

No 670

Nov. 24th 1911

5 Cents

SECRET SERVICE.

THE BRADYS IN "LITTLE AFRICA" OR TEN HOURS OF DEADLY PERIL

By A NEW YORK DETECTIVE



FRANK TOUSEY
PUBLISHER
• 24
UNION SQUARE.
NEW-YORK.

So busy was the fellow abusing the Bradys that, apparently without knowing it, he was spilling the oil all over the floor. The old darkey bent down over the lamp, and lighted a twisted bit of paper. It looked as if he meant to fire the oil.

SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York, N. Y., Post Office, March 1, 1899. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1911, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York. New Application for Second Class Entry pending.

No. 670.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 24, 1911.

Price 5 Cents.

THE BRADYS IN "LITTLE AFRICA"

OR,

TEN HOURS OF DEADLY PERIL

By A NEW YORK DETECTIVE

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERY OF THE ALWAYS OPEN WINDOW.

A very shabby corner of the Borough of Brooklyn, N. Y., is the Colored Quarter, or "Little Africa," as it is sometimes called.

To get there one wants to go up Myrtle avenue from the Borough Hall, although there are half a dozen other ways, of course, but when one gets there then there is nothing to see save a big bunch of old tumble-down frame buildings, some large enough to come under the head of tenement houses, but most of them of the cottage order.

These are occupied by colored people with scarce an exception within the limits of the wide space bounded by Tillary street on the north, Willoughby on the south, Fleet on the west, and Canton on the east.

This square slice of Brooklyn is well named "Little Africa," for with the exception of the store-keepers on Myrtle avenue, which passes through the heart of it, one can scarcely find a white person there after dark.

Until very recently there stood on Hudson avenue, near Johnson street, in the said "Little Africa," a frame house larger than the rest, with an enormously high roof, covered with shingles and very steep.

This building stood head and shoulders above its neighbors and was long one of the landmarks of "Little Africa."

It was in plain view of the passengers on the Ridgewood line of the elevated, and was all the more noticeable from the fact that there was an exceedingly large window in the gable close up by the peak of the roof.

For years this window was always open, and observing passengers on the elevated trains used to mildly wonder whether the sashes were missing or not; whether it opened from an attic or a room; why the people in the house didn't shut up the opening somehow when it came to zero weather, and whether it did not make the house cold.

But the open window never was closed up to the time they pulled down old "Razor Hall," as the house was

locally known some three or four years ago to make room for a brick factory, for even "Little Africa" is changing, although, as we remarked before, it has changed as little as any part of the Borough of Brooklyn.

Late one cold evening in November a few years since there sat in the last car of a New York bound elevated train down from Ridgewood a stylish young fellow in his twenties, accompanied by a really handsome young lady who acted toward him in every respect like a wife or sister.

The few passengers in the car mildly curious wondered who this prosperous looking couple might be.

It would certainly have added to their interest had they been informed that the man was none other than the famous Young King Brady, of the Brady Detective Bureau of Union Square, New York, while the young lady was Miss Alice Montgomery, the accomplished female sleuth, who is a full partner in the same flourishing institution.

Harry and Alice, as our readers know them, had been attending an anarchist meeting at a hall on Troutman street, in the upper Williamsburg section, hoping to spot a noted anarchist woman whom the Bradys were anxious to find.

Failing in this, they were now returning to Manhattan, and as the train drew near the Navy street station, Harry, who was looking out the window, suddenly exclaimed:

"By Jove, Alice, a man has just been thrown out of the always open window of Razor Hall!"

"Then that settles it," remarked Alice, quietly. "We get out at Bridge street."

"Oh, no, Alice!"

"Oh, yes, Harry."

The train was stopping.

Alice arose, her face wearing a determined look.

"Sit down," said Harry, persuasively.

"No; if you don't go with me I am going alone," said Alice, and Young King Brady knowing the girl he loved better than any one else knows her, got up and joined her in the aisle.

A moment later and they had left the train.

Now, the inside story of all this has to do with a conversation which had been going on between Harry and Alice on the way down from Ridgewood.

Singularly enough, Razor Hall entered into it.

Alice remarked that she believed she had seen about every queer quarter of Greater New York late at night except "Little Africa," and she would greatly like to see that.

Harry allowed that while he considered it worth seeing, it was certainly no place for a woman.

He then spoke of Razor Hall and the hard name it bore, and referred to the always open window up under the roof.

Alice begged him to take her there, but he refused—refused then, to consent now when he found he could not help himself, for as far as Harry is concerned Alice always has her way, and even with Old King Brady himself it is pretty much the same.

Harry never harps upon his objections once he gives in, so when they got down on Myrtle avenue, Alice took his arm and began talking just as if there had been no argument.

"You are sure you saw a man fall out of the always open window?" she inquired.

"Positive," replied Harry.

"Perhaps you can tell whether he was black or white?"

"Laugh at me if you like, Alice; I know what I saw, and I propose to prove my words if I can."

"But how could you see such a distance in the dark?"

"As it happens there was a big arc light burning in front of a painted advertising sign on the roof of the house next below Razor Hall. It shone directly on the always open window."

"Well explained, sir. Is this Hudson avenue?"

"This is Hudson avenue. Now we are in 'Little Africa.'"

Harry turned north on the avenue, running into a gaily dressed bunch of young colored people, evidently returning from some entertainment.

Alice drew closer to her escort.

"They seem a decent lot enough," she remarked.

"Yes," said Harry. "Of course, you find all kinds here. But what is your scheme, Alice? Do you want me to look up a cakewalk for you or a colored ball?"

"Neither. I merely wanted to see how the neighborhood looks."

"You see it. It is not inviting."

"Certainly not, but these coons are not allowed much choice as to the neighborhoods they live in."

"That's so, too. But I daresay they find as much real comfort inside these shabby houses as they do in the modern tenements of San Juan Hill."

"And a whole lot cheaper for the poor creatures."

"Surely. Here we are. This is Razor Hall. Want to go in?"

"No, no, Harry. The outside is enough."

It was a gloomy old roost, rising four stories above the basement, which was two more than the houses on either side of it.

It seemed to be but partially occupied, for there were lights in only a few of the windows.

Over those of the basement was a home-made sign, reading:

"Whitewashing done here. Jim Johnson."

"Here's a chance for some of our crooked politicians to come and get whitewashed," laughed Harry as he called Alice's attention to it.

"Have you forgotten your window man?" she asked. "I don't see any excitement over the matter."

"What can I do? I don't want to take you up on that roof."

"I'll go."

"I don't doubt your willingness, but—ah, here comes a policeman. I think I'll tell him."

"Do; I am more than curious to know whether you were right or not."

Truth told, Harry was curious himself, and as the officer came up he showed his shield and made himself known.

Of course, the entire New York police force knows the Bradys by reputation, and it really is remarkable how many know them personally and by sight.

"Officer," said Harry, "while riding on the elevated I saw a man come tumbling out of the always open window of Razor Hall. As near as I could make out he landed on the roof of this house here."

"Is dat so?" replied the policeman. "But say, how could you see dat in de dark?"

"Dark, officer! Look up. It strikes me it is very light up there."

"Well, dat's so, too. I didn't stop to t'ink. Did he roll off into de back yard, den?"

"That I couldn't see. Suppose we investigate?"

"I must, since you say you saw dis."

"I'll go with you."

"All right. But de lady? 'Tain't safe to leave her on de street here."

"Oh, I'll go, too," said Alice. "I am also a detective."

"Dat so? Not Miss Alice Montgomery?"

"Yes. What might your name be?"

"Monihan, miss. John Monihan," replied the policeman, and he looked at Alice with an air of immense respect.

"Shall we go through to the yard?" asked Harry.

"It would be best to begin dere, sir," was the reply.

They entered at the open door and passed through the hall, meeting no one.

The back door also stood open.

The arc light on the roof made it very bright. There was no one to be seen in the yard.

"We shall have to go on the roof," observed Harry.

"That's it," replied the policeman. "Come on."

"Ever been on the other side of that window, Mr. Monihan?" inquired Alice.

"No, miss, I never have," was the reply. "I'm not long on this beat."

"I don't suppose you like it any too well?"

"Well, naturally I don't, miss, but I will say dis for de coons, dey hain't made me no trouble. I'd sooner be here den some parts of Williamsburg, where a policeman carries his life in his hands."

They started upstairs.

Reaching the top floor a door was suddenly thrown open and there stood a stout, white-haired colored woman.

"Pa!" she cried, "it's a policeman! Here!"

An old darkey came hobbling forward.

"Officer!" he exclaimed, "there is something wrong up above. There was a terrible crash on the roof just now."

"Is dat so?" replied the policeman. "Well, we are here to find out what it means. Show me the way to the roof."

The old darkey flung open a closet door in the hall, revealing a scuttle ladder within.

"Do you occupy the whole floor?" inquired Harry.

"Yes, sir," replied the old man. "I own the house. Mebbe it's the big sign what's blowed over."

"Don't be a fool, pa!" snapped the old woman. "How could the big sign have blowed over when there hain't no wind?"

"Well, that's so, too," was the reply. "If it hain't that, ma, then I don't know what it can be, I'm suah."

But whatever it may have been, here was Young King Brady's statement confirmed by the experience of "pa and ma" with the mysterious noise.

A moment settled it, however, for when the policeman came up through the scuttle he exclaimed:

"Well, say, youse was right, sure enough. Dere is a man here, and it looks like he was dead."

Harry and Alice followed him out upon the roof, which was flat and covered with gravel.

There lay a large, well-dressed, white man on his back with his legs drawn up.

He was apparently a person of about fifty years; his clothing was expensive and evidently custom made.

No hat was to be seen.

He lay just under the always open window of Razor Hall. It was open now and dark as usual, looking like a huge eye up there above them.

"Is he dead?" cried pa, who had now ventured up the ladder.

"Dat's what he is," replied the policeman, who bent down over him. "Sure his neck is broke, and one leg, too, to say nothing about anny'ting else. Why wouldn't he be dead? Do you know him, uncle?"

"No, sir; I never seen him before."

"Come out here and take a good look."

"Oh, I can see him, sir; I can see him. The electric light makes it very bright. No; I don't know the poor man at all. I'm full of rheumatics. If I was to get up there I suah wouldn't never be able to get down again. Poor man! He made an awful noise. The whole house shook like it was an earthquake. Ise afear'd he done come out of Razor Hall. Turrible bad place in dere. Turrible!"

The old fellow kept chattering away, nobody paying any particular attention to him, for Young King Brady and the policeman were giving full attention to the dead man.

"There don't seem to be any visible wound," remarked Harry.

"No," replied the policeman, "nor he don't smell of booze, so he can't have been drunk."

"Better search him, officer, while you have Miss Montgomery and me for witnesses."

"I was thinking dat same thing," replied the policeman.

"I'll do it now, but it won't do to interfere with the position of the body on account of the coroner."

"Is the house next door such a bad place, then?" asked Alice.

"It's bad enough," was the reply. "About de worst element in 'Little Africa' hang out dere. Not dat dey all live in dere. Many of de rooms isn't let."

"And that window?" demanded Harry.

"Must be in de garret," replied the policeman. "I dunno, though. I wasn't never up dere."

The search was made with a strictly negative result. Not a solitary thing was found upon the dead man which would serve in any way to identify him.

Harry called the policeman's attention to the fact that the tailor's label had been carefully cut out of the inside of his coat.

There was no watch, no money, no keys, not even a lead pencil or a pocket knife.

"It is my opinion," observed Harry, "that the man was unconscious when they threw him out of the window. Some one has evidently been through him."

"That's what's the matter," replied the policeman.

"I must report this at once," he added.

He asked Harry for his card, which was given, and then they descended to the street.

The policeman went his way. Harry took Alice through other streets of "Little Africa" and showed her the outside of things, after which they returned to Manhattan, where they live, Harry with Old King Brady on Washington Square, Alice on Waverly Place.

"I wonder who he can be?" Alice remarked as they parted.

"Ah!" said Harry, "and I'm wondering, too. Looks to me as if we might keep on wondering for some time."

CHAPTER II.

THE DEAD MAN IDENTIFIED AT LAST.

Harry's prediction proved to be quite true.

The New York papers next day barely alluded to the discovery of the dead man on the roof.

The Brooklyn papers enlarged upon the subject, of course, but as the days passed, Harry, who took the trouble to follow the case up, learned that the unfortunate man had not been identified.

At the end of ten days he was buried in the Potter's Field.

But not until, at Old King Brady's suggestion, Harry had secured an excellent snapshot photograph of his face.

"The matter may come up again," said Old King Brady, "and who can tell if it will blow our way?"

And sure enough it did.

It was about a month later, shortly after Christmas, when a lady deeply veiled entered the office of the Brady Detective Bureau and presented a card, reading:

"Madame Stephanie De Mussidan."

She was a middle-aged person, decidedly French. She was dressed in deep mourning, and her whole appearance suggested recent widowhood.

"Will it be possible for me to see Old King Brady?" she inquired, speaking with a strong Southern accent.

As Old King Brady happened to be in at the time, the clerk assured her that it would be quite possible, and her card was taken to the inner office, where the old detective happened to be alone.

The lady threw back her veil and displayed a face of inexpressible sadness.

"Be seated, madam," said the old detective, placing a chair. "What is it that you wish to see me about?"

"It concerns my husband, Dr. De Mussidan," replied the lady. "He has been missing over a month now. I am satisfied he is dead, but I desire to learn his fate and, if possible, to have his murderers apprehended and punished. There are also certain papers missing which it is extremely important I should recover. Mr. Warringer, of New Orleans, advised me to come to New York and confer with you."

"Let me see," said Old King Brady, "if I mistake not Mr. Warringer is still chief of police at New Orleans?"

"He is, sir. He expressed great confidence in you, Mr. Brady; but before I take up any of your valuable time, sir, I desire to state frankly that I have almost no money. I have strained my resources to the utmost to make this trip. If the stolen papers can be recovered I have every reason to believe I shall win a lawsuit now pending; it involves an amount of money which will make me quite independent, but otherwise——"

"Don't mention it, madam; don't mention it," broke in the old detective. "Pay me at your convenience or never. But first it is necessary to decide if I care to undertake your case. Begin at the beginning, please, and tell me the whole story in as few words as possible."

Madame De Mussidan then began as follows:

"I reside in Louisiana, Mr. Brady, in a small town known as La Celeste, in the Parish St. Antoine, which you must know is up in the Red River country, where social conditions remain in a backward state.

"My husband was not a practising physician. He was a sugar planter on a large scale, as his father was before him. My father-in-law died two years ago at the age of ninety-one. In spite of his advanced years he remained active to the end, and never in the slightest degree gave up his interest in the plantation. Dr. De Mussidan was the younger of two brothers, and for years was his father's manager, working on a salary which was none too liberal. His brother, Etienne, or Stephen, as you would say in English, was wild. Years ago he robbed his father and disappeared, and until the old gentleman's death we did not know what had become of him or even that he still lived. You are able to follow me, I hope?"

"Perfectly, madam, perfectly. I am following you with the closest attention," replied the old detective, and Madame De Mussidan continued:

"After his father's death Stephen suddenly turned up in company with the old gentleman's lawyer from New Orleans. They had a will dated twenty years back which left the plantation to Stephen outright, giving my husband for his share another and smaller plantation in the next parish.

"Now this will would have been just enough at the time it was made, but the small plantation was long since sold and the money invested in increasing the size of the larger

one, so you see as it reads it gives Gaston—that's my husband—nothing at all.

"Of course, it seemed very unjust considering the way the doctor had worked that he should be thus cut off. We could not believe that there was no later will. Gaston searched his father's papers with the greatest care, but he could find no scrap of writing which indicated that a later will had been made, and Stephen at once proceeded to probate his will and claim the estate, and the courts allowed his claim, which was no sooner done than we received by mail from New York photographic copies of each page of a much later will which left everything to my husband, and cut off Stephen with one dollar. Accompanying these sheets was a letter which I have brought with me, and which you will kindly read."

And Madame De Mussidan opened her little handbag, producing the following letter:

"New York, Sept. 10, 19—.

"DR. DE MUSSIDAN: This is the hour of my revenge. Remember Jack Curtis? Ah, I fancy you will not forget him again even if you have already done so. You helped to lynch him, you scoundrel, and he was my brother and an innocent man. Well, doctor, I kept quiet then, but I swore to get square with you. Daily you saw me and never guessed. I watched my chance and stole your father's will, which I happened to know left you the plantation. That was the time I suddenly disappeared, you will remember. I knew that Mr. Stephen lived, I knew that he had the old will, for he once told me so, and he urged me on to steal the new one. I was to give it to him, but I never did it. I hate the whole race of you. I kept the will so I could gloat over you in your trouble and that's what I'm doing now. Money would not buy it from me and I shall not destroy it. I have deprived you of a fortune, and that is enough for me. I hate you, Dr. De Mussidan. Oh, how I hate you! Perhaps some day I shall blackmail Mr. Stephen, but not now, for I hate him, too. I fancy under these circumstances you are not likely to forget your mortal enemy.

JOE CURTIS."

"A serious matter," remarked Old King Brady as he handed the letter back to Madame De Mussidan. "What did the doctor do?"

"Showed the photographs to the Surrogate of our parish and had the case reopened," replied the lady. "The doctor was given time to get this new will. He came to New York for that purpose. Three times he wrote me. The last letter stated that he had obtained a clew and was on the trail of Joe Curtis. That was in November."

"A colored man, of course?"

"A mulatto. The old gentleman educated him and made him his private secretary."

"And the brother who was lynched?"

"Was a terribly desperate character. He richly deserved his fate."

"Yes, yes, but ah, madam, these lynchings are like two-edged swords, they cut both ways, as in this case. Here we find it better always to let the law take its course. But that is neither here nor there. Who is in possession of the estate now?"

"It is in the courts, Mr. Brady. Stephen is working

the plantation under a special order from the court, but the Surrogate assures me that if I can produce the will, and it proves genuine, that I am certain to win."

"A singular case. Do you happen to have a photograph of your husband, madam?"

"Yes, sir. I brought one with me, thinking you might ask for it. Here it is."

She produced the photograph from her bag and Old King Brady studied it long and critically.

"This face is strangely familiar," he remarked, but Dr. De Mussidan certainly did not call on me."

"He was not what you would call an ordinary looking man, Mr. Brady."

"I see he was not. What reason aside from his silence have you for believing him dead?"

"I dream of him constantly as being dead."

"I see. Can you tell me where he was staying at the time of his disappearance?"

"It was at the Cosmopolitan Hotel on West Broadway, an inexpensive place, I am told. You see the doctor was very short of funds."

"Not a bad place by any means, madam. A little old-fashioned, that is all. Have you inquired about him there?"

"I wrote them and received an answer, stating that my husband remained there two weeks and went away one evening, failing to return. Next day a mulatto called with a note signed by my husband asking the hotel people to deliver his grip to the man, which was done. That is all they know."

"And you have no other clew to give me?"

"None."

"It is very little to work on."

"I know it. I can only wish there was more."

"However, I will see what can be done," the old detective was saying, when just then Harry passed through the office on his way to his own, which adjoins Old King Brady's.

The old detective stopped him and introduced him to Madame De Mussidan.

"Look, but say nothing," he said by secret signs, of which the Bradys have a regular code, and then he handed Harry the photograph.

Instantly Harry made a sign which meant "recognized."

"Excuse me a moment, madam," said Old King Brady, and he drew Harry into the next room and shut the door.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"If I know anything, governor, it is a picture of a live man who looks surprisingly like the dead one Alice and I saw on that roof in 'Little Africa' a month ago."

"There!" exclaimed the old detective, "I knew I had seen that face somewhere, and yet I couldn't place it. Where is that photograph you took?"

"I have it here," replied Harry, and he drew the print from a drawer in his desk.

"Surely!" cried Old King Brady as he compared it with the picture Madame De Mussidan had given him. "Well, well!"

"What's it all about, governor?" Harry asked.

"A long and interesting story. Wait till the lady is gone."

"But who is she?"

"A Louisiana woman. A Madame De Mussidan, who

comes North to find her missing husband and a stolen will. But I will return to her and settle her anxiety on one point, at least."

And as Old King Brady entered the office, he said:

"Madame De Mussidan, I must ask you to prepare your mind for a shock."

"My husband is dead? You have proof? It will be no shock, Mr. Brady. I have shed my last tear. I know Gaston is dead," the lady cried.

"Then look at this," said Old King Brady, handing her the picture Harry took.

But Madame De Mussidan had miscalculated her mental strength.

She had many more tears to shed for her dead husband. She screamed as she looked at the photograph and then fell to weeping.

The dead man was identified at last.

CHAPTER III.

LOOKING THE GROUND OVER.

Old King Brady waited for Alice to come in before he rehearsed Madame De Mussidan's long story for the benefit of his partners.

"Have you taken the case?" Alice then asked.

"I have," replied the old detective. "I don't know what I can make of it, though. These colored cases are very hard to work up."

"We have always found them so. To disguise as a colored man is no easy matter. As for myself, I gave up trying to do it years ago. It is not impossible to fool a white man, but it is very, very difficult to fool a coon, and when it comes to fooling a whole bunch of them, the thing is not to be thought of."

"And our case being a month old makes it all the worse," remarked Harry.

"It does so," replied the old detective. "But come, Harry, let's you and I go to that house you speak of and see what we can find. Alice, I suppose you are too busy to go."

"I am to-day," replied Alice; "besides, you know very well you don't want me."

"It would be as well to keep you as a reserve fund, I think," laughed the old detective. "'Little Africa' is hardly the place for a young lady."

"Wait. I may go there on my own account yet. Remember this case is as much mine as it is Harry's."

"It is all mine," said the old detective. "You two deliberately dropped it and I picked it up."

"That house, they tell me," remarked Old King Brady as he and Harry walked down Hudson avenue about an hour later, "was originally owned by one of the Fleet family of Brooklyn. It was occupied for years by a miserly old woman who kept an innumerable number of cats which were the pests of the neighborhood. She finally died leaving a large estate."

The Bradys entered the house boldly and ascended the rickety stairs.

The old detective on this occasion, as always when not in

disguise, wore the long, blue coat with brass buttons, the old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar, and his big white hat with its astonishingly broad brim.

Thus dressed, Old King Brady cuts a very impressive figure, but it is a question if many of the coons of "Little Africa" recognized him, for it had been a long time since the old detective found occasion to show himself in "Little Africa."

They met a colored man on the stairs going up to the third story.

Old King Brady stopped and asked:

"Who do you people pay rent to now?"

"Mr. Carmichael," replied the coon.

"Where's his place?"

"He lives around on Johnson street. Third house from the corner."

"Does he own the house?"

"Dunno, boss, whether he does or not. I don't hardly think so. He don't live like a rich man."

"Thanks," replied the old detective, and they passed on, meeting no one else till they came to what seemed to be the top floor, when a woman put her head out of the door and inquired who they were looking for.

"We are thinking of buying this house," replied Old King Brady. "We are just looking it over a bit."

"Ha!" cried the woman. "Tain't good for nuffin on'y firewood. It oughter been pulled down long ago. It'll tumble down some of these fine days."

"Lived here long, ma'am?" asked the old detective.

"No, sir; ah moved in a week ago."

"You the only tenant on this floor?"

"Dat's what ah am, boss. De rest ob de rooms up hyar deys all vacant. You see kean't get no one to stop here; what wiv de ceilings all tumbled down, de bedbugs and rats and cockroaches, it's as much as a 'spectable woman kin do to stand it, and dat am a solemn fac'."

"Who lived up here before you?"

"Dunno, sah! Dey tell me dere hain't been no one libin' hyar dis long while. Wouldn't be hyar mah ownself on'y mah man he kean't fin' no work."

"What's above here?" demanded the old detective, opening a door and finding another flight of stairs.

"Oh, dat ar's jes' a garret," replied the woman. "De rats dey run around up dere in a way what would make you tired. One ob dem fell froo a hole in de ceiling t'other day an' landed in mah baby's cradle."

"If I buy the property I shall have the house put in thorough order," said the old detective, and then Harry followed him up the garret stairs.

It was just one big unfinished space under the roof.

The window, which was always open, it proved impossible to shut, for the excellent reason it had no sashes.

The roof was full of great, gaping holes, where the shingles were gone altogether.

The floor of this wretched enclosure was littered with all sorts of old trash; pieces of broken, discarded furniture, old rags, broken crockery, ashes—anything, everything. The garret had evidently been used as a dumping ground.

Over in one corner was an old mattress which looked as if it might have been slept on recently.

The old trash had been hastily pushed away from this

mattress so as to make it possible to reach it without stumbling.

"Well, Harry, this is certainly an interesting place," remarked the old detective as he paused and looked around.

"What a hole! What a mess!" Harry exclaimed.

"What's this?" remarked Old King Brady, picking up some loose pieces of rope.

"Looks as if that had been used to tie some one up with and hastily cut," Harry remarked.

"It does so. Could it have been used on your man?"

"Don't ask me. I'll never tell you."

"Wait! Let us go slow. There is such a mess here that one can't tell what we may find. Now then, what about this hat?"

It was a soft felt hat of a grayish color and a brim about as broad as the one Old King Brady wore.

It was badly torn, however, and covered with dried mud. It lay quite close to the old mattress.

"Why, this hat is almost new in spite of the rough usage it has received," remarked the old detective.

He turned it over and looked inside.

"A clew, Harry!" he quietly said.

"What about that?" demanded Harry.

"See! The maker's name. New Orleans!"

"Sure enough, the name stamped inside the hat was 'J. G. Berdan, Hatter, 862 Royal St., New Orleans.'"

"This hat was surely worn by Dr. De Mussidan," declared Old King Brady.

"What makes you so sure?" Harry asked.

"I'll prove it to you," replied the old detective. "Before Mrs. De Mussidan left me she gave me a second photograph of her husband, a snap shot. I forgot to show it to you and Alice. In it, if I don't mistake, the doctor wears a hat similar to this."

Old King Brady got out his wallet and produced the photograph.

It represented the doctor standing beside a handsome horse.

Certainly the hat he wore was a counterpart of the one just discovered.

"Looks to be the same, and yet it can scarcely be called a clew," remarked Harry, "for it merely confirms what we were already sure of, that the doctor was thrown out of this window. I don't see that it is liable to lead up to anything."

Old King Brady did not answer.

He was studying the snapshot attentively.

"What are you musing over now, governor?" demanded Harry.

"I was thinking," replied the old detective, stowing away the picture.

"Of what?"

"No matter. It was a mere passing thought. Probably it does not amount to anything."

Harry did not press him, for he knew it would be no use, and presently they returned to the street.

"We will call on Mr. Carmichael," said Old King Brady, and they went around on Johnson street.

It was a block of houses almost as shabby as the colored shacks on Hudson avenue, and the number in question was in no way superior to the rest.

Old King Brady knocked on the door, for there was no

bell, and his summons brought an aged man who appeared to be quite feeble.

"Mr. Carmichael?" inquired the old detective.

"That's my name," replied the man, holding the door.

"We are detectives, Mr. Carmichael. Probably you remember the dead man who was found on the roof around on Hudson avenue a month or so ago?"

"Yes. Well?"

"He has been identified. We are after his murderers."

"What's that to me? I didn't murder him."

"He was murdered in the house known as Razor Hall, of which, I understand, you are the owner."

"I am not the owner; I am only the agent. I have nothing to do with the matter."

"My dear sir, we are only seeking information; nothing is further from our intention than to involve you in any way."

"I have no information to give."

"But you know the names of the tenants in that house."

"Well!"

"Is there a Joe Curtis on the list?"

"No."

"He is a mulatto."

"There are no mulattos in the house. There were none at that time."

"Were there any tenants on the top floor at that time?"

"I deny your right to question me, sir," snarled the old man, and he shut the door in the face of the detectives.

"What an old crank," said Harry.

"Patience!" replied Old King Brady. "I am not so sure he's a crank. I believe that man actually knows something. Let us think a minute. We will walk."

They turned back on Hudson avenue.

"The idea is this," said Old King Brady. "It is hardly to be supposed that Mr. Carmichael would assume so offensive a tone without a motive. As I looked at his face I fancied I could see the love of money written strongly upon it. What if he should have some knowledge of the facts in this case and was being paid to hold his tongue? Would he not act precisely the way he did?"

"He would be very apt to, but, on the other hand, he may have been pestered with detectives before."

"That is true all the same. I think he will bear watching. Now I am going to theorize. Let us imagine ourselves in Dr. De Mussidan's place. We are searching for Joe Curtis; we get a clew. Perhaps it was voluntarily thrown out to entrap us; but are we, as Southerners, well knowing the desperate character of the fellow, and the hatred he bears us, going to meet the man at night in 'Little Africa?' I hardly think so. The attempt would be made to arrange a meeting elsewhere. Why not at Mr. Carmichael's house for instance? Perhaps the man is a lawyer, and this Joe Curtis may have advised with him."

"Seems to be rather far-fetched," said Harry. "If the fellow was private secretary to a Southern planter he must be an educated man."

"Mrs. De Mussidan spoke of him as such, but our standard of education is one thing and that of the Parish of St. Antoine of Louisiana quite another. However, there is no use theorizing. Stand here a minute. I am going into that corner grocery to inquire about this man Carmichael."

Old King Brady was gone nearly ten minutes.

"He's a lawyer out of practice," he announced when he returned. "He has lived in the neighborhood for years. All the coons know him, just as I supposed. He owns many of their houses, but is only agent for Razor Hall, which is part of a large estate. The owners live abroad."

"And Joe Curtis?" asked Harry.

"Is not known to the grocer. We pull out now. Where are you going?"

"To Williamsburg to see Brewer."

"Good. I return to the office. Be at this corner to-night at precisely eight o'clock, if I don't see you in the meanwhile."

And Old King Brady turned away with an abruptness which showed Harry that he was pondering deeply upon the case.

Harry did not see his chief when he returned to the office, nor was Alice there.

Neither turned up at the usual hour, and Harry went to supper alone, presenting himself at the corner of Hudson avenue and Johnson street at the appointed time, but nothing was to be seen of Old King Brady.

It was not very cold, but it felt like snow.

Harry walked up and down for a few minutes, wondering why Old King Brady, who is seldom late, should be so on this occasion. Then he saw a big white hat heading his way, and at first he thought it was the old detective, but as he looked again he perceived that it was an altogether different looking man.

He was a person of decidedly Southern appearance, and looked considerably younger than Old King Brady.

With him was a young woman who wore a heavy veil.

As they drew near this veil was pushed aside, and Harry recognized Alice.

But what a change had come over her face!

While no attempt had been made at disguise, the face was decidedly yellow. In short, Alice looked like a mulatto, while her companion bore a startling resemblance to the picture of Dr. De Mussidan.

Of course, Harry "tumbled" as soon as he recognized Alice.

Here was Old King Brady more cleverly disguised than Harry had seen him for many a long day.

"Well, young man, what do you think of us?" asked the old detective in his natural voice.

"I compliment you, Dr. De Mussidan," said Harry.

"Pardon me. I am not Dr. De Mussidan. I am his wicked brother, Stephen. Dr. De M., you seem to forget, is dead."

"And this fair quadroon or octoroon, or whatever you call her?"

"I am a mulatto, I'll have you understand," put in Alice.

"Is an accident," added Old King Brady. "She wanted to do something on the case, so she tried her hand at this face dyeing. I only hope the stuff will come off as easily as it went on."

"Oh, I don't know," laughed Alice, "I think it decidedly improves my looks. What do you say, Harry?"

"What's it all about?" demanded Harry, dodging the question.

"We have no very definite plan," replied Old King Brady. "The more I studied that snapshot the more

firmly convinced I became that I could make up somewhere near Dr. De M. Of course, I have no means of knowing that his brother Stephen looks in the least like him, but I assume that Joe Curtis, who is a comparatively young man, cannot have seen much if anything of Stephen in late years."

"But for whose benefit is all this?" persisted Harry.

"Mr. Carmichael's," replied the old detective quickly.

"I am satisfied that man knows something, Alice, and I am jumping in haphazard prepared to act as circumstances dictate; as for your part, Harry, you are to shadow whoever comes out of the lawyer's house after we go in."

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT SHADOWING BROUGHT TO HARRY.

Harry was puzzled and just a bit annoyed.

He felt convinced that he was not receiving the old detective's full confidence, but so it goes with Old King Brady sometimes.

It was not that he did not trust Harry, but simply because his plans were not fully matured, and he never likes to commit himself until they are.

So Harry took his stand on the other side of Johnson street and watched his partners as they ascended the steps of Mr. Carmichael's house.

It was a young man of about his own age who answered the bell this time.

The door was closed on the detective after the first few words.

There was a wait and then the old lawyer appeared.

Harry saw him give a decided start.

There was no parley. Old King Brady and Alice were admitted.

A long wait followed.

At last Mr. Carmichael came out with his visitors dressed for the street.

"By Jove, the governor seems to have captured him," thought Harry. "Wonder if I am to follow them or not? Ha! Now I get the tip."

For Old King Brady made a secret sign which meant "wait."

Then they turned the corner of Hudson avenue and disappeared.

It was getting colder and looked more like snow than ever.

"Where on earth have they gone?" pondered Harry. "I should like to understand this thing."

His wait now was but a brief one, for presently the young man came out.

This filled the bill, and Harry started in to shadow.

The young man started up Hudson avenue at a rapid walk and put it through to Fulton street, where he boarded an east-bound train on the Fulton avenue elevated, Harry, of course, doing the same.

The young man held his seat until the Ralph avenue station was reached, when he left the train and took a Ralph avenue surface car, riding to St. John's Place.

This brought the shadowed and shadower into that section of Brooklyn formerly known as "Weeksville."

In the old days this was exclusively a colored quarter of a little higher order than "Little Africa."

Many colored people still reside there, many being well-to-do and owning property, but the whites have invaded Weeksville and it can no longer be called strictly a colored settlement.

Harry had hit it at its easterly end where vacant lots are many and houses few.

The young man paused for a moment and looked around doubtfully as one not sure just where he wanted to go.

At last he struck off into the lots in the direction of Howard avenue.

This put Harry somewhat at a disadvantage, for he could not follow without showing himself.

Still the sky was overcast and the night dark, so he took his chances and followed on.

Here it was all hills and hollows, but the young man did not seem to mind, and made the best time possible.

Presently he struck down the hill into a street which Harry was not able to name and which had been cut through the hill.

At first it looked as if there were no houses on the block, but Harry presently spied a small frame house which, originally built in one of the hollows, now stood far above the grade, being reached by a long flight of wooden steps.

Here the young man turned in and started up the steps. Now there was real detective work to do.

To learn the young man's errand in that out-of-the-way spot was the point, and difficult enough it was likely to prove.

Harry at once climbed the hill and approached the house from the rear after he had seen the fellow safely inside.

On top of the hill Harry was able to look down into the back end of the hollow in which the house had originally stood.

There was no definitely defined yard and no fence.

Dogs? Well, perhaps!

Harry kept a sharp eye out for them, but saw none as he stole down into the hollow.

The house was a frame structure two stories high. Lights could be seen in all windows, and as Young King Brady crept up to the kitchen windows he saw the young man standing there talking to a colored woman. But what was being said he could not hear, for the windows were tightly closed.

Harry paused only to make sure that there was no one else in the room.

As the young man did not sit down it looked as if he had no intention of remaining for any length of time, so Harry pulled right out, got around in front and waited.

The young man came out in a moment.

As he started down the steps the old woman called after him:

"Now don't make no mistake. It's the corner of Ralph avner and Dean street. If he hain't thar, Ah jes' dunno whar yo'll find him. Likely him's dar, dough, half drunk, lak he allus is dis time ob night."

"Thanks," replied the fellow, and he hurried on down the steps.

"Looking for somebody," thought Harry, and he at once

started, this time keeping well ahead of his victim, for he felt that it was quite safe.

As he expected, Harry found a saloon on the corner mentioned. None being on the opposite corner, he felt sure of the place.

He opened the door and peeped in.

The saloon was crowded with colored men.

It was no place for him, so he closed the door, moved on down the block a little way and waited.

Soon the young man hove in sight.

He did precisely what Harry had done, opened the door and then pulled back, but a husky young coon came out instantly and they stood talking on the corner.

Harry edged up a little and sat down on the stoop of the first house beyond the saloon on the Dean street side.

It was as near as he dared approach.

At first he could hear nothing, but the night was still and sound traveled. As he continued to listen, Young King Brady found himself catching all that was being said.

"How's Ah to know?" was the first remark of the coon's he got. "Yo's gib me de pass word, but Ah doan know yo'. Ah kean't do nuffin so."

The young man walked up and down trying to keep warm, which was no easy task.

Presently the sound of music was heard down Dean street. As it drew nearer Harry perceived that it came from a harmonica.

The tune was "Hot Time in the Old Town To-night."

Four young bucks, all colored, with gaily dressed dusky damsels hanging to their arms, were approaching.

Naturally the young man glanced at them.

Trouble was he kept on glancing. Perhaps one of the girls glanced at him; at all events the musical coon took immediate offense.

"Hyar, you white feller, keep yer eyes to yerself!" he snarled.

"Who are you talking to?" snapped the young man.

"Yo'll blame soon find out ef yer give me any of yer lip!"

"He winked at me, Jim. I seen him!" cried one of the girls, and all four let go of their escorts and backed away.

Surely, coming from "Little Africa," the young man ought to have known better.

Just what he said Harry could not catch, but it was something which must have given mortal offense, for out came the razors then.

This settled it.

The young man ran for his life.

The cries the coons sent after him were more forcible than elegant, but they did not attempt to follow him up.

The girls linked on again and the playing was resumed as well as the march.

As they passed Harry, he never raised his eyes.

Had he lost his man?

He hardly thought so, and he was right, for the bunch had no sooner gone than the fellow turned up from somewhere and stood waiting.

After about half an hour the coon returned.

"Say, 'tain't no use," he announced. "He won't come nigh yer. Says, dough, he'll see Mr. Carmichael to-morrer fust t'ing. How'll dat suit?"

"It will have to suit, I suppose," replied the young man, and he went away.

Now was the time Harry had to do quick thinking. Should he continue to shadow him or should he stick to his post and see what the coon did?"

He decided on the latter course upon the ground that in all probability the young man would simply return to Mr. Carmichael's house.

For a moment the coon stood quietly on the corner. Then he peered around it and then made a dive into the saloon.

Harry did not attempt to follow him, for he knew no possible good could come of it, and it was just as well that he did not, for now out of the saloon came his coon with a tall, handsome mulatto, a man of perhaps thirty-five.

"You are sure he's gone?" the mulatto asked as the door closed.

Harry saw through the whole thing.

The mulatto was "Joe," whether Curtis or no; the coon pretending to go after him had merely gone around the corner, entering the saloon where the mulatto was all the while, doubtless, by the other door. A clever dodge, and one to which even Harry at the time did not "tumble."

"Yes, he's gone, Joe," said the coon. "Wha' yo' gwinter do?"

"Get down to Razor Hall. You shall go with me, Zeke, and take a message for me to Mr. Carmichael. I will deal with him alone, and only in Razor Hall, as I swore to him I would do."

"Right you are, Joe. He hain't to be trusted."

"No white man is to be trusted by our kind, Zeke. Hist! Who's that?"

He had caught on to Harry, who was still sitting on the step with his head hanging down.

"Oh, he's boozed," said Zeke. "Seen him afore. He's sound asleep."

"By heaven, I'll make sure, then!" said Joe, and he started to do so when Harry, anxious to save him the trouble, neatly rolled off the step and sprawled on the sidewalk.

This settled it. Joe and Zeke turned the corner of Ralph avenue and vanished.

Had Harry seen Joe Curtis?

He was strongly of that opinion, and most thankful did he feel that he had not followed the letter of his orders and continued to shadow the young man.

CHAPTER V.

ALICE TAKES A ROOM IN "LITTLE AFRICA."

Old King Brady felt so convinced from Mr. Carmichael's manner that he knew Joe Curtis that he determined to throw the old lawyer a big bluff and take his chances as to what might come of it.

He had no idea of taking Alice, originally; that was an after thought which came to him when he saw what an excellent mulatto she made, but principally because of her ambition to take a hand in the case.

The old detective had prepared a fake visiting card bearing the name of Stephen De Mussidan.

"If we get in on that name," he whispered to Alice when the young man having taken the card shut the door on them, "it will be proof positive that this man knows Curtis even if he has no knowledge of the murderers of the doctor."

As we have told, they were kept waiting but a minute when the door again opened and they were shown into a little parlor where there was a desk.

Evidently the old lawyer used the room for an office.

The start he gave when he came to the door was noticed by the detectives, of course, but it was accompanied by no words save "come in."

Closing the door, he placed chairs and seated himself at the desk.

"Why have you called on me?" he coldly asked.

"To find out what has become of my brother," Old King Brady replied. "That is one reason. There are two others."

"Name them."

He was coolness itself, this old man.

Old King Brady liked his face less and less the more he studied it.

It was a hard face, a cruel face. The face of a man who would do anything for money, as he remarked to Harry.

Mr. Carmichael seemed to study him with equal attention as he said:

"Name your two other reasons."

"I will name one of them. Perhaps it will not be necessary to name the other," the old detective replied.

"Well?"

"Joe Curtis mentioned your name as his legal adviser in the letter he wrote me. I thought I would like to talk matters over with you before seeing him."

Here was the bluff thrown.

The whole matter would be settled in an instant now.

A momentary silence followed, and then Mr. Carmichael replied:

"Yes, I have given the man some legal advice. I am on the retired list, but I am still a member of the bar. I am willing to talk with you."

"Then I will mention my third reason. This young woman has been a servant in the family of my lawyer in New Orleans. She was obliged to come North for certain reasons, and to oblige my lawyer I agreed to act as her escort and to find her a room in the house of some respectable colored family. Inasmuch as we seemed likely to have business together, I brought her along with me to-night, for I know as little of New York as she does. I thought perhaps you would help me to place her."

The old man stared at Alice now.

"What's her name?" he asked.

"Suzanne Morlais."

"French?"

"Louisiana French."

"Does she speak English?"

"Not a word."

"Very good. I know a place where I can get her a room. I will take you to it. Shall we go now or have our talk first?"

"We will talk first if it is agreeable to you. She can't understand a word we say."

"Very well."

"About my brother. Is he dead?"

"I don't know. How should I?"

"But you saw him a month ago. He called on you?"

"Who told you that?"

"Joe Curtis, in his letter."

"Well, I admit it. What then?"

"I suppose you think I look like him?"

"You look very much like him. I only saw him once, but I recognized the resemblance as soon as I saw you."

"And you know nothing of him?"

"Nothing whatsoever. Is he missing?"

"Yes. His wife believes him dead."

"Ah!"

"I am satisfied that he is myself."

"Oh!"

"Yes."

"Do you care?"

"Certainly not. We have been enemies for years. We were not even on speaking terms."

"So I have understood. Then why bother your head about your brother, may I ask?"

"Just to satisfy myself. If Dr. De Mussidan is dead, I want to know it."

"I cannot inform you. Pass on to the next point."

"The next point is the stolen will."

"I am not admitting that I have any knowledge of a stolen will, but admitting for argument's sake that I have, I ask you what you want to know about it?"

"I was about to ask if it was in your possession?"

"Certainly not. I am not a receiver of stolen goods."

"I must see it before I make any offer."

"You have seen photographs of it, perhaps?"

"Yes."

"Do you believe it is your father's will?"

"I haven't the least doubt of it."

"What is the value of your father's estate?"

"Fully half a million."

"Which you are bound to get if the later will, of which you have seen photographs, is destroyed?"

"I am certain to get it. Nothing can keep it from me."

"Then I should strongly advise you to get the original of those photographs and destroy them."

"That is precisely what I wish to do. Can you aid me?"

"I? Not in the least. I know nothing whatever of the will, as I told you. I am merely advising you on general principles."

But surely, Mr. Carmichael, you can put me in the way of meeting the proper parties."

"Joe Curtis, for instance."

"Yes."

"I can."

"Will you?"

"I will."

"When?"

"Now. To-night if it can be brought about. I will send him word to come here, but it will be some time before he comes. He lives at the other end of the city."

"Why not give me his address and let me go to him?"

"Because I have not got his address."

"Pardon me. I understood you to say——"

"I didn't say it. I said I would send for him. I have the address of a party who knows where to find him, which I do not."

"Very good. Arrange it as you think best."

"Is that all?"

"I don't think of anything else."

"Have you been satisfied with my advice, Mr. De Mussidan?"

"Why, certainly, Mr. Carmichael. I have no doubt you have advised me for the best."

"Thank you," replied the old lawyer, and he turned to his desk, took a sheet of paper and began to write.

Through all this, Alice, deeply interested, of course, sat with drooping eyes, apparently oblivious.

Old King Brady, not wishing to appear to be watching the old man, turned his head towards the window.

In a moment Mr. Carmichael turned and said:

"If you please, sir."

He was extending the paper upon which he had been writing to Old King Brady.

The old detective took it and, putting on his glasses, saw to his amazement that it was a bill for legal advice for \$100.

"Now, of all the cheeky proceedings I ever ran up against, this is certainly the limit!" thought the old detective.

"Why, how is this, Mr. Carmichael?" he exclaimed, "I am not aware that you have been giving me any legal advice."

"Not aware of it! What can you mean? What else have I been doing, pray? You came here asking my advice in a criminal matter which you propose to engage in. I have advised you to the best of my ability. You admitted it. The bill is a moderate one under the circumstances. Another would have made it a thousand. I advise you to pay it. If you don't, let me tell you that you will never see this man Curtis."

Old King Brady pulled out a roll and paid the bill without another word.

A trap had been set for him and he walked deliberately into it.

"This old shark is really a very shrewd character," he thought. "I suppose I ought to congratulate myself upon the success of my bluff and be satisfied."

"Thanks," said Mr. Carmichael. "Let me have the bill and I'll receipt it. Then we will go and try to place this young woman."

"Any charge for that service?" inquired the old detective as he handed back the bill.

"No charge for that."

Mr. Carmichael, having receipted the bill, told Old King Brady to wait, and then rose and left the room.

He was back after a little with his hat and overcoat on.

"We will go now," he said.

"Are you not going to send for Curtis?" inquired the old detective.

"I have already sent for him," was the reply.

"And how soon may we expect him?"

"I should imagine it might be at least two hours."

"And in the meantime do I understand I am to stay here?"

"I should prefer that you called again at the end of that time. My house is small, and——"

"That's what I shall do, then. Come, let us be going."

They left the house and Harry got the secret sign.

Mr. Carmichael took them up Hudson avenue and into Fleet street, where he rang the bell of a little cottage just beyond the colored church.

"Is Mrs. Baker in?" he enquired of a colored girl who came to the door.

"She is, sir," was the reply.

"I want to speak with her a moment."

"Won't you walk in, Mr. Carmichael?" said the girl, civilly.

They entered a little parlor where they were presently waited on by a very neat looking colored woman.

"Mrs. Baker, have you a room to let?" the lawyer asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Furnished, of course?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Well, then, this lady would like to engage it for a short time. It is for a short time only, is it not, Mr. De Mussidan?"

"She will engage it for a week," replied Old King Brady.

"How much longer she may want it I can't say."

"It will be all right," said Mrs. Baker. "I will show the room."

"She would like to occupy it to-night."

"That will be all right, too."

"By the way, she only speaks French. I knew you did. That is one reason why I brought her here."

Mrs. Baker at once addressed Alice in French, which language she speaks like a native.

They left the room together.

"Seems like a very respectable person," remarked Old King Brady.

"So she is," was the reply. "She is from New Orleans herself. I own this house. Mrs. Baker has been my tenant for several years."

And thus it came about that Alice was landed in on Mrs. Baker, and Old King Brady parting from Mr. Carmichael at Myrtle avenue, went his way wondering how it was all going to turn out.

Alice found Mrs. Baker a great talker, and especially enthusiastic over New Orleans, which she considered the finest city on earth.

"And what brought you North, my dear?" she asked.

"You look and speak like an educated woman. Of course, you are perfectly safe in my house, but 'Little Africa' is no place for you."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Alice. "If it is good enough for you, Mrs. Baker, it ought to be good enough for me. I came here to try to find a cousin of mine."

"Man or woman?"

"A man."

"Might I ask his name? I know most all the colored folks around here."

"His name is Joe Curtis," replied Alice on the spur of the moment.

She had not quite decided on her course as yet.

"Joe Curtis," repeated Mrs. Baker. "I don't know any such man. Have you no address?"

"No, ma'am."

"Is he a New Orleans fellow?"

"No. He belongs up the Red River. St. Antoine Parish."

"Indeed! There are St. Antoine people living out at Weeksville. Perhaps they would know."

"Is that far from the city?"

"Bless you, no. It's right in the city. It is only a local name. I'll tell you how to get there to-morrow."

And so the conversation ran.

Alice had a hard job to get rid of Mrs. Baker, but she finally left her to herself.

"Why am I here?" thought Alice as she opened the little bag she brought with her. "It seems a fool move, and I do believe Old King Brady brought me along merely to keep me quiet. Well, perhaps something may come of it, who can tell?"

A great deal was to come of it, as Alice was soon to find out. In detective work one never can tell.

Meanwhile, the old detective, for want of better occupation to kill time, crossed to New York and sat in the Astor House smoking-room.

At the end of two hours he was in front of Mr. Carmichael's again.

It was now about eleven o'clock.

Instantly Harry came out of the shadows and signaled for Old King Brady to follow him.

They walked up Johnson street until well out of range of Mr. Carmichael's house, when they came together.

"Well?" demanded Old King Brady, "and did you find any shadowing to do?"

"Indeed I did," replied Harry. "Plenty."

"Who was the victim?"

"A young man who came out of Mr. Carmichael's house."

"And where did your work take you?"

"To Weeksville, as you call it."

"Oh! The old Hunterfly Road country."

"That's a new one on me. I never heard that section of Brooklyn called that name before."

"I never heard it called anything else when I first came to this country and went into the detective business. Weeksville is only a part of it. Even that name is all but forgotten. But go on. What happened?"

"Well, the fellow went to a house of an old colored woman away out in the lots. He was looking for a coon whom I afterwards heard called Zeke, and she directed him to a certain gin mill where he found the man. I managed to get near enough to overhear the most of their talk. He gave the fellow a password which I didn't get, and then asked for a man he called 'Joe.' Said he had a message for him from Mr. Carmichael."

"Joe Curtis?"

"That I don't know, but I afterward saw the man. A big, handsome mulatto about thirty-five years old. I should think he might very well be Joe Curtis."

"What passed between them?"

"They did not meet. Curtis refused to come to him, but he came where I was watching afterwards. It appears that Carmichael threatened him with detectives. Word

was sent by him to Carmichael that he would meet him to-morrow. Afterwards, however, he started for 'Little Africa' along with Zeke, who entered Carmichael's house and immediately came out again. Joe went into Razor Hall."

"This is most interesting," said Old King Brady when Harry, complying with his request, told of the happenings of the evening. "Now let me understand definitely. You say you shadowed Zeke to Mr. Carmichael's?"

"Yes."

"And Joe to Razor Hall?"

"That's it. He told Zeke to tell Carmichael that he would see him nowhere else."

"Ah! Then the man is surely Joe Curtis. We have accomplished wonders. I should say that there is nothing to hinder me from having an interview with this murderous mulatto this very night."

CHAPTER VI.

THE SCHEME THAT FAILED.

Harry listened to Old King Brady's story with the deepest interest and had a hearty laugh over the way Mr. Carmichael did him out of a hundred dollars.

"That old fellow must be a peach," he said. "Still you fooled him all right about Alice."

"I hope so," replied the old detective, "but I have my doubts. I want you to understand Mr. Carmichael is a man very hard to fool. But listen, Harry. I am going back there now, and by comparing your story with mine, I judge that I may be asked to accompany this man to Razor Hall; a dangerous business it certainly is. All depends upon how well acquainted Joe Curtis is with Stephen De Mussidan."

From the letter Madame De Mussidan showed you, I judge he must have met him."

"So I conclude. Yet it may have been only once. Remember, the man I am personating was twenty years missing. If Joe Curtis is thirty-five he could only have been twenty when Stephen robbed his father and vanished. There is little doubt that I have passed muster in Carmichael's eyes, but I cannot feel sure about Curtis."

"What do you want me to do?"

"Shadow me closely. I have an idea from what you heard Curtis say that he is determined to hold this interview only on the scene of the crime, which very possibly is the garret. If I am gone too long, get a policeman and come after me. It is all you can do."

"You are determined to go?"

"Certainly. It is all in the line of my business. When did you ever know me to hesitate on account of an element of danger?"

"Never."

"And this is part of the never. So come along. It is time I reported to Carmichael."

It was, and more than time, for it was twenty minutes past eleven when Old King Brady rang the lawyer's bell.

Mr. Carmichael answered in person.

"You are late," he remarked.

"Yes, I returned to New York proper. I have been delayed," Old King Brady replied.

"I see you have your hat and overcoat on," he added. "Do we get on the move?"

"Yes, if you want to talk with Joe Curtis."

"Oh, you have found him?"

"He has found himself. He is now waiting for us at Razor Hall. But let me advise you——"

"Stop!" broke in Old King Brady; "is this advice free or shall I have to pay for it?"

"It's free," grinned the old man. He actually seemed to appreciate the joke.

"Very well, then. Advise."

"I was going to say that I consider Curtis a very dangerous man. You want to be on your guard."

"And you?"

"He fears me. I am safe. But you——"

"Well?"

"He hates your whole race. You know why, I suppose?"

"My brother assisted when his brother was lynched some years ago."

"Yes. But come, let us go. It is past the time I set."

"One word."

"Well?"

"Let us suppose for a guess that this is a plot to rob me or do me up. Can I count on your help?"

"Not on any physical help, surely. What good would I be in a fight?"

"Suppose I am made a prisoner, will you send the police to rescue me?"

Carmichael hesitated.

"Now, Mr. DeMussidan," he said, slowly, "what I promise I always perform. I cannot promise that. There are reasons why I don't care to mix up with the police, but in such a case I promise this. I will pretend to side with Curtis. At the earliest possible moment I will set a gang of his own people on his bunch; you shall be rescued. Incidentally, you will pay the bill."

"Thank you for your frankness," said Old King Brady. "Now I know just what to expect. Come, let us go."

Harry trailed Old King Brady and the lawyer to Razor Hall, but instead of remaining on guard outside after they entered he instantly started to put into action a plan which occurred to him while waiting.

He also felt pretty certain that it was Joe Curtis' intention to hold the interview in the garret, so he determined to settle this point at once.

It was beginning to snow when Harry popped into the house next door, finding the front door on the latch.

A small lamp burning in a niche showed him the way upstairs, and he softly opened the closet door and made for the roof, accomplishing his purpose without disturbing the peaceful slumbers of "pa" and "ma."

A faint light burned behind the always open window, and listening attentively, Harry caught the sound of voices.

"They are surely there," he thought.

There was a step-ladder on the roof, left there by the builders of the illuminated sign, probably.

Harry remembered having seen it, and it was this which induced him to try his scheme. It was a relief to find it still there.

Cautiously he placed it against the adjoining building

and climbed until his head was just below the level of the window-sill where, to his satisfaction, he found he could hear all that was being said.

"Joe" was talking, and in a moment Harry heard Old King Brady's voice speak in reply.

"They are at it," he thought, and he stood listening on the ladder.

Mr. Carmichael upon entering Razor Hall led the way to the top floor and turned in at the garret stairs.

"Higher still?" asked Old King Brady.

"Yes," replied the lawyer, "he is supposed to be up here."

"One moment. Does he know that I am coming?"

There was no answer as the old lawyer started up the garret stairs.

Had he heard or did he decline to explain himself further?

Old King Brady could only guess.

He put his hand on his revolver to make sure it was in place and followed.

Pitilessly cold was the old garret now. The snow came sifting in through the open window.

A lantern hanging from one of the rafters showed the visitors the tall, handsome mulatto whom Harry had trailed down from Weeksville standing there alone.

And now Old King Brady's mental question was answered, for the man fell back with a start, exclaiming:

"In heaven's name, who is this?"

"Let me introduce Mr. Stephen De Mussidan," said Carmichael with a chuckle.

"Oh!" gasped Joe, and he instantly pulled himself together.

"Did you take me for my brother's ghost?" asked Old King Brady, quietly.

The answer was in French, spoken with great rapidity.

Now, Old King Brady was prepared for this.

Unable to speak a word of any language but English, it was well that this was so.

"I speak only English in the presence of Mr. Carmichael," he quietly said.

"Very good," replied Joe. "You decided to answer my letter in person it seems."

Now if ever there was a shrewd guess it was when Old King Brady assumed that Joe Curtis had probably offered the will for sale to Stephen De Mussidan.

This was the secret of his success, of course. Had he missed it here his whole scheme would have promptly collapsed.

"My presence here is sufficient answer to your question, Curtis," he replied. "Now then, what have you to say?"

"You might have sent me word. You might have told Zeke, Mr. Carmichael," said Joe.

"I did send you word, but you declined to see my messenger," replied the lawyer.

"You could have told Zeke when he called at the house to make the appointment here."

"I could, but I didn't choose to. I never sell my cabbages twice. Now go ahead and do business with Mr. De Mussidan if you can."

"How do I know he really is Mr. De Mussidan? It is over twenty years since I saw the man."

"You recognized me instantly from my resemblance to

my brother," replied Old King Brady, quietly. "You know you did."

"The resemblance is certainly strong, but all the De Mussidans look alike. You may be Alphonse."

"I am not Alphonse. Waste no more words, Curtis. What have you to propose?"

"How came you to go first to Mr. Carmichael? I never mentioned him in my letter. I told you how to get at me."

"That is my business. Do you imagine that I want to share my brother's fate?"

The mulatto looked at Carmichael uneasily, but the lawyer only smiled.

"Come, Mr. Carmichael, if this man don't propose to do business we may as well be going," the old detective said.

By this time his eyes had roamed everywhere.

He felt as certain as he could be that they had the old garret to themselves.

"Wait," said Joe. "It is easy to do business, but I must have some guarantee as to who I am dealing with."

"You will get none," snapped Old King Brady. "The mere fact that I am here ready to negotiate for my father's will should be enough. Gaston is dead, thanks to you, if I know anything. Do I want to give up the plantation to his widow?"

"I should say not."

"And I echo the sentiment."

"But you are wrong when you say I killed Gaston."

Old King Brady's eyes roamed to Mr. Carmichael's face, but he could read nothing there.

"I am not arguing that point," he replied. "Nor will I pretend that I regret my brother's death. You know how I hated him."

"Indeed I do. You would have killed him yourself if you had dared."

"Go on or I go."

"Well, then, do you accept my offer? If so, produce the cash and you get the will."

"Repeat your offer in the presence of Mr. Carmichael."

"What!" thundered Joe. "Is Mr. Carmichael my lawyer or yours?"

"I am acting for both," put in the lawyer, hastily. "Go ahead, Joe. Get a move on. What sense is there in this? Humor the man and end it all before I get my death in this fearful place."

"You've sold me out, you old rascal, that's what you have done," flashed the mulatto.

"It is not so," said Old King Brady, steadily. "All he has done is to bring about this meeting at my request. Repeat your offer or I leave this place."

"Very well, then; the will is for sale. Price, \$100,000."

"It is strange that a man who had brains enough to be my father's private secretary should imagine that I can raise any such sum. You know, or ought to know, that the estate is held up by the courts, and that I am only acting as manager."

"Mr. De Bruinville can raise the money for you."

"Who in thunder is Mr. De Bruinville?" thought Old King Brady. "Stephen's lawyer, I suppose."

"It can't be done," he said aloud.

"My terms were liberal enough," continued Curtis. "All I asked was \$25,000 down, the rest to be secured by notes

payable at one, two and three years, I to retain the will until they are paid."

"There, Mr. Carmichael!" said Old King Brady. "Now you hear it. Could any sensible man suppose I would listen to such an offer? I must have the will on the first payment or we can't come to terms."

"It is only reasonable, Joe," said the lawyer. "I told you it wouldn't work."

"And now," thought Old King Brady, "this farce has gone far enough. Carmichael don't count. I believe I am good enough to take this man. Here goes!"

Suddenly drawing his revolver, he covered the mulatto, exclaiming sternly:

"Enough of this! I am not Stephen De Mussidan. I am a detective. Joe Curtis, you are under arrest."

Carmichael gave a gasp and fell back, but Curtis simply folded his arms.

"I thought as much," he said. "Get me out of this garret if you can!"

"It can be done!" cried a voice at the always open window, and Harry looked in, also covering the mulatto.

"That's right," said Old King Brady. "Good for you! Come in. Hold him covered while I handcuff him. Mr. Carmichael, you are arrested, too."

The lawyer said nothing, but looked at Joe Curtis, who nodded.

It made Old King Brady nervous. He was anxious to finish his work.

He had not forgotten the evil reputation of Razor Hall.

Harry sprang in through the window, covering the mulatto.

Old King Brady pocketed his revolver and produced a pair of handcuffs.

"Put out your hands," he ordered.

Joe obeyed, and on went the handcuffs.

"Do we handcuff Carmichael?" asked Harry. "I have another pair."

"No; it is not necessary," replied Old King Brady. "Search them both for weapons and the will."

Harry made the search, the old detective taking charge of the revolver.

Meanwhile, the snow came whirling in through the always open window. The old lawyer's teeth were chattering, but he never said a word nor did Joe, from whom a revolver and a razor were taken.

The will was not found.

"Now we go," said the old detective. "Lead on, Harry. Mr. Carmichael, you follow him. Curtis, you are next. I'll bring up the rear."

And in this order they started down the rickety stairs.

Now here was a bold scheme carefully planned and apparently well executed, but the Bradys turned up at no police station in Brooklyn with their prisoners that snowy December night.

Nor did any station in New York see them.

The snow continued to fall until everything was blockaded.

It drifted in through the always open window in great heaps.

All through the next day it continued, and when night

again settled down upon "Little Africa" the Bradys had not turned up at any police station, nor anywhere else. Evidently their scheme had failed.

CHAPTER VII.

ALICE FINDS PLENTY TO DO.

When Alice awoke next morning it was snowing hard. She dressed and went out, however, seeing nothing of Mrs. Baker.

Caught in the morning rush to Manhattan, she had occasion to thank her stars that she did not live in Brooklyn and have to go through with such experiences every day.

She went directly to the Bradys' house, anxious to learn how they made out.

What she did learn, and that to her alarm, was that they had failed to return during the night.

Nine o'clock found her at the office. This is the hour of the Bradys for arriving, but they were not there.

The case was plain.

The detectives had come to grief in "Little Africa."

It was up to Alice to do what she could.

She lost not a moment in returning to Mrs. Baker's.

"Listen," she said in French, "it is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with Mr. Carmichael at once. Will you help me?"

"Certainly I will," replied Mrs. Baker. "You want me to go around there and act as interpreter, I suppose."

"Yes, but before we go tell me what sort of a man Mr. Carmichael really is. I have the best of reasons for wanting to know."

Mrs. Baker looked surprised.

"Do you want me to tell you the truth?" she asked.

"I don't want anything else."

"Well, then, I consider him a very bad man."

"Ah!"

"Yes. He is a notorious old miser. He lends money to the colored people and squeezes them for all they are worth. He is bad to his tenants. I have known him to put a widow with five young children on the street on a stormy day. In that case the baby caught cold and died. It was all his fault. I could tell you other things he's done, but I think I have said enough. If you have any business with him, I advise you to be careful. He'll do you sure."

"You have said enough," remarked Alice. "Let us go."

They went to Mr. Carmichael's house and rang the bell.

The young man Harry shadowed came to the door.

On the way Mrs. Baker informed Alice that the lawyer was a childless widower and that this young man, whose name was Sam Turner, was half clerk and half servant. They occupied the house alone.

"We want to see Mr. Carmichael," said Mrs. Baker.

"He isn't here," replied Turner. "He hasn't been home all night. I am very much worried about him."

"But where did he go? He was at my house last evening with a Southern gentleman. Didn't he come home after that?"

"Yes; but he went out with the gentleman later. I haven't seen him since."

"Where did he go? You needn't be afraid to speak out before this woman. She is French. She can't understand what you say."

"I don't know why I should tell you where he went, Mrs. Baker," retorted Turner. "He went out on business."

And with this he slammed the door.

Now, as this conversation was held in English, Alice, of course, was supposed not to understand it, but she enlightened Mrs. Baker in that respect, for when they got off the stoop she turned to her and said in English:

"So that old shark is missing, too."

"What! You understood?" cried the colored woman.

"Certainly, Mrs. Baker. I have a confession to make to you. I am not a mulatto. I am a detective."

"Lorzee! You don't say!" cried Mrs. Baker. "I thought when I first seen you that you were a queer color, but I says to myself mebber she has Injun blood, and that accounts for it. Then your hair, of course. But the Injun blood would account for that, too. Do you mean to say you're painted?"

"Dyed would be better."

"Well, well! Are you working up some case against Carmichael?"

"No; I'll explain. I'm going to tell you the whole story, for I am very much troubled about something, and I want your help. I feel that I can trust you, Mrs. Baker, and for whatever you do for me I shall see that you are liberally paid."

Alice had finished her story before they reached Mrs. Baker's house.

The colored woman was a kind-hearted creature and seemed greatly interested.

"There's a bad bunch holds out around Razor Hall," she said. "I know that to my sorrow. They ruined a boy of mine. What with crap shooting and their cakewalks he went to the bad entirely. He's in Sing Sing now for stealing. I'd just like to get square with that crowd. We come from respectable people, we do."

Her English showed it, for save for a slight French accent it was the best Alice had ever heard a colored person speak.

"What we must do," said Alice, "is to find out what happened there last night. What can you suggest? I don't suppose you want to go there and ask?"

"It wouldn't be any use. The people who live in Razor Hall ain't my kind. They wouldn't tell me anything. I think I can fix it, though. I know a young fellow who will undertake the job if I can only get at him. You go on in and I'll look him up and start him at it. He's out of a job just now and ought to be around somewhere."

"Another thing," said Alice. "Those people out in Weeksville you spoke of last night are likely to know this Joe Curtis. If I could only see them I might learn something. Who are they?"

The name is Brundage. I know the woman well. She and I lived as servants in the same house one time a few years ago. I'll go there with you. I haven't much to do to-day."

So Alice went into the house and waited, anxious enough.

Before long Mrs. Baker returned.

She had found the young man and started him on his errand.

"Shall we wait for him to come and report?" she asked. "If you think he will come soon," replied Alice.

Mrs. Baker did think so, and they waited. In about an hour the young man arrived.

"Well?" demanded Mrs. Baker.

"There was a big row on the top floor of Razor Hall last night," replied the young coon. "That's all I could learn."

"What about?" asked Mrs. Baker.

"I couldn't find out. Nobody would let on that they knew. Perhaps nobody did know that I talked to."

"Stupid!" cried Mrs. Baker. "Now you try again, Bill Thompson. I'm not going to let you off so easy. We have to go to Weeksville on business. You want to have something to report by the time we get back."

And for Weeksville Alice and Mrs. Baker started forthwith in all the storm.

Alice and Mrs. Baker turned in at the house where Harry had done his spying the night before.

It was the colored woman he had seen through the window who came to the door.

This proved to be Mrs. Brundage.

Alice was introduced under the name of Morlais.

"She is anxious to find out something about a man named Curtis," Mrs. Baker explained. "He is from your parish down in Louisiana. Perhaps you can help her out."

"Joe Curtis?" demanded Mrs. Brundage.

"That's the name," replied Alice, the conversation being all in French.

"Indeed I ought to know him," was the reply. "His father and mine were cousins. Both were born slaves on old Judge Curtis' plantation. Joe is living here in Brooklyn, worse luck. He has been the ruin of my boy Zeke, my only son."

"In what way?" inquired Alice, sympathetically.

"Oh, teaching him to drink and gamble. But what is it you want to know, miss?"

"His address," replied Alice.

"He has a room on Dean street," replied Mrs. Brundage, and she gave the number.

It was in the very row where Harry sat on the steps the night before.

"Zeke was with him last night," continued Mrs. Brundage. "He never got in till morning. He was just as drunk as ever he could be. I don't know what I am ever going to do with him. I'm sure he will come to a bad end."

Thus the widow Brundage ran on.

Alice, realizing that she had got as far as she was likely to get, soon pulled out.

"I don't know what I ought to do," she remarked as they descended the steps. "I'm afraid I shall have to go to the police."

"And why not, my dear?" demanded Mrs. Baker.

"Because Old King Brady dislikes to have the police mix up with his affairs. However, we will see what young Thompson has to report."

They returned to Mrs. Baker's and, sure enough, Thompson was there.

He seemed to feel very important.

"Ah know a few fings more now," he said. "Where do I come in if I tell?"

"You'll be paid all your information is worth," said Alice.

He looked hard at her and then said, suddenly:

"Do you know a yaller man named Joe Curtis?"

"I know of him," replied Alice, quickly. "You are on the right track now, Bill. Well!"

"Know old man Carmichael?"

"Yes."

"Well, Ah hear say dat Joe Curtis him's got old man Carmichael and two other fellers locked in somewhere. Now if dat information hain't wuth a five-spot it hain't wuth nuffin at all."

Alice took the hint and handed over a five-dollar bill.

"Where are they?" she demanded.

"Say, I don't know dat," replied Bill, "but dere's gwine to be a cakewalk in Razor Hall to-night. Ef you could put some 'tective onto it he might find out, for Joe Curtis he's to be dere, and after de cakewalk de 'tective might foller him home."

"Are you going?" asked Alice.

"Ah sure am," replied Bill.

"Then listen. A colored detective will be here at eight o'clock ready to go with you. Do your best to help him, and it won't be five dollars you will get for it, but ten."

"Say!" cried Bill, "dat 'ar talk suits me all right. Ah'll sure be here, honey. Ah'm out to earn dat ten."

CHAPTER VIII.

IN DEADLY PERIL.

What had happened to the Bradys?

They had yielded to the force of superior numbers, that was all.

But it was quite enough to cause them very serious inconvenience.

When they first got into the hall below the garret stairs they never suspected what they were up against and had no other thought than that they would easily be able to get their prisoners to the street, when all at once every door opening on that floor flew back, and from every door rushed a coon armed with a razor.

Harry had no chance to draw his revolver.

Two had him backed against the wall in a jiffy.

Three set upon the old detective, one shouting:

"Cut de young fellow's t'roat if de old guy don't instantly trow down his gun!"

It was hopeless.

With Harry at the mercy of these black fiends, Old King Brady could only yield, and in less time than it takes to tell it these five coons had the Bradys prisoners, disarmed and with their hands tied behind them.

Not until then did Joe Curtis speak.

"So you see, Carmichael, I was right in insisting that this meeting take place only at Razor Hall," he said. "I didn't know your game. I am no mind reader, but I suspected something of this sort. I was not mistaken, it seems. Very clever, old man. Might have worked with another, but never with me—no, never with me!"

His tone of triumph was intense.

Old King Brady was then searched for the key of the handcuffs, and Curtis was set free.

But the search went further than that.

Everything of value which both detectives possessed was now taken from them.

They were then blindfolded, led downstairs and out into the open by a rear door.

Carmichael was served precisely as the Bradys in spite of his vigorous protests and dire threats.

"No use, old man," declared Curtis. "You may not have known this man was a detective as you claim, and then again you may. I neither know nor care, but the fact remains that you betrayed my business to a stranger. I don't know just what I shall decide to do with you, but you can rely upon it that I will have my revenge, and it will be sweet enough when it comes."

The snow blew about them as they were hurried through the yard behind Razor Hall.

Just how they went after that it was hard to determine, but the Bradys knew that they passed through at least three back fences, entering at a door at last, and ascending three flights of stairs, where the eye bandages were removed, revealing a dirty room bare of furniture save one old chair.

It was up under the eaves and had one dormer window.

The plaster was cracked in many places, but there was no glass out of the window, upon which they had reason to congratulate themselves, for the storm was now raging fiercely.

Here they were locked in after their feet had been tied as well as their hands.

It was, perhaps, some slight satisfaction to Old King Brady to see his hundred dollars go into the pocket of Joe Curtis along with other money when Carmichael was searched, which was not done until now, for he felt satisfied that the lawyer knew that Curtis had a bunch of coons on the floor below ready to aid him in case of trouble.

A lamp placed on the floor lighted their prison, which was very cold.

Carmichael now began bemoaning his fate.

He was an old man; he could not stand such tereatment; he would surely take pneumonia and die, and so on.

The Bradys let him talk until he was tired as they all sat there in a row with their backs against the wall.

At last the lawyer broke out with:

"But say, who are you, anyway?"

"My name is Brady," replied the old detective, quietly.

"Not Old King Brady?"

"Yes, Old King Brady."

"You called on me this morning?"

"Yes. If you had been decently civil to me and listened to me, then this might never have occurred."

"I wish to heavens I had, then," groaned the lawyer.

"This is my finish. I shall die!"

"If you feel that way, why not make a clean breast of this whole business of Dr. De Mussidan's death? I don't intend to die unless I have to, you may be very sure. We may live to use the information against this man Curtis."

"I know nothing about Dr. De Mussidan's death. How should I?" snarled Carmichael.

"Not ready yet, I see," said Old King Brady. "Well, well, it will come in time, I suppose."

The snow beat against the windows. It was pitilessly cold.

Such a night the Bradys had scarcely ever put in.

Still, they are used to such things and able to stand it.

Not so with Mr. Carmichael, however.

By morning the old man was about at the end of his rope.

He was coughing and sneezing, his whole body was in a tremble from the cold, and finally this was succeeded by a fever, and he declared that he could not draw his breath.

It certainly looked as if pneumonia had him in its deadly grip.

Meanwhile, no one had been near the prisoners, who had exhausted every effort to get free.

It grew a little warmer after sunrise, but as the storm kept right up there was not much improvement in that respect.

No one came near them until two o'clock in the afternoon.

By that time Mr. Carmichael was out of his mind.

Old King Brady got what he wanted before that.

This was about nine in the morning.

After a long silence except for his coughing and wheezing, the old lawyer suddenly addressed the detective with:

"There's no use talking, gentlemen, this spells my finish. I feel it. I know it. Unless relief speedily comes I shall die."

"I wish I could help you," said Old King Brady, kindly.

"I don't see how you two stand it."

"We are used to hardships of this kind."

"It is terrible! Mr. Brady, I have decided to take your advice."

"Well?"

"Something tells me that you will live to get out of this trouble. I feel equally sure that I shall not."

"And you propose to make a confession?"

"Yes, if you want to call it that. I propose to tell what I know."

"I advise it. Listen, unless you actually killed Dr. De Mussidan I promise under no circumstances to proceed against you."

"I did not kill him. I had no hand in it. Joe Curtis is not his murderer, either. He was killed by a negro named Buck Walker, one of the gang who captured us last night."

"A big fellow, very black?" put in Harry. "The man who held me up against the wall?"

"The same," replied the lawyer. "He did the murder. But let me begin at the beginning. Some time ago Joe Curtis, who I then did not know, came to me in company with this Walker, who is one of my tenants at Razor Hall, and showed me the will of the elder De Mussidan. He admitted that he had stolen it and told me why. He wanted to know if it could be photographed sheet by sheet. He stated that he expected to sell the will to Dr. De Mussidan, but first he wanted to thoroughly frighten him. I had the photographing done for him, and he wrote the doctor a letter which I never saw."

"I have seen it," said Old King Brady. "It was shown me by his widow. The wonder is that Dr. De Mussidan ever had the courage to come to New York and negotiate with Curtis after receiving such a letter."

"I will explain that," replied Mr. Carmichael. "Curtis

came to me again and wanted me to write the doctor a letter stating that I knew where the will could be had, and that I was open to a proposition to turn it over to him. The letter was anonymous. It stated that there would be no more correspondence, but that if he would come to New York and register at the Cosmopolitan Hotel I would know it and that he would be waited upon by a person who would put him in touch with me."

"And he came," said Old King Brady.

"Yes; at a time when I happened to be away," continued Mr. Carmichael. "He had been two weeks in the city when I returned. I was informed by my young man, Sam Turner, who was on the watch, and I immediately sent same to the hotel and the doctor was brought to my house blindfolded in a cab.

"I had arranged with Curtis to meet him there, but the fellow, who is nothing if not cranky, sent word at the last minute that he would meet him nowhere else than in that garret at Razor Hall. I suspect, but I do not certainly know, that he had already opened negotiations with Stephen De Mussidan, the man whom you so successfully attempted to personate."

"And the doctor went to Razor Hall and there met his death," said the old detective.

"Yes," continued Mr. Carmichael. "He refused at first, but finally I persuaded him to go. He was willing to pay \$50,000 for the will, and declared that he could raise the money as soon as he returned to New Orleans, but that was his limit. He declared that under no circumstances would he pay another cent. The absurd price asked by Joe Curtis he positively refused to entertain. Well, we went to the garret and found Curtis there along with Buck Walker. He kept his temper pretty well for the first part of the interview, but he stuck to his price, and to make the story as short as possible, he finally lost his temper and began abusing Curtis and the colored race generally. His talk was very rough, I will admit. I tried to check him, but he would not listen."

"And what was the end?" asked Old King Brady.

"Curtis lost his temper at this point," replied the lawyer. "He alluded to the lynching of his brother and called the doctor a murderer. Then the doctor struck him and there was a fierce fight in which Walker joined. He struck the doctor a terrible blow which sent him staggering backward and he fell downstairs. When they picked him up his neck was broken and he was quite dead."

"And then they threw him out of the window!" cried Harry, "and I saw him when he came down."

"Is that possible?" demanded Mr. Carmichael. "Where were you at the time?"

"Riding down Myrtle avenue on an elevated train."

"Ha! I heard that a white man found him. Now I come to think of it, I did read in the papers that the name was Brady, but nothing was said about you being a detective."

"I particularly requested that nothing should be said to that effect, and the police kept my secret."

"So? Well, gentlemen, that is my story. I have told all I know except that after that Curtis wrote Stephen De Mussidan again, but got no answer. The man is a fiend. I actually believe from the way he went on that he was better satisfied to have Dr. De Mussidan dead than he would have been to get the money, but it was different with

me. I lost a commission which had been promised me. I would have got it, too, for at that time Curtis feared me."

And this was the story of the murder.

After that Mr. Carmichael rapidly became worse, and when at about two o'clock Joe Curtis, Buck Walker and an old darkey who was addressed as Solomon finally turned up, he was quite out of his head.

"Why, why, why! Wot's de mattah wiv de landlawd?" cried old Solomon as soon as he saw him. "Him done gone nutty fo' suah!"

"The man has pneumonia," said Old King Brady. "You see the result of your work, Curtis. It is a wonder we are not in an equally bad condition. At least show common humanity and give us heat of some sort."

"No," replied the mulatto, with a grin, "I shall do nothing of the sort. That old sinner betrayed me. I hope he does die of pneumonia, but he mustn't die here."

He spoke to Carmichael, but the lawyer did not know him.

He kept muttering to himself and calling on some one named Eliza to kill him and put him out of his misery.

Curtis, satisfied at last that he really was in a bad condition and not shamming, ordered him untied, and Buck Walker and Solomon carried him away.

Old King Brady did not ask where they were taking him, and Curtis did not tell.

He remained behind after the others had gone, and for some minutes stood gazing at the old detective steadily.

"Old man," he then said, "I have decided to kill you and your partner. Know that?"

"I presumed you had some such notion," replied the old detective, quietly. "But can't we get together and settle it some other way?"

"There is only one way of settling it, and that is for you to buy old Massa De Mussidan's will at my price."

"Your price is absurd. Mrs. De Mussidan can raise no such sum, as you very well know."

"Are you acting for her?"

"Frankly, yes."

"Then that settles it. The will is not for sale to her at any price. I hate the woman as badly as I hated her husband, and——"

He suddenly checked himself here.

But Old King Brady, ever shrewd, was able to read his thoughts.

"And you have received a letter to-day from Stephen De Mussidan making you a cash offer for the will?"

"Who told you that?" cried Curtis, quickly.

But Old King Brady would give him no satisfaction.

He allowed him to believe that some one had interfered with his business.

The effect was to throw him into a violent rage.

"Tell or I'll shoot you dead!" he cried, producing his revolver.

"Put it up," said Old King Brady. "That was merely my guess. I see it is true."

"Yes, it is true. It is also true that Mr. Stephen gets the will."

"Then we are out of the race. Why not set us free? I am prepared to pay for it."

"Never! I have determined that you shall die."

"But——"

"Shut up. Listen! I am now about to begin a poker game with a few friends. I believe in signs; I believe that there is a time for everything; I dreamed last night that I was playing poker and that I held four aces. If that comes true, the moment I have played that hand out I am coming here with a man who will kill you. Know how I have decided to do it?"

"It would interest me to know."

"Well, then, old man, I have decided to set fire to this old crib and let you two roast in it. That is the way the white folks served my poor brother; it is what they are doing to men of my race down South every day for the most trivial offenses. What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. I have long wanted to burn a white man. Now I have the chance."

And with this Joe Curtis left the room abruptly, bolting the door behind him.

"By Jove, governor, this is getting serious!" said Harry.

"It is, indeed," replied Old King Brady. "The man is a fiend. There can be no doubt that we are in deadly peril."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAKEWALK AT RAZOR HALL.

Alice Montgomery is one of the most venturesome of women, and one who is ever ready to take chances in the line of her business.

In fact, the Bradys have their own troubles in trying to hold her in check, and many times her boldness has put her in serious peril.

As soon as Bill Thompson had gone Alice turned to Mrs. Baker and said:

"I am going to that cakewalk. Do you think I would be safer to go as I am or made up like a man?"

"Lors, miss, you couldn't never make up like a colored man so as to deceive that bunch!" cried Mrs. Baker.

"Yes, I could."

"But, honey——"

"Oh, I can do it as far as that goes, the only question is which would be best. If I go as a man I'm liable to get mixed up in a fight; if I go as I am I shall need a colored escort. I daren't trust this Bill Tompson for that, for there is no telling but what he might betray me to Curtis. On the other hand, if I could get next to Curtis, which I can certainly do best by going as a woman, it might be the whole thing."

"That's true. As you are no one would ever suspect you; as a man it seems to me you would run a terrible risk. But I thought you told Bill you would have a detective here at eight o'clock."

"I am the detective. When I said that I meant to make up as a man. Afterwards I began to think. Has Bill got any girl he intends taking to the cakewalk, I wonder?"

"Likely he has. I don't know for sure."

"Do you know any one who could act as my escort—some one whom I could fully trust?"

"No, miss, I don't. Wish I did."

"Then that settles it. I must make up as a man and take my chances," declared Alice, and she then went to the office to experiment in the costume room which the Bradys keep and where there is a full supply of everything needed for any kind of disguise.

At seven o'clock Alice was back again at Mrs. Baker's in male attire.

When the woman opened the door she did not know her. She would hardly believe it was Alice, so cleverly was her disguise made.

"I don't see who would suspect you; I don't see who could!" declared Mrs. Baker. "I'm sure I never should."

"Go with me," said Alice. "I shall get along better if I have a lady with me."

"Lor' sakes, my dear, I don't never go to their cake-walks!" cried Mrs. Baker. "It would be all over 'Little Africa' if I did. My friends would think I'd gone crazy."

Alice did not urge her, not wishing to get the woman into trouble.

At a little before eight Bill Thompson arrived.

"Whar's dat 'ar 'etective?" Alice heard him ask when Mrs. Baker opened the door.

"He's here," replied the woman. "I'll call him," and Alice came out from the other room.

"I am the detective," she said. "The lady you talked with this morning is my sister. Don't I look like her?"

"You suah do. Wha' de name? I t'ink I ought to know."

"Ed Jones."

"Mine's Bill Thompson."

"Yes, I know. Have you anything to report?"

"Wa'al, no sah, I hain't been able to fin' out nuffin mo' since I talked wiv your sister dis mawnin'."

Just then there was a knock on the door, and when Mrs. Baker returned from answering the summons, who should she have with her but the old Martinique witch woman, Mrs. Dugay.

She looked at Alice fixedly, and then said in French:

"Does this man understand me?"

"No, indeed," replied Mrs. Baker in French.

"I came to see that girl you brought to my house this morning, the one I laid the cards for."

"She has gone," faltered Mrs. Baker.

"Don't lie to me," flashed the witch woman. "There she stands now disguised as a man."

Mrs. Baker glanced at Alice nervously.

"It is true," replied Alice in French. "Is my disguising so badly done, then, that any one could see through it?"

Mrs. Dugay shook her head.

"Not at all; no one could see through it but me. Your disguise is simply perfect, but I knew you would make it before I entered the house."

"How could you possibly know that, Mrs. Dugay?"

"The cards told me."

"Oh! The cards."

"Yes. You may not believe in them, but let me tell you something else they told me. Your friends still live. They are in deadly peril. Something must be done before midnight or they are lost. I have tried to find Joe Curtis to warn him not to kill them, for the cards tell me he is bound to come to grief for what he is doing. I hoped to be able to persuade him to let up."

"It is very kind of you," said Alice. "I wish you would let me pay you for your trouble. You refused to take money this morning, but——"

"No, no; I never take money for laying the cards now. That day has passed. The cards tell me that you must go to a cakewalk."

"That's just where I am going."

"That there you will meet Curtis."

"That is what I hope for."

"That if you can gain his ear you will succeed in rescuing your friends."

"Don't the cards tell you whether I shall succeed or not?"

"No; but they tell me this. You must pretend that you know no English, only French; that will attract his attention. For a moment you will be in the greatest danger, but if you can pass that point all will go well."

"I shall not forget," said Alice. "Do the cards tell anything else?"

"Yes. They tell me that there is a will mixed up in this business—a stolen will."

"And so there is. Do I get it?"

"I see it in your hand."

"Good! Is that all?"

"That is all," replied Mrs. Dugay. "I wish you luck, and with that she walked out of the house."

"What a singular woman," remarked Alice.

"She sure is," replied Mrs. Baker. "I have known her a long time; sometimes she fails to hit it, but I have known lots of things she has predicted to come true."

"I hope her present predictions may come true," sighed Alice.

"You will be careful of yourself, won't you?" said Mrs. Baker. "If this Curtis is as bad as she makes him out, it makes me shudder to think that you should have anything to do with him."

It was half-past eight when Alice left the house with Bill Thompson to attend the cakewalk at Razor Hall.

As Mrs. Baker predicted, Bill had a girl on his hands.

He first took Alice upstairs in an old, ramshackle house on Navy street, where she was introduced to this girl, Rosie Brown by name.

She was just about the blackest specimen Alice had ever seen, but good-natured to the last degree.

Neither she nor Bill seemed to have the faintest suspicion that "Ed Jones," as Alice called herself, was other than what she seemed.

"Now look here, you two," said Alice, "I want to say just one thing to you. I speak French, and only French. This will give me a chance to do a lot of listening and also to talk with Joe Curtis in his native language if I come up with him."

They promised to bear this in mind, and then all three started for Razor Hall.

As they drew near the gloomy old roost the sound of a cracked fiddle, rather skilfully played, was heard.

Bill Thompson knocked on the door of the front room on the first floor, and it was opened by a young coon wearing tan shoes and a blue suit, with a tie of the brightest red.

"Hi yah, yo' Bill! Why fo' you fetch a stranger here?"

he cried. "Didn't I done tole yer dat dis entertainment was strictly private?"

"He's a friend of mine jes' up from de Souf," replied Bill. "Leastwise, he am a friend of a friend's—see? He don't speak nuffin but French."

"Am dat any reason why he should be let in? Ah dunno 'bout dat. Ah shall have to ask Buck Walker what him finks."

"Ask him, then, and be quick about it," retorted Bill. "Ef yo' doan let mah friend's friend in den Rosie an' me'll cut out dis heah cakewalk and yo', too."

"Tain't mah fault, nohow," replied the coon, and he closed the door.

But it was only to immediately open it again, bringing with him the desired permission.

The room into which Alice now entered was a large one, having been the front parlor of the old house in the days of its glory.

The back parlor was just as big, and by opening a pair of folding doors the two rooms had been thrown into one.

The broken walls were all hung with Christmas wreaths; a row of chairs had been placed on one side and a row of camp stools on the other.

On the chairs sat the dusky damsels, while their escorts occupied the camp stools, Quaker meeting style.

The fiddler sat at the end of the back parlor between the windows, and in front of him on a table rested a huge frosted cake covered all over with artificial flowers.

Needless to say everybody was dressed in their best, and not a few of the men wore dress suits.

As for light, it was furnished by at least a dozen lamps, which had been placed on barrels turned bottom upwards.

Buck Walker in a dress suit was wandering about the room talking to this one and that. He appeared to be master of ceremonies.

It had been arranged with Bill Thompson that he was to make a certain sign if Joe Curtis was present, and then take the first opportunity to point him out.

The sign was not given.

Having escorted Rosie to a seat, Bill and Alice sat down on the other side.

Alice saw that she should have to play the wall flower, and she wondered if she was going to have company.

A short wait followed.

Several other couples arrived.

At last Buck Walker cried out:

"Ladies an' gemn! De cakewalk will now begin!"

Immediately the fiddler struck up a march.

The men sprang up, crossed the room and got their girls.

There were several who kept their seats, both men and women.

The usual scene at a cakewalk now followed.

It was a merry crowd, and Alice watched them with no little interest in spite of her anxiety.

When it was all over and the cake was awarded to the winning couple, they all began to dance.

It was just then that a door in the rear opened and a tall, handsome mulatto entered.

Alice's eyes sought Bill Thompson, who was waltzing with Rosie, and that was the time she got the sign.

"Joe Curtis at last," she thought, "but really I don't

see what is going to come of all this. There doesn't seem to be the slightest chance of learning his secrets."

Curtis drew the master of ceremonies aside and they talked in whispers.

Alice could see that they were looking her way.

At last Curtis started to make his way among the dancers in her direction.

He had almost reached the place where she sat when a big and very black coon who was dancing with a mulatto girl jostled against him with considerable force.

"Look where you're going," snarled Curtis, and he gave the fellow a push, in doing which he accidentally trod on the girl's toe.

She gave a scream, and quicker than a flash her partner struck the mulatto in the face.

"Take dat, Joe Curtis!" he cried. "Ah'll learn yer to bunk up agin me an' mah girl."

He had no more than said it than Curtis struck him a blow which knocked him down.

"That's yours!" he cried, and it's been due this long time.

The coon sprang up, razor in hand.

"A fight! A fight!" several cried, and the girls began screaming.

It was not one razor that was drawn now, but a dozen.

Curtis seemed to have none.

He backed against the wall.

Alice thought she saw her chance now, and brave girl that she is, she lost not an instant in taking it.

Springing to her feet, she placed herself at the mulatto's side.

"If it's the whole against one, I'm with the one!" she cried in French.

CHAPTER X.

JOE CURTIS GETS HIS FOUR ACES.

Was it the speaking of a foreign language or the force and quickness with which Alice spoke that checked the oncoming razors?

It is hard to tell, but checked they certainly were, and next moment Buck Walker jumped in front of Joe Curtis, exclaiming:

"Now, now, now, you niggers. None of dat! Won't have it nohow. Put up yer razzers! Dat am mah premy order as master of ceremonies. Mistah Curtis, 'pologize to de lady an' make it all right."

"Certainly I apologize to the lady," replied Curtis. "As for the man, we'll settle it between us afterward. I don't want to spoil this meeting, that's sure."

And so peace was patched up and the dance resumed.

Curtis then sat down beside Alice and said in French: "I want to thank you for that. It was bravely done. What is your name? I was told that a Louisiana man was here who spoke only French. I'm from Louisiana. Thought I'd look you up."

"I'm going under the name of Ed Jones up here," replied Alice. "My real name is Marlais. I'm from Bayou Texas, on the Gulf."

"So? There is a great deal of French spoken down there they tell me."

"I worked on a plantation where no English was spoken. Where are you from?"

"Parish St. Antoine. What brings you up here?"

"Looking for work. I wanted to see New York. I can't seem to find anything to do. I'm going back next week."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"I wish I was going with you, then. I'm tired of it up here myself."

They talked perhaps twenty minutes in this strain.

Suddenly Curtis turned and asked abruptly:

"Don't you want to take a hand in a little poker game? I'm going to play with some friends. But perhaps you have no money to lose?"

Alice hesitated.

Here was certainly a chance to get better acquainted with Curtis, but might it not lead to trouble?

"I am not so sure that I should come out the loser," she said. "Where are you going to play, here?"

"No; in a house near here."

"Perhaps your friends won't care to have a stranger introduced among them."

"They can't help themselves. Any friend of mine goes. The fact is, I've cleaned them out and they will have to be started on borrowed money."

"And now you would like to clean me out." laughed Alice. "I don't think I care to play."

The fact was Curtis was an inveterate poker fiend and had a habit of cleaning his friends out.

He had been playing for five hours and had not held his four aces yet.

To the last degree superstitious, he believed in his dream and that good luck was to be his that night.

The money he had stolen from the Bradys and Mr. Carmichael had been greatly added to by his winnings, but he still wanted more, and as Alice was exceedingly well dressed, he put her down as one likely to possess a good fat roll.

"Oh, come along!" he said. "What are you afraid of?"

Just then Buck Walker came up and said in English:

"Joe, are you gwinter want me to-night for you know what?"

"Can't tell yet," replied Curtis.

"Can he speak English?"

"Not a word."

"Looks lak he had plenty dough."

"I believe it. I'm out for that same dough, but he says he won't play."

"Yo' still t'ink yo'll get dem four aces?"

"I do. I never dreamed like I dreamed last night that it didn't come true."

"And then yo' mean to do it?"

"I sure do, Buck. Carmichael is evidently dying. To have him found there will be the ruination of you, anyway. You've got the place well insured, and the mortgage is to be foreclosed on you next week. I see no better way of helping you out of a bad fix, and at the same time getting me my revenge."

"Well, dat's so. Reckon Ah'll pull out now an' get

'round dar and hab a look at 'em. Ah tole everybody Ah shouldn't stay hyar after 'leben, an' it's dat much now."

"Go on," replied Curtis, "and I'll steer this fellow around if I can."

To all of this Alice listened with intense interest, but of course she could only understand its meaning in part.

The mention of Mr. Carmichael's name was enough to make her feel certain that it was quite probable that the allusion to revenge referred to the Bradys.

Curtis now tried to persuade her to join in the poker game.

"No," said Alice, "I'm a poor player and don't care to take chances. But I'm leaving here now, and I'll go along with you if you are going."

"I am," replied Curtis. "I just looked in here for a minute. Come on. Perhaps you will change your mind."

They left together and Alice walked with the man around to Navy street.

He did not ask her which way she was going, but seemed to take it for granted that it was his way.

He halted in front of an old frame house.

"Well, here's where the game is to be pulled off," he said. "Won't you change your mind and come in?"

"No," said Alice, "I think not."

"Shall I see you again? It isn't often in these days that I run up against a fellow I can talk French with."

"I don't know why you shouldn't see me again," replied Alice. "Do you live here?"

"No; I live in another part of the city. Dean street, if you know where that is?"

"No; I don't know anything about Brooklyn."

"Where are you stopping?"

Alice mentioned Mrs. Baker's.

"Perhaps I'll look in on you to-morrow night. I should like to get better acquainted. I may decide to run down to New Orleans myself. Perhaps we could arrange to go together."

They shook hands and parted, Curtis entering the house and Alice walking towards Myrtle avenue.

"Now what to do?" she asked herself. "I see no other way than to go for the police, and that is just what I didn't want to do."

But she decided to do it and walked up Myrtle avenue with the intention of going to the station at the corner of Vanderbilt.

Meanwhile, how fared it with the Bradys?

They were still in the same fix.

Not a morsel of food had passed their lips since they were captured, not even a drink of water.

They were still in deadly peril.

During that afternoon they could hear voices in the room below them, and sometimes they caught words which came up through a stove-pipe hole in the floor over in one corner.

They were able thus to know that a poker game was in progress.

By attentive listening they were able to distinguish Joe Curtis' voice from the rest.

At last towards seven o'clock they heard him say:

"Well, I seem to have cleaned you fellows out, and I haven't held those four aces yet, but I still believe my dream will come true."

After that a door slammed and the voices were heard no more for a long time.

As the evening advanced the imprisoned detectives slept some, but it was so cold that their sufferings were too great to permit them to stay asleep.

No one had been near them since Curtis left, but shortly after eleven the door was opened and Buck Walker entered carrying a lamp and an oil can.

He was in full dress and had a flower in his button-hole.

Evidently he had been drinking, for his speech was quite thick.

"Wa'al, an' how's you uns getting along?" he asked.

"Walker," said the old detective, "I for one am almost dead. Is there nothing I can say which will induce you to set us free. If it is a question of money——"

"But it hain't, boss," broke in Buck. "Ah kean't mak' no bargain wiv you. Ah's Joe Curtis' man fust, last an' all de time, an' he's a-bossin' dis hyar job."

"Does he really mean to fire this house and burn us alive?"

"Dat's what he does, boss, dat's what I done fetched de ile can for. Not dat Ise gwinter do it now. We'se gwinter start another lilly poker game first off. Mebbe we'll play all night. Ah kean't tell."

He set down the oil can.

Old King Brady begged for a drink of water.

"Wa'al, hit's agin' orders," said Buck, "but Ah'll tak' pity on you an' humor you in dat. Ah'll go fetch de water."

He left the room then and they heard him go down stairs.

"What can we do?" groaned Harry. "This is certainly the worst fix we have found ourselves in for years."

"And yet I have a feeling that we shall e-cape," replied the old detective.

The water was brought, and Buck held the tumbler while they both drank.

He had evidently been imbibing again and a talkative fit was upon him.

"Yo' ax 'bout burnin' de house," he said. "Lemme 'splain jest how it is. Ah owns dis house, hit am mortgaged for all its wuth, which hain't much, an' hit's insured for more'n hit's wuth. Next week dey's gwinter foreclose dat 'ar mortgage, so why shouldn't I jest have a lilly fire an' mak' somet'ing out ob it all? Other folks do business dat way. Doan see why Ah shouldn't try de same game?"

"Well, well," said Old King Brady, "but is that any reason why you should burn us with the house?"

"Oh, dat 'ar's Joe Curtis' bizness," chuckled the coon. "I doan nebbber interfere wiv Joe."

He left them, bolting the door behind him.

Presently voices were heard in the room below, Curtis' among the rest.

The Bradys listened.

They are getting ready to start the poker game," remarked Harry.

Buck now began to talk boisterously.

"Say, wha' yo' do wiv dat 'ar French feller wiv de soff voice?" he asked.

"I couldn't induce him to come in and play," was the reply.

"Say, do yo' know him speak mighty lak a woman?"

"So he did a little, but it was because he spoke French that you thought his voice soft. French is the softest language in the world, but say, Joe, how Ise gwinter play? Hain't got a nickel. Yo' done clean me all out last time."

"I'll lend you ten," replied Curtis.

"Wa'al, dat 'ar 'll start me. Hope I have luck. Hand us your ten. Ah'll spit t'ree times on de bill for luck."

The game began. The noises in the street had ceased. The Bradys could hear better now.

But the talk brought them no hope.

"If I could only break these infernal cords," groaned Harry. "My hands have become so swollen that I just can't slip them."

"It is useless to try," said Old King Brady. "Help must come from the outside or not at all."

As time passed they became aware that some, at least, of the poker players were drinking heavily.

Solomon had joined in the game.

So had two others.

Joe Curtis staked them all.

And now luck seemed to be against the mulatto.

He seemed to be losing with every hand if the Bradys could judge by the talk they overheard.

At last came a remark which sent cold chills through the prisoners if, indeed, they could be any colder than they were.

Curtis made it.

It came after an interval of silence.

"I take that pot!" he cried. "You see, Buck! The four aces at last! Go and do your work."

"Mah good gollys, hit sure am. Four aces!" said Buck, "but yo'll come along, Joe?"

"No; I'll stay here. I'm paying for this. Don't expect me to do the dirty work. Here, boys, I won't keep this money I've just won. Divide it among yourselves. All I ask is to get rid of those prisoners. Solomon, you see how old man Carmichael is."

There was an interval of silence, and then Old Solomon's voice exclaimed:

"Say, Joe, he's done gone!"

"Gone! What do you mean?" cried Curtis. "Has he escaped?"

"Escaped for good. He's dead!"

"You don't say?"

"Sure t'ing. Dead an' cold. Now we uns have gotter hustle or we'll all get de chair."

"Well, I'm glad of it," said Curtis. "The old sinner sold me out. No use ever to trust a white man, anyhow."

"Hit am so," replied Solomon. "Dey'll fool a nigger ebery time! But he's known in 'Little Africa' by every-body. Unless we can clean up we'se all done for."

"We must fire the house and slope," replied Curtis. "Buck, what are you standing there for? You've got your pay; go do your work. I'll stop here till you come and report."

All of which was distinctly heard by the prisoners.

"It looks like our finish, Harry," said Old King Brady, calmly.

"It does, indeed, governor, and I want to thank you for all your kindness to me before the end comes."

"No need, my dear boy, no need. I am under as many obligations to you as you possibly can be to me. You

have been faithful in your work. I love you as much as if you were my own son."

Footsteps were heard on the stairs.

"They are coming," sighed Harry. "Unless Alice comes to the rescue no one can save us now. It is midnight. We have been ten hours in deadly peril."

CHAPTER XI.

ALICE TO THE RESCUE.

Alice had not gone far before she suddenly realized that she was undertaking something which could hardly succeed.

She was not at all acquainted at the Myrtle avenue police station.

There is a law in the State of New York which makes it a criminal offense for a person to masquerade as one of the opposite sex.

To make herself known would lay Alice open to arrest. She wondered if her detective shield would save her.

If she ran up against a friendly sergeant it might, but the chances were just as strong that it might be the other way.

"It won't do," she said to herself. "It just won't do. If I am jammed into a cell and kept over night, that's the finish of Old King Brady and Harry. What on earth shall I do?"

It was up to her to act on her own account.

But how?

Alice could think of but one way.

"I'll get back to Razor Hall," she said to herself. "I'll appeal to Bill Thompson to get up a gang of his friends and we'll raid that bunch and go through that house on Navy street, for it is there, I believe, the Bradys are confined."

It seemed a forlorn hope.

But Alice had worked herself into a frame of mind now when she was ready to grasp at a straw.

"I can telephone to the police just before we start," she thought. "Perhaps they will heed that, whereas to present myself in person at the station in my disguise is almost certain to lead to trouble."

She accordingly hurried back to Hudson avenue, entered Razor Hall and rapped on the door, behind which she could hear the fiddle still going on, while the shuffle of feet told her that the festivities of the evening were still in full progress.

The coon with the tan shoes opened the door.

Forgetting herself in her excitement, Alice blurted out:

"I want to speak to Bill Thompson right away."

"Ho!" cried the coon. "Ah t'ought yo' couldn't speak nuffin but French. How 'bout dis yere—say?"

"That's what Thompson thought, but it is not so," replied Alice, quickly. "I can speak English."

She started to enter the room, but the coon barred the way.

"Dunno 'bout yo'," he cried. "Doan like dis fo' a lily bit."

It looked like trouble, but Bill, anxious for the ten and

feeling that he had really done next to nothing to earn it, came hurrying forward, abandoning Rosie in the midst of a two-step.

"Wha' de mattah?" he demanded.

"Looker yere, Bill, here's yo' friend a-talkin' English, an' yo' done say him didn't speak nuffin but French!" cried the coon.

"What do yer know 'bout dat 'ar?" said Bill. "Him's all right, anyhow."

"I don't want to come in," said Alice; "I only want to speak to you, Bill. Come out here in the hall."

Bill obeyed the summons.

"Yo' done gib yo'self away bad," he said.

"Yes, but it can't be helped now," replied Alice. "I forgot myself. Look here, Bill, you expect ten dollars. I'll make it a hundred if you will do what I'm going to ask."

"A hunerd! Mah good gollys! Ah'd sell mah soul fo' a hunerd dollahs!" cried the coon. "What's in de wind?"

"Listen," said Alice. "I think I know where my friends are being held prisoners. I want you to get a gang together and come with me. We want to break into the place and rescue them—see? Can you do this?"

Bill scratched his head.

"Is Buck Walker into it?" he asked.

"Very much into it."

"Buck's a bad one. I dunno."

"Think of the hundred."

"Say, Ah hain't t'inking ob nuffin else. Wa'al, I'll try, but Ah kean't git none ob dis bunch. Deys all Buck's friends. Ah'll have to tak' Rosie home first."

"For heaven sake be quick whatever you do," said Alice. "Buck means to set the house on fire for the insurance and burn the prisoners with it. You can see for yourself where I stand."

"It's bad enough fo' mah," admitted Bill. "But say; why doan you go to de station house an' tell 'em dar?"

"For the best of reasons, which I can't explain. Come, Bill, decide quick. Do you want that hundred dollars or does it go to some one else? I am not without friends in 'Little Africa.' I can get what I want."

"Ah'll go yer," said Bill, hastily, "but Ah specs we shall all get pulled in. Ah have to tak' Rosie home first."

Alice chafed at the delay, but she thought best to yield.

Help must be had, and she was utterly at a loss to look for it outside of this reluctant coon.

Bill went inside and presently returned with Rosie, whom they saw safely to her home.

"Now yo' stick to me an' doan say nuffin," said Bill. "Yo' better forget yo' English again. Ah'll see what Ah kin do towards gettin' up a gang."

Now if Alice was curious to see "Little Africa," this was the time her curiosity was fully gratified.

Bill Thompson went from one dirty tenement to another and appealed to his friends.

Some were in bed already, and he had to wake them up.

Several refused pointblank to have anything to do with the matter, although Bill, by Alice's instructions, offered each one five dollars, which was to be over and above the hundred.

At last, however, he succeeded in getting ten husky coons who were willing to stand by him.

Alice now saw that she would have to abandon her scheme of telephoning the police.

It would surely scare off her allies she felt.

It was necessary to cast her lot with them and take her chances, so with Bill in the lead and Alice walking beside him, the whole bunch started down Navy street towards Buck Walker's house.

Were they all armed with razors?

Alice never doubted it.

Still, the Bradys were in deadly peril, and the Bradys must be saved.

And certain it was that at that very moment the Bradys were in an exceedingly bad way.

The footsteps on the stairs which had so alarmed them were heard to ascend to the top of the flight, and the door was opened to admit Buck Walker and old Solomon.

Two other coons stood in the doorway looking in.

Buck had shed his dress suit now and wore an old flannel shirt and a pair of lavender trousers.

He was comfortably drunk and as talkative as ever.

"Ho, yo' 'tectives!" he cried, "how yo' a-gittin' on—say?"

"You see us, Mr. Walker," replied Old King Brady. "Have you come to your senses? Have you decided to take our money and set us free?"

"Not on your life," retorted Buck. "Ez fo' money, yo' hain't got none, nohow, coz why? We uns took it all away from yo'. S'pose I'd trust a white man to keep his promises in a case lak dis? Nebber! Would you, Uncle Solomon?"

"Doan trust no white man, nohow," mumbled Solomon.

"Do you really intend to burn us alive?" demanded Old King Brady. "I can scarcely believe it even now."

"Dem's orders," replied Buck. "Hain't hit so, Uncle Solomon?"

"Suah," replied Solomon, "an' say, why should yo' kick? Doan de white-folks down Souf burn niggers ebery day?"

"This isn't the South, my friend," replied the old detective. "There is law and order in this city, even if it is lacking elsewhere. You are sure to get yourselves into trouble for this monstrous deed."

"Doan argufy wiv me," retorted Solomon. "Talk to Buck. He owns de house. He's boss."

"No, I hain't boss, neither," said Buck. "Hit's Joe Curtis' bizness. Ise Joe Curtis' man. Wha' he orders did is gwinter be did."

He picked up the oil can and began to pour its contents over the floor.

Suddenly he stopped and began abusing the prisoners.

Such another torrent of vile words they had seldom heard.

Even old Solomon looked disgusted, and twice told him to shut up, that he was talking too much, but he kept it right up, shaking his fist at the helpless detectives.

"Cut out de talk!" cried one of the coons in the doorway, raising his hand; "cut out de talk t'ing an' get on de job. Ah heah folks a-talkin' downstairs, an' it hain't Joe Curtis, neither. Specs some one's come in."

So busy was the fellow abusing the Bradys that appar-

ently without knowing it he was spilling the oil all over the floor.

The old darkey bent down over the lamp and lighted a twisted bit of paper.

It looked as if he meant to fire the oil.

"Hurry up!" cried the coon in the doorway. "Deyse folks comin' upstairs."

Buck put down the oil can; Solomon blew out his lighter and thrust it into his pocket.

With wildly beating hearts the Bradys listened, scarcely daring to hope.

"Can it be a rescue?" murmured Harry.

"If so it's Alice," replied the old detective. "But——"

The sentence was uncompleted when the two coons in the doorway sprang back into the room.

"Hi yah! Big bunch a-comin' up de stairs!" one yelled.

Out came the razors, and it was time if resistance was intended, for now nearly a dozen darkeys burst into the room.

"Dat 'ar French nigger!" gasped Buck. "Whar's Joe? He orter be here. Hi, yo' Bill Thompson, what does dis 'trusion mean—say?"

"You black scoundrel! Throw down that razor or I fire!" cried Alice, leveling a revolver at Buck Walker's head, while Thompson and his gang flourished their razors in the faces of Solomon and the two coons.

Not until she spoke did the Bradys recognize Alice, and even then they could scarcely believe it was she, so cleverly was she disguised.

Of course, there was no fight.

All four were backed against the wall, and Alice held them covered while Bill with a huge jack-knife cut the Bradys free.

"Take my advice and don't think of making arrests," said Alice.

"But we want Curtis," protested Harry.

"So far as I know he is not in the house," she replied.

"Let us get out of here just as quick as we can."

"The advice is sound," said Old King Brady, "but if Curtis is here we must have him."

They did not get him, however. The house was searched in vain, Buck, Solomon and the others being made to follow them about.

Buck was very meek now.

"Hit's Joe's bizness; 'tain't mine. Ah hain't got nuffin to do wiv it," he kept protesting, and then he added:

"Say, boss, Ah was on'y foolin', anyway. Ah nebber 'tended to set de house on fire. 'Twas on'y to scare you uns."

"If this house burns to-night the police shall know who to put it up to," said Old King Brady, and then they left, glad enough to get safely out of "Little Africa" at last.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Bill Thompson got his hundred dollars, but even then he did not seem wholly satisfied.

"Hit's all right," he said. "Youse libed up to your 'greement, but say, Ah'll hev to get out ob 'Little Africa' or Ah'll git killed, dat's one suah t'ing."

But it was beyond the power of the Bradys to help him in that regard.

Before leaving they searched the whole house, as we have said, and in one of the rooms on the lower floor came across the corpse of Mr. Carmichael.

The police had to be notified, so their first call was at the Myrtle avenue station.

It was all the Bradys could do to get there.

Here the happenings in "Little Africa" were explained.

"If we had been physically able we should have arrested those men," said Old King Brady, "but as it was we did not feel equal to the undertaking."

"We'll send men there at once," the sergeant assured him.

He did so, but Buck Walker and Solomon had vanished.

Joe Curtis was sought at his house on Dean street also.

The Bradys learned next day that he had not been found.

It was Alice's belief, then, that the mulatto must have seen the bunch coming down Navy street and took himself off by the back way.

It need hardly be said that the Bradys were a pretty badly used up pair when they reached their home on Washington Square that night.

Still, they were both on hand at the office next morning.

Alice joined them soon after their arrival.

"And once more, my dear Alice, we owe our lives to your bravery," said the old detective. "Of course, I have no words to express my gratitude, but——"

"None are needed," broke in Alice, who was still in her male disguise, and this to the surprise of both Old King Brady and Harry, although they said nothing about it.

She brought the subject up herself at once, however.

"I suppose you are wondering to see me dressed as I am," she said.

"Well, rather," replied the old detective.

"Same here," added Harry. "Why is this thus?"

"Do you realize," said Alice, "that after all the suffering you two have been through, and all the hard work and anxiety I have had, that we have accomplished nothing? In short, that we have lost our case?"

"Indeed, I realize that only too well," replied the old detective, "but it cannot be helped."

"I still see a chance to get Curtis and the stolen will if he has it about him, as he probably has," said Alice.

"You do; how?" Old King Brady asked.

"Listen, Mr. Brady. You were so tired last night that I did not attempt to tell you my adventures in detail, but only rehearsed them in a general way. I am going to tell you the whole story now, and I think you will agree with me that the chance exists."

And Alice told her story through to the end.

"I fail to see the point, I must say," remarked the old detective.

"You think there is just a chance that Curtis may look you up at Mrs. Baker's to-day?" said Harry.

"That's it," replied Alice. "He asked particularly where I was stopping, and said something about going to

New Orleans with me. Of course, it may have been just talk."

"If he saw you with that bunch he'll never come," said Old King Brady.

"Never."

"Or if Buck Walker tells him what happened," added Harry.

"Never!" repeated Alice, "but neither of those things may have occurred. Curtis is surely something of a coward. I realized that when I saw him turn pale last night when the razors were drawn on him at the cakewalk. You say you think he saw us coming down Navy street and so lit out the back way, Mr. Brady, but the fact remains that he did not kill Dr. De Mussidan, nor, according to Carmichael's story, did she show any disposition to do so; neither did he attempt the firing of the house himself. I believe the man to be a sneak. I now believe he took himself off before we ever came down Navy street so as not to be on hand when the fire broke out. Buck Walker was thoroughly scared. It is my opinion that both he and Old Solomon got out of Brooklyn in a hurry last night. If so, they may not communicate with Curtis. Yes, gentlemen, I believe there is a chance that he may look me up at Mrs. Baker's, and I think that we ought not to lose one single instant in getting there, and that once there we ought to wait until a late hour this evening before we give it up."

"Alice is certainly right," remarked Harry.

"I think so," replied Old King Brady. "If we could only get the man and the will it would be great. I wish I had arrested Walker now."

"You were in no shape to undertake it, nor was Harry," declared Alice. "If you had done so you would have had a big crowd at your heels all the way up Myrtle avenue, and there is no telling what might have happened. It is all right as it is. To send Walker to the chair would not bring Dr. De Mussidan back to life again. What we want is the will."

"We go to Mrs. Baker's, that is settled," said Old King Brady.

The obliging colored woman was surprised enough to see them.

"All 'Little Africa' is talking about your people," she said. "I am so glad you escaped. I hear you had a very narrow escape, too."

"Madam, it was a tight squeeze," said Old King Brady. "We should surely have been burned alive but for the courage and energy of this brave girl. But now permit me to thank you for the very efficient help you gave her."

And as he said it Old King Brady slipped a hundred-dollar bill into the woman's hand.

"Oh, Mr. Brady! This is entirely too much," protested Mrs. Baker, evidently highly delighted.

"Not at all; not at all," replied the old detective. "Put it away and say no more. And now I suppose, Mrs. Baker, you are wondering why we are here."

"Well, I didn't expect to see you, I must confess," replied the woman.

"Alice, explain your theory," said the old detective, and Alice did so.

"It might be," said Mrs. Baker. "Of course, no one can tell. You are welcome to stay here as long as you like, I'm sure."

The result was a quiet day at Mrs. Baker's, and it was just what Old King Brady and Harry needed.

Night settled down upon "Little Africa" and nothing had been seen of Joe Curtis.

"We will remain till eleven o'clock," declared Old King Brady. "If Curtis don't show up by that time he never will."

It was seven o'clock when he said it. At a quarter to eight the bell rang.

The Bradys slipped into Mrs. Baker's little dining-room, which was separated from the parlor by portieres, and waited.

"Yes, he is here," she heard Mrs. Baker say. "Won't you walk in?"

And into the room she came, followed by Joe Curtis.

His face wore a hunted expression, but he greeted Alice with a heartiness which amply proved that he knew nothing of the part she had played.

"I suppose you are surprised to see me, Mr. Morlais," he said when they had shaken hands, "but the fact is I have decided to go to New Orleans at once. I have important business there. I thought that perhaps you would go along with me. A fellow likes company, you know, and I have taken a liking for you which may seem singular in view of our short acquaintance."

"Why, yes," replied Alice. "I finished up my business to-day. I don't know that there is any reason why I should not start for New Orleans to-morrow if it comes to that."

All this was said in French, and now she added in English:

"But first let me introduce you to a couple of friends of mine whom you will, I am sure, be glad to meet."

It was the cue for the Bradys.

Old King Brady pushed aside the portieres. Harry appeared at the door leading into the hall.

Each held a revolver, and Curtis found himself covered.

The handcuffs went on in a hurry.

Old King Brady then searched the fellow and found in his coat pocket the stolen will.

That night Curtis slept in a station-house cell. Sing Sing claimed him later on.

Buck Walker was never captured. The police searched for him in vain.

Great was the joy of Madame De Mussidan when Old King Brady placed the will in her hands.

The detectives learned later that the estate was promptly made over to her, and that shortly after Stephen De Mussidan committed suicide.

Later, Madame De Mussidan sent the Bradys a check for \$5,000. They had never even rendered her a bill.

Next week's issue will contain "THE BRADYS' THREE BALL CLEW; OR, HELD IN THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY."

SPECIAL NOTICE:—All back numbers of this weekly, except the following, are in print: 1 to 6, 9, 13, 42, 46, 47, 53 to 56, 63, 81. If you cannot obtain the ones you want from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York City, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.

"Secret Service"

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 24, 1911.

TERMS TO SUBSCRIBERS

Single Copies.....	.05 Cents
One Copy Three Months.....	.65 Cents
One Copy Six Months.....	\$1.25
One Copy One Year.....	\$2.50

Postage Free.

HOW TO SEND MONEY—At our risk send P. O. Money Order, Check, or Registered Letter; remittances in any other way are at your risk. We accept Postage Stamps the same as cash. When sending silver, wrap the coin in a separate piece of paper to avoid cutting the envelope. Write your name and address plainly. Address letters to

FRANK TOUSEY, President }
 H. HARRISON, Treasurer }
 G. E. NYLANDER, Secretary }

Frank Tousey, Publisher
 24 Union Sq., New York

ITEMS WORTH READING

The Sultan of Turkey imagines himself a sport. Lately he has developed a passion for playing cards for money, and the man who is unfortunate enough to win the Sultan's money incurs his enduring dislike. Public officials permit him to win, and thus save their places.

A favorite dish with the Eskimo is an ice cream made of seal oil, into which snow is stirred until the desired consistency has been obtained; then frozen berries of different kinds are added. This decoction is about as tempting to the civilized palate as frozen cod-liver oil.

The court-house at Sherbrooke, N. D., is a very small structure and such an uncomfortable place in hot weather that Judge C. A. Pollock, at the request of lawyers, during a warm spell last summer, ordered the court-room furniture moved to a small grove adjoining. The regular sessions were held in the grove for three days.

Among the perils and wonders of the ocean there are few more interesting things than icebergs, interesting not only by reason of their gigantic size, their fantastic shapes, their exceeding beauty, but also for the manner wherein they array themselves. Icebergs exhibit a tendency to form both clusters and long lines, and these groupings may arise from the effects both of ocean currents and of storms. Some very singular lines of bergs, extending for many hundreds of miles east of Newfoundland, have been shown on official charts issued by the government. Two of these cross each other, each keeping on its independent course after the crossing. In several instances parallel lines of bergs leave long spaces of clear water between them. Curiously enough, while enormous fields of ice invade the so-called "steamer lanes" of the Atlantic at the opening of spring during certain years, in other years at that season there is comparatively little ice to be seen. The ice comes, of course, from the edges of the Arctic regions, from the ice-bound coasts of Greenland and Labrador, where huge bergs, broken from the front of the glaciers at the point where they reach the sea, start on their long journeys toward the south, driven by the great current that flows from Baffin's Bay into the northern Atlantic Ocean.

Some years ago a slow sailing vessel, when some 600 miles out from Liverpool, picked up a lusty youngster of five years lashed to a mast. The captain took a great liking to him, called him his son and decided that the little chap must be christened—one of the few things which he knew must be attended to in the case of children. Of course there was no chaplain aboard, so the captain himself undertook the ceremony. He gathered the men about him, and with a mixed knowledge of his duties, he glared about him and asked whether any one knew just cause why the boy should not be christened. "If there is," he roared, "speak up like a man or forever hold your tongue." Then he suddenly cracked a bottle of wine above his head and christened him. The ocean waif is now settled down—a steady longshoreman, but he still relates with satisfaction the story of his christening.

WITH THE FUNNY FELLOWS

Teacher—How many bones are there in the human body? Pupil—I don't know; I haven't learned to ride a wheel yet.

"And what do you have in your garden?" "Egg plants, mostly." "Indeed?" "Yes, the neighbors' chickens are there most of the time."

Summer Boarder—Is this farm of yours very fertile? Kansas Farmer—Not very. I tried to raise a mortgage on it last year and made a failure.

First Bank Director—Bad news. Second Ditto—What is it? "I heard the president's pretty typewriter call him 'uncle' to-day." "Send for the bank examiner at once."

"George, I fear you are marrying me just because my uncle left me a fortune." "No, my precious; I'd marry you just the same as if any other friend had left it to you."

"Everybody seems to be on an equality in Klondike," said the shoe clerk boarder. "Yes," said the Cheerful Idiot, "one man can cut as much ice as another up there."

Freshy—Professor, is it ever possible to take the greater from the less? Professor Potterby—There's a pretty close approach to it when the conceit is taken out of a freshman.

He—Do you believe in palmistry—that you can tell anything by the hand? She—Certainly; now, for example, if I had a certain kind of ring on a certain finger on my left hand, people would know that I was engaged.

The Pastor—I don't see your husband at church any more. The Wife—No; he never goes now. What's the matter?" "Why, you know, he's a vegetarian, and he says there is too much meat in your sermons to suit him."

Old Gent (to beggar, to whom he has given a cent)—Now, my man, what shall you do with that coin? Beggar—Well, I hardly know, gov'nor, whether to purchase an annuity or invest in railway stocks. What do you advise?

THE WIDOW IN BLACK

OR,

THE GREAT DIAMOND MYSTERY

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VII. (continued)

By moving her head a little, she caught a glimpse of the profile of the other woman, who was quite robust, but of a pale cast of features.

"I shall be glad of a change myself," the pale-faced woman said. "I am sick of playing invalid, and it's hard on my two children."

"But the pay is good," suggested Annette.

"Oh, I can't complain as to that. But this way of being compelled to stay in the house day and night whilst you and Maria are riding in carriages is telling on me. Why, just see how pale I am!"

Annette laughed and said:

"Your paleness is your card. You can look sick when you are as well as the healthiest."

"Yes, but it's making me sick, I fear."

Just then she heard the door-bell, and hastened softly to open it before Annette or the other could do so. She found the little girl had returned.

"Ah!" she said. "You opened the door for me. I opened it for you," and passed out into the street.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PLOT THICKENS.

The little girl only stared up at the stranger. She did not know what to say or do. The woman passed out and walked briskly up the avenue toward Fourteenth street, whither Graybill went to meet her.

The detective heard the door close with a slam, and knew that somebody had shut it with an angry impulse. As she met him, Mrs. Hatton took his arm, and said:

"I have had a strange adventure."

"I suppose you have. It's one of the daily experiences of a good detective. What did you see or hear?"

She told him about word for word the conversation she had heard between Annette and the other woman, and it staggered him.

"Great Scott!" he gasped. "That shows that madame, the doctor, Annette and the widow are all playing some kind of game together."

"Yes, it would seem so," she said.

"And I am puzzled to know how it works. From what Annette says the doctor is the moving spirit, and that he is going to close it up and leave for Philadelphia as soon as possible. Ah! I think I understand it all now, Sarah."

"You do?"

"Yes. Madame Fairfax and her maid stole those diamonds, and this doctor and the sick widow are in the business with them in some way."

"Good Heavens! How can you imagine such a thing!"

Would a woman with \$30,000 worth of diamonds go into such a business, think you?"

"Yes, if money could be made by so doing. It is her own diamonds being stolen that helps to disarm suspicion."

"You surprise me."

"I am surprised myself."

They went back to the costumer's, where she exchanged her disguise for her street costume, and then passed out on the street again.

"I am satisfied now that the four are a band of thieves," said the detective, "and I am indebted to you for finding it out."

"Do you think you have a clew now?" she asked.

"Yes, I am sure of it. I can understand now why the doctor suspected and shadowed us. He gets the diamonds and disposes of them, whilst the ladies go unsuspected. They meet at the bedside of the bogus sick widow without their motives being questioned. Oh, it's the shrewdest game I ever heard of, and you are the best help a detective ever had. If you were a widow you'd have a chance to accept or reject me as a partner for life."

She laughed and said:

"But I am not a widow, though."

"No, much to my regret."

"You must not talk that way."

"I won't any more," he replied. "I shall now go to work and chase the diamonds to their hiding-places."

"But you will let me know what you are doing all the time, will you not?"

"Yes, indeed, for I now know that you can keep a secret."

"Of course I can."

"And you are as good a detective as one wants to see."

"Well, my husband will be home to-morrow, and so I shall not have a chance to go masquerading with you any more."

"I don't think there will be any necessity for it. I am of the opinion that I can run them down by myself."

"Oh, heavens!" gasped she, suddenly pulling her veil down over her face.

"What is it?" Graybill asked.

"The woman in mourning! She passed us and, I think, recognized me."

"Great Scott! That's too bad," and he looked back, but in the throng of people he could not see any one in black that looked like Madame Fairfax.

"I did not see her till she was almost against me," said Mrs. Hatton. "Oh, I would have given a thousand dollars to have avoided that. She will tell it all over the house that I am going out with you in the absence of my husband."

"On the contrary, I don't think she will say anything about it," said the detective.

"Why not?"

"She is undoubtedly going down to the widow's place where Annette is, and they will tell her about the strange woman going out without making her presence known to any one but the little girl. Then she will see at once that the woman must be you, and will be too much troubled to say a word about it. She will see at once that the detective is at work."

"If she asks me if I am the woman I shall deny it."

"Of course, and be awfully insulted, too, at the idea. Tell her you met me in the street, and that I came to your side and said that I had no clew, as yet, to the diamond robbery."

"Yes."

"But I don't think she will say a word to you about it. They will be alarmed. I will be shadowed and so will you, every time you go out, so we will have to be careful."

"Dear me! Do you think so?"

"Yes. The doctor shadowed us once, you know."

"Yes. Well, I'll stay at home and wait till I hear from you."

"Very well. That's the best way. If you have anything new, write me full particulars at my quarters, and mail the letter yourself."

She left him at the corner of Fourteenth street and Fifth avenue, and went to the hotel alone, whilst he repaired to his quarters to think over the discovery he had made.

"There is a gang of them at work," he muttered, as he wended his way to his quarters, "and that wily French doctor is the masier spirit. The madame and her maid are simply decoys. They wear first-class diamonds and plenty of them, and find out where the others are. They have the chance to get impressions of all the keys in the house, and give them to him. He may not do the stealing himself. They may do that, and as madame happens to be the heaviest loser, she is never suspected. Lord bless me! The wisdom of Solomon himself couldn't have concocted a shrewder scheme. Even the sick widow is a sham, though just why they work that racket I can't make out. Now that's my theory of the case. Suspicious circumstances all point that way. But I can't arrest anybody on mere theory. I've got to follow out this thing and see where it will lead to. What a lucky thing it was that I got her to go there. Annette and her mistress are at daggers' points about something. I guess she wants to change positions with her and play mistress awhile herself. That's what I infer from what she said to the widow. Why in the world they have to have a sick widow in the game is more than I can understand. But she is playing a hand with them in some way, that's sure. Well, I'm going to lay for that doctor and see what I can find out. Not being suspected of even being acquainted with the madame, and never going about the Hotel Beaumont, he could receive the diamonds and get them off to a place of safety with the utmost security. Oh, it's a grand scheme, and I tip my hat to the genius of him who conceived it."

Whilst he was in his quarters, thinking over what he should do, and reasoning out the possibility of his theory, the woman in black entered the home of the widow.

Ten minutes later she and Annette came out, and hurried round to Washington Square to the residence of Dr. Comte. They found him at home, for he met them at the door himself.

They entered and remained there a half hour or more, after which they emerged and made their way back to the Hotel Beaumont.

(To be continued)

HIS OWN LAWYER

OR,

HOW TOM HAZEN WON FAME AND FORTUNE

By JOHN SHERMAN

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XVIII. (continued)

"Oh, you haven't cut our throats yet."

"No, but I've got you by the ears, your head drawn back and the knife raised—and it's sharp."

"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," said Cadmus, shaking his head.

"Yes, that's true, and it's very thin skin where the knife goes in."

Freeman chuckled till he was heard by half the lawyers present. Cadmus said no more, seeing that Tom was loaded.

Tom looked over at Weichman. The old inventor's face was a picture to look at. He had the great robber at bay now, and had faith in the young champion of his cause. As for Katrine Weichman, she was staring and smiling at him as she had never smiled at man before. Just then the idea flashed through Tom's mind that she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. There were many women in the audience, drawn hither by the general expectation that Freeman would be heard in the case. But that great orator knew that if Tom managed the case well he would win, so he sat there to look after the law points that might arise.

When the jury was ready, Tom opened the case in a speech to them, in order to tell them why the suit was brought, and what he expected to prove by his witnesses. He began with the invention of the coupler, how and when it was patented, how same couplers had been sent to various great railroads to test by actual use on the cars, how the roads at once had them made in their machine shops and put on all their cars, till they were now in universal use in all parts of the country; how the inventor, a poor German, but now a naturalized American citizen, had tried in vain to get some compensation for his invention; how lawyers had swindled him out of retainers, until he was now old and in direst poverty, while great corporations were earning millions annually by using the creation of his inventive brain.

"And now, gentlemen of the jury!" he exclaimed, "we have brought one of these great corporate highwaymen to bay before you. Counsel may object to his client being called such a name; he will claim respectability for his client, and may use the name of respectable men. I shall assail no individual, but will prove this great corporation a common thief in its treatment of my client."

Then he called Weichman to the stand. The old inventor was there for three long hours, telling of his invention and how the Maybury road had been using it for five years without compensating him therefor. He said that he and another man had spent a week on the road examining the cars of the company, and had made a memoranda of over one thousand cars to which his coupler was attached. He had bought a broken coupler for old iron from a yard-

master of the road, and now had it in court to show that it had been made somewhere without the stamp recording his name and date of patent. Tom had it placed on a table before the jury. The letters patent was passed to each juror to examine, while Weichman stood up and showed how it worked.

All the lawyers were surprised at the clearness of the claim Tom was presenting to the jury. He left nothing undone. Old Freeman was watching him like a hawk to see that he made no mistake. Not once did he have to interfere to help him out.

When Weichman stepped down the corporation lawyer called to him to keep his seat. He went back on the stand and resumed his seat, to submit to a cross-examination. The New York lawyer was a searcher in that line, and tried to confuse the witness by putting the same question to him in different ways, in the hope of getting contradictory answers. But the witness was wary, and the lawyer remarked:

"You have been well coached."

"Why should he not be," Tom quickly retorted, "after bucking against a great corporate thief for five years? He has the benefit of his experience."

"And of your impudence," retorted the counsel.

"And your trepidation in the face of a jury of honest men!" returned Tom, at which there was a great laugh.

"I faced juries before you were born, sir!"

"How did you get away from 'em?"

More laughter, in which even the judge joined. Cadmus shook inwardly, and the counsel himself smiled. It was the wit of a bright boy who was good at repartee. Old Freeman reached over and grasped his hand, while Katrine beamed upon him.

Weichman stood the strain well; and all the next day he sat there and replied to questions designed to confuse him.

Then came other witnesses—the man who had counted the cars with Weichman, and then followed witnesses for the defense—a few railroad men. They gave it as their opinion that the company had been using that coupler for ten years or more—several years before Weichman invented it.

Tom tackled the first one who said that, and asked him:

"How long have you been on that road?"

"Three years."

"And yet you say the company has been using this coupler ten or more years?"

"Yes. I was on another road, and often saw the defendants' cars on that line."

"Do you swear positively that you saw this coupler on the cars of the defendant prior to the date of this patent?" and Tom read the date to him.

"Yes—at least five years before," was the unblushing reply.

"May it please Your Honor, I ask that a commitment for perjury be issued against this witness," said Tom, turning to the judge.

Both Cadmus and the New York lawyer sprang to their feet, livid with rage.

Cadmus cried out:

"Plaintiff seeks to intimidate defendant's witness in the

presence of the court! I protest and demand that he be reprimanded by the court!"

"It is an outrage!" cried the big corporation lawyer.

"He is a perjurer!" returned Tom.

The judge rapped for order, and the court employees had to go to the two indignant lawyers and push them down into their seats.

The witness himself was white as a sheet, and all his nerve had left him. Tom stood before him, his eyes riveted on him.

"I—I may be mistaken," he stammered.

"Who told you to swear to that falsehood?" Tom asked him.

"The yardmaster told me they had been in use there that long."

"Ah!" and Tom wheeled and faced the New York lawyer. "Have you any more such witnesses for your respectable client?"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MASTERLY SPEECH MADE BY TOM WINS A FORTUNE AND FAME.

Tom's cool daring as he wheeled round and faced the New York lawyer electrified the lawyers about him. They saw how he had unmasked the witness on the stand, and had wheeled on the counsel to clinch the shot. Bold as he was, learned in the law and skilled in legal battle, he was taken unawares by the suddenness of the query.

Flushed and in a rage, he said:

"Perhaps the witness is not aware that hearsay evidence is not admissible."

"Oh, I am willing to admit it, since he says the yardmaster told him to make that statement. But who told the yardmaster to get up that sort of evidence for your respectable client?"

"Yet you say he is a perjurer!"

"Yes, but if he reveals the truth as to your respectable client's culpability, and it can be corroborated, I am quite willing to believe him."

Tom had him down, and was pounding him for all he was worth. But he turned again to the witness and proceeded to ask him more questions, when Cadmus sprang up, and said:

"Your Honor, I protest against plaintiff's intimidation of the witness. He has done so to such extent that witness is mentally incapable of being coherent, much less of remembering things of the past. When counsel can threaten witnesses with the horrors of State prison, justice becomes a farce."

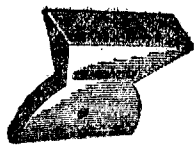
"The court assures counsel that witnesses shall be duly protected in the witness chair. If the witness has told the truth he has nothing to fear; if he has committed perjury he is himself aware of the fact as well as the penalty. The crime of perjury is punished by confinement in State prison for a term of years."

(To be continued)

BOYS

OWN TOY MAKER Tells how to make Engines, Cameras, Microscopes, Telephones, Lanterns, Boats, Bells, Balloons, Guns, Fishing Tackle, Animal Traps & many others so plain a boy can easily make. 200 illus. This great book, 10 cents. Bates & Co., Dept. 2, Melrose, Mass.

THE FLUTOPHONE.



A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play any tune desired as easily as whistling. But little practice is required to become a finished player. It is made entirely of metal, and will last a lifetime. We send full instructions with each instrument. Price, 15c., or 2 for 25c., by mail, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

THE NEW FROG JOKER.



Bushels of fun! "Froggy" has got a very croaking and rasping voice, and when held in the hollow of the hand and made to croak, one instinctively looks around for a bullfrog. An amusing joke can be played on your friends by passing the ratchet-wheel of the frog down their coat-sleeve or the back of their coat. The ripping, tearing gives them a severe shock and they heave a sigh of relief when they find that their clothes are sound and whole as before. A good joke is to make a gentleman's or lady's watch a stem winder. With the frog concealed in your hand, you take the stem of the watch between your thumb and finger, and at the same time allow the ball of your thumb to pass over the ratchet-wheel of the frog, when to the company you will seem to be winding the watch, but the noise will startle them, for 'twill sound more like winding Earnum's steam callopo than a watch, and you can keep winding indefinitely. The possessor of one of these Frog Jokers can have any amount of fun with it. It is made of bronze metal and will never wear out. Do not fail to send for one. Price, 10c., 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

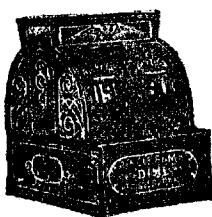
GREAT PANEL TRICK.



This remarkable illusion consists of a simple, plain wooden panel, octagonal in shape, with no signs of a trick about it. The panel can be examined by any one; you then ask for a penny or silver coin and place it on the center of the panel; then at the word of command the coin immediately disappears. You do not change the position of the panel at any time, but hold it in full view of the audience all the time. The coin does not pass into the performer's hand, nor into his sleeve; neither does it drop upon the floor. The second illusion is as wonderful as the first; at the word of command the coin again appears upon the center of the panel as mysteriously as it went. We send full printed instructions by the aid of which any one can perform the trick, to the astonishment and delight of their friends. Price, 15c., 2 for 25c., by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

"UNCLE SAM" BANKS.



For Quarters, Nickels, Dimes, and Pennies. Every deposit registers. Every quarter Bank registers 80 deposits or \$20.00, the Nickel Bank holds 200 deposits or \$10.00, the Dime Bank holds 200 deposits or \$20.00, and the Penny Bank contains 100 deposits or \$1.00. These banks are about 4 1/2 inches long, 4 inches high, 2 inches wide and weigh from 7-8 lb. to 11-12 lbs. They are made of heavy cold rolled steel, are beautifully ornamented, and cannot be opened until the full amount of their capacity is deposited. When the coin is put in the slot, and a lever is pressed, a bell rings. The indicator always shows the amount in the bank. All the mechanism is securely placed behind the out of reach of meddlesome fingers. It is the strongest, safest, and most reliable bank made as it has no key, but locks and unlocks automatically. Price, \$1.00 each.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

FALSE MUSTACHES, FULL BEARDS, ETC



Mustaches 15c. each, 2 for 25c.; full beards and side whiskers, 75c. each. Can be had in five colors—gray, red, dark brown, light brown and black. Name color you want. Postage stamps taken. Address CHAS. UNGER, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

WATCH RING & FREE CHAIN SET
FOR SELLING POST CARDS
We positively give a beautiful watch, ring and chain set, equal in appearance to Build Gold Watch, American made, guaranteed 5 years and a beautiful ring set with an 18c. Diamond, for selling only 20 packages of beautiful high grade art post cards at 10c a package. Order 20 packages, and when sold, send us \$2.00, and we will promptly send you the Watch, Ring & Chain. WILLARD WATCH CO., Dept. 1105 CHICAGO

IF YOU STAMMER

Attend no stammering school till you get my large FREE book and special rate. Largest and best school in the world curing by natural method. Write today. Leo Wolfe Millard, Pres., North-Western School, Inc. 838 First St., Milwaukee, Wis.

Wizard Repeating LIQUID PISTOL



Will stop the most vicious dog (or man) without permanent injury. Perfectly safe to carry without danger of leakage. Fires and recharges by pulling the trigger. Loads from any Liquid. No cartridges required. Over six shots in one loading. All dealers, or by mail, 50c. Pistol with rubber covered holster, 55c. Holsters separate, 10c. Money order or U. S. stamps. No coins.

PARKER, STEARNS & CO., 273 GEORGIA AVE., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Stem Wind WATCH, RING FREE AND CHAIN SET

LADIES AND GENTS STYLES
We positively give a beautiful stem wind and stem set watch, also chain and ring set with brilliant gem, for selling our High Grade Art Post Cards. Order 20 packages to sell at 10c per package. When sold send us \$2.00 and we will promptly send you pre-paid the 5 year guaranteed watch, ring, chain.

FEERLESS WATCH CO., 1133 E. 63rd St., Dept. A71 CHICAGO

GIVEN BOYS AIR RIFLE

This dandy rifle free for selling 20 pkgs. ART Post Cards at 10c per pkg. Send for cards today. When sold, send us \$2.00 and rifle will be sent you at once. GATES MFG. CO., DEPT. 504, CHICAGO.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME

Ventriloquists Double Throat. His roof of mouth always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and amuse your friends. Weigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary and imitate birds and beasts of field and forest. **LOTS OF FUN**—Wonderful invention. Shows and sells. Price only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents or 12 for 50 cents. DOUBLE THROAT CO., DEPT. K FRENCHTOWN, N. J.

"HE GOT ONE" New book; experience and quaint old maid one moonless night. Illustrated. Interesting. 10c. Catalog classy books. Atoc Pub. Co., West Jefferson, Ohio.

Magic Tricks Send 10c, and we mail 200 Magic Tricks with coins, cards, dice, ribbons, rings, etc., explained so simple you can do them at once. Astonish and amuse friends and make money. Be a wizard since a star in your town. Write Bates Magic Co., Dept. 58, Melrose, Mass.

VENTRILOQUISM

Almost anyone can learn it at home. Small cost. Send to-day 2-cent stamp for particulars and proof. O. A. SMITH, Room D 27-823 Bigelow St., Peoria, Ill.

XRAY Look right through your friends with this little instrument. See the bones of the body, its great. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Sent neatly packed for 10c. Send today. X-Ray Mfg. Co., A. 29 Chicago.

25 NEW HOLIDAY CARDS 10c
High Grade Art Embossed cards. Gold and silver. New beautiful designs. Postpaid. FEERLESS CO., 1133 E. 63rd St., Dept. 48 Chicago

REMINGTON UMC

.22 REPEATER

Cleaned from the breech. You can look through the barrel and see that it's clean. Simple take-down. You can remove the breech block with your fingers. Shoot *Remington-UMC* Lesmok .22's. They hold the world's 100-shot record of 2,484 out of a possible 2500. *Remington-UMC*—the perfect shooting combination. Write for a free set of Targets. REMINGTON ARMS—UNION METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO., 299 BROADWAY, New York City

and the new "LESMOK" 22 CARTRIDGES

THE LITTLE RED BOTTLE.
It is labeled "Whiskey," but it contains a snake. If you have a friend addicted to drink, you can cure him of the habit with this bottle. Catch him with a "bum" on, hand him the bottle, and tell him to open it. When he complies, a long snake squirms out of the bottle in his hand, and he thinks he is seeing things. A sure cure for the jim-jams! It also affords no end of amusement among boys in various other ways. Price, 10c. each by mail. FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.—The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black walnut, the whole thing about 1 1/2 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will push the button expecting to hear it ring. As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed. Price 10c., by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MYSTERIOUS SKULL.



Shines in the dark. The most frightful ghost ever shown. A more startling effect could not be found. Not only will it afford tremendous amusement, but it is guaranteed to scare away burglars, bill collectors, and book agents. It cannot get out of order and can be used repeatedly. Price, 4x5 inches, 15c.; life size, 40c. by mail.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

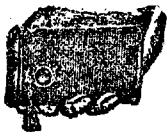
CACHOO O' SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET FLASH LIGHT SQUIRT.



Made of decorated enameled metal, representing an exact flash pocket lighter; by pressing a button instead of a bulb's eye, an electrically lighted up stream of water is ejected into the face of the spectator; an entirely new and amusing novelty. Price, 35c., postpaid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

NEW SURPRISE NOVELTY.



Foxy Grandpa, Mr. Peewee and other comical faces artistically colored, to which is attached a long rubber tube, connected with a rubber ball, which can be filled with water; the rubber ball being carried in the pocket, a slight pressure on the bulb causes a long stream, the result can easily be seen.

Price, 15c., Postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

L. SENARENS, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

JAPANESE TWIRLER.



A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

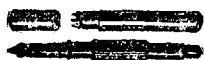
WIZARD'S PACK OF TRICK CARDS.



A full pack of 52 cards, but by the aid of the instructions given, anyone can perform the most wonderful tricks. Many of the feats exhibited are truly marvelous, and astonish and amuse a whole audience. Positively no sleight-of-hand. The whole trick is in the cards. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

AUTOMATIC COPYING PENCIL.



The importance of carrying a good reliable pencil need not be dwelt upon here. It is an absolute necessity with us all. The holder of this pencil is beautifully nickeled with grooved box-wood handle, giving a firm grip in writing; the pencil automatically supplies the lead as needed while a box of these long leads are given with each pencil. The writing of this pencil is indelible the same as ink, and thus can be used in writing letters, addressing envelopes, etc. Bills of account or invoices made out with this pencil can be copied the same as if copying ink was used. It is the handiest pencil on the market; you do not require a knife to keep it sharp; it is ever ready, ever safe, and just the thing to carry.

Price of pencil, with box of leads complete, only 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen 90c. postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK MATCHES.



Consist of a Swedish safety box, filled with matches, which will not light. Just the thing to cure the match borrowing habit. Price, 5c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MAGIC COINER.



A mystifying and amusing trick. Tin blanks are placed under the little tin cup and apparently coined into dimes. A real money-maker. Price, 20c.

CHAS. UNGER, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

MAGIC PIPE.



Made of a regular corn-cob pipe, with rubber figures inside; by blowing through the stem the figure will jump out. Made in following figures: rabbits, donkeys, cats, chickens, etc.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE FOUNTAIN RING.



A handsome ring connected with a rubber ball which is concealed in the palm of the hand. A gentle squeeze forces water or cologne in the face of the victim while he is examining it. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing ring in water same as a fountain pen filler. Price by mail, postpaid, 12c. each.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

TRICK CUP.



Made of natural white wood turned, with two compartments; a round, black ball fits on those compartments; the other is a stationary ball. By a little practice you make the black ball vanish; a great trick novelty and immense seller.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MAGIC MIRROR.



Fat and lean funny faces. By looking in these mirrors upright your features become narrow and elongated. Look into it sidewise and your phiz broadens out in the most comical manner. Size 3 1/4 x 2 1/4 inches, in a handsome imitation morocco case.

Price, 10c. each, postpaid.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

THE CANADIAN WONDER CARD TRICK.



Astonishing, wonderful, and perplexing! Have you seen them? Any child can work them, and yet, what they do is so amusing that the sharpest people on earth are fooled. We cannot tell you what they do, or others would get next and spoil the fun. Just get a set and read the directions. The results will startle your friends and utterly mystify them. A genuine good thing if you wish to have no end of amusement.

Price by mail, 10c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET SAVINGS BANK.



A perfect little bank, handsomely nickel plated. Holds just five dollars (50 dimes). It cannot be opened until the bank is full, when it can be readily emptied and relocked, ready to be again refilled. Every parent should see that their children have a small savings bank, as the early habit of saving their dimes is of the greatest importance. Habits formed in early life are seldom forgotten in later years. Price of this little bank, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed postpaid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

PICTURE POSTALS.



They consist of Jungle sets, Map and Seal of States, Good Luck cards, Comics, with witty sayings and funny pictures, cards showing celebrated person buildings, etc. In fact, there is such a great variety that it is not possible to describe them here. They are beautifully embossed in exquisite colors, some with glazed surfaces, and others in matt. Absolutely the handsomest cards issued.

Price 15c. for 25 cards by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE INK BLOT JOKER.



Fool Your Friends. The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that

has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.



The puzzle is to separate the one star from the linked star and crescent without using force. Price by mail, postpaid 10c.; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

THE AUTOPHONE.



A small musical instrument that produces very sweet musical notes by placing it between the lips with the tongue over the edge, and blowing gently into the instrument. The notes produced are not unlike those of the fife and flute. We send full printed instructions whereby anyone can play anything they can hum, whistle or sing, with very little practice. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC DAGGER.



A wonderful illusion. To all appearances it is an ordinary dagger which you can flourish around in your hand lived long enough and had better commit suicide, at the same time plunging the dagger up to the hilt into your breast or side, or you can pretend to stab a friend or acquaintance. Of course your friend or yourself are not injured in the least, but the deception is perfect and will startle all who see it.

Price, 10c., or 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

ITALIAN TRANSFER.



With this remarkable invention any one can transfer pictures or engravings from newspapers or books, and make perfect copies of butterfly and moth wings for scrap books. It is the dry transfer process, cleanly, handy and reliable, and the results secured will astonish you. Transfer is a gelatinous substance put up in cakes, one of which is enclosed with a wooden rubber and full directions for producing pictures, it requiring but a few moments to make the transfer. Any picture in the newspapers can be speedily reproduced in your album or elsewhere, a perfect copy being made, and several copies can be made from the same picture. Butterfly and moth wings can also be pictured, all the beautiful colors and markings on the wings being transferred, and thus an interesting and instructive collection of insect forms can be made and permanently preserved in a scrap book. Both young and old will take delight in using Transfer, and the price is so low that all can afford to have this new process at command. Price only 10c., 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SECRET SERVICE

—LATEST ISSUES—

- 630 The Bradys and the Snake Charmer; or, The Search for the Hindoo Idol.
631 The Bradys After the Bronx Burglars; or, Nabbing the Gas House Gang.
632 The Bradys and the Dumb Boy; or, The Fate of Messenger No. 9.
633 The Bradys and the Blind Chinaman; or, The White Slaves of Mott Street.
634 The Bradys Tracking a Skeleton Arm; or, The Claw in the Tree.
635 The Bradys and the Factory Boy; or, The Mystery of the Mill Pond.
636 The Bradys and the Poisoned Pen; or, Foiling a Desperate Plot.
637 The Bradys Chasing the Black Crook; or, Solving a Fifth Avenue Mystery.
638 The Bradys and the Banker's Boy; or, The Kidnappers of Mulberry Bend.
639 The Bradys After the Gold Brick Men; or, Chasing a Gang of Swindlers.
640 The Bradys and the Diamond Heart; or, The Mystery of a Mummy.
641 The Bradys' Red Glove Claw; or, The Secret Band of Seven.
642 The Bradys and the Man Next Door; or, The Mystery House on High Street.
643 The Bradys' Case in Chinatown; or, Tracking the Hip Sing Tong.
644 The Bradys and the Mad Barber; or, Solving a Singular Secret.
645 The Bradys' Six Days' Chase; or, Running Down a Clever Crook.
646 The Bradys and the Black Dwarf; or, Working Up a Poison Claw.
647 The Bradys' Masked Foe; or, The Man With the Missing Finger.
648 The Bradys and the Sneak Thieves; or, Running Down the Red Hook Gang.
649 The Bradys Working a "Blind"; or, The Secret of the Sealed Room.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, **24 UNION SQUARE, N. Y.**

- 650 The Bradys and the Laundry Clerk; or, A Dangerous Hunt in Chinatown.
651 The Bradys on a Hot Trail; or, The Boy Who Escaped From Sing Sing.
652 The Bradys and the Conspirators; or, The Case That Came From Mexico.
653 The Bradys After the Second Story men; or, Tracking a Box of Treasure.
654 The Bradys and the Mad Student; or, The Mystery of the Medical College.
655 The Bradys' Desperate Deal; or, Foiling a Slick Bunch.
656 The Bradys and the Brass-bound Chest; or, The Case Which Came Out of the Sea.
657 The Bradys' Leather Locket Claw; or, The Secret of the Old Grave Yard.
658 The Bradys after a Chinese Princess; or, The Yellow Fiends of Frisco.
659 The Bradys and Old Dangerous; or, Hunting the King of the Bank Breakers.
660 The Bradys and the Sack of Gold; or, The Mystery of the Steel Vault.
661 The Bradys among the Gypsies; or, The Fortune-Teller's Secret.
662 The Bradys Shadowing a Bandit; or, The Tough Man of the Ozarks.
663 The Bradys and the Magic Box; or, The Mystery of the Magician.
664 The Bradys Chinese Trail; or, The Hunt for the Wooden Idol.
665 The Bradys and Gentleman Joe; or, Rounding Up the Taxi Crooks.
666 The Bradys Under Sealed Orders; or, A Secret Service Case from Panama.
667 The Bradys and the "Con" Man; or, A Clever Crook from Chicago.
668 The Bradys Triple Trail; or, Tracked Through Three Cities.
669 The Bradys and Captain Carter; or, The Claw that Came by Wire-
less.
670 The Bradys in "Little Africa"; or, Ten Hours of Deadly Peril.

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our weeklies and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Write out and fill in your Order and send it to us with the price of the weeklies you want and we will send them to you by return mail. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, **24 UNION SQUARE, N. Y.**

OUR TEN-CENT HAND BOOKS

- No. 43. **HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN.**—Containing the grandest assortment of magical illusions ever placed before the public. Also tricks with cards, incantations, etc.
No. 45. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.**—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.
No. 48. **HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.**—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated.
No. 49. **HOW TO DEBATE.**—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debates, questions for discussion, and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.
No. 50. **HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.**—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.
No. 51. **HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.**—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. Illustrated.
No. 52. **HOW TO PLAY CARDS.**—Giving the rules and full directions for playing Euchre, Cribbage, Casino, Forty-Five, Rounce, Pedro Sancho, Draw Poker, Auction Pitch, All Fours, and many other popular games of cards.
No. 53. **HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.**—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to.
No. 54. **HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.**—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations.
No. 55. **HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.**—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.
No. 56. **HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.**—Containing full instructions how to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.
No. 58. **HOW TO BE A DETECTIVE.**—By Old King Brady, the well-known detective. In which he lays down some valuable rules for beginners, and also relates some adventures of well-known detectives.
No. 59. **HOW TO MAKE A MAGIC LAN-**

- TERN.**—Containing a description of the lantern, together with its history and invention. Also full directions for its use and for painting slides. Handsomely illustrated.
No. 60. **HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.**—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated.
No. 62. **HOW TO BECOME A WEST POINT MILITARY CADET.**—Explains how to gain admittance, course of Study, Examinations, Duties, Staff of officers, Post Guard, Police Regulations, Fire Department, and all a boy should know to be a cadet. By Lu Senarens.
No. 63. **HOW TO BECOME A NAVAL CADET.**—Complete instructions of how to gain admission to the Annapolis Naval Academy. Also containing the course of instruction, description of grounds and buildings, historical sketch, and everything a boy should know to become an officer in the United States Navy. By Lu Senarens.
No. 64. **HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.**—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos, and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By R. A. R. Bennett. Fully illustrated.
No. 65. **MULDOON'S JOKES.**—The most original joke book ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist, and practical joker of the day.
No. 66. **HOW TO DO PUZZLES.**—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated.
No. 67. **HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.**—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.
No. 68. **HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.**—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.
No. 69. **HOW TO DO SLEIGHT-OF-HAND.**—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated.
No. 70. **HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.**—Containing full directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. Fully illustrated.
No. 71. **HOW TO DO MECHANICAL TRICKS.**—Containing complete instructions for performing over sixty Mechanical Tricks. Fully illustrated.
No. 72. **HOW TO DO SIXTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.**—Embracing all of the latest and most deceptive card tricks, with illustrations.
No. 73. **HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH NUM-**

- BERS.**—Showing many curious tricks with figures and the magic of numbers. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.
No. 74. **HOW TO WRITE LETTERS CORRECTLY.**—Containing full instructions for writing letters on almost any subject; also rules for punctuation and composition, with specimen letters.
No. 75. **HOW TO BECOME A CONJURER.**—Containing tricks with Dominoes, Dice, Cups and Balls, Hats, etc. Embracing thirty-six illustrations. By A. Anderson.
No. 76. **HOW TO TELL FORTUNES BY THE HAND.**—Containing rules for telling fortunes by the aid of lines of the hand, or the secret of palmistry. Also the secret of telling future events by aid of moles, marks, scars, etc. Illustrated.
No. 77. **HOW TO DO FORTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.**—Containing deceptive Card Tricks as performed by leading conjurers and magicians. Arranged for home amusement. Fully illustrated.
No. 78. **HOW TO DO THE BLACK ART.**—Containing a complete description of the mysteries of Magic and Sleight-of-Hand, together with many wonderful experiments. By A. Anderson. Illustrated.
No. 79. **HOW TO BECOME AN ACTOR.**—Containing complete instructions how to make up for various characters on the stage; together with the duties of the Stage Manager, Prompter, Scenic Artist and Property Man.
No. 80. **GUS WILLIAMS' JOKE BOOK.**—Containing the latest jokes, anecdotes and funny stories of this world-renowned German comedian. Sixty-four pages; handsome colored cover containing a half-tone photo of the author.
No. 81. **HOW TO MESMERIZE.**—Containing the most approved methods of mesmerism; animal magnetism, or magnetic healing. By Prof. Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S., author of "How to Hypnotize," etc.
No. 82. **HOW TO DO PALMISTRY.**—Containing the most approved methods of reading the lines on the hand, together with a full explanation of their meaning. Also explaining phrenology, and the key for telling character by the bumps on the head. By Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S. Fully illustrated.
No. 83. **HOW TO HYPNOTIZE.**—Containing valuable and instructive information regarding the science of hypnotism. Also explaining the most approved methods which are employed by the leading hypnotists of the world. By Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S.
No. 84. **HOW TO BECOME AN AUTHOR.**—Containing information regarding choice of subjects, the use of words and the manner of containing valuable information as to the preparing and submitting manuscript. Also neatness, legibility and general composition of manuscript.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 10 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher **24 UNION SQUARE, N. Y.**