into Chinese disguise and see if I can hire Ching Chop's room," said Alice. "That will give me a chance to find out what is said of the man in the house. Of course everyone in Chinatown knows that the man was found dead by the Bradys. It will make them shy of us unless we disguise."

"Anything," said the old detective. "I leave the matter entirely in your hands. As for me, I'm going after the janitor."

And he went.

There was one thing which had not been tried in the matter of the janitor, and that was to see the Tammany Hall district leader, whose beat covered that section of the First Ward.

This the old detective proposed to do now.

The man was one Dowd, who kept a saloon on Greenwich street.

To this saloon the old detective now went and found his man.

Here he had even less trouble in getting what the man knew out of him than he expected, for the saloon-

keeper was one of those natural talkers who cannot keep a still tongue, even if they try.

"Why, yes, Mr. Brady, I know Jim Dowd well enough," he said. "A mighty slick article he is, too. I have been wondering why no detective came to me about him. If you want my opinion, he is more deeply mixed up in that matter than is believed."

"Hello!" cried Old King Brady. "Do you consider that he murdered his boss and that Chinaman then?"

Not at all. That's not the kind of man he is. Jim was a timid fellow. He would never have had the courage, even if he did have the inclination, but what I do think is that he knew more about the business than he let on. He was horribly scared while the detectives were watching him, but as soon as they let up on that he seemed to get the big head. He came in here often. He was in the last day he was seen at the building, and after he got a few drinks in he began talking large, and telling about a new business he was going into, and how there was big money in it. He evidently had something up his sleeve. Among other things he told me that he should probably go to Boston in a few days. I haven't seen him since."

This, of course, was highly important.

Old King Brady began to question the saloonkeeper further.

"How old a man is Dowd?" he asked.

"About thirty, I should say," was the reply.

"Married or single?"

"He's a single man as far as I know."

"Have you any idea who his friends are? Can't you tell me somebody who knew him well upon whom I could call for information?"

Dowlas declared that he could not, but just as Old King Brady was about to give it up he let out something which changed the whole complexion of affairs.

"I'll tell you one thing," he said. "On the last day I saw him he came in here drinking, as I said. He seemed to have lots of money. This was about noon. Towards five o'clock he looked in again, and stood around for a few minutes.

"Then there came in a low-sized man, very well dressed who I had never seen before. He seemed to know Jim. They shook hands and sat down at that table over in the corner. Jim pulled a little paper out of his pocketbook, and out of it took what looked to be a pearl, or mebbe it was glass. I'll never tell you. At all events this feller examined it very carefully, and then putting it back in the paper, he put the whole business into his own pocketbook, and handed Jim a fat wad. I wasn't going to tell you this first off, for it is really none of my business, but I suppose you might as well know."

Here came the pearl end of the question cropping out again.

Old King Brady could regard this important clew only one way, and that was that the janitor had found finished fake pearls either in the office, in Mr. Dobbs's bedroom, or in the room up on the roof, and that he had stolen them, for what would a janitor be doing with big pearls?

It looked also as if Dowd had been able to sell his pearls as genuine.

But to whom?

Old King Brady tried his hand at the jewelry trade, but he could not get a clew to the short, stout man, who had been very accurately described by Dowlas.

Later in the afternoon he returned to the building and had a conversation with Lawyer Davis.

He reasoned this way:

Men of Jim Dowd's stamp seldom go outside of their own immediate acquaintances for information.

It looked much more reasonable to suppose that if Dowd had stolen pearls that his first move would be to try to find out whether they were genuine or not, and that to do this he would apply to some person in the building with whom he was acquainted.

With this train of thought running through his head, the old detective sat down at Mr. Davis's desk.

They talked a few minutes about the case, and then the old detective said:

"Now look here, Mr. Davis, I have struck a new tack. I am going after a man whom I am about to describe to you. I have an idea that he may be a tenant in this building. You know them all, I suppose?"

"Yes, I have met them all," replied Davis. "Let us have the description. If the man you want is really in this building I shall recognize him."

Old King Brady repeated Dowlas's description of the janitor's pearl purchasing friend.

"Why, that fits Detective Webb," exclaimed Davis. "He has a little office on the top floor, front. Do you know him?"

"No. I presume he is one of the many hundred private sleuths in New York. There are new ones cropping up every day."

"According to Mr. Dobbs's books, he had been a tenant here for several years."

"He is engaged by some private firm or some company, I suppose. You feel that I have described him pretty well?"

"Very accurately."

"Was he engaged on this case at all?"

"No. He drifted in and out at the start, I am told. He hasn't been here since I took hold, however."

"I must make an excuse to see him."

"Do you imagine that he had anything to do with the murder?"

"Oh, I don't say that, but I do think he holds information about Dowd, the janitor, which it will pay me to get hold of if I can."

"You will find him a hard man to talk to, I am afraid."

Old King Brady sat silent for a few minutes.

"Look here," he said, "I have a scheme. Send for Webb to call here if he is in and say to him what I tell you. I will stand in the other room and take it all in."

"Not the least objection providing he will come," was the reply.

When Old King Brady first called at the Dobbs offices Mr. Davis was alone, but he now had a small clerk, whom he despatched to the detective's office with the request that Mr. Webb look in on him if he could spare the time.

Meanwhile Old King Brady instructed Davis to say that he had heard in an indirect way that Mr. Webb was an excellent judge of pearls, that he was looking for a fine pearl for his wife, and thought he would ask if the

detective could recommend him to someone who would be able to supply him at a reasonable rate.

This was all very well as far as it went.

But when the clerk came back he announced that the office was locked and there was nothing doing.

"Look here, Mr. Davis, can't we get in there?" demanded the old detective quickly. "Among that man's papers I may be able to find just the clew I am looking for."

"We certainly can," was the reply. "I have a duplicate key to every office in the building."

"Then let us go."

"But suppose we are caught?"

"Leave it to me in that case."

Mr. Davis took down a bunch of keys from a nail, and they ascended to the top story in front.

"J. Webb, Detective," was the brief sign which was painted on the glass door of a little office at the end of the hall.

Old King Brady rapped several times on the door, and receiving no response Mr. Davis proceeded to open it.

It was just a little five by nine room, with one desk and two chairs.

Upon the floor lay several letters which had been dropped through the door.

It was quite evident that Mr. Webb was out of town.

Old King Brady picked up the letters and turned them over.

"I wonder if you would throw a fit if I was to open these, Mr. Davis?" he said.

"It is none of my business," was the reply. "It is a case of detective against detective. Do as you please."

"Here is one in an envelope of the American House, Boston," continued Old King Brady. "The writing would seem to indicate an ignorant man. I'm thinking of the janitor. Here goes."

He tore open the envelope and read as follows:

"Boston, —, —.

"Mr. Webb:

"Dear Sir:—Are you comin i wrote you yesterday to telephone me here but you haven't done it. The think i seen is here. i seen him on de street in Chinatown. Say it was de same man surest thing. Say come on. i can't do nothing alone. Say, i sold tree pearls dey are sure de real goods an' you are dead wrong, but i am willin' to put de ting troo. Respectfully your friend,

"J. DOWD."

"And what does all that mean?" demanded Mr. Davis.

"Much to me," replied Old King Brady. "I haven't explained this part of the business to you yet, but I suppose I may as well. Of course you will consider it strictly confidential."

They talked the matter over.

"You are certainly right," declared Davis. "Dowd knows more of this business than he has told. He has made Webb his confidant, and the latter has gone to Boston."

Old King Brady then tore open the other letters, three in number.

Only one interested him.

It read as follows:

"Von Linden Rooms, —, —.

"Dear Webb:—I have had no report from you since Thursday. Are you still working? I am most anxious. Once more I tell you that what we want is that Chinese idol. Find it at any cost. Get me the papers which are surely inside of it and my fortune is made. Yours will come just as soon as I can turn myself afterward. Write me when I can see you. Have called three times, but your door is always locked. The necessity for haste will be apparent when I tell you that an old hayseed of an uncle of mine is in town and has chartered the Brady Detective Bureau to work up this case. This, as you know, was my original suggestion to you, but you would have none of it. Now these Bradys get mixed up in the business anyhow. I confess I wish it was not so. That my father was killed by a Chinaman there is no doubt, but what good would it do me to have that proved? What I want is the will and the other paper I told you about. Shake things up, for heaven's sake. Yours,

"A. DOBBS."

Mr. Davis opened his eyes when Old King Brady read this letter.

"You are right, Mr. Brady!" he exclaimed. "Webb is in this business with both feet. But what is this other paper he speaks of, do you suppose?"

"It can be but one thing," replied Old King Brady, "and that is a formula for making fake pearls."

"And you really believe that?"

"I certainly do."

"What's your plan?"

"I am going to Boston."

"The clews seem to point that way."

"That is what they do. Now, silence in this matter, Mr. Davis; but I don't suppose I have to say it. You can have no leaning to one side or the other."

"Absolutely none," replied the lawyer.

They closed up the office and went away, leaving Detective Webb minus a part of his mail.

CHAPTER V.

OFF FOR BOSTON.

It was not destined that Harry and Alice should do much work in New York's Chinatown in this case of the Chinese idol.

The scene of action was to be transferred to Boston for them as well as for their chief.

On their way to the house on Pell street where the starting clew in this case was discovered, the detectives stopped at the corner of Pell and Doyers street to look at the Chinese newspaper, or bulletin, as some call it.

This is the dead brick wall on that corner upon which is posted innumerable slips of red paper covered with Chinese characters.

These are notices of society meetings, of goods just

arrived from China and on sale, of men who are missing, of articles lost and found, etc.

This so-called "newspaper" is one of the institutions of Chinatown.

Both Harry and Alice were in Chinese dress, and were consequently not to be distinguished from the little crowd of Chinks which gathered about the wall studying the notices and jabbering among themselves.

Harry looked up at the flytracks just as though he could read them to carry out the illusion of his appearance.

Alice, of course, did read them, but as there were very many on the wall it was a wonder she did not miss the one which was to so interest her when she came to it.

In a minute she touched Harry's arm as a signal to move on, and they shuffled away.

"You have struck something on the bulletin," remarked Harry. "I can read it in your face."

And no one could read Alice's face better.

The fact is, Harry is deeply in love with this highly accomplished partner of his.

It is easy to read the thoughts of those we love.

"Yes," replied Alice, "there is a notice which appears to have been freshly posted on the wall there which certainly looks as if it might have something to do with the case."

"What is it?"

"Just the Chinese figure ten; then follows Boston, and then the date, day and hour, which is to-morrow night at eleven o'clock."

"And you figure it out that the secret Order of Ten propose to meet in Boston at that time?"

"So it strikes me, Harry. What do you think?"

"It looks feasible, but as I can't read Chinese it is up to you."

"I feel so sure of it that it seems to me we ought to get right over there."

"We better consult the governor."

"Of course. But in the meantime don't let us engage that room. I am certain he will say Boston."

They had yet to learn what excellent reasons Old King Brady would have for saying Boston when they saw him.

They went on to their destination, and Alice tackled the old Chink in the front room.

She failed to get anything out of him of the least importance.

He told her that Ching Chop had been a very silent, reserved man, and that he was scarcely acquainted with him.

He also informed Alice that the grocery man who leased the whole house, had seized the dead Chink's effects, and had rented the room to a Chinaman and his white wife.

Thus there would have been nothing doing in any case.

So Harry and Alice returned to the office and later came Old King Brady with his fresh bunch of discoveries.

The old detective accepted Alice's theory of the notice at once.

"There is no doubt there is something in it," he said. "By all means go with me to Boston. I must get right over there in the light of my discoveries, of course."

"How shall we go?" demanded Harry.

"Let us think. If there are any members of this secret order in New York, and there must be or the notice would not have been posted, they will probably be going too. Chinamen are pretty apt to travel by the cheapest route. I was going over on the five o'clock train, but we can all go by the Fall River boat."

"Suppose Harry and I go as we are," suggested Alice. "They were still in their Chinese disguises."

"Just what I was about to suggest," was the reply. "You might find Chinks aboard, and by cultivating an acquaintance, pick up some point about this supposed meeting."

"Not if they belong to the order," said Alice. "That is not possible."

"Wait and see. It is not impossible. I have an idea it will amount to something, our going this way."

"Settled anyhow," said Harry, and he started to telephone for staterooms, which he was fortunate enough to secure.

And so, when the big floating palace, the Puritan, sailed that night the Bradys were on board.

It was understood that Harry and Alice should keep apart from the old detective.

They took their places on the upper deck, and had a little basket supper all to themselves shortly after the sailing of the boat, for in their Chinese disguises they did not care to go to the table.

This done, they started to make the rounds of the boat to see if by any chance there were Chinese passengers on board.

And sure enough, Old King Brady was right.

On the deck on the port side they ran into two Chinamen.

When Harry and Alice thus go together disguised as Chinamen the former always plays the dummy.

This, of course, is a matter of necessity.

Alice saluted the two Chinamen in the regulation Chinese way.

To her surprise they paid no attention, but barely glancing at her, turned to each other and began talking between themselves.

But Alice persisted.

Stopping, she asked some question about Boston in Chinese.

One of the pair, a man of unusual size for a Chinaman, made some answer, whereupon Alice walked away.

"What was it?" demanded Harry, when they were out of hearing.

"He told me in broken Cantonese that he was a Manchurian, and could not speak my kind of Chinese," replied Alice.

"Oh! Then there is nothing doing. Did you notice their hands?"

"No, Harry. I can't say that I did particularly. What about their hands?"

"Well, I got a good view. On the left hand of each of those fellows was a Chinese character tattooed."

"So? Strange that I didn't notice it. Was it on the back or on the palm?"

"On the palm."

"Well! We must have another look."

"Suppose the character turns out to be Manchurian, can you make anything of it?"

"I know some of those characters, but very few. I know the Manchurian figures up to twenty, but not beyond that."

"I would not go back for a few minutes. They may suspect us. That big fellow looked pretty sharp."

"So he did to me. We will make the round of the boat and then return."

They did so, meeting Old King Brady by the way, but paying no attention to him.

After a little they passed the two Manchurians again, who were still jabbering to each other.

They did not even look at Harry and Alice, but the latter took them in, and was fortunate enough to get a look at the left palm of the big fellow.

"Well, you saw it?" demanded Harry when they had again passed beyond hearing.

"Yes. Harry, it is very important. That sign tattooed on the hand is the Manchurian character signifying ten."

"Ah, ha! The Governor was right then. These men are on their way to attend the meeting."

"It looks so. Did the other man have the same character on his left hand?"

"So it seemed to me."

"I wish I could have seen."

"We might try again."

"No; not just now."

"Were they talking in Manchurian?"

"As near as I could make out. Remember I don't understand one word of Manchurian."

It seemed exasperating to have made such important discoveries and not to be able to go any further.

But they were to make other discoveries before the boat reached Fall River.

These, however, first came Old King Brady's way.

Later in the evening Harry and Alice found opportunity in a dark corner to communicate their own discoveries to the old detective.

"It is as I thought. These men are surely on their way to Boston to attend the secret meeting," Old King Brady declared.

"Then all we have to do is to shadow them to locate the house we want," replied Harry, "and the question is how that can best be done."

"It is clearly your job."

"It seems so to me," said Alice. "But I can't talk to them, and I don't want to excite their suspicions."

"How can you help it if you go to Chinatown where they are going?" demanded Old King Brady. "However, I shall be right behind you in any case."

"Not in your present dress, I hope," protested Harry.

"That remains to be decided yet. There is nothing the matter with my present dress. These Chinamen, I am satisfied, never saw me before. I should recognize that big fellow anywhere if I had ever laid eyes on him."

"The Governor is in one of his stubborn moods again," remarked Harry, as he and Alice pulled away. "He really ought to disguise in a case like this."

But Old King Brady was accustomed to do as he

pleased, and on this occasion it pleased him to go to bed about nine o'clock.

His stateroom was an inside one on the port side of the big boat, on the upper deck.

Just as he started to enter it he ran into the two Manchurians, who were coming out of the outside stateroom next adjoining his.

As they were about to close the door the old detective caught sight of a big parcel done up in brown paper which stood on the washstand.

The door was closed too quickly for him to make out anything else.

He entered his own stateroom and was almost undressed when there came a rap on his door.

Old King Brady opened it on the crack.

"Who is there?" he demanded, for he could see no one.

"Alice," came the answer.

"Wait!"

Old King Brady closed the door, hurried on his clothes and opened it again.

Alice stood without in her Chinese disguise.

"Slip in," said the old detective. "Quick! Those two Chinks have the room next door."

"What!" breathed Alice. "Good luck!"

"What is it? Where is Harry?"

"I don't know. He left me for a few moments. I was walking along by the guards and happened to hear voices talking in Chinese behind one of the lifeboats. It was that pair, Mr. Brady. If they speak Manchurian they also speak Cantonese, our kind of Chinese, for that is what they were talking then, and what do you suppose they were saying?"

"Give it up. They were here just a minute ago."

"They were talking about a Chinese idol which they called their 'luck god,' as near as I can put it in English. I judge they have it with them, and are taking it to the meeting."

"You don't say! There is a big brown paper parcel standing on the washstand in the next stateroom. Perhaps that is it. Did they say anything more? Anything as to how they came by this, luck god?"

"No. One of them caught sight of me, and I had to move on. That is all I heard. I thought I ought to tell you at once, that perhaps you would want to put the matter up to the boat officers and search the stateroom."

"By Jove, Alice, I believe I will risk it to do my own searching without putting it up to anyone; but the trouble is we should not be able to recognize this Chinese idol even if we saw it."

"Dr. Dobbs's description was certainly very vague."

"That is the trouble. But let us think. Among other things the doctor said that the image had a particularly big nose, did he not?"

"Yes."

"Wait. I am resolved to make the attempt. My skeleton keys will easily open that stateroom door, and located as we are down this alley there isn't one chance in a hundred that I shall be discovered. Yes, I am going to make the try. Stand back out of the way so that you can't be seen. Hold the door open on the catch so that I can slip right in again."

Old King Brady produced his skeleton keys, but before he could make another move there came a sharp knock on the door.

"Confound the luck! What now?" muttered the old detective. "Am I to be jacked up for breaking and entering before I begin."

CHAPTER VI.

THE BRADYS STEAL THE CHINESE IDOL.

The knocker proved to be only Harry.

"Governor, I can't find Alice anywhere," he whispered as the old detective opened the door on the crack.

"She is in here," was the reply. "Slide in."

Harry entered.

The situation was explained to him.

"Don't you think we better put it up to the steward or the purser, or somebody?" asked Harry.

"No," replied Old King Brady stubbornly. "I am resolved to put the thing through myself. Stay here with Alice. I'm going to do it now."

Old King Brady slipped out.

In less than two minutes he slipped in again carrying the big paper parcel which he had seen in the other stateroom.

"It is as heavy as lead," he whispered. "Upon my word I believe we have captured the idol."

"Untie it. Let us see," said Harry eagerly.

"No, but wait. Let us study the way it is wrapped in case we want to wrap it up again. It won't take a minute."

The old detective made his study.

So accurate is his eye in such matters that he could have perfectly restored the wrappers if it came to that.

Then he removed them.

It was as they anticipated.

Inside was a strip of red Chinese cloth, but when this was removed there, sure enough, was an ugly image of a squatting man with an amazingly large head.

"Looks like the genuine article," remarked Harry.

"It does indeed!" replied the old detective. "I only wish we had Dr. Dobbs here to identify it. Where does the thing open, then? It is evidently hollow."

He struck on the bronze with a coin, and the hollow ring was distinctly heard.

"We want to be quick if we mean to restore it," said Alice. "Perhaps the head unscrews."

"That is just what I imagine," replied the old detective.

The head did not, but the right arm, which was detached from the body, did, leaving an opening big enough to admit a small man's hand.

Both the Bradys' hands were too big, but Alice managed to get her hand into the opening.

"I've got the paper!" she cried.

"Good!" said Old King Brady. "We win. We can put the old thing back again now!"

Alice withdrew her hand and held the paper up to the electric light.

Upon it was written in English:

"This is the luck god Jing Fow. It is the property of John Frazer Dobbs, of New York City."

"Bother!" cried Alice. "We don't win as much as we thought we did after all."

"Come again," said Old King Brady. "Perhaps there is something else inside there."

But there was nothing that Alice could discover.

Old King Brady flashed his electric light inside, but he could see nothing.

Half an hour was spent in studying the idol in every part.

The head seemed solid.

The other arm formed part of the figure itself, and even if it was hollow it was impossible to reach inside of it, so it was hard to imagine that any papers could be concealed in there.

The Bradys were greatly disgusted.

"What do we do? Put it back?" demanded Harry.

"Not at all," replied Old King Brady. "This Chinese idol will serve as a most beautiful bait. If these two Chinks really want it we can perhaps worm something of the truth out of them in exchange for the image. My theory is that the real motive for the double murder was to obtain the secret formula for manufacturing these fishscale pearls. Perhaps these men opened the idol and took out both the formula and the will. Perhaps somebody else did it for them, and they are merely doing the expressman act in taking the idol to Boston. At all events we will hold on to the thing and see how the cat jumps! Before giving up altogether, I propose to smash the idol. We may not know all its secrets yet."

"Well enough reasoned," replied Harry, "but how about keeping it to-night?"

"Inasmuch as we have stolen the thing we may as well do it. Now to tie it up in some way in which it will not be recognized, even by our two Chinks next door."

This was easily arranged.

As the idol had been tied up before the cloth on the inside and the paper outside was pressed about it in such a way as to give the paper some resemblance to the human form.

Old King Brady went down on the main deck and tackled the steward, with whom he was acquainted, and from him got a square box of sufficient size to hold the idol, in which he placed it, and nailed on the cover.

The box was then concealed under the lower berth.

"And now," said Old King Brady, "you and Alice have done your Chinese work, Harry, and what is more, you have done it well. In the morning you will drop your disguises. Harry, you will stay here with me to-night in case of trouble. You, Alice, better get to your stateroom now."

But before Alice had a chance to make a move they heard a shuffle of feet outside, and a key was fitted into the door of the next stateroom.

"Hark!" breathed Old King Brady. "Now for an explosion!"

It came!

A minute later there was the greatest jabbering ever.

It could be plainly heard on account of the open fret-work at the top of the partition, designed to admit air to the inside stateroom—the one occupied by the Bradys.

"Manchurian or Chinese?" whispered Harry.

"Hush! Not a sound!" breathed Old King Brady.

The racket continued for several minutes, and then the two men could be heard moving away.

"They are going to enter a complaint," whispered the old detective. "Now, Harry, you get into bed as quick as possible, and hide your Chinese clothes. Give me your stateroom key. I'll see Alice safe to her room while there is a chance. I'll bring your dress suit case back with me. If the assistant steward or anyone comes here, you are sound asleep: Now, Alice! Slide along ahead of me. Don't lose a moment in getting under cover."

Alice's stateroom, like Harry's, was on the starboard side, and Old King Brady saw her safely inside; they saw nothing of the two Chinamen on the way.

Old King Brady entered with her and closed the door.

"Just a moment," he said. "What were those two Chinks saying in there? Could you make out?"

"Every word. They spoke in Cantonese. They think Harry and I have stolen the idol. They went to the purser to complain."

"Well! well! That's bad! Some petty officer may strike in here any minute."

"What shall I do? Change?"

"No. Get into bed. I'll watch. You see, you bought tickets under Chinese names, and are so entered on the purser's list. That's where the trouble comes in. But I'll stand by and make myself known, and explain that you are a Chinese assistant of mine if it comes to a pinch."

Old King Brady got outside and waited a long time, but there was nothing doing.

If the two Chinamen actually did complain their story must have been doubted.

And this can be easily imagined, for there is not one man in a hundred who can be induced to treat a Chinaman like a human being.

At last Old King Brady gave it up, and securing Harry's dress suit case, returned to his own stateroom.

There was a light burning in the Chinamen's room.

Knocking lightly, Harry admitted him.

"Well," whispered the old detective, "they are in there it seems."

"Yes, they have been in there for some time," replied Harry. "They seem to have quieted down. There has scarcely been a sound."

"I suppose the room steward, purser, or whoever they complained to would not understand them, would not be bothered; or perhaps they don't speak English enough to make themselves understood."

And thus the Bradys slipped out of their burglarious raid in great shape.

But the question was how to get the box ashore and on board the train.

Old King Brady wrapped it in paper and tied it with a stout cord different in appearance from the one it had been tied with before.

At four o'clock next morning when the boat reached Fall River, Harry was stirring.

He hastily dressed and went downstairs to watch the passengers go off the boat.

Early as he was, the two Chinamen were already on hand, and a petty officer stood with them.

Here was trouble in anticipation.

Harry hurried back to the stateroom and reported.

"Easy fixed," said Old King Brady. "Tell Johnson to come to me if he is on duty, as he usually is in the morning."

This man was one of the colored attendants in the cabin.

Both Old King Brady and Harry knew the fellow well enough, as they often travel by the Fall River line.

Harry found the man at his post, and informed him that Old King Brady wanted to see him in No. 232.

The result was that Jim Johnson carried out the box, after engaging parlor car chairs for the detectives, and placed it in the hands of the conductor.

Harry, who was on the watch, had the satisfaction of seeing him pass the two Chinamen, and not a word said. And that ended it.

Harry continued to watch until the "Boat Train," as the first Boston train is called, started, but the two Chinamen did not come aboard.

Doubtless they intended to watch the second train to see if anyone left the boat carrying the Chinese idol.

CHAPTER VII.

STARTING IN AGAIN AT THE HOTEL BRISTOL.

The Bradys reached Boston in due time, and instead of going to Young's Hotel, their usual stopping place, they took a cab and drove to the old American House, on Hanover street, from which address Dowd, the janitor, had written.

Here they registered under their own names, for Old King Brady was still determined to make no secrecy of their connection with the case.

"It is no use," he said. "Archie Dobbs knows it, and this man Webb knows it. As for the Chinks, every mother's son of them in New York Chinatown knows it, so why waste time in disguises?"

So Old King Brady talked that day.

He was in one of his stubborn moods over his trademark clothes, as Harry likes to call them.

Once established at the hotel, and breakfast over, Old King Brady went to the office and interviewed the manager, whom he knew, on the subject of Janitor Dowd.

"That party left yesterday," said the manager. "There was a New York detective named Webb with him. It was about time Dowd did leave. He was drunk all the while, and he carried so much money and displayed it so recklessly that I feared for his life."

As the manager had no idea where Webb and Dowd had gone, the Bradys once more found themselves at sea.

"Get down around Chinatown, you and Alice," the old detective said when he returned to the room. "I would not disguise. Just cover the ground in a general way and see what you can pick up. Meanwhile I'll get around among the jewelry trade and talk pearls."

"You don't propose to try to locate the Order of the Ten then?" questioned Harry.

"I don't see how we are going to do it. Do you, Alice?"

"It will be difficult. Let me offer a suggestion."

"A dozen if you wish."

"Suppose Harry and I call upon Dobbs's Chinese pearl correspondent. The one who wrote the letter from Boston. What's the name again?"

"His name is Sing Lung. He has an address on Oxford Place. Yes, that may be a good idea. How will you go? Looking for pearls?"

"That depends upon what sort of person this Sing Lung turns out to be."

"Go, and success attend you. I go on the still hunt for Dowd."

Down on Washington street, near Winter, up one flight and at the end of a dark hall, was then located the principal buyer of pearls in Boston.

As we do not care to give his name, we shall call this man Schmidt. He went out of business long since.

Old King Brady had been up against him several times in cases where stolen jewelry was involved. And for Schmidt's place the old detective headed, fortunately finding his man in.

The pearl dealer was one of those direct characters with whom it would have been a decided mistake to beat about the bush.

So Old King Brady went at him in a different way.

He referred to the Dobbs murder case, of which the man had heard, and then told of Harry's discovery of the dead Chinaman.

"And this man turns out to be one Ching Chop," he added. "It appears that he possessed a secret of making fish scale pearls, which have deceived the most expert. Old Dobbs seems to have been mixed up in the business in some way which is not quite clear. Now, friend Schmidt, what do you know about these fake pearls?"

Schmidt gave a contemptuous sniff.

"Brady," he replied, "vy you come to me? I deal only in de generwine article, sir. No man living could sell me a fish scale pearl."

This was said with a ludicrous air of contempt for fish scale pearls in general, and for those put out by the late Ching Chop in particular.

But Old King Brady was prepared for this sort of a reception.

He knew that fish scale pearls were no new discovery.

For many years pearls manufactured from fish scales have been on the American market, and in spite of Mr. Schmidt's sweeping assertion, some of them are extremely difficult to tell from the real thing.

"Let me finish, Schmidt," continued the old detective. "These people had a Boston agent, a Chinaman whom we are most anxious to locate. It is understood that he placed many of these pearls on this market, but whether he sold them for what they were or not I do not know. His name is Sing Lung."

The instant Old King Brady said Chinaman he saw that he had hit the little man hard.

Schmidt began to sit up and pay attention.

"Vat!" he cried. "A Chinese man—huh! Vell!"

"You know him?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Listen!" cried Schmidt. "I vas an honest man; same time I cannot afford a pig loss, for I vas also a poor man, yes! If I talk mit you man to man, Mr. Brady, you keeps your mout shut—huh?"

"As tight as if it was sealed with wax, Schmidt. I have all I can do to attend to my own business without interfering with yours. You have been buying some of those pearls."

Schmidt laid his left forefinger alongside his nose.

"Listen!" he said. "I did buy seven pearls of a Chinaman, von at a time. He swear he did get dem by his brudder, who vas a fisherman in China. But sure dey were no fakes, for I sold efery von, und I am de best judge of pearls in Boston—yes."

"Do you know this Chinaman's name?"

"No. Vot's de use? I calls him John. He sells de pearls cheap. I pay cash. Dot's all dere vas to it—yes."

"I wish that you had some of these pearls to show me," said Old King Brady. "You are sure they are all sold."

"Efery von sold—yes. If de feller comes again I vill look owit sharp. Dot's all I can do fer you now. But sure dose pearls vas generwine, Mr. Brady, for I vas de best judge in Boston."

And then Old King Brady hit this very frank expert again.

He went on to give a description of Janitor Dowd according to that which he had received through Saloon-keeper Dowlas.

"Have you bought any pearls of a man who fills that bill?" he asked, "within a few days, I mean?"

Schmidt grew more troubled than ever.

"Vell, I vill tell you de truth. I did seen dot feller in here yesterday, und vonce before," he said.

"And you bought pearls of him?"

"I did, both times, but just so sure as I am a human being, Mr. Brady, dose vas generwine pearls."

"You have them?"

"Yes. I haf dem both. You shall see dem. I nefer make mistakes."

And he produced two pearls of considerable size.

Old King Brady did not ask what story had been put up, nor what he paid for the pearls.

Nor did he make any comment on them, for a pearl is a very difficult thing to decide about, and he considered himself no judge when even the most expert jewelers are at times deceived.

But, of course, he could not consider these genuine pearls in the light of what he knew.

Schmidt did not know Dowd's address, nor had the janitor given his name.

Clearly Mr. Schmidt was in the habit of buying stray pearls from strangers.

It was enough for Old King Brady to have proved that Dowd was really in Boston selling pearls which at least passed as genuine among the jewelry trade.

The old detective now kept on along Washington street as far as Beach.

Here he turned down into Chinatown.

Though much smaller than New York's Chinatown, Boston's little colony presents a far more picturesque appearance.

Here many of the houses on Beach street, Harrison avenue, Essex street, Oxford place, and other alleys have been altered over and present a strongly Oriental appearance.

There are broad balconies in front of each story; these are hung with Chinese lanterns, which at night are lighted up. Queer shops are to be found on the ground floors of the building and up the alleys.

It looks like a bit of old China dropped down in this corner of Boston.

As Old King Brady hoped might be the case, he ran into Harry and Alice on Essex street.

"Well, what luck?" he demanded.

"Nothing doing," replied Harry. "We found that fellow Sing Lung, but he positively refused to talk. He declared that he never heard of Ching Chop, and did not deal in pearls."

"So? Let us walk on, we are attracting attention, perhaps."

"How can we help it?" growled Harry.

"With me along, you would add."

"Well!"

"You are determined that I shall disguise in this case, Harry, and I am equally determined not to do so. Let us cut that out. Come with me to the Hotel Beach."

"And why there?"

"Because I am going to engage rooms there."

"Oh, I see. You have some new scheme up your sleeve."

"I have. Interesting as Boston always is to me, I don't propose to stay here more than a month. What I do propose is to bring matters to a head at once."

The Hotel Beach is located on the edge of Chinatown. Certainly it cannot be called a first-class establishment. Indeed, it is barely a respectable one when you come down to a fine point.

But its location was what appealed to Old King Brady, and when he stated that he had decided to take up his quarters there he meant just what he said.

As they walked on he told of his visit to Schmidt.

"Did he describe his Chinaman?" demanded Alice.

"He gave a very close description of the man," replied Old King Brady, and he repeated it.

"That certainly fills the bill," said Harry. "The man can be no one else than Sing Lung. But what are you going to do about it?"

"Nothing," replied the old detective. "What we want is the murderer of old Dobbs and Ching Chop, for I am satisfied that he, if anyone, has the missing will."

"And your plan?"

"First, to locate at the Hotel Beach. Second, to advertise on the Chinese Bulletin here that we have a Chinese idol which was found on the Fall River boat."

"Great Scott, Governor, you risk all our lives!"

"Perhaps. We shall have to take the risk, however, for that is what I propose to do. Third, I propose to receive the assistance of that very excellent Chinese detective, Billy Charles."

"I have heard of that man," said Harry, "but none of us have ever met him, I believe. What put that idea into your head?"

The Chief of Police here recommended him to me most

highly last time we had a case in Boston. He wanted me to give him a trial next time I had a Chinese case, and I promised that I would. If we receive any answers to our Chinese advertisement he shall see and judge of such Chinamen as may wait on us."

"I hate to turn the case over into the hands of a stranger," said Harry, "and that is practically what your plan will amount to."

"Not at all. On the contrary, I propose to keep the case under full control. But we do not know this Chinatown as we do New York's and San Francisco's Chinese colonies. We need local help."

And when Old King Brady's foot goes down that is final.

The Bradys went to the Hotel Beach.

Here they secured three of the best rooms in the house.

They took immediate possession and Alice wrote out an advertisement to the effect that a Chinese idol had been found on board the Fall River boat. That it could be seen by applying to Old King Brady, detective, at the Hotel Beach.

Harry then went to the American House, with instructions to bring away their belongings, including the idol.

On the way he pasted the red slip on the Chinese bulletin.

Old King Brady started for Police Headquarters to look up Billy Charles, while Alice remained at the hotel.

An hour later all were together again at the Hotel Beach.

Old King Brady came in last in the company of the tallest and in every way the most athletic-looking Chinaman Harry had ever seen.

The man looked like a full-blooded Chinese, but actually he was only a halfbreed, his mother being a French-Canadian.

Harry and Alice introduced, Old King Brady said:

"And now what about the Chinese idol? Have you unpacked it, Harry?"

"Yes, and I have set it up in the middle room," replied Harry. "Does Mr. Charles want to see it?"

"Yes, let us all have a look at it," replied the old detective, throwing open the door.

Billy Charles surveyed the idol curiously.

"He's a queer-looking guy," he remarked. "Really, Mr. Brady, I know very little about these things. You see, I was born in Canada and my father took so little interest in religious matters that he never took the trouble to educate me in that line. I daresay Miss Montgomery knows more than I do."

"Well, I admit knowing something about the different Chinese idols," said Alice, "but I never saw an image like this. Do you think you can help us? That is the point."

"I know every Chink in Boston," replied Charles, "but when it comes to your secret societies, there are so many little ones that no man can keep the run of them. I never heard of this Order of the Ten. How should I? There probably are only ten members and they keep their secrets close. It is a new one on me. But what I can do is to stand by when these fellows who want the idol call. Perhaps I may find that I have some pull with

them. When it comes to the secret dens of our little Chinatown, I think I know all about them."

"And about this Ping Pank?" questioned Harry.

"Never heard of him," replied Charles. "The name may be a false one. If it is the true name then Ping Pank certainly is not a Boston man."

"We must take it as it comes," said Old King Brady. "Meanwhile you dine with us, Charles. We will wait for three o'clock and see what it brings."

It brought at least one caller.

For the hands of Old King Brady's watch had no sooner marked the hour of three than there came a knock on the door and a bellboy announced that there was a Chinaman wanting to see Old King Brady waiting downstairs.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VANISHING OF JING FOW.

Billy Charles went into the third room of the suite and partially closed the door.

The Bradys then awaited the coming of the Chinaman, who had been notified that they would receive him.

Presently there was a timid knock, and when Harry opened the door in walked a meek, little Chink, who looked about him in a hesitating sort of way.

"You Ole Kling Blady?" he asked.

"That's me," replied the old detective. "What do you want?"

"Me no speakee good Inglees. Me want to see him little god. You putee plaper on wall—yair?"

"Talk to him, Alice," said Old King Brady.

It always comes as an immense surprise to Chinamen when they find out that Alice can speak their language.

The little man jabbered away at a great rate.

"He says," explained Alice, "that he doesn't know anything about the idol. He is only acting for a friend."

And as she spoke Alice made a sign which meant, "I cannot get anything out of the man."

"Show him the idol," said the old detective.

Alice took the Chink into the middle room, where not only could he see the idol, but Billy Charles could see him.

The little man looked the image over curiously.

Then, turning to Old King Brady, he said:

"Him no good. Dlat no wkattee my flend wantee. No!"

"All right," replied the old detective. "No harm done."

The Chinaman shuffled to the door.

"Good day!" he said

"Goodby, John!" replied Old King Brady, carelessly, and out the little man went.

Billy Charles instantly entered the room.

"I should shadow him," he said. "That fellow keeps an opium joint on Oxford place. He is a bad man."

"Go on!" replied the old detective. "You have the description of the two men who had the idol. See if he joins them."

Exit Billy Charles.

"Pick up anything, Alice?" inquired Harry.

"Not a thing," replied Alice. "All the same I believe the man just came here as a spy."

"Not a doubt of it," replied the old detective.

"But there was no tattooing on the hand," said Harry. "He can't belong to the order."

"Perhaps they are not all tattooed," suggested Old King Brady. "However, this is only the start. There are more to come, no doubt."

There was.

The Bradys were soon to learn that they had to deal with a shrewder proposition than they supposed.

In about half an hour a letter was handed in by one of the hotel bellhops.

It was addressed: "Old King Brady, Hotel Beach," in a full, round hand.

The old detective tore open the envelope, asking, as he did so, who had brought the letter.

"It was left by a Chinaman, sir," replied the boy.

"I should say it must have been," said Old King Brady, as he opened the enclosure.

The letter proved to be a strip of white paper, covered with Chinese characters.

Old King Brady handed it over to Alice, who read as follows:

"I want Old King Brady and the miss to come to No. 10 Oxford place right away. I have made an important discovery.
Charles."

"There!" exclaimed the old detective. "That fellow seems to be all right. He starts in well, at all events. Come, Alice; let us go."

"And I am to stay and watch the idol," added Harry.

"Exactly, and see that you watch it well, sir," said Alice. "These Chinese gods are not quite so slow as you may think. Don't let this one get the best of you now."

"This is the luck god Jing Fow," laughed Harry. "Perhaps if I can get a private interview with him he may bring me a bit of good luck. We shall see."

"Come, come, Alice!" cried the old detective, impatiently. "We must be going."

They went.

Harry lit a cigar and sat down in the middle room to read the paper.

He had not been ten minutes at it when there was a loud yelling in the hall outside.

Again it was repeated, and still again.

Harry jumped up, ran through to the outer room and out into the hall, for Old King Brady had locked the door of the middle room and carried away the key.

Upon the floor lay a Chinaman writhing in a fit and yelling for all he was worth.

Others came running up, including the clerk from the office.

Nobody seemed to know the Chink, nor to know how he got there.

While they were talking, the Chinaman having now quieted down, it suddenly occurred to Harry that he was not only butting into what was none of his business, but

that he had left the little luck god to look out for himself.

He darted back into the middle room, only to find the fear which had come upon him realized.

The window stood wide open. The Chinese idol had disappeared!"

"Great Scott!" gasped Harry. "I'm the goat!"

Beneath the window was the roof of a stable on the side street.

It was no trouble at all to get in and out.

Young King Brady clapped on his hat and went downstairs flying.

The fit-throwing Chinaman had come to his senses now.

But Harry did not stop to hear what he was saying; the way he got around to that stable was a caution.

All no use!

He could find no Chinaman.

The men in the stable had seen none.

Thoroughly called down, Harry got back to the rooms.

"That's one on me, and a great, big one," he growled.

It was a long time since he had allowed anything to trouble him so.

The worst was to have to confess to Old King Brady.

But the old detective was to come back with a calldown of his own.

In about half an hour he and Alice returned.

"Well?" demanded Harry.

"Oh, don't talk to me!" snapped Old King Brady.

"I've been played for a fool. Charles wasn't there. Alice and I went all over the house and couldn't find the fellow. Talk about your New York tenements being crowded! Why, this one was simply packed. I never saw the equal."

"It is part of a plot," said Harry, meaningly.

"Part!" cried the old detective. "What do you mean? I sincerely hope there is no more of it, then."

Harry threw up his hands, despairingly. "Sorry to say there is, then!" he exclaimed. "If you're a goat, I'm a worse one."

"Come!" cried Alice. "You don't mean to say you have let them get the Chinese idol away from you, Harry?"

"Even that!"

Old King Brady sat down, and for fully a minute no one spoke.

"Well, well, well!" exclaimed the old detective then. "This is certainly interesting. If we were a bunch of school children playing detective it couldn't be worse. Explain."

Harry explained.

"I haven't got a word of excuse to offer," he said. "Really, Governor, you ought to take my shield away."

"We have all made a great, big mistake, Harry," said the old detective, more mildly, after a few moments. "Let us say no more about it. All we can do now is to wait for Charles. After all, I am the most to blame."

"Well, I'm sure it is very good of you, Governor, to take all my sins upon your own shoulders, but I can't excuse myself in the least."

"No, but you don't understand. Harry, we ought to have broken that idol and made sure that the will was

not inside. I came back resolved to do it at once and take no further chances. Now it is too late."

"Probably you would have changed your mind, for to do so would have spoiled all your plans."

They dropped the subject then, for the Bradys are never the ones to keep threshing out old straw.

"What shall we do now?" demanded Alice at last.

"Wait awhile for Charles," replied the old detective. "I don't see what else we can do. I only hope this very slick bunch of Chinks haven't captured him, as well as the luck god."

It was over an hour before Charles returned.

"Any luck?" demanded Old King Brady.

The Chinese detective shook his head.

"This is the time they got the best of me," he said.

"I followed that fellow all the way out to Dorchester and there I lost him. I feel quite ashamed of myself. He turned a corner, and I got around a minute later, but he was gone. Couldn't make out where he went."

"Did he know that you were after him, think?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Oh, I think so," was the reply. "He knows me by sight well enough."

Secretly Old King Brady did not think much of Billy Charles's methods of shadowing, but it was a poor time to call him down when they had a confession of their own to make.

To spare Harry Alice made it.

Charles listened with open-eyed astonishment.

"And do you really mean to say that they have captured the idol!" he cried.

"That's what they have," answered Harry.

Old King Brady handed Charles the letter.

"Of course, you never wrote that?" he said.

"Never! But wait! That's pretty good English writing for a Chink. I mean the address on the envelope."

"It is, indeed."

"You went there?"

"Yes."

"How did they get the idol?"

Harry explained.

"A slick trick," said Charles.

"Particularly so," replied Old King Brady; "but you were going to say something about that writing."

"Only that it seems to me I have seen it before. There were some forged orders for goods put out here in Chinatown last spring. I had something to do with the case, which did not come to anything. Let me see."

Charles, who was in full American dress, drew out a big pocketbook and fumbled among some papers.

At last he selected one, which proved to be an order on a large grocery house for twenty boxes of soap, written in English and signed by a Chinese name.

"What do you think of that, Mr. Brady?" he demanded. "The writing, I mean."

Old King Brady carefully studied the paper and compared it with the address on his envelope.

"I think it is the same hand," he said. "The letters are certainly similarly formed."

"Then I believe I have an idea. Will you give me a few hours to work it up in?"

"Certainly. But what is your idea?"

Charles, however, was not telling.

"Oh, I'll keep that to myself," he said. "Listen! I am going out now. I shall put on Chinese clothes. You say one of those two men you saw on the boat was about my size?"

"Much such a looking man as you are."

"That gives me an idea."

"Two ideas?"

"Yes."

"Well!"

"I may write you again. If I do I'll put the Chinese sign for ten on the corner of the envelope."

"Write in English."

"Very good. If I send for you will you come?"

"Yes."

"Then I am off."

Charles hurried away.

"Do you trust that fellow thoroughly, Governor?" demanded Harry.

"The chief of police assures me that he is to be trusted," was the reply.

"I wish I could have shadowed him. He certainly does look very much like that man we saw on the boat, doesn't he, Alice?"

"There is a strong resemblance," replied Alice. "If I could only see him in Chinese dress I could tell better."

"Well, I feel as if I did not know anything after what has happened," said Old King Brady; "but for the present I shall certainly continue to trust Billy Charles."

CHAPTER IX.

IN TROUBLE AGAIN.

The remainder of the afternoon passed without event. Nobody else came inquiring for the Chinese idol.

Billy Charles did not return.

But shortly after supper a letter was handed in which bore the Chinese sign for ten on the envelope.

This writing was very different from the address on the other envelope.

Old King Brady hastened to open it, and read as follows:

"This time I think I have hit it. Come at once to No. — Essex street, back rooms, top floor. Knock twice. Charles."

"Going?" demanded Harry.

"Certainly," replied the old detective. "I have no doubt it is all straight. However, we shall be entirely on our guard."

So they went to the Essex street house, which proved to be a Chinese tenement, with a bric-a-brac shop on the ground floor.

Ascending two pairs of stairs, the old detective tapped lightly on the door of the back room.

It was immediately opened by a man who looked startlingly like the big Chink on the Fall River boat.

He pressed his finger to his lips as a sign for silence, and the Bradys, recognizing Billy Charles, filed into a plainly furnished room.

"Do I look like the big man you spoke of?" whispered Charles.

"Very much," replied Alice.

"I tried to make up like him. Come here. Don't make a sound."

Charles opened the door of a closet.

Through a papered partition light came streaming out of a small, round hole.

"Look!" whispered Charles.

Alice put her eyes to the peephole.

In a room beyond sat a big Chinaman in a rocking chair, his head thrown back. He appeared to be asleep.

"Is that the man?" whispered Charles.

"Yes; he is certainly the man," replied Alice.

"Send Mr. Brady."

Old King Brady had his look.

"He is certainly the man," he said. "What's been done to him?"

"Oh, I gave him a little dose of knockout. It is pretty near time for him to wake up."

They stepped back into the room.

"What's the word? What have you learned?" demanded the old detective.

"That the secret Order of the Ten are to meet in a room on the floor below. The idol I believe to be there. I have the key and there is nothing to hinder us from going there now."

"Who is that man?"

"His name is Wing Fang. He was mixed up in these forgery cases. I have a pull on him. He has confessed to me that he was sent to New York for the idol. It was stolen from a house in Canton some years ago, where this Order of the Ten meet. He claims that it was stolen by a white man. He appeared not to know anything about your case. I roped him and sent for you. That's as far as I have gone."

"We better get down there at once," said Old King Brady. "Is the coast clear, do you know?"

"I don't know anything more than I have told you."

Old King Brady hardly knew what to think.

It all seemed too easy to be true.

"What we want to do is to smash that idol," he said.

"If there are papers inside those are what we want."

"And the murderer?"

"That will have to be a separate case. I don't see how we are going to mix the two things up. Suppose we arrest this man and make him confess more, for he undoubtedly knows more."

"I shouldn't wonder if he did. I don't care what you do. If we are going to smash the idol I want an axe."

"Well?"

"Stay here, Mr. Brady, and I will go and get one. I am well acquainted in this house."

"Don't be long. I am impatient to see this thing through."

"I will be just as quick as I can. Before I return I will have a look into that room and see if the idol is really there."

"All right. Which room is it?"

"The one directly under this."

"Go. It will be well to finish this matter up and get out of here before it grows dark."

Billy Charles hastily left the room.

"By jove! I don't know what to think of this, Harry," whispered the old detective, as soon as he had gone.

"What's the matter? Don't you trust Charles?" demanded Harry.

"It seems as if he had accomplished almost too much."

"It does, indeed!" added Alice. "But then he may have been fooled."

"His object in making up to resemble that man in there is not altogether apparent," said Harry.

"There is a good bit about it that is not apparent," was the reply. "But let us wait and see; meantime I will go and have another look at that fellow."

Old King Brady stepped into the closet.

He instantly stepped out again.

"Why, the man is gone!" he exclaimed.

"Now, then," said Harry, "suppose we try the door and see if they have locked us in."

But the door was not fastened.

This allayed the suspicions of the detectives somewhat, and they waited.

Time passed, and Billy Charles did not return.

It was growing dusk.

Old King Brady was anxious to get out of the house before dark, as he had said.

"Suppose we start out to investigate?" he said, at length. "I don't like this very well. Come, let us go and see what we can make out of that room for ourselves."

They passed out of the hall and descended the stairs.

"Upon my word," whispered Old King Brady, "this house seems to be deserted. I haven't heard a sound since Charles left us."

"The whole thing is so strange," said Harry. "I can't understand it at all."

"This seems to be the room," added Alice, and she tried the door.

It yielded to her touch.

They entered a room where there were several doors and windows; a few Chinese mottoes hung against the wall.

The room was entirely unfurnished, except for a dinky, little altar, made of a couple of boxes, upon which rested the Chinese idol. There was a painted background behind.

On the lower box, which projected a little, were three cups, in which some sort of incense was smouldering.

This was all, except that a hatchet lay on the floor. There was no person in the room.

"Well, there's the idol," said Harry. "But what are we to do with it? If we undertake to lug it through the streets we shall surely be mobbed. There isn't even a newspaper here."

"There is a great, big string tied to it," said the old detective. "Somebody has baited this trap for the Bradys and I must confess it looks very much as if it was up to Billy Charles.

He had scarcely uttered the words when another door

opened and in walked a Chinaman without a hat. The Bradys took him to be the priest of this rude shrine.

He made a low bow and said something in Chinese, which Alice answered.

There were other Chinks at the door, peering into the room.

"What does he say, Alice?" demanded the old detective, entirely unable to size up all this business.

"That if we wait a moment our wishes will be granted, whatever that means," replied Alice.

"Did you ask him where B. C. is?" said Harry.

"No. Shall I, Mr. Brady?"

"No, no! Keep quiet. Let us wait and watch," was the reply.

The Chinaman folded his arms and looked at the idol. His glance was rather one of curiosity than reverence.

All at once a big Chinaman entered the room.

At first the Bradys thought that he was Billy Charles, but as they looked again they saw that it was not so.

Nor was he the man they had seen on the Fall River boat, but they could tell by his dress that he was the same person they had seen asleep in the chair upstairs and that they had blundered.

Bowing to the Bradys and Alice, he walked up to the idol and paused.

There was an odd grin on his face.

The other Chinks came into the room now, three in number.

Now, the full meaning of this singular occurrence was never known to the Bradys, so we cannot explain it here.

One thing is certain—the other Chinamen could not have known what the big fellow contemplated.

What they thought he meant to do with the hatchet is something we cannot say.

Alice spoke to the big man, but he made no answer.

The Chinaman who first came in adjusted the painted screen behind the idol and shook up the incense cups.

Then there arose a general talk.

Alice said afterward that the Chinks were asking each other what god this was and where it came from.

The big fellow and his companion did not speak.

While the Chinamen were clamoring excitedly the big fellow suddenly got a move on.

Seizing a hatchet, he went for the idol on the little altar, pushing the priest to one side.

The Bradys and Alice made no attempt to interfere.

Jing Fow, the luck god, got it in the head.

The priest and the other Chinks flung up their hands.

And the idol was wrecked by two blows.

The big fellow waved his hatchet at the Chinks, menacingly.

Acting as if they thought the man crazy, they fled from the room.

The big fellow then said to Alice, in Chinese:

"As I swore so I have done. I have destroyed the luck god. Let the old man with the big hat take what he finds!"

Alice translated.

"Wonderfully accommodating, these people!" said Old King Brady, and he advanced to the idol.

The hollow, bronze head had been cut in two.

It was now easy to get one's hand into the stationary arm.

But, to the disappointment of the detective, there was nothing to be found.

"The old man with the big hat seems disappointed," said the big fellow, who still clung to his hatchet.

"He is," replied Alice. "Who told you to do this?"

"Mr. Charles."

"Where is Mr. Charles?"

"He is downstairs. He wants to see you. Will you go to him?"

Alice translated.

"Very singular!" said Old King Brady.

"I should say as much!" echoed Harry. "We better be getting out of here."

"I think so myself," replied Old King Brady. "Tell him, Alice," he added, "that if he will come with us to the Hotel Beach we will pay him for what he has done."

Alice translated.

"Come to Mr. Charles," said the big Chink.

"We are going away now," replied Alice. "Tell Mr. Charles to come to us."

Old King Brady backed to the door and flung it open.

"Tell him to come to Mr. Charles!" cried the Chinaman, flourishing the hatchet.

Old King Brady was about to draw his revolver, when the man suddenly flung the hatchet at the wrecked idol, knocking it off of the altar, and ran out of the room.

"Well! This beats the band!" cried Harry. "That fellow is crazy sure."

"Looks so; but let us get out," replied Old King Brady.

It was now pretty dark and in the hall it was very dark.

The Bradys groped their way down the narrow stairs.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Old King Brady, suddenly.

"Surely this is not the way we came! I think we must have passed into the next house through that door."

He produced his flashlight.

"Why, see these stairs are much narrower than the others!" he cried. "There is no flight overhead."

"We better return," said Harry. "We shall be waltzing merrily into some trap next thing we know."

Old King Brady flashed his light downstairs.

"There seems to be a door down there," he said. "We may as well go on."

"We ought to have taken that hatchet," said Alice.

"Next thing we know that fellow will be flinging it at our heads."

"We will return and try to find the correct way out," said Old King Brady. "After all, that will be best."

They hurried back up the stairs.

They had left the door open when they passed through, but now it was suddenly shut.

Old King Brady pressed ahead and tried it.

Not only was the door shut, but it was locked and bolted.

"Come, I don't like this!" cried Harry. "Governor, we want to get Alice out of here, some way or another. I smell serious trouble."

"And it was your own suggestion to return," replied the old detective. "Confound that fellow Charles! He

has surely betrayed us! It's the last time I'll trust a Chink!"

"Perhaps it would have been better if we had done what the man told us to do," said Alice. "He offered to take us to Charles."

"Come! Come!" cried Old King Brady, impatiently, and he pushed on down the stairs.

CHAPTER X.

JANITOR DOWD TELLS ALL HE KNOWS.

Fresh discoveries awaited the Bradys at the foot of the stairs.

The door here was plated with iron.

It had neither knob nor latch.

"Well! We are bottled up, all right, all right!" cried Harry.

"This case has been one grand botch from start to finish."

"Oh! Look at the stairs!" cried Alice.

It was well that they looked as they did, for the stairs were not in evidence a second later.

They simply folded up and went flat against the wall in that condition.

Harry seized hold of them and narrowly escaped getting his hand crushed.

Once in their new position the stairs would not budge.

Then, all at once, there was a creaking sound, and just what Old King Brady anticipated happened.

The floor began to descend.

"We are in for it now!" gasped Harry.

There was nothing to catch hold of, no way of preventing what was happening.

The floor quietly dropped down about six feet and stopped.

The Bradys were now in a small cellar, with stone walls on all four sides, and no trace of either door or window.

There were three chairs and three cot beds.

It looked as if the place had been especially fitted up for their reception.

"Well! Do we get off or do we stay where we are?" demanded Harry, as they stood looking about.

"Oh, we may as well chime in with this," said Old King Brady. "We can't do any better."

The instant they got off the trap it flew up to the ceiling.

The Bradys walked about their prison, flashing their lights.

It was terribly hot and stuffy.

The prospect of remaining here in the darkness was anything but inviting.

Of course, if they kept on flashing their lights the batteries would soon become exhausted.

Suddenly from over by the trap door a voice called out something in Chinese.

"Listen!" breathed Old King Brady.

Alice answered.

Several remarks were exchanged and the voice ceased.

"What does he say?" demanded Harry.

"Says that we are to remain here to-night, and if we keep quiet no harm will come to us," replied Alice. "He said further that in a minute a light will be lowered to us and that I must come alone to the trap door and take it off. Later we are to be fed, it seems."

"Well!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "They don't seem disposed to slaughter us offhand, at all events. We must be patient, I suppose, and take things as they come."

In about five minutes the trap door was lowered again. There was a lighted lantern upon it.

Again the voice called in Chinese and Alice, going for the lantern, talked back.

Then the trap shot up into place.

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

"That in a few minutes we are to have a companion. Another prisoner is to be let down."

"Bother!" cried Harry. "And there are only three beds."

"Perhaps it is Charles," suggested Old King Brady. "But let us study the situation before he comes."

There was little to be seen.

The walls seemed particularly solid.

All that the Bradys could discover that they had not seen before were a couple of small pipes in the floor overhead, which seemed to serve as ventilators.

They sat talking for some little time.

But they could make nothing of it all, and we may as well add right here that, although the Bradys had their own ideas about the matter afterward, the situation never was fully explained.

At last, after about an hour, the rattle of the trap door was heard again.

They watched it come down, and, sure enough, it brought Billy Charles.

The Chinese detective was apparently unconscious.

The Bradys lifted him off onto the cellar floor and found that he was in a profound sleep.

"Now do you blame him?" demanded Harry.

"Don't know what to think," replied the old detective. "He seems to be doped."

"Do you think so?"

"Surely! I can smell the opium on him."

"Perhaps he is put down here just as a bluff."

"You can think what you like, Harry."

"You don't think so, then?"

"Really, I have formed no opinion. All this is so strange that I don't know what to think."

"Shall we try to arouse him?"

"No. Let him sleep."

Just then the voice called in Chinese again.

"Well, what is it this time?" demanded Old King Brady when Alice had answered.

"We get another prisoner in a few minutes."

"Oh, we do, do we?" cried Harry. "When is dinner coming? We shall have quite a party to sit down at the table if this keeps on."

"Unless my eyes deceive me, we have no table," remarked Old King Brady.

"Don't be too exact, Governor."

"Our situation seems to be singularly exact. I could wish it were less so. But who can this newcomer be?"

They were kept guessing for about twenty minutes, when the rattle of the trap was heard again.

This time it carried upon it a small, white man, and doubled up, and securely tied.

He was a stranger to the Bradys.

"Get me up out of dis and set me free!" he cried. "Sure I am almost dead!"

He was a red-headed proposition, dirty, unkempt and unshaven. His clothes were a wreck.

It looked as if some one had been wiping up a barroom floor with this man.

The Bradys laid him on the cellar floor and the trap door flew up.

"Say, you old guy! Hain't you going to cut these ropes?" he cried, in a surly way.

"Take your time," retorted Old King Brady. "Who may you be?"

"Sure I was Jim Dowd before I run up ag'in them blame Chinks!" snarled the man. "I'll be blamed if I know who I am now!"

"The janitor!" cried Harry.

"Yes, de janitor!" growled the man. "An' I'd been better off if I'd stopped at janitoring instead of butting in on other business, so I would."

"Set him free, and then search him," ordered Old King Brady.

"Search me, nothing!" snarled Dowd. "What right have youse to search me, I'd like to know? But I needn't ask. I see who you are now—Old King Brady, de detective."

"Just so. We are working on the Dobbs murder case."

"Oh!"

"You begin to understand."

"Well, it hain't no use to search me. De Chinks has done dat already. Dey have tuk from me everyting what's anny good."

Old King Brady signed to Harry to go ahead as ordered, and it was done.

Dowd made no resistance to the search.

But it was as he had said. Nothing was found upon him of any value.

The search over, the man sat down sullenly upon the edge of one of the cots.

"What's all dis, anyway?" he asked, after a minute. "Are youse prisoners here, like meself?"

"That's what we are, Mr. Dowd," replied Old King Brady. "This young man and lady are my partners."

"And dat Chink?"

"Is a Chinese detective. Now you know the whole situation."

Dowd sat in silence for a few minutes and then suddenly broke loose again.

"I wisht I hadn't never had nothin' to do wit' no detectives!"

"Have they got you into trouble, then?" demanded Old King Brady. "Come, tell me all about it, man. We are surely going to get out of this, some way or another. You have been suspected once of the Dobbs murder. You may be again. Better get over on our side while you have so good a chance."

"Well, do you know, I was just t'inking dat same t'ing meself," replied Dowd; "but dere's a reason why I can't

do it. I don't want to get into no worse trouble dan I'm in now."

"I think I can understand your reason."

"You can?"

"Yes."

"What is it, den?"

"You have been dealing in those fake pearls; you are afraid on that account. Then you have been mixed up with one Webb, a detective, who knows all about your business. Perhaps you are afraid on that account, too; but, be that as it may, you will do best to trust us. We have nothing to do with your private affairs. Indeed, I will help you to get out of whatever difficulties you may be in or may get into if you will be frank with me."

"How can you help me any, when you have been ketcht by de Chinks yourself?"

"I know it looks bad for us, but you take my word for it, we are going to get out of this."

Dowd sat for some time, kicking his feet.

"I s'pose all dis business wit' youse comes out of dat Chineese idol?" he said at last.

"That was the beginning of it."

"I've a blame good mind to talk out."

"You certainly could not do better, my friend."

"I want to get back to New York. I've had enough of Boston. I know you have a big pull over dere, Mr. Brady. Dat's why I'm willing to tell what I know, for I want some one to stand between me and de law, in case I get pulled in again."

"I'll stand for every true word you speak, Dowd. That you may rest assured of—see?"

"Well, let her go; but what am I to say? I didn't kill de old skinflint. Some Chink done dat, sure t'ing. I seen by de papers dat youse discovered a dead Chink in de little room up on de roof. I s'pose you t'ink I knowed all de time he was dere, but I didn't. It was news to me. Say, I dunno what to tell you, anyhow."

"You have told me one thing already," replied Old King Brady. "But let me question you. You knew Mr. Dobbs how long?"

"About two years, ever since I went to work for him. He was de meanest, de stingiest——"

"Cut that out! Did he receive Chinamen in his rooms right along?"

"Only dat one feller—Ching Chop; him what you found dead. He used to come every night pretty near."

"Did you know what he came for?"

"No; it was none of my business. But I knew they made something in that little room on de roof. I wasn't never allowed in dere."

"Did he come the night of the murder?"

"Yes. I let him in after I had locked the door."

"You lived in the building?"

"Yes."

"You are not married?"

"No. I lived alone in a room on the top floor, next to Detective Webb's."

"You saw no more of either Dobbs or the Chinaman that night?"

"No."

"And next morning you were the first to enter his office?"

"Yes. I——"

"Wait! Was the front door of the building locked when you came downstairs that morning?"

"Yes; it was just as usual."

"And the door of Mr. Dobbs's office?"

"Dat was locked, too. I had trouble getting in. Had to turn de key what was in de lock on de inside wit' a wire; den I opened de door wit' me passkey."

"How do you think the murderer came in?"

"By a ladder from dat low roof on Trinity place, which he put up to our roof. Dere was a secret way of getting from Dobbs's room up to de workroom. Dat's my theory, Mr. Brady."

"I believe you are right. To get back to the morning of the discovery: You found Dobbs lying dressed on the bed, with a knife in his body, I believe?"

"Dat's right."

"And the Chinese idol, which always stood on the table in his room, was gone?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure it was there the night before?"

"Dead sure. I seen it meself when I went in to say good night to de old man, like I always did. Now, Boss Brady, you know every blame t'ing I know."

"Not quite," replied the old detective, with a smile. "You haven't told me yet how you came to get hold of the fake pearls you stole and sold here in Boston by the aid of Detective Webb."

"Oh, murder!" cried Dowd, disgustedly. "You know too much entirely. Sure dat's what got me into all de trouble I'm in now."

"I fancied as much. Come, Dowd, you have lied to me; you did go into the room on the roof and get the pearls."

"No, no, no!" cried the janitor. "Honest, I didn't; but I did find a bunch of dem pearls in a secret drawer in dat table, on top of which de idol used to stand. I t'ought dey was real. De old man had showed me some wunst and he said dey was de real t'ing. I tried to sell 'em to a jeweler on Maiden Lane and he told me dey was fakes. I showed dem to Webb and he told me to take dem over to Boston and try to sell dem. Den I was arrested. When I got out of dat snap I come to Boston. Webb give me a few letters of introduction, and I did sell some of de pearls, and dat's de trute."

"And you sent for Webb to join you?"

"Look at dat, now! How much you know! Well, I did. Wisht I hadn't. He come, and we sold de balance of de pearls. Den we heard you was around. Webb got scared. He got me into a Chineese hop joint. Den, when I was a little doped, he robbed me of every cent. De Chinks tied me up and dropped me down here. Now, den, Boss Brady, you have got me up to date, and dat's every blame t'ing I know."

CHAPTER XI.

THE BRADYS' CHINESE DINNER.

Leaving Dowd to himself, the Bradys got together in a corner and consulted.

"It is certainly a very peculiar thing that these two men should be thrown in upon us so," he observed.

"It is more than peculiar," replied Alice. "You can

rest assured, Mr. Brady, that there is some design in it. I can see that some intelligent Chinese hand has been at work here."

"I think Alicé is right," added Harry.

"Ha! Of course!" cried Old King Brady. "Is she ever wrong, in your partial estimation? I doubt it much. Lovers are not to be relied upon. But in this case I agree with you both."

"Do you believe Dowd's story?" demanded Harry.

"Oh, yes; in a general way," was the answer. "He may have enlarged on some details. He may have left others out. But I have no doubt he has told the truth, take it as a whole."

"And what is to be done?"

"I don't see what we can do, unless we can pull down that trap and get out of here."

"I was going to suggest that we try it. All the same I don't believe it will come down."

This was decided upon.

"We are going to make an attempt to get out, Dowd," said the old detective. "If we succeed you go with us."

"I'm ready," replied the janitor. "Sure if I can only get back to New York it's all I ask; but I don't see how I'm going to do it, unless I walk. That scoundrel Webb has robbed me of every cent."

"Oh, I'll pay your fare," replied Old King Brady. "But tell me about this fellow Webb? What kind of a detective business did he do?"

But this Dowd professed not to know.

Later Old King Brady learned that the man was employed by several of the steamship agencies on lower Broadway to watch for swindlers who rob returning emigrants of their money and tickets, and he learned further that, having been suspected of standing in with the swindlers themselves, that of late his business had been very poor.

Harry now stripped the bedding off of one of the cots.

This was placed upright under the trap, and while Dowd and Old King Brady held on to it Harry managed to climb on top.

But it all amounted to nothing, for the thing positively refused to budge.

And so all there was for it seemed to be to settle down to wait.

About an hour elapsed before there was anything further doing.

Dowd fell asleep, not having fully recovered from his overindulgence with the opium pipe.

At last there was a rattle overhead, and the trap was slightly lowered.

Then a voice began speaking in Chinese again.

Alice got under the trap and did the talking, which lasted for some little time.

"What does he say?" demanded the old detective, when she turned away at last.

"That dinner is ready for us. That no harm is intended to us; that if we will put our revolvers on the trap and let them be taken up first the trap will be lowered again and we can come up; but that Charles and the red-headed man, as they called Dowd, must stay here."

"I think we better comply," said Old King Brady.

"The heat of this place is terrible. Really, I am afraid that I couldn't stand a night here at my age."

"That's so," added Harry. "But we must leave it to Alice. I'm sure I don't know what to say."

"What I say is this," replied Alice: "That when a Chinaman gives you his word, he usually keeps it. I say, decidedly, let us go."

"Settled!" said Old King Brady. "Tell him so, Alice."

Alice called up and the trap was lowered.

Each placed a revolver upon it.

Needless to say that in a secret pocket each had another in reserve.

The trap was drawn up and then suddenly lowered a little way.

A Chinaman, wearing a yellow silk mask over his face, looked down and flashed a lantern.

He seemed satisfied when he saw Billy Charles lying on the floor and the red-headed Dowd upon one of the cots.

Down came the trap, and the Bradys and Alice got aboard.

For a minute the thing did not move, nor did they see anything more of the yellow mask.

Then presently a grinding sound was heard and the trap began to rise slowly.

It came up into place, there was a sharp click, and it stopped.

As the trap formed the entire floor of the enclosure, all the detectives could do was to wait, for there was no one to be seen.

In a moment the iron door opened and the yellow mask stepped out and spoke to Alice.

"We are to follow him, he says," explained Alice.

"Go ahead," replied the detective. "We are up against this now for better or for worse."

The yellow mask flung the door wide open.

Beyond was a narrow alley, which wound in behind the house—such a blind way as only Boston can produce.

"Wait a minute!" said Old King Brady. "Ask him, Alice, what is to become of Billy Charles. I don't feel altogether like deserting the fellow."

Alice put the question.

"He says that both he and Dowd will be set free in the morning," she announced.

"All right. Go on," ordered Old King Brady. "We can't be too particular."

The Chinaman went on through the alley.

Presently two Chinks shuffled past them.

They looked curiously at the outfit, but neither stopped nor spoke.

"What's the matter with making a strike to get out of this?" demanded Harry, in a whisper. "I have no doubt we could succeed."

"No," was the reply. "This business grows more mysterious and interesting every minute. I have made up my mind to see it through."

Seeing that the old detective was determined, Harry said no more.

Suddenly the mask opened a door on his right and beckoned to Alice to come on.

They passed inside. Here stood a lighted lantern upon the bottom step of a flight of stairs.

The Chink closed the door, picked up the lantern and ascended.

They went up only one flight and then another door was flung open.

Beyond was a good-sized room, furnished in full Chinese fashion and in the most expensive and elegant style possible.

There were no windows visible, and the place was lighted with four fine, old bronze lanterns, which hung from the ceiling.

An agreeable, aromatic smell pervaded the place, as though incense had been recently burned.

"By jove! This is a great room!" cried Harry. "I never saw its equal, either in New York or San Francisco."

There was a low chuckle behind the yellow mask, which made the old detective fancy that perhaps, after all, the man was not as ignorant of the English language as he professed to be.

Instantly the man pushed aside the hangings and fastened them back, revealing an open door, through which light came streaming, at the same time speaking to Alice.

"He says we are not to go through that door," said Alice. "We are to sit down at the table and dinner will be served."

The mask bowed and backed through the door.

"No chance of them poisoning us, is there?" demanded Harry, looking around.

"I shall eat whatever they place before me," said Alice. "We are evidently in the hands of a Chinese gentleman. This is not the work of Highbinders and opium fiends."

"You are undoubtedly right," replied Old King Brady.

He removed his hat and seated himself at the table, Harry and Alice taking their places opposite each other at the sides.

To describe the dinner in detail would be tiresome.

Enough to say that, in all their experience, the Bradys never met its equal.

Of course, there was chop suey, but this was only an item.

Sharks' fins and even the expensive edible birds' nests, which are imported from China, were served.

Yellow Mask did the business.

He bobbed in and out by the forbidden door, bringing dishes and removing them.

He was the perfection of a waiter, and neglected nothing.

What seemed to trouble him most was that the guests would not touch the wine which he served.

It ended with splendid coffee, some yellow, Chinese cheese and such cigars as the Bradys had not smoked in many a long day.

Scarcely a word was spoken by the mask during the entire meal, and after the coffee and cheese was served he closed the door, dropped the curtain and left the detectives to themselves.

"And now what comes next?" demanded Harry, as he and Old King Brady sat smoking.

"Why, we can only await developments," was the reply. "Something will turn up soon, you may depend."

He was right, but they had started on their second cigar before it came.

Then, all at once, from behind the rich hangings a voice spoke in Chinese.

It came from a different part of the room than the kitchen door.

Alice talked a few minutes, which gave the Bradys a chance to size up the voice.

Certainly it was not the voice which had called down through the trap, nor did that of the yellow mask correspond with the one they had heard first.

"This person says that he proposes to tell you all about the Chinese idol and our case generally," said Alice. "He wants me to translate sentence by sentence and you to take notes. He says he has used you like gentlemen and he relies upon your honor not to interfere nor to attempt to solve the secrets of this place."

"Tell him," replied Old King Brady, "that he will find that his reliance is not misplaced. Harry, take the notes."

Harry got out his memorandum book and pencil, and Alice announcing that they were all ready, the voice began speaking behind the hangings again.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Harry's memorandum book read as follows when the voice behind the hangings finally ceased to speak and Alice had translated her last sentence:

"I speak to Mr. Old King Brady.

"It is not desired in any way to injure that remarkable man, who, in his way, has been a good friend to the Chinese in America.

"It is not designed in any way to interfere with the ends of justice, but we Chinese like to manage our own affairs, and therefore we have managed this.

"In China, many years ago, was established the Order of the Ten.

"This is not a religious order and never was. It is like what you would call a stock company. It possessed a secret which its members were sworn never to reveal, except to those who, upon the death of a member, should be newly elected into the Order of the Ten.

"The nature of this secret was a process for making pearls, which came so near to being the real thing that many were deceived. But our members deceived nobody. The pearls they made were sold as imitations. It was not their business to prevent persons from being deceived by them after they had once-passed out of their hands.

"Like all Chinese societies, the Order of the Ten had its luck god, or idol, as you call it. We were then established in the city of Canton. One day, several years ago, one of our members turned traitor. He stole the luck god and fled to America, where he joined with a certain rich American, whom he had met in China in former years.

"How this was brought about, we don't know and we don't care. We had lost our luck god, who could no longer be our god, as he had turned his back on us. We had also lost the ancient recipe, written by our founder, telling how to make these pearls. We resolved to get back the recipe and to punish the thief. His name was

Ching Chop. He is the Chinaman with the tattooed hand, who was found dead in the Broadway building in New York. The white man who was found dead also is the man who persuaded him to betray us for money. Both deserved their fate, but we are not murderers. We hired a Highbinder, whose trade is murder, to obtain our revenge. He will be punished for his crime in due time.

"He stole the luck god, for which we have no further use. Ching Chop left a paper in his room on Pell street trying to throw suspicion on his enemy Ping Pank, one of our order. He called him a priest to create a desire to be more revengeful; he was no priest, but a maker of imitation pearls."

We pause for a moment to say a word on our own account.

Certainly the last sentence is very obscure.

Either Alice must have made a mistake in her translation or Harry did so in taking her dictation.

"In order to enable our Highbinder to identify the luck god we caused a duplicate image to be made. This is the image you saw destroyed last night. It was ended. You thought it was the real Chinese idol of which you were in search, but you were wrong.

"If, when you go back to New York, you will go to No. — Pell street, the same room in which Ching Chop lived, on the evening of the day after to-morrow, at nine o'clock, the murderer of those two men—the Chinese traitor, Ching Chop, and the American swindler, who sold the pearls as genuine—shall be delivered into your hands.

"So shall the Chinese idol, and within it will be found the paper you seek, which gives to the Chinese child, who is the daughter of Fing Chung, now dead, the money of her grandfather. It is well for her. It is her own.

"Do with the murderer as you will. He is only a hired assassin, a Highbinder, whose trade it is to rob and kill.

"Do with the luck god as you will. It is no longer the god of the Order of the Ten.

"As for the rest, if you are wise you will quietly leave this place and seek to interfere with the business of our order no more. We who represent it propose to return to China at once. To attempt to persecute those of our countrymen who have befriended us because they have done so would not only be foolish, but wrong. Be warned and mind your own business. As to how the Highbinder obtained entrance to that building, if you ask him perhaps he will tell you. I doubt it. You will never learn from me. Farewell!"

Old King Brady, who had sat in silence while this long harrangue was delivered, now told Alice to thank the unseen speaker.

Alice attempted to do so, but there was no reply.

"I think we better get right out," she said. "These people seem to be disposed to treat us very decently. If you take my advice you will retire at once."

"It shall be taken," said Old King Brady. "Question is, Can we go?"

He had scarcely spoken when the door was thrown open and there stood the Yellow Mask.

"You will follow me," he said to Alice in Chinese.

Old King Brady placed a ten-dollar bill in the man's hand, but he passed it back.

He then led them to the alley and there left them.

As he was about to close the door he said good night in English and the Bradys responded.

They then made their way through the alley and passed out by a gate into Oxford place.

"If we only had Billy Charles and that rescally Dowd this would be simply perfect," said Old King Brady. "But I shall rely upon the word of these people and not attempt to do anything to-night."

"I think you safely may," said Alice. "After all, we care only for Charles. I doubt if they will attempt to injure him."

"Really," remarked the old detective just before they separated for the night, "there is no use in attempting to lay out a Chinese case on regular lines. All the same, but for the clew we found in Pell street, I doubt if we should ever have met with even this much success."

"I believe you," replied Alice. "But the case is not over yet. We have the murderer to capture at Ching Chop's room and the Dobbs will to recover."

Next morning, while the Bradys were at breakfast, which was being served in their own suite, there came a letter, which proved to be from Billy Charles.

It was rather a laughable production and ran as follows:

"Mr. Old King Brady:

"Respected Sir—I write to tell you that I give up detective business now. I am a fool, and a fool cannot make a good detective. When I saw success in my hand, sir, I let myself listen to a woman, and I was drugged. Where I was all night, sir, I do not know, sir; but this morning I find myself locked in the station house for being drunk, which I was not, sir, no! Believe me, no! I hope you may succeed in your case, but it will have to be done without me, for to-day I give back my commission. A detective is not a fool. I am a fool, consequently I cannot be a detective. Do not come to me. I shall do all right. I am, sir, one who admires you.

"B. Charles."

"Exit Billy Charles!" laughed Old King Brady. "He is not the first man who has spoiled his work by listening to a woman, nor will he be the last. But, at all events, we now know that he was not the traitor we thought."

They went on with their breakfast. Harry was looking over the morning Globe.

"Listen to this," said Harry, and he read as follows:

"The man who was picked up unconscious on Harrison avenue in Chinatown last night, with a stab wound in the back and his pockets turned inside out, died this morning in the hospital. He proves to be James Webb, a private detective from New York. He revived just long enough to give his name and to state that he was killed in a quarrel with three Chinamen."

"Well! Another traitor gone!" exclaimed Alice. "He didn't make much by robbing his partner, Dowd."

They heard from the janitor before they rose from the table, for he appeared in person and demanded admittance.

"Excuse me for buttin' in, Mr. Brady," he exclaimed, thickly, "but I come to tell youse that if youse will read the paper youse will see dat dat scoundrel Webb got his deserts. I dunno who done him up, but even if he was a Chink, I could shake de hand of him. An', say! I'll have to ask you for dat loan you promised me. I haven't a blame cent and I want to get back to New York worst way. Dis here town hain't fit for nobody but Chinks."

"Well, short as you are of money, you seem to have been able to get your whisky all right," said Old King Brady. "Who told you we were here?"

"It was a Chink what let me out last night," replied Dowd. "He gimme two dollars and turned me loose. He told me youse was here. But, first off, dey put a jug of whisky by me bedside. As true as preachin', I only had one drink."

"Then you have the two dollars now," said Old King Brady. "You won't need to borrow of me."

"No, no, no! Look at dat now! I lost de money and dat one drink went so to me head——"

"That will do," broke in the old detective. "No need of any further lying. Here are five dollars. Get right back to New York."

Dowd grabbed at the bill like a true janitor and departed.

Whether he ever did go to New York or not, we are unable to state. At all events, the Bradys never saw or heard of the fellow again.

The detectives themselves returned to New York by the ten o'clock train.

Next morning Dr. Dobbs called and anxiously asked about the case.

But Old King Brady, who interviewed the old gentleman, would tell him nothing, except that by the day following he hoped to have secured the will.

The doctor pressed hard for details, but did not get them.

Old King Brady regarded the story he had to tell as too fanciful to be confided to a man of the doctor's stamp.

The Bradys kept shady that day.

Everything depended upon whether the unknown Chinaman would make good that night or not.

Evening came and, needless to say, the Bradys and Alice started for Pell street.

There was some little confusion about the number.

Alice thought it was one thing, and Harry was sure it was another.

At last they settled upon a number and ascended to the top floor of a dirty tenement.

"This is not the house we were in before," declared Alice. "I am positive of it."

"You are wrong," asserted Harry. "It certainly is."

"I thought you two had settled that business," said Old King Brady. "Really, there should be no question of the sort."

"But these Pell street houses look so much alike," said Harry.

"Here we are on the top floor, now to settle it," was the reply.

They knocked on the door of the back room.

There was some shuffling about inside, and then all was still.

Again they knocked, but there was no response, except more shuffling, followed by a fall, which shook the floor.

"Here! We must end this!" cried Old King Brady.

He put his shoulder to the door and forced it in.

There upon the floor lay two men, half dressed.

There was no sign of the Chinese idol, nor anything else, to make the Bradys believe that they had come to the right place.

"These men are simply drunk with opium!" declared Old King Brady. "Don't you see the layout? They have been smoking in that bunk."

"It's the wrong house," declared Alice. "Our place is next door, as I said."

They beat a hasty retreat and ascended to the top floor of the next house.

Here both Harry and Alice recognized the place.

The door of the back room was locked and there was no response to their knock.

Once more Old King Brady forced the door.

The unknown had been as good as his word, as far as the first glance showed.

There upon a table stood the very duplicate of the wretched Chinese idol split in two halves with an axe.

Stretched upon the floor lay the body of a dead Chinaman, shot through the heart!

To his blouse was pinned a paper with Chinese characters on it, which Alice translated as follows:

"This is your murderer. Do with him as you will. Look inside of the idol for the will!"

They looked and they found it.

The paper which Old King Brady drew forth was the will of John Frazee Dobbs, sure enough.

What is more, it cut Archie Dobbs off with a small income and gave the whole of the remainder of the large estate to little Ellen Dobbs Chang.

Old King Brady pocketed the will and they hastily retreated, leaving the dead man for the police.

And so old Dr. Dobbs was made happy next day and the Bradys came in for a fat reward.

Archie Dobbs disputed the will, but he lost his suit and in the end the child inherited, with the old doctor as her guardian.

The detectives kept their mouths shut, and the death of J. F. Dobbs remained a mystery, now to be for the first time explained in this story of "The Bradys and the Chinese Idol."

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS AND THE TORN SHOE; or, CONVICTED BY A FOOTPRINT," which will be the next number (501) of "Secret Service."

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ITEMS WORTH READING.

Regarding the war in Morocco, the last stages of which wrought havoc among the French troops, a French journal recalls a remark once made by the French General Canrobert, in describing the taking of Zaatcha, in the Arabian campaign. "All around me," said the famous general, "the staff officers were being killed like flies. I alone remained untouched. Why? For a very simple reason. As usual, I was wearing full-dress uniform, with all my decorations and medals glistening in the sun. Consequently, the Arabs aimed at me personally." The times have changed since then, and the Moroccans are better marksmen, as the French troops found to their cost.

For many years past, chrome mining has been pursued as an industry in Asia Minor. The chrome is usually found on mountains from 4,000 to 5,000 feet high, and is removed from the pits to the railway station or market on the backs of donkeys and camels. But while chrome in the neighborhood of Smyrna brought \$100 a ton, it now commands a very small price, being in this respect like antimony, so that it scarcely pays to mine it, and certainly not in districts remote from railways. As the chrome of other countries comes on the world's markets, that of Turkey, whose mines have never been worked on a scientific basis, with up-to-date machinery, must necessarily decline in value.

An electric rat killer is the latest means designed for slaughtering rodents. Recently it was tried in Trieste, France, and it is claimed that it produced good results. The "killer" is made so that it can be lowered into drains and other infested places. It consists of a shallow tray, with a bottom lined with closely spaced metal points alternately connected to the positive and negative terminals of a high-tension electric circuit. The animals are promptly electrocuted as they step on the points in attempting to reach the bait. The apparatus destroys only rats and similar vermin, and it is affirmed that there is no risk to cats and other domestic animals.

Artificial hatching has become so much of a pronounced success that its application is being extended quite a little beyond the incubation of chicken eggs. Turkey, duck, and goose eggs are as regularly hatched in incubators, and the young reared in brooders, as those of the ordinary barnyard fowls. Possibly the most important acquisition to the wooden hen (certainly so in size) is the incubation of ostrich eggs, which has been successfully carried on by ostrich breeders in Southern California for the past few years, the most pronounced success having been attained by the South Pasadena ostrich farm. On the grounds of this establishment has been built a handsome incubator and brooder house, with a capacity of about a hundred ostrich eggs, and the brooder apartment capable of accommodating some fifty youngsters. The edifice

is built of concrete walls and floors and a wooden roof, this material affording a reasonably even temperature during all kinds of weather. Hatching is done every day in the year. The period of incubation with ostrich eggs is forty days, fertility averaging about 65 per cent. The chicks are allowed to dry off in the incubator for 24 hours, much the same as with chickens. After that period they are transferred to the brooder and given a ration of fine cut alfalfa, dry bone and finely ground grit. If the weather is pleasant, their duration is quite limited to the brooder house, as they are given outside runs at once. During the winter and rainy season, however, they are confined to the brooder house until the weather is more favorable. In about a fortnight the chicks are given sparingly a ration consisting of cracked corn and bran worked up into a mash, and are then allowed to range over a field of alfalfa. At the expiration of about three months the young commence to shed their baby feathers, gradually putting on the adult plumage which constitutes such an important article of commerce. The ostrich is a long-lived bird, the average age being about sixty years. It reaches its full growth in from four to five years, and its greatest commercial value from the ages of six to forty years.

WITH THE FUNNY FELLOWS.

"Binks is stuck on his new automobile." "The last time I saw him with it he was stuck under it."

"I hear he is getting rich since he quit drinking." "Appearances would indicate that he is. I understand he is about to trade the water wagon for an automobile."

"Didn't I give you 10 cents to get a meal?" "Yes, sir." "And now I find you in a saloon." "I came in to get a piece of cheese. Dey don't serve cheese with them 10-cent dinners."

"Katie, do you know the policeman on this beat?" "Sure I do, ma'am." "He told me to-day he had taken up Esperanto." "And sure, what had the Oitalian been doin, ma'am?"

"What made you kick Jimpson?" "He called me an ass." "Oh, well, kicking is a characteristic of asses, but I shouldn't think you'd want to confirm Jimpson's statement so quickly."

When five-year-old Margie was taken in to see the new twins she exclaimed: "Oh, mamma, you have been to another bargain sale, haven't you?"

"How do you write horn?" asked the teacher of a small boy at the blackboard. "A horn isn't written at all," answered the little fellow. "It's blowed."

Small Elsie—Grandma, is your teeth good? Grandma—No, dear. I haven't any. Small Elsie—Then I'll let you hold my candy till I come back.

Sunday School Teacher—The wisest man that ever lived said, "There's nothing new under the sun." Small Pupil—Didn't they never have a baby at his house?"

"John, dear, I wish you would taste this milk, and see if it's perfectly sweet." "What for?" "Because if it's the least bit sour I don't want to give any to Fido. It isn't good for him."

Magistrate—You say your wife threw a teacup and struck you on the head? Plaintiff—Yes, your honor. Magistrate—How far was she away from you at the time? Plaintiff—About ten feet. Magistrate—What did she aim at? Plaintiff—At me. Magistrate—Well, all I've got to say is that you ought to be proud of a wife like that.

OUT OF THE PAST.

By D. W. STEVENS.

Ancient Roger Green's ambition was nearing its fruition. On the morrow his only grandchild would wed a man of noble blood—a man whose pedigree was as lengthy as that of a race horse, although, perhaps, not quite as pure. To be sure, Count Marsden was a beggar financially, but then he possessed blue blood, and Roger Green had thirsted for social recognition ever since he could remember.

Along the line of the bleak coast of Maine he enjoyed an enviable reputation for ability as a lawyer. For the most part, people believed him a man of strictest honor, although now and then a person was to be encountered who gave him credit with being a sharper.

That Roger Green had made money everybody knew, but it was a matter of pure guesswork as to how much he might really possess. He lived with Elsie Green in a castle-like structure, surmounting a precipice against which the waves of old ocean murmured in times of calm, and dashed in maddest fury when the storm was on.

There was among the neighbors only one man who knew aught of the old "castle," as it was locally called. He could tell of its having been purchased by a gentleman who had come there with an only child, a daughter of several summers. Living secluded there for a year, he then went off to sea in a sailing vessel bound for the Mediterranean. He had never come back, and afterward Roger Green had taken up his residence here. He owned it; there could be no question about that, for the county books showed the transcript of the deed.

From the time of coming here to live Roger Green had begun to narrow the lines of his practice, till now, after some years, he was living the dignified life of ease of a wealthy gentleman, his secret efforts directed to obtaining social position for himself and a husband for his Elsie.

On the morning of this day preceding the grand wedding, Roger and his granddaughter stood before the window of the library that faced the shore, and for some moments gazed in silence out over the summer sea.

The striking of the clock recalled the old man from his reverie, and he remarked:

"Well, Elsie, if nothing happens, by this time to-morrow you will be the Countess Marsden."

"Yes. But I hate the man so that I do not know if the title will be recompense sufficient for the sacrifice. He is nothing but a needy fortune hunter—it is the money he is after and not me. I can read him as easily as a printed book, and it is all that I can do at times to keep from telling him what a hypocrite he is when he declares undying devotion."

"You must be careful not to do that. Just think of it, Elsie—when rebellious thoughts arise, just think that you will be Countess Marsden."

The girl's head was tossed with pride. Already she was lifted far above her most refined neighbors by the prospect. Countess of Marsden! It was a luscious morsel to roll under her tongue. She had feasted, and she now feasted in recalling the envious glances that had been bestowed on her ever since it became known to the public that she was engaged to Count Marsden. She had only to drive in her dog cart to the fashionable watering place within sight of the turrets of the castle to create a furore almost as great as though she were a princess royal.

She had declared the count's motives to be mercenary alone, but even she did not know how mercenary they were. It had been kept from her by Roger that before the count formally proposed he had spent an evening with him in the library,

during which an old-fashioned safe concealed behind a panel in the wainscoting had been opened, and untold treasures spread before the covetous eyes of nobility. Nor did she know that immediately after her marriage the count was to receive the sum of a hundred thousand dollars—that he had, as it were, been hired to marry her.

"Yes," she said, a ring of triumph in her tone, "I'll bend the heads of some of those who have before now taunted me with my father's disgrace, with the fact of your early poverty. But, do you know, there's one thing that troubles me, has troubled me ever since I discovered the truth, and that is, that she may some day come here."

"Hush!" and there was a hiss in the old man's tone. "It was luck the most cursed that you ever discovered the truth. But surely you must have sense enough not to breathe a word now, or at any time. It is impossible to say what ears may drink in an incautious word. And there is no danger—the ship went down with all on board!"

"Perhaps not."

"I know it. No, no there is no danger, not the slightest; do not refer to it again," and picking up his cane, Roger Green went out on the lawn.

"No," he said, standing there on the edge of the bluff, "there is no danger. I made certain of that. I wonder what vessel that is," his gaze resting on a trim-looking craft lying off the little seaport, her sails aback.

Standing there, he looked not unlike some ancient picture that, endowed with life, had stepped out of its frame. He was dressed in the style of several generations before, with velvet trunks, coat of the same, a silken vest, and ruffled linen, while on his waving white locks was set a hat of a century past.

He was an eminently respectable person, viewed as he stood there, suggestive of antiquity of family in which so much pride was centered that he clung to the dress of that family in the past.

Presently he went slowly down a winding path that took him to the shore. There was a favorite spot here where he came on every fine day and smoked a cigar.

The shore being reached, he was moving slowly along toward his "nook," when suddenly he saw a person before him. It was a girl, clad in a costume suggestive of foreign lands. The skirt was short, disclosing dainty feet encased in slippers, and giving an occasional glimpse of finely turned ankles. A flat straw hat surmounted a shapely head crowned with brown curls, shading a wondrously sweet and perfect face.

They had halted involuntarily, and stood gazing at each other, typifying the Present and the Past.

A minute thus, and then the girl's eyes began to dilate. At the same time Roger Green bent forward and scanned her with anxious eagerness. Slowly the color left his face, and the hands that rested on the cane began to tremble.

It was the girl who broke the silence.

"You are Roger Green?" she said.

"I am."

"I recognize you. Do you not recognize me?"

"No, I do not know you."

"Do not your fears, does not guilty heart, tell you who I am?"

"No. Why should I know you?"

"I am Sarah Howland!"

He caught his breath gaspingly, and stared at her with a deathly fear creeping into his face.

Again she spoke.

"I have come for my rights, Roger Green," she said. "I have come for my rights to-day."

"What rights can you prate of?" and in his tone rang a resolute resolution.

"The rights you robbed my father of, for which you murdered my father," she firmly said.

He laughed hoarsely. He must not admit anything; come what might, Elsie must be Countess of Marsden.

"You are crazy!" he cried. "If you are Sarah Howland, the daughter of the man from whom I bought the castle, you shall never come to want while I have a penny. But I must consider you crazy, and I shall have a doctor examine you, and, if necessary, place you in an asylum."

"Never! This day I mean to have my rights acknowledged! Out of my way, Roger Green, I am going to my home."

She would have mounted the winding path up the face of the bluff, but, suddenly controlled by a mad impulse, he threw himself in her way and raised his cane to strike. Swish! The heavy cane cut the air, and only that she leaped nimbly aside, the girl must have been felled insensible.

Uttering a cry of rage now, knowing that his mad action had committed him, Roger Green made a dash at her, his long bony hands reaching for her fair white throat.

But, before he could do her injury, there was a rush of feet. A man darted forward from behind a point of rocks, and by a blow sent Roger Green sprawling.

"Father!" exclaimed the girl, "I did not know you were so near! Where is——"

The question was not finished. She had been about to ask him where was his attendant, for he had been out of his mind for years past. She was halted now by the terrible convulsion witnessed on his face. His protruding eyes, fastened on Roger Green's sanctimonious, oily face, began to gleam with a light to which they had for years been a stranger.

There was a spasm, as of rage, a contraction of the brows, a clutching at it with his hands, a motion as though rending away a veil, and then he cried:

"It comes back to me now—the wreck!—the sailing from this place first—you are Roger Green!"

Then he gazed blankly at the girl.

"Did you call me father? I know the voice, but surely you are not my little girl! How did I get here?"

"Come!" she said, taking him by the hand. "Do not puzzle over it now. In due time it will be all explained. We will now go to our home on the cliffs. Roger Green, we wish your company."

When he demurred, she took a dainty revolver from her dress pocket, firmly saying:

"Roger Green, the misery you brought upon me and mine has made me something of a man in my ability to care for myself, and that loved father who was not murdered, but made insane in the carrying through of your murderous scheme."

She did not threaten in words, but he dared not refuse while she held that weapon ready to enforce her commands, and he led the way up the winding path to the castle.

"What is that?" cried Elsie, when she met the party near the house.

"I am Sarah Howland," answered the girl.

More plucky than her grandfather, Elsie Green cried:

"It's a lie! You are some adventuress, trying to blackmail us! Begone! This place belongs to him; the deeds stand in his name."

"Then they are forged," was the calm reply.

"Begone, I say, or I will have you arrested. Grandfather, will you weakly let them rob you?"

"No—no—never!" and a fierceness suddenly leaped into his utterance. "I will defy and fight you to the last. Elsie will to-morrow become the Countess Marsden! You have no proof—ha! ha! You have no proof."

"That is where you are mistaken!" exclaimed a quiet voice,

as a newcomer stepped from the screen of a flowering shrub. "I am John Morgan, detective, at your service, Roger Green. Six months ago a dying tar made a confession to me. He said that a certain man, named Roger Green, a lawyer by profession, had hired him to scuttle a ship in which he was about to sail, so that a gentleman and his little daughter might never reach another port. He earned the sum you promised him by scuttling the vessel. She went down in mid-ocean. But he did not know whether the gentleman and his child had been lost or saved, although when he came to you to get his pay he assured you that with his own eyes he had seen them perish. But he told me that certain of the crew had been saved, and told me the names of these. I sought them out, and one of them was able to tell me of a child that had been taken ashore in safety. I hunted her out, and found her with her father, who, struck on the head by a piece of wreckage, had never recovered his reason. Yonder vessel brought us here to claim our rights, and—Heaven be praised—the sight of your rascally visage has been the one needed thing to touch the chords of memory and restore Mr. Howland's reason. The proof of your guilt is here—in this dying confession of your tool—properly witnessed before a competent magistrate."

As the last word was uttered, Roger Green uttered a gasping cry and fell to the earth. When they reached his side he was dead. Elsie Green stood speechless before them for a minute, then fled, nor ever was seen again. She did not become the Countess Marsden on the morrow. The count transferred his attentions on the real heiress, but she had no ambition to bear a title at the expense of true love, and the fortune hunter shortly left for pastures new.

Roger Green was buried in the village churchyard, followed by no mourner, for he had won the love of none, and on the stone that Mr. Howland caused to be raised at his head was inscribed:

ROGER GREEN,
Out of the Past.

The initiated alone understanding the meaning of that sentence.

As he stands in the middle of the flat Suffolk field, in England, there is little to show that he is not the ordinary inanimate scarecrow. He stands motionless for five minutes at a time, and only when a bird is tempted by the fresh corn just appearing above the ground does he show any signs of life. But then it is that the scarecrow moves. He hits an old tin can with the rusty handle of a shovel, and frightens the birds and makes them fly quickly out of sight. So he spends his day, this old, bent man, and at the end he is paid 18 pence. He is the village scarecrow.

A curious and pathetic, albeit not so uncommon, feature of prison life was touched upon the other day when a man named Kelley complained to a magistrate that he had been prevented by the warders from bringing out of prison with him a rat that he had tamed. Prisoners at all times have been in the habit of making pets of the four-footed creatures that haunt their prisons. Big Bill Johnson, in his day a notorious South London character, trained mice in Pentonville, and trained them so cleverly, that on his release he was able to earn over \$300 by exhibiting them, sufficient to set him up in business. Sparrows, blackbirds, spiders, and even flies, have all been made pets of by convicts; and not long ago a sad little story found its way into the press of how a Portland "lifer" named Persons was driven insane through the confiscation of a field mouse he had caught and tamed. Wainwright, the Whitechapel murderer, made friends with the prison cat and interrupted the chaplain's exhortations at the foot of the gallows to inquire concerning its welfare. Prichard, the double-

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