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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BRADYS AFTER A CHINESE PRINCESS; OR, THE YELLOW FIENDS OF 'FRISCO ***



Old King Brady rushed after the flying Chinaman who was carrying the princess. He crossed a gangplank, and entered the house on the piles. Then part of the runway flew up, closing the doorway. Harry and Alice looked on.

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SECRET SERVICE.

THE BRADYS AFTER A CHINESE PRINCESS

OR

THE YELLOW FIENDS OF 'FRISCO

FRANK TOUSEY
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OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES

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THE BRADYS AFTER A CHINESE PRINCESS OR, THE YELLOW FIENDS OF 'FRISCO

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERY THAT CAME OUT OF THE MIST.

One foggy night a few years since at something after two o'clock, a good-sized motor boat containing five men might have been seen cruising close in to the water-front line of lower San Francisco.

Three of the occupants were big, husky fellows, who sat idly in the boat looking like men waiting to be called upon to act and prepared for any emergency.

A good-looking young fellow in his twenties was attending to engineer's duty, while astern sat an

elderly man of striking appearance and peculiar dress.

He wore a long, blue coat with brass buttons, an old-fashioned stock and stand-up collar, and a big white hat with an unusually broad brim.

Clearly he was the leader of this outfit, whatever their business might be out there on the silent bay in the early morning hours.

He was a man accustomed to command, being none other than the world-famous detective, Old King Brady, chief of the Brady Detective Bureau of Union Square, New York.

And having made this statement, we need scarcely add that the young man in charge of the boat was his partner, Young King Brady, second in skill as a detective only to his great chief.

The detective had been ordered to San Francisco on special duty by the United States Secret Service Bureau.

Information had been received of the intention of certain Chinamen to run in opium on a large scale, dodging the duty due to Uncle Sam.

The information, while definite and reliable, was still vague.

Details were lacking, yet it was known that there was surely going to be something doing in the line during this particular week, and that whatever was done would take place in the neighborhood of the India Basin.

This made the fourth night the Bradys had been on the watch with three local Secret Service men as their aides.

It was discouraging work.

Nothing had happened.

The weak point of the undertaking was the lack of knowledge as to the particular ship or steamer on which the opium was expected to arrive.

Two steamers had arrived from China this week, one regular liner and one tramp.

Three sailing vessels had also come in, all from Chinese ports.

Yet it was by no means certain that the opium would enter the harbor of San Francisco in that way.

It is quite the custom with captains of English tramp steamers, and also with those of sailing vessels, to drop opium overboard in sealed rubber bags while off the Farralleone Islands.

Such bags are picked up by fishing schooners on hand for the purpose, and by them landed as best they can.

A close watch for such operations in this particular instance was being kept by a special revenue cutter outside the Golden Gate.

The Bradys' orders had to do only with the landing.

It was supposed that the people connected with some storage warehouse in this vicinity were and had been for some time standing in with the smugglers.

It was particularly desired by the Government to learn who these people were; to catch them red-handed and make an example of them.

That Chinese capital was back of this crooked enterprise was certain, but there was reason to believe that they were being substantially aided by others who were not of their race.

"If the fog would only lift we might be able to do something," remarked one of the Secret Service men, "but as it is I see little use in remaining here."

"Patience," replied Old King Brady. "We have to do the best we can, my friend. I admit that the fog is a nuisance, but I am not giving up yet by any means. Harry, work in a little nearer. We must be close upon the India Basin by this time."

The order was obeyed by Young King Brady.

After a few moments the wharf line became visible, the fog lifting a bit.

Then suddenly came a break.

"The basin," said the Secret Service man.

"I think not," replied Old King Brady. "I think it is only the Islais Creek Channel. Stop the boat, Harry. We will lie off here for a few minutes. Perhaps we are banking too much on these hop smugglers running into the basin. It may be one of the warehouses on the channel here after all."

Harry stopped the launch accordingly.

The ebb tide took them back and the fog closed in on the Islais Channel.

The boat ran against a wharf and the movement was stopped.

"Shall I pull up, governor?" inquired Young King Brady.

"No. We will rest as we are," said the old detective. "Quiet, now. Let us listen. I shall not remain long idle here."

"It isn't the least use," growled the Secret Service man. "There won't be nothing doing to-night."

Old King Brady made no reply.

This man was a chronic kicker. He had been at it right along.

But for the fact that he was also known to be a good fighter, Old King Brady would have dropped him.

Silence and fog!

Such was the situation now.

For fully twenty minutes they remained thus, and the old detective was just about to order a move on to the India Basin when voices were heard at no great distance, speaking in some foreign tongue.

"At last!" breathed Old King Brady. "I told you there would be something doing to-night, boss. Is that Chinese they are talking, Harry?"

"Sounds so."

"Sure it is," added the kicker.

"I'll wake up Alice, then," said the old detective. "This is her job."

We have not mentioned a woman who, wrapped in a heavy shawl, sat half reclining at Old King Brady's feet with her head resting on a corner of the stern seat.

This was the noted female detective, Alice Montgomery, who is a full partner in the Brady Bureau.

The daughter of a missionary, born and brought up in China, Alice, besides several other foreign languages, such as German, French and Italian, both speaks and reads Chinese.

Of course, such an accomplishment was likely to prove invaluable in a situation like this.

Old King Brady now aroused his female partner and explained.

But by this time the voices had ceased.

"Must be that they are in a sailboat," observed the kicker, half aloud.

"Will you kindly keep quiet," breathed the old detective. "This mist is as good as a telephone. I want to do business to-night if I can."

After a moment the voices in the mist were heard again.

Alice listened attentively.

"Chinese?" whispered Harry.

"Yes; hush."

The voices ceased.

Chinese never hold continuous conversation like other people.

They say what they have to say and let it go at that.

This time the voices seemed to come from a greater distance.

"What are they talking about?" the old detective asked.

"They are trying to find the Islais Channel," whispered Alice. "They think they have missed their bearings."

"Therein they are quite mistaken. The Islais Channel is right here. Didn't catch the name of any street or warehouse?"

"No."

"Or person?"

"The name Volckman was mentioned."

"Good! It may prove a valuable clew. Let us wait and listen. To attempt to overhaul them in the open bay would be useless, but once they enter the channel, we have them bottled up."

"I wonder what sort of a craft they are in?" queried Harry.

"It can't be either a rowboat or a launch," replied the old detective, "and it is hard to see how

they can get around with a sailboat on a night like this, yet that must be what it is."

"There is a breeze springing up now," observed the kicker.

He had scarcely spoken when the voices were heard close to them.

Evidently the ebb tide was taking the smugglers, if such they were, their way.

They were now speaking loud and rapidly.

"Draw your revolvers, boys, and be ready," breathed Old King Brady. "We are liable to be discovered at any moment."

Alice sat listening.

"They are the smugglers, all right," she presently whispered.

"Sure?" asked Old King Brady.

"Yes. They say——"

"Never mind, Alice, unless it is something important."

Still the voices continued.

The smugglers appeared to be passing the launch in the direction of the channel.

"Listen!" whispered Alice, as they presently ceased. "This is important. One said: 'We must hurry if we expect to save the princess. She can't stand it much longer.'"

"What can that mean?"

"The name of their boat, perhaps."

"Do you think so?"

"Frankly, I don't. It seemed to me as if they were speaking of a person."

"Then they must have a woman with them. Perhaps some Chinese woman they are smuggling in."

Suddenly a loud voice exclaimed in English: "Here's your channel now, you Chinks!"

"Allee light! Allee light! Hullly up now," came the reply.

The breeze had increased. The fog was lifting a little. Certain sounds were heard that indicated a sailboat going about.

"Shall I start up?" asked Harry.

"Not yet," was the reply. "Let them get well into the channel, then we will close in on them."

The voices died away; the time to move had come.

"Now," said Old King Brady. Immediately the "chug-chug" of the motor made itself heard.

"Bear right down upon them," ordered the old detective; "a little brisk action will put us on the right side of this outfit, I hope. Alice, you get down in the boat."

Alice, brave girl that she is, protested that she was willing to take her chances with the rest, but Old King Brady sternly repeating the order, it was obeyed.

A few moments of anxious suspense and a large sailboat loomed up out of the mist right ahead of them.

Instantly Old King Brady turned a powerful electric flashlight upon it.

In the boat were several boxes and bales. One box seemed particularly large.

If this was filled with opium, Old King Brady knew that it must be very valuable.

There were three Chinamen in the boat and one white man.

"Lower your sail and surrender!" thundered Old King Brady.

The white man appeared about to obey, but one of the Chinamen interfered.

The other two immediately discharged their revolvers at the launch.

The shots flew harmlessly past them, but it made the old detective vexed to think that he had not been the first to open fire, which he and the others by his command now instantly did.

Whether any one was hit or not it was impossible to tell, but all four men at once sprang overboard and, abandoning their boat, struck out for the south bulkhead of the channel, which was no great distance away.

"We win!" cried the old detective. "No more firing, boys. I had just as soon they would escape."

They pushed on to the abandoned boat.

The mist closed in on them and the swimmers were lost to view.

Making fast to the boat, the kicker sprang aboard and lowered the sail.

"A good haul, Mr. Brady," he exclaimed. "There are thousands of pounds of hop here, but what do you suppose is in this big box?"

"That remains for us to discover," replied Old King Brady. "Is it heavy?"

"Very," replied the kicker, weighting the box.

"Never mind now. Make fast and we will pull around to the Indian Basin. I shall touch nothing until we are at the Government stores."

The kicker obeyed, and was just about to step back into the launch, when Old King Brady, ordering him to remain where he was, he sat down on the big tin box.

Instantly he jumped up again, exclaiming:

"Good heavens! There is some one alive in this box!"

"Ah! The princess!" cried Alice.

"What did you hear?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Some one spoke. There it goes again! It's a Chinaman."

"Or a woman! Alice, do you think you can get aboard the sailboat without tumbling into the bay?"

"Why, certainly," replied Alice, and she stepped aboard the sailboat with the kicker's aid.

"Is any one in the box?" she called.

"Yes. Help! Save me! I am dying in here!" came the answer in Chinese.

Alice instantly repeated the words.

"We must make a landing right here on the bulkhead in front of these warehouses," declared Old King Brady, and he gave Harry orders accordingly.

Loaded down as the sailboat was, it would have been both difficult and dangerous to attempt to open the bulky box on board.

Indeed, in order to get at it properly, a good portion of the contents of the boat would have to be removed in any case.

"Ask her who she is and how she came to be there, Alice," the old detective called; adding:

"I am assuming that it is a woman."

"Yes, it's a woman," replied Alice, and she put the question.

"She says she is the Princess Skeep Hup," Alice called.

"Ask her how she came to be in the box."

But when Alice put the question there came no reply.

"I'm afraid she has fainted!" said Alice, "or, indeed, she may be dead."

"A mystery!" cried Harry. "The mystery that came out of the mist."

CHAPTER II.

ALICE AND THE CHINESE PRINCESS.

To make a quick opening of the box containing the Chinese Princess was quite impossible.

Besides the difficulties already explained, there were others.

The box was not nailed.

Examination showed that it was put together with screws, and that the boards were of some hard wood.

Air-holes bored in the sides at regular intervals showed that the imprisoned princess certainly ought to have no difficulty in breathing, and made it seem that her present unconsciousness was probably nothing more than a faint.

The landing at the bulkhead had now been made.

There appeared to be no watchman here—at least no one challenged the Secret Service party.

Behind the bulkhead extended a row of storage warehouses.

The boat had been tied up opposite a break in this row formed by a street extending back towards Amador street, the first of which parallels the Islais Creek Channel on the south.

The Bradys had plenty of rope, and the work of unloading now began.

Harry got into the sailboat along with the kicker and remained there.

Old King Brady, Alice and the other two Secret Service men ascended to the bulkhead.

Such boxes and opium bales as were piled on the larger box were transferred to the launch, and a rope made fast around the box, which was then hauled up, but not without considerable difficulty, and carried in front of the first warehouse of the row, where it was placed on the board platform.

Alice now called again to the imprisoned princess, but received no answer.

"I'll be blest if I see how we are ever going to get this thing open without a screw-driver," grumbled one of the Secret Service men.

"I can supply that want," replied the old detective, who usually has a few tools concealed in some of the many pockets of that wonderful blue coat.

He hastily produced it and went to work.

The screw-driver was not only a small affair, but the blade folded into a slot in the handle.

The joint being loose, it made the tool wobbly.

Old King Brady soon discovered that he had attempted the impossible. He could not start a single screw.

"This is a bad job," he exclaimed. "We shall have to lower the box again. I greatly fear that we are up against a murder case. If the woman was alive, she would surely have revived before this."

"She said she was dying," replied Alice. "It begins to look as if she spoke the truth."

"Get back to the boat," called Harry. "We may as well run around to the India Basin warehouse. We shall be able to open the box there."

"I see no other way," replied Old King Brady, and once again he started to make fast the rope, when suddenly Harry called that he could hear the sound of oars.

"Which way?" demanded the old detective.

"Up the channel. Don't seem to be far off, either."

"Come, boys," said Old King Brady, "we'll sneak along the bulkhead and see who it is. Crouch low, now. If it is the Chinamen prowling about, we may be able to bag them. Alice, you better go aboard the launch."

"I'll stay here and watch the box," replied Alice.

The old detective and the two Secret Service men now crept along the line of the bulkhead with their revolvers drawn.

Alice quickly lost sight of them in the fog, which was now thicker than ever.

"Alice, are you all right up there?" called Harry.

"Of course," she replied. "Why not?"

"I wish you would come down."

"And abandon my imprisoned princess? I won't."

Harry and Alice are lovers, and practically engaged.

Long ago they would have been married if Alice would only consent to give up her work.

But Alice is perfectly fascinated with the life of a detective, so the marriage day is forever being postponed, for Harry insists that Alice shall give up the business before becoming his wife.

But even under their present relations he sometimes tries to force her to yield to his ideas more than she cares for, although he has long ago learned that she is a difficult person to drive.

Harry knew by her tone now that Alice had made up her mind to stay just where she was, so he let the matter drop and was sitting in the launch in silence when suddenly a shot rang out.

It was followed by another, and others still.

Then Old King Brady shouted something in the distance, but Harry could not make out what he said.

"Alice!" he called, "can you hear what the governor is saying?"

There was no answer.

"She don't seem to hear you," observed the kicker.

"Alice!" shouted Harry again.

Still no answer.

"Can she have gone forward to see what that shooting is about?" he exclaimed. "It would be just like her. I'm going up to see."

"I hear somebody running," cried the kicker.

Just then Old King Brady was heard calling out:

"Lay for them, Harry! Chinks in a boat! Coming your way!"

Young King Brady listened, catching the sound of oars.

But it was only for a minute.

"They have either stopped or muffled their oars!" he said when he heard Old King Brady right above him exclaim:

"Good heavens! What's this?"

"Anything the matter with Alice?" cried Harry, and he went up the standing ladder flying.

Old King Brady was peering about in the fog.

The two Secret Service men were just coming up.

"What is it?" cried Harry. "Where's Alice? I have called her several times, but she don't answer."

"Why, I left her right here, and that box with her; both seem to have vanished," Old King Brady answered in a tone which fully betrayed his anxiety.

But it was easy to mistake the exact position in the fog.

A moment's search revealed the puzzling fact that nowhere on the bulkhead Alice and the heavy box containing the imprisoned princess was to be found.

The Bradys and the Secret Service men pushed about everywhere.

One of the first things they did was to turn the corner of the end warehouse and look there along the street.

"She has been captured and carried off. She must have gone this way," Harry exclaimed.

"Or into one of the warehouses," said Old King Brady.

"I'll get up the street. You get along by the warehouses," cried Harry, and he started away on the run.

It was ten minutes before he returned.

"Learned anything?" demanded Old King Brady, anxiously.

"Nothing. I went two blocks. Didn't see a soul; no need to ask you if you had better luck, I suppose?"

"I had none at all. I have tried the different doors, but I can't find any that is open now, whatever the case may have been a few minutes ago."

And such are the circumstances of the most mysterious disappearance Alice has ever made, and she has made many, for, of course, troubles form a part of the life of a detective.

Poor Harry was in despair. Old King Brady exceedingly anxious and also vexed with himself to think that he had not insisted upon Alice going aboard the boat.

"And you heard no noise of any kind?" he asked for the third time.

"Not a sound," replied Harry. "I was sitting quiet in the boat, too."

"When was the last you heard her speak?"

"Just before the firing began. Was it you who fired?"

"We fired back at three Chinamen who fired on us from a boat."

"Sailboat—rowboat?"

"Rowboat. Didn't you hear the sound of oars?"

"Yes, yes! I am so rattled that I hardly know what I'm saying. What on earth shall we do?"

"We have to look after our captured opium, too. You remain here, Harry, and Leggett can stop with you. I'll run the stuff around into the India Basin and make sure of it. Don't you go doing the disappearance act now."

"Same to you, governor. Oh, these Chinks! I wish we might never have another mix-up with

them."

Old King Brady made no reply, but hastily descended to the launch, which towed the captured sailboat to a bonded warehouse on the India Basin, where Secret Service men were waiting to receive them.

It was daybreak before he got back to the Islais Creek Channel again.

The fog had vanished with the night, and a hot August wind was blowing the sand about after the usual San Francisco style.

Harry and the Secret Service man were standing on the bulkhead.

"Have you learned anything?" demanded Old King Brady as the launch drew near.

"Not a thing, worse luck," replied Harry. "If ever there was a mystery it is this."

"It is certainly a bad job," replied the old detective, "but such as it is we must make the best of it. Let us wait for the opening up of these warehouses. Information of some sort may come from a quarter we least suspect."

Seven o'clock came, bringing with it the men connected with the warehouses.

Among them was the dock foreman, who demanded the Bradys' business.

He seemed slightly startled when he saw the Secret Service shield.

"Who is Volckman?" demanded the old detective, abruptly.

"I am Volckman," was the reply.

"What's your position here?"

"I am dock foreman."

"Which means that you have charge of the laborers?"

"Yes."

"Who is superintendent of these stores?"

"Mr. Renshaw."

"When is he due here?"

"Eight o'clock."

"Will he remain here right along after that?"

"Yes; all day."

"I want to see Mr. Renshaw. Tell him Old King Brady was speaking to you, and that he will return in about an hour."

The Bradys went away in their launch then, going to breakfast at the Palace Hotel, where they were staying.

The first thing Old King Brady did upon their arrival at the hotel was to call up Secret Service Commissioner Narraway and tell him of their partial success.

He did not mention Alice's disappearance nor the matter of the Chinese princess, leaving these things to be communicated by word of mouth later on when, it was to be hoped, he would understand them better himself.

Breakfast over, the Bradys lost no time in keeping their appointment with Mr. Renshaw, who proved to be a civil, intelligent gentleman.

Old King Brady at once explained the whole situation.

"This certainly seems to be a serious piece of business," said Mr. Renshaw after hearing the old detective through. "I can't understand what brought these Chinamen here or how they came to use Mr. Volckman's name. Is there no possibility of Miss Montgomery being mistaken?"

"I don't think so. Her knowledge of Chinese is excellent."

"And her disappearance a serious matter for you, I realize. I can't imagine that she and this singular box can have been taken into any of our warehouses."

"You have perfect confidence in Volckman?"

"Always have had. Would you like to question him? I will send for him if you wish."

"No; I think not. I certainly do suspect the man of being mixed up in this business, but it will do no good to make him aware of it; still I should like to be given the opportunity to search these warehouses in every part."

"And so you shall. I will go with you myself. If there is any crooked work going on here I want to

know it."

The search was made accordingly, but nothing came of it.

"Listen, Mr. Renshaw," said the old detective as they were about to part. "To-day a laboring man will apply for work at this office. He wants to be hired and given a job, which will enable him to watch Volckman."

"I understand," was the reply, "and so it shall be."

And so it was. Secret Service man Leggett, an excellent detective in his way, was the person selected, but three days passed, and at the end of that time he had nothing to report.

Nor had a word been heard of Alice.

This time her disappearance seemed to be a serious matter.

The Bradys exhausted every effort to find her, but in vain.

CHAPTER III.

LUNG & LUNG.

It is needless to dwell upon the anxiety of the Bradys over the strange vanishing of their accomplished partner.

They were otherwise very seriously inconvenienced.

The Secret Service people, satisfied with the very valuable haul the detectives had made in the line of smuggled opium, now called them off.

The Bradys are not regular Secret Service men.

They have, however, an arrangement with the Government under which their services can be claimed at any time.

The day after Alice's disappearance Old King Brady was notified by Mr. Narraway that the regular force would finish up the matter, inasmuch as he felt satisfied that the heavy loss they had sustained must have bankrupted the smugglers.

Thus under ordinary circumstances the detectives would have made haste to cross the continent and get back to their own business in New York.

As it was, they had no idea of leaving San Francisco yet awhile, of course.

Each day was devoted to the search for Alice.

Even the police took a hand in the game, much as Old King Brady dislikes to have them mix up in his affairs, but as we have said before, it was all in vain.

On the morning of the fourth day before the Bradys had yet left the hotel, a page announced that a Chinaman wished to speak to the old detective, and at the same time he handed in a business card printed in English on one side, and in Chinese on the other.

The English side read thus:

LUNG & LUNG,
GENERAL IMPORTERS,
1015 Dupont Street,
San Francisco, Cal.

Ah Lung
Gee Lung
Wun Lung.

"The whole Lung family," remarked the old detective, looking at the card. "Show the man up."

It proved to be Ah Lung who came.

He was a very much Americanized proposition, California born and college educated.

In short, both in dress, intelligence and manner he was as perfect a specimen of a Chinese gentleman as the Bradys had ever seen.

Before proceeding further we must pause to explain that while the Bradys through their influence had been able to keep the matter of Alice's disappearance and the boxed-up princess off the police blotter, and so out of the papers, it was an open secret among the force.

Consequently it was no surprise to the detectives to have this Chinaman at once allude to it.

"Mr. Brady," he began, "I want you if you will to take up an important matter for our firm, which

you will find upon investigation, if you are not already aware of it, stands high in San Francisco commercial circles."

Old King Brady had heard of the firm of Lung & Lung, and said so. He doubted, however, if he cared to take up a case for them.

"It is work you are already engaged in," replied Ah Lung quickly. "It concerns the Chinese princess, Skeep Hup, who disappeared along with your Miss Montgomery the other day."

"What do you know about that?" demanded Old King Brady, "and who told you?"

"My information comes through my cousin, who is interpreter at police headquarters," replied Ah Lung. "I am prepared to tell you what I know of the Chinese princess. I suppose the information will interest you in any case."

"It certainly will," said the old detective. "Fire away, Mr. Lung. This puts altogether a different face on the matter."

"It is this way," continued Ah Lung. "I have had frequent occasion in the course of business to visit China, and, being a merchant, am allowed to come and go as I please. When in Pekin, some three years ago, I was introduced to this Chinese princess, as you have called her. She is not actually a member of the Imperial family, but the daughter of a very wealthy Mandarin. I fell in love with her, and it was finally arranged that we should marry. It was my intention to go to China after her, but the illness of my brother Wun prevented it, so she started to come to me. I supposed her to be a passenger on the Manchuria, the last steamer in from China. I was so informed by letters I received, but when I went to meet her at the wharf, I was surprised to learn that her name was not on the passenger list. Both the purser and the steward informed me that she had not been seen on the steamer.

"I immediately cabled to China, but it was only to be told that she had started for Shanghai with the intention of taking passage on the Manchuria, and that it was supposed by the family that she had done so. She traveled from Pekin in company of a man named Wang Foo, a cousin of hers. This person was to return to Pekin after seeing the princess off. He had failed to put in an appearance at the time the answer to my cablegram was sent, nor had anything been heard from him.

"You can imagine my anxiety, gentlemen. I was quite at a loss to know what to do when my cousin told me the story of your adventures with that bunch of opium smugglers. That was late last night, and not wishing to disturb you, I put off my call until this morning. If you can find my intended, you will probably also solve the mystery of the disappearance of your partner. It is up to you."

"Oh we will take up your case, of course, Mr. Lung," said Old King Brady. "Have you any idea what the motive for all this can be? Any starting clew to give us?"

"None whatever. I am just as much in the dark over the matter as you are."

"Suppose this Wang Foo wanted to marry the princess?"

"Would he box her up and treat her as he has if he loved her?" put in Harry, speaking for the first time.

"Listen," said Ah Lung, "Chinamen are not all fiends, as you may think."

"I don't think so," retorted Harry. "There are white fiends as well as yellow fiends."

"You are more liberal-minded than most of your race," replied the Chinaman, "but we will leave the white fiends out of the question. Yellow ones there certainly are in this town, and I greatly fear that it is into their hands the princess has fallen."

"Is there money coming to the man who marries her?" demanded Old King Brady, abruptly.

"That's just it. There was \$20,000 of what you call dowry to go with the princess. As you are probably aware, among my people women rarely carry with them dowry. On the other hand, men who want to marry have to pay for their wives—buy them, you call it, though I never could understand where the difference comes in between paying for husbands, as is done right along in America. However, that is not the point. In this case it is different. The Princess Skeep Hup had in her own right \$10,000, given to her by her mother. As our women do not take care of their own money matters, that money was to come to me. It was sent to me by mail in the form of a draft on the Bank of California, and I have it now, so that can't be the reason for kidnaping the princess, you see."

"All of which makes the mystery additionally puzzling," said Old King Brady. "But now listen, you, Mr. Lung. There is but just one thing certain in this case outside of the fact that a voice from that box told Miss Montgomery that the Princess Skeep Hup was inside, which I, knowing her knowledge of Chinese, believe."

"So do I," declared Ah Lung, emphatically. "I know Miss Montgomery by reputation, and can well believe it. But this one thing you speak of!"

"Is the fact that the matter was managed by opium smugglers. If we can catch on to who these people were we may stand some chance of success in our chase after this Chinese princess."

Ah Lung sat silent for some time.

"What you say is true," he said at last. "I could help you in that if—"

"Well, if?"

"If I could feel sure that the Secret Service people would not interfere with me."

"In other words, Lung & Lung sometimes deal in smuggled hop."

"I make no statements. What I want is a guarantee."

"Assure me upon your honor that you are not mixed up with this gang and you shall have it."

"Oh, I do, Mr. Brady; indeed I do. The worst Lung & Lung have ever done is to buy cheap opium without asking questions."

"Very well, I accept that. Do what you will. I want to help you out and to help myself out at the same time. Now then, what do you propose?"

"Listen here," said Ah Lung, lowering his voice. "You Secret Service men captured a lot of that opium the other night, but you didn't get it all by any means. There was another boat load which ran in ahead of the one you captured."

"I can well believe it. The people in that boat fired at me in the fog."

"I am told that Young King Brady is very successful in masquerading as a Chinaman."

"Who told you that?" demanded Harry.

"My cousin at Police Headquarters."

"And what about it?"

"Can you meet me to-night at eight o'clock at our store on Dupont street so disguised?"

"I could, of course. But why?"

"I must not tell, but you can guess. I have an appointment. I want you with me."

"I'll go, but there is one thing you must understand, I can't speak Chinese. I always play the dummy when I disguise that way."

"That will be all right. I was born in San Francisco, and, as it happens, brought up in a part of the city where I associated only with English-speaking children. My own knowledge of the Chinese language is very poor. I never speak it unless I am obliged to. I won't speak it in this interview. You can and shall be a witness to all that is said. I know you play the dummy when in Chinese disguise. I want you to play it to-night."

"Settled then," said Harry, "I will be on hand."

There was some further talk, but as it developed nothing, it is not worth recording.

Soon after Ah Lung left.

"A lucky thing this matter came up, governor," observed Harry.

"It promises well," replied the old detective. "That's about all we can say for it, but we must work ahead just as though it had not come up."

It was a busy day the Bradys put in, but nothing came of it.

Towards five o'clock Harry turned up at the hotel, where he found a note from Old King Brady, reading:

"DEAR HARRY: I have just had a call over the 'phone from Leggett. He wants to see me at the Harper House, on Mission street, and that's where I am going now. Don't know what for, but I suppose it relates to Volckman. Don't wait for me. Be very careful of yourself to-night.

"O. K. B."

Was the caution needed?

It certainly was.

For a detective to mix up with Chinese opium smugglers in Chinatown, San Francisco, is always dangerous.

But Young King Brady felt confidence in Ah Lung.

Not only had he taken a liking to the man, personally, but having gone to the trouble to look him up in a business way, he found that the standing of the firm in white circles was very high.

"Half a million capital invested," one person stated.

"Good for anything they want to buy here," another firm declared.

"Squarest Chinese house in San Francisco," said another, and so on.

So Harry made his Chinese disguise, and at eight o'clock turned up at the handsome new store on Dupont street, near Sacramento, where the Lung Brothers held forth.

Inquiring for Ah Lung, he came up against his brother Wun, who was quite a different proposition, being in native dress and speaking broken English.

"Ah, him go joss house," he said. "Say, you comee longer me. Meetee him dlere."

Harry assented, and to the new Jackson street joss house, the most important Chinese temple of America, they went.

The big hall contained many Chinamen, most of them standing around with their hats on talking business, for this joss house has a good deal of the character of a Chinese commercial exchange.

But there were worshipers there before the idols, if they can be so called.

Really, it bears no resemblance to Christian worship.

When a Chinaman gets down on his knees before the idols and throws joss sticks out of a box just as a gambler would throw dice, he is consulting the spirits of his ancestors as to what course to take in business, love or pleasure. Just this and nothing more.

There were about twenty Chinamen thus engaged when Harry entered the Jackson street joss house, and among them he spied Ah Lung throwing the sticks for all he was worth.

"Dlere he be. We waitee," said Wun Lung. "Him findee out what go to happen to-night."

So Harry stood waiting while the joss stick throwing went merrily on.

CHAPTER IV.

ALICE PASSES THROUGH THE DOOR OF DEATH.

What then had happened to Alice?

What did happen never could have happened but for the fog, which it will be remembered blew in more thickly just about the time she disappeared.

Alice stood watching the box, never thinking of danger, when suddenly a cloth of some sort was thrown over her head from behind, and by a strong hand gathered in about her throat.

No doubt she had been closely watched previous to this by sharp eyes peering out of the mist.

The thing was done so suddenly that Alice was taken wholly unawares, and when a voice said in Chinese: "There are two revolvers covering you, Miss Montgomery; utter a sound and you will be instantly shot," all she could do was to submit, especially as the voice added: "And Young King Brady as well."

"No shooting," she said. "I yield."

Her voice was sadly muffled under the big piece of burlap which had been thrown over her head.

Her arm was now clutched and she was drawn forward, the hand still retaining its grip on her throat.

She was so startled and mixed up that she could not tell in which direction she was being led, but they did not take her far.

Suddenly the clutch at her throat was released.

"Step up," said the voice. "I am about to assist you into an auto. Be careful. There! All right now. Sit down and behave yourself and you will slip through this trial easy enough."

Was it a Chinaman who was speaking?

Certainly the voice was that of an Oriental of some sort, but to Alice it sounded more like the voice of an educated Japanese, although the language was that of the other race.

"May I have my head free now?" she asked. "I am stifling."

"Just a moment," was the reply. "They are bringing the box. When we start you shall be relieved."

She heard them come; the box was lifted into the car, which seemed to be a long, three-seated affair, as near as Alice could judge.

Then the start was made, and so noiselessly was it all managed that there had scarce been a sound.

Immediately the burlap was withdrawn from Alice's head.

The car proved to be a closed one. By the light of its lamps Alice was able to get an uncertain view of her companion.

She shuddered as she recognized him.

"So it is you, Dr. Garshaski!" she breathed.

"Yes, Miss Montgomery, it is I," replied the man, speaking now in English. "I trust you will pardon this step on my part. It all came about by accident. I saw you standing there and I could not resist the temptation to at once seize upon the opportunity, and the woman of all others whom I devotedly love."

Alice's heart sank.

There were three other men in the car.

The chauffeur was white, but the two seated on the box, which was crowded in front of the middle seat, were Chinese in American dress.

They sat on the seat with their feet on the box, silent and stolid looking.

Certainly there was nothing to be hoped for from an appeal to them.

Did Alice know this Dr. Garshaski?

She did, indeed.

Harry's anxiety would have been more intense even than it was could he have suspected the truth.

But there was no possible reason why he should suspect it. He believed this man to be in China or Japan.

The story is this:

About two years before it became necessary in a certain case to engage a detective who could speak both Chinese and Japanese.

Such a combination is much rarer than might be supposed.

Old King Brady applied to the Secret Service people, for it was on their work that the man was needed.

They had such a person in stock, it seemed, and Dr. Garshaski, born of a Japanese father and a Chinese mother in the city of Shanghai, was sent to New York to co-operate with the Brady Bureau.

They won out in the case all right, but they got more than they bargained for in this man, who really was a doctor and a graduate of a New England medical college.

From the very outset he began making love to Alice, and in the most extravagant fashion.

After the case was over he threw up his position as a Secret Service detective and remained in New York, pestering Alice beyond endurance.

Harry threw him out of the office at an early stage of the game.

He then wrote letters, threatening Harry's life.

Alice was deluged with silly love epistles; he dogged her in the streets and waylaid her when she came and went from her rooms on Waverly Place.

In short, he made himself such a nuisance that Old King Brady had him arrested and bound over to keep the peace.

His next and last move was to make a pretended attempt at suicide on Alice's door-step.

Again he was arrested and got the usual penalty.

Then he wrote a whining letter to Old King Brady, asking help to get out, and promising to go to Shanghai.

Alice interceded. He was released.

The Bradys thought they had good reason for believing that he had kept his word.

But if he went he must have come back again, for here he was, sitting beside Alice in the automobile.

No wonder her heart failed her, but to the doctor's latest declaration of love she calmly replied:

"Once you told me you were the son of a Japanese gentleman, doctor. Don't forget it now."

"Never, Alice! Never! I intend that you shall marry me. A man could not act otherwise than as a gentleman towards a woman whom he hopes to make his wife."

"Well spoken," said Alice, with a sigh. "Do these men understand English?" she added, trying to

she speak in her ordinary tone.

"Not a word."

"And the chauffeur?"

"Is a French-Canadian; but he can't hear. Did Old King Brady get that boat load of opium?"

"Yes. Are you interested in it?"

"I am."

"Did you go to China?"

"Certainly; I have made two trips to China since I last saw you."

"What is it about this unfortunate Chinese woman in the box?"

"That's a private matter. Were you my wife, as you soon will be, you should know. As it is, I can't tell you—at least not yet."

"I am afraid she is dead, doctor."

"Not the least danger, Alice."

She did not correct this familiar form of speech.

"Were you speaking to her in Chinese?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What did she tell you?"

"Nothing except that she was the Princess Skeep Hup."

"That is so."

"Why have you captured her?"

"It is not my business. It was done for another."

"And you are taking her to Chinatown?"

"Yes; that is where we are going."

"Speak to her, or let those men speak. I am sure she is in trouble. After the first she would not answer me."

"She is drugged. I suppose for the moment she came out from under the influence. I am surprised that she did."

"But, doctor, I heard some one say before we captured the boat that if they didn't hurry up the princess would die. What about that?"

"The man didn't know what he was talking about. I am an expert chemist. It is no morphine sleep the woman is in. I have used a Chinese drug of which chemists in this country know nothing. I should hate to have to use it on you."

"Don't you dare try it, doctor."

"Listen. We have to leave this auto soon. I warn you, Alice, not to attempt to make me trouble. Just so sure as you do, you will get your dose."

Alice was silent.

She preferred Dr. Garshaski's threats to his love-making. It was a relief to find that he was not disposed to try the latter now.

They were rapidly approaching Chinatown.

At last they hit Dupont street and ran on to Washington, where they turned up the hill, stopping in front of China alley.

The Chinamen jumped out and stood for a moment.

"All right, the coast is clear, doctor," one said in Chinese.

"Take the box out and be quick," replied the doctor.

This was done.

Staggering under their load, the two Chinamen disappeared down the alley.

"Now, Alice!" said the doctor, when presently they returned.

"Dr. Garshaski, be sensible and let me go about my business," said Alice, in her calmest fashion, for she realized that it would be more than useless to display excitement now.

"No," replied the doctor. "No, it cannot be. I have begun, and I am going to see the thing through."

That's all there is about it."

He got out and extended his hand to Alice, who accepted it and alighted.

The two Chinks closed in behind her.

In a few seconds they had vanished down China alley, where there was no hope of rescue, for although the alley is not the dark, mysterious affair it used to be before the great fire, it still retains much of its old character, and is a mighty dangerous place at night.

They did not have far to go; the doctor retained his hold on Alice's arm.

She had heard the click of cocking revolvers behind her, so knew what to expect.

Suddenly the doctor turned in at a dark doorway and hurried Alice up an equally dark flight of stairs.

This brought them to a long hall, which appeared to run through to Dupont street.

Much of this property is now owned by American-born Chinese.

The new structures erected on it were built to suit themselves.

Just how true it is we cannot tell, but there are those who claim that the underground dens of Chinatown are not wiped out by any means; even that some of them have been reconstructed on more extensive lines.

The doctor halted before a door at what seemed about midway in the long hall and proceeded to unlock it with a key.

"In with you, Alice," he said, and he pushed her gently into what seemed to be a small elevator.

Following her, the Chinaman crowded in behind her.

The doctor clutched the wire rope, and the machine started to descend.

"You see I'm letting you into all our secrets, Alice," he said with a grin. "I haven't required you to blindfold."

If this was an attempt to start a flirtation it failed, for Alice made no reply.

This elevator descended three stories; they had ascended but one flight of stairs, consequently they must be under ground, Alice reasoned.

It stopped, and the doctor opened a door.

Here there was a long passage little resembling the ugly secret passages of old Chinatown.

This one was plastered, and from the walls hung Chinese mottoes.

There were lights at intervals, and many doors opening off from it.

Alice saw that it must extend through from China alley to Dupont street.

The doors all had Chinese characters on them.

These were not numbers.

Each carried with it the word "door"; each was modified in some way.

Thus there was the "door of hope," the "door of knowledge," the "door of wisdom," and so on.

Alice, who could read the characters, found herself quite at a loss to imagine why they should be thus applied.

At last they came to one bearing a character which signified the "door of death."

Here the doctor paused.

Determined not to give him the satisfaction of displaying any curiosity, Alice stood waiting for the doctor to speak.

He pointed to the character and said in English:

"I suppose you haven't forgotten how to read your Chinese?"

"No; I haven't forgotten."

"You see what that says?"

"Yes; I see."

"It may or may not apply to you, Alice."

"I suppose you are about to add, 'all depends upon yourself.'"

"Exactly."

"Dr. Garshaski, I tried to treat you well. While another would have left you in prison, I induced

Old King Brady to get you out. I must say I don't think you are treating me well to-night."

"Better than you think for. Another situated as I was when I suddenly met you would surely have shot your lover, Young King Brady. I spared his life."

"I thank you for that."

"Waste no time in thanking me. Look at the character on the door directly behind us. What does it say?"

"The door of love."

"Well, Alice, which door shall it be? It is for you to decide."

"Nonsense, doctor. Don't be ridiculous. I am in your power. Get ahead and let us end all this."

"Will you marry me, Alice? I will make you a good husband. What is more, I am in a good paying business now. If my schemes succeed I am in a fair way to become rich."

"No, I won't. That's final."

"Once again I ask you, Alice."

"And once again I refuse!" cried Alice, stamping her foot, for she was beginning to lose patience at last.

The two Chinamen stood grinning at each other.

If they did not understand English they at least must have had a pretty good idea of what was going on.

They seemed to be highly amused.

"And now for the third time I ask you," continued the doctor, "will you marry me?"

"Never!" cried Alice. "Not if you were the last man on earth!"

"Then that settles it, Alice Montgomery!" he said, sternly. "The door you enter shall be the door of death!"

He unlocked it and threw it open.

Inside Alice could see nothing. It appeared to be just across the passage.

But before she had time to think twice about it the two Chinamen gave her a sudden push.

The doctor jumped aside and poor Alice went flying through the door of death.

CHAPTER V.

OLD KING BRADY GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS.

Harper's Hotel, on Mission street, both before and since the fire was always a great resort for Secret Service men.

In fact, the proprietor himself was formerly one.

As it happened, this was one of the few buildings in that part of the city which escaped the fire, so the public house at which Old King Brady turned up late that afternoon was the same old Harper's Hotel.

Detective Leggett, disguised as a dock laborer, sat in the cafe playing dominoes with another Secret Service man.

The minute he saw Old King Brady, without waiting to finish the game, he pushed the dominoes aside and made a sign for the old detective to follow, then leading him upstairs.

"I'm living here just now," he said. "I don't know as you know it."

"No; I didn't know," was the reply. "Have you caught on to anything?"

"I think so. Volckman's a sly one, but I have had a good chance to watch him. He quit an hour earlier than usual to-night. So did I, and I trailed him to China alley and saw him go into a crib there."

"Good for you! What kind of a crib?"

"Oh, there is supposed to be about everything that is crooked going on there. Mock Ting's restaurant is on the ground floor of the Dupont street side. There's a fan-tan joint on the third floor. I understand there are underground rooms. I don't actually know any of them to be opium joints, but I have no doubt that some of them are."

"It's enough that you have tracked Volckman there. What do you propose?"

"It's up to you, Mr. Brady. I have no pull in Chinatown. That is what we want."

"It surely is. I used to have a lot, but times have changed. I hardly know who to apply to now. I hate to ring in a wardman."

"I wouldn't," said Leggett, with a shrug of his shoulders. "I don't believe it would pay. I'm ready to bust ahead with you and take our chances."

"I have little faith in that, either. Volckman doesn't look like a man who used opium. He must have had special business to call him there. But let us get down there, anyway."

This conversation took place in Leggett's room upstairs.

"Better drop this rig, hadn't I?" he asked.

"I think so."

"If we only had some one who could speak Chinese."

"Get ready," said the old detective, impatiently. "We'll go ahead and do the best we can."

It was about six o'clock when they reached the House of the Seven Delights.

"We'll take supper in the restaurant as a starter," said Old King Brady. "It is not impossible that I may strike somebody I know."

They entered to find the place reasonably full.

The old detective picked out a central table, from which they could see in all directions.

Supper was ordered, and they had almost finished when Old King Brady suddenly said:

"There's a man I know. Just sitting at the third table on the left as you come in from the door."

Leggett looked.

"A Jap, isn't he?"

"Half Japanese and half Chinese. Don't you know him?"

"No."

"You will be surprised, then, when I tell you that he was once a Secret Service man."

"Is that so? He never operated in San Francisco in my time, then. What's his name?"

"Dr. Garshaski."

"Is he really a doctor?"

"Yes. I certainly ought to know him. He made me trouble enough. I don't like this. I thought the man was in China."

An inkling of the truth dawned upon Old King Brady.

The sight of Dr. Garshaski had stirred him more than he would have cared to own.

"If Alice fell into the clutches of that fellow, then heaven help her!" he thought.

He hardly knew whether he ought to show himself to the doctor or attempt to trail him.

But the matter promptly settled itself.

Dr. Garshaski saw him.

Old King Brady, who was watching him closely, did not fail to note the start he gave.

He immediately got up, and the old detective thought it was with the intention of leaving the restaurant, but instead of that he came forward to their table and, putting out both hands, exclaimed:

"Mr. Brady! I am rejoiced! My best friend! My savior, I may say! Well, well!"

Old King Brady shook hands and invited the doctor to sit down, introducing Leggett as a Secret Service man.

"Do you mind if I take my supper at this table?" asked the doctor.

"Not at all," was the reply.

Having come up with the man, it seemed to the old detective that he might as well listen to anything he had to say.

"I thought you were going to China, doctor?" he began.

"Did go," replied the doctor. "I have been across twice since I saw you. How is Young King Brady?"

"Well."

"In San Francisco?"

"I don't know where he is just now. He is working for a man on a private matter. It is some little time since I heard from him."

"And—I almost hesitate to ask for reasons such as you—you know, Mr. Brady. How is that loveliest of her sex, Miss Montgomery?"

Old King Brady's eyes were right upon him as he quietly answered:

"I cannot tell you, doctor."

"Cannot tell! Has the partnership been dissolved, then?"

"Temporarily, yes."

"You speak strangely, Mr. Brady. I hope and trust that nothing has gone wrong in that direction. You need not fear to trust me. I have quite recovered from my mad folly, I assure you."

"Something has gone very wrong, doctor. It is now several days since Miss Montgomery disappeared right here in San Francisco."

The doctor threw up his hands dramatically.

"Don't tell me that!" he cried. "Under what circumstances?"

"The circumstances belong to Secret Service business. I cannot state them. It may be, however, that she has fallen into the hands of your people."

"Now, don't call the Chinese my people. I am the son of a Japanese gentleman, as you well know. You touch me deeply. If there is anything I can do to help, command me."

"You are very kind. And your address?"

The doctor produced a card.

The address it bore was a number on Stockton street.

"I have a room in that house just at present," he said.

Leggett sat quiet through all this.

Still engaging the doctor in conversation, the old detective trod on his toe.

The signal was returned.

Old King Brady felt that he had been understood, when the Secret Service man suddenly arose and said:

"Will you excuse me, Mr. Brady? I have to keep that appointment with Holes."

"Go on," said Old King Brady. "You are a bit late for it now."

He left himself as soon as the doctor's supper was served.

Going around on to China alley, he found Leggett somewhat disguised watching the rear entrance to the house of the Seven Delights.

"That man must be shadowed," he said. "It is useless for me to undertake it other than in a general way. He has worked for me and knows my methods of disguising. He is as keen as a razor. Some time ago he fell madly in love with Miss Montgomery, and we had all kinds of trouble with him. I am afraid he is at the bottom of her disappearance."

"I'm on the job. Where shall I lay for him? Here or in front?"

"In front."

"Will I do as I am?"

"It's the best you can do at short notice. Listen. You saw him give me his card. I am going to his room on Stockton street. If I can get in I shall not hesitate to give it a good overhauling. I must be quick. Do the best you can for me, Leggett."

The Secret Service man gave his promise and Old King Brady hurried away.

The Stockton street house proved to be a four-story brick tenement filled with Japanese.

There was a bell-board with names on it, but that of Dr. Garshaski did not appear.

Old King Brady had just finished studying the names when a Jap came out through the open door.

The old detective showed the doctor's card.

"Know him?" he asked.

But the man appeared to be short on English.

"No know," he said. Then pointing inside he made the old detective understand that he was to inquire at the last door on the right, which he did.

This proved to be the janitor, whose English was quite understandable.

"Top floor," he said. "He only hire room of 'nother man. Las' door left."

Old King Brady traveled up the stairs.

He felt that he was running every risk of discovery by the doctor.

Encountering no one in the upper hall, he knocked lightly on the door.

There was no answer.

Producing his skeleton keys, he easily mastered the lock.

It was only a bedroom. There was but little furniture.

On the top of a chiffonier was Alice's picture in an elaborate gilt frame, which did not bear out the doctor's assurance that he had got over being love-sick.

Without losing an instant the old detective opened the drawers of this chiffonier and began disturbing things as little as possible.

It was not until the lower drawer was reached that he found anything to interest him.

The first was a bunch of three letters fastened by a rubber band.

There were other letters, some in Japanese and some in Chinese.

These, however, were in English, and when Old King Brady caught the signature, "R. Volckman," he knew that he had made a discovery.

This letter was brief enough. It read:

"DEAR SIR: Yours receipted. I shall be ready for you at 2 thirty. All serene. R. VOLCKMAN."

"This settles it," muttered the old detective. "Volckman has been standing in with these opium smugglers all right, and the doctor is in the deal. I shall arrest the man on sight."

He ran over the other letters.

All related to the landing of the smuggled opium.

In one Volckman agreed to furnish boats to the Chinese smugglers, with men to take charge of them.

The other was a demand to know when and where he could meet Dr. Garshaski.

There was no mention of the Chinese princess nor of Alice.

Old King Brady pocketed the letters and proceeded to examine a trunk, which he opened with a skeleton key.

Here he found other letters and photographs of several Chinese and Japanese women.

All the letters appeared to be in these languages, as the old detective hastily ran over them.

There was one photograph of a very peculiar looking young woman who was not altogether unhandsome.

She was dressed in a fancy Mexican costume.

To the old detective she looked as if she might be of mixed stock, Mexican and Chinese, or Mexican and Japanese.

But as none of these things interested the old detective, he returned them to the trunk and closed it.

Scarce had he done so when there came a knock on the door, which had not been locked.

Of course, this could not be the doctor.

Thinking that it might lead to some further discovery, Old King Brady slipped into a closet and remained on the watch through the crack of the door.

Again came the knocking, a little more insistent, and then the door opened and a young woman very stylishly dressed walked into the room.

A glance was sufficient to identify her as the original of the photograph the old detective had just been looking at.

She stood peering about as if expecting Dr. Garshaski to jump out at her from the closet or under the bed.

Then suddenly she made a rush for the chiffonier, seized the gilt frame, pulled Alice's picture out

of it, spit on it, tore it to pieces, and stamped it under her feet, her eyes blazing with jealous rage and hate.

It was easy now to see that the girl—she was little more—was a Mexican-Chinese half-breed.

"Ah ha, my lady!" thought Old King Brady, "I see how the case stands! It's to be hoped that you speak English. You may prove a very valuable ally. I'm glad now that I came here."

He stepped out into full view.

The young woman gave a scream and made a bolt for the door.

"Stay, daughter! A word with you," the old detective said.

CHAPTER VI.

HEARD IN THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN DELIGHTS.

Harry did not have long to wait before Ah Lung got up and came to him.

His brother Wun, making a few remarks in Chinese, excused himself and left.

"You will pardon me, Mr. Brady, for making it necessary for you to follow me here," said the merchant. "I wanted to find out whether the gods were propitious to our undertaking, as you would say. I have been so busy to-day that I got no chance until now."

"And the result?" asked Harry.

"We shall win out in the end, but not without trouble."

"Yon believe in your joss sticks, I see, Mr. Lung?"

"Firmly; and why should I not? For untold ages my people have employed them to predict the future."

"Does it always come out true as they say?"

"By no means. Just about as often as what is told us by people in this world comes true."

"Of what use to consult them then?"

"Listen! If you have a friend upon whom you rely, who you have known for years, and who has never lied to you, then you unhesitatingly believe him, do you not?"

"Most assuredly."

"It is precisely the same with me. I believe that the movement of the joss sticks in my case is controlled by the spirit of my dead father. He never lied to me living. Why should he do so now that he has dropped the body and is living in the world of spirits?"

"It is too deep for me. It would seem, though, that you must be a spiritualist."

Ah Lung shrugged his shoulders.

"I know very little about your American spiritualists," he replied, "but we will not continue the subject. I am ready."

"Where do we go?"

"We will talk of that outside."

"Am I made up to suit you?"

"Yes, yes. As I look at you I fail to see how any one could see through your disguise."

They passed out of the joss house and walked down Jackson street hill.

"One thing," said Harry. "You must pretend to talk to me with your fingers deaf and dumb fashion when we come into the presence of others."

"Oh, I can actually do it," replied Wun Lung. "I have a sister who is deaf and dumb. We were able to put her through the deaf and dumb school. She knows only English. I am the only one who can talk to her. But I suppose you cannot do the deaf and dumb finger speech?"

"Indeed I can," replied Harry, with his fingers.

"Then let us begin now," responded Ah Lung in the same fashion, "for we are liable to be seen by some one whom we may meet in the House of the Seven Delights."

"And what may that be?"

"A sort of club. A secret society. But I must say no more. You promised not to press me, you know."

"All right. I am in your hands, but I just want to ask have you spoken of the princess to any of the members of this club?"

"Why yes, to one or two whom I can trust."

Harry shook his head.

"I am afraid you are the author of your own troubles, then, Mr. Lung," he said.

"I shouldn't wonder. It is a matter I should not have spoken about to any one. I see it now."

They turned up China alley at last, entering the long building into which Alice had been taken on the night of her capture.

Harry now traveled over the same ground.

They ascended one flight, entered that elevator, and Ah Lung let them down to the long corridor under ground.

Harry wondered at the many doors.

"What new organization am I up against?" he asked himself.

But of Ah Lung he asked no questions, feeling that he was in the man's hands for better or for worse.

"Now I don't know whether anything is going to come out of this or not," Lung said with his fingers. "I am expecting to meet a certain party on business. I shall bring the conversation around to the princess. The man is supposed to be my friend. If he has betrayed me I want to know it. At all events, it is my only chance of giving you a clew on which to start your search."

"Right," said Harry. "Lead on."

Lung stopped before a door, on which he knocked three times.

It was immediately opened by a young Chinaman in a white native dress.

The room was quite a large one, well fitted up with comfortable American furniture.

It looked what it actually was, a club-room. Several Chinamen, mostly in American dress, were sitting or standing in groups.

One came forward looking questioningly at Harry.

Lung said something, apparently vouching for him as a friend, and the man walked away.

Nobody else spoke to them.

Going up to a handsome buffet, Lung poured out tea for himself and Harry, helping him also to sweetmeats and Chinese cakes.

"Is this just a business club?" asked Young King Brady.

"Just that and nothing else," was the reply; "there are several clubs meeting down here. While the members are all part of one grand organization, these clubs are organized for different purposes, and a man may belong to one without belonging to another or knowing anything about the others. That's the way we work it."

"Is your man here?"

"Not yet. He is expected, however. I must hurry and get you placed."

They now left the club-room, Ah Lung, opening the next door beyond with a latch-key.

This ushered them into a narrow corridor lighted by colored red lanterns.

From it opened several small alcoves before which fancy-colored curtains hung.

Harry saw that they were intended for opium smokers, and that each would hold two persons. They were provided with soft couches instead of the usual Chinese wooden bunks.

An attendant in white came forward. Ah Lung spoke to him in Chinese and gave him money.

"I have engaged two of these rooms," he said. "You must take one now and pretend to smoke and go to sleep. Watch and listen for me, for I shall come into the next alcove with my man. I never smoke opium myself, but he does, and he always prefers to talk business over a pipe."

And this programme was carried out.

Ah Lung left Harry, who lost no time in pretending to go to sleep. The curtain was drawn before the alcove.

Harry waited an hour and grew so drowsy that at last he actually did drop off, to be suddenly awakened by hearing somebody give a loud cough. As he opened his eyes he saw a hand draw his curtain shut.

He was on the alert instantly, for he could hear two men entering the next alcove.

"And now for business," one said. Harry recognized the voice of Ah Lung.

"Wait till I get my pipe going," replied the second person.

The voice and accent were peculiar.

It seemed to Young King Brady that he recognized both.

"Surely I have heard that voice before," he said to himself. "But where?"

This was a question that as Harry lay listening he found himself unable to decide.

The pipe filling was so quickly completed and the smell which arose so different from ordinary opium that Harry concluded the man must be merely smoking some sort of opium saturated tobacco.

The talk then began.

It was precisely what Ah Lung had hinted at, a transaction in cheap opium.

The word smuggled was not used.

Ah Lung bought a thousand dollars worth, which was to be delivered next day at the store.

There was considerable haggling, the talk lasting all of twenty minutes, and all this time Young King Brady was puzzling his brains to know where he had heard that voice before, but memory refused to serve him.

As for the man's English, it was almost as good as Ah Lung's, which amounts to saying that it was nearly perfect.

Harry heard, although their voices were keyed low. It vexed him to think that Ah Lung could not have spoken the man's name, but he never did once.

Now suddenly the conversation took a different turn.

"Ah, my good friend," said Ah Lung with a sigh, "I am in deep trouble. I know you will sympathize with me when I tell you what it is."

"Of course," was the reply. "I always have sympathy for those in trouble. What is the matter now?"

"My princess."

"Ah, ha! She is ill?"

"Not that. She failed to arrive on the Manchuria."

"Is it so? Did she not sail then?"

Ah Lung told the story he had given the Bradys.

"It must be very hard for you, Lung," replied the other. "I wish I could help you. Perhaps I can."

"You? How can that be possible?"

"Listen! I heard it rumored—only rumored by men—you know who—that there was a Chinese woman of high rank who was a passenger on the Dover Castle. With her was a man who claimed to be her cousin. The man was smuggled in, Lung. I saw and talked with him. His name was Wang Foo!"

"You don't mean it!" cried Ah Lung, excitedly.

"Hush! We shall be heard."

"No, no! I tell you the man in the next bunk is deaf and dumb. Besides, he is a good friend of mine."

"But on the other side?"

"It is empty."

"Sure? Some one may have come in."

"I'll look and see."

Ah Lung did so and reported the alcove empty.

"Go on!" he said eagerly. "You are interesting me greatly. What became of this woman of high rank?"

"Ah! That I do not know, my friend, but I do know that she did not land openly. Then she must have been smuggled ashore. Probably she is concealed somewhere in Chinatown now."

"I must find out. I will employ detectives."

"Do nothing of the sort. If the woman is here, if she really is the Princess Skeep Hup, then I am the man who can get her for you. What will you pay, Ah Lung?"

"Pay! I thought you were my friend."

"I am out for the dollars, brother. Out for the dollars every time."

"What is it worth to you then to go to the trouble to make these inquiries?"

"Nothing to make inquiries, but if this Chinese woman should prove to be the Princess Skeep Hup, and I am the means of delivering her up to you, I shall expect half of that money you told me you were going to get with her, or, in other words, \$5,000."

Harry heard Ah Lung give an angry exclamation, and he feared that he was going to say something which would spoil everything, but the Chinaman controlled himself.

"Why, this is almost as bad as blackmail," he said, sarcastically. "I don't mind paying a thousand dollars, but five thousand! It is nonsense!"

"It has to be or I won't work."

"Come, I'll be liberal with you. I'll make it two thousand. Go ahead and find out for me."

"Not a cent less than \$5,000, Brother Lung."

"Dr. Garshaski, I believe you know something definite, that this is a deal to blackmail me."

Dr. Garshaski! Harry almost jumped off the couch.

Now he knew whose voice he had been listening to.

He wondered at himself.

How could he ever have forgotten?

"That scoundrel!" he thought. "Alice in his hands? This is terrible, but it explains her disappearance, all right."

Meanwhile the talk was going right on.

"Have it your own way, Mr. Lung," said the doctor, "but you want to decide. Do I work or don't I work? Which?"

"I will give up no more than I said. I won't be swindled."

"Very well. Then I won't do anything about your Chinese princess. Your opium will be delivered. I am going now. Good-night."

"Go," replied Lung. "I shall not forget this, doctor."

"No, I don't think you will," replied the doctor, and Harry heard him leave the room.

Instantly Ah Lung drew aside the curtain.

But Harry did not wait for him to speak.

"After him!" he whispered. "I know that fellow! He is a scoundrel! No doubt he is at the bottom of this whole business, and of the disappearance of Miss Montgomery, too."

CHAPTER VII.

IN A TORTURE CHAMBER.

Alice felt that her situation was bad enough as she passed through the "door of death" without Dr. Garshaski adding to it by clap-trap.

This she was sure he had done, for while the Chinese characters on the other doors were painted directly on the woodwork, in this case it was a piece of red paper, upon which the character had been written with a Chinese pen.

That it had been put there for her special benefit Alice did not doubt.

It was just like Dr. Garshaski, who was forever doing something dramatic in the old days.

He hurried Alice along the empty corridor and down a short flight of stairs.

Coming to a door, he let go his hold and knocked.

It was instantly opened by a very Chinese-looking Chinaman wearing a rich native dress.

The room was rather small, but well fitted up as a bed chamber, partly in Chinese and partly in American style. In the middle of the floor stood the box which was supposed to contain the Chinese princess.

"So you have come at last!" exclaimed the Chinaman in his own language. "I thought you never would."

"Patience, Wang Foo," replied the doctor. "We can't get there all in a moment."

"But the princess may die. She may be dead now. I believe it. She ought to have been released long ago."

"Patience, I tell you. I know my business. She is in no danger of death whatever."

"And the woman you were to bring to look after her. She must have an attendant. She is not to be ill treated. She is of my own blood."

"The woman is here."

"What, a white woman?"

"Yes."

"Of what use can she be?"

"I know her of old. She is an excellent nurse. None better."

"But she cannot talk to the princess."

"There you are quite mistaken. Better be careful what you say to her. She speaks Chinese as well as you do."

Wang Foo stared at Alice and asked her name.

He managed to grasp the Alice part, but the rest was quite beyond him.

"Hurry! Hurry," he cried.

"Alice," said the doctor, "I am going to resurrect the princess now. Sit down in that easy-chair and make yourself at home."

Alice silently obeyed. Thus far there seemed nothing so terrible coming out of the passage through the door of death.

The doctor asked for a screw-driver, and Wang Foo produced one, with which he made short work of opening the box.

There, apparently, in a deep sleep, lay a little doll of a Chinese woman upon blankets carefully fitted into the box.

She was in plain native dress, and her feet were not bigger than those of a good-sized doll.

This alone proved that she belonged to a good family.

The ordinary Chinese women do not compress their feet.

The doctor bent over the box and listened at her heart.

"She's all right," he said. "I'll have her out of this in no time."

He produced a leather medicine case, and, taking a tumbler from the washstand, proceeded to mix small portions of the contents of two different vials.

The result was a reddish liquid, of which he administered a few drops to the princess.

"Now, Alice," he said, "we can talk freely before this man, who is just from China and can't speak a word of English. Our love affairs can hang over a few days. Just now I am going to explain about this woman. She is the daughter of a rich Pekin Mandarin, who has sold her to an equally rich merchant here in Chinatown. They are really in love with each other, and the woman came to California of her own accord, although not in just the way she set out to do. She is also the granddaughter of a rich old Chink on her mother's side, who died in San Francisco at the time of the great fire. He left a pile of ready cash behind him, but no one knows where he hid it. That he did hide it somewhere on the night of the fire is certain. Just before his death, as I have the best of reason for believing, old Gong Schow wrote out this secret of the buried money and sent it to a man in China with instructions for him to deliver the letter containing the secret to his granddaughter on her twentieth birthday. It was done. This funny little midget alone knows where Gong Schow's wealth is buried. She has kept her secret well. She promised her lover to reveal it to him on their marriage day. Wang Foo knows all this. He is my partner in certain business transactions. He is her cousin. He started to escort her to Shanghai from her home in Pekin. There she was to sail on the Manchuria for San Francisco. But Wang Foo deceived her and took her aboard an English tramp steamer, the Dover Castle. He has delivered her to me. She must be made to give up her secret, fair Alice. That was another reason why I kidnaped you. I want you to do the detective act. Get the secret out of the princess as best you can, only get it. Make her understand that if she don't give it up she will surely die. You have followed me in all this, I hope?"

"I certainly have," replied Alice, adding: "At your old tricks, doctor. Forever plotting and scheming. Am I to be kept alone with this Chinese princess then?"

"That's what you are, and it's up to you to work my schemes out to success, for it is I and not Wang Foo who must have this hidden treasure——But she is waking; my drug has done it's work."

It was so. Inside of a few minutes the Chinese princess had fully revived.

She was little, but she made it hot for those around her.

Such a temper Alice never saw displayed in any Chinawoman.

She began by screaming, demanding to know where she was and why she was there.

She turned on Wang Foo with all the fury of a tigress, accused him of drugging her, of kidnaping her, and then began yelling to be taken to Ah Lung.

As for Dr. Garshaski, she did not appear to know him. She seemed to feel an instinctive hatred for him, however. She clawed at his face and tried to hit him when he started to help her out of the box.

She got out herself, however, and promptly tumbled over on her little feet. Like many another Chinawoman of her class, she could scarcely walk.

Wang Foo did not attempt to reply.

At last he and Dr. Garshaski left the room, taking the box away with them.

After a while they returned with two trunks containing the belongings of the princess, whom they found crying in Alice's arms.

"That's right, Alice, that's right," said the doctor, delightedly. "I see you know your business as well as ever. Keep it up, my dear, and see here, I have determined to make you a promise. If you succeed in worming the secret out of that horrid little fright, you shan't marry me unless you really want to—so there!"

"That's certainly kind of you," said Alice with a half sneer. "All right, doctor, I'll see what I can do."

She did nothing of the sort, of course.

During the days of her unexplained absence, Alice remained shut in that room with Skeep Hup, the Chinese princess, an old Chinawoman serving them with their meals and otherwise attending to their wants.

Two Chinamen with drawn revolvers stood outside the door every time it was opened. There was no possibility of escape.

During this time Alice got very close to the princess.

Little Skeep Hup seemed to take a great liking to her from the first, which increased as the days dragged by.

She told Alice about everything she knew except the secret of the hiding-place of her grandfather's buried treasure, which she claimed she knew. She confirmed Dr. Garshaski's story in every particular, and upbraided herself bitterly for having been foolish enough to listen to the lies of Wang Foo.

But where was Wang Foo?

They saw no more of him.

Dr. Garshaski came every day towards night asking as to Alice's success.

She put him off as best she could.

"The princess will not reveal her secret," she said at last, "and who can blame her? The best thing you can do, doctor, is to go and blackmail Ah Lung out of a few thousand and set her free."

This was on the night the Bradys had the call from Ah Lung.

The doctor's face grew dark as Alice said it.

"Do you say so?" he exclaimed. "Well, we shall see!"

He turned on the princess and said:

"Now look here, little woman, to-night you have to tell your secret or take the consequences. Understand?"

Then Skeep Hup flew into one of her rages, and the doctor was getting it good and plenty when he abruptly left the room, saying in English to Alice as he went out:

"This is played out. She shall be made to tell, and you, who I believe have put her up to this, shall see the job done. You will find out that it is no joke to have passed through the door of death."

And this Alice translated for the benefit of Skeep Hup, asking her what she supposed it meant.

"It means torture, that's what it means," replied the princess, promptly. "No matter. They will never get the secret out of me. I will never reveal it to any one but Ah Lung."

And here is what followed:

No supper came that night.

Alice and the princess waited until they were tired, and were just preparing to go to bed when the door was suddenly thrown open and two men wearing hideous paste-board masks after the Chinese style entered the room.

Dr. Garshaski and another followed them, an old Chinaman with a long, drooping mustache. A person Alice had never seen.

"Young women," said the doctor, "you are to follow us to the torture room, unless you, Princess Skeep Hup, instantly reveal what I wish to know, or, rather, give me your promise to do so, for it must be revealed to me alone."

The princess set her lips together, and, throwing intense scorn into her speech, defied him.

They were then led along the passage, through a door at its end, up steps and through another passage, winding up in a room all draped in black, which was dimly lighted by a solitary candle placed within a human skull resting on an old-fashioned coffin, which looked as if it may have been made to fit the princess, judging from its size.

Beyond this was a low table provided with an arrangement of ropes attached at one end to a post at the other to a large wooden jackscrew.

It was a wicked-looking engine.

Alice shuddered.

"We have fallen into the hands of a bunch of yellow fiends," she thought. "I wonder if there is anything too wicked for Dr. Garshaski to do?"

The two masks now seized the princess and laid her down upon the table on her back.

They then proceeded to tie her hands to the ropes attached to the post, while her feet were made fast to those attached to the screw.

The brave little woman never let out a whimper—never said one word.

"You see, Alice," said the doctor, taking his place beside her. "Don't you think of interfering, or you shall get your dose."

"You yellow fiend!" breathed Alice, feeling that such cruelty was beyond endurance. "Wouldn't I like to have the turning of that screw with you on the table! How dare you resort to such barbarous methods as this?"

"Have a care!" hissed the doctor. "That's the rack—the old-fashioned rack, such as your white holy men used to resort to when they wanted to make a man holy in some other way than his own. It is still in use in China for extorting confessions from thieves. Nice contrivance, isn't it? But its use has been by no means confined to the Chinese."

"What you allude to happened two hundred years ago, and you know it," retorted Alice. "It takes yellow fiends like you and your friends here to torture a woman in these days!"

"Bah! They would rack people to death for religion's sake to-day if they dared," answered the doctor.

"But you have your warning, so heed it," he added, and advancing to the princess, he again asked her if she was ready to reveal the secret.

"Never!" she cried. "You can torture me all you will, but you will never learn from me that which will place in your hands what I choose shall belong to my husband, Ah Lung."

"Ah Lung is not your husband nor will he ever be unless you yield to my request," declared the doctor.

She gave him one look and turned her head away.

"Give the screw a twist!" cried the doctor, and the old Chinaman obeyed, the two masks standing on each side reciting something in old Chinese which Alice could make nothing of.

Skeep Hup bore the pain thus inflicted unflinchingly.

She shut her eyes, set her lips, and never uttered a sound.

"Will you tell?" demanded the doctor.

No answer.

"Give it another turn!" he thundered.

The screw was turned again.

The masks chanted louder than ever.

The Chinese princess groaned in her misery. Alice was forced to turn her head away.

They let her lie so for a few minutes before the doctor again put the question.

This time she answered, declaring that never would she tell.

"You fool!" cried the doctor. "Do you realize that I mean to continue to order that screw turned until your limbs are wrenched off?"

"I believe you," replied the princess, "but I shall never tell."

He let her lie there in agony for a few minutes, and then put the request again.

This time there was no answer.

The victim of this yellow fiend was almost past speech.

"Go it again!" thundered the doctor.

"You fiend!" cried Alice. "Release that woman or I'll do something desperate. In the name of humanity! In the name of your mother! Dr. Garshaski, forbear!"

"Interfere at your peril!" thundered the doctor, and as he spoke the screw was turned once again.

If Alice had been in possession of her revolver she surely would have shot the fiend, but that had long ago been taken from her.

Helplessly she turned her head away, stopping her ears that she might not hear the cries which the wretched Chinese woman could no longer keep back.

But the cries suddenly *ceased*.

"She has fainted," said the torturer.

"You have killed her, poor soul!" moaned Alice. "Oh, you yellow fiends!"

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD KING BRADY BLUNDERS AHEAD AS BEST HE CAN.

It was undoubtedly the mildness with which the old detective spoke which influenced the young woman to stand her ground.

"Who are you? What are you doing in this room?" she faltered.

"I might put the same question to you, young woman," Old King Brady replied. "I was a witness to your display of rage against a picture. You must be in love with Dr. Garshaski, then?"

"In love with him!" she cried with a hysterical laugh. "I hate him! I am his wife."

"So? In that case I may as well introduce myself. Did you ever happen to hear him speak of Old King Brady, the detective?"

"Yes; many a time. He also was a detective. He once worked for you in New York."

"Yes, for a short time. Were you his wife then, may I ask?"

"Sure I was. I married him five years ago. He deserted me. He has never provided for my support since. I have been living in Los Angeles. I only came to San Francisco day before yesterday. I happened to meet him in the street. I tell you I made it hot for him. He gave me the slip or I would have had him arrested. I learned that he was living here. I have been here again and again, but this is the first time I have been able to get into the room."

"Do you know whose picture that was which you destroyed?"

"Sure I do. A woman he married in New York two years ago. He is living with her here now, but I'll have him arrested. I am his lawful wife."

"You are quite mistaken. He never married her."

"He told me he did. He showed me her picture one time about a year ago."

"He lied. That lady is my partner. Dr. Garshaski so pestered her with his attentions that I had to have him arrested. Then I was told that he went to China."

"So he did. Twice since then. Mr. Brady, I begin to believe you are telling me the truth."

"I certainly am, but let us leave this house. I don't wish the doctor to know I have been here. I should like to talk with you further, Mrs. Garshaski."

"I'll go, but you needn't call me that. I go now by my mother's maiden name. I am known as Inez Reyes."

"Mrs. or miss?"

"Miss."

"Very well, Miss Reyes. Let us get out; that is if you have accomplished your purpose here."

"My purpose!" she replied, grimly. "My purpose is to catch my husband and make him give me money to live on. He is an opium smuggler. He is rolling in wealth. I don't care what he does so long as he gives me money to live on."

"Perhaps I may be able to help in that, but we won't talk any more about it till we get on the street."

They then hurriedly left the house.

As they walked along, Old King Brady explained about the disappearance of Alice.

"You say you heard that Dr. Garshaski had her in his power," he added. "Who told you this?"

"A Chinese woman I know. She is my aunt."

"You are Chinese on your father's side?"

"Yes, I am, and I'm not ashamed of it, either. My father was a good man."

"He is dead?"

"Yes, and so is my mother. She was a Mexican woman. I was born and brought up in Mexico. I wish I had never left it."

"Listen, Miss Reyes," said the old detective. "You say you need money. If through your means I can rescue Miss Montgomery from the clutches of Dr. Garshaski, I am going to give you \$200."

"And you will arrest him and send him up?"

"I most certainly shall."

"Then I'll help. My aunt told me that the doctor had Miss Montgomery at the House of the Seven Delights, but she did not say he was holding her a prisoner. She lives there herself. She ought to know."

"Where is this House of the Seven Delights?"

"It runs through from Dupont street to China alley," was the reply, and the woman named the block.

"And what is it?" persisted Old King Brady.

"Oh, a sort of club-house. A lot of different Chinese clubs meet there. There is a big restaurant on the ground floor; there are opium joints and fan-tan joints in it."

"Same place," thought the old detective. "But where are the dungeons of this House of Delights, I wonder?"

"Can you find out in just what part of the house the doctor has Miss Montgomery concealed?" he asked.

"Listen here," replied the woman. "The only thing I can do is to see my aunt and tell her that you have promised to aid me. She hates my husband as much as I do. Still, you know how helpless Chinese women are, so just what she will do I cannot say."

"But we must not be seen together on Chinese alley, Mr. Brady. Where can I find you? Appoint a place."

"How long shall you probably be gone?" asked the old detective.

"Not over half an hour. I will keep on the block on the Dupont street side. Meet me there."

They parted at the alley, Old King Brady pushing on to Dupont street.

He had scarcely turned the corner when he ran into Detective Leggett.

"Well?" he demanded. "What about Volckman?"

"I haven't seen him since," was the reply. "Evidently he has given me the slip somehow."

"Let him go. I have secured evidence against him which will enable us to arrest him at any time," and the old detective went on to explain.

"I want your help in this new business," he said.

"Right," replied Leggett. "Can't we go it alone, thin?"

"I'm going to try it that way, anyhow. You follow me right after I make the start. If I want you to join me I'll let you know."

They separated then, and for more than half an hour Old King Brady paced the block; finally he was joined by Inez Reyes.

She did not stop to talk to him, but merely said as she walked slowly past the doorway in which the old detective was standing:

"We must not be seen together. You follow me."

Old King Brady fell in behind.

Looking back he caught sight of Leggett on the other side of the street, and made a sign for him to join the procession.

The woman rounded the corner and entered the alley, slipping in at the door of the House of the Seven Delights.

She did not ascend the stairs, but passed along the dimly lighted hall till she came to a door under the main stairway. There appeared to be nobody but themselves in the hall. Looking sharply up and down, the woman halted and waited for Old King Brady to come up in response to her signal.

"All I could get out of my aunt," she whispered, "is that this door is one way of getting into the private rooms in this building. It is not the way used by the club members; there are several other ways in and out. She says that Miss Montgomery was still there this evening; she is locked in one of the secret rooms. She won't tell me which one nor how to find it. There seems to be some mystery about it all which I can't fathom, and she is evidently afraid to reveal it. But she says that what you tell me is true, Mr. Brady. Miss Montgomery hates my husband.—It is such a relief to know it. I tried every way I knew to persuade my aunt to help up, but she is afraid to make a move. I don't know what more to do."

"There is nothing more you can do," replied the old detective. "Go and leave me to do the best I can. You will probably see a tall man standing just outside the door. Tell him I want him, please. I am staying at the Palace Hotel. Call there to-morrow and I will give you your money in case I succeed. I shall be glad to do what I can to help you in any case."

She thanked him and left; in a moment Leggett joined the old detective who in the meantime had unlocked the door with his skeleton keys.

Three Chinamen came shuffling through the hall from the Dupont street end, evidently diners from the restaurant going out that way.

Old King Brady with his back to the door talked aloud to Leggett on a different subject.

The men, paying no attention to them, passed on.

"All the young woman has been able to learn is that this stairway leads down to the private rooms," Old King Brady then explained. "I have managed to unlock the door. Let us push right ahead."

He opened it and a long, dark, narrow stairway was revealed.

"This is probably intended for a way of escape in case of fire," said the old detective. "Shut the door, Leggett, I'll get out my flash light and we will go on down."

"It's mighty dangerous business, Mr. Brady."

"Of course. Come on!"

He led the way and they descended the stairs, ending up at a door covered with sheet iron which had neither lock nor knob.

"Balked," breathed Leggett.

"Balked nothing," replied Old King Brady. "This door is controlled by a spring which works in the simplest sort of fashion."

He pressed it and the door flew open.

The long, lighted corridor already described lay beyond.

Old King Brady surveyed its many doors in silent dismay.

"Now we are balked," he whispered. "This is more than a Chinese puzzle. Which door to choose?"

"You may search me," replied Leggett. "What can be the object of all these doors?"

"Stand back!" breathed Old King Brady, and he allowed the iron door which was self-closing to swing almost to.

For out of one of the doors a man now came and that man was Dr. Garshaski.

Hastily closing the door behind him he walked on rapidly along the corridor, opened another door and disappeared.

Old King Brady carefully noted the door and was about to venture in, when the first door opened and two Chinamen emerged.

Both were in American dress. One pointed along the corridor in the direction taken by the Doctor. They halted at the door through which Garshaski vanished.

It was too far off to enable the watching detectives to see their faces plainly, the dim red lights

making it additionally obscure.

The two men stood talking for a few seconds then one of them got out what seemed to be a bunch of keys and began fumbling with the lock. As their backs were now turned to the detectives it was impossible to make out just exactly what they were doing.

In a moment the door was opened and they disappeared inside.

Old King Brady was about to press forward, but now came other delays.

A different door opened and four Chinamen came out. They shuffled along the corridor, talking, and entered at still a different door.

At the same time five others came out of that door and for fully ten minutes stood talking in the corridor, vanishing at last through the door out of which the others came.

Again Old King Brady thought he had got his chance, but once more he was balked in the same way.

At last his chance really did come and finding that they had the corridor to themselves he and Leggett pushed on.

Now at the start the old detective had been at particular pains to identify that door.

But did he still remember it? was the question.

He could not feel by any means certain and the worst of it was a quick decision was absolutely necessary.

"I think this is it," he said, pausing before a certain door.

"You want to be sure," replied Leggett.

"I am as sure as I can be. Yes. I think this is it."

The door was locked and the old detective getting out his skeleton keys went at the job of opening it vigorously.

He quickly succeeded.

A narrow, dark staircase leading up lay beyond; leaving the door unlocked, Old King Brady pressed on to the top flight, no great distance, coming out upon a semi-circular platform where there were three doors.

There was no light here.

The old detective flashed his electric lantern around.

"Your Chinese puzzle isn't it, Mr. Brady," whispered Leggett. "Is there any end to the mysteries with which these Chinks like to surround themselves?"

"None, absolutely none," replied the old detective. "It makes one tired to try to follow their curves. But listen a moment. We may catch on to something."

"It's a blame sight more likely that someone will catch on to us," growled Leggett.

"Hush! Hush! Listen!"

He had scarcely spoken when someone behind the middle door called out in a loud voice in English:

"Now, Ah Lung, I've got you. You scoundrel! It was I myself who kidnapped your princes! The secret of Gong Schow's hidden treasure is mine! Now you die!"

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Three shots were instantly fired.

"This is murder!" cried Old King Brady, and he threw himself against the middle door from behind which the shots came.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BRADYS GET TOGETHER ONCE AGAIN. BUT THE PRINCESS SLIPS THROUGH THEIR FINGERS.

Urged by Harry, Ah Lung jumped to the outer door of the smoking room as this part of the House of the Seven Delights was called.

Young King Brady hastily adjusting his clothes—he had taken off his coat and vest after the manner of opium smokers—prepared to follow him, but Ah Lung was back before he could get

ready.

"Well?" he demanded.

"I know where he went," replied Lung. "Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Then come with me."

They passed out into the corridor.

There were the "two Chinamen" seen by Old King Brady and Leggett.

"Where did he go?" demanded Harry.

"Listen," replied Lung. "We—the organization, I mean—don't make use of all this big building. Our part is only on this side. There are rooms on the other side which we rent, some to secret societies, others to individuals; most of them are vacant just now. The Doctor went in through a door leading to a suite of these supposed-to-be vacant rooms and here it is."

He paused before the door which Dr. Garshaski had called the "Door of Death."

It carried no red paper on it now, but a Chinese character painted on the panel.

"What does that say?" asked Harry, pointing to it.

"Flat to let," replied Ah Lung, "but I strongly suspect that our janitor is allowing the Doctor to use it for purposes of his own. Otherwise why should he be going through that door? Still it may have been rented to him for all I know. Anyhow that's where he went. What do you think of it? Shall we attempt to follow him up?"

"By all means," replied Harry. "Let me tell you something. I know this Dr. Garshaski. He is an infamous scoundrel."

Ah Lung shrugged his shoulders.

"We meet all kinds," he replied. "They are necessary to make up the world. But you heard what was said; you heard him try to blackmail me. Do you believe he really knows anything about the princess, or is it all bluff? There was nothing that he said he had not heard from me before."

"I don't believe it was bluff and I do believe he has the princess," replied Harry, "and I'll tell you why."

He went on to explain about Alice, and this while he was trying his skeleton keys.

"I believe he has Miss Montgomery a prisoner in the rooms you speak of," he declared, "and it would not surprise me a bit if the princess was there too. Hello! I've got the door open now. Shall we go exploring and see what we find?"

"Surely. If that is your belief. I am with you, of course," replied Ah Lung. "But lock the door behind you," he added. "We don't want anybody prowling after us."

Harry scarcely saw the necessity of it, but he locked the door.

The long corridor was dimly lighted by a solitary gas jet.

"Why this is strange," said Ah Lung. "I never was in this part of the building before."

"This corridor surely leads in under the next building," said Harry.

"Of course, it does, I never knew of its existence. I shall inquire into this."

"Sure you've got the right door?"

"Positive. Come on."

At the end of the corridor they made the same turns Alice took and at last found themselves up against three doors.

The ones on the right and the left were locked, but the middle one stood slightly open.

Harry pushed it wide open and flashed his light inside, having already drawn his revolver in case of emergency.

The room was entirely unfurnished.

Ah Lung stepped in and looked around.

"Nothing here," he remarked, when the door shut with a bang.

Harry sprang to it, but all too late.

Somebody must have been watching them, for now somebody had bolted that door on the other side.

"Well, upon my word!" cried Ah Lung, "we have walked right into a trap."

"That is certainly what we have done," replied Harry disgustedly, "and the worst of it is here I've been talking. I suppose every word we have spoken has been overheard."

"Every word, Mr. Young King Brady," spoke a voice above them.

"Garshaski, you villain! What do you mean by this?" shouted Ah Lung, recognizing the Doctor's voice.

"Business," was the reply. "You would not accede to my very modest request so I have to do the best I can for myself. So Young King Brady was your deaf and dumb friend in the next alcove, was he? Say, Lung, I'm going to read you a lesson. I'm going to teach you how dangerous it is to muss with me. As for little Brady he knows how I love him and what good reasons I have for my extreme affection. But you are dead wrong if you think the fair Alice is here, Harry."

"Did you kidnap her, Garshaski?" demanded Harry.

"Did I? Why sure I did," was the reply. "Who else? And I bagged your princess, too, my bold Lung. Listen, brother Chink; the plot was all mine. It was I who put up the job with Wung Foo. He brought your little would-be bride over to the boat on the Dover Castle. Same boat we brought that hop on, Lungy, old man! To avoid trouble, for Wang Foo had to be smuggled in as well as the hop, I drugged your pretty princess and boxed her up. Then in butted the Bradys after their usual fashion, but I watched my chance and got there and, Harry, I got your Alice, too. That pleased me more than all."

From where was the man speaking?

The sound of his voice seemed to be from above.

At the beginning of it Harry shut off his flash light and they had been standing there in the dark, but now he turned it on again and flashed it around.

There was no one to be seen. He could see no opening in the ceiling overhead.

"Hide and seek! You can't find me!" cried the voice with a chuckle. "Say, Lungy, old man. I know why you were so stuck on marrying Skeep Hup. I know her secret! Did you think I'd sell out for any \$5,000? No, not for five times five. I'm out for bigger game."

"Has she betrayed the secret to you?" cried Ah Lung quickly.

There was no answer.

Again and again the merchant repeated the demand, but it was just the same until all at once the voice fairly shouted:

"Now, Ah Lung, I've got you! It was myself who kidnapped your princess! The secret of Gong Schow's hidden treasure is mine. Now you die!"

As he spoke these ominous words three shots were fired in quick succession through some hole in the ceiling.

Instantly Harry shut off the light.

Probably he was not quick enough to prevent the would-be murderer from taking some sort of aim, for Ah Lung with a deep groan dropped to the floor.

At the same time a violent banging was heard overhead.

Harry held his breath and waited, not daring to turn on the light.

"Lung, are you badly hurt?" he breathed.

There was no reply.

"Lung! Speak! Where are you hit?" persisted Harry.

Still no answer.

The banging kept right up.

"He is dead," thought Young King Brady. "Merciful heavens! What about Alice's fate in the hands of that yellow fiend?"

Just then came a crash. Hurrying footsteps were heard overhead.

"Why there is nobody here, Leggett!" Old King Brady's voice exclaimed.

"Upon my word!" thought Harry. "And just in the nick of time!"

"Governor! Oh, Governor!" he shouted.

"Harry, my dear boy, where are you?" cried Old King Brady, for like Harry and Ah Lung, he and the Secret Service man had penetrated into a seemingly vacant room.

"I fancy I am in the room below you!" replied Harry. "So? Who fired those shots? You?"

"No, that yellow fiend, Garshaski!"

"As I supposed. You are not hurt, I judge from the way you speak."

"I am not, Governor, but poor Ah Lung who is here with me got it in the neck and I greatly fear he is dead."

"Well, well, that's a bad job. Do you know anything of Alice?"

"Only that Garshaski said she is far enough away if you can believe him, which is more than I can. Can't you come down here?"

"I must try to get there. Are you locked in?"

"Bolted in, most securely."

"There seems to be but one door here; I daresay there is another, a secret door. But I am going to take the back track and try it another way."

"I don't care what way you try it as long as you get here. I'm in a bad enough fix. I have no doubt Ah Lung is dead."

All this talk took place in the dark.

Harry was so rattled that he did not turn on his flash light. He never even thought of it until now, and he flashed it on Ah Lung.

Evidently the Chinaman had been hit in the head for his face was all covered with blood.

He was breathing, however. There seemed to be some slight hope.

Meanwhile Old King Brady, who had broken the door down after several attempts, returned to the semi-circular hall outside.

"This is a great piece of business, Leggett!" he exclaimed. "We must make haste and get Harry out."

As he said it there came a loud pounding on the door at their left and Alice's voice called:

"Mr. Brady! Oh, Mr. Brady!"

"Well, upon my word!" exclaimed Leggett.

"Alice, are you all right?" cried the old detective with deep anxiety in his tone.

"As right as I can be under the circumstances," replied the voice behind the door, "but they have taken the poor little princess away. This is Garshaski's work. Perhaps you don't know?"

"Oh, I know. I had as soon see you in the clutches of the arch fiend himself as in that man's power."

"Yes, he's a fiend, all right, and don't you forget it," replied Alice, "and a yellow one at that. I have a lot to tell you, Mr. Brady, but if Harry needs you, do attend to him first."

"He can wait. Patience a moment. I have unbolted the door. I shall soon find a key to fit."

The old detective was trying his skeletons and in a moment he had the door open.

It was the same room in which Alice had passed those dreary days with the princess.

But now she was alone and the room was all in disorder.

As for Alice herself she was tied in her chair, being bound hand and foot.

She had been gagged also, she explained, a handkerchief having been tied over her mouth, but this she managed to work off.

"I heard you when you called murder," she said, "but I couldn't speak then. Who fired? Who was killed?"

"Ah Lung," replied the old detective, and he explained as he cut Alice's bonds.

"As for my story, it is too long to tell now," she said. "Go for Harry."

"If we can get there. We seem to have taken another door than the one we intended."

"From that long corridor?"

"Yes."

"I came in at the Door of Death as they call it. It has nearly been the death of me."

She shuddered at the recollection of the cruelties she had witnessed in the torture room.

They hurried down stairs and passed out into the corridor again.

Alice could see no "Door of Death" now.

"This next door says To Let," she said. "Suppose you try that."

"Yes, and I think it is the one," replied Old King Brady, again working his skeleton keys.

Fortunately they found themselves with the corridor at their own disposal.

In a moment they had the door open.

"This is the road I travelled," Alice instantly declared.

This lengthy cross corridor seemed certain to lead them away from the room in which Harry was confined, but Alice explaining its windings they determined to try it.

They were a story lower than the room in which they had been before and when they came to the semi-circular hall with the three doors exactly like the arrangement above Old King Brady felt that they must be right.

"Harry!" he called in a low voice, for he had no desire to bring the Chinks down upon him.

"Here," replied Harry instantly. "Behind the middle door."

Old King Brady shot the bolt and threw back the door, which was not locked.

Ah Lung was sitting up leaning on Harry.

He certainly was a horrible looking object with his face all bathed in blood.

"Not dead!" exclaimed Old King Brady.

"Not dead, but in a mighty bad way," gasped Lung. "The princess!" he added. "I see you have Miss Montgomery all right."

"I'm sorry to say we have seen nothing of the princess," replied the old detective. "I haven't had time to ask Miss Montgomery about her yet. What has become of her, Alice?"

"Dr. Garshaski carried her off," replied Alice.

"Did—did she give away what he wanted to know?" asked Ah Lung.

"I'm afraid she did. They tortured the poor creature terribly."

"We must get you out of here without delay, Ah Lung," interrupted the old detective. "As for the rest it will have to keep. Where shall we take you—home?"

"Wait," said Ah Lung. "Connected with this place is a club of which I am a member. I have a room here where I sometimes sleep. Take me there first and go for Dr. Gim Suey on Sacramento street."

"Oh, you better have an American doctor," protested Harry.

"Not at all," replied Ah Lung, decidedly. "I have doctored both ways, I greatly prefer the Chinese treatment. Dr. Gim Suey will save my life if it can be saved."

CHAPTER X.

TREASURE HUNTING.

Harry and Detective Leggett carried Ah Lung out into the long corridor head and heels.

Here they ran into a bunch of Chinks just coming out of the main club room.

There were friends of Ah Lung's among them, and a tremendous pow-wow and excitement followed, all in Chinese.

Alice explained that it was partly sympathy, partly indignation against Dr. Garshaski, who was a club member, and partly about the presence of detectives in the House of the Seven Delights.

Ah Lung quieted them, however.

"Leave me now," he said. "I am in the hands of my friends. They will do all for me that can be done. They are not willing that you should enter the club room."

So the detectives were escorted back to earth by the way Old King Brady and Leggett had come down into these lower regions and glad enough they were to find themselves safe on China alley.

Parting from Leggett, they started, reaching it shortly before midnight.

Alice was so exhausted that Old King Brady insisted that she should postpone her story till morning.

"I don't know that it will do any good to tell it now," she said. "But I must give you a hint. There is buried or hidden money at the bottom of all this business."

"Yes, yes, I know," said Old King Brady. "I heard Garshaski call out about it. Do you know where the hiding place is?"

"In an old house down by the North Beach."

"Does he know?"

"He does. He has had plenty of time to get there and get the treasure if it still exists."

"If that is the case," said the old detective, "then I think the best thing that all of us can do is to go to bed."

They did so and it was not until the next morning at breakfast in the private parlor of the detective's suite that Alice's story was told.

We need only take it up at the scene in the torture room when the princess fainted and Alice thought her dead.

"They ran me out then," she said, "so I don't know exactly what the yellow fiends did to her after that.

"They tied me to the chair and I think Garshaski meant mischief.

"After a little he brought the princess into the room and laid her on the bed. She was in a dreadful condition, but she was game still. She had not given the secret away. I begged Garshaski to untie me and allow me to attend to her, but he wouldn't hear to it.

"She'll come around all right," he declared; adding:

"And for your interference you have to suffer, Alice. I will make you feel sorry you ever insulted me in the way you did.' He then left us, and I tried to question the princess, but she would not talk about herself.

"Listen, Alice,' she said. 'That fiend has killed my cousin Wang Foo. He told me so. He means to kill me, I know it, but I will never tell him where my grandfather hid his money. I will tell you, though, for you may live to get out of this and I want you, if you do, to go and get that money and give it to Ah Lung. Promise me that.'

"I gave her the promise and asked how much the money amounted to.

"She declared that her grandfather's letter did not state.

"She then went on to tell me that it was hidden under the headstone of an old house near the North Beach, the location of which she described so carefully that I am sure I can find it. It appears that her grandfather, although he lived in Chinatown, carried on business in this house selling cigars, soda water and so on, probably doing a little opium smuggling on the sly."

"Let's see!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "What was the old fellow's name again? I heard Garshaski speak it, but I forget."

"His name was Gong Schow," Alice replied.

"Why, I knew him!" cried the old detective. "Of course, he smuggled opium. The cigar and soda water business was only a blind. I can locate that house if you can't Alice. But do you suppose it is still standing?"

"The princess thinks so at all events. That is all I know about it."

"Very likely it is then. We must go down there at once. On the way we will look in at Lung & Lung's and learn how it fares with Garshaski's unfortunate victim."

"Go on with your story," said Harry.

"There is little more to tell," replied Alice. "Garshaski must have had his ear at some listening hole, for he now burst in on us and, gagging me carried Skeep Hup off, declaring that he had heard all."

And this ended what Alice had to say.

They started away right after breakfast.

Meanwhile Old King Brady called up Mr. Narraway on the telephone and suggested—for he was in no position to order it—the immediate arrest of Volckman.

"That has already been attended to," replied the Secret Service commissioner over the wire, "Leggett was at my house early this morning and told me what happened last night."

At Lung & Lung's they ran into Wun Lung.

"Ah was still at his club," he said. "He had seen him that morning. Dr. Gim Suey thought he would recover." That was all he could say.

The Bradys and Alice now went to the North Beach.

Here they met with disappointment.

They passed on to a point at some distance from the bathing houses to a place where there had once been quite a little grouping of little shacks where various kinds of small business had once been carried on.

But these, owing to certain changes, had all been abandoned since the fire. Many of them had been pulled down and carried away for firewood. The few which still remained were all unoccupied and fast going to ruin.

Skeep Hup's description of the place would have fitted either one of those remaining.

Even Old King Brady was at fault, sure as he had been that he could easily identify the house.

They returned to the North Beach proper and started to inquire.

They could not find any one who remembered old Gong Schow, strange as it seemed, for the man had been there for several years.

"It looks as though we should have to give it up altogether," remarked Harry when this stage of the game was reached.

"It does," replied Old King Brady, "and it don't give us the Chinese Princess either. There is but one way to solve the mystery that I can think that is to get hold of some old Chink who knew and had business with Gong Schow."

"But it is doubtful if such a person can be made to tell."

"Very."

"Do you know such a man?"

"I think I do."

"Who is he?"

"Now, Harry, I feel under obligations not to tell you. He is a Chinaman who was at one time largely engaged in opium smuggling. I knew it, but I was never called upon to proceed against him, so as he once did me an important service I made no move. I found out that he was in the hop business by the merest accident and I swore to him that I would never tell."

And Harry knew that this was final.

So they gave it up and went back to town, leaving Old King Brady to look up his man.

Alice was still suffering from the effects of what she had been through in those underground rooms, so she remained at the hotel while Harry started out to see what he could do towards locating Dr. Garshaski.

He called first at the Stockton street house and entered the Doctor's room with a skeleton key.

It was a case of no doctor, but there was evidence that he had recently been there.

Hardly knowing what to do or where to go, Harry bent his steps towards the North Beach again.

When he got there the water looked good to him, so he went in swimming.

The day was cool and there were few bathers.

One old white-haired man, a splendid swimmer, particularly attracted Young King Brady's attention and he fell into conversation with him.

He learned that the old fellow suffered terribly from insomnia.

"Why I often come down here and go in alone at midnight," he said, "and sometimes in the early morning hours. I was here this morning at a quarter to one."

"Is the place deserted then?" Harry asked.

"I don't believe the North Beach baths are ever deserted," replied the old man. "There are always a few old cranks like myself paddling about; sometimes we see strange sights."

"I suppose so. Suicides for instance?"

"Yes, I have seen more than I like to think of. I have personally prevented three. Last night I saw something which interested me, but, of course, I didn't butt in. I never do. I learned long ago to mind my own business in my nightly wanderings."

"What was that?" inquired Harry carelessly, for he was not paying very close attention to the old man's talk.

"See those old shacks away down there where the pavilion used to be," pointing to the very place which interested Young King Brady most.

"Why, yes. What about them?"

"Last night, just as I came here and before I had undressed—it was about a quarter to one, I should say—I saw an old-fashioned hack drive up on the top of the bank and stop. A man got out and then lifted out what I took to be a little girl, and the hack drove away. Next thing I knew he was coming down the long steps carrying the girl in his arms."

"Going to drown her!" cried Harry.

"I thought so," replied the old man. "There was nobody here but me. I determined to prevent it if I could so I sneaked along under the bank making as good time as possible and managed to get where I could see what was going on, just as the fellow reached the bottom of the steps. You can judge of my surprise when I tell you that I saw that he was a Chinaman, and that what I had taken to be a little girl was actually a very small Chinese woman, one of the kind with little feet. I hid under the bank ready to jump on him if he attempted any funny business, but I now saw that he had no notions of drowning the woman. He wandered about among the old shacks talking to her in Chinese. They seemed to be trying to find something."

"And did they succeed?" asked Harry quickly.

"They did not as far as I could judge," replied the swimmer. "They hung around for half an hour. The Chinawoman apparently could not walk; he had to carry her all the time. At last they seemed to give it up. He carried her up the steps again and they got into the hack and were driven away."

"Garshaski and the princess," thought Harry. "It could have been no one else. What can it mean? Has he given up the treasure hunt then?"

He asked the old fellow his name and was told that it was Abner Dawson.

They went out of the water now after that and while they were dressing an idea suddenly occurred to Young King Brady.

"Mr. Dawson," he asked, "is there any other place around San Francisco which goes by the name of North Beach?"

"There might be, over the Bay," said Dawson. "They have a lot of our San Francisco names duplicated over there."

Harry left him wondering if there could be anything in his idea.

CHAPTER XI.

TOO LATE.

Old King Brady had two good reasons for keeping his mouth shut about the Chinaman whom he hoped might furnish him information about Gong Schow.

In the first place this man, who went by the name of Ed. Woo, had once saved his life during a mix-up in a Dupont street opium joint, a service which the old detective was not the kind to forget, and in the next place the man had long since given up his crooked ways and now held a position in a certain prominent bank on Montgomery street where he had charge of all Chinese business, commanded a good salary and was highly respected.

Old King Brady was not the man to throw a stone in the way of such a character, for which who can blame him?

Business of importance prevented the old detective from calling at once on Ed Woo, but during the morning he went to the bank and calling him out into the hall briefly explained the situation in part.

He told him about the princess, but made no mention of the supposed-to-be-hidden money.

"I have every reason to believe that Gong Schow before his death hid papers of importance in the little shack where he used to carry on business near the North Beach," he said. "This man Ah Lung is most anxious to recover those papers as well as the princess. I have been there, but everything seems to be in ruins. I can't even locate the spot where the shack stood. I am afraid the case is hopeless, but I thought that perhaps you could help me out, Woo."

"I will if I can, you may be sure," replied the Chinese bank clerks, "but I must say, Mr. Brady, you are rather indefinite."

"I know it," answered the old detective, "but to tell the truth, I have to be. The affair concerns only Ah Lung."

"And you are the best man in the world for keeping others people's secrets. But I did not refer to that. Which Gong Schow do you mean?"

"What! Was there more than one of that name in Chinatown?"

"There were four."

"Bless me! That certainly complicates matters. But surely there was only one who ran a business at the North Beach and engaged in hop smuggling on the side."

"There again you are wrong. There were two; what is more, there was another place called North Beach in those days."

The Chinaman named the location. It was over the Bay above Saucelito.

There, Ed Woo explained, a certain cove was once called North Beach and enjoyed a short-lived popularity as a Sunday bathing resort, but had now been entirely abandoned for several years.

"And was there a Gong Schow in business over there?" asked the old detective.

"There was," replied Ed Woo, "there was one out there and one at the old North Beach in San Francisco. Both took a hand at hop smuggling. I knew them both, so you see, Mr. Brady, it is important that I should know which one you mean."

"Well, under the circumstances I should say so," exclaimed the old detective. "The man I refer to died shortly after the fire."

"Then he was the Gong Schow over the bay," was the reply. "The other one so far as I know is living still."

Here was information of real value.

Hurrying back to the hotel Old King Brady found Harry had just come in.

"Have you accomplished anything?" he asked.

"Nothing, I may say," replied Harry, "except that by mere accident I learned that Dr. Garshaski took the princess to the North Beach last night and made a hunt for Gong Schow's house, but failed to find it."

"Which North Beach?"

"What? Are there two?"

"Sure."

"You don't mean it. Do you know that is just what I was wondering. You certainly know San Francisco better than I do, Governor."

Old King Brady smiled.

"Oh, I can't lay claim to have been in possession of the knowledge for any length of time," he said, and went on to explain.

"Singular that I should have been seized with the same idea," remarked Harry. "Alice, how does it strike you? Can this and not the regulation North Beach be the place?"

"Easily," replied Alice. "Skeep Hup knows nothing of San Francisco, remember. When she said North Beach, she was only repeating what she had read in her grandfather's letter. She told me that the letter stated that the house was a little frame affair standing back under the bluff, and that it had a green door; that there were other houses near it and that all had been abandoned."

"Hello!" exclaimed Harry. "You did not mention the green door before."

"Didn't I? Then it must have slipped my mind. But when one comes to think of it, no Chinaman in his senses would ever think of hiding money anywhere around North Beach, San Francisco."

"Dr. Garshaski seems to have been as badly deceived as ourselves," observed Harry.

"Yes, but he may have become undeceived by this time," replied Old King Brady. "We want to get across the bay at once and do our investigating there."

They lost no time in putting this plan into effect, starting for the foot of Clay street where, as Old King Brady knew, there was a man who had naphtha launches to rent.

As they were about to enter the little office of this individual who should they run into but Detective Leggett.

"Volckman has given us the slip," said Leggett. "I am going across the bay after him."

"You started to arrest him?"

"I didn't; Narraway sent a man to do it; some one must have tipped Volckman off, for he didn't come to business this morning nor send any word. I happened to be at the office when the man came in with this report; Narraway told me to go to Volckman's house and see if I could nail him there."

"And you failed?"

"Failed because he wasn't there. Wasn't any one there? The house was shut up. I managed to get in all the same. Found most everything packed up. I prowled about and came across some letters in an old desk which are mighty interesting. Want to see them?"

"What are they about?"

"Opium smuggling. Five names are mentioned. The gang has had a bad scare through our operations. They have changed their base. There's another lot of hop expected in to-night it seems and the landing is to be made at a lonely spot over the bay. I'm bound for there now. Want to size up the place and report to Narraway. I shall recommend that you be put in charge of the raid, Mr. Brady."

"I am not sure that I want the contract," replied the old detective.

"Got the princess yet?"

"No. We are still hunting Garshaski; but where is this place you speak of?"

"It's above Saucelito; used to be called North Beach."

The Bradys and Alice glanced at each other.

"How are you going, Leggett?" the old detective asked.

"Why, I was going to hire a launch."

"Then you may as well come along with us, for that's just the place we are bound for."

And thus it came about that once again Detective Leggett came to be associated with the Bradys in their chase after the Chinese Princess.

The launch was engaged and with the detectives on board and Harry running the motor, it started in the direction of the Golden Gate.

It now became necessary to take Leggett fully into their confidence, for the Secret Service man had not understood about the hidden money.

He grew quite excited and talked of little else the rest of the trip.

It made matters easier for the Bradys that Leggett knew the exact location of this other North Beach.

In due time they ran into the shallow cove under the green hills where there was a small pier, sort of boat-house on piles and several frame shacks which had once been devoted to such business as is usually found about a bathing place.

All happened to be deserted.

The Bradys instead of landing at the pier ran further down and tied up at a float from which they passed to the shore.

The Bradys walked up the beach surveying the different shacks.

"There's your green door, Alice," Harry suddenly exclaimed, as he pointed on ahead.

It was attached to a one-story building scarcely larger than a good sized hencoop, that green door.

"Looks as if it might be the place," observed Old King Brady, adding:

"But who owns the sailboat tied up at the pier, I wonder?"

They had not observed it as they approached the pier from the other side.

"Suggests Garshaski," said Harry.

They pushed on to the green door.

"Go on in, Harry and Alice," said the old detective. "Leggett and I will watch that house on the piles. The owner of the sailboat may be inside."

Harry and Alice then pushed on into the shack.

"Too late!" cried Alice, "Garshaski has been here ahead of us!"

And indeed it looked so, for there in the middle of the floor lay a flat stone broken in two pieces.

Evidently it had served as a hearth stone and beneath where it had lain at the foot of the chimney was a newly dug hole.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

"Just in time to be too late!" exclaimed Harry, pointing at the hole.

"So it would seem. But it may not be so. That sailboat!" said Old King Brady.

"That's what's the matter!" cried Harry. "That boat-house, you may say. Who is inside? That's what we want to know now."

"Mr. Brady! Oh, Mr. Brady!" called Leggett excitedly.

All hurried outside.

"Look!" said Leggett, pointing up the bay.

A good-sized launch was rapidly approaching, evidently heading for this abandoned beach.

"Can it be the hop gang?" asked Leggett.

"Who can tell?" replied the old detective. "Sneak on beyond the boat-house and get a sight of them. If you find they are Chinks hold up two fingers and get back as fast as you can. Don't show yourself any more than you have to."

"Right. What about the treasure?"

Harry hastily explained and Leggett hurried away, passing behind the boat-house.

The Bradys approached it leisurely.

The building was much larger than an ordinary boat-house. Indeed, perhaps it had never been intended for a boat-house at all, but for the office of the proprietors of the beach.

It had a door opening on the pier, also a window.

They stepped upon the pier and were just about to pass around to the front of the building when suddenly they heard the door open noisily.

"Stop!" breathed Old King Brady, "we want to know what that means."

He was about to peer around the corner of the building when a harsh voice called out something in Chinese.

"Mercy!" whispered Alice. "Garshaski! He says 'Now I'm going to be rid of you, princess!'"

Before Alice finished speaking, Old King Brady knew.

Peering around the corner of the building, he saw Dr. Garshaski starting down the pier carrying the Princess Skeep Hup in his arms crossing a sort of runway or gang plank which connected the pier with the house.

"Stop where you are, Doctor!" shouted the old detective, as all three showed themselves now.

The old detective ran to head him off. Harry and Alice were now on the side platform separated from the runway by considerable space.

Instantly the Doctor saw them.

With an exclamation of surprise and disgust he turned and took the back track.

Old King Brady rushed after the flying Chinaman who was carrying the princess.

He crossed a gang plank and entered the house on the piles.

The next instant part of the runway flew up, closing the doorway, while Harry and Alice looked on.

"You scoundrel!" shouted Old King Brady. "Harm that woman at your peril!"

"Leggett is signalling!" cried Harry. "There are Chinks in the launch!"

"Save the princess!" exclaimed Alice. "That yellow fiend has unearthed the treasure and now he will kill her."

"But how to get at him!" cried Old King Brady. "You two keep guard here. There must be a rear entrance. I'll tackle him there."

He ran around to where they were standing.

"Let Harry go too!" cried Alice. "If he comes out with the princess I'll shoot him."

"Come, Harry," said the old detective, and around the house they went.

Meanwhile Leggett was hurrying along the beach.

There proved to be a back door to the house, but it was shut. There was no window here, thus it was impossible to tell what Garshaski was about, but as they drew nearer they could hear him fumbling with the lock of the door.

"Stand in close, Harry," whispered the old detective.

The order was a wise one, for the next instant the door slightly opened and Garshaski peered out.

He jumped back, closing the door, but before the Bradys had time to think twice it was opened again on the crack and a revolver was fired.

The shot went through Old King Brady's hat.

The instant the crack of the revolver was heard, Harry, who had drawn his weapon, fired.

His aim was true, the shot flew in through the crack of the door.

There was a yell of pain and something was heard to fall.

"Forward!" cried the old detective.

As he said it a succession of queer little squeals began inside the house and a woman's voice chattered in Chinese.

It was the princess!

The Bradys rushed inside.

Harry's shot had taken Dr. Garshaski in the right hand.

He dropped the revolver and starting back had stumbled over a chair and fallen.

The princess lost no time in improving her opportunity.

She could not stand on her little feet owing to the damage done those nearly useless members by that terrible rack, but she had free use of her hands as she sat there on the floor.

Garshaski, as we should have mentioned, was now in full Chinese costume even to a false pigtail, but his natural hair was long enough for Skeep Hup to get a good hold, and there she was yanking it for all she was worth.

The scene was a comical one, but it might have been a tragedy, for the Doctor had just managed to get hold of the princess with his unwounded left hand, when the Bradys burst into the room.

Harry covered the Doctor, Old King Brady managed to make the princess let go her hold on his hair, but not without some difficulty.

Quickly they tied his legs together, searched and captured another revolver.

Meanwhile Garshaski had not spoken a word. His face was deathly white, the sight of his own blood which flowed freely had apparently turned him faint, for by the time the Bradys succeeded in securing him he had relapsed into unconsciousness.

"Call Alice!" ordered the old detective. "We want to find out about the treasure while we have so good a chance."

Alice came. The princess almost fell over herself in her delight, chattering eagerly in Chinese.

"Well?" demanded the old detective. "Well?"

"Oh, he got the treasure all right," said Alice. "It is in here."

She led the way into the front room, which was fitted up with a bar and upon this stood an old dress-suit case.

"That's it!" cried Alice. "They have but just finished their work. Garshaski was going to drown her and make off with the money. The princess says that he found it under the hearth stone and that there is a lot of it."

Leggett now burst into the room.

"That launch is full of Chinks!" he said, "but they have shoved off. I think they saw Mr. Brady's big hat and were scared away."

Perhaps it was so, for they did not return.

The suit-case, being opened, was found stuffed with yellow-backs with some gold.

When counted later the amount proved to be a little over \$75,000.

Garshaski was rounded up in San Francisco jail, later going to a hospital.

The Princess Skeep Hup was turned over to the Lung Brothers with the treasure. Some weeks later she married Ah Lung, who made a quick recovery.

That night the Bradys with Leggett and other Secret Service men returned to the abandoned beach.

Here they went into hiding, waiting for the opium smugglers.

And again it proved a foggy night, which greatly aided them in their work.

Two boats landed between one and two o'clock.

Meanwhile Volckman, five Chinamen and a white representative of the crooked commercial house were on land to receive the cargo.

At the right moment the Bradys rounded up the whole outfit; thus that incident was closed.

Dr. Garshaski went to San Quentin for ten years. The opium smugglers received various short sentences.

Volckman's was five years.

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ITEMS WORTH READING

The superintendent of an orphan asylum in Oxford, N. C., lately received the following letter, offering a good education to some deserving boy: "Dear Doctor, I wants to git a gude boye from the assylim to hep mee in mye farm wurk. I will treet him cindely and giv him as gude edicatin as I hev got myself. Your truly," etc.

By way of reply to the 14-inch gun which has been adopted, by some other navies, the British Admiralty are constructing, we understand, a 15-inch, 50-caliber gun. If the present rate of increase continues, it will not be long before we are back to the 17-inch caliber, which was used in a few monster weapons of 20 years ago that were mounted in certain Italian warships.

For conniving at the crimes of notorious robbers, eleven of the detective officers of Moscow have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment—five of them to hard labor in the Siberian mines. The detectives were denounced in a private letter to the czar, written by a thief who had refused to operate with the officers and divide his plunder with them.

One hundred dollars for one standing white pine tree was the stiff price paid to George Burgess of Clark County, Wis. The tree was cut and scaled slightly over 5,000 feet when cut into six logs, making a good profit for the buyer at the present price of lumber. At that rate a quarter section of pine would make a man a millionaire many times over.

According to cable dispatches from Gibraltar, the new battleship "Neptune" has recently made a test of a new system of aiming the main battery, which has been originated by Percy Scott, the father of the modern system of target firing. It is stated that while the "Neptune" was steaming at 13-knots she fired two broadsides in quick succession at a target moving at the same speed at a distance of 8,000 yards, and that every shot went home. The aiming and firing of the guns is done entirely from the conning tower, the duties of the gun crews being merely to load the guns. If this be true, Scott has made an advance second only in importance to his famous improvements of five or six years ago.

At Douen, in France, on the River Seine, there is a bridge that is a sort of aerial ferry. In order to avoid interference with shipping at this point, it was determined to place no structure in the stream or near its surface. Instead of a bridge in any of the ordinary forms, a horizontal flooring, sustained by steel towers and suspension cable, was stretched across the river at an elevation of 167 feet. On this flooring run electrically-driven rollers, from which is suspended, by means of steel ropes, a car that moves at the level of the wharves on the river banks. The car is 36 feet wide and 42 feet long, and is furnished, like a ferryboat, with accommodations for carriages and foot passengers. The ropes that carry the hanging car are interlaced diagonally in such a manner that the support is rigid, and a swinging motion is avoided.

To secure sound rock for the entire length of the Catskill aqueduct tunnel it has been necessary to go down over one thousand feet below the river surface. Investigation was made by wash borings, by diamond drills operated from scows on the river, and by inclined diamond borings started from the bottom of shafts sunk 300 feet on each side of the river. One of these inclined holes was over 3,000 feet long. The inclination was determined by sinking the shaft glass tubes filled with hydrofluoric acid, which etched a true horizontal line on the interior surface.

WITH THE FUNNY FELLOWS.

Shockit—Does learning the bicycle require any particular application? Sprockitt—No; none in particular. But arnica is about as good as anything.

Visitor—What makes you so ugly, Tommy? Don't you love your baby brother? Tommy (viciously)—Well, I did till somebody came in and said he looked like me.

Waiter (seeing dissatisfaction on guest's face)—Wasn't the dinner cooked to suit you, sir? Guest—Yes; all but the bill. Just take that back and tell them to boil it down a little.

"George, I wish you'd leave this little package at the express office." Me carry a bundle? I guess not. Besides, I've got to lug both my tires and a handle bar down to the repair shop.

Lawyer—I'll defend you, Sambo, in this bigamy case, but what defense have you? Sambo—I kin prove an alibi. Lawyer—An alibi? How will you prove it? Sambo—By two odder wives whut I had.

Miss Smart (after an hour of patient listening to a tortured violin)—Do you play a great deal, Mr. Sawton? Mr. Sawton (modestly)—Oh, not a great deal, I assure you. I play only to kill time. Miss S. (enthusiastically)—How well you succeed!

Judge—Have you anything to say, prisoner? Prisoner—Yes. I'm engaged to be married. I've been engaged for the last ten years. Judge—Why aren't you married? Prisoner—Because we've never been out of jail together. She comes out to-morrow.

The pupils in a school in Boston were asked to give in writing the difference between a biped and a quadruped. One boy gave the following: "A biped has two legs and a quadruped has four legs, therefore, the difference between a biped and a quadruped is two legs."

Mistress—Oh, Briget! Briget! What an awful numbskull you are! You've put the potatoes on the table with their skins on, right in front of our visitors, too. You—you—what shall I call you? Briget (affably)—Call me "Agnes," if ye loike, mum; 'tis me other name.

A real joke was sprung by a student at the Western Reserve University last week. This student suffers from the stigma of obesity; it appears that even professors do not love a fat man. After a particularly unsuccessful recitation in English III., the professor said: "Alas, Mr. Blank! You are better fed than taught." "That's right, professor," sighed the youth, subsiding heavily. "You teach me—I feed myself."

A writer in the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post tells of a big, overgrown, bashful booby of a farmer's boy who was afraid even to speak to a girl, and whose father one day finally lost patience and scolded him roundly for not looking about and finding some girl to marry. "Why," he said, "at your age I had been married three years and had a house and farm of my own!" "Well, but, dad," complained the boy, "that ain't the same thing at all. You only had to marry mother, while I've got to go and hunt up some strange girl and ask her to marry me!"

THE MARSHLEA TRAGEDY

By Col. Ralph Fenton

Three years ago I went down to Marshlea to spend the summer. It is a sea-breezy, bird-singing country, and the Ocean House, having been taken by a friend of mine for the season, I knew I should have unexceptionable quarters, and "rust" as my friend Charley Williard says, to my heart's content.

Change of scene is a good thing, but utter solitude, under the names of rustication and rest, is a penalty I never willingly undergo.

I knew that there would be plenty of people at Marshlea—people in undress and holiday tempers—fashionables exhibiting, scholars seeking, invalids languishing, flirts flirting, and many good people simply enjoying relief from care and the salubrious situation.

I expected as much of the people as I did of the place, and accepted them quite as willingly.

My quarters were comfortable, a cool northeast room and a little east bedroom looking upon the sea, both rooms furnished freely in bamboo and India matting.

I wheeled my bed so that I could see the sun rise in the morning, quite comfortable, and with no thanks to Mr. Bierstadt, and heard the gong sound two hours later, while I was reading Thackeray.

I never took morning sea-baths—they did not agree with my constitution—but at noon, when the tide lapped the shingles, full of a soft wash and warm swells, I took a stretch of half a mile, and felt the better for my tonic.

But of a morning, as the tide came in, it was pleasant to watch the bathers—men swimming with fearless little boys, mothers dipping astonished babies, and acres of scarlet-clad figures tripping along the sand, or waltzing in the surf, like blossoms blown about—while the sky lay low and fleecy and warm over the scene.

I remember the sand-piper's cry, the peals of laughter, and lowing of the cattle in the marshes.

I recollect the saxifrage that grew among the rocks, the spring that pushed its way over the salt pebbles to the waters of the cove, and the sweet notes of the little brown shore birds.

I recall a day when the sunshine was very bland; glittering carriage loads of dolce far niente

pleasure-seekers rolled slowly down the sands. Staniels' canopied boat, its silken flag fluttering, softly rocked at his moorings, little white tents, the mushroom dwellings of sportsmen, dotted the rocks, and the sea glittered and tossed under the serene blueness of the sky.

It was all enjoyable then, but an element of tragedy entered into it afterwards which makes me recall the place with a pang of sorrow.

I seem to hear a woman's shrieks ringing out over that blue, smiling water.

I was smoking in the bowling alley one evening, when a light coupe came dashing over the sands, and stopped at the door of the hotel.

John Saunders, my good friend and host, came out to meet a singularly handsome man, who alighted, and entered into conversation with him.

"By jingo!" exclaimed a volatile voice in my ear. "Colonel Staniels!" and my mercurial friend, Walt Summers, finished his exclamation of surprise with a prolonged whistle.

"Are you sure?" I asked, for I knew the name, though not the man then.

"Yes; know his carriage. And then no one could ever see Eben Staniels and mistake him afterwards."

I was certain of that when I saw the gentleman at supper.

He was about the medium height, with a magnificent chest, a handsome head covered with curling brown hair, and a prompt, military bearing.

His eyes were gray, bright, unflinching and very handsome.

He wore a closely-trimmed dark beard, and his regular features, straight brows and bold white forehead made his face as fine as it was fearless.

He seemed entirely indifferent to the sensation he produced.

It was generally known that he had been divorced from his wife two years previous, and this fact, together with his wealth, standing and personal appearance, made him an object of attention to everybody.

His manner was unexceptionable, and his bearing perfectly cool, to an ordinary observer; but as I passed him on the porch, late in the evening, smoking, I saw him looking silently over the moonlighted sea, and wincing at his secret thoughts.

His room adjoined mine. He was at Marshlea three weeks before I made his acquaintance.

He knocked at my door one evening just at sunset.

"Mr. Cathmor, would you like to drive in town with me to-night? The sunset promises us a fine evening."

I had planned a sail by the moonlight, but an impulse to accept Colonel Staniels' invitation instantly seized me.

I admired the colonel, was glad to know more of him, as this opportunity suggested, and I liked fine horses, and the colonel's were very fine. I accepted the invitation.

When we went out the sun had just set, and a boy was holding the horses.

As soon as he left their heads we sailed away.

The animals were magnificent, wanting nothing but guiding.

In town we went to the postoffice and bank, and then turned homewards.

The colonel talked well. We touched briefly on a score of standard subjects, and momentarily my respect for the man beside me increased.

He made many remarks worth recording, among these this:

"It is a very common mistake among men that they must rule their wives."

This was nearly four years ago, before the diffusion of the woman's rights question, now so generally discussed. The words, and his manner of saying them, gave me a clew to the track of his observations, if not his experience.

I glanced at the stern contour of his face, the unquiet glance of his eye, and chose to believe the latter.

Suddenly his manner changed.

"Mr. Cathmor, I have a fancy to receive your congratulations first. I am to be married in a few days, and bring my wife to the Ocean House," he said.

I expressed the pleasure his manner conveyed to me.

"My little girl will like this place, I think," he said.

The singular sweetness of his smile charmed me. After a moment he took a little oval miniature case from his breast and handed it to me. It contained a sweet, pure, earnest face—a sparkle in the modest eyes, too, that told of exuberant life.

"That is what I call lovable," I exclaimed, in enthusiasm.

My praise seemed to touch him to the quick.

"I think so, too," he answered, quietly, putting the picture back in its hiding-place, with a moment's happy abstraction.

We drove fleetly up to the door. A little knot of men gathered about the horses as usual. I went up to my room with a new item for thought.

The next day Colonel Staniels took the boat for New York. In three days he was back with his wife.

Brides are not generally to my taste, they are usually too suggestive of clothes, and plume themselves to a fatiguing extent. They are too demonstrative and important, too publicly tender, and too generally oppressive. But I liked Mrs. Staniels the moment I heard her glad laugh. It was a laugh, and her face was like a sunbeam.

She was not overdressed or burdened with the consciousness of her position; she did not caress her husband in public, or betray any unusual excitement.

She talked in an arch, merry little way with everybody she won to her side, telling of places, things, people, anybody but herself and the colonel.

She had just returned from Europe. She was pretty, and an heiress, but she was not spoiled.

I admired the colonel more than ever at that time. He received the ladies' congratulations and compliments on his wife with a grave sweetness; I noticed that the men did not jest with him, and that their appearance did not suggest any of the stale jokes and comments on matrimony, common to a mixed company. More than all this, their composed and friendly demeanor when together, and the quiet system of their glances, pleased me.

But I knew that Staniels was very happy. His face unbent—its only fault had been a little coldness and sternness—and revealed a warmth and geniality that made him quite resistible.

He formed the habit of coming into my room to smoke, remarking that: "Say did not like tobacco smoke."

I never saw him smoke in her presence.

The name on her wedding cards was Sarah Fay Pomfret, but this stately appellation the colonel abbreviated to the diminutive title, "Say," and it seemed to quite suit her.

One day, about three weeks after their arrival, a party of us went down the shore gunning, Colonel Staniels was of the number.

My luck was unusually good. My game bag became heavy.

Towards noon I flung myself down under a tree to rest.

In a few minutes Staniels appeared and took a seat beside me. He was out of spirits.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

He tried to smile, ruthlessly, but I saw a tear flash in his eye.

"My cursed obstinacy! I was cross to Say this morning."

He arose restlessly, and walked away. I saw that he was far from being happy, but it was a matter requiring no interference of mine.

"Who breaks—pays," I muttered, and lay flat on my back for a full hour before the rest came up.

I reached home first.

The day had been unusually hot, but a cooling breeze had sprung up as the sun set.

I entered the house, and passing up to my room met Say Spaniels, all in white, in the hall.

"Mr. Cathmor, is Eben coming?" she asked.

"He has come; he will be up directly," I answered.

"Keep still as a mouse," she whispered, "I am going to play a trick on him. Don't tell where I am—hush!" as a step sounded on the stair.

She turned and fled noiselessly into an alcove of the hall.

Staniels came rather slowly up the stairs. I thought he was deliberating what kind of a reception might greet him, fearing, perhaps, tears, pouts or frowns.

But I, seeing the merry, peeping face, knew that the matter to which he was probably keenly

sensible was utterly disregarded by the sweet, healthy nature of his wife.

He entered the room, closed the door. All was silent after he crossed the floor. Say tiptoed down the hall and stood listening, her head with its glossy waves of chestnut hair bent, her red lips parted, her cheek dimpling.

Suddenly we heard the report of a pistol. She started bewildered. I leaped from my seat, and sprang past her into the room. Staniels lay dead on the floor, shot through the heart. Beside him lay the innocent paper which had caused the deed.

It was a little note saying:

"You do not love me. I have gone away. Good-by. Say."

The cheat had been too certain. With a sore conscience, and a heart in which memories of a hidden past had probably rankled all day, the husband had been thoroughly duped. The thoughts that rushed upon him maddened him; the first act was self-destruction.

And so, when I think of beautiful Marshlea, I always hear above the murmur of the sea and the songs of the birds, the dreadful shrieks of an agonized woman, whose innocent, childlike love had been the cause of so terrible a tragedy.

A WILDCAT FULL OF FIGHT.

A fierce fight between a monster wildcat and two dogs was witnessed the other day by Henry T. Frankelfield on Saw Creek, a tributary of the Bushkill, in lower Pike county, Pa. Mr. Frankelfield is the landlord of the Falls House at Resaca, Pa. He had been hearing the cries of the wildcat for several nights. A recent snowfall made excellent tracking and he started out in pursuit of the animal in company with his dogs, Sport and Watch.

The hunter had not gone far when Sport struck the trail of the wildcat. The two dogs started off with a yelp and followed the scent almost to Saw Creek and then stopped. When Frankelfield came up he found one of the dogs smelling around an old tree stump. It was evident that the cat had been there recently, but had left again, after Watch found the trail again, and the animal was traced into Little Pine Swamp. Frankelfield remained at the edge of the swamp while the dogs entered it. He heard them bark and knew that they had found their game, and he made his way to the spot. He found both dogs at the foot of an old tamarack stump which had fallen against another tree, and in the top of the stump was the wildcat eying them both.

Frankelfield took deliberate aim and discharged both barrels of his gun at the animal, but failed to kill it outright. Wounded and maddened with pain, the cat gave a loud screech, sprang from the tree stump to the ground, and landed on the back of one of the dogs. The infuriated beast got one of its paws in on Sport and almost scalped the dog, while Watch planted his teeth in the cat. Then began one of the liveliest scrapping matches Frankelfield has ever seen. Snarling and snapping, the cat fought both animals, the blood from the gunshot wounds dyeing the snow a deep red. Frankelfield watched the battle some time, and tried to shoot the animal, but the combatants seemed to be all in a snarl, and he was afraid to fire lest he should hit the dogs. It was nip-and-tuck for a long time, and the wildcat, although fighting against odds, clawed and chewed first one dog and then the other, as the trio rolled over and over. At last the cat, exhausted from loss of blood, gave up the fight and was killed by its opponents. Frankelfield carried the animal home, and intends having it mounted. It weighed forty pounds, and is the largest cat that has been killed in Poke County in many years.

A clerk in Belgrade, Servia, named Vellslaw Simmonovitch, on the strength of an increase of salary, recently telegraphed to a young woman of Losnitsa and asked her to share his fortunes. The regulation tax allows ten words for the minimum fee, and her answer ran: "Yes, gladly, willingly, joyfully, delightfully, gratefully, lovingly, yes, yes, yes."

The Dissolving Penny.—A genuine penny is held by the fingertips. You offer it to your friend, and when he attempts to take it, the penny suddenly vanishes without any trace and is immediately reproduced from some quite unexpected place. Price, 12c

CHAS. UNGER, 316 UNION ST., JERSEY CITY, N. J.

MOSSBERG WRENCH DCO. ATTLEBORO MASS. U.S.A.

DEVILINE'S WHISTLE.—Nickel plated, polished; it produces a near-piercing sound, large seller; illustration actual size.

Price, 12c., by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MICROSCOPE.—By use of this wonderful little microscope you can magnify a drop of stagnant water until you see thousands of crawling insects; is also useful for inspecting grain, pork, linen and numerous other articles. This little instrument does equally as good work as the best microscopes and is invaluable to the household. Is made of best finished brass; size when closed one inch by two and a half inches. Price, 30c.

L. SENARENS,
347 Winthrop St.,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

MANY TOOL KEY RING.

The wonder of the age. The greatest small tool in the world. In this little instrument you have in combination seven useful tools embracing Key Ring, Pencil Sharpener, Nail Cutter and Cleaner, Watch Opener, Cigar Clipper, Letter Opener and Screw Driver. It is not a toy, but a useful article, made of cutlery steel, tempered and highly nicked. Therefore will carry an edge the same as any piece of cutlery. As a useful tool, nothing has ever been offered to the public to equal it.

Price, 15 cents, mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.—This cigar is made an exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord, which with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c. each.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

LINK THE LINK PUZZLE.

The sensation of the day. Pronounced by all, the most baffling and scientific novelty out. Thousands have worked at it for hours without mastering it, still it can be done in two seconds by giving the links the proper twist, but unless you know how, the harder you twist them the tighter they grow.

Price, 6 cents; 3 for 15 cents; one dozen, 50 cents, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

CACHOO OR 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.

ROUGH AND READY TUMBLERS.

These lively acrobats are handsomely decorated with the U. S. flag and with gold and silver stars and hearts. Upon placing them upon any flat surface they at once begin a most wonderful performance, climbing and tumbling over each other and chasing each other in every direction, as if this evil spirit was after them, causing roars of laughter from the spectators. They actually appear imbued with life. What causes them to cut up such antics is a secret that may not be known even to the owner of the unruly subjects. If you want some genuine fun send for a set of our tumblers.

Price, per set, 10 cents; mailed postpaid.

The following is a summary of the advertisements shown in the grid:

- CACHOO**: Advertisement for sneezing powder, showing a bottle.
- Good Luck Banks**: Advertisement for small banks, showing a bank with a key.
- HAPPY HOOLIGAN JOKER**: Advertisement for a keychain toy, showing a key with a figure.
- ROUGH AND READY TUMBLERS**: Advertisement for acrobat toys, showing several figures.
- THE GERMAN OCARINA**: Advertisement for a musical instrument, showing the ocarina.
- THE JOKER'S CIGAR**: Advertisement for a disappearing cigar, showing a man holding a cigar.
- LINK THE LINK PUZZLE**: Advertisement for a puzzle, showing a chain of links.
- THE GREAT FIRE EATER**: Advertisement for a fire-eating toy, showing a figure with a flame.
- WHICH PUZZLE**: Advertisement for a puzzle, showing a puzzle box.
- THE VANISHING CIGAR**: Advertisement for a disappearing cigar, showing a man holding a cigar.
- THE MICROSCOPE**: Advertisement for a microscope, showing the instrument.
- MANY TOOL KEY RING**: Advertisement for a multi-tool keychain, showing the keychain.
- THE VANISHING CIGAR**: Advertisement for a disappearing cigar, showing a man holding a cigar.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

THE GERMAN OCARINO.

A handsome metal instrument, made in Germany, from which peculiar but sweet music can be produced. Its odd shape, which resembles a torpedo boat, will attract much attention. We send instructions with each instrument, by the aid of which any one can in a short time play any tune and produce very sweet music on this odd looking instrument.

Price 10 cents by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.—The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the centre of purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it. Price by mail, postpaid, 25c. each.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.

The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction, to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end.

Price, 10 cents; 3 for 25 cents; 1 dozen, 90 cents, mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

JAPANESE TRICK KNIFE.—You can show the knife and instantly draw it across your finger, apparently cutting deep into the flesh. The red blood appears on the blade of the knife, giving a startling effect to the spectators. The knife is removed and the finger is found in good condition. Quite an effective illusion. Price by mail, 10c. each.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

Good Luck Banks

Price 10 Cents

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nicked 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.

L. SENARENS
347 WINTHROP ST.,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

HAPPY HOOLIGAN JOKER

With this joker in the lappel of your coat, you can make a dead shot every time. Complete, with rubber ball and tubing.

Price, 15 cents, by mail, postpaid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

THE GREAT FIRE EATER.

A great Sensational Trick of the Day! With the Fire Eater in his possession any person can become a perfect salamander, apparently *breathing fire* and ejecting *thousands* of brilliant sparks from his mouth, to the horror and consternation of all beholders. Harmless fun for all times, seasons and places. If you wish to produce a *decided sensation* in your neighborhood don't fail to procure one. We send the Fire Eater with all the materials, in a handsome box, the cover of which is highly ornamented with illustrations in various colors. Price of *all* complete only 15 cents, or 4 boxes for 50 cents, mailed postpaid; one dozen by express \$1.20.

N. B.—Full printed instructions for performing the trick accompany *each* box, which also contains

sufficient material for giving *several* exhibitions.

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

THE SURPRISE BOUQUET.

The best practical joke of the season. This beautiful button-hole bouquet is made of artificial flowers and leaves which so closely resemble natural flowers that not one person in a thousand would detect the difference. After placing the bouquet in your button-hole you call the attention of a friend to its beauty and fragrance. He will very naturally step forward and smell of it, when, to his utter astonishment, a fine stream of water will be thrown into his face. Where the water comes from is a mystery, as you can have your hands at your side or behind you, and not touch the bouquet in any manner. You can give one dozen or more persons a shower bath without removing the bouquet from your button-hole, and after the water is exhausted it can be immediately refilled without removing it from your coat. Cologne can be used in place of water when desired. We have many funny things in our stock, but nothing that excels this.

Price, complete in a beautiful box, with full printed instructions, 25 cents, or three for 60 cents; by mail post paid.

Chas. Unger, 316 Union St., Jersey City, N. J.

IMITATION GOLD TEETH.—Gold plated tooth, shape made so that it will fit any tooth.

Price, 5c., postpaid

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

CARTER AEROPLANE No. 1

Will fly on a horizontal line 150 feet! Can be flown in the house, and will not injure itself nor anything in the room. The most perfect little aeroplane made.

The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance sidewise before it is released for flight. PRICE 35 Cents Each, Delivered.

L. Senarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

SNAKES IN THE GRASS.

Something entirely new, consisting of six large cones, each one nearly one inch in height. Upon lighting one of these cones with a match, you see something similar to a 4th of July exhibition of fireworks. Sparks fly in every direction, and as the cone burns down it throws out and is surrounded with what appears to be grass; at the same time a large snake uncoils himself from the burning cone, and lazily stretches out in the grass, which at last burns to ashes, but the snake remains as a curiosity unharmed. They are not at all dangerous, and can be set off in the parlor if placed on some metal surface that will not burn. An ordinary dust pan answers the purpose nicely.

Price of the six cones, packed in sawdust, in a strong wooden box, only 10 cents, 3 boxes for 25 cents, 1 dozen boxes 75 cents, sent by mail post paid.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

COMICAL RUBBER STAMPS.

A complete set of five grotesque little people made of indestructible rubber mounted on black walnut blocks. The figures consist of Policeman, Chinaman, and other laughable figures as shown in pictures. As EACH figure is mounted on a separate block, any boy can set up a regular parade or circus by printing the figures in different positions. With each set of figures we send a bottle of colored ink, an ink pad and full instructions. Children can stamp these pictures on their toys, picture books, writing paper and envelopes, and they are without doubt the most amusing and entertaining novelty gotten up in years. Price of the complete set of Rubber Stamps, with ink and

WOLFF NOVELTY CO. 29 W. 26th St. N. Y.

CARTER AEROPLANE No. 1
 It consists of three large rubber bands twisted together to form a propeller at each end. The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance sidewise before it is released for flight. PRICE 35 Cents Each, Delivered.

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Good Luck Puzzle
 One of the best and oldest of all the puzzles of the world. It consists of three rings, each one nearly one inch in diameter. The puzzle is to get the rings off one another. It is a very difficult puzzle and is a great test of patience and ingenuity. Price 10 cents.

THE MAGIC CARD BOX.
 One of the best and oldest of all the magic card boxes of the world. It consists of a box containing a number of cards. The cards are arranged in a certain order and are used to perform various tricks. It is a very difficult trick and is a great test of patience and ingenuity. Price 10 cents.

COMICAL RUBBER STAMPS.
 A complete set of five grotesque little people made of indestructible rubber mounted on black walnut blocks. The figures consist of Policeman, Chinaman, and other laughable figures as shown in pictures. As EACH figure is mounted on a separate block, any boy can set up a regular parade or circus by printing the figures in different positions. With each set of figures we send a bottle of colored ink, an ink pad and full instructions. Children can stamp these pictures on their toys, picture books, writing paper and envelopes, and they are without doubt the most amusing and entertaining novelty gotten up in years. Price of the complete set of Rubber Stamps, with ink and

WORLD WISE WEEKLY
 A weekly magazine containing a variety of interesting and amusing stories, puzzles, and other entertainment. Price 10 cents.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO. 29 W. 26th St. N. Y.

ink pad, only 10 cents, 3 sets for 25 cents, one dozen 90 cents, by mail postpaid.

L. Senarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.—The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black walnut, the whole thing about 1-1/4 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.

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.

Good Luck Puzzle

It consists of three horseshoes fastened together. Only a very clever person can take off the closed horseshoe from the two linked horseshoes. But it can be done in a moment when the secret is known.

Price by mail, 10 cents each

FRANK ROBINSON, 311 W. 44th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC CARD BOX.

One of the best and cheapest tricks for giving parlor or stage exhibitions. The trick is performed as follows: You request any two persons in your audience to each select a card from an ordinary pack of cards, you then produce a small handsome box made to imitate pebbled leather, which anyone may examine as closely as they will. You now ask one of the two who have selected cards to place his or her card inside the box, which being done, the lid is shut, and the box placed on the table. You then state that you will cause the cards to disappear and upon opening the box the card has vanished and the box found empty. The other card is now placed in the box; the lid is again closed and when the box is opened the first card appears as strangely as it went. Other tricks can be performed in various ways. You may cause several cards to disappear after they are placed in the box, and then you can cause them all to appear at once. You may tear a card up, place it in the box, and on lifting the cover it will be found whole and entire. In fact, nearly every trick of appearance and disappearance can be done with the Magic Card Box.

Full printed instructions by which anyone can perform the different tricks sent with each box.

Price 20 cents, by mail postpaid.

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FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 UNION SQUARE, N. Y.

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.

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