The APACHES OF NEW YORK

ALFRED HENRY LEWIS

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BY

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TO

ARTHUR WEST LITTLE

PREFACE.

These stories are true in name and time and place. None of them in its incident happened as far away as three years ago. They were written to show you how the other half live—in New York. I had them direct from the veracious lips of the police. The gangsters themselves contributed sundry details.

You will express amazement as you read that they carry so slight an element of Sing Sing and the Death Chair. Such should have been no doubt the very proper and lawful climax of more than one of them, and would were it not for what differences subsist between a moral and a legal certainty. The police know many things they cannot prove in court, the more when the question at bay concerns intimately, for life or death, a society where the "snitch" is an abomination and to "squeal" the single great offense.

Besides, you are not to forget the politician, who in defense of a valuable repeater palsies police effort with the cold finger of his interference. With apologies to that order, the three links of the Odd-Fellows are an example of the policeman, the criminal and the politician. The latter is the middle link,

and holds the other two together while keeping them apart.

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I.

EAT-'EM-UP JACK

Chick Tricker kept a house of call at One Hundred and Twenty-eight Park Row. There he sold strong drink, wine and beer, mostly beer, and the thirsty sat about at sloppy tables and enjoyed themselves. When night came there was music, and those who would—and could—arose and danced. One Hundred and Twenty-eight Park Row was in recent weeks abolished. The Committee of Fourteen, one of those restless moral influences so common in New York, complained to the Powers of Excise and had the license revoked.

It was a mild February evening. The day shift had gone off watch at One Hundred and Twenty-eight, leaving the night shift in charge, and—all things running smoothly—Tricker decided upon an evening out. It might have been ten o'clock when, in deference to that decision, he stepped into the street. It was commencing to snow—flakes as big

and soft and clinging as a baby's hand. Not that Tricker—hardy soul—much minded snow.

Tricker, having notions about meeting Indian Louie, swung across to Roosevelt Street. Dodging down five steps, he opened the door of a dingy wine-cellar. It was the nesting-place of a bevy of street musicians, a dozen of whom were scattered about, quaffing chianti. Their harps, fiddles and hand-organs had been chucked into corners, and a general air of relaxation pervaded the scene. The room was blue with smoke, rich in the odor of garlic, and, since the inmates all talked at once, there arose a prodigious racket.

Near where Tricker seated himself reposed a hand-organ. Crouched against it was a little, mouse-hued monkey, fast asleep. The day's work had told on him. Fatigued of much bowing and scraping for coppers, the diminutive monkey slept soundly. Not all the hubbub served to shake the serene profundity of his dreams.

Tricker idly gave the handle of the organ a twist. Perhaps three notes were elicited. It was enough. The little monkey was weary, but he knew the voice and heard in it a trumpet-call to duty. With the earliest squeak he sprang up—winking, blinking—and, doffing his small red hat, began begging for pennies. Tricker gave him a dime, not thinking it right to disturb his slumbers for nothing. The mouse-hued one tucked it away in some recondite

pocket of his scanty jacket, and then, the organ having lapsed into silence, curled up for another snooze.

Tricker paid for his glass of wine, and—since he saw nothing of Indian Louie, and as a source of interest had exhausted the monkey—lounged off into the dark.

In Chatham Square Tricker met a big-chested policeman. Tricker knew the policeman, having encountered him officially. As the latter strutted along, a small, mustard-colored dog came crouching at his heels.

"What's the dog for?" Tricker asked.

Being in an easy mood, the trivial possessed a charm.

The policeman bent upon the little dog a benign eye. The little dog glanced up shyly, wagging a wistful tail.

"He's lost," vouchsafed the policeman, "and he's put it up to me to find out where he lives." He explained that all lost dogs make hot-foot for the nearest policeman. "They know what a cop is for," said the big-chested one. Then, to the little dog: "Come on, my son; we'll land you all right yet."

Tricker continued his stroll. At Doyers Street and the Bowery he entered Barney Flynn's. There were forty customers hanging about. These loiterers were panhandlers of low degree; they were beneath the notice of Tricker, who was a purple patrician of the gangs. One of them could have

lived all day on a quarter. It meant bed—ten cents —and three glasses of beer, each with a free lunch which would serve as a meal. Bowery beer is sold by the glass; but the glass holds a quart. The Bowery has refused to be pinched by the beer trust.

In Flynn's was the eminent Chuck Connors, his head on his arm and his arm on a table. Intoxicated? Perish the thought! Merely taking his usual forty winks after dinner, which repast had consisted of four beef-stews. Tricker gave him a facetious thump on the back, but he woke in a bilious mood, full of haughtiness and cold reserve.

There is a notable feature in Flynn's. The East Side is in its way artistic. Most of the places are embellished with pictures done on the walls, presumably by the old monsters of the *Police News*. On the rear wall of Flynn's is a portrait of Washington on a violent white horse. The Father of his Country is in conventional blue and buff, waving a vehement blade.

"Who is it?" demanded Proprietor Flynn of the artist, when first brought to bay by the violent one on the horse.

"Who is it?" retorted the artist indignantly. "Who should it be but Washin'ton, the Father of his Country?"

"Washin'ton?" repeated Flynn. "Who's Washin'ton?"

"Don't you know who Washin'ton is? Say, you

ought to go to night school! Washin'ton's th' duck who frees this country from th' English."

"An' he bate th' English, did he? I can well belave it! Yez can see be th' face of him he's a brave man." Then, following a rapt silence: "Say, I'll tell ye what! Paint me a dead Englishman right down there be his horse's fut, an' I'll give ye foor dollars more."

The generous offer was accepted, and the foreground enriched with a dead grenadier.

Coming out of Flynn's, Tricker went briefly into the Chinese Theater. The pig-tailed audience, sitting on the backs of the chairs with their feet in the wooden seats, were enjoying the performance hugely. Tricker listened to the dialogue but a moment; it was unsatisfactory and sounded like a catfight.

In finding his way out of Doyers Street, Tricker stopped for a moment in a little doggery from which came the tump-tump of a piano and the scuffle of a dance. The room, not thirty feet long, was cut in two by a ramshackle partition. On the grimy wall hung a placard which carried this moderate warning:

No discussion of

POLITICS

or

RELIGION

Allowed. This goes!

The management seemed to be in the hands of a morose personage, as red as a boiled lobster, who acted behind the bar. The piano was of that flat, tin-pan tone which bespeaks the veteran. It was drummed upon by a bleary virtuoso, who at sight of Tricker—for whose favor he yearned—began banging forth a hurly-burly that must have set on edge the teeth of every piano in the vicinity. The darky who was dancing redoubled his exertions. Altogether, Tricker's entrance was not without *éclat*. Not that he seemed impressed as, flinging himself into a chair, he listlessly called for apollinaris.

"What do youse pay him?" asked Tricker of the boiled barkeeper, indicating as he did so the hard-working colored person.

"Pad-money!"—with a slighting glance. "Pad-money; an' it's twict too much."

Pad-money means pay for a bed.

"Well, I should say so!" coincided Tricker, with the weary yet lofty manner of one who is a judge.

In one corner were two women and a trio of men. The men were thieves of the cheap grade known as lush-workers. These beasts of prey lie about the East Side grog shops, and when some sailor ashore leaves a place, showing considerable slant, they tail him and take all he has. They will plunder their victim in sight of a whole street. No one will tell. The first lesson of Gangland is never to inform nor give evidence. One who does is called snitch; and the wages of the snitch is death. The lush-workers pay a percentage of their pillage, to what saloons they infest, for the privilege of lying in wait.

Tricker pointed to the younger of the two women —about eighteen, she was.

"Two years ago," said Tricker, addressing the boiled barman, "I had her pinched an' turned over to the Aid Society. She's so young I thought mebby they could save her."

"Save her!" repeated the boiled one in weary disgust. "Youse can't save 'em. I used to try that meself. That was long ago. Now"—tossing his hand with a resigned air—"now, whenever I see a skirt who's goin' to hell, I pay her fare."

One of the three men was old and gray of hair. He used to be a gonoph, and had worked the rattlers and ferries in his youth. But he got settled a couple

of times, and it broke his nerve. There is an age limit in pocket-picking. No pickpocket is good after he passes forty years; so far, Dr. Osler was right. Children from twelve to fourteen do the best work. Their hands are small and steady; their confidence has not been shaken by years in prison. There are twenty New York Fagins—the police use the Dickens name—training children to pick pockets. These Fagins have dummy subjects faked up, their garments covered with tiny bells. The pockets are filled—watch, purse, card-case, handkerchief, gloves. Not until a pupil can empty every pocket, without ringing a bell, is he fit to go out into the world and look for boobs.

"If Indian Louie shows up," remarked Tricker to the boiled-lobster barman, as he made ready to go, "tell him to blow 'round tomorry evenin' to One Hundred and Twenty-eight."

Working his careless way back to the Bowery, Tricker strolled north to where that historic thoroughfare merges into Third Avenue. In Great Jones Street, round the corner from Third Avenue, Paul Kelly kept the New Brighton. Tricker decided to look in casually upon this hall of mirth, and —as one interested—study trade conditions. True, there was a coolness between himself and Kelly, albeit, both being of the Five Points, they were of the same tribe. What then? As members of the gang nobility, had they not won the right to nurse

a private feud? De Bracy and Bois Guilbert were both Crusaders, and yet there is no record of any lost love between them.

In the roll of gang honor Kelly's name was written high. Having been longer and more explosively before the public, his fame was even greater than Tricker's. There was, too, a profound background of politics to the New Brighton. It was strong with Tammany Hall, and, per incident, in right with the police. For these double reasons of Kelly's fame, and that atmosphere of final politics which invested it, the New Brighton was deeply popular. Every foot of dancing floor was in constant demand, while would-be merry-makers, crowded off for want of room, sat in a triple fringe about the walls.

Along one side of the dancing room was ranged a row of tables. A young person, just struggling into gang notice, relinquished his chair at one of these to Tricker. This was in respectful recognition of the exalted position in Gangland held by Tricker. Tricker unbent toward the young person in a tolerant nod, and accepted his submissive politeness as though doing him a favor. Tricker was right. His notice, even such as it was, graced and illustrated the polite young person in the eyes of all who beheld it, and identified him as one of whom the future would hear.

Every East Side dance hall has a sheriff, who acts as floor manager and settles difficult questions of

propriety. It often happens that, in an excess of ardor and a paucity of room, two couples in their dancing seek to occupy the same space on the floor. He who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, may help his race and doubtless does. The rule, however, stops with grass and does not reach to dancing. He who tries to make two couples dance, where only one had danced before, but lays the bed-plates of a riot. Where all the gentlemen are spirited, and the ladies even more so, the result is certain in its character, and in no wise hard to guess. Wherefore the dance hall sheriff is not without a mission. Likewise his honorable post is full of peril, and he must be of the stern ore from which heroes are forged.

The sheriff of the New Brighton was Eat-'Em-Up-Jack McManus. He had been a prize-fighter of more or less inconsequence, but a liking for mixed ale and a difficulty in getting to weight had long before cured him of that. He had won his *nom de guerre* on the battle-field, where good knights were wont to win their spurs. Meeting one of whose conduct he disapproved, he had criticized the offender with his teeth, and thereafter was everywhere hailed as Eat-'Em-Up-Jack.

Eat-'Em-Up-Jack wore his honors modestly, as great souls ever do, and there occurred nothing at the New Brighton to justify that re-baptism. There he preserved the proprieties with a black-jack, and

never once brought his teeth into play. Did some boor transgress, Eat-'Em-Up-Jack collared him, and cast him into the outer darkness of Great Jones Street. If the delinquent foolishly resisted, Eat-'Em-Up-Jack emphasized that dismissal with his boot. In extreme instances he smote upon him with a black-jack—ever worn ready on his wrist, although delicately hidden, when not upon active service, in his coat sleeve.

Tricker, drinking seltzer and lemon, sat watching the dancers as they swept by. He himself was of too grave a cast to dance; it would have mismatched with his position.

Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, who could claim social elevation by virtue of his being sheriff, came and stood by Tricker's table. The pair greeted one another. Their manner, while marked of a careful courtesy, was distant and owned nothing of warmth. The feuds of Kelly were the feuds of Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, and the latter knew that Tricker and Kelly stood not as brothers.

As Eat-'Em-Up-Jack paused by Tricker's table, passing an occasional remark with that visitor from Park Row, Bill Harrington with Goldie Cora whirled by on the currents of the *Beautiful Blue Danube*. Tricker's expert tastes rejected with disfavor the dancing of Goldie Cora.

"I don't like the way she t'rows her feet," he said.

Now Goldie Cora was the belle of the New Brigh-

ton. Moreover, Eat-'Em-Up-Jack liked the way she threw her feet, and was honest in his admiration. As much might be said of Harrington, who had overheard Tricker's remark. Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, defending his own judgment, declared that Goldie Cora was the sublimation of grace, and danced like a leaf in a puff of wind. He closed by discrediting not only the opinion but the parentage of Tricker, and advised him to be upon his way lest worse happen him.

"Beat it, before I bump me black-jack off your bean!" was the way it was sternly put by Eat-'Em-Up-Jack.

Tricker, cool and undismayed, waved his hand as though brushing aside a wearisome insect.

"Can that black-jack guff," he retorted. "Un'erstan'; your bein' a fighter don't get youse nothin' wit' me!"

Harrington came up. Having waltzed the entire length of the *Beautiful Blue Danube,* he had abandoned Goldie Cora, and was now prepared to personally resent the imputation inherent in Tricker's remark anent that fair one's feet.

"He don't like the way you t'row your feet, eh? I'll make him like it."

Thus spake Harrington to Goldie Cora, as he turned from her to seek out Tricker.

No, Gangland is not so ceremonious as to demand that you lead the lady to a seat. Dance ended, it is

good form to leave her sticking in the furrow, even as a farmer might his plow, and walk away.

Harrington bitterly added his views to Eat-'Em-Up-Jack's, and something was said about croaking Tricker then and there. The threats of Harrington, as had those of Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, glanced off the cool surface of Tricker like the moon's rays off a field of ice. He was sublimely indifferent, and didn't so much as get off his chair. Only his right hand stole under his coat-skirt in an unmistakable way.

"Why, you big stiff! w'at be youse tryin' to give me?" was his only separate notice of Harrington. Then, to both: "Unless you guys is lookin' to give th' coroner a job, youse won't start nothin' here. Take it from me that, w'en I'm bounced out of a dump like this, the bouncin' 'll come off in th' smoke."

Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, being neither so quick nor so eloquent as Tricker, could only retort, "That's all right! I'll hand you yours before I'm done!"

Harrington, after his first outbreak, said nothing, being privily afraid of Tricker, and more or less held by the spell of his fell repute. Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, who feared no man, was kept in check by his obligations as sheriff—that, and a sense of duty. True, the situation irked him sorely; he felt as though he were in handcuffs. But the present was no common case. Tricker would shoot; and a hail

of lead down the length of the dancing floor meant loss in dollars and cents. This last was something which Kelly, always a business man and liking money, would be the first to condemn and the last to condone. It would black-eye the place; since few care to dance where the ballroom may become a battle-field and bullets zip and sing.

"If it was only later!" said Eat-'Em-Up Jack, wistfully.

"Later?" retorted Tricker. "That's easy. You close at one, an' that's ten minutes from now. Let the mob make its getaway; an' after that youse ducks 'll find me waitin' 'round the corner in Thoid Avenue."

Tricker, manner nonchalant to the point of insult, loitered to the door, pausing on his way to take a leisurely drink at the bar.

"You dubs," he called back, as he stepped out into Great Jones Street, "better bring your gatts!"

Gatts is East Sidese for pistols.

Harrington didn't like the looks of things. He was sorry, he said, addressing Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, but he wouldn't be able to accompany him to that Third Avenue tryst. He must see Goldie Cora home. The Police had just issued an order, calculated invidiously to inconvenience and annoy every lady found in the streets after midnight unaccompanied by an escort.

Eat-'Em-Up-Jack hardly heard him. Personally he wouldn't have turned hand or head to have had

the company of a dozen Harringtons. Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, while lacking many things, lacked not at all in heart.

The New Brighton closed in due time. Eat-'Em-Up-Jack waited until sure the junction of Great Jones Street and Third Avenue was quite deserted. As he came 'round the corner, gun in hand, Tricker —watchful as a cat—stepped out of a stairway. There was a blazing, rattling fusillade—twelve shots in all. When the shooting was at an end, Eat-'Em-Up-Jack had vanished. Tricker, save for a reason, would have followed his vanishing example; there was a bullet embedded in the calf of his leg.

Tricker hopped painfully into a stairway, where he might have advantage of the double gloom. He had lighted a cigarette, and was coolly leaning against the entrance, when two policemen came running up.

"What was that shooting?" demanded one.

"Oh, a couple of geeks started to hand it to each other," was Tricker's careless reply.

"Did either get hurt?"

"One of 'em cops it in th' leg. Th' other blew."

"What became of the one who's copped?"

"Oh, him? He hops into one of th' stairways along here."

The officers didn't see the spreading pool of blood near Tricker's foot. They hurried off to make a

ransack of the stairways, while Tricker hobbled out to a cab he had signaled, and drove away.

Twenty-four hours later!

Not a block from where he'd fought his battle with Tricker, Eat-'Em-Up-Jack was walking in Third Avenue. He was as lone as Lot's wife; for he nourished misanthropic sentiments and discouraged company. It was a moonless night and very dark, the snow still coming down. What with the storm and the hour, the streets were as empty as a church.

As Eat-'Em-Up-Jack passed the building farthest from the corner lamp, a crouching figure stepped out of the doorway. Had it been two o'clock in the afternoon, instead of two o'clock in the morning, you would have seen that he of the crouching figure was smooth and dark-skinned as to face, and that his blue-black hair had been cut after a tonsorial fashion popular along the Bowery as the Guinea Lop. The crouching one carried in his hand what seemed to be a rolled-up newspaper. In that rolled-up paper lay hidden a two-foot piece of lead pipe.

The crouching blue-black one crept after Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, making no more noise than a cat. He uplifted the lead pipe, grasping it the while with both hands.

Eat-'Em-Up-Jack, as unaware of his peril as of what was passing in the streets of Timbuctoo, slouched heavily forward, deep in thought. Perhaps

he was considering a misspent youth, and chances thrown away.

The lead pipe came down.

There was a dull crash, and Eat-'Em-Up-Jack—without word or cry—fell forward on his face. Blood ran from mouth and ears, and melted redly into the snow.

The crouching blue-black one shrank back into the stairway, and was seen no more. The street returned to utter emptiness. There remained only the lifeless body of Eat-'Em-Up-Jack. Nothing beyond, save the softly falling veil of snow, with the street lamps shining through.

II.

THE BABY'S FINGERS

It was a Central Office man who told me how the baby lost its fingers. I like Central Office men; they live romances and have adventures. The man I most shrink from is your dull, proper individual to whom nothing happens. You have seen a hundred such. Rigidly correct, they go uneventfully to and fro upon their little respectable tracks. Evenings, from the safe yet severe vantage of their little respectable porches, they pass judgment upon humanity from across the front fence. After which, they go inside and weary their wives with their tasteless, pale society, while those melancholy matrons question themselves, in a spirit of tacit despair, concerning the blessings of matrimony. In the end, first thanking heaven that they are not as other men, they retire to bed, to rise in the dawning and repeat the history of every pulseless yesterday of their existence. Nothing ever overtakes them that doesn't overtake a clam. They are interesting, can be interesting, to no one save themselves. To talk with one an hour is like being lost in the desert an hour. I prefer people into whose lives intrudes some ele-

ment of adventure, and who, as they roll out of their blankets in the morning, cannot give you, word and minute, just what they will be saying and doing every hour in the coming twelve.

My Central Office friend, in telling of the baby's absent fingers, began by speaking of Johnny Spanish. Spanish has been sent to prison for no less than seven years. Dribben and Blum arrested him, and when the next morning he was paraded at the Central Office looking-over, the speech made upon him by Commissioner Flynn set a resentful pulse to beating in his swarthy cheek.

Not that Spanish had been arrested for the baby's lost fingers. That story in the telling came later, although the wrong it registered had happened months before. Dribben and Blum picked him up—as a piece of work it did them credit—for what occurred in Mersher Miller's place.

As all the world knows, Mersher Miller, or as he is called among his intimates, Mersher the Strong-Arm, conducts a beer house at 171 Norfolk Street. It was a placid April evening, and Mersher's brother, as bottle-tosser, was busy behind the bar. Mersher himself was not in, which—for Mersher—may or may not have been greatly to the good.

Spanish came into the place. His hat was low-drawn over his black eyes. Mersher's brother, wiping glasses, didn't know him.

"Where's Mersher?" asked Spanish.

"Not here," quoth Mersher's brother.

"You'll do," returned Spanish. "Give me ten dollars out of the damper."

Mersher's brother held this proposal in finance to be foolishly impossible, and was explicit on that head. He insisted, not without scorn, that he was the last man in the world to give a casual caller ten dollars out of the damper or anything else.

"I'll be back," replied Spanish, "an' I bet then you'll give me that ten-spot."

"That's Johnny Spanish," declared a bystander, when Spanish, muttering his discontent, had gone his threatening way.

Mersher's brother doubted it. He had heard of Spanish, but had never seen him. It was his understanding that Spanish was not in town at all, having lammistered some time before.

"He's wanted be th' cops," Mersher's brother argued. "You don't suppose he's sucker enough to walk into their mitts? He wouldn't dare show up in town."

"Don't con yourself," replied the bystander, who had a working knowledge of Gangland and its notables. "That's Spanish, all right. He was out of town, but not because of the bulls. It's the Dropper he's leary of; an' now th' Dropper's in hock he's chased back. You heard what he said about comin' 'round ag'in? Take my tip an' rib yourself up wit' a rod. That Spanish is a tough kid!"

The evening wore on at Mersher's; one hour, two hours, three went peaceably by. The clock pointed to eleven.

Without warning a lowering figure appeared at the door.

"There he is!" exclaimed the learned bystander. Then he added with a note of pride, albeit shaky as to voice: "What did I tell youse?"

The figure in the doorway strode forward. It was Spanish. A second figure—hat over eyes—followed hard on his heels. With a flourish, possible only to the close student of Mr. Beadle's dime literature, Spanish drew two Colt's pistols.

"Come through wit' that ten!" said he to Mersher's brother.

Mersher's brother came through, and came through swiftly.

"I thought so!" sneered Spanish, showing his side teeth like a dog whose feelings have been hurt. "Now come through wit' th' rest!"

Mersher's brother eagerly gave him the contents of the cash drawer—about eighty dollars.

Spanish, having pocketed the money, wheeled upon the little knot of customers, who, after the New York manner when crime is afoot, had stood motionless with no thought of interfering.

"Hands up! Faces to the wall!" cried Spanish. "Everybody's dough looks good to me to-night!"

The customers, acting in such concert that it

seemed as though they'd been rehearsed, hands held high, turned their faces to the wall.

"You keep them covered," said Spanish to his dark companion in arms, "while I go through 'em."

The dark companion leveled his own pistol in a way calculated to do the most harm, and Spanish reaped an assortment of cheap watches and a handful of bills.

Spanish came round on Mersher's brother. The latter had stooped down until his eyes were on a par with the bar.

"Now," said Spanish to Mersher's brother, "I might as well cook you. I've no use for barkeeps, anyway, an' besides you're built like a pig an' I don't like your looks!"

Spanish began to shoot, and Mersher's brother began to dodge. Ducking and dodging, the latter ran the length of the bar, Spanish faithfully following with his bullets. There were two in the ice box, two through the mirror, five in the top of the bar. Each and all, they had been too late for Mersher's brother, who, pale as a candle, emerged from the bombardment breathing heavily but untouched.

"An' this," cried Ikey the pawnbroker, ten minutes after Spanish had disappeared—Ikey was out a red watch and sixty dollars—"an' this iss vat Mayor Gaynor calls 'outvard order an' decency'!"

It was upon the identification of the learned bystander that Dribben and Blum went to work, and

it was for that stick-up in Mersher's the two made the collar.

"It's lucky for you guys," said Spanish, his eye sparkling venomously like the eye of a snake—"it's lucky for you guys that you got me wit'out me guns. I'd have croaked one of you bulls sure, an' maybe both, an' then took th' Dutch way out meself."

The Dutch way out, with Spanish and his immediate circle, means suicide, it being a belief among them that the Dutch are a melancholy brood, and favor suicide as a means of relief when the burdens of life become more than they can bear.

Spanish, however, did not have his gun when he was pinched, and therefore did not croak Dribben and Blum, and do the Dutch act for himself. Dribben and Blum are about their daily duties as thief takers, as this is read, while Spanish is considering nature from between the Sing Sing bars. Dribben and Blum say that, even if Spanish had had his guns, he would neither have croaked them nor come near it, and in what bluffs he put up to that lethal effect he was talking through his hat. For myself, I say nothing, neither one way nor the other, except that Dribben and Blum are bold and enterprising officers, and Spanish is the very heart of quenchless desperation.

By word of my Central Office informant, Spanish has seen twenty-two years and wasted most of

them. His people dwell somewhere in the wilds of Long Island, and are as respectable as folk can be on two dollars a day. Spanish did not live with his people, preferring the city, where he cut a figure in Suffolk, Norfolk, Forsyth, Hester, Grand, and other East Side avenues.

At one time Spanish had a gallery number, and his picture held an important place in Central Office regard. It was taken out during what years the inadequate Bingham prevailed as Commissioner of Police. A row arose over a youth named Duffy, who was esteemed by an eminent Judge. Duffy's picture was in the gallery, and the judge demanded its removal. It being inconvenient to refuse the judge, young Duffy's picture was taken out; and since to make fish of one while making flesh of others might have invited invidious comment, some hundreds of pictures—among them that of Spanish —were removed at the same time.

It pleased Spanish vastly when his mug came out of the gallery. Not that its presence there was calculated to hurt his standing; not but what it was bound to go back as a certain incident of his method of life. Its removal was a wound to police vanity; and, hating the police, he found joy in whatsoever served to wring their azure withers.

When, according to the rules of Bertillon, Spanish was thumb-printed, mugged and measured, the police described him on their books as Pickpocket

and Fagin. The police affirmed that he not only worked the Broadway rattlers in his own improper person, but—paying a compliment to his genius for organization—that he had drawn about himself a group of children and taught them to steal for his sinful use. It is no more than truth to say, however, that never in New York City was Spanish convicted as either a Fagin or a pickpocket, and the police—as he charges—may have given him these titles as a cover for their ignorance, which some insist is of as deep an indigo as the hue of their own coats.

Spanish was about seventeen when he began making an East Side stir. He did not yearn to be respectable. He had borne witness to the hard working respectability of his father and mother, and remembered nothing as having come from it more than aching muscles and empty pockets. Their clothes were poor, their house was poor, their table poor. Why should he fret himself with ideals of the respectable?

Work?

It didn't pay.

In his blood, too, flowed malignant cross-currents, which swept him towards idleness and all manner of violences.

Nor did the lesson of the hour train him in self-restraint. All over New York City, in Fifth Avenue, at the Five Points, the single cry was, Get the

Money! The rich were never called upon to explain their prosperity. The poor were forever being asked to give some legal reason for their poverty. Two men in a magistrate's court are fined ten dollars each. One pays, and walks free; the other doesn't, and goes to the Island. Spanish sees, and hears, and understands.

"Ah!" cries he, "that boob went to the Island not for what he did but for not having ten bones!"

And the lesson of that thunderous murmur—reaching from the Battery to Kingsbridge—of Get the Money! rushes upon him; and he makes up his mind to heed it. Also, there are uncounted scores like Spanish, and other uncounted scores with better coats than his, who are hearing and seeing and reasoning the same way.

Spanish stood but five feet three, and his place was among the lightweights. Such as the Dropper, who tilted the scales at 180, and whose name of Dropper had been conferred upon him because every time he hit a man he dropped him—such as Ike the Blood, as hard and heavy as the Dropper and whose title of the Blood had not been granted in any spirit of factitiousness—laughed at him. What matter that his heart was high, his courage proof? Physically, he could do nothing with these dangerous ones—as big as dangerous! And so, ferociously ready to even things up, he began packing a rod.

While Spanish, proceeding as best he might by his dim standards, was struggling for gang eminence and dollars, Alma, round, dark, vivacious, eyes as deep and soft and black as velvet, was the unchallenged belle of her Williamsburg set. Days she worked as a dressmaker, without getting rich. Nights she went to rackets, which are dances wide open and unfenced. Sundays she took in picnics, or rode up and down on the trolleys—those touring cars of the poor.

Spanish met Alma and worshipped her, for so was the world made. Being thus in love, while before he, Spanish, had only needed money, now he had to have it. For love's price to a man is money, just as its price to a woman is tears.

Casting about for ways and means, Spanish's money-hunting eye fell upon Jigger. Jigger owned a stuss-house in Forsyth Street, between Hester and Grand. Jigger was prosperous beyond the dreams of avarice. Multitudes, stabbing stuss, thronged his temple of chance. As a quick, sure way to amass riches, Spanish decided to become Jigger's partner. Between them they would divide the harvest of Forsyth Street stuss.

The golden beauty of the thought lit up the dark face of Spanish with a smile that was like a splash of vicious sunshine. Alma, in the effulgence of her toilets, should overpower all rivalry! At rout and racket, he, Spanish, would lead the hard walk with

her, and she should shine out upon Gangland fashion like a fire in a forest.

His soul having wallowed itself weary in these visions, Spanish sought Jigger as a step towards making the visions real. Spanish and his proposition met with obstruction. Jigger couldn't see it, wouldn't have it.

Spanish was neither astonished nor dismayed. He had foreseen the Jiggerian reluctance, and was organized to break it down. When Jigger declined his proffered partnership—in which he, Jigger, must furnish the capital while Spanish contributed only his avarice—and asked, "Why should I?" he, Spanish, was ready with an answer.

"Why should you?" and Spanish repeated Jigger's question so that his reply might have double force. "Because, if you don't, I'll bump youse off."

Gangland is so much like Missouri that you must always be prepared to show it. Gangland takes nothing on trust. And, if you try to run a bluff, it calls you. Spanish wore a low-browed, sullen, sour look. But he had killed no one, owned no dread repute, and Jigger was used to sullen, sour, low-browed looks. Thus, when Spanish spoke of bumping Jigger off, that courtier of fortune, full of a case-hardened scepticism, laughed low and long and mockingly. He told the death-threatening Spanish to come a-running.

Spanish didn't come a-running, but he came much

nearer it than Jigger liked. Crossing up with the perverse Jigger the next evening, at the corner of Forsyth and Grand, he opened upon that obstinate stuss dealer with a Colt's-38. Jigger managed to escape, but little Sadie Rotin, *ætat* eight, was killed. Jigger, who was unarmed, could not return the fire. Spanish, confused and flurried, doubtless, by the poor result of his gun-play, betook himself to flight.

The police did not get Spanish; but in Gangland the incident did him little good. At the Ajax Club, and in other places where the best blood of the gangs was wont to unbuckle and give opinions, such sentiment-makers as the Dropper, Ike the Blood, Kid Kleiney, Little Beno, Fritzie Rice, Kid Strauss, the Humble Dutchman, Zamo, and the Irish Wop, held but one view. Such slovenly work was without precedent as without apology. To miss Jigger aroused ridicule. But to go farther, and kill a child playing in the street, spelled bald disgrace. Thereafter no self-respecting lady would drink with Spanish, no gentleman of gang position would return his nod. He would be given the frozen face at the rackets, the icy eye in the streets.

To be sure, his few friends, contending feebly, insisted that it wasn't Spanish who had killed the little Rotin girl. When Spanish cracked off his rod at Jigger, others had caught the spirit. A half dozen guns—they said—had been set blazing; and it was some unknown practitioner who had shot down the

little Rotin girl. What were the heart-feelings of father and mother Rotin, to see their baby killed, did not appeal as a question to either the friends or foes of Spanish. Gangland is interested only in dollars or war.

That contention of his friends did not restore Spanish in the general estimation. All must confess that at least he had missed Jigger. And Jigger without a rod! It crowded hard upon the unbelievable, and could be accounted for only upon the assumption that Spanish was rattled, which is worse than being scared. Mere fear might mean no more than an excess of prudence. To get rattled, everywhere and under all conditions, is the mean sure mark of weakness.

While discussion, like a pendulum, went swinging to and fro, Spanish—possibly a-smart from what biting things were being said in his disfavor—came to town, and grievously albeit casually shot an unknown. Following which feat he again disappeared. None knew where he had gone. His whereabouts was as much a mystery as the identity of the unknown whom he had shot, or the reason he had shot him. These two latter questions are still borne as puzzles upon the ridge of gang conjecture.

That this time he had hit his man, however, lifted Spanish somewhat from out those lower reputational depths into which missing Jigger had cast

him. The unknown, to be sure, did not die; the hospital books showed that. But he had stopped a bullet. Which last proved that Spanish wasn't always rattled when he pulled a gun. The incident, all things considered, became a trellis upon which the reputation of Spanish, before so prone and hopeless, began a little to climb.

The strenuous life doesn't always blossom and bear good fruit. Balked in his intended partnership with Jigger, and subsequently missing Jigger—to say nothing of the business of the little Rotin girl, dead and down under the grass roots—Spanish not only failed to Get the Money! but succeeded in driving himself out of town. Many and vain were the gang guesses concerning him. Some said he was in Detroit, giving professional aid to a gifted booster. The latter was of the feminine gender, and, aside from her admitted genius for shoplifting, was acclaimed the quickest hand with a hanger—by which you are to understand that outside pendant purse wherewith women equip themselves as they go forth to shop—of all the gon-molls between the two oceans. Others insisted that Spanish was in Baltimore, and had joined out with a mob of poke-getters. The great, the disastrous thing, however—and to this all Gangland agreed—was that he had so bungled his destinies as to put himself out of New York.

"Detroit! Baltimore!" exclaimed the Dropper. "W'y, it's woise'n bein' in stir! A guy might as well be doin' time as live in them burgs!"

The Dropper, in his iron-fisted way, was sincere in what he said. Later, he himself was given eighteen spaces in Sing Sing, which exile he might have missed had he fled New York in time. But he couldn't, and didn't. And so the Central Office got him, the District Attorney prosecuted him, the jury convicted him, and the judge sentenced him to that long captivity. Living in New York is not a preference, but an appetite—like drinking whiskey—and the Dropper had acquired the habit.

What was the Dropper settled for?

Robbery.

It's too long to tell here, however, besides being another story. Some other day I may give it to you.

Spanish, having abandoned New York, could no longer bear Alma loving company at picnic, rout and racket. What was Alma to do? She lived for routs, reveled in rackets, joyed in picnics. Must these delights be swept away? She couldn't go alone—it was too expensive. Besides, it would evince a lack of class.

Alma, as proud and as wedded to her social position as any silken member of the Purple and Fine Linen Gang that ever rolled down Fifth Avenue in her brougham, revolved these matters upon her

wheel of thought. Also, she came to conclusions. She, an admitted belle, could not consent to social obliteration. Spanish had fled; she worshipped his black eyes, his high courage; she would keep a heart-corner vacant for him in case he came back. Pending his return, however, she would go into society; and, for those reasons of expense and class and form, she would not go alone.

Alma submitted her position to a beribboned jury of her peers. Their judgment ran abreast of her own.

"A goil would be a mutt," they said, "to stay cocked up at home. An' yet a goil couldn't go chasin' around be her lonesome. Alma"—this was their final word—"you must cop off another steady."

"But what would Johnny say?" asked Alma; for she couldn't keep her thoughts off Spanish, of whom she stood a little bit in fear.

"Johnny's beat it, ain't he?" returned the advisory jury of friends. "There ain't no kick comin' to a guy what's beat it. He ain't no longer in th' picture."

Alma, thus free to pick and choose by virtue of the absence of Spanish, picked the Dropper. The latter chieftain was flattered. Taking Alma proudly yet tenderly under his mighty arm, he led her to suppers such as she had never eaten, bought her drinks such as she had never tasted, revolved with her at rackets where tickets were a dollar a throw, the or-

chestra seven pieces, and the floor shone like glass. It was a cut or two above anything that Spanish had given her, and Alma, who thought it going some, failed not to say so.

Alma was proud of the Dropper; the Dropper was proud of her. She told her friends of the money he spent; and the friends warmed the cockles of her little heart by shrilly exclaiming at pleasant intervals:

"Ain't he th' swell guy!"

"Betcher boots he's th' swell guy," Alma would rejoin; "an' he's got money to boin a wet dog! Th' only t'ing that worries me," Alma would conclude, "is Johnny. S'ppose he blows in some day, an' lays for th' Dropper?'

"Th' Dropper could do him wit' a wallop," the friends would consolingly return. "He'd swing onct; an' after that there wouldn't be no Johnny Spanish."

The Round Back Rangers—it was, I think, the Round Backs—gave an outdoor racket somewhere near Maspeth. The Dropper took Alma. Both were in high, exultant feather. They danced, they drank, they rode the wooden horses. No more gallant couple graced the grounds.

Cheese sandwiches, pig's knuckles and beer brought them delicately to the banquet board. They were among their friends. The talk was always interesting, sometimes educational.

Ike the Blood complained that certain annoying purists were preaching a crusade against the Raines Law Hotels. Slimmy, celebrated not only for his slimness, but his erudition, declared that crusades had been the common curse of every age.

"W'at do youse know about it?" sourly propounded the Humble Dutchman, who envied Slimmy his book-fed wisdom.

"W'at do I know about it?" came heatedly from Slimmy. "Do youse think I ain't got no education? Th' last time I'm in stir, that time I goes up for four years, I reads all th' books in th' prison library. Ask th' warden if I don't. As to them crusades, it's as I tells you. There's always been crusades; it's th' way humanity's gaited. Every sport, even if he don't go 'round blowin' about it, has got it tucked somewhere away in his make-up that he, himself, is th' real thing. Every dub who's different from him he figgers is worse'n him. In two moves he's out crusadin'. In th' old days it's religion; th' Paynims was th' fall guys. Now it's rum, or racin', or Raines Hotels, or some such stall. Once let a community get the crusade bug, an' something's got to go. There's a village over in Joisey, an,' there bein' no grog shops an' no vice mills to get busy wit', they ups an' bounces an old geezer out of th' only church in town for pitchin' horse-shoes."

Slimmy called for more beer, with a virtuously superior air.

"But about them Paynims, Slimmy?" urged Alma.

"It's hundreds of years ago," Slimmy resumed. "Th' Paynims hung out in Palestine. Bein' they're Paynims, the Christians is naturally sore on 'em; an' so, when they feels like huntin' trouble, th' crusade spirit'd flare up. Richard over in England would pass th' woid to Philip in France, an' th' other lads wit' crowns.

"'How about it?' he'd say. 'Cast your regal peepers toward Palestine. D'you make them Paynims? Ain't they th' tough lot? They won't eat pork; they toe in when they walk; they don't drink nothin' worse'n coffee; they've got brown skins. Also,' says he, 'we can lick 'em for money, marbles or chalk. W'at d'youse say, me royal brothers? Let's get our gangs, an' hand them Paynims a swift soak in behalf of the troo faith.'

"Philip an' the other crowned lads at this would agree wit' Richard. 'Them Paynims is certainly th' worst ever!' they'd say; an' one woid'd borry another, until the crusade is on. Some afternoon you'd hear the newsies in th' streets yellin', 'Wuxtry!' an' there it'd be in big black type, 'Richard, Philip an' their gallant bands of Strong-Arms have landed in Palestine.'"

"An' then w'at, Slimmy?" cooed Alma, who hung on every word.

"As far as I can see, th' Christians always had it

on th' Paynims, always had 'em shaded, when it comes to a scrap. Th' Christian lads had th' punch; an' th' Paynims must have been wise to it; for no sooner would Richard, Philip an' their roly-boly boys hit th' dock, than th' Paynims would take it on th' run for th' hills. Their mullahs would try to rally 'em, be tellin' 'em that whoever got downed fightin' Christians, the prophet would punch his ticket through for paradise direct, an' no stop-overs.

" 'That's all right about the prophet!' they'd say, givin' th' mullahs th' laugh. An' then they'd beat it for th' next ridge."

"Them Paynims must have been a bunch of dead ones," commented the Dropper.

"Not bein' able to get on a match," continued Slimmy, without heeding the Dropper, "th' Paynims declinin' their game, th' Christian hosts would rough house th' country generally, an' in a way of speakin' stand th' Holy Land on its head. Do what they would, however, they couldn't coax th' Paynims into th' ring wit' 'em; an' so after a while they decides that Palestiné's th' bummest place they'd ever struck. Mebby, too, they'd begin havin' woid from home that their wives was gettin' a little gay, or their kids was goin' round marryin' th' kids of their enemies, an' that one way an' another their domestic affairs was on th' fritz. At this, Richard'd go loafin' over to Philip's tent, an' say:

" 'Philly, me boy, I don't know how this crusade

strikes youse, but if I'm any judge of these great moral movements, it's on th' blink. An' so,' he'd go on, 'Philly, it's me for Merrie England be th' night boat.'

"Wit' that, they'd break for home; an', when they got there, they'd mebby hand out a taste of th' strap to mamma an' th' babies, just to teach 'em not to go runnin' out of form th' next time father's far away."

"Youse don't bank much on crusades, Slimmy?" Ike the Blood said.

The Blood had more than a passing interest in the movement, mention of which had started the discussion, being himself a part proprietor in one of those threatened Raines Law Hotels.

"Blood," observed Slimmy, oracularly, "them moral movements is like a hornet; they stings onct an' then they dies."

Alma's attention was drawn to Mollie Squint—so called because of an optical slant which gave her a vague though piquant look. Mollie Squint was motioning from the outskirts of the little group. Alma pointed to the Dropper. Should she bring him? Mollie Squint shook her head.

Leaving the Dropper, Alma joined Mollie Squint.

"It's Johnny," gasped Mollie Squint. "He wants you; he's over be that bunch of trees."

Alma hung back; some impression of peril seized her.

"Better go," whispered Mollie Squint. "He's onto you an' the Dropper, an' if you don't go he'll come lookin' for you. Then him an' the Dropper'll go to th' mat wit' each other, an' have it awful. Give Johnny one of your soft talks, an' mebby youse can smooth him down. Stall him off be tellin' him you'll see him to-night at Ding Dong's."

Mollie Squint's advice seemed good, and as the lesser of two evils Alma decided to go. Mollie Squint did not accompany her.

"Tell th' Dropper I'll be back in a moment," said Alma to Mollie Squint, "an' don't wise him up about Johnny."

Alma met Spanish at the far corner of the clump of trees. There was no talk, no time for talk. They were all alone. As she drew near, he pulled a pistol and shot her through and through the body.

Alma's moaning cry was heard by the Dropper—that, and the sound of the shot. When the Dropper reached her, she was lying senseless in the shadow of the trees—a patch of white and red against the green of the grass. Spanish was nowhere in sight.

Alma was carried to the hospital, and revived. But she would say nothing, give no names—staunch to the spirit of the Gangs. Only she whispered feebly to Mollie Squint, when the Dropper had been sent away by the doctors:

"Johnny must have loved me a lot to shoot me

up like he did. A guy has got to love a goil good and plenty before he'll try to cook her."

"Did youse tell th' hospital croakers his name?" asked Mollie Squint.

"Of course not! I never squealed to nobody. Do youse think I'd put poor Johnny in wrong?"

"Then I won't," said Mollie Squint.

An attendant told Mollie Squint that she must go; certain surgeons had begun to assemble. Mollie Squint, tears falling, kissed Alma good-by.

"Give Johnny all me love," whispered Alma. "Tell him I'm no snitch; I'll stick."

The Dropper did not have to be told whose bullet had struck down his star, his Alma. That night, Kid Kleiney with him, he went looking for Spanish. The latter, as jealous as Satan, was looking for the Dropper. Of the two, Spanish must have conducted his hunting with the greater circumspection or the greater luck; for about eleven of the clock he crept up behind the Dropper, as the latter and Kid Kleiney were walking in East Broadway, and planted a bullet in his neck. Kid Kleiney 'bout faced at the crack of the pistol, and was in fortunate time to stop Spanish's second bullet with one of the big buttons on his coat. Kid Kleiney fell by the side of the wounded Dropper, jarred off his feet by the shock. He was able, however, when the police came up, to help place the Dropper in an ambulance.

Spanish?

Vanished—as usual.

The police could get no line on him, did get no line on him, until months later, when, as related—the Dropper having been lagged for robbery, and safely caged—he came back to stick up the joint of Mersher the Strong-Arm, and be arrested by Dribben and Blum.

The baby and I met casually in a Williamsburg street, where Alma had brought it to take the air, which was bad. Alma was thin-faced, hollow-eyed, but I could see that she had been pretty. She said she was twenty and the baby less than a year, and I think she told the truth.

No one among Alma's friends finds fault with either the baby or herself, although both are without defence by the canons of high morality. There is warmth in the world; and, after all, the case of Alma and the baby is not so much beyond the common, except as to the baby's advent, which was dramatic and after the manner of Cæsar.

Folk say the affair reflects illustriously upon the hospital. Also, what surgeons officiated are inclined to plume themselves; for have not Alma and the baby lived? I confess that those boastful scientists are not wanting in excuse for strutting, although they ought, perhaps, in honor, to divide credit with Alma and the baby as being hard to kill.

It is not an ugly baby as babies go. Not that I

pretend to be a judge. As I paused by its battered perambulator, it held up a rose-leaf hand, as though inviting me to look; and I looked. The little claw possessed but three talons; the first two fingers had been shot away. When I asked how, Alma lowered her head sadly, saying nothing. It would have been foolish to ask the baby. It couldn't talk. Moreover, since the fingers were shot away before it was born, it could possess no clear memory as to details.

It is a healthy baby. Alma loves it dearly, and can be depended upon to give it every care. That is, she can be if she lives; and on that head her worn thinness alarms her friends, who wish she were fatter. Some say her thinness is the work of the bullet. Others believe that a sorrow is sapping her heart.

III.

HOW PIOGGI WENT TO ELMIRA

The Bottler was round, inoffensive, well-dressed, affable. He was also generous, as the East Side employs the term. Any one could touch him for a quarter upon a plea of beef stew, and if plaintively a bed were mentioned, for as much as fifty cents. For the Bottler was a money-maker, and had Suffolk Street position as among its richest capitalists.

What bridge whist is to Fifth Avenue so is stuss to the East Side. No one save the dealer wins at stuss, and yet the device possesses an alluring feature. When the victim gets up from the table, the bank under the descriptive of viggresh returns him one-tenth of his losings. No one ever leaves a stuss game broke, and that final ray of sure sunshine forms indubitably the strong attraction. Stuss licks up as with a tongue of fire a round full fifth of all the East Side earns, and to viggresh should be given the black glory thereof.

The Bottler owned talents to make money. Morally careless, liking the easy way, with, over all, that bent for speculation which sets some folk to dealing in stocks and others to dealing cards, those money-

making talents found expression in stuss. Not that the Bottler was so weak-minded as to buck the game. Wise, prudent, solvent, he went the other way about it, his theater of operations being 135 Suffolk. Also, expanding liberally, the Bottler endowed his victims, as—stripped of their last dollar—they shoved back their hopeless chairs, with not ten, but fifteen per cent. of what sums they had changed in. This rendered 135 Suffolk a most popular resort, and the foolish stood four deep about the Bottler's tables every night in the week.

The Bottler lacked utterly the war-heart, and was in no wise a fighter. He had the brawn, but not the soul, and this heart-sallowness would have threatened his standing save for those easy generosities. Gangland is not dull, and will overlook even a want of courage in one who, for bed and beef stews, freely places his purse at its disposal.

There are two great gangs on the East Side. These are the Five Points and the Monk Eastmans. There are smaller gangs, but each owes allegiance to either the one or the other of the two great gangs, and fights round its standard in event of general gang war.

There is danger in belonging to either of these gangs. But there is greater danger in not. I speak of folk of the Bottler's ways and walks. The Five Points and Eastmans are at feud with one another, and the fires of their warfare are never permitted

to die out. Membership in one means that it will buckler you against the other while you live, and avenge you should you fall. Membership in neither means that you will be raided and rough-housed and robbed by both.

The Bottler's stuss house was—like every other of its kind—a Castle Dangerous. To the end that the peril of his days and nights be reduced to minimum, he united himself with the Five Points. True, he could not be counted upon as a *shtocker* or strong-arm; but he had money and would part with it, and gang war like all war demands treasure. Bonds must be given; fines paid; the Bottler would have his uses. Wherefore the Five Points opened their arms and their hearts to receive him.

The Eastmans had suffered a disorganizing setback when the chief, who gave the sept its name, went up the river for ten years. On the heels of that sorrowful retirement, it became a case of York and Lancaster; two claimants for the throne stood forth. These were Ritchie Fitzpatrick and Kid Twist, both valorous, both with reputations of having killed, both with clouds of followers at their backs.

Twist, in whom abode the rudiments of a savage diplomacy, proposed a conference. Fitzpatrick at that conference was shot to death, and Kid Dahl, a near friend of Twist, stood for the collar. Dahl was thus complacent because Fitzpatrick had not died by his hand.

The police, the gangs and the politicians are not without a sinister wisdom. When life has been taken, and to punish the slayer would be an inconvenience, some one who didn't do the killing submits to arrest. This covers the retreat of the guilty. Also, the public is appeased. Later, when the public's memory sleeps, the arrested one—for lack of evidence—is set at liberty.

When Fitzpatrick was killed, to clear the path to gang leadership before the aspiring feet of Twist, the police took Dahl, who all but volunteered for the sacrifice. Dahl went smilingly to jail, while the real murderer of Fitzpatrick attended that dead personage's wake, and later appeared at the funeral. This last, however, by the nicer tastes of Gangland, was complained of as bordering upon vulgarity.

Fitzpatrick was buried with a lily in his hand, and Twist was hailed chief of the Eastmans. Dahl remained in the Tombs a reasonable number of weeks, and then resumed his position in society. It was but natural, and to the glory of stumbling human nature, that Dahl should dwell warmly in the grateful regard of Twist.

Twist, now chief of the Eastmans, cast about to establish Dahl. There was the Bottler, with his stuss Golconda in Suffolk Street. Were not his affiliations with the Five Points? Was he not therefore the enemy? The Bottler was an Egyptian, and Twist resolved to spoil him in the interest of Dahl.

Twist, with Dahl, waited upon the Bottler. Argument was short and to the point. Said Twist:

"Bottler, the Kid"—indicating the expectant Dahl—"is in wit' your stuss graft from now on. It's to be an even break."

The news almost checked the beating of the Bottler's heart. Not that he was astonished. What the puissant Twist proposed was a commonest step in Gangland commerce—Gangland, where the Scotch proverb of "Take what you may; keep what you can!" retains a pristine force. For all that, the Bottler felt dismay. The more since he had hoped that his hooking up with the Five Points would have kept him against such rapine.

Following the Twist fulmination, the Bottler stood wrapped in thought. The dangerous chief of the Eastmans lit a cigar and waited. The poor Bottler's cogitations ran off in this manner. Twist had killed six men. Also, he had spared no pains in carrying out those homicides, and could laugh at the law, which his prudence left bankrupt of evidence. Dahl, too, possessed a past as red as Twist's. Both could be relied upon to kill. To refuse Dahl as a partner spelled death. To acquiesce called for half his profits. His friends of the Five Points, to be sure, could come at his call. That, however, would not save his game and might not save his life. Twist's demand showed that he had resolved, so far as he, the Bottler, was concerned, to rule or ruin. The

latter was easy. Any dozen of the Eastmans, picking some unguarded night, could fall upon his establishment, confiscate his bankroll, and pitch both him and his belongings into the street. The Five Points couldn't be forever at his threatened elbow. They would avenge him, certainly; but vengeance, however sweet, comes always over-late, and possesses besides no value in dollars and cents. Thus reasoned the Bottler, while Twist frowningly paused. The finish came when, with a sickly smile, the Bottler bowed to the inevitable and accepted Dahl.

All Suffolk Street, to say nothing of the thoroughfares roundabout, knew what had taken place. The event and the method thereof did not provoke the shrugging of a shoulder, the arching of a brow. What should there be in the usual to invite amazement?

For six weeks the Bottler and Dahl settled up, fifty-and-fifty, with the close of each stuss day. Then came a fresh surprise. Dahl presented his friend, the Nailer, to the Bottler with this terse remark:

"Bottler, youse can beat it. The Nailer is goin' to be me partner now. Which lets you out, see?"

The Bottler was at bay. He owned no stomach for battle, but the sentiment of desperation, which the announcement of Dahl provoked, drove him to make a stand. To lose one-half had been bad. To lose all—to be wholly wiped out in the annals of

Suffolk Street stuss—was more than even his meekness might bear. No, the Bottler did not dream of going to the police. That would have been to squeal; and even his friends of the Five Points had only faces of flint for such tactics of disgrace.

The harassed Bottler barred his doors against Dahl. He would defend his castle, and get word to the Five Points. The Bottler's doors having been barred, Dahl for his side at once instituted a siege, despatching the Nailer, meanwhile, to the nearest knot of Eastmans to bring reinforcements.

At this crisis O'Farrell of the Central Office strolled into the equation. He himself was hunting a loft-worker, of more than common industry, and had no thought of either the Bottler or Dahl. Happening, however, upon a situation, whereof the elemental features were Dahl outside with a gun and the Bottler inside with a gun, he so far recalled his oath of office as to interfere.

"Better an egg to-day than a hen to-morrow," philosophized O'Farrell, and putting aside for the moment his search for the loft-worker, he devoted himself to the Bottler and Dahl.

With the sure instinct of his Mulberry Street caste, O'Farrell opened negotiations with Dahl. He knew the latter to be the dangerous angle, and began by placing the muzzle of his own pistol against that marauder's back.

"Make a move," said he, "and I'll shoot you in two."

The sophisticated Dahl, realizing fate, moved not, and with that the painstaking O'Farrell collected his armament.

Next the Bottler was ordered to come forth. The Bottler obeyed in a sweat and a tremble. He surrendered his pistol at word of the law, and O'Farrell led both off to jail. The two were charged with Disturbance.

In the station house, and on the way, Dahl ceased not to threaten the Bottler's life.

"This pinch'll cost a fine of five dollars," said Dahl, glaring round O'Farrell at the shaking Bottler. "I'll pay it, an' then I'll get square wit' youse. Once we're footloose, you won't last as long as a drink of whiskey!"

The judge yawningly listened, while O'Farrell told his tale of that disturbance.

"Five an' costs!" quoth the judge, and called the next case.

The Bottler returned to Suffolk Street, Dahl sought Twist, while O'Farrell again took the trail of the loft-worker.

Dahl talked things over with Twist. There was but one way: the Bottler must die. Anything short of blood would unsettle popular respect for Twist, and without that his leadership of the Eastmans was a farce.

The Bottler's killing, however, must be managed with a decent care for the conventionalities. For either Twist or Dahl to walk in upon that offender and shoot him to death, while feasible, would be foolish. The coarse extravagance of such a piece of work would serve only to pile needless difficulties in the pathway of what politicians must come to the rescue. It was impertinences of that character which had sent Monk Eastman to Sing Sing. Eastman had so far failed as to the proprieties, when as a supplement to highway robbery he emptied his six-shooter up and down Forty-second Street, that the politicians could not save him without burning their fingers. And so they let him go. Twist had justified the course of the politicians upon that occasion. He would not now, by lack of caution and a reasonable finesse, force them into similar peril. They must and would defend him; but it was not for him to render their labors too up-hill and too hard.

Twist sent to Williamsburg for his friend and ally, Cyclone Louie. The latter was a bull-necked, highly muscled individual, who was a professional strong man—so far as he was professionally anything—and earned occasional side-show money at Coney Island by bending iron bars about his neck and twisting pokers into corkscrews about his brawny arms.

Louie, Twist and Dahl went into council over mutual beer, and Twist explained the imperative call

for the Bottler's extermination. Also, he laid bare the delicate position of both himself and Dahl.

In country regions neighbors aid one another in bearing the burdens of an agricultural day by changing work. The custom is not without what one might call gang imitation and respect. Only in the gang instance the work is not innocent, but bloody. Louie, having an appreciation of what was due a friend, could not do less than come to the relief of Twist and Dahl. Were positions reversed, would they not journey to Williamsburg and do as much for him? Louie did not hesitate, but placed himself at the disposal of Twist and Dahl. The Bottler should die; he, Louie, would see to that.

"But when?"

Twist, replying, felt that the thing should be done at once, and mentioned the following evening, nine o'clock. The place should be the Bottler's establishment in Suffolk Street. Louie, of whom the Bottler was unafraid and ignorant, should experience no difficulty in approaching his man. There would be others present; but, practiced in gang moralities, slaves to gang etiquette, no one would open his mouth. Or, if he did, it would be only to pour forth perjuries, and say that he had seen nothing, heard nothing.

Having adjusted details, Louie, Twist and Dahl compared watches. Watches? Certainly. Louie,

Twist and Dahl were all most fashionably attired and—as became members of a gang nobility—singularly full and accurate in the important element of a front, *videlicet,* that list of personal adornments which included scarf pin, ring and watch. Louie, Dahl and Twist saw to it that their timepieces agreed. This was so that Dahl and Twist might arrange their alibis.

It was the next evening. At 8.55 o'clock Twist was obtrusively in the Delancey Street police station, wrangling with the desk sergeant over the release of a follower who had carefully brought about his own arrest.

"Come," urged Twist to the sergeant, "it's next to nine o'clock now. Fix up the bond; I've got a date over in East Broadway at nine-thirty."

While Twist stood thus enforcing his whereabouts and the hour upon the attention of the desk sergeant, Dahl was eating a beefsteak in a Houston street restaurant.

"What time have youse got?" demanded Dahl of the German who kept the place.

"Five minutes to nine," returned the German, glancing up at the clock.

"Oh, t'aint no such time as that," retorted Dahl peevishly. "That clock's drunk! Call up the telephone people, and find out for sure."

"The 'phone people say it's nine o'clock," reported the German, hanging up the receiver.

"Hully gee! I didn't think it was more'n half-past eight!" and Dahl looked virtuously corrected.

While these fragments of talk were taking place, the Bottler was attending to his stuss interests. He looked pale and frightened, and his hunted eyes roved here and there. Five minutes went by. The clock pointed to nine. A slouch-hat stranger entered. As the clock struck the hour, he placed the muzzle of a pistol against the Bottler's breast, and fired twice. Both bullets pierced the heart, and the Bottler fell—dead without a word. There were twenty people in the room. When the police arrived they found only the dead Bottler.

O'Farrell recalled those trade differences which had culminated in the charge of disturbance, and arrested Dahl.

"You ain't got me right," scoffed Dahl.

And O'Farrell hadn't.

There came the inquest, and Dahl was set free. The Bottler was buried, and Twist and Dahl sent flowers and rode to the grave.

The law slept, a bat-eyed constabulary went its way, but the gangs knew. In the whispered gossip of Gangland every step of the Bottler's murder was talked over and remembered. He must have been minus ears and eyes and understanding who did not know the story. The glance of Gangland turned towards the Five Points. What would be their action? They were bound to avenge. If not for the

Bottler's sake, then for their own. For the Bottler had been under the shadow of their protection, and gang honor was involved. On the Five Points' part there was no stumbling of the spirit. For the death of the Bottler the Five Points would exact the penalty of blood.

Distinguished among the chivalry of the Five Points was Kid Pioggi. Only a paucity of years—he was under eighteen—withheld Pioggi from topmost honors. Pioggi was not specifically assigned to avenge the departed Bottler. Ambitious and gallantly anxious of advancement, however, he of his own motion carried the enterprise in the stomach of his thoughts.

The winter's snow melted into spring, spring lapsed into early summer. It was a brilliant evening, and Pioggi was disporting himself at Coney Island. Also Twist and Cyclone Louie, following some plan of relaxation, were themselves at Coney Island.

Pioggi had seated himself at a beer table in Ding Dong's. Twist and Louie came in. Pioggi, being of the Five Points, was recognized as a foe by Twist, who lost no time in mentioning it.

Being in a facetious mood, and by way of expressing his contempt for that gentleman, Twist made Pioggi jump out of the window. It was no distance to the ground, and no physical harm could come. But to be compelled to leave Ding Dong's by way of

the window, rubbed wrongwise the fur of Pioggi's feelings. To jump from a window stamps one with disgrace.

Twist and Louie—burly, muscular, strong as horses—were adepts of rough-and-tumble. Pioggi, little, light and weak, knew that any thought of physical conflict would have been preposterous. And yet he was no one to sit quietly down with his humiliation. That flight from Ding Dong's window would be on every tongue in Gangland. The name of Pioggi would become a scorning; the tale would stain the Pioggi fame.

Louie and Twist sat down at the table in Ding Dong's, from which Pioggi had been driven, and demanded refreshment in the guise of wine. Pioggi, rage-swollen as to heart, busied himself at a nearby telephone. Pioggi got the ear of a Higher Influence of his clan. He told of his abrupt dismissal from Ding Dong's, and the then presence of Louie and Twist. The Higher Influence instructed Pioggi to keep the two in sight. The very flower of the Five Points should be at Coney Island as fast as trolley cars could carry them.

"Tail 'em," said the Higher Influence, referring to Twist and Louie; "an' when the fleet gets there go in wit' your cannisters an' bump 'em off."

While waiting the advent of his promised forces, Pioggi, maintaining the while an eye on Twist and Louie to the end that they escape not and disap-

pear, made arrangements for a getaway. He established a coupé, a fast horse between the shafts and a personal friend on the box, where he, Pioggi, could find it when his work was done.

By the time this was accomplished, Pioggi's recruits had put in an appearance. They did not descend upon Coney Island in a body, with savage uproar and loud cries. Much too military were they for that. Rather they seemed to ooze into position around Pioggi, and they could not have made less noise had they been so many ghosts.

The campaign was soon laid out. Louie and Twist still sat over their wine at Ding Dong's. Now and then they laughed, as though recalling the ignominious exit of Pioggi. Means must be employed to draw them into the street. That accomplished, the Five Points' Danites were to drift up behind them, and at a signal from Pioggi, empty their pistols into their backs. Pioggi would fire a bullet into Twist; that was to be the signal. As Pioggi whispered his instructions, there shone a licking eagerness in the faces of those who listened. Nothing so exalts the gangster like blood in anticipation; nothing so pleases him as to shoot from behind.

Pioggi pitched upon one whose name and face were unknown to Twist and Louie. The unknown would be the bearer of a blind message—it pur-

ported to come from a dancer in one of the cheap theaters of the place—calculated to bring forth Twist and Louie.

"Stall 'em up this way," said Pioggi, indicating a spot within touching distance of that coupé. "It's here we'll put 'em over the jump."

The place pitched upon for the killing was crowded with people. It was this very thronged condition which had led to its selection. The crowd would serve as a cover to Five Points operations. It would prevent a premature recognition of their assailants by Twist and Louie; it would screen the slayers from identification by casual citizens looking on.

Pioggi's messenger did well his work, and Twist and Louie moved magnificently albeit unsteadily into the open. They were sweeping the walk clear of lesser mortals, when the voice of Pioggi arrested their attention.

"Oh, there, Twist; look here!"

The voice came from the rear and to the right; Pioggi's position was one calculated to place the enemy at a double disadvantage.

Twist turned his head. A bullet struck him above the eye! He staggered! The lead came in a storm! Twist went down; Louie fell across him! There were twelve bullets in Twist and eight in Louie. The coroner said that they were the deadest people of whom he owned official recollection.

As the forethoughtful Pioggi was dashing away in his coupé, a policeman gave chase. Pioggi drove a bullet through the helmet of the law. It stopped pursuit; but Gangland has ever held that the shot was an error. A little lower, and the policeman would have been killed. Also, the death of a policeman is apt to entail consequences.

Pioggi went into hiding in Greenwich, where the Five Points had a hold-out. There were pullings and haulings and whisperings in dark political corners. When conditions had been whispered and hauled and pulled into shape satisfactory, Pioggi sent word to a favorite officer to come and arrest him.

Pioggi explained to the court that his life had been threatened; he had shot only that he himself might live. His age was seventeen. Likewise there had been no public loss; the going of Twist and Louie had but raised the average of all respectability. The court pondered the business, and decided that justice would be fulfilled by sentencing Pioggi to the Elmira Reformatory.

The best fashion of the Five Points visited Pioggi in the Tombs on the morning of his departure.

"It's only thirteen months, Kid," came encouragingly from one. "You won't mind it."

"Mind it!" responded Pioggi, in disdain of the worst that Elmira might hold for him; "mind it! I could do it standin' on me head."

IV.

IKE THE BLOOD

Whenever the police were driven to deal with him officially, he called himself Charles Livin, albeit the opinion prevailed at headquarters that in thus spelling it, he left off a final ski. The police, in the wantonness of their ignorance, described him on their books as a burglar. This was foolishly wide. He should have been listed as a simple Strong-Arm, whose methods of divorcing other people from their money, while effective, were coarse. Also, it is perhaps proper to mention that his gallery number at the Central Office was 10,394.

It was during the supremacy of Monk Eastman that he broke out, and he had just passed his seventeenth birthday. Being out, he at once attached himself to the gang-fortunes of that chief; and it became no more than a question of weeks before his vast physical strength, the energy of his courage and a native ferocity of soul, won him his proud war-name of Ike the Blood. Compared with the herd about him, in what stark elements made the gangster important in his world, he shone out upon the eyes of folk like stars of a clear cold night.

Ike the Blood looked up to his chief, Monk Eastman, as sailors look up to the North Star, and it wrung his soul sorely when that gang captain went to Sing Sing. In the war over the succession and the baton of gang command, waged between Ritchie Fitzpatrick and Kid Twist, Ike the Blood was compelled to stand neutral. Powerless to take either side, liking both ambitious ones, the trusted friend of both, his hands were tied; and later—first Fitzpatrick and then Twist—he followed both to the grave, sorrow not only on his lips but in his heart.

It was one recent August day that I was granted an introduction to Ike the Blood. I was in the company of an intimate friend of mine—he holds high Central Office position in the police economy of New York. We were walking in Henry Street, in the near vicinity of that vigorous organization, the Ajax Club—so called, I take it, because its members are forever defying the lightnings of the law. My Central Office friend had mentioned Ike the Blood, speaking of him as a guiding light to such difficult ones as Little Karl, Whitey Louie, Benny Weiss, Kid Neumann, Tomahawk, Fritzie Rice, Dagley and the Lobster.

Even as the names were in his mouth, his keen Central Office glance went roving through the open doorway of a grogshop.

"There's Ike the Blood now," said he, and tossed a thumb, which had assisted in necking many a male-

factor with tastes to be violent, towards the grog-shop.

Since to consider such pillars of East Side Society was the great reason of my ramble, we entered the place. Ike the Blood was sitting in state at a table to the rear of the unclean bar, a dozen of his immediate followers—in the politics of gang life these formed a minor order of nobility—with him.

Being addressed by my friend, he arose and joined us; none the less he seemed reticent and a bit disturbed. This was due to the official character of my friend, plus the fact that the jealous eyes of those others were upon him. It is no advantage to a leader, like Ike the Blood, to be seen in converse with a detective. Should one of his adherents be arrested within a day or a week, the arrested one reverts to that conversation, and imagines vain things.

"Take a walk with us, Ike," said my friend.

Ike the Blood was obviously reluctant. Sinking his voice, and giving a glance over his shoulder at his myrmidons—not ten feet away, and every eye upon him—he remonstrated.

"Say, I don't want to leave th' push settin' here, to go chasin' off wit' a bull. Fix it so I can come uptown sometime."

"Very well," returned my friend, relenting; "I don't want to put you in Dutch with your fleet."

There was a whispered brief word or two, and an

arrangement for a meet was made; after which Ike the Blood lapsed into the uneasy circle he had quitted. As we left the grogshop, we could hear him loudly calling for beer. Possibly the Central Office nearness of my friend had rendered him thirsty. Or it may have been that the beer was meant to wet down and allay whatever of sprouting suspicion had been engendered in the trustless breasts of his followers.

It was a week later.

The day, dark and showery, was—to be exact—the eighth of August. Faithful to that whispered Henry Street arrangement, Ike the Blood sat awaiting the coming of my friend and myself in the Bal Tabarin. He had spoken of the stuss house of Phil Casey and Paper Box Johnny, in Twenty-ninth Street, but my friend entered a protest. There was his Central Office character to be remembered. A natural embarrassment must ensue were he brought face to face with stuss in a state of activity. Stuss was a crime, by surest word of law, and he had taken an oath of office. He did not care to pinch either Paper Box or Casey, and therefore preferred not to be drawn into a situation where the only alternative would be to either pull their joint or lay the bedplates of complaint against himself.

"It's no good time to be up on charges," remonstrated my friend, "for the commish that's over us now would sooner grab a copper than a crook."

Thus instructed, and feeling the delicacy of my friend's position, Ike the Blood had shifted suggestion to the Bal Tabarin. The latter house of entertainment, in Twenty-eighth Street, was innocent of stuss and indeed cards in any form. Kept by Sam Paul, it possessed a deserved popularity with Ike and the more select of his acquaintances.

Ike the Blood appeared to better advantage in the Bal Tabarin than on that other, Henry Street, grog-shop occasion. Those suspicious ones, of lowering eye and doubtful brow, had been left behind, and their absence contributed to his relief, and therefore to his looks. Not that he had been sitting in the midst of loneliness at the Bal Tabarin; Whitey Dutch and Slimmy were with him, and who should have been better company than they? Also, their presence was of itself an honor, since they were of his own high caste, and many layers above a mere gang peasantry. They would take part in the conversation, too, and, if to talk and touch glasses with a Central Office bull were an offense, it would leave them as deep in the police mud as was he in the police mire.

Ike the Blood received us gracefully, if not enthusiastically, and was so polite as to put me on a friendly footing with his companions. Greetings over, and settled to something like our ease, I engaged myself mentally in taking Ike's picture. His

forehead narrow, back-sloping at that lively angle identified by carpenters as a quarter-pitch, was not the forehead of a philosopher. I got the impression, too, that his small brown eyes, sad rather than malignant, would in any heat of anger blaze like twin balls of brown fire. Cheek-bones high; nose beaky, predatory—such a nose as Napoleon loved in his marshals; mouth coarsely sensitive, suggesting temperament; the broad, bony jaw giving promise of what staying qualities constitute the stock in trade of a bulldog; no mustache, no beard; a careless liberality of ear—that should complete the portrait. Fairly given, it was the picture of one who acted more than he thought, and whose atmosphere above all else conveyed the feeling of relentless force—the picture of one who under different circumstances might have been a Murat or a Massena.

My friend managed the conversation, and did it with Central Office tact. Knowing what I was after, he brought up Gangland and the gangs, upon which topics Whitey Dutch, seeing no reasons for silence, spoke instructively. Aside from the great gangs, the Eastmans and the Five Points, I learned that other smaller yet independent gangs existed. Also, from Whitey's discourse, it was made clear that just as countries had frontiers, so also were there frontiers to the countries of the gangs. The Five Points, with fifteen hundred on its puissant muster

rolls, was supreme—he said—between Broadway and the Bowery, Fourteenth Street and City Hall Park. The Eastmans, with one thousand warriors, flourished between Monroe and Fourteenth Streets, the Bowery and the East River. The Gas House Gang, with only two hundred in its nose count, was at home along Third Avenue between Eleventh and Eighteenth Streets. The vivacious Gophers were altogether heroes of the West Side. They numbered full five hundred, each a holy terror, and ranged the region bounded by Seventh Avenue, Fourteenth Street, Tenth Avenue and Forty-second Street. The Gophers owned a rock-bottom fame for their fighting qualities, and, speaking in the sense militant, neither the Eastmans nor the Five Points would care to mingle with them on slighter terms than two to one. The fulness of Whitey Dutch, himself of the Five Points, in what justice he did the Gophers, marked his splendid breadth of soul.

Ike the Blood, overhung by some cloud of moodiness, devoted himself moderately to beer, taking little or less part in the talk. Evidently there was something bearing him down.

"I ain't feelin' gay," he remarked; "an' at that, if youse was to ast me, I couldn't tell youse why."

As though a thought had been suggested, he arose and started for the door.

"I won't be away ten minutes," he said.

Slimmy looked curiously at Whitey Dutch.

"He's chased off to one of them fortune-tellers," said Whitey.

"Do youse take any stock in them ginks who claims they can skin a deck of cards, or cock their eye into a teacup, an' then put you next to everyt'ing that'll happen to you in a year?"

Slimmy aimed this at me.

Upon my assurance, given with emphasis, that I attached no weight to so-called seers and fortune-tellers, he was so magnanimous as to indorse my position.

"They're a bunch of cheap bunks," he declared. "I've gone ag'inst 'em time an' time, an' there's nothin' in it. One of 'em gives me his woid—after me comin' across wit' fifty cents—th' time Belfast Danny's in trouble, that Danny'll be toined out all right. Two days later Danny gets settled for five years."

"Ike's stuck on 'em," remarked Whitey.

Slimmy and Whitey Dutch, speaking freely and I think veraciously, told me many things. Whitey explained that, while he and Slimmy were shining lights of the Five Points, yet to be found fraternizing with Ike the Blood—an Eastman—was in perfect keeping with gang proprieties. For, as he pointed out, there was momentary truce between the Eastmans and the Five Points. Among the gangs, in seasons of gang peace, the nobles—by word of Whitey—were expected to make stately calls of cere-

mony and good fellowship upon one another, as had been the wont among Highland chieftains in the days of Bruce and Wallace.

"Speaking of the Gas House Gang: how do they live?" I asked.

"Stickin' up lushes mostly."

"How much of this stick-up work goes on?"

"Well"—thoughtfully—"they'll pull off as many as twenty-five stick-ups to-night."

"There's no such number of squeals coming in at headquarters."

The contradiction emanated from my Central Office friend, who felt criticized by inference.

"Squeals!" exclaimed Whitey Dutch with warmth, "w'y should they squeal? The Gas House push'd cook 'em if they squealed. Suppose right now I was to go out an' get put in th' air; do you think I'd squeal? Well, I should say not; I'm no mutt! They'd about come gallopin' 'round tomorry wit' bale-sticks, an' break me arms an' legs, or mebby knock me block off. W'y, not a week ago, three Gas House *shtockers* stands me up in Rivington Street, an' takes me clock—a red one wit' two doors. Then they pinches a fiver out of me keck. They even takes me bank-book.

" 'W'at license has a stiff like youse got to have $375 in th' bank?' they says—like that.

"Next night they comes bluffin' round for me three hundred and seventy-five dollar plant—w'at

do you t'ink of that? But I'm there wit' a gatt meself that time, an' ready to give 'em an argument. W'en they sees I'm framed up, they gets cold feet. But you can bet I don't do no squealin'!"

"Did you get back your watch?"

"How could I get it back?" peevishly. "No, I don't get back me watch. All the same, I'll lay for them babies. Some day I'll get 'em right, an' trim 'em to the queen's taste."

My friend, leading conversation in his specious Central Office way, spoke of Ike the Blood's iron fame, and slanted talk in that direction.

"Ike can certainly go some!" observed Slimmy meditatively. "Take it from me, there ain't any of 'em, even th' toughest ever, wants his game." Turning to Whitey: "Don't youse remember, Whitey, when he tears into Humpty Jackson an' two of his mob, over in Thirteenth Street, that time? There's nothin' to it! Ike simply makes 'em jump t'rough a hoop! Every lobster of 'em has his rod wit' him, too."

"They wouldn't have had the nerve to fire 'em if they'd pulled 'em," sneered Whitey. "Ike'd have made 'em eat th' guttaperchy all off th' handles, too. Say, I don't t'ink much of that Gas House fleet. They talk strong; but they don't bring home th' goods, see!"

It appeared that, in spite of his sanguinary title, Ike the Blood had never killed his man.

"He's tried," explained Slimmy, who felt as though the absent one, in his blood-guiltlessness, required defense; "but he all th' time misses. Ike's th' woist shot wit' a rod in th' woild."

"Sure, Mike!"—from Whitey Dutch, his nose in his drink; "he couldn't hit th' Singer Buildin'."

"How does he make his money?" I asked.

"Loft worker," broke in my friend.

The remark was calculated to explode the others into fresh confidences.

"Don't youse believe it!" came in vigorous denial from Whitey Dutch. "Ike never cracked a bin in his life. You bulls"—this was pointed especially at my friend—"say he's a dip, too. W'y, it's a laugh! Ike couldn't pick th' pocket of a dead man—couldn't put his hand into a swimmin' tank! That's how fly he is."

"Now don't try to string me," retorted my friend, severely. "Didn't Ike fill in with Little Maxie and his mob, when they worked the Jersey fairs?"

"But that was only to do the strong-arm work, in case there's a scrap," protested Whitey. "On th' level, Ike is woise than Big Abrams. He can't even stall. An' as for gettin' a leather or a watch, gettin' a perfecto out of a cigar box would be about his limit."

"That Joisey's a bum place; youse can go there for t'ree cents."

The last was interjected by Slimmy—who had a

fine wit of his own—with the hopeful notion of diverting discussion to less exciting questions than pocket-picking at the New Jersey fairs.

It developed that while Ike the Blood had now and then held up a stuss game for its bank-roll, during some desperate ebb-tide of his fortunes, he drew his big income from a yearly ball.

"He gives a racket," declared Whitey Dutch; "that's how Ike gets his dough. Th' last one he pulls off nets him about twenty-five hundred plunks."

"What price were the tickets?" I inquired. Twenty-five hundred dollars sounded large.

"Th' tickets is fifty cents," returned Whitey, "but that's got nothin' to do wit' it. A guy t'rows down say a ten-spot at th' box-office, like that"—and Whitey made a motion with his hand, which was royal in its generous openness. "'Gimme a pasteboard!' he says; an' that ends it; he ain't lookin' for no change back. Every sport does th' same. Some t'rows in five, some ten, some guy even changes in a twenty if he's pulled off a trick an' is feelin' flush. It's all right; there's nothin' in bein' a piker. Ike himself sells th' tickets; an' th' more you planks down th' more he knows you like him."

It was becoming plain. A gentleman of gang prominence gives a ball—a racket—and coins, so to speak, his disrepute. He of sternest and most bloody past takes in the most money. To discover one's status in Gangland, one has but to give a

racket.. The measure of the box-receipts will be the dread measure of one's reputation.

"One t'ing youse can say of Ike," observed Slimmy, wearing the while a look of virtue, "he never made no money off a woman."

"Never in all his life took a dollar off a doll!" added Whitey, corroboratively.

Ike the Blood reappearing at this juncture, it was deemed best to cease—audibly, at least—all consideration of his merits. He might have regarded discussion, so personal to himself, with disfavor. Laughing lightly, he took his old place at the table, and beckoned the waiter. Compared with what had been its former cloudy expression, his face wore a look of relief.

"Say, I don't mind tellin' youse guys," he said at last, breaking into an uneasy laugh, "but th' fact is, I skinned round into Sixt' Avenoo to a fortune teller—a dandy, she is—one that t'rows a fit, or goes into a trance, or some such t'ing."

"A fortune teller!" said Slimmy, as though he'd never heard the word before.

"It's on account of a dream. In all th' years"—Ike spoke as might one who had put a century behind him—"in all th' years I've been knockin' about, an' I've had me troubles, I never gets a notch on me gun, see? Not that I went lookin' for any; not that I'm lookin' for any now. But last night I had a dream:—I dreams I croaks a guy. Mebby it's some-

t'in' I'd been eatin'; mebby it's because of me havin' a pretty hot argument th' mornin' before; but anyhow it bothers me—that dream does. You see" —this to my friend—"I'm figgerin' on openin' a house over in Twenty-fift' Street, an' these West Side ducks is all for givin' me th' frozen face. They say I oughter stick down on th' East Side, where I belongs, an' not come chasin' up here, cuttin' in on their graft. Anyhow, I dreams I puts th' foist notch on me gun——"

"And so you consult a fortune teller," laughed my friend, who was not superstitious, but practical.

"Wait till I tells you. As I says, I blows in on that trance party. I don't wise her up about any dream, but comes t'rough wit' th' little old one buck she charges, an' says: 'There you be! Now roll your game for th' limit!' "

"Which she proceeded to do," broke in my friend.

"Listen! Th' old dame—after coppin' me dollar —stiffens back an' shuts her eyes; an' next, th' foist flash out of th' box she says—speakin' like th' wind in a keyhole: 'You're in th' midst of trouble; a man is killed!' Then she wakes up. 'W'y didn't youse go t'rough?' I says; 'I want th' rest. Who is it gets croaked, th' other dub or me?' Th' old dame insists that to go back, an' get th' address of th' party who's been bumped off, she must have another dollar. Oh, they're th' birds, them fortune tellers, to grab th' dough! But of course I can't stop there, so I bucks

up wit' another bone. 'There you be,' I says; 'now, is it me that gets it, or does he?"

"W'at he?" demanded Whitey.

"How do I know?" The tone and manner were impatient. "It's th' geek I'm havin' trouble wit'." Ike looked at me, as one who would understand and perhaps sympathize, and continued: "This time th' old dame says th' party who's been cooked is some other guy; it ain't me. 'I can see now that it ain't you,' she says. 'You're ridin' away in a patrol wagon, wit' a lot of harness bulls.' That's good so far. 'So I gets th' collar?' I says. 'How about th' trial?' She answers, 'There ain't no trial;' an' then she comes out of her trance, same as a diver comes up out o' the water."

"Is that all?" asked Slimmy.

"That's where she lets me off."

"W'y don't youse dig for another dollar," said Whitey, "an' tell th' old hag to put on her suit an' go down ag'in for th' rest?" Whitey had been impressed by that simile of the diver.

"W'at more is there to get? I ain't killed; an' I ain't tried—that oughter do me. Th' coroner t'rows me loose, most likely. Anyhow, I ain't goin' to sit there all day, skinnin' me roll for that old sponge—a plunk a crack, too."

"Talk of th' cost of livin'!" remarked Slimmy, with a grin. "Ain't it fierce, th' way them fortune tellers'll slim a guy's bank-roll for him, once they

has him hooked? They'll get youse to goin'; an' after that it's like one of them stories w'at ends wit' 'Continued in our next.' W'y, it's like playin' th' horses, only woise. Th' foist day you goes out to win; an' after that, you keep goin' back to get even."

Ike the Blood paid no heed to the pessimistic philosophy of Slimmy; he was too wholly wrapped up in what he had been told.

"Well," he broke forth, following a ruminative pause, "anyhow, I'd sooner he gets it than me."

"There you go ag'in about that 'he,'" protested Whitey, and the manner of Whitey was querulous.

"Th' guy she sees me hooked up wit'!" This came off a bit warmly. "You know w'at I mean."

"Take it easy!—take it easy!" urged my friend. "What is there to get hot about? You don't mean to say, Ike, you're banking on that guff the old dame handed you?"

"Next week"—the shadow of a smile playing across his face—"I won't believe it. But it sounds like th' real t'ing now."

The door of the Bal Tabarin opened to the advent of a weasel-eyed individual.

"Hello, Whitey!" exclaimed Weasel-eye cheerily, shaking hands with Whitey Dutch. "I just leaves a namesake of yours; an' say, he's in bad!"

"W'at namesake?"

"Whitey Louie. A bunch of them West Side

guerrillas has him cornered, over in a dump at Twenty-seventh Street and Seventh Avenoo. It looks like there'd be somethin' doin'; an', as I don't want no part of it, I screws out."

At the name of Whitey Louie, Ike the Blood arose to his feet.

"Whitey Louie?" he questioned; "Seventh Avenoo an' Twenty-seventh Street?"

"That's th' ticket," replied Weasel-eye; "an' youse can cash on it."

Ike the Blood hurried out the door.

"Whitey Louie is Ike's closest pal," observed Whitey Dutch, explaining the hurried departure.

"Will there be trouble?" I asked.

"I don't t'ink so," said Slimmy. "It's four for one they'll lay down to Ike."

"Don't put your swell bet on it!" came warningly from Whitey Dutch; "them Gophers are as tough a bunch as ever comes down the pike."

"Tough nothin'!" returned Slimmy: "they'll be duck soup to Ike."

"Why don't you look into it?" I asked, turning to my friend. As a taxpayer, I yearned for some return on that $16,000,000 a year which New York City pays for its police.

That ornament of the Central Office yawned, and motioned to the waiter to bring his bill.

"That sort of thing is up to the cop on the beat," said he.

"Whitey an' me 'ud get in on it," explained Slimmy—his expression was one of half apology—"only you see we belong at th' other end of th' alley. We're Five Points; Ike an' Whitey Louie are Eastmans; an' in a clash between Eastmans an' Gophers, it's up to us to stand paws-off, see!"

"That's straight talk," coincided Whitey.

"Suppose, seeing it's stopped raining, we drift over there," said my friend, adjusting his Panama at the exact Central Office angle.

As we journeyed along, I noticed Slimmy and Whitey Dutch across the street. It was already written that Whitey Dutch, himself, would be shot to death in the Stag before the year was out; but the shadow of that impending taking-off was not apparent in his face. Indeed, from that face there shone forth only pleasure in anticipation, and a lively interest.

"They'd no more miss it than they'd miss a play at the theater," remarked my friend, who saw where my glance was directed.

About a ginmill, on the corner of Seventh Avenue and Twenty-seventh Street, a crowd had collected. A patrol wagon was backing up.

An officer in uniform tossed a prisoner into the wagon, with no more ceremony than should attend the handling of a bag of bran.

"It's Dubillier!" exclaimed Whitey Dutch, naming the prisoner.

The two Five Pointers had taken position on the edge of the crowd, directly in front of my friend and me.

"There's Ike!" said Slimmy, as two policemen were seen pushing their way towards the patrol wagon, Ike the Blood between them. "Them bulls is holdin' him up, too, an' his face is as pale as paper! By thunder, they've nailed him!"

"I told you them Gophers were tough students," was the comment of Whitey Dutch.

My friend began forcing his way forward. As he plowed through the crowd, Whitey Dutch and Slimmy, having advantage of his wake, kept close at his heels.

Slimmy threw me a whispered word: "Be th' way th' mob is actin', I t'ink Ike copped one."

Slimmy, before the lapse of many minutes, was again at my side, attended by Whitey Dutch. The pair wore that manner of quick yet neutral appreciation which belongs—we'll say—with such as English army officers visiting the battlefield of Santiago while the action between the Spaniards and the Americans is being waged. It wasn't their fight, it was an Eastman-Gopher fight, but as full-blown Five Pointers it became them vastly to be present. Also, they might learn something.

"Ike dropped one," nodded Whitey Dutch, answering the question in my eye. "It's Ledwich."

"What was the row about?" I asked.

"Whitey Louie. The Gophers was goin' to hand it to him; but just then Ike comes through th' door on th' run, an' wit' that they outs wit' their rods an' goes to peggin' at him. Then Ike gets to goin' an' cops Ledwich."

"Th' best th' Gophers can get," observed Slimmy —and his manner was as the manner of one balancing an account—"th' best th' Gophers can get is an even break; an' to do that they'll have to cash on Ike. Whitey Louie? He makes his get-away all right. Say, Whitey, let's beat it round to the Tenderloin Station, an' get th' finish."

The finish was soon told. Ike the Blood lay dead on the station house floor; a bullet had drilled its dull way through his lungs. An officer was just telephoning his people in Chrystie Street.

"Now do youse see?" said Whitey Dutch, correcting what he conceived to be Slimmy's skepticism; "that fortune tellin' skirt handed out th' right dope. 'One croaked!—Ike in th' hurry-up wagon! —no trial!' That's th' spiel she makes; an' it falls true, see!"

"Ike oughter have dug down for another bone," returned Slimmy, more than half convinced; "she'd have put him hep to that bullet in his breather, mebby."

"W'at good 'ud that have done?"

"Good? If he'd got th' tip, he might have ducked —you can't tell."

"It's a bad business," I commented to my friend, who had rejoined me.

"It would be a good thing"—shrugging his cynical Central Office shoulders—"if, with a change of names, it could happen every day in the year. By the way, I forgot my umbrella; let's go back to the Bal Tabarin."

V.

INDIAN LOUIE

No one knew his real name, not even the police, and the police, let me tell you, know much more than they can prove. The Central Office never once had the pleasure of mugging and measuring and parading him at the morning bawling out, and the Mulberry Street records to the last were barren concerning him. For one brief space and only one did Mulberry Street nourish hopes. That was when he himself let it be thought that somewhere, sometime, somehow, he had taken some one's life. At this, Mulberry Street fairly shook the wide earth like a tablecloth in search of proof, but got not so much as one poor crumb of confirmation.

It was at Big Jack's in Chatham Square that local history first laid eyes on him. Big Jack is gone now; the Committee of Fourteen decided upon him virtuously as an immoralist, handed him the fatal blue paper, and he perished. Jack Sirocco—who was himself blue-papered in a Park Row hour—keeps the place now.

Starting from Big Jack's, he soon began to be known in Flynn's, and Nigger Mike's, and about

the Chatham Club. When his pals spoke to him they called him Louie. When they spoke of him they called him Indian Louie, or Spanish Louie, to the end that he be identified among the hosts of East Side Louies, who were and are as many as the leaves on a large tree.

Rumor made Indian Louie a native of South America, and his dark skin, black eyes, thin lips, high cheek-bones and high curved nose helped rumor out in this. Also, he was supposed to be of Spanish or Portuguese extraction.

When Louie was buried, this latter assumption received a jolt. His funeral, conducted by a rabbi, was according to strictest Hebrew ceremonial. Two pieces of porcelain were laid upon his eyes, as intimating that he had seen enough. A feather, which a breath would have disturbed, was placed upon his upper lip. This was to evidence him as fully and conclusively dead, although on that point, in all conscience, the coroner's finding should have been enough. The flowers, which Gangland sent to prove its grief, were put aside because too gay and pleasant. The body was laid upon straw. A would-be pallbearer, since his name was Cohen, had to be excluded from the rites, as any orthodox Jew could have told him must be the case. For death and the dead are unclean; and a Cohen, who by virtue of his name is of the high-priest caste—Aaron was a Cohen—and tends the altars, must

touch nothing, approach nothing, that is unclean. The funeral was scrupulously held before the second sun went down, and had to be hurried a little, because the morgue authorities, hobbled of red tape, move as slowly as the sea itself in giving up the dead. The coffin—of poorest pine—was knocked to pieces in the grave, before the clods of earth were shoveled in and the doomsday sods laid on. The garments of him who acted as principal mourner were faithfully torn; that is to say, the rabbi cut a careful slit in the lapel of that mourner's waistcoat where it wouldn't show.

You will see from this, that every detail was holy by most ancient Jewish prescription. And the business led to talk. Those about Flynn's, Nigger Mike's and the Chatham Club, to say naught of members of the Humpty Jackson gang, and others who in his latter days had been near if not dear to him, confessed that it went far in contradiction of any Spanish or Portuguese ancestry for Louie.

Louie was a mystery, and studied to be so. And to be a mystery is as difficult as being a hypocrite. One wrong word, one moment off your guard, and lo, a flood of light! The mystery vanishes, the hypocrisy is laid bare. You are no longer a riddle. Or, if so, then a riddle that has been solved. And he who was a riddle, but has been solved, is everywhere scoffed at and despised.

Louie must have possessed a genius for mystery, since not once did he fall down in that difficult rôle. He denied nothing, confirmed nothing, of the many tales told about him. A waif-word wagged that he had been in the army, without pointing to any regiment; and that he had been in the navy, without indicating what boat. Louie, it is to be thought, somewhat fostered this confusion. It deepened him as a mystery, and made him more impressive.

Louie was careful, also, that his costume should assist. He made up all in black—black shoes, black trousers, black coat, black hat of semi-sombrero type. Even in what may be spoken of as the matter of linen—although there was no linen about it—he adhered to that funereal hue, and in lieu of a shirt wore a sweater, collar close up to the chin, and all as black as his coat. As he walked the streets, black eyes challenging, threatening, from underneath the black, wide-rimmed hat, he showed not from top to toe a fleck of white.

Among what tales went here and there concerning Louie, there was one which described him as the deadest of dead shots. This he accentuated by a brace of big Colt's pistols, which bore him constant company, daylight and dark. There was no evidence of his having used this artillery, no word of any killing to his perilous glory. Indeed, he

couldn't have pointed to so much as one wounded man.

Only once did those pistols come into play. Valenski's stuss house, in Third Avenue near Fourteenth Street, was put in the air. The hold-ups descended upon Valenski's, grabbed $80 which was on the table, and sent Valenski into his safe for $300 more. While this went on, Louie stood in the door, a gun in each fist, defying the gaping, staring, pop-eyed public to interfere. He ran no risk, as everyone well knew. The East Side, while valorous, never volunteers. There was no more chance of outside interference to save Valenski from being plundered, than of outside contributions to make him up another roll.

The incident might have helped in building up for Louie a reputation, had it not been that all that was starkly heroic therein melted when, two days later, the ravished $380 was privily restored to Valenski, with the assurance that the entire business was a jest. Valenski knew nothing humorous had been intended, and that his bundle was returned in deference only to the orders of one high in politics and power. Also, it was the common feeling, a feeling no less cogent for not being put into words, that had Louie been of the wood from which champions are carved, the $380 would never have come back. To refrain from some in-

tended stick-up upon grave orders given, might mean no more than prudence and a right discipline. But to send back money, once in actual hand and when the risk and work of which it stood the harvest had been encountered and performed, was to fly in the face of gang ethics. An order to that effect, however eminent its source, should have been met with stony refusal.

There was one tale which should go, perhaps, to the right side of the reputational ledger, as indicating that Louie had nerve. Crazy Charlie was found dead in the mouth of a passageway, which opened off Mulberry Street near the Bowery. His throat had been cut from ear to ear. No one of sense supposed Louie did that throat slashing. Crazy Charlie was a hop-head, without a dollar in his jeans, and Louie never did anything except for money. He would no more have gone about a profitless killing, than he would have wasted time and effort by fishing in a bathtub.

For all that, on the whispered hint of the Ghost —who himself was killed finally as a snitch—two plain-clothes men from the Eldridge Street station grabbed Louie. They did not tell him the reason of the pinch. Neither did they spread it on the books. The police have a habit of protecting themselves from the consequences of a foolish collar by a specious system of concealment, and put nothing on the blotter until sure.

When searched at the desk, Louie's guns were discovered. Also, from inside his waistcoat was taken a seven-inch knife, which, as said the police sergeant, might have slit the windpipe of Crazy Charlie or any other bug. But, as anyone with eyes might see, the knife was as purely virginal as when it came from a final emery wheel in its far-off Sheffield home. It had slit nothing.

Still, those plain-clothes dicks did not despair. They hoped to startle Louie into a confession. With a view to his moral and physical stampede, they conveyed Louie in a closed patrol wagon, at mirk midnight, to the morgue. He hadn't been told what he was charged with; he didn't know where he was going.

The wagon backed up to the morgue door. Louie had never visited the morgue before, though fated in the end to appear there officially. The plain-clothes men, one at each shoulder, steered him inside. All was thick blackness; you couldn't have seen your own nose. Feeling their wordless way, the painstaking plain-clothes folk manhandled Louie into position.

Then they flashed on a flood of electric light.

There, within two feet of Louie, and squarely beneath his eyes, lay the dead Crazy Charlie, posed so as to show effectively that gruesome slash across the throat. Louie neither started nor exclaimed. Gazing down on the dead Charlie, he searched forth

a cigarette and turned to one of his plain-clothes escorts for a match.

"Do you see this?" demanded the plain-clothes man, slewing round the dead head until that throat-gash yawned like some horrid mouth.

The plain-clothes man was wroth to think he should have worked so hard to achieve so little.

"Yes," retorted Louie, as cold as a wedge. "Also, I'll tell you bulls another thing. You think to rattle me. Say, for ten cents I'd sit on this stiff all night an' smoke a pipe."

Those plain-clothes artists gave Louie up. They turned him loose at the morgue door.

The affair worked round, and helped Louie to a better position in the minds of all fair men. It fell in lucky, too, since it more than stood off a set-back which overtook him about the same time. Louie had called upon the Irish Wop, at the latter's poolroom in Fourth Avenue. This emigrant from Mayo was thin and slight and sickly, and Louie argued that he might bully him out of a handful of money. Putting on a darkest frown, he demanded fifty dollars, and intimated that dire indeed would be the consequences of refusal.

"Because," said Louie, "when I go out for anything I get it, see?"

The Wop coughed timidly and made a suggestion. "Come round in half an hour," said he,

"when the last race from New Orleans is in; I'll have the cush ready for yez."

Louie withdrew, and the Wop shoved the poker into the blazing big-bellied stove.

An hour later, that New Orleans race having been run, Louie returned. The poker being by this time white-hot, the Wop drew it forth from the stove. There were no stage waits. Applying the poker to the shrinking rear of Louie, the Wop compelled that yearner after fifty dollars to leap screechingly from a second-storey window.

"That's phwy I puts th' windy up," explained the Wop; "I didn't want that chape skate to bre-a-ak th' glassh. Indian Louie! Spanish Louie!" he repeated with measureless contempt. "Let me tell youse ginks wan thing." This to a circle who had beheld the flight of Louie. "If ever that bum shows up here ag'in, I'll put him out av business altogether. Does he think a two-cint Guinea from Sout' Ameriky can bluff a full-blown Mick?"

Louie's flight through the Wop's window, as had his steadiness at the morgue, went the gossipy rounds. It didn't injure him as much as you might think.

"For who," said the general voice, "would face and fight a white-hot poker?"

On the whole, public sentiment was inclined to sustain Louie in that second-storey jump.

From what has been written, it will not astonish you to hear that, upon the important matter of courage, Louie's place in society had not been absolutely fixed. Some said one thing, some another. There are game men in Gangland; and there exist others who aren't the real thing. Sardinia Frank believes, with the Irish Wop, that Louie belonged in the latter class. Also, Sardinia Frank is entitled to an opinion. For he was born in Mulberry Bend, and has himself been tried twice on charges of murder.

It was Sardinia Frank, by the way, who smote upon Eat-'em-up Jack with that effective lead pipe, albeit, there being no proof, he was never arrested for it. No, he doesn't admit it, even among intimates and where such admission would be respected as sacred. But when joked concerning it, he has ever worn a cheerful, satisfied look—like the pictures of the cat that ate the canary—and while careful not to accept, was equally careful not to reject, the compliment implied. Moreover, when the dead Eat-'em-up-Jack was picked up, the lead pipe used to break his skull had been tucked jocosely under his arm. It was clear to knowing ones that none except Sardinia Frank would have thought of such a jest. To him it would have come readily enough, since death always appealed to his sense of humor.

Clad in a Tuxedo and an open-face suit, Sar-

dinia Frank, at the time I questioned him, was officiating as peace-preserver in the Normandie rathskeller. By way of opener, I spoke of his mission on the rathskeller earth.

"I'm here to keep out everybody I know," said he simply.

There was a pathetic side to this which, in his ingenuousness, Frank failed wholly to remark.

"About Indian Louie?" I at last said.

It was within an hour after Louie had been killed.

"I'll tell youse about Louie," returned Frank. "Of course, he's dead, an' lyin' on a slab in th' morgue right now. They 'phoned me woid ten minutes ago. But that don't make no difference. He was a bluff; he wasn't th' goods. He went around wit' his hat over his eyes, bulldozin' everybody he could, an' lettin' on to be a hero. An' he's got what heroes get."

"Did you ever get tangled up with him?" I asked.

"Let me show you," and Frank became confidential. "This'll give youse a line. One time he's got two hundred bones. Mollie Squint climbs into a yap-wagon an' touches a rube for it. Louie takes it, an' plants it wit' Nigger Mike. That's about six months ago. Th' next night, me bein' wise to it, I chases to Mike an' says, 'Louie's over to Jigger's, pointin' stuss, an' he wants th' two hundred.' So Mike hands me th' dough. I splits it five ways wit'

th' gang who's along, each of us gettin' his little old bit of forty dollars apiece.

"Louie, when he finds out next day, makes an awful beef. He tells everybody he's goin' to hand it to me—goin' to cook me on sight, see? I hears of it, an' I hunts Louie up in Jack Sirocco's.

" 'Say, Louie,' I says, 'about that cookin' me. Th' bully way would be to come right now over to Hoboken, an' bump me off to-night. I'll go wit' youse. An' there won't be no hang-over, see; 'cause no one in Joisey'll care, an' no one in New York'll know.'

"Do youse think Louie'll come? Not on your necktie! He didn't want me game—just wanted to talk, that's all.

" 'Not youse, Frank,' he said; 'I ain't gunnin' for youse. It's Nigger Mike; he's th' guy I'm goin' to croak. He oughtn't to have let youse have th' money.' No, of course, he don't go after Mike; that's simply his crawl.

"Take it from me," Frank concluded, "Louie wasn't th' goods. He'd run a bluff, but he never really hoited a guy in his whole life. As I says, he goes about frownin', an' glarin', an' givin' people th' fiery eye, an' t'rowin' a chest, an' lettin' it go broadcast that he's a hero. An' for a finish he's got w'at heroes get."

Such was the word of Sardinia Frank.

When he fell with two bullets through his brain,

and two more through his body, Louie had $170 in his pocket, $700 in his shoe, and $3,000 in the Bowery Bank. This prosperity needn't amaze. There was, for one thing, a racket reason to be hereinafter set forth. Besides, Pretty Agnes and Mollie Squint both walked the streets in Louie's loved behalf, and brought him all in the way of riches that came to their lure. Either was sure for five dollars a day, and Mollie Squint, who could graft a little, once came in with $800. Both Pretty Agnes and Mollie Squint most fiercely adored Louie, and well did he know how to play one loving heart against the other. Some say that of the pair he preferred Pretty Agnes. If so, he wasn't fool enough to let her find it out. She might have neglected her business to bask in his sweet society.

Besides, when it came to that, Louie's heart was really given to a blonde burlesquer, opulent of charm. This *artiste* snubbed and neglected Louie for the love of a stage manager. But she took and spent Louie's money, almost if not quite as fast as Pretty Agnes and Mollie Squint could bring it to him from the streets.

Louie never made any place his hangout long. There was no element of loyalty in him, whether for man or for woman, and he went from friend to friend and gang to gang. He would stay nowhere, remain with no one, after his supremacy had been challenged. And such hardy natures as Biff Ellison,

Jimmy Kelly, Big Mike Abrams, Chick Tricker and Jack Sirocco were bound to challenge it. They had a way, too, of putting the acid on an individual, and unless his fighting heart were purest gold they'd surely find it out. And Louie never stood the test. Thus, beginning at Big Jack's in Chatham Square, Louie went from hangout to hangout, mob to mob, until, working through Nigger Mike's, the Chatham Club and Sharkey's, he came at last to pal in with the Humpty Jackson guerrillas.

These worthies had a stamping ground in a graveyard between First and Second Avenue, in the block bounded north and south by Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets. There Louie was wont to meet such select company as Monahokky, Nigger Ruhl, Candy Phil, the Lobster Kid, Maxie Hahn, and the Grabber. As they lolled idly among the tombstones, he would give them his adventures by flood and by field. Louie, besides being conceited, was gifted with an imagination and liked to hear himself talk. Not that he felt obliged to accuracy in these narrations. It was enough that he made them thrilling, and in their telling shed an effulgent ray upon himself.

While he could entertain with his stories, Louie was never popular. There was that doubt about his courage. Also, he was too frugal. No one had ever caught the color of his money. Save in the avaricious instance of the big blonde burlesquer,

as hungry as false, he held by the selfish theology that it is more blessed to receive than to give.

Taking one reason and another, those about Louie at the finish were mainly the Humpty Jackson bunch. His best hangout of any fashion was the Hesper Club. Had Humpty Jackson remained with his own, Louie might have been driven, in search of comradeship, to go still further afield. Humpty was no weakling, and while on the surface a whining, wheedling, complaining cripple, owned his volcanic side, and had once shot it out, gun to gun and face to face, with no less a paladin than Jimmy Kelly. Louie would have found the same fault with Humpty that he had found with those others. Only Humpty didn't last long enough after Louie joined his forces. Some robbery came off, and a dull jury held Humpty responsible. With that, the judge sent him up for a long term of years, and there he sticks to-day. Humpty took the journey crying that he had been jobbed by the police. However that may have been, his going made it possible for Louie to remain with the Jacksons, and shine at those ghoulish, graveyard meetings, much longer than might otherwise have been the case.

While Louie had removed to the remote regions about Fourteenth Street and Third Avenue, and was seldom seen in Chatham Square or Chinatown, he was not forgotten in those latter precincts. Jew Yetta brought up his name one evening in the Chat-

ham Club, and spoke scornfully of him in conjunction with the opulent blonde.

"That doll's makin' a farmer of Louie," was the view of Jew Yetta.

"At that," remarked the Dropper—for this was in the days of his liberty and before he had been put away—"farmer or no farmer, it's comin' easier for him now than when he was in the navy, eatin' sow-belly out of a harness cask an' drinkin' bilge. W'at's that ship he says he's sailin' in, Nailer?" continued the Dropper. "Ain't it a tub called *Atalanta?*"

"There never is a ship in the navy named *Atalanta.*"

This declaration, delivered with emphasis, emanated from old Jimmy, who had a place by himself in East Side consideration. Old Jimmy was about sixty, with a hardwood-finish face and 'possum-colored hair. He had been a river pirate in the old days, and roamed the midnight waters for what he might pick up. Those were times when he troubled the police, who made him trouble in return. But one day old Jimmy salvaged a rich man's daughter, who—as though to make his fortune—had fallen overboard from a yacht, and bored her small hole in the water within a rod or two of Jimmy's skiff. Certainly, he fished her out, and did it with a boat hook. More; he sagaciously laid her willowy form across a thwart, to the end that the river water flow

more easily from her rosebud mouth. Relieved of the water, the rescued beauty thanked Jimmy profusely; and, for his generous part, her millionaire father proceeded to pension his child's preserver for life. The pension was twenty-five dollars a week. Coming fresh and fresh with every Monday, Jimmy gave up his piracies and no longer haunted in the name of loot the nightly reaches of the river. Indeed, he became offensively idle and honest.

"No sir," repeated old Jimmy; "there never is a ship in our navy named *Atalanta.*"

"All th' same," retorted the dropper, "I lamps a yacht once w'at's called *Atalanta.*"

"An' who says No?" demanded old Jimmy, testily. "I'm talkin' about th' United States Navy. But speakin' of Louie, it ain't no cinch he's ever in th 'navy. I'd sooner bet he's been in jail."

"An' if he was," said Jew Yetta, "there ain't no one here who's got anything on him."

"W'at does Atalanta mean, anyway?" questioned the Dropper, who didn't like the talk of jails. "Is it a place?"

"Nixie," put in Slimmy, the erudite, ever ready to display his learning. "Atalanta's the name of a skirt, who b'longs 'way back. She's some soon as a sprinter, too, an' can run her one hundred yards in better than ten seconds. Every god on Olympus clocked this dame, an' knew what she could do."

"W'at's her story?" asked the Dropper.

"It gets along, d'ye see, where Atalanta's folks thinks she ought to get married. But she won't have it; she'd sooner be a sprinter. With that, they crowd her hand; an' to get shut of 'em, she finally tacks it up on the bulletin board that she'll chase to th' altar only with some student who can beat her at a quarter mile dash. 'No lobsters need apply!' says she. Also, there's conditions. Under the rules, if some chump calls th' bluff, an' can't make good—if she lands him loses—her papa's headsman will be on th' job with his axe, an' that beaten gink'll get his block whacked off."

"An' does any one go against such a game?" queried Jew Yetta.

"Sure! A whole fleet of young Archibalds and Reginalds went up ag'inst it. They all lose; an' his jiblets wit' th' cleaver chops off their youthful beans.

"But the luck turns. One day a sure-thing geek shows up whose monaker is Hippomenes. Hippy's a fly Indian; there ain't goin' to be no headsman in his. Hippy's hep to skirts, too, an' knows where th' board is off their fence. He organizes with three gold apples, see, an' every time little Atalanta Shootin' Star goes flashin' by, he chucks down one of 'em in front of her. She simply eats it up; she can't get by not one; an' she loses so much time grabbin' for 'em, Hippy noses in a winner."

"Good boy!" broke forth the Dropper. "An' do they hook up?"

"They're married; but it don't last. You see its Venus who shows Hippy how to crab Atalanta's act an' stakes him to th' gold apples. An' later, when he double-crosses Venus, that goddess changes him an' his baby mine into a couple of lions."

The Irish Wop had been listening impatiently. It was when Governor Hughes flourished in Albany, and the race tracks were being threatened. The Wop, as a pool-room keeper, was vastly concerned.

"I see," said the Wop, appealing directly to old Jimmy as the East Side Nestor, "that la-a-ad Hughes is makin' it hot for Belmont an' Keene an' th' rist av th' racin' gang. Phwat's he so ha-a-ard on racin' for? Do yez look on playin' th' ponies as a vice, Jimmy?"

"Well," responded old Jimmy with a conservative air, "I don't know as I'd call it a vice so much as a bonehead play."

"They call it th' shpo-r-rt av kings," observed the Wop, loftily.

Old Jimmy snorted. "Sport of kings!" said he. 'Sport of come-ons, rather. Them Sport-of-kings gezebos 'll go on, too, an' give you a lot of guff about racin' bein' healthy. But they ain't sayin' a word concernin' th' mothers an' youngones livin' in hot two-room tenements, an' jumpin' side-

ways for grub, while th' husbands and fathers is blowin' in their bank-rolls in th' bettin' ring an' gettin' healthy. An' th' little jocks, too—mere kids! I've wondered th' Gerries didn't get after 'em. But I suppose th' Gerries know who to pass up, an' who to pinch, as well as th' oldest skipper on th' Force."

"F'r all that," contended the Wop, stubbornly, "thim la-a-ads that's mixed up wit' th' racin' game is good fellys."

"Good fellows," repeated old Jimmy with contempt. "I recollect seein' a picture once, a picture of a girl—a young wife, she is—lyin' with her head on an untouched dinner table—fallen asleep, poor thing! Th' clock in the picture is pointin' to midnight. There she's been waitin' with th' dinner she's cooked with her own little lovin' mitts, for that souse of a husband to come home. Under th' picture it says, 'For he's a jolly good fellow!'"

"Somebody 'd ought to have put a head on him!" quoth Jew Yetta, whose sympathies were both active and militant.

"Say," went on Jimmy, "that picture gets on my nerves. A week later I'm down be th' old Delmonico joint at Twenty-sixth an' Broadway. It's meby one o'clock in th' mornin'. As I'm goin' by th' Twenty-sixt' Street door, out floats a fleet of Willies, stewed to the gills, singin' in honor of a

dude who's in th' middle, 'For he's a jolly good fellow.'

"'Who's that galoot?' I asks th' dub who's slammin' carriage doors at the curb. 'Is he a married man?'

"'He's married all right," says th' door-slammin' dub.

"Wit that I tears into him. It's a good while ago, an' I could slug a little. Be th' time th' copper gets there, I've got that jolly good fellow lookin' like he'd been caught whistlin' *Croppies Lie Down* at Fiftieth Street an' Fift' Avenoo when th' Cathedral lets out."

"Well, I'm not married," remarked the Wop, snappishly;—"I'm not married; I niver was married; an' I niver will be married aloive."

"Did youse notice?" remarked the Dropper, "how they gets a roar out of old Boss Croker? He's for racin' all right."

"Naturally,"said old Jimmy. "Him ownin' race horses, Croker's for th' race tracks. He don't cut no ice."

"How much do yez figger Croker had cleaned up, Jimmy, when he made his getaway for Ireland?" asked the Wop, licking an envious lip.

"Without comin' down to book-keepin'," returned old Jimmy, carelessly, "my understandin' is that, be havin' th' whole wad changed into thousand

dollar bills, he's able to get it down to th' dock on a dray."

The Grabber came in. He beckoned Slimmy, and the two were at once immersed in serious whisperings.

"What are youse two stews chinnin' about?" called out the Dropper lazily, from across the room. "Be youse thinkin' of orderin' th' beer?"

"It's about Indian Louie," replied Slimmy, angrily. "Th' Grabber here says Louie's out to skin us."

"Indian Louie," remarked the Wop, with a gleam in his little gray eye. "That's th' labberick w'at's goin' to shti-i-ick up me poolroom f'r thim fifty bones. Anny wan that'd have annything to do wit' a bum loike him ought to get skinned."

"W'at's he tryin' to saw off on youse?" asked the Dropper.

"This is th' proposition." It was the Grabber now. "Me an' Slimmy here goes in wit' Louie to give that racket last week in Tammany Hall. Now Louie's got th' whole bundle, an' he won't split it. Me an' Slimmy's been t'run down for six hundred good iron dollars apiece."

"An' be yez goin' to let him get away wit' it?" demanded the Wop.

"W'at can we do?" asked the Grabber, disconsolately.

"It's that big blonde," declared Jew Yetta with

acrimony. "She's goin' through Louie for every dollar. I wonder Mollie Squint an' Pretty Agnes don't put her on th' fritz."

The Hesper Club was in Second Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets. It was one o'clock in the morning when Indian Louie took his accustomed seat at the big table in the corner.

"How's everybody?" he asked, easily. "I oversleeps meself, or I'd been here hours ago."

"W'at tires you?" asked Candy Phil. Not that he cared, but merely by way of conversation.

"It's th' big feed last night at Terrace Garden. I'm two days trainin' for it, an' all day gettin' over it. Them swell blowouts is something fierce!" and Louie assumed a wan and weary air, intended to be superior.

"So you was at Terrace Garden?" said Nigger Ruhl.

"Was I? Youse should have seen me! Patent leathers, white choker, and a diamond in th' middle of me three-sheet big enough to trip a dog."

"There's nothin' in them dress suits," protested Maxie Hahn. "I'm ag'inst 'em; they ain't dimmycratic."

"All th' same, youse 've got to wear 'em at these swell feeds," said Candy Phil. "They'd give youse th' gate if you don't. An' as for not bein' dimmycratic"—Candy Phil had his jocose side—"they make it so you can't tell th' high-guys from th'

waiters, an' if that ain't dimmycratic what is? Th' only thing I know ag'inst 'em is that youse can't go to th' floor wit' a guy in 'em. You've got to cut out th' scrappin', an' live up to the suit, see?"

The Grabber strolled in, careless and smiling. Louie fastened him with eyes of dark suspicion, while Maxie Hahn, the Lobster Kid and Candy Phil began pushing their chairs out of the line of possible fire. For they knew of those monetary differences.

"Not a chance, sports," remarked the Grabber, reassuringly. "No one's goin' to start anything. Let's take a drink," and the Grabber beat upon the table as a sign of thirst. "I ain't after no one here."

"Be youse alludin' to me, Grabber?" asked Louie, with a frown like a great cloud. "I don't like them cracks about startin' somethin'."

"Keep your shoit on," expostulated the Grabber, clinking down the change for the round of beers; "keep your shoit on, Louie. I ain't alludin' at nobody nor nothin', least of all at youse. Besides, I just gets a message for you—only you don't seem in no humor to receive it."

"Who's it from?" asked Louie.

"It's Laura"—Laura was the opulent blonde—"Mollie Squint an' Pretty Agnes runs up on her about an hour ago at Twelfth Street an' Second Avenoo, an' Mollie bounces a brick off her coco. A copper comes along an' chases Mollie an' Pretty

Agnes. I gets there as they're carryin' Laura into that Dago's joint be th' corner. Laura asks me if I sees youse to tell w'at's happened her; that's all."

"Was Mollie and Agnes sloughed in?" asked Louie, whose practical mind went first to his bread-winners.

"No, they faded into th' next street. Th' cop don't want to pinch 'em anyway."

"About Laura; was she hoited much?"

"Ten stiches, an' a week in Roosevelt Hospital; that's the best she can get."

"I must chase round an' look her over," was Louie's anxious conclusion. "W'at's that Dago joint she's at?"

"It's be th' corner," said the Grabber, "an' up stairs. I forgets the wop's monaker." As Louie hesitated over these vague directions, the Grabber set down his glass. "Say, to show there's no hard feelin', I'll go wit' youse."

As Louie and the Grabber disappeared through the door, Candy Phil threw up both hands as one astonished to the verge of nervous shock.

"Well, w'at do youse think of that?" he exclaimed. "I always figgered Louie had bats in his belfry; now I knows it. They'll croak him sure!"

Nigger Ruhl and the Lobster Kid arose as though to follow. At this, Candy Phil broke out fiercely.

"W'at's wrong wit' youse stews? Stick where you be!"

"But they'll cook Louie!" expostulated the Lobster Kid.

"It ain't no skin off your nose if they do. W'y should youse go buttin' in?"

Louie and the Grabber were in Twelfth Street, hurrying towards Second Avenue. Not a soul, except themselves, was abroad. The Grabber walked on Louie's right, which showed that either the latter was not the gunplayer he pretended, or the word from Laura had thrown him off his guard.

Suddenly, as the pair passed a dark hallway, the Grabber's left arm stole round Louie's neck.

"About that dough, Louie!" hissed the Grabber, at the same time tightening his left arm.

Louie half turned to free himself from the artful Grabber. As he did so, the Grabber's ready right hand brought his pistol into action, and one bullet and then another flashed through Louie's brain. A slim form rushed out of the dark hallway, and fired two bullets into Louie's body. Louie was dead before he struck the pavement.

The Grabber, with his slim companion, darted through the dark hallway, out a rear door and over a back fence. Sixty seconds later they were quietly walking in Thirteenth Street, examples of law-abiding peace.

"It was th' easiest ever, Slimmy!" whispered the Grabber, when he had recovered his breath. "I knew that stall about Laura 'd fetch him."

"Who was at th' Hesper Club?"

"On'y Candy Phil, th' Lobster Kid an' two or three other blokes. Every one of 'em's a right guy. They won't rap."

"Thim la-a-ads," remarked the Wop, judiciously, when he heard of Louie's taking off—"thim la-a-ads musht 'av lost their heads. There's six or seven hundred bones on that bum, an' they niver copped a splinter!"

The word came two ways to the Central Office. One report said "Indian Louie" and another "Johnny Spanish." Detective O'Farrell invaded Chinatown, and dug up Big Mike Abrams, that the doubt might be removed.

"It's Indian Louie, all right," said Big Mike, following a moment's silent survey of the rigid form. Then, in a most unlooked for vein of sentiment: "They all get here at last!"

"That's no dream!" agreed the morgue attendant. "An', say, Mike"—he liked his joke as well as any other—"I've been expectin' you for some time."

"Sure!" returned Big Mike, with a friendly grin; "I'll come chasin' along, feet foist, some mornin'. But don't forget that while I'm waitin' I'm workin'. I've sent two stiffs down here to youse already, to

help keep you goin' till I comes. Accordin' to th' chances, however, me own turn oughtn't to be so very far away."

Big Mike Abram's turn was just three weeks away.

"Who were those two, Mike, you sent down here to the morgue?" asked O'Farrell, carelessly.

O'Farrell had a catlike fame for slyness.

"Say," grinned Big Mike, derisively; "look me over! I ain't wearin' no medals, am I, for givin' meself up to you bulls?"

VI.

HOW JACKEEN SLEW THE DOC

In person he was tall, languid, slender, as neat as a cat, and his sallow face—over which had settled the opium pallor—was not an ugly face. Also, there abode such weakness, some good, and no harm in him. His constitution was rickety. In the winter he coughed and invited pneumonia; in the summer, when the sun poured down, he trembled on the brink of a stroke. But neither pneumonia nor sunstroke ever quite killed him.

It was written that Jackeen would do that—Jackeen Dalton, *alias* Brady; and Jackeen did it with five bullets from an automatic-38. Some said that opium was at the bottom of it; others laid it to love. It is still greatly talked over in what pipe joints abound in Mott, Pell and Doyers, not to mention the wider Catherine Street, in the neighborhood of number Nineteen, where he had his flat and received his friends.

They called him the Doc. Twenty years ago the Doc studied dentistry with his father, who flourished reputably as a tooth surgeon at the Troy Dental Parlors in Roosevelt Street. The father died

before the Doc had been given a diploma; and the Doc, having meanwhile picked up the opium habit, was never able afterwards to see the use. Why should he be examined or ask for a license? What foolishness! Magnanimously waving aside every thought of the sort, he plunged into the practice of his cheerless art among those who went in and out of Chinatown, and who lived precariously by pocket-picking, porch-climbing, safe-blowing and all-round strong-arm methods; and, careless of the statute in such case made and provided, he proceeded to file and drill and cap and fill and bridge and plug and pull their aching cuspids, bicuspids and molars, and all with as quick an instinct and as deft a touch as though his eyes were sharpened and his hand made steady by the dental sheepskins of a dozen colleges. That he was an outlaw among tooth-drawers served only to knit him more closely to the hearts of his patients—themselves merest outlaws among men.

The Doc kept his flat in Catherine Street as bright and burnished as the captain's cabin of a man-of-war. There was no prodigious wealth of furniture, no avalanche of ornament to overwhelm the taste. Aside from an outfit of dental tools, the most expensive belongings appeared to be what lamps and pipes and kindred paraphernalia were required in the smoking of opium.

Those who visited the Doc were compelled to one

formality. Before he would open his door, they must push the bell four times and four times tap on the panel. Thus did they prove their friendly identity. Lawful dentists, in their jealousy, had had the Doc arrested and fined, from time to time, for intromitting with the teeth of his fellow worms without a license. Hence that precautionary quartet of rings, followed by the quartet of taps, indicative that a friend and not a foe was at his gate.

The Doc had many callers who came to smoke opium. For these he did divers kindly offices, mostly in the letter-writing line. As they reclined and smoked, they dictated while the Doc transcribed, and many and weird were the epistles from Nineteen Catherine Street which found their way into the mails. For this service, as for his opium and dentistry, the Doc's callers never failed to press upon him an honorarium. And so he lived.

Love, that flowerlike sentiment for which—as some jurist once remarked of justice—all places are palaces, all seasons summer, is not incompatible with either dentistry or opium. The Doc had a sweetheart named Lulu. Lulu was very beautiful and very jealous. Also, she was broadly popular. All Chinatown made songs to the deep glories of her eyes, which were supposed to have excited the defeated envy of many stars. The Doc, in what odd hours he could snatch from tooth-drawing and opium-smoking, worshipped at the shrine of Lulu;

and Lulu was wrapped up in the Doc. Number Nineteen Catherine Street served as their Garden of Eden.

Now it is among the many defects of opium that it renders migratory the fancy. An ebon evidence of this was to be given at number Nineteen. The love of the Doc became, as it were, pipe-deflected, and one day left Lulu, and, after a deal of fond circling, settled like some errant dove upon a rival belle called May.

Likewise, there was a dangerous side to this dulcet, new situation. The enchanting May, when the Doc chose her for his goddess, *vice* Lulu thrown down, could not be described as altogether disengaged. Was she not also the goddess of Jackeen? Had not that earnest safe-robber laid his heart at her feet?

Moreover, there were reasons even more substantial. The gentle May was in her way a bread-winner. When the fortunes of Jackeen were low, she became their mutual meal-ticket. May was the most expert shoplifter in all of broad New York. If not upon heart arguments, then upon arguments of the pocket, not to say stomach, Jackeen might be expected to fiercely resent any effort to win her love away.

Jackeen?

Not much is to be told by an appearance, although physiognomists have sung otherwise. The

egg of the eagle is less impressive than the egg of the goose. And yet it hotly houses in its heart an eagle. The egg of the nightingale shows but meanly side by side with the egg of the crow. And yet it hides within its modest bosom the limpid music of the moon.

So it is with men.

Jackeen was not an imposing personality. But neither is the tarantula. He was five feet and an inch in stunted stature, and weighed a mean shadow under one hundred and ten pounds. Like the Doc —who had stolen his love away—Jackeen's hollow cheeks were of that pasty gray which speaks of opium. Also, from opium, the pupils of his vermin eyes had become as the points of two dull pins. Shrivelled, degenerate, a tattered rag of humanity, Jackeen was none the less a perilous spirit, and so the Doc—too late—would learn.

From that Eden at Nineteen Catherine Street, the fair Lulu had been put into the street. This was to make pleasant room for the visits of the fairer May. Jackeen was untroubled, knowing nothing about it. He was for the moment too wholly engaged, being in the throes of a campaign against the Savoy theatre safe, from which strongbox he looked forward to a harvest of thousands.

The desolate Lulu went everywhere seeking Jackeen, to tell him of his wrongs. Her search was vain; those plans touching the Savoy safe had with-

drawn him from his accustomed haunts. One night, however, the safe was blown and plundered. Alas and alack! Jackeen's share, from those hoped-for thousands, dwindled to a paltry sixty dollars—not enough for a single spree!

In his resentment, Jackeen, with the aid of a bevy of friends, hastily stuck-up a wayfarer, whom he met in Division Street. The wayfarer's pockets proved empty. It was even more of a waterhaul than had been the Savoy safe. The double disappointment turned Jackeen's mood to gall and it was while his humor was thus bilious that he one day walked into the Chatham Club.

There was a distinguished company gathered at the Chatham Club. Nannie Miller, Blinky the Lobbygow, Dago Angelo, Roxie, Jimida, Johnny Rice, Stagger, Jimmy Foy, and St. Louis Bill—all were there. And these were but a handful of what high examples sat about the Chatham Club, and with calls for beer, and still more beer, kept Nigger Mike and his assistants on the joyful jump.

When Jackeen came in, Mike greeted him warmly, and placed a chair next to that of Johnny Rice. Conversation broke out concerning the dead and departed Kid Twist. While Twist was an Eastman and an enemy of Roxie—himself of the Five Points—the latter was no less moved to speak in highest terms of him. He defended this softness by remarking:

"Twist's dead, see! An' once a guy's been put to bed wit' a shovel, if youse can't speak well of him youse had better can gabbin' about him altogether. Them's my sentiments."

Dago Angelo, who had been a friend of the vanished Twist, applauded this, and ordered beer.

Twist—according to the veracious Roxie—had not been wanting in brilliancy as a Captain of Industry. He had showed himself ingenious when he took his poolroom into the Hatmakers' Union, as a safeguard against raids by the police.

Upon another occasion, strictly commercial—so said Roxie—Twist had displayed a generalship which would have glorified a Rockefeller. Baby Flax, named for the soft innocuousness of his countenance, kept a grogshop in Houston Street. One quiet afternoon Twist abruptly broke that cherubic publican's windows, mirrors, glasses, bottles.

Lighting a cigar, Twist stood in the midst of that ruin undismayed.

"What's up?" demanded the policeman, who came hot-foot to the scene.

"Well," vouchsafed Twist, between puffs, "there's a party chases in, smashes things, an' then beats it up the street wit'out sayin' a woid."

The policeman looked at Baby Flax.

"It's straight," chattered that ill-used proprietor, who, with the dangerous eye of Twist upon him,

wouldn't have told the truth for gold and precious stones.

"What started youse, Twist?" asked a friend.

"It's this way," explained Twist. "I'm introducin' a celery bitters—because there's cush in it. I goes into Baby Flax's an' asks him to buy. He hands me out a 'No!' So I ups an' puts his joint on the bum. After this, when I come into a dump, they'll buy me bitters, see! Sure, I cops an order for two cases from Flax before I leaves."

Leaving Twist to sleep in peace, and by way of turning the laugh on that gentleman, Roxie related an adventure with Nigger Mike. It was when that sub-chief of the Eastmans kept at number Twelve Pell, by word of the vivacious Roxie, he, with certain roysterers belonging to the Five Points, had gone to Mike's to drink beer. They were the foe. But no less he served them, as he was doing now, for such was and is the bland etiquette of the gangs.

One o'clock struck, and Mike locked his door. Key turned, the beer flowed on unchecked.

At half after one, when Mike himself was a law-breaker under the excise statute by full thirty criminal minutes, Roxie with his Five Points merrymakers arose, beat up Mike and his few retainers, skinned the damper for fifty bones, and departed singing songs of victory.

Mike was powerless.

As was well said by Roxie: "W'at could he do? If he makes a roar to th' cops for us puttin' his joint in th' air, we'd have whipped one over on him for bein' open after hours."

Mike laughed with the rest at Roxie's reminiscence. It was of another day.

"W'at's th' matter wit' your mouth, Mike?" asked St. Louis Bill, for there was a lisping queerness, not only about Mike's talk, but about his laugh.

Nigger Mike proceeded to lay bare the causes of that queerness. While engaged in a joint debate—years ago, it was—with a gentleman given as much to sudden petulances as to positive views, he had lost three of his teeth. Their place had been artifically but not artistically supplied.

"An' lately they've been feelin' funny," explained Mike, alluding to the supplemental teeth, "an' I toins 'em over to th' Doc to fix. That guy who made 'em for me foist must have been a bum dentist. An' at that, w'at do you t'ink he charges? I'm a Dutchman if he don't lash me to th' mast for forty bucks! He says th' gold plate is wort' twenty."

"Well, Mike," said Nannie Miller, who'd been listening, "I don't want to make you sore, but on the level you talk like your mouth is full of mush. I'd make th' Doc come through wit' 'em as soon as I could."

"He says he'll bring 'em in to-morry," returned Mike.

"It's ten to one you don't see 'em for a week," declared the pessimistic St. Louis Bill. "Youse can't tell nothin' about them hop-heads. They say 'to-morry' when they mean next year."

St. Louis Bill, being virtuously superior to opium, never lost a chance to speak scornfully of those who couldn't make that boast.

Mike, at the discouraging view expressed, became doleful. "Say," he observed, "I'd look like a sucker, wouldn't I, if anything happens th' Doc, an' I don't get 'em?"

St. Louis Bill assured Mike that he would indeed look like a sucker, and re-declared his conviction —based upon certain occult creepings and crawlings in his bones—that Mike had seen the last of those teeth.

"Take my steer," said St. Louis Bill in conclusion; "treat them teeth you gives th' Doc as a dead issue, an' go get measured for some more. Twenty dollars wort' of gold, you says! It ain't no cinch but the Doc's hocked 'em for hop."

"Nothin' to that!" returned Mike, decisively. "Th' Doc's a square guy. Them teeth is all safe enough. Only, as you says, bein' he hits the pipe, he may be slow about chasin' in wit' 'em."

While Nigger Mike and his guests are in talk, run your eye over the scene. Those citizens of

Gangland assembled about the Chatham Club tables would have made a study, and mayhap a chapter, for Lombroso. Speaking generally, they are a stunted litter, these gangmen, and seldom stand taller than five feet four. Their weight wouldn't average one hundred and twenty pounds. They are apt to run from the onslaught of an outsider. This is not perhaps from cowardice; but they dislike exertion, even the exertion of fighting, and unless it be to gain money or spoil, or a point of honor is involved—as in their duels and gang wars—they back away from trouble. In their gang battles, or when fighting the police, their strategy is to lie flat on the ground and shoot. Thus they save themselves a clubbing, and the chances from hostile lead are reduced.

To be sure there are exceptions. Such as Chick Tricker, Ike the Blood, Big Mike Abrams, Jack Sirocco, the Dropper, and the redoubtable Jimmy Kelly never fly and always fight. No one ever saw their backs.

You are inclined to doubt the bloody character of those gang battles. Why doesn't one hear of them? —you ask. Because the police conceal as much as may be all word and all sign of them. For the public to know might get the police criticized, and they are granted enough of that without inviting it through any foolish frankness. The hospitals, however, will tell you of a weekly average of fifty

patients, suffering from knife or gun-shot wounds, not to name fractures born of bottles, bricks and blackjacks. A bottle judiciously wielded, or a beer stein prudently broken in advance to assure a jagged edge, is no mean weapon where warriors are many and the fields of battle close.

While Roxie rattled on, and the others gave interested ear, Jackeen was commenting in discouraged whispers to Johnny Rice on those twin setbacks of the Division Street stick-up and the Savoy safe.

"It looks like nobody's got any dough," replied Rice, in a spirit of sympathy. "Take me own self. I ain't made a touch youse could call a touch, for a mont' of Sundays. Me rag, Josie, an' I was chinnin' about it on'y last night, an' Josie herself says she never sees th' town so dead."

"It's somethin' fierce!" returned Jackeen, moodily.

More beer, and a moment of silence.

"W'at's you' goil May doin'?" asked Rice.

"She's graftin' a little," responded Jackeen; "but w'at wit' th' stores full of private dicks a booster can't do much."

"Well, you can bet May ought to know!" returned Rice. "As a derrick, she' got the Darby Kid an' the best of 'em beat four ways from th' jack. She could bring home th' bacon, if any of them hoisters could."

Then appeared Lulu the houseless—Lulu, the forlorn and outcast Eve of that Catherine Street Eden!

Lulu stood a polite moment behind the chair of Jackeen. At a lull in the talk, she whispered a word in his ear. He looked up, nodded, and then followed her out into Doyers Street.

"It's this way," said Lulu. "May's copped th' Doc from me, see! An' she's givin' you the cross, Jackeen. You ought to hand her out a good beatin'. She's over hittin' the pipe wit' th' Doc right now."

"G'wan!" came jealously from Jackeen.

"Honest! You come wit' me to number Nineteen, an' I'll show youse."

Jackeen paused as though weighing the pros and cons.

"Let me go get Ricey," he said at last. "He's got a good nut, an' I'll put th' play up to him."

"All right," responded Lulu, impatient in her desolation; "but get a move on! I've wised you; an' now, if you're any good at all, you'll take May out of number Nineteen be th' mop. W'at license has she, or any other skirt for that matter, got to do me out of me Doc?"

The last ended in a howl.

Leaving Lulu in the midst of her complaints, Jackeen wheeled back into the Chatham Club for a word with Rice. Even during his absence, a change had come over the company. He found

Rice, St. Louis Bill and Nannie Miller, holding anxious confab with a ratfaced person who had just come in.

"See here, Jackeen," said St. Louis Bill in an excited whisper, "there's been a rap about that Savoy safe trick, an' th' bulls are right now lookin' for th' whole mob. They say it's us, too, who put that rube in the air over in Division Street."

"An' th' question is," broke in Nannie Miller, who was quick to act, "do we stand pat, or do we do a lammister?"

"There's on'y one answer to that," said St. Louis Bill. "For my end of it I'm goin' to lamm."

Jackeen had May and his heart troubles upon the back of his regard. Still he heard; and he arrived at a decision. He would run—yes; for flight was preferable to four stone walls. But he must have revenge—revenge upon the Doc and May.

"Wit' th' bulls after me, an' me away, it 'ud be comin' too soft for 'em," thought Jackeen.

"W'at do youse say?" asked St. Louis Bill, who was getting nervous.

"How did youse get the woid?" demanded Jackeen, turning upon Ratface. It was he who had brought the warning.

"I'm a stool for one of the bulls," replied Ratface, "an' it's him tells me you blokes is wanted, see!"

"So you're stoolin' for a Central Office cop?"

Jackeen's manner was fraught with suspicion. "How do we know you're givin' us th' correct dope?"

"Miller knows me," returned Ratface, "an' so does Bill. They'll tell youse I'm a right guy. That stool thing is only a stall. I gets more out of the bull than he gets out of me. Sure; I give him a dead one now an' then, just be way of puttin' in a prop for meself. But not youse;—w'en it's any of me friends I puts 'em hep, see!"

"Do you sign for this duck?" demanded Jackeen of St. Louis Bill. "He's a new one on me."

"Take it from me, he's all right," said St. Louis Bill, decisively. "Why, you ought to know him, Jackeen. He joined out wit' that mob of gons Goldie Louie took to Syracuse last fall. He's no farmer, neither; Ricey there ain't got nothin' on him as a tool."

This endorsement of Ratface settled all doubt. Jackeen's mind was made up. Addressing the others, he said:

"Fade's the woid! I'll meet youse over in Hoboken to-night at Beansey's. Better make th' ferry one at a time."

"W'at do youse want to wait till night for?" asked Nannie Miller. "Th' foist t'ing you know you'll get th' collar."

"I'm goin' to take the chance, though," retorted Jackeen. "It's some private business of me own.

An' say"—looking at Rice—"I want a pal. Will youse stick, Ricey?"

"Sure, Mike!" said Rice, who had nerve and knew how to be loyal.

Thus it was adjusted. Ratface went his way, to exercise his gifts of mendacity upon his Central Office principal, while the others scattered—all save Jackeen and Rice.

Jackeen gave his faithful friend the story of his wrongs.

"I wouldn't have thought it of the Doc," was the pensive comment of Rice. He had exalted the Doc, because of his book learning, and groaned to see his idol fall. "No, I wouldn't have guessed it of him! Of course, it's different wit' a doll. They'd double-cross their own mothers."

Over in Catherine Street at number Nineteen the Doc was teaching May how to cook opium. The result fell below the Doc's elevated notions.

"You aren't to be compared with Lulu," he complained, as he trimmed the peanut-oil lamp. "All Chinatown couldn't show Lulu's equal for cooking hop. She had a genius for it."

The Doc took the needle from May, and cooked for himself. May looked discouraged and hurt.

"It's all right," said the Doc, dreamily, replying to the look of injury. "You'll get it right in time, dear. Only, of course, you'll never quite equal Lulu; that would be impossible."

The Doc twirled the little ball of opium in the flame of the lamp, watching the color as it changed. May looked on as upon the labors of a master.

"I'll smoke a couple of pipes," vouchsafed the Doc; "then I must get to work on Nigger Mike's teeth. Mike's a good fellow; they're all good fellows over at the Chatham Club," and the Doc sank back upon the pallet.

There was the sound of someone in the hall. Then came those calmative four rings and four taps.

"That's Mike now," said the Doc, his eyes half closed. "Let him in; I suppose he's come for his teeth. I'll have to give him a stand-off. Mike ought to have two sets of teeth. Then he could wear the one while I'm fixing the other. It's a good idea; I'll tell him."

May, warned by some instinct, opened the door but a timorous inch. What she saw did not inspire confidence, and she tried with all her little strength to close and bolt it.

Too late!

The door was flung inward, and Jackeen, followed by Rice, entered the room. They paid no heed to the opium fumes; almost stifling they were, but Jackeen and Rice had long been used to them.

May gazed at Jackeen like one planet-struck. The Doc, moveless on the pallet, hardly raised his opium-weighted lids.

"This is a fine game I'm gettin'!"

Jackeen sneered out the words. The Doc pulled tranquilly at his pipe; while May stood voiceless, staring with scared eyes.

"I'd ought to peg a bullet into you," continued Jackeen, addressing May.

He had drawn his heavy gun. May stood as if the sight of the weapon had frozen her. Jackeen brought it down on her temple. The Doc never moved. Peace—the peace of the poppy—was on his brow and in his heart. May fell to the floor, her face a-reek with blood.

"Now you've got yours!"said Jackeen.

May struggled unsteadily to her feet, and began groping for the door.

"That ought to do youse till I get back," was Jackeen's good-by. "You'll need a few stitches for that."

Unruffled, untroubled, the Doc drew blandly at the mouthpiece of the pipe.

Jackeen surveyed him.

"Go on!" cried Rice; "hand it to him, if you're goin' to!"

Rice was becoming fretted. He hadn't Jackeen's sustaining interest. Besides, he was thinking of that word from the Central Office, and how much safer he would be with Beansey, on the Hoboken side of the Hudson.

Jackeen took a step nearer. The Doc smiled, eyes just showing through the dreamy lids.

"Turn it loose!" cried Rice.

The gun exploded five times, and five bullets ploughed their way into the Doc's body.

Not a cry, not a movement! The bland, pleased smile never left the sallow face. With his mouth to the pipestem, the Doc dreamed on.

In the street, Jackeen and Rice passed Lulu. As they brushed by her, Rice fell back a pace and whispered:

"He croaked th' Doc."

Lulu gave a gulping cry and hurried on.

"Is that you, Lulu?" asked the Doc, his drug-uplifted soul untouched, untroubled by what had passed, and what would come. Still, he must have dimly known; for his next words, softly spoken, were: "I'm sorry about Mike's teeth! Cook me a pill, dear; I want one last good smoke."

VII.

LEONI THE TROUBLE MAKER

It was a perfect day for a funeral. The thin October air had in it a half-chill, like the cutting edge of the coming winter, still six weeks away. The leaves, crisp and brown from early frosts, seemed to rustle approval of the mournful completeness of things.

Florists' shops had been ransacked, greenhouses laid waste, the leading carriages were moving jungles of blossoms. It was magnificent, and as the procession wound its slow way into Calvary, the heart of the undertaker swelled with pride. Not that he was justified; the glory was the glory of Paper-Box Johnny, who stood back of all this gloomy splendor with his purse.

"Remember," was Paper-Box's word to the undertaker, "I'm no piker, an' neither was Phil; so wade in wit' th' bridle off, an' make th' spiel same as if you was buryin' yourself."

Thus exhorted, and knowing the solvency of Paper-Box, the undertaker had no more than broken even with his responsibilities.

Later, Paper-Box became smitten of concern be-

cause he hadn't thought to hire a brass band. A brass band, he argued, breathing Chopin's Funeral March, would have given the business a last artistic touch.

"I'd ought to have me nut caved in for forgettin' it," he declared; "but Phil bein' croaked like he was, got me rattled. I'm all in th' air right now! Me head won't be on straight ag'in for a mont'."

In the face of Paper-Box's self-condemnation, ones expert in those sorrowful matters of crape and immortelles, averred that the funeral was a credit to Casey, and regrets were expressed that the bullet in that dead hero's brain forbade his sitting up in the hearse and enjoying what was being done in his honor.

As the first shovelful of earth awoke the hollow responses of the coffin, there occurred what story writers are fond of describing as a dramatic incident. As though the hollow coffin-note had been the dead voice of Casey calling, Dago Frankie knelt at the edge of the grave. Lifting his hands to heaven, he vowed to shed without mercy the blood of Goldie Louie and Brother Bill Orr, on sight. The vow was well received by the uncovered ring of mourners, and no one doubted but Casey's eternal slumbers would be the sounder for it.

In the beginning, she went by the name of Leoni; the same being subsequently lengthened, for good and sufficient reasons, to Leoni the

Trouble Maker. As against this, however, her monaker, with the addition, "Badger," as written upon her picture—gallery number 7409—to be found in that interesting art collection maintained by the police, was given as Mabel Grey.

Leoni—according to Detective Biddinger of that city's Central Office—was born in Chicago, upon a spot not distant from the banks of the classic Drainage Canal. She came to New York, and began attracting police attention about eight years ago. In those days, radiant as a star, face of innocent beauty, her affections were given to an eminent pickpocket known and dreaded as Crazy Barry, and it was the dance she led that bird-headed person's unsettled destinies which won her the *nom de cœur* of Trouble Maker.

It was unfortunate, perhaps, since it led to many grievous complications, that Leoni's love lacked every quality of the permanent. Hot, fierce, it resembled in its intensity a fire in a lumber yard. Also, like a fire in a lumber yard, it soon burned itself out. Her heart was as the heart of a wild goose, and wondrous migratory.

Having loved Crazy Barry for a space, Leoni turned cool, then cold, then fell away from him altogether. At this, Crazy Barry, himself a volcano of sensibility, with none of Leoni's saving genius to grow cold, waxed wroth and chafed.

While in this mixed and storm-tossed humor, he

came upon Leoni in the company of a fellow gonoph known as McTaffe. In testimony of what hell-pangs were tearing at his soul, Crazy Barry fell upon McTaffe, and cut him into red ribbons with a knife. He would have cut his throat, and spoke of doing so, but was prevailed upon to refrain by Kid Jacobs, who pointed out the electrocutionary inconveniences sure to follow such a ceremony.

"They'd slam youse in th' chair, sure!" was the sober-headed way that Jacobs put it.

Crazy Barry, one hand in McTaffe's hair, had drawn the latter's head across his knee, the better to attend to the throat-cutting. Convinced, however, by the words of Jacobs, he let the head, throat all unslashed, fall heavily to the floor. After which, first wiping the blood from his knife on McTaffe's coat—for he had an instinct to be neat—he lammistered for parts unknown, while McTaffe was conveyed to the New York Hospital. This chanced in the Sixth Avenue temple of entertainment kept by the late Paddy the Pig.

Once out of the hospital and into the street, McTaffe and the fair Leoni found no trouble in being all the world to one another. Crazy Barry was a thing of the past and, since the Central Office dicks wanted him, likely to remain so.

McTaffe was of the swell mob. He worked with Goldie Louie, Fog-eye Howard and Brother Bill

Orr. Ask any Central Office bull, half learned in his trade of crook-catcher, and he'll tell you that these names are of a pick-purse peerage. McTaffe himself was the stinger, and personally pinched the poke, or flimped the thimble, or sprung the prop, of whatever boob was being trimmed. The others, every one a star, were proud to act as his stalls; and that, more than any Central Office assurance, should show how near the top was McTaffe in gonoph estimation.

Every profession has its drawbacks, and that of picking pockets possesses several. For one irritating element, it is apt to take the practitioner out of town for weeks on end. Some sucker puts up a roar, perhaps, and excites the assiduities of the police; or there is a prize fight at Reno, or a World's Fair at St. Louis, or a political convention at Chicago, or a crowd-gathering tour by some notable like Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Taft, which gives such promise of profit that it is not to be refused. Thus it befell that McTaffe, with his mob, was greatly abroad in the land, leaving Leoni deserted and alone.

Once McTaffe remained away so long that it caused Leoni uneasiness, if not alarm.

"Mack's fell for something," was the way she set forth her fears to Big Kitty: "You can gamble he's in hock somewheres, or I'd have got the office from him by wire or letter long ago."

When McTaffe at last came back, his face exhibited pain and defeat. He related how the mob had been caught in a jam in Chihuahua, and Goldie Louie lagged.

"The rest of the fleet managed to make a getaway," said McTaffe, "all but poor Goldie. Those Greasers have got him right, too; he's cinched to do a couple of spaces sure. When I reached El Paso, I slimmed me roll for five hundred bucks, an' hired him a mouthpiece. But what good is a mouthpiece when there ain't the shadow of a chance to spring him?"

"So Goldie got a rumble, did he?" said Leoni, with a half sigh.

Her tones were pensive to the verge of tears; since her love for Goldie was almost if not quite equal to the love she bore McTaffe.

Goldie Louie lay caged in the Chihuahua calaboose, and Sanky Dunn joined out with McTaffe and the others in his place. With forces thus reorganized, McTaffe took up the burdens of life again, and—here one day and gone the next—existence for himself and Leoni returned to old-time lines.

Leoni met Casey. With smooth, dark, handsome face, Casey was the superior in looks of either McTaffe or Goldie Louie. Also, he had fame as a gunfighter, and for a rock-like steadiness under fire. He was credited, too, by popular voice, with having

been busy in the stirring, near vicinity of events, when divers gentlemen got bumped off. This had in it a fascination for Leoni, who—as have the ladies of every age and clime—dearly loved a warrior. Moreover, Casey had money, and, unlike those others, he was always on the job. This last was important to Leoni, who at any moment might find herself at issue with the powers, and Casey, because of his political position, could speak to the judge.

Leoni loved Casey, even as she had aforetime loved McTaffe, Goldie Louie and Crazy Barry. True, Casey owned a wife. But there arose nothing in his conduct to indicate it; and since he was too much of a gentleman to let it get in any one's way, Leoni herself was so generous as to treat it as a technicality.

McTaffe and his mob returned from a losing expedition through the West. Leoni asked as to results.

"Why," explained McTaffe, sulkily, "th' trip was not only a waterhaul, but it leaves me on the nut for twelve hundred bones."

McTaffe turned his pockets inside out, by way of corroboration.

While thus irritated because of that financial setback, McTaffe heard of Leoni's blushing nearness to Casey. It was the moment of all moments when he was least able to bear the blow with philosophy.

And McTaffe stormed. Going farther, and by way of corrective climax, he knocked Leoni down with a club. After which—according to eye-witnesses, who spoke without prejudice—he proceeded to beat her up for fair.

Leoni told her adventures to Casey, and showed him what a harvest of bruises her love for him had garnered. Casey, who hadn't been born and brought up in Mulberry Bend to become a leading light of Gangland for nothing, took his gun and issued forth on the trail of McTaffe. McTaffe left town. Also, that he didn't take his mob with him proved that not graft, but fear of Casey, was the bug beneath the chip of his disappearance.

"He's sherried," Casey told Leoni, when that ill-used beauty asked if he had avenged her bruises. "But he'll blow in ag'in; an' when he does I'll cook him."

Goldie Louie came up from Chihuahua, his yellow hair shot with gray, the prison pallor in the starved hollows of his cheeks. Mexicans are the most merciless of jailers. Fog-eye Howard, who was nothing if not a gossip, wised him up as to Leoni's love for Casey. In that connection Fog-eye related how McTaffe, having rebuked Leoni's heart wanderings with that convincing club, had now become a fugitive from Casey's gun.

Having heard Fog-eye to the end, Goldie faithfully hunted up Leoni and wore out a second club

on her himself. Again did Leoni creep to Casey with her woes and her wrongs, and again did that Knight of Mulberry Bend gird up his fierce loins to avenge her.

Let us step rearward a pace.

After the Committee of Fourteen, in its uneasy purities, had caused Chick Tricker's Park Row license to be revoked, Tricker, seeking a livelihood, became the owner of the Stag in Twenty-eighth Street, just off Broadway. That license revocation had been a financial jolt, and now in new quarters, with Berlin Auggy, whom he had brought with him as partner, he was striving, in every way not likely to invoke police interference to re-establish his prostrate destiny.

It was the evening next after the one upon which Goldie Louie, following the example of the vanished McTaffe, had expressed club-wise his disapproval of Leoni's love for Casey. The Stag was a riot of life and light and laughter; music and conversation and drink prevailed. In the rear room —fenced off from the bar by swinging doors— was Goldie Louie, together with Fog-eye Howard, Brother Bill Orr and Sanky Dunn. There, too, Whitey Dutch was entertaining certain of the choicest among the Five Pointers. Scattered here and there were Little Red, the Baltimore Rat, Louis Buck, Stager Bennett, Jack Cohalan, the Humble

Dutchman, and others of renown in the grimy chivalry of crime. There were fair ones, too, and the silken sex found dulcet representation in such unchallenged belles as Pretty Agnes, Jew Yetta, Dutch Ida, and Anna Gold. True, an artist in womanly beauty might have found defects in each of these. And if so? Venus had a mole on her cheek, Helen a scar on her chin.

Tricker was not with his guests at the Stag that night. His father had been reported sick, and Tricker was in filial attendance at the Fourteenth Street bedside of his stricken sire. In his absence, Auggy took charge, and under his genial management beer flowed, coin came in, and all Stag things went moving merrily.

Whitey Dutch, speaking to Stagger Bennett concerning Pioggi, aforetime put away in the Elmira Reformatory for the Coney Island killing of Cyclone Louie and Kid Twist, made quite a tale of how Pioggi, having served his time, had again shown up in town. Whitey mentioned, as a matter for general congratulation, that Pioggi's Elmira experience had not robbed him of his right to vote, as would have been the blighting case had he gone to Sing Sing.

"There's nothing in that disfranchisement thing, anyhow," grumbled the Humble Dutchman, who sat sourly listening. "I've been up th' river twict,

an' I've voted a dozen times every election since. Them law-makin' stiffs is goin' to take your vote away! Say, that gives me a pain!"

The Humble Dutchman got off the last in tones of supreme contempt.

Grouped around a table near the center, and under convoy of a Central Office representative who performed towards them in the triple rôle of guide, philosopher and friend, were gathered a half dozen Fifth Avenue males and females, all members in good standing of the Purple and Fine Linen Gang. Auggy, in the absence of Tricker, had received them graciously, pressed cigars and drinks upon them, declining the while their proffered money of the realm in a manner composite of suavity and princely ease.

"It's an honor, loides an' gents," said Auggy, "merely to see your maps in the Stag at all. As for th' booze an' smokes, they're on th' house. Your dough don't go here, see!"

The Purple and Fine Linen contingent called their visit slumming. If they could have heard what Auggy, despite his beaming smiles and royal liberality touching those refreshments, called both them and their visit, after they had left, it might have set their patrician ears afire.

Having done the Stag, and seen and heard and misunderstood things to their slumming souls' content, the Purple and Fine Linen Gang said good-

bye. They must drop in—they explained—at the Haymarket, just around the corner in Sixth Avenue. Auggy invited them to come again, but was visibly relieved once they had gone their slumming way.

"I was afraid every minute some duck'd start something," said Auggy, "an' of course if anything did break loose—any little t'ing, if it ain't no more than soakin' some dub in th' jaw—one of them Fift' Avenoo dames's 'ud be bound to t'row a fit."

"Say!" broke in Anna Gold resentfully; "it's somethin' fierce th' way them high s'ciety fairies comes buttin' in on us. W'at do they think they're tryin' to give us, anyway? For th' price of a beer, I'd have snatched one of them baby-dolls baldheaded. I'd have nailed her be th' mop; an' w'en I'd got t'rough doin' stunts wit' her, she wouldn't have had to tell no one she'd been slummin'."

"Now, forget it!" interposed Auggy warningly. "You go reachin' for any skirt's puffs round here, an' it'll be the hurry-up wagon at a gallop an' you for the cooler, Anna. The Stag's a quiet joint, an' that rough-house stuff don't go. Chick won't stand for no one to get hoited."

"Oh, Chick won't stand for no one to get hoited!" retorted the acrid Anna, in mighty dudgeon. "An' the Stag's a quiet joint! Why, it ain't six weeks since a guy pulls a cannister in this very room, an'

shoots Joe Rocks full of holes. You helps take him to the hospital yourself."

"Cut out that Joe Rocks stuff," commanded Auggy, with vast heat, "or you'll hit the street on your frizzes—don't make no mistake!"

Observing the stormy slant the talk was taking, Whitey Dutch diplomatically ordered beer, and thus put an end to debate. It was a move full of wisdom. Auggy was made nervous by the absence of Tricker, and Anna the Voluble, on many a field, had shown herself a lady of spirit.

While the evening at the Stag thus went happily wearing towards the smaller hours, over in Twenty-ninth Street, a block away, the stuss game of Casey and Paper-Box Johnny was in full and profitable blast. Paper-Box himself was in active charge. Casey had for the moment abandoned business and every thought of it. Leoni had just informed him of those visitations at the hands of Goldie Louie, and set him to thinking on other things than cards.

"An' he says," concluded Leoni, preparing to go, "after he's beat me half to death, 'now chase 'round an' tell your Dago friend, Casey, that my monaker ain't McTaffe, an' that if he starts to hand me anythin', I'll put him down in Bellevue for the count.'"

The dark face of Casey displayed both anger and

resolution. He made neither threat nor comment, but his eyes were full of somber fires. Leoni departed with an avowed purpose of subjecting her injuries to the curative effects of arnica, while Casey continued to gloom and glower, drinking deeply the while to take the edge off his feelings.

Harry Lemmy, a once promising prize-fighter of the welter-weight variety, showed up. Also, he had no more than settled to the drink, which Casey —whom the wrongs of his idolized Leoni could not render unmindful of the claims of hospitality —had ordered, when Jack Kenny and Charlie Young appeared.

The latter, not alive to the fatal importance of such news, spoke of the Stag, which he had left but the moment before, and of the presence there of Goldie Louie.

"McTaffe's stalls, Fog-eye, Brother Bill an' Sanky Dunn, are lushin' wit' him," said Young. "You know Sanky filled in wit' th' mob th' time Goldie gets settled in Mexico."

Goldie Louie, only a block away, set the torch to Casey's heart.

"Where's Dago Frankie?" he asked.

Dago Frankie was his nearest and most trusted friend.

"He's over in Sixt' Avenoo shootin' craps," replied Lemmy. "Shall I go dig him up?"

"It don't matter," said Casey, after a moment's thought. Then, getting up from his chair, he inquired, "Have you guys got your cannons?"

"Sure t'ing!" came the general chorus, with a closer from Kenny.

"I've got two," he said. "A sport might get along wit'out a change of shoits in Noo York, but he never ought to be wit'out a change of guns."

"W'at's on, Phil?" asked Charlie Young, anxiously, as Casey pulled a magazine pistol, and carefully made sure that its stomach was full of cartridges; "w'at's on?"

"I'm goin' over to the Stag," replied Casey. "If you ducks'll listen you'll hear a dog howl in about a minute."

"We'll not only listen, but we'll go 'long," returned Young.

Lemmy and Kenny fell behind the others. "W'at's th' muss?" whispered Lemmy.

"It's Leoni," explained Kenny guardedly. "Goldie give her a wallop or two last night, an' Phil's goin' to do him for it."

Casey strode into the Stag, his bosom a storm-center for every black emotion. The sophisticated Auggy smelled instant trouble on him, as one smells fire in a house. Bending over the friendly shoulder of Whitey Dutch, Auggy spoke in a low tone of warning.

"There's Phil Casey," he said, "an' t'ree of his

bunch. It's apples to ashes he's gunnin' for Goldie. If Chick were here, now, he'd somehow put the smother on him."

"Give him a call-down your own self," was Whitey's counsel. "W'at with Chick's license bein' revoked in Park Row, an' Joe Rocks goin' to the hospital from here only a little over a mont' ago, the least bit of cannonadin' 's bound to put th' joint in Dutch all the way from headquarters to the State excise dubs in Albany."

"I know it," returned Auggy, in great trouble of mind. "If a gun so much as cracks once, it'll be th' fare-you-well of the Stag."

"Well, w'at do youse say?" demanded the loyal Whitey. "I'm wit' youse, an' I'm wit' Chick, an' I'm wit' Goldie. Give th' woid, an' I'll pull in a harness bull from off his beat."

"No, none of that! Chick'd sooner burn the joint than call a cop."

"I'll go give Casey a chin," said Whitey, "meb-by I can hold him down. You put Goldie wise. Tell him to keep his lamps on Casey, an' if Casey reaches for his gatt to beat him to it."

Casey the decisive moved swiftly, however, and the proposed peace intervention failed for being too slow. Casey got a glimpse of Goldie through the separating screen doors. It was all he wanted. The next moment he had charged through.

Chairs crashed, tables were overthrown, women

shrieked and men cursed. Twenty guns were out. Casey fired six times at Goldie Louie, and six times missed that lucky meddler with other people's pocket-books. Not that Casey's efforts were altogether thrown away. His first bullet lodged in the stomach of Fog-eye, while his third broke the arm of Brother Bill.

Whitey Dutch reached Casey as the latter began his artillery practice, and sought by word and moderate force to induce a truce. Losing patience, however, Whitey, as Casey fired his final shot, pulled his own gun and put a bullet through and through that berserk's head. As Casey fell forward, a second bullet—coming from anywhere—buried itself in his back.

"By the Lord, I've croaked Phil!" was the exclamation of Whitey, addressed to no one in particular.

They were Whitey's last words; some one shoved the muzzle of a gun against his temple, and he fell by the side of Casey.

No sure list of dead and wounded for that evening's battle of the Stag will ever be compiled. The guests scattered like a flock of blackbirds. Some fled limping and groaning, others nursing an injured arm, while three or four, too badly hurt to travel, were dragged into nooks of safety by friends who'd come through untouched. There was blood to the east, blood to the west, on the

Twenty-eighth Street pavements, and a wounded gentleman was picked up in Broadway, two blocks away. The wounded one, full of a fine prudence and adhering strictly to gang teachings, declared that the bullet which had struck him was a bullet of mystery. Also, he gave his word of honor that, personally, he had never once heard of the Stag.

When the police reached the field of battle—wearing the ill-used airs of folk who had been unwarrantably disturbed—they found Casey and Whitey Dutch dead on the floor, and Fog-eye groaning in a corner. To these—counting the injured Brother Bill and the prudent one picked up in Broadway, finlly identified as Sanky Dunn—rumor added two dead and eleven wounded.

Leoni?

The Central Office dicks who met that lamp of loveliness the other evening in Broadway reported her as in abundant spirits, and more beautiful than ever. She had received a letter from McTaffe, she said, who sent his love, and her eyes shone like twin stars because of the joy she felt.

"Mack always had a good heart," said Leoni.

Paper-Box Johnny—all in tears—bore sorrowful word of her loss to Mrs. Casey, calling that matron from her slumbers to receive it. Paper-Box managed delicately.

"It's time to dig up black!" sobbed Paper-Box; "they've copped Phil.

"Copped Phil?" repeated Mrs. Casey, sleepily. "Where is he?"

"On a slab in the morgue. Youse'd better chase yourself over."

"All right," returned Mrs. Casey, making ready to go back to bed, "I will after awhile."

VIII.

THE WAGES OF THE SNITCH

Knowledge is power, and power is a good thing, as you yourself well know. Since Eve opened the way, and she and Adam paid the price—a high one, I sometimes think—you are entitled to every kind of knowledge. Also, you are entitled to all that you can get.

But having acquired knowledge, you are not entitled to peddle it out in secret to Central Office bulls, at a cost of liberty and often life to other men. When you do that you are a snitch, and have thrown away your right to live. Anyone is free to kill you out of hand, having regard only to his own safety. For such is the common law of Gangland.

Let me ladle out a cautionary spoonful.

As you go about accumulating knowledge, you should fix your eye upon one or two great truths. You must never forget that when you are close enough to see a man you are close enough to be seen. It is likewise foolish, weakly foolish, to assume that you are the only gas jet in the chandelier, the only pebble on the beach, or possess the only kodak

throughout the entire length of the boardwalk. Bear ever in mind that while you are getting the picture of some other fellow, he in all human chance is snapping yours.

This last is not so much by virtue of any law of Gangland as by a law of nature. Its purpose is to preserve that equilibrium, wanting which, the universe itself would slip into chaos and the music of the spheres become but the rawest tuning of the elemental instruments. The stars would no longer sing together, but shriek together, and space itself would be driven to stop its ears. Folk who fail to carry these grave matters upon the constant shoulder of their regard, get into trouble.

At Gouverneur hospital, where he died, the register gave his name as "Samuel Wendell," and let it go at that. The Central Office, which finds its profit in amplification, said Samuel Wendell, *alias* Kid Unger, *alias* the Ghost," and further identified him as "brother to Johnny the Mock."

Samuel Wendell, *alias* Kid Unger, *alias* the Ghost, brother to Johnny the Mock, was not the original Ghost. Until less than two years ago the title was honorably worn by Mashier, who got twenty spaces for a night trick he turned in Brooklyn. Since Mashier could not use the name in Sing Sing, Wendell, *alias* Kid Unger, brother to Johnny the Mock, adopted it for his own. It fitted well with his midnight methods and noiseless, glid-

ing, skulking ways. Moreover, since it was upon his own sly rap to the bulls, who made the collar, that Mashier got pinched, he may have felt himself entitled to the name as part of his reward. The Indian scalps his victim, and upon a similar principle Wendell, *alias* Unger, brother to Johnny the Mock, when Mashier was handed that breath-taking twenty years, may have decided to call himself the Ghost.

It will never be precisely known how and why and by whose hand the Ghost was killed, although it is common opinion that Pretty Agnes had much to do with it. Also, common opinion is more often right than many might believe. In view of that possible connection with the bumping off of the Ghost, Pretty Agnes is worth a word. She could not have been called old. When upon a certain Saturday evening, not remote, she stepped into Jack Sirocco's in Chatham Square, her years counted fewer than nineteen. Still, she had seen a good deal—or a bad deal—whichever you prefer.

Pretty Agnes' father, a longshoreman, had found his bread along the docks. None better ever shaped for a boss stevedore, or trotted up a gangplank with a 280-pound sack of sugar on his back. One day he fell between the side of a moored ship and the stringpiece of the wharf; and the ship, being at that moment ground against the wharf by the swell from a passing steamer, he was

crushed. Those who looked on called him a fool for having been killed in so poor a way. He was too dead to resent the criticism, and after that his widow, the mother of Pretty Agnes, took in washing.

Her mother washed, and Pretty Agnes carried home the clothes. This went on for three years. One wind-blown afternoon, as the mother was hanging out clothes on the roof—a high one—and refreshing her energies with intermittent gin from the bottle of her neighbor, the generous Mrs. Callahan, she stepped backward down an airshaft. She struck the flags ten stories below, and left Pretty Agnes to look out for herself.

Looking out for herself, Pretty Agnes worked in a sweatshop in Division Street. Here she made three dollars a week and needed five. The sweatshop owner—for she was a dream of loveliness, with a fog of blue-black hair and deep brown eyes —offered to make up the lacking two, and was accepted.

Round, ripe, willowy, Pretty Agnes graduated from the Division Street sweatshop to a store in Twenty-third Street. There she served as a cloak model, making fourteen dollars a week while needing twenty. The manager of the cloak store was as generous as had been the owner of the sweatshop, and benevolently made up the absent six.

For Pretty Agnes was lovelier than ever.

All work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy. Also, it has the same effect on Jill. Pretty Agnes —she had a trunkful of good clothes and yearned to show them—went three nights a week to one of those dancing academies wherewith the East Side was and is rife. As she danced she met Indian Louie, and lost no time in loving him.

Having advantage of her love, that seeker after doubtful dollars showed Pretty Agnes where and how she could make more money than would come to her as a cloak model in any Twenty-third Street store. Besides, he jealously disapproved of the benevolent manager, though, all things considered, it is hard to say why.

Pretty Agnes, who had grown weary of the manager and to whom Louie's word was law, threw over both the manager and her cloak-model position. After which she walked the streets for Louie —as likewise did Mollie Squint—and, since he often beat her, continued to love him from the bottom of her heart.

Between Pretty Agnes and Mollie Squint, Louie lived sumptuously. Nor could they themselves be said to have altogether suffered; for each knew how to lick her fingers as a good cook should. Perhaps Louie was aware that his darlings held out on him, but regarded it as just an investment. He must have known that to dress well stood first

among the demands of their difficult profession, which was ancient and had been honorable, albeit in latter days ill spoken of.

Louie died, and was mourned roundly by Pretty Agnes for eight weeks. Then she gave her love to Sammy Hart, who was out-on-the-safe. Charlie Lennard, *alias* Big Head, worked pal to Sammy Hart, and the Ghost went with them as outside man and to help in carrying the tools.

Commonly Sammy and Big Head tackled only inferior safes, in cracking which nothing nobler nor more recondite than a can-opener was demanded. Now and then, however, when a first-class box had to be blown and soup was an absolute requirement, the Ghost came in exceeding handy. No yegg who ever swung under and traveled from town to town without a ticket, knew better than did the Ghost how to make soup.

The soup-making process, while ticklish, ought to be worth reading about. A cake of dynamite is placed in the cold bottom of a kettle. Warm water is added, and the kettle set a-simmer over a benzine lamp. As the water heats, the dynamite melts into oil, and the oil—being lighter—rises to the top of the water.

The oil is drawn softly off with a syringe, and as softly discharged into a bottle half filled with alcohol. The alcohol is to prevent explosion by jarring. Soup, half oil, half alcohol, can be fired

with a fuse, but will sustain quite a jolt without resenting it.

This was not true in an elder day, before our box workers discovered that golden alcoholic secret. There was a yegg once who was half in, half out, of the window of a P. O. He had the bottle of soup in his hip pocket. The sash fell, struck the consignment of hip-pocket soup, and all that was found of the yegg were the soles of his shoes. Nothing so disconcerting would have happened had the Ghost made the soup.

The Ghost, while believed in by Big Head and Sammy, was distrusted by Pretty Agnes. She distrusted him because of his bad repute as a snitch. She called Sammy's attention to what tales were abroad to the black effect that the Ghost was a copper in his mildewed soul, and one time and another had served stoolpigeon to many dicks.

Sammy took no stock in these reports, and told Pretty Agnes so.

"Th' Ghost's all right," he said; "he's been wit' me an' Big Head when we toins off twenty joints."

"He may go wit' you," retorted Pretty Agnes, "for twenty more tricks, an' never rap. But mark me woids, Sammy; in th' end he'll make a present of youse to th' bulls."

Sammy only laughed, holding that the feminine intelligence, while suspicious, was not a strong intelligence.

"Well," said Sammy, when he had ceased laughing, "if th' Ghost does double-cross me, w'at'll youse do?"

"W'at'll I do? As sure as my monaker is Pretty Agnes, I'll have him cooked."

"Good goil!" said Sammy Hart.

Gangland discusses things social, commercial, political, and freely forms and gives opinions. From a panic in Wall Street to the making of a President, nothing comes or goes uncommented upon and unticketed in Gangland. Even the fashions are threshed out, and sage judgments rendered concerning frocks and hats and all the latest hints from Paris. This you can test for yourself, on any evening, at such hubs of popular interest as Sirocco's, Tony's, Jimmy Kelly's or the Chatham Club.

Sirocco's was a-swarm with life that Saturday evening when Pretty Agnes dropped in so casually. At old Jimmy's table they were considering the steel trust investigation, then proceeding—ex-President Roosevelt had that day testified—and old Jimmy and the Irish Wop voiced their views, and gave their feelings vent. Across at Slimmy's the dread doings of a brace of fair ones, who had excited Coney Island by descending upon that lively suburb in harem skirts, was under discussion.

Speaking of the steel trust investigation and its developments, old Jimmy was unbelting after this

wise. Said he, bringing down his hairy fist with a whack that startled every beer glass on the table into an upward jump of full three inches:

"Th' more I read of th' doin's of them rich guys, th' more I begin to think that th' makin' of a mutt lurks in every million dollars. Say, Wop, they don't know how to pick up a hand an' play it, after it's been dealt 'em. Take 'em off Wall Street an' mix 'em up wit' anything except stocks, an' they can't tell a fire plug from a song an' dance soubrette. If some ordinary skate was to go crabbin' his own personal game th' way they do theirs, th' next you'd hear that stew would be in Bloomingdale."

"Phwat's eatin' yez now, Jimmy?" inquired the Wop, carelessly. "Is it that steel trusht thing th' pa-a-apers is so full of?"

"That an' th' way Morgan an' th' balance of that fur-lined push fall over themselves. Th' big thing they're shy on is diplomacy. When it comes to diplomacy, they're a lot of dead ones."

"An' phwat's diplom'cy?"

The Wop didn't like big words; his feeling was to first question, then resent them.

"Phwat's diplom'cy?" he repeated.

"Diplomacy," said old Jimmy, "is any cunnin' move that lands th' trick. You wake up an' hear a noise; an' you think it's some porch-climber, like th' Nailer here, turnin' off th' joint. At that, not

knowin' but he's framed up with a gun, you don't feel like goin' to th' mat with him. What do you do? Well, you use diplomacy. You tosses mebby a dumbbell over th' bannisters, an' lets it go bumpin' along from step to step, makin' more row than some geezer fallin' down stairs with a kitchen stove. Th' racket throws a scare into th' Nailer, an' he beats it, see?"

"An' that's diplom'cy!" said the Wop.

"Also, it's exactly what them Wall Streeters ain't got. Look at th' way they're always fightin' Roosevelt. For twenty-five years they've been roustin' Teddy; an' for twenty-five years they've done nothin' but keep him on th' map. When Teddy was in Mulberry Street th' Tammany ducks gets along with him as peaceful as a basketful of pups. Diplomacy does it; that, an' payin' strict attention to Teddy's blind side. 'What's th' use of kickin' in th' gate,' says they, 'when we knows where a picket's off th' fence?' You remember Big Florrie Sullivan puttin' young Brady on th' Force? Teddy's in Mulberry Street then. Do you think Big Florrie goes queerin' th' chances, be tellin' Teddy how Brady passes th' cush box in Father Curry's church? Not on your life! It wouldn't have been diplomacy; Teddy wouldn't have paid no attention. Big Florrie gets in his work like this:

" 'Say, Commish,' he says, 'I sees th' fight of

my life last night. Nineteen rounds to a knockout! It's a left hook to th' jaw does it.'

"'No!' Teddy says, lightin' up like Chinatown on th' night of a Chink festival; 'you int'rest me! Pull up a stool,' says he, 'an' put your feet on th' desk. There; now you're comfortable, go on about th' fight. Who were they?'

"'A lad from my district named Brady,' says Big Florry, 'an' a dock-walloper from Williamsburg. You ought to have seen it, Commish! Oh, Brady's th' goods! He's th' lad to go th' route! He's all over that Williamsburg duffer like a cat over a shed roof! He went 'round him like a cooper 'round a barrel!'

"Big Florrie runs on like that, using diplomacy, an' two weeks later Brady's thumpin' a beat."

"Ye're r-r-right, Jimmy," said the Wop, after a pause which smelled of wisdom; "I agrees wit' yez. Morgan, Perkins, Schwab an' thim rich omadauns is th' bum lot. Now I think av it, too, Fatty Walsh minchons that wor-r-rd diplom'cy to me long ago. Yez knew Fatty, Jimmy?"

"Fatty an' me was twins."

"Fatty's th' foine la-a-ad; on'y now he's dead—Mary resht him! Th' time I'm in th' Tombs for bouncin' th' brick off th' head av that Orangeman, who's whistlin' th' Battle av th' Boyne to see how long I can shtand it, Fatty's th' warden; an' say, he made th' place home to me. He's talkin', Fatty

is, wan day about Mayor Hughey Grant, an' it's then he shpeaks av diplom'cy. He says Hughey didn't have anny."

"Don't you believe it!" interrupted old Jimmy; "Fatty had Hughey down wrong. When it comes to diplomacy, Hughey could suck an egg an' never chip th' shell."

"It's a special case loike. Fatty's dishtrict, d'yez see, has nothin' in it but Eyetalians. Wan day they'r makin' ready to cilibrate somethin'. Fatty's in it, av course, bein' leader, an' he chases down to th' City Hall an' wins out a permit for th' Dago parade."

"What's Hughey got to do with that?"

"Lishten! It shtrikes Hughey, him bein' Mayor, it'll be th' dead wise play, when Fatty marches by wit' his Guineas, to give them th' gay, encouragin' face. Hughey thinks Fatty an' his pushcart la-a-ads is cilibratin' some Dago Saint Patrick's day, d'yez see. It's there Fatty claims that Hughey shows no diplom'cy; he'd ought to have ashked."

"Asked what?"

"I'm comin' to it. Fatty knows nothin' about phwat's on Hughey's chest. His firsht tip is when he sees Hughey, an' th' balance av th' Tammany adminishtration cocked up in a hand-me-down grandshtand they've faked together in City Hall Park. Fatty pipes 'em, as he an' his Black Hand bunch comes rowlin' along down Broadway, an' th'

sight av that grandshtand full av harps, Hughey at th' head, almosht gives him heart failure.

"Fatty halts his Eyetalians, sets them to ma-a-arkin' toime, an' comes sprintin' an' puffin' on ahead.

"'Do a sneak!' he cries, when he comes near enough to pass th' wor-r-rd. 'Mother above! don't yez know phwat these wops av mine is cilibratin'? It's chasin' th' pope out av Rome. Duck, I tell yez, duck!"

"Sure; Hughey an' th' rist av th' gang took it on th' run. Fatty could ma-a-arch all right, because there's nobody but blackhanders in his dishtrict. But wit' Hughey an' th' others it's different. They might have got his grace, th' archbishop, afther thim."

"Goin' back to Teddy," observed old Jimmy, as he called for beer, "them rich lobsters is always stirrin' him up. An' they always gets th' worst of it. They've never brought home th' bacon yet. He's put one over on 'em every time.

"Yez can gamble that Tiddy's th' la-a-ad that can fight!" cried the Wop in tones of glee; "he's th' baby that's always lookin' f'r an argument!" Then in a burst, both rapturous and irrelevant: "He's th' idol av th' criminal illimint!"

"I don't think that's ag'inst him," interjected the Nailer, defensively.

"Nor me neither," said old Jimmy. "When it

comes down to tacks, who's quicker wit' th' applaudin' mitt at sight of an honest man than th' crim'nal element?—only so he ain't bumpin' into their graft. Who is it hisses th' villyun in th' play till you can hear him in Hoboken? Ain't it some dub just off the Island? Once a Blind Tom show is at Minor's, an' a souse in th' gallery is so carried away be grief at th' death of Little Eva, he falls down two flights of stairs. I gets a flash at him as they tosses him into th' ambulance, an' I hopes to join th' church if it ain't a murderer I asks Judge Battery Dan to put away on Blackwell's for beatin' up his own little girl till she can't get into her frock. Wall Streeters an' college professors, when it comes to endorsin' an honest man, can't take no medals off th' crim'nal element."

"Phwy has Morgan an' th' rist av thim Wall Street geeks got it in f'r Tiddy? queried the Wop. "Phwat's he done to 'em?"

"Nothin'; only they claims it ain't larceny if you steal more'n a hundred thousand dollars, an' Teddy won't stand for a limit."

"If that's phwat they're in a clinch about, then I'm for Tiddy," declared the Wop. "Ain't it him, too, that says th' only difference bechune a rich man an' a poor man is at th' bank? More power to him!—why not? Would this beer be annythin' but beer, if it came through a spigot av go-o-old,

from a keg av silver, an' th' bar-boy had used a diamond-shtudded bung-starter in tappin' it?"

Over at Slimmy's table, where the weaker sex predominated, the talk was along lighter lines. Mollie Squint spoke in condemnation of those harem skirts at Coney Island.

"What do youse think," she asked, "of them she-scouts showin' up at Luna Park in harem skirts? Coarse work that—very coarse. It goes to prove how some frails ain't more'n half baked."

"Why does a dame go to th' front in such togs?" asked Slimmy disgustedly.

"Because she's stuck on herself," said the Nailer, who had drifted over from old Jimmy and the Wop, where the talk was growing too heavy for him; "an' besides, it's an easy way of gettin' th' spot-light. Take anything like this harem skirt stunt, an' oodles of crazy Mollies'll fall for it. Youse can't hand it out too raw! So if it's goin' to stir things up, an' draw attention, they're Johnny-at-the-rat-hole every time!"

"We ladies," remarked Jew Yetta, like a complacent Portia giving judgment, "certainly do like to be present at th' ball game! An' if we can't beat th' gate—can't heel in—we'll climb th' fence. Likewise, we're right there whenever it's th' latest thing. Especially, if we've got a face that'd stop traffic in th' street. Do youse remember"—this to

Anna Gold—"when bicycles is new, how a lot of old iron-bound fairies, wit' maps that'd give youse a fit of sickness, never wastes a moment in wheelin' to th' front?"

"Do I remember when bicycles is new?" retorted Anna Gold, resentfully. "How old do youse think I be?"

"Th' Nailer's right," said Slimmy, cutting skilfully in with a view to keeping the peace. "Th' reason why them dames breaks in on bicycles, an' other new deals, is because it attracts attention; an' attractin' attention is their notion of bein' great. Which shows that they don't know th' difference between bein' famous an' bein' notorious."

Slimmy, having thus declared himself, looked as wise as a treeful of owls.

"Well, w'at is th' difference?" demanded Anna Gold.

"What's th' difference between fame an' notoriety?" repeated Slimmy, brow lofty, manner high. "It's th' difference, Goldie, between havin' your picture took at th' joint of a respectable photographer, an' bein' mugged be th' coppers at th' Central Office. As to harem skirts, however, I'm like Mollie there. Gen'rally speakin', I strings wit' th' loidies; but when they springs a make-up like them harem skirts, I pack in. Harem skirts is where I get off."

"Of course," said Big Kitty, who while speaking

little spoke always to the point, "youse souses understands that them dolls who shakes up Coney has an ace buried. They're simply a brace of roof-gardeners framin' up a little ink. I s'pose they figgered they'd make a hit. Did they?"—this was in reply to Mollie Squint, who had asked the question. "Well, if becomin' th' reason why th' bull on post rings in a riot call, an' brings out th' resoives, is your idee of a hit, Mollie, them dames is certainly th' big scream."

"Them harem skirts won't do!" observed the Nailer, firmly; "youse hear me, they won't do!"

"An' that goes f'r merry widdy hats, too," called out the Wop, from across the room. "Only yisterday a big fat baby rounds a corner on me, an' bang! she ketches me in th' lamp wit' th' edge av her merry widdy. On the livil, I thought it was a cross-cut saw! She came near bloindin' me f'r loife. As I side-steps, a rooshter's tail that's sproutin' out av th' roof, puts me other optic on th' blink. I couldn't have seen a shell av beer, even if Jimmy here was payin' fer it. Harem skirts is bad; but th' real minace is merry widdys."

"I thought them lids was called in," remarked Slimmy.

"If they was," returned the Wop, "they got bailed out ag'in. Th' one I'm nailed wit' is half as big as Belmont Pa-a-ark. Youse could 've raced a field av two-year olds on it."

"Well," remarked the Nailer, resignedly, "it's th' fashion, an' it's up to us, I s'pose, to stand it. That or get off the earth."

"Who invints th' fashions?" and here the Wop appealed to the deep experience of old Jimmy.

"Th' French."

Old Jimmy—his pension had just been paid—motioned to the waiter to again take the orders all 'round.

"Th' French. They're the laddy-bucks that shoves 'em from shore. Say 'Fashion!' an' bing! th' French is on th' job, givin' orders."

"Thim Frinch 're th' great la-a-ads," commented the Wop, admiringly. "There's a felly on'y this mornin' tellin' me they can cook shnails so's they're almosht good to eat."

"Tell that bug to guess ag'in, Wop," said Mollie Squint. "Snails is never good to eat. As far as them French are concerned, however, I go wit' old Jimmy. They're a hot proposition."

Jack Sirocco had been walking up and down, his manner full of uneasiness.

"What's wrong, Jack?" at last asked old Jimmy, who had observed that proprietor's anxiety.

Sirocco explained that divers gimlet-eyed gentlemen, who he believed were emissaries of an anti-vice society, had been in the place for hours.

"They only now screwed out," continued Sirocco. Then, dolefully: "It'd be about my luck,

just as I'm beginnin' to get a little piece of change for myself, to have some of them virchoo-toutin' ginks hand me a wallop. I wonder w'at good it does 'em to be always tryin' to knock th' block off somebody. I ain't got nothin' ag'inst virchoo. Virchoo's all right in its place. But so is vice."

Old Jimmy's philosophy began manœuvring for the high ground.

"This vice and virtue thing makes me tired," he said; "there's too much of it. Also, there's plenty to be said both ways. Th' big trouble wit' them anti-vice dubs is that they're all th' time connin' themselves. They feel moral when it's merely dyspepsia; they think they're virchous when they're only sick. In th' end, too, virchoo always falls down. Virchoo never puts a real crimp in vice yet. Virchoo's a sprinter; an' for one hundred yards it makes vice look like a crab. But vice is a stayer, an' in th' Marathon of events it romps in winner. Virchoo likes a rockin'-chair; vice puts in most of its time on its feet. Virchoo belongs to th' Union; it's for th' eight hour day, with holidays an' Saturday afternoons off. Vice is always willin' to break th' wage schedule, work overtime or do anythin' else to oblige. Virchoo wants two months in th' country every summer; vice never asks for a vacation since th' world begins."

The Wop loudly cheered old Jimmy's views. Sirocco, however, continued gloomy.

"For," said the latter with a sigh, "I can feel it that them anti-vice guys has put th' high-sign on me. They'll never rest now until they've got me number."

Pretty Agnes, on comin' in, had taken a corner table by herself. She heard, but did not join in the talk. She even left untouched the glass of beer, which, at a word from old Jimmy, a waiter had placed before her. Silent and sad, with an expression which spoke of trouble present or trouble on its way, she sat staring into smoky space.

"W'at's wrong wit' her?" whispered Slimmy, who, high-strung and sensitive, could be worked upon by another's troubles.

"Why don't youse ask her?" said Big Kitty.

Slimmy shook a doubtful head. "She ain't got no use for me," he explained, "since that trouble wit' Indian Louie."

"She sure couldn't expect you an' th' Grabber," remarked Anna Gold, quite scandalized at the thought of such unfairness, "to lay dead, while Louie does you out of all that dough!"

"It's th' rent," said Jew Yetta. She had been canvassing Pretty Agnes out of the corners of her eyes. "I know that look from me own experience. She can't come across for the flat, an' some bum of an agent has handed her a notice."

"There's nothin' in that," declared Mollie Squint. "She could touch me for th' rent, an' she's hep

to it." Then, in reproof of the questioning looks of Anna Gold: "Sure; both me an' Agnes was stuck on Indian Louie, but w'at of that? Louie's gone; an' besides, I never blames her. It's me who's th' butt-in; Agnes sees Louie first."

"Youse 're wrong, Yetta," spoke up the Nailer, confidently. "Agnes ain't worryin' about cush. There ain't a better producer anywhere than Sammy Hart. No one ever sees Sammy wit'out a roll."

The Nailer lounged across to Pretty Agnes; Mollie Squint, whose heart was kindly, followed him.

"W'y don't youse lap up your suds?" queried the Nailer, pointing to the beer. Without waiting for a return, he continued, "Where's Sammy?"

"Oh, I don't know," returned Pretty Agnes, her manner half desperate. "Nailer, I'm simply fretted batty!"

"W'at's gone crooked, dear?" asked Mollie Squint, soothingly. "Youse ain't been puttin' on th' mitts wit' Sammy?"

"No," replied Pretty Agnes, the tears beginning to flow; "me an' Sammy's all right. On'y he won't listen!" Then suddenly pointing with her finger, she exclaimed; "There! It's him I'm worryin' about!"

The Nailer and Mollie Squint glanced in the direction indicated by Pretty Agnes. The Ghost had just come in and was sidling into a chair. It

must be admitted that there was much in his appearance to dislike. His lips were loose, his eyes half closed and sleepy, while his chin was catlike, retreating, unbased. In figure he was undersized, slope-shouldered, slouching. When he spoke, his voice drawled, and the mumbled words fell half-formed from the slack angles of his mouth. He was an eel—a human eel—slippery, slimy, hard to locate, harder still to hold. To find him you would have to draw off all the water in the pond, and then poke about in the ooze.

"It's him that's frettin' me," repeated Pretty Agnes. "He's got me wild!"

The Nailer donned an expression, cynical and incredulous.

"W'at's this?" said he. "W'y Agnes, youse ain't soft on that mutt, be youse? Say, youse must be gettin' balmy!"

"It ain't that," returned Pretty Agnes, indignantly. "Do youse think I'd fall for such a chromo? I'd be bughouse!"

"Bughouse wouldn't half tell it!" exclaimed Mollie Squint fervently. "Him?"—nodding towards the Ghost. "W'y he's woise'n a wet dog!"

"Well," returned the puzzled Nailer, who with little imagination, owned still less of sentimental breadth, "if youse ain't stuck on him, how's he managin' to fret youse? Show me, an' I'll take a punch at his lamp."

"Punchin' wouldn't do no good," replied Pretty Agnes, resignedly. "This is how it stands. Sammy an' Big Head's gettin' ready to do a *schlam* job. They've let th' Ghost join out wit' 'em, an' I know he's goin' to give 'em up."

The Nailer looked grave.

"Unless youse 've got somethin' on him, Agnes." he remonstrated, "you oughtn't to make a squawk like that. How do youse know he's goin' to rap?"

"Cause he always raps," she cried fiercely. "Where's Mashier? Where's Marky Price? Where's Skinny Goodstein? Up th' river!—every mother's son of 'em! An' all his pals, once; every one! He's filled in wit' th' best boys that ever cracked a bin. An' every one of 'em's doin' their bits, while he's here drinkin' beer. I tell youse th' Ghost's a snitch! Youse can see 'Copper' written on his face."

"If I t'ought so," growled the Nailer, an evil shine in his beady eyes, "I'd croak him right here." Then, as offering a solution: "If youse 're so sure he's a stool, w'y don't youse tail him an' see if he makes a meet wit' any bulls?"

"Tail nothin'!" scoffed Pretty Agnes, bitterly; "me mind's made up. All I'll do is wait. If Sammy falls, it'll be th' Ghost's last rap. I know a party who's crazy gone on me. For two weeks I've been handin' him th' ice pitcher. All I has to

do is soften up a little, an' he'll cook th' Ghost th' minute I says th' woid."

Pretty Agnes, as though the sight of the Ghost were too much for her feelings, left the place. The Ghost himself, appeared uneasy, and didn't remain long.

The Nailer turned soberly to Mollie Squint. "Do youse t'ink," said he, "there's anythin' in that crack of Agnes?"

"Search me!" returned Mollie Squint, conservatively. "I ain't sayin' a woid."

"It's funny about youse skoits," remarked the Nailer, his manner an imitation of old Jimmy's. "Here's Agnes talkin' of havin' th' Ghost trimmed in case he tips off Sammy to th' dicks, an' yet when Slimmy an' th' Grabber puts Indian Louie over th' jump, neither Agnes nor you ever so much as yelps!"

"You don't understand," said Mollie Squint, tolerantly. "Sammy's nice to Agnes. Louie? Th' best he ever hands us is to sting us for our rolls, an' then go blow 'em on that blonde. There's a big difference, Nailer, if youse could only see it."

"Well," replied the Nailer, who boasted a heart untouched, "all I can say is youse dolls are too many for me! You've got me wingin'."

Midnight!

The theatre of operations was a cigar store, in Canal Street near the Bowery. The Ghost was

on the outside. The safe was a back number; to think of soup would have been paying it a compliment. After an hour's work with a can-opener, Sammy and Big Head declared themselves within ten minutes of the money. All that remained was to batter in the inner-lining of the box.

Big Head cocked a sudden and suspicious ear.

"What's that?" he whispered.

Sammy had just reversed the can-opener, for an attack upon that sheet-iron lining. He paused in mid-swing, and listened.

"It's a pinch," he cried, crashing down the heavy iron tool with a cataract of curses. "It's a pinch, an' th' Ghost is in on it. Agnes had him right!"

It was a pinch sure enough. Even as Sammy spoke, Rocheford and Wertheimer of the Central Office were covering them with their pistols.

"Hands up!" came from Wertheimer.

"You've got us bang right!" sighed Big Head.

Outside they found Cohen, also of the Central Office, with the ruffles on the Ghost.

"That's only a throw-off," sneered Sammy, pointing to the bracelets.

The Ghost began to whine. The loose lips became looser than ever, the drooping lids drooped lower still.

"W'y, Sammy," he remonstrated weepingly, "youse don't t'ink I'd go an' give youse up!"

"That's all right," retorted Sammy, with sullen emphasis. "Youse'll get yours, Ghost."

Had the Ghost been wise he would have remained in the Tombs; it was his best chance. But the Ghost was not wise. Within the week he was walking the streets, and trying to explain a freedom which so sharply contrasted with the caged condition of Big Head and Sammy Hart. Gangland turned its back on him; his explanations were not received. And, sluggish and thick as he was, Gangland made him feel it.

It was black night in University Place. The Ghost was gumshoeing his way towards the Bridge Saloon. A taxicab came slowly crabbing along the curb. It stopped; a quick figure slipped out and, muzzle on the very spot, put a bullet through the base of the Ghost's brain.

The quick figure leaped back into the cab. The door slammed, and the cab dashed off into the darkness at racing speed.

In that splinter of time required to start the cab you might have seen—had you been near enough—two white small hands clutch with a kind of rapturous acceptance at the quick figure, as it sprang into the cab, and heard the eager voice of a woman saying

"Promise for promise, and word for word! Who wouldn't give soul and body for th' death of a snitch?—for a snake that will bite no more?"

IX.

LITTLE BOW KUM

Since then no Chinaman will go into the room. I had this from Loui Fook, himself an eminent member of the On Leon Tong and a leading merchant of Chinatown. Loui Fook didn't pretend to know of his own knowledge, but spoke by hearsay. He said that the room was haunted. No one would live there, being too wise, although the owner had lowered the rent from twenty dollars a month to ten. Ten monthly dollars should be no inducement to live in a place where, at odd, not to say untoward hours, you hear sounds of scuffling and wing-beating, such as is made by a chicken when its head is chopped off. Also, little Bow Kum's blood still stains the floor in a broad red patch, and refuses to give way to soap and water. The wife of the Italian janitor—who cannot afford to be superstitious, and bemoans a room unrented—has scrubbed half through the boards in unavailing efforts to wash away the dull red splotch.

Detective Raphael of the Central Office heard of the ghost. He thought it would make for the moral uplift of Chinatown to explode so foolish a tale.

Yong Dok begged Raphael not to visit the haunted room where the blood of little Bow Kum spoke in dumb, dull crimson from the floor. It would set the ghosts to talking.

"Then come with me, and act as interpreter," quoth Raphael, and he threw Yong Dok over his heavy shoulder and began to climb the stairs.

Yong Dok fainted, and lay as limp as a wet bath towel. Loui Fook said that Yong Dok would die if taken to the haunted room, so Raphael forbore and set him down. In an hour Yong Dok had measurably recovered, but Tchin Foo insists that he hasn't been the same man since.

Low Fong, Low Tching and Chu Wah, three hatchet men belonging to the Four Brothers, were charged with the murder. But the coroner let Chu Wah go, and the special sessions jury disagreed as to Low Fong and Low Tching; and so one way and another they were all set free.

It is difficult to uncover evidence against a Chinaman. They never talk, and their faces are as void of expression as the wrong side of a tombstone. In only one way does a Chinaman betray emotion. When guilty, and pressed upon by danger, a pulse beats on the under side of his arm, just above the elbow. This is among the golden secrets known to what Central Office men do duty along Pell, Mott and Doyers streets, but for obvious reasons it cannot be used in court.

Although the white devils' law failed, the Chinese law was not so powerless. Because of that murder, eight Four Brothers and five On Leon Tongs have been shot dead. Also, slippered feet have stolen into the sleeping rooms of offensive ones, as they dreamed of China the Celestial far away beyond the sunset, and unseen bird-claw fingers have turned on the white devils' gas. In this way a dozen more have died. They have awakened in Chinatown to the merits of the white devils' gas as a method of assassination. It bids fair to take the place of the automatic gun, just as the latter shoved aside the old-time barbarous hatchet.

Little Bow Kum had reached her nineteenth year when she was killed. Her husband, Tchin Len, was worth $50,000. He was more than twice as old as little Bow Kum, and is still in Mott Street waiting for her spirit to return and strangle her destroyers. This will one day come to pass, and he is waiting for that day. Tchin Len has another wife in Canton, but he does not go back to her, preferring to live in Chinatown with the memory of his little lost Bow Kum.

Little Bow Kum was born in the Canton district, China. Her father's name was Wong Hi. Her mother's name doesn't matter, because mothers do not amount to much in China. As she lay in her mother's lap, a chubby, wheat-hued baby, they

named her Bow Kum, which means Sweet Flower, for they knew she would be very beautiful.

When little Bow Kum was five years old, Wong Hi, her father, sold her for $300. Wong Hi was poor, and $300 is a Canton fortune. Also, the sale had its moral side, since everyone knows that children are meant to be a prop and support to their parents.

Little Bow Kum was bought and sold, as was well understood by both Wong Hi, the father, and the man who chinked down his hard three hundred silver dollars as the price, with the purpose of rearing her to a profession which, while not without honor among Orientals, is frowned upon by the white devils, and never named by them in best society. Much pains were bestowed upon her education; for her owner held that in the trade which at the age of fifteen she was to take up, she should be able to paint, embroider, quote Confucius, recite verses, and in all things be a mirror of the graces. Thus she would be more valuable, being more attractive.

Little Bow Kum accepted her fate and made no protest, feeling no impulse so to do. She knew that she had been sold, and knew her destiny; but she felt no shock, was stricken by no desire to escape. What had happened and would happen, had been for hundreds and thousands of years the life story of a great feminine fraction of her people. Where-

fore, the thought was at home in her blood; her nature bowed to and embraced it.

Of course, from the white devils' view-point the fate designed for little Bow Kum was as the sublimation of the immoral. But you must remember that morality is always a question of geography and sometimes a question of race. Climates, temperatures, also play their part.

Then, too, there is that element of support. In the tropics, where life is lazy, easy, and one may pick a dinner from every tree, man is polygamous. In the ice locked arctics, where one spears his dinner out of the cold, reluctant sea, and goes days and days without it, man is polyandrous, and one wife has many husbands. In the temperate zone, where life is neither soft nor hard and yet folk work to live, man is monogamous, and one wife to one husband is the only good form.

Great is latitude!

Take the business of steeping the senses in drinks or drugs. That eternal quantity of latitude still worms its way into the equation. In the arctic zone they drink raw alcohol, in the north temperate whiskey, in the south temperate wine, while in the tropics they give up drinking and take to opium, hasheesh and cocaine.

Little Bow Kum watched her fifteenth year approach—that year when she would take up her profession—without shame, scandal or alarm.

Had you tried to show her the horrors of her situation, she wouldn't have understood. She was beautiful beyond beauty. This she knew very well, and was pleased to have her charms confessed. Her owner told her she was a lamp of love, and that he would not sell her under $3,000. This of itself was the prettiest of compliments, since he had never before asked more than $2,000 for a girl. Koi Ton, two years older than herself, had brought just $2,000; and Koi Ton was acknowledged to be a vision from heaven. And so when Bow Kum learned that her price was to be $3,000, a glow overspread her—a glow which comes to beauty when it feels itself supreme.

Little Bow Kum was four feet tall, and weighed only seventy pounds. Her color was the color of old ivory—that is, if you can imagine old ivory with the flush and blush of life. She had rose-red lips, onyx eyes, and hair as black as a crow's wing. One day her owner went mad with opium. As he sat and looked at her, and her star-like beauty grew upon him, he struck her down with a bamboo staff. This frightened him; for he saw that if he kept her he would kill her because of her loveliness. So, knowing himself and fearing her beauty, he sent little Bow Kum to San Francisco, and never laid eyes on her again.

Having ripened into her fifteenth year, and the value of girls being up in San Francisco, little

Bow Kum brought the price—$3,000—which her owner had fixed for her. She kissed the hand of Low Hee Tong, her new owner; and, having been adorned to the last limit of Chinese coquetry, went with him to a temple, dedicated to some Mongolian Venus, which he maintained in Ross Alley. Here little Bow Kum lived for nearly four years.

Low Hee Tong, the Ross Alley owner of little Bow Kum, got into trouble with the police. Something he did or failed to do—probably the latter—vastly disturbed them. With that, waxing moral, they decided that Low Hee Tong's Temple of Venus in Ross Alley was an eyesore, and must be wiped out.

And so they pulled it.

Little Bow Kum—so small, so much the rose-flower which her name implied—aroused the concern of the judge. He gave her to a Christian mission, which years before had pitched its tent in Frisco's Chinatown with a hope of saving Mongol souls, which hope had failed. Thereafter little Bow Kum lived at the mission, and not in Ross Alley, and was chaste according to the ice-bound ideals of the white devils.

The mission was ruled over by a middle-aged matron with a Highland name. This good woman was beginning to wonder what she should do with little Bow Kum, when that almond-eyed floweret came preferring a request. Little Bow Kum, while

dwelling in Ross Alley, had met Tchin Len and thought him nice. Tchin Len owned a truck-farm near Stockton, and was rich. Would the Highland matron, in charge of the mission, write a letter to Tchin Len, near Stockton, and ask that bewitching truck-gardener to come down and see little Bow Kum?

"Because," explained little Bow Kum, in her peculiar English, "I likee Tchin Len to mally me."

The Highland matron considered. A husband in the case of little Bow Kum would supply a long-felt want. Also, no harm, even if no good, could flow from Tchin Len's visit, since she, the Highland matron, sternly purposed being present while Tchin Len and little Bow Kum conferred.

The matron wrote the letter, and Tchin Len came down to San Francisco. He and little Bow Kum talked quietly in a language which the managing matron did not understand. But she knew the signs; and therefore when, at the close of the conversation, they explained that they had decided upon a wedding, she was not astonished. She gave them her blessing, about which they cared nothing, and they pledged each other their faith after the Chinese manner—which is curious, but unimportant here—about which they cared much.

Tchin Len went back to his Stockton truck garden, to put his house in order against the wifely advent of little Bow Kum. It is not of record that

Tchin Len said anything about his Canton wife. The chances are that he didn't. A Chinaman is no great hand to mention his domestic affairs to anybody. Moreover, a wife more or less means nothing to him. It is precisely the sort of thing he would forget; or, remembering, make no reference to, lest you vote him a bore. What looks like concealment is often only politeness, and good-breeding sometimes wears the face of fraud.

It was settled that Tchin Len should marry little Bow Kum, and the latter, aided and abetted by the watchful mission matron, waited for the day. Affairs had reached this stage when the unexpected came rapping at the door. Low Hee Tong, who paid $3,000 for little Bow Kum and claimed to own her, had been keeping an eye on his delicate chattel. She might be living at the mission, but he no less bore her upon the sky-line of his calculations. Likewise he knew about the wedding making ready with Tchin Len. He didn't object. He simply went to Tchin Len and asked for $3,000. It was little enough, he said; especially when one considered that—excluding all others—he would convey to Tchin Len in perpetuity every right in and to little Bow Kum, who was so beautiful that she was hated by the moon.

Tchin Len said the price was low enough; that is, if Low Hee Tong possessed any interest in little Bow Kum to convey, which he doubted. Tchin

Len explained that he would talk things over with the mission matron of the Highland name, and later let Low Hee Tong know.

Low Hee Tong said that this arrangement was agreeable, so long as it was understood that he would kill both Tchin Len and little Bow Kum in case he didn't get the money.

Tchin Len, after telling little Bow Kum, laid the business before the mission matron with the Highland name. Naturally, she was shocked. She said that she was amazed at the effrontery of Low Hee Tong! Under the white devils' law he couldn't possess and therefore couldn't pretend to any title in little Bow Kum. Tchin Len would be wild to pay him $3,000. Low Hee Tong was lucky to be alive!—only the mission matron didn't put it in precisely these words. If Tchin Len had $3,000 which he didn't need, he might better contribute it to the mission which had sheltered his little Bow Kum. It would be criminal to lavish it upon a yellow Pagan, who threatened to shed blood.

Tchin Len heard this with pigtailed phlegm and politeness, and promised to think about it. He said that it would give him no joy to endow Low Hee Tong with $3,000; he was willing that much should be understood.

Little Bow Kum was placidly present at the discussion. When it ended she placidly reminded Tchin Len that he knew what she knew, namely,

that he in all probability, and she in all certainty, would be killed if Low Hee Tong's claim were refused. Tchin Len sighed and confessed that this was true. For all that, influenced by the mission matron with the Highland name, he was loth to give up the $3,000. Little Bow Kum bent her flower-like head. Tchin Len's will was her law, though as the penalty of such sweet submission death, bitter death, should be her portion.

Tchin Len and the mission matron held several talks; and Tchin Len and Low Hee Tong held several talks. But the latter did not get the $3,000. Still he threatened and hoped on. It was beyond his Chinese comprehension that Tchin Len could be either so dishonest or so dull as not to pay him that money. Tchin Len was rich, and no child. Yes; he would pay. And Low Hee Tong, confident of his position, made ready his opium layout for a good smoke.

The mission matron and Tchin Len hit upon a plan. Tchin Len would privily marry little Bow Kum—that must precede all else. Upon that point of wedding bells, the mission matron was as moveless as Gibraltar. The knot tied, Tchin Len should sell out his Stockton truck-farm and move to New York. Then he was to send money, and the mission matron was to outfit little Bow Kum and ship her East. With the wretched Low Hee Tong in San Francisco, and Tchin Len and little Bow Kum

in far New York, an intervening stretch of three thousand five hundred miles might be expected to keep the peace.

Tchin Len and little Bow Kum were married. A month later, Tchin Len left for New York with $50,000 under his bridal blouse. He settled down in Mott Street, dispatched New York exchange for $800 to the mission matron, who put little Bow Kum aboard the Overland Express at Oakland, together with three trunks and a ticket. Little Bow Kum arrived in due and proper time, and Tchin Len—who met her in Jersey City—after saluting her in the Chinese fashion, which is cold and lacks enthusiasm, bore her away to Seventeen Mott, where he had prepared for her a nest.

There are three septs among Chinamen. These are the On Leon Tong, the Hip Sing Tong and the Four Brothers. The two first are associations; the last is a fraternity. You can join the Hip Sing Tong or the On Leon Tong. Your sole chance of becoming a Four Brother lies in being born into the tribe.

Loui Fook told me these things late one night in the Port Arthur restaurant, where the red lamps glow and there is an all-pervading smell of preserved ginger, and added that the Four Brothers was very ancient. Its sources were lost in the dimmest vistas of Chinese antiquity, said Loui Fook.

"One thousand years old?" I asked.

"Much older."

"Five thousand?"

"Much older."

"Ten thousand?"

"Maybe!"

From which I inferred that the Four Brothers had beheld the dawn and death of many centuries.

Every member of the Four Brothers is to be known by his name. When you cut the slippered trail of a Chinaman whose name begins with Low or Chu or Tching or Quong, that Chinaman is a Four Brothers. A Chinaman's first name is his family name. In this respect he runs counter to the habit of the white devils; just as he does in the matter of shirts, which the white devil tucks in and the Chinaman does not. Wherefore, the names of Low, Chu, Tching and Quong, everywhere the evidence of the Four Brothers, are family names.

Loui Fook gave me the origin of the Four Brothers—he himself is an On Leon Tong. Many thousands of years ago a Chinaman was travelling. Dusty, weary, he sat down by a well. His name was Low. Another travel-stained Chinaman joined him. They talked, and liked each other much. The second traveler's name was Chu. Then a third sat down, and the three talked and liked each other much. His name was Tching. Lastly, came a

fourth Chinaman, and the weary dust lay deep upon his sandals. His name was Quong. He was equally talked to by the others, and by them equally well liked. They—the four—decided, as they parted, that forever and forever they and their descendants should be as brothers.

Wherefore the Four Brothers.

Low Hee Tong was a member of the Four Brothers—a descendant of the earliest Chinaman at that well, back in the world's morning. When he found that Tchin Len had married little Bow Kum and stolen her away to New York, his opium turned bitter and he lost his peace of mind. Low Hee Tong wrote a Chinese letter, giving the story of his injuries, and sent it *via* the white devils' mails to Low Hee Jit, chief of the Four Brothers.

Low Hee Jit laid the case before Lee Tcin Kum, chief of the On Leon Tong. The wise men of the On Leon Tong appointed a hearing. Low Hee Jit came with the wise men of the Four Brothers to the company rooms of the On Leon Tong. Tchin Len and little Bow Kum were there. The question was, should the On Leon Tong command Tchin Len to pay Low Hee Tong $3,000—the price of little Bow Kum?

Lee Tcin Kum and the wise men of the On Leon Tong, after long debate, said that Tchin Len should pay Low Hee Tong nothing. And they argued after this wise. The white devils' law had taken

hold of little Bow Kum, and destroyed Low Hee Tong's title. She was no longer his property. She might marry whom she would, and the bridegroom owe Low Hee Tong nothing.

This was in the On Leon Tong's Company rooms in Mott Street.

Low Hee Jit and the wise men of the Four Brothers opposed this. Particularly they declined the white devils' laws as of controlling pith and moment. Why should a Chinaman heed the white devils' laws? The white devils were the barbarous inferiors of the Chinese. The latter as a race had long ago arrived. For untold ages they had been dwelling upon the highest peaks of all possible human advancement. The white devils, centuries behind, were still blundering about among the foothills far below. It was an insult, between Chinaman and Chinaman, for Lee Tcin Kum and the wise men of the On Leon Tong to quote the white devils' laws, or assume to yield them respect.

With this the council broke up.

War was declared by the Four Brothers against the On Leon Tong, and the dead-walls of Chinatown were plastered with the declaration. Since the white devils could not read Chinese, they knew nothing of all this. But the On Leon Tong knew, and the Four Brothers knew, and both sides began bringing in their hatchet-men.

When a Chinaman is bent on killing, he hires an

assassin. This is not cowardice, but convenience. The assassin never lives in the town where the killing is to occur. He is always imported. This is to make detection difficult. The Four Brothers and the On Leon Tong brought in their hatchet-men from Chicago, from Boston, from Pittsburg, from Philadelphia.

Some impression of the extent of this conscription might be gathered from the following: When last New Year the On Leon Tong gave a public dinner at the Port Arthur, thirty hatchet-men were on the roof and eighty in the street. This was to head off any attempt the Four Brothers might make to blow that banquet up. I received the above from an esteemed friend of mine, who was a guest at the dinner, but left when told what profuse arrangements had been made to insure his skin.

Tchin Len and little Bow Kum kept up the fires of their love at Seventeen Mott. They took their daily chop suey and sharkfin, not to mention their bird's-nest soup, across the way at Twenty-two with their friends, Sam Lee and Yong Dok.

It was a showery, August afternoon. Tchin Len had been all day at his store, and little Bow Kum was sitting alone in their room. Dismal as was the day outside, the room showed pleasant and bright. There were needlework screens, hangings of brocade and silk, vases of porcelain, statuettes in jade. The room was rich—a scene of color and Chinese luxury.

Little Bow Kum was the room's best ornament—with her jade bracelets, brocade jacket, silken trousers, golden girdle, and sandaled feet as small as the feet of a child of six. It would be twenty minutes before the Chinese dinner hour, when she was to join Tchin Len across the street, and she drew out pen and ink and paper that she might practice the white devils' way of writing; and all with the thought of some day sending a letter of love and gratitude to the mission matron with the Highland name.

So engrossed was little Bow Kum that she observed nothing of the soft opening of the door, or the dark savage face which peered through. The murderer crept upon her as noiselessly as a shadow. There was a hawk-like swoop. About the slender throat closed a grip of steel. The fingers were long, slim, strong. She could not cry out. The dull glimmer of a Chinese knife—it was later picked up in the hall, a-drip with blood—flashed before her frightened eyes. She made a convulsive clutch, and the blade was drawn horribly through her baby fingers.

Over across, not one hundred feet away, sat Tchin Len and his two friends in the eating room of Twenty-two. It was a special day, and they would have chicken and rice. This made them impatient for the advent of little Bow Kum. She was already ten minutes behind the hour. His

friends rallied Tchin Len about little Bow Kum, and evolved a Chinese joke to the effect that he was a slave to her beauty and had made a foot-rest of his heart for her little feet. Twenty minutes went by, and his friends had grown too hungry to jest.

Tchin Len went over to Seventeen, to bring little Bow Kum. As he pushed open the door, he saw the little silken brocaded form, like a child asleep, lying on the floor. Tchin Len did not understand; he thought little Bow Kum was playing with him.

Poor little Bow Kum.

The lean fingers had torn the slender throat. Her baby hand was cut half in two, where the knife had been snatched away. The long blade had been driven many times through and through the little body. A final slash, hari-kari fashion and all across, had been the awful climax.

His friends found Tchin Len, seated on the floor, with little Bow Kum in his arms. Grief was neither in his eyes nor in his mouth, for his mind, like his heart, had been made empty.

Tchin Len waits for the vengeance of little Bow Kum to fall upon her murderers. Some say that Tchin Len was a fool for not paying Low Hee Tong the $3,000. Some call him dishonest. All agree that the cross-fire of killings, which has raged and still rages because of it, can do little Bow Kum no good.

X.

THE COOKING OF CRAZY BUTCH

This is not so much to chronicle the bumping off of Crazy Butch, as to open a half-gate of justice in the maligned instance of the Darby Kid. There is subdued excitement in and about the Central Office. There is more excitement, crossed with a color of bitterness, in and about the Chatham Club. The Central Office, working out a tip, believes it has cut the trail of Harry the Soldier, who, with Dopey Benny, is wanted for the killing of Crazy Butch. The thought which so acrimoniously agitates the Chatham Club is "Who rapped?" with the finger of jealous suspicion pointing sourly at the Darby Kid.

That you be not misled in an important particular, it is well perhaps to explain that the Darby Kid is a girl—a radiant girl—and in her line as a booster, a girl of gold. She deeply loved Crazy Butch, having first loved Harry the Soldier. If she owned a fault, it was that in matters of the heart she resembled the heroine of the flat boatman's muse.

There was a womern in our town
In our town did dwell.
She loved her husband dear-i-lee
An' another man twict as well.

But that is not saying she would act as stool-pigeon. To charge that the Darby Kid turned copper, and wised up the Central Office dicks concerning the whereabouts of Harry the Soldier, is a serious thing. The imputation is a grave one. Even the meanest ought not to be disgraced as a snitch in the eyes of all Gangland, lightly and upon insufficient evidence. There were others besides the Darby Kid who knew how to locate Harry the Soldier. Might not one of these have given a right steer to the bulls? Not that the Darby Kid can be pictured as altogether blameless. She indubitably did a foolish thing. Having received that letter, she should never have talked about it. Such communications cannot be kept too secret. Some wretched talebearer must have been lounging about the Chatham Club. Why not? The Chatham Club can no more guarantee the character of its patrons than can the Waldorf-Astoria.

The evening was a recent one. It was also dull. There wasn't an overflow of customers, hardly enough in waiting on them, to take the stiffness out of Nigger Mike's knees.

It was nine of the clock, and those two inseparables, the Irish Wop and old Jimmy, sat in their

usual chairs. The Wop spoke complainingly of the poolroom trade, which was even duller than trade at the Chatham Club.

"W'at wit' killin' New York racin'," said the Wop dismally, "an' w'at wit' raidin' a guy's joint every toime some av them pa-a-pers makes a crack, it's got th' poolrooms on th' bum. For meself I'm thinkin' av closin'. Every day I'm open puts me fifty dollars on th' nut. An' Jimmy, I've about med up me moind to put th' shutters up."

"Mebby you're in wrong with th' organization."

"Tammany? Th' more you shtand in wit' Tammany, th' ha-a-arder you get slugged."

Old Jimmy signalled to Nigger Mike for beer.

"Over to th' Little Hungary last night," remarked old Jimmy casually, "them swell politicians has a dinner. I was there."

The last came off a little proudly.

"They tell me," said the Wop with a deprecatory shrug, "that Cha-a-arley Murphy was there, too, an' that Se-r-rgeant Cram had to go along to heel an' handle him. I can remimber whin chuck steak an' garlic is about Cha-a-arley's speed. Now, whin he's bushtin' 'em open as Chief av Tammany Hall, it's an indless chain av champagne an' tur'pin an' canvashback, with patty-de-foy-grass as a chaser."

Old Jimmy shook a severe yet lofty head. "If some guy tells you, Wop, that Charley needs any-

body in his corner at a dinner that guy's stringin' you. Charley can see his way through from napkins to toothpicks, as well as old Chauncey Depew. There's a lot of duffers goin' 'round knockin' Charlie. They're sore just because he's gettin' along, see? They'll tell you how if you butt him up ag'inst a dinner table, he'll about give you an imitation of a blind dog in a meat-shop—how he'll try to eat peas with a knife an' let 'em roll down his sleeve an' all that. So far as them hoboes knockin' Charley goes, it's to his credit. You don't want to forget, Wop, they never knock a dead one."

"In th' ould gas house days," enquired the Wop, "wasn't Cha-a-arley a conducthor on wan av th' crosstown ca-a-ars?"

"He was! an' a good one too. That's where he got his start. He quit 'em when they introduced bell punches; an' I don't blame him! Them big companies is all alike. Which of 'em'll stand for it to give a workin' man a chance?"

"Did thim la-a-ads lasht night make spaches?"

"Speeches? Nothin' but. Trusts is to be th' issue this next pres'dential campaign."

"Now about thim trushts? I've been wantin' to ashk yez th' long time. I've been hearin' av trushts for tin years, an' Mary save me! if I'd know wan if it was to come an' live next dure."

"Well, Wop," returned old Jimmy engigmatically, "a trust is anything you don't like—only so

it's a corp'ration. So long as it stands in with you an' you like it, it's all right, see? But once it takes to handin' you th' lemon, it's a trust."

"Speakin' av th' pris'dency, it looks loike this fat felly Taft's out to get it in th' neck."

"Surest ever! Th' trusts is sore on him; an' th' people is sore on him. He's a frost at both ends of th' alley."

"W'at crabbed him?"

"Too small in th' hat-band, too big in th' belt. Them republicans better chuck Taft in th' discard an' take up Teddy. There's a live one! There's th' sturdy plow-boy of politics who'd land 'em winner!"

The Nailer came strolling in and pulled up a chair.

"Roosevelt, Jimmy," said he, "couldn't make th' run. Don't he start th' argument himself, th' time he's elected, sayin' it's his second term an' he'll never go out for th' White House goods again?"

"Shure he did," coincided the Wop. "An' r-r-right there he give himsilf th' gate. You're right, Nailer; he's barred."

"Teddy oughtn't to have got off that bluff about not runnin' ag'in," observed old Jimmy thoughtfully. "He sees it himself now. Th' next day after he makes his crack, a friend of mine, who's down to th' White House, asks him about it; 'Is it for the bleachers,' says my friend, 'or does it go?'

" 'Oh, it goes!' says Teddy.

" 'Then,' says my friend, 'you'll pardon me, but I don't think it was up to you to say it. It may wind up by puttin' everybody an' everything in Dutch. No sport can know what he'll want to do, or what he ought to do, four years ahead. Bein' pres'dent now, with four years to draw to, you can no more tell whether or no you'll want to repeat than you can tell what you'll want for dinner while you're eatin' lunch. Once I knew a guy who's always ready to swear off whiskey, when he's half full. Used to chase round to th' priest, on his own hunch, to sign th' pledge, every time he gets a bun. Bein' soaked, he feels like he'll never want another drink. After he'd gone without whiskey a couple of days, however, he'd wake up to it that he's been too bigoted. He'd feel that he's taken too narrow a view of th' liquor question, an' commence to see things in their true colors.' That's what my friend told him. And now that Teddy's showin' signs, I've wondered whether he recalls them warnin' words."

"W'at'll th' demmycrats do?" asked the Nailer. "Run Willyum Jennin's?"

"They will," retorted the Wop scornfully, "if they want to get th' hoot. Three toimes has this guy Bryan run—an' always f'r th' end book. D'yez moind, Jimmy, how afther th' Denver Convention he cha-a-ases down to th' depot to shake ha-a-ands

wit' Cha-a-arley Murphy? There's no class to that! Would Washin'ton have done it?—Would Jefferson?"

"How was he hoited be shakin' hands wit' Murphy?"

The Nailer's tones were almost defiant. He had been brought up with a profound impression of the grandeur of Tammany Hall.

"How was he hur-r-rted? D'yez call it th' cunnin' play f'r him to be at th' depot, hand stretched out, an' yellin' 'Mitt me, Cha-a-arley, mitt me?" Man aloive, d'yez think th' country wants that koind av a ska-a-ate in th' White House?"

The acrid emphasis of the Wop was so overwhelming that it swept the Nailer off his feet.

The Wop resumed:

"Wan thing, that depot racket wasn't th' way to carry New York. Th' way to bring home th' darby in th' Empire Shtate is to go to th' flure wit' Tammany at th' ringin' av th' gong. How was it Cleveland used to win? Was it be makin' a pet av Croker, or sendin' th' organization flowers? An' yez don't have to be told what happened to Cleveland. An' Tammany, moind yez, tryin' to thump his proshpecks on th' nut ivery fut av th' way! If Willyum Jinnin's had been th' wise fowl, he'd have took his hunch fr'm th' career av Cleveland, an' rough-housed Tammany whiniver an' wheriver found. If he'd only knocked Tammany long

enough an' ha-a-ard enough, he'd have had an anchor-nurse on th' result."

"This sounds like treason, Wop," said old Jimmy in tones of mock reproach. "Croker was boss in th' Cleveland days. You'll hardly say that Charlie ain't a better chief than Croker?"

"Jimmy, there's as much difference bechune ould man Croker an' Cha-a-arley Murphy as bechune a buffalo bull an' a billy-goat. To make Murphy chief was loike settin' a boy to carryin' hod. While yez couldn't say f'r shure whether he'd fall fr'm th' laddher or simply sit down wit' th' hod, it's a cinch he'd niver get th' bricks to th' scaffold. Murphy's too busy countin' th' buttons on his Prince Albert, an' balancin' th' gold eye-glasshes on th' ridge av his nose, to lave him anny toime f'r vict'ry."

"While youse guys," observed the Nailer, with a great air of knowing something, "is indulgin' in your spiels about Murphy, don't it ever strike youse that he's out to make Gaynor pres'dent?"

"Gaynor?" repeated old Jimmy, in high offence. "Do you think Charlie's balmy? If it ever gets so that folks of th' Gaynor size is looked on as big enough for th' presidency, I for one shall retire to th' booby house an' devote th' remainder of an ill-spent life to cuttin' paper dolls. An' yet, Nailer, I oughtn't to wonder at youse either for namin' him. There's a Demmycrat Club mutt speaks to me about that very thing at th' Little Hungary dinner.

'Gaynor is a college graduate,' says the Demmycrat Clubber. 'Is he?' says I. 'Well then he ought to chase around to that college an' make 'em give him back his money. They swindled him.' 'Look at th' friends he has!' says th' Clubber. 'I've been admirin' 'em,' I says. 'What with one thing an' another, them he's appointed to office has stole everything but th' back fence.' 'But didn't Croker, in his time, hook him up with Tammany Hall?' says th' Clubber; 'that ought to show you!' 'Croker did,' says I; 'it's an old Croker trick. Croker was forever gettin' th' Gaynors an' th' Shepherds an' th' Astor-Chanlers an' th' Cord Meyers an' all them high-flyin' guys into Tammany. He does it for th' same reason they puts a geranium in a tenement house window.' 'An' w'at may that be?' asks the Clubber. 'Th' geranium's intended,' says I, 'to engage th' eye of th' Health Inspector, an' distract his attention from th' drain.' "

The Darby Kid, a bright dancing light in her eyes and all a-flutter, rushed in. The Nailer crossed over to a table at which sat Mollie Squint. The Darby Kid joined them.

"W'at do youse think?" cried the Darby Kid. "I'm comin' out of me flat when th' postman slips me a letter from Harry th' Soldier."

"Where is he?" asked Mollie Squint.

"That's th' funny part. He's in th' Eyetalian Army, an' headed for Africa. That's a fine lay-

out, I don't think! An' he says I'm th' only goil he ever loves, an' asts me to join him! Ain't he got his nerve?"

"W'y? You ain't mad because he croaks Butch?"

"No. But me for Africa!—the ideer!"

"About Dopey Benny?" said the Nailer.

"Harry says Benny got four spaces in Canada. It's a bank trick—tryin' to blow a box in Montreal or somethin'."

"Then you won't join Harry?" remarked Mollie Squint.

"In Africa? When I do, I'll toin mission worker."

The next day the Central Office knew all that the Darby Kid knew as to Harry the Soldier. But why say it was she who squealed? The Nailer and Mollie Squint were quite as well informed as herself, having read Harry's letter.

To begin at the foundation and go to the eaves—which is the only right way to build either a house or a story. Crazy Butch had reached his twenty-eighth year, when he died and was laid to rest in accordance with the ceremonial of his ancient church. He was a child of the East Side, and his vices out-topped his virtues upon a principle of sixteen to one.

The parents of Butch may be curtly dismissed as unimportant. They gave him neither care nor

guidance, but left him to grow up, a moral straggler, in what tangled fashion he would. Never once did they show him the moral way in which he should go. Not that Butch would have taken it if they had.

To Butch, as to Gangland in general, morality was as so much lost motion. And, just as time is money among honest folk, so was motion money with Butch and his predatory kind. Old Jimmy correctly laid down the Gangland position, which was Butch's position. Said old Jimmy:

"Morality is all to the excellent for geeks with dough to burn an' time to throw away. It's right into the mitts of W'ite Chokers, who gets paid for bein' good an' hire out to be virchuous for so much a year. But of what use is morality to a guy along the Bowery? You could take a cartload of it to Simpson's, an' you couldn't get a dollar on it."

Not much was known of the childhood of Butch, albeit his vacuous lack of book knowledge assisted the theory that little or less of it had been passed in school. Nor was that childhood a lengthy one, for fame began early to collect upon Butch's scheming brow. He was about the green and unripe age of thirteen when he went abroad into the highways and byways of the upper city and stole a dog of the breed termed setter. This animal he named Rabbi, and trained as a thief.

Rabbi, for many months, was Butch's meal

ticket. The method of their thievish procedure was simple but effective. Butch—Rabbi alertly at his godless heels—would stroll about the streets looking for prey. When some woman drifted by, equipped of a handbag of promise, Butch pointed out the same to the rascal notice of Rabbi. After which the discreet Butch withdrew, the rest of it—as he said—being up to Rabbi.

Rabbi followed the woman, his abandoned eye on the hand-bag. Watching his chance, Rabbi rushed the woman and dexterously whisked the handbag from out her horrified fingers. Before the woman realized her loss, Rabbi had raced around a nearest corner and was lost to all pursuit. Fifteen minutes later he would find Butch at Willett and Stanton Streets, and turn over the touch.

Rabbi hated a policeman like a Christian. The sight of one would send him into growling, snarling, hiding. None the less, like all great characters, Rabbi became known; and, in the end, through some fraud which was addressed to his softer side and wherein a canine Delilah performed, he was betrayed into the clutches of the law.

This mischance marked the close, as a hanger-snatcher, of the invaluable Rabbi's career. Not that the plain-clothes people who caught him affixed a period to his doggish days. Even a plains-clothes man isn't entirely hard. Rabbi's captors merely

found him a home in the Catskills, where he spent his days in honor and his nights in sucking unsuspected eggs.

When Rabbi was retired to private life, Butch, in his bread-hunting, resolved to seek new paths. Among the cruder crimes is house-breaking and to it the amateur law-breaker most naturally turns. Butch became a house-worker with special reference to flats.

In the beginning, Butch worked in the day time, or as they say in Gangland, "went out on *skush.*" Hating the sun, however, as all true criminals must, he shifted to night jobs, and took his dingy place in the ranks of viciousness as a *schlamwerker.* As such he turned off houses, flats and stores, taking what Fate sent him. Occasionally he varied the dull monotony of simple burglary by truck-hopping.

Man cannot live by burglary alone, and Butch was not without his gregarious side. Seeking comradeship, he united himself with the Eastman gang. As a gangster he soon distinguished himself. He fought like a berserk; and it was a sort of war-frenzy, which overtook him in battle, that gave him his honorable prefix.

Monk Eastman thought well of Butch. Not even Ike the Blood stood nearer than did Butch to the heart of that grim gang captain. Eastman's weakness was pigeons. When he himself went

finally to Sing Sing, he asked the court to permit him another week in the Tombs, so that he might find a father for his five hundred feathered pets.

In the days when Butch came to strengthen as well as ornament his forces, Eastman kept a bird store in Broome Street, under the New Irving Hall. Eastman also rented bicycles. Those who thirsted to stand well with him were sedulous to ride a wheel. They rented these uneasy engines of Eastman, with the view of drawing to themselves that leader's favor. Butch, himself, was early astride a bicycle. One time and another he paid into Eastman's hands the proceeds of many a *skush* or *schlam* job; and all for the calf-developing privilege of pedalling about the streets.

Butch conceived an idea which peculiarly endeared him to Eastman. In Forsyth Street was a hall, and Butch—renting the same—organized an association which, in honorable advertisement of his chief's trade of pigeons and bicycles, he called the Squab-Wheelmen. Eastman himself stood godfather to this club, and at what times he reposed himself from his bike and pigeon labors, played pool in its rooms.

There occurred that which might have shaken one less firmly established than Butch. As it was, it but solidified him and did him good. The world will remember the great gang battle, fought at Worth and Center Streets, between the Eastmans

and the Five Points. The merry-making was put an end to by those spoil sports, the police, who, as much without noble sympathies as chivalric instincts, drove the contending warriors from the field at the point of their night sticks.

Brief as was the fray, numerous were the brave deeds done. On one side or the other, the Dropper, the Nailer, Big Abrams, Ike the Blood, Slimmy, Johnny Rice, Jackeen Dalton, Biff Ellison and the Grabber distinguished themselves. As for Butch, he was deep within the warlike thick of things, and no one than he came more to the popular front.

Sequential to that jousting, a thought came to Butch. The Squab-Wheelmen were in nightly expectation of an attack from the Five Pointers. By way of testing their valor, and settle definitely, in event of trouble, who would stick and who would duck, Butch one midnight, came rushing up the stairway, which led to the club rooms, blazing with two pistols at once. Butch had prevailed upon five or six others, of humor as jocose as his own, to assist, and the explosive racket the party made in the narrow stairway was all that heart could have wished. It was comparable only to a Mott Street Chinese New Year's, as celebrated in front of the Port Arthur.

There were sixty members in the rooms of the Squab-Wheelmen when Butch led up his feigned

attack, and it is discouraging to relate that most if not all of them fled. Little Kishky, sitting in a window, was so overcome that he fell out backwards, and broke his neck. Some of those who fled, by way of covering their confusion, were inclined to make a deal of the death of Little Kishky and would have had it set to the discredit of Butch. Gangland opinion, however, was against them. If Little Kishky hadn't been a quitter, he would never have fallen out. Butch was not only exonerated but applauded. He had devised—so declared Gangland—an ideal method of separating the sheep who would fly from the goats who would stay and stand fire.

Then, too, there was the laugh.

Gangland was quick to see the humorous side; and since humanity is prone to decide as it laughs, Gangland overwhelmingly declared in favor of Butch.

It was about this time that Butch found himself in a jam. His *schlam* work had never been first class. It was the want of finish to it which earned him the name of Butch. The second night after his stampede of the Squab-Wheelmen, his clumsiness in a Brooklyn flat woke up a woman, who woke up the neighborhood. Whereupon, the neighborhood rushed in and sat upon the body of Butch, until the police came to claim him. Subsequently, a Kings County judge saw his way clear to send

Butch up the river for four weary years. And did.

Butch was older and soberer when he returned. Also, his world had changed. Eastman had been put away, and Ritchie Fitzpatrick ruled in his place. Butch cultivated discretion, where before he had been hot and headlong, and no longer sought that gang prominence which was formerly as the breath to his nostrils.

Not that Butch altogether turned his back upon his old-time associates. The local Froissarts tell how he, himself, captained a score or so of choice spirits among the Eastmans, against the Humpty Jackson gang, beat them, took them prisoners and plundered them. This brilliant action occurred in that Fourteenth Street graveyard which was the common hang-out of the Humpty Jacksons. Also, Humpty Jackson commanded his partisans in person, and was captured and frisked with the rest. Butch gained much glory and some money; for the Jacksons—however it happened—chanced to be flush.

Butch, returning from Sing-Sing exile, did not return to his *schlam* work. That trip up-the-river had shaken him. He became a Fagin, and taught boys of tender years to do his stealing for him.

Butch's mob of kids counted as many as twenty, all trained in pocket-picking to a feather-edge. As aiding their childish efforts, it was Butch's habit

to mount a bicycle, and proceed slowly down the street, his fleet of kids going well abreast of him on the walks. Acting the part of some half-taught amateur of the wheel, Butch would bump into a man or a woman, preferably a woman. There would be cries and a scuffle. The woman would scold, Butch would expound and explain. Meanwhile the wren-head public packed itself ten deep about the center of excitement.

It was then that Butch's young adherents pushed their shrewd way in. Little hands went flying, to reap a very harvest of pokes. Butch began building up a bank account.

As an excuse for living, and to keep his mob together, Butch opened a pool parlor. This temple of enjoyment was in a basement in Willett Street near Stanton. The tariff was two-and-a-half cents a cue, and what Charley Bateses and Artful Dodgers worked for Butch were wont to refresh themselves at the game.

Butch made money with both hands. He took his share as a Fagin. Then, what fragmentary remnants of their stealings he allowed his young followers, was faithfully blown in by them across his pool tables.

Imagination rules the world. Butch, having imagination, extended himself. Already a Fagin, Butch became a *posser* and bought stolen goods for himself. Often, too, he acted as a *melina* and

bought for others. Thus Butch had three strings to his business bow. He was getting rich and at the same time keeping out of the fingers of the bulls. This caused him to be much looked up to and envied, throughout the length and breadth of Gangland.

Butch was thus prosperous and prospering when it occurred to him to fall in love. Harry the Soldier was the Mark Antony of the Five Points, his Cleopatra the Darby Kid. There existed divers reasons for adoring the Darby Kid. There was her lustrous eyes, her coral mouth, her rounded cheek, her full figure, her gifts as a shop lifter. As a graceful crown to these attractions, the Darby Kid could pick a pocket with the best wire that ever touched a leather. In no wise had she been named the Darby Kid for nothing. Not even Mollie Squint was her superior at getting the bundle of a boob. They said, and with truth, that those soft, deep, lustrous eyes could look a sucker over, while yet that unconscious sucker was ten feet away, and locate the keck wherein he carried his roll. Is it astonishing then that the heart of Butch went down on its willing knees to the Darby Kid?

Another matter:—Wasn't the Darby Kid the chosen one of Harry the Soldier? Was not Harry a Five Pointer? Had not Butch, elbow to elbow, with his great chief, Eastman, fought the Five Pointers in the battle at Worth and Center? It

was a triumph, indeed, to win the heart of the Darby Kid. It was twice a triumph to steal that heart away from Harry the Soldier.

The Darby Kid crossed over from Harry the Soldier to Butch, and brought her love along. Thereafter her smiles were for Butch, her caresses for Butch, her touches for Butch. Harry the Soldier was left desolate.

Harry the Soldier was a gon of merit and deserved eminence. That he had been an inmate not only of the House of Refuge but the Elmira Reformatory, should show you that he was a past-master at his art. His steady partner was Dopey Benny. With one to relieve the other in the exacting duties of stinger, and a couple of good stalls to put up an effective back, trust them, at fair or circus or theatre break, to make leathers, props and thimbles fly.

It was Gangland decision that for Butch to win the Darby Kid away from Harry the Soldier, even as Paris aforetime took the lovely Helen from her Menelaus, touched not alone the honor of Harry but the honor of the Five Points. Harry must revenge himself. Still more must he revenge the Five Points. It had become a case of Butch's life or his. On no milder terms could Harry sustain himself in Gangland first circles. His name else would be despised anywhere and everywhere that

the fair and the brave were wont to come together and unbuckle socially.

Butch, tall and broad and strong, smooth of face, arched of nose, was a born hawk of battle. Harry the Soldier, dark, short, of no muscular power, was not the physical equal of Butch. Butch looked forward with confidence to the upcome.

"An' yet, Butch," sweetly warned the Darby Kid, her arms about his neck, "you mustn't go to sleep at the switch. Harry'll nail you if youse do. It'll be a gun-fight, an' he's a dream wit' a gatt."

"Never mind about that gatt thing! Do youse think, dearie, I'd let that Guinea cop a sneak on me?"

It was a cool evening in September. A dozen of Butch's young gons were knocking the balls about his pool tables. Butch himself was behind the bar. Outside in Willett Street a whistle sounded. Butch picked up a pistol off the drip-board, just in time to peg a shot at Harry the Soldier as that ill-used lover came through the front door. Dopey Benny, Jonathan to the other's David, was with Harry. Neither tried to shoot. Through a hail of lead from Butch's pistol, the two ran out the back door. No one killed; no one wounded. Butch had been shooting too high, as the bullet-raked ceiling made plain.

Butch explained his wretched gun play by saying

that he was afraid of pinking some valued one among his boy scouts.

"At that," he added, "it's just as well. Them wops 'll never come back. Now when they see I'm organized they'll stay away. There ain't no sand in them Sicilians.

Butch was wrong. Harry, with Dopey Benny, was back the next night. This time there was no whistle. Harry had sent forward a force of skirmishers to do up those sentinels, with whom Butch had picketed Willett Street. Butch's earliest intimation that there was something doing came when a bullet from the gun of Harry broke his back. Dopey Benny stood off the public, while Harry put three more bullets into Butch. The final three were superfluous, however, as was shown at the inquest next day.

The Darby Kid was abroad upon her professional duties as a gon-moll, when Harry hived Butch. Her absence was regretted by her former lover.

"Because," said he, as he and Dopey Benny fled down Stanton Street, I'd like to have made the play a double header, and downed the Kid along wit' Butch."

It was not so written, however. Double headers, whatever the field of human effort, are the exception and not the rule of life.

It was whispered that Harry the Soldier and Dopey Benny remained three days in the Pell Street

room of Big Mike Abrams before their get-away. They might have been at the bottom of the lower bay, for all the Central Office knew. Butch was buried, and the Darby Kid wept over his grave. After which she cheered up, and came back smiling. There is no good in grief. Besides, it's egotistical, and trenches upon conceit.

The Central Office declares that, equipped of the right papers, it will bring Harry the Soldier back from Africa. Also, it will go after Dopey Benny in Kanuckland, when his time is out. The chair —says the Central Office—shall yet have both.

Old Jimmy doesn't think there's a chance, while the jaundiced Wop openly scoffs. Neither believes in the police. Meanwhile dark suspicions hover cloudily over the Darby Kid. Did she rap? She says not, and offers to pawn her soul.

"Why should I?" asks the Darby Kid. "Of course I'd sooner it was Butch copped Harry. But it went the other way; an' why should I holler? Would beefin' bring Butch back?"

XI.

BIG MIKE ABRAMS

This was after Nigger Mike had gone into exile in cold and sorrowful Toronto, and while Tony Kelly did the moist honors at Number Twelve Pell. Nigger Mike, you will remember, hurried to his ruin on the combined currents of enthusiasm and many drinks, had registered a score or two of times; for he meditated casting full fifty votes at the coming election, in his own proper person, and said so to his friends.

As Mike registered those numerous times, the snap-shot hirelings of certain annoying reformers were busy popping him with their cameras. His friends informed him of this, and counselled going slow. But Mike was beyond counsel, and knew little or less of cameras—never having had his picture taken save officially, and by the rules of Bertillon. In the face of those who would have saved him, he continued to stagger in and out upon that multifarious registration, inviting destruction. The purists took the pictures to the District Attorney, their hirelings told their tales, and Mike perforce went into that sad Toronto exile. He is back now, however,

safe, sober, clothed and in his right mind; but that is another story.

The day had been a sweltering July day for all of Chinatown. Now that night had come, the narrowness of Pell and Doyers and Mott Streets was choked with Chinamen, sitting along the curb, lolling in doorways, or slowly drifting up and down, making the most of the cool of the evening.

Over across from Number Twelve a sudden row broke out. There were smashings and crashings, loopholed, as it were, with shrill Mongolian shrieks. The guests about Tony's tables glanced up with dull, half-interested eyes.

"It's Big Mike Abrams tearin' th' packin' out of th' laundry across th' street," said Tony.

Tony was at the front door when the war broke forth, and had come aft to explain. Otherwise those about his tables might have gone personally forth, seeking a solution of those yellings and smashings and crashings for themselves, and the flow of profitable beer been thereby interrupted. At Tony's explanation his guests sat back in their chairs, and ordered further beer. Which shows that Tony had a knowledge of his business.

"About them socialists," resumed Sop Henry, taking up the talk where it had broken off; "Big Tom Foley tells me that they're gettin' something fierce. They cast more'n thirty thousand votes last Fall."

"Say," broke in the Nailer, "I can't understand about a socialist. He must be on the level at that; for one evenin', when they're holdin' a meetin' in the Bowery, a fleet of gons goes through a dozen of 'em, an', exceptin' for one who's an editor, and has pulled off a touch somewheres, there ain't street car fare in all their kecks. That shows there's nothin' in it for 'em. Th' editor has four bones on him—hardly enough for a round of drinks an' beef stews. Th' mob blows it in at Flynn's joint, down be th' corner."

"I'm like you, Nailer," agreed Sop Henry. "Them socialists have certainly got me goin'. I can't get onto their coives at all."

"Lishten, then." This came from the Irish Wop, who was nothing if not political. "Lishten to me. Yez can go to shleep on it, I know all about a socialist. There's ould Casey's son, Barney—ould Casey that med a killin' in ashphalt. Well, since his pah-pah got rich, young Casey's a socialist. On'y his name ain't Barney now, it's Berna-a-ard. There's slathers av thim sons av rich min turnin' socialists. They ain't strong enough to git a fall out av either av th' big pa-a-arties, so they rush off to th' socialists, where be payin' fer th' shpot light, they're allowed to break into th' picture. That's th' way wit' young Barney, ould Ashphalt Casey's son. Wan evenin' he dr-r-ives up to Lyon's

wit' his pah-pah's broom, two bob-tailed horses that spint most av their time on their hind legs, an' th' Casey coat av arms on the broom dure, th' same bein' a shtick av dynamite rampant, wit' two shovels reversed on a field av p'tatoes. 'How ar-r-re ye?' he says. 'I want yez to jump in an' come wit' me to th' Crystal Palace. It's a socialist meetin',' he says. 'Oh, it is?' says I; 'an' phwat's a socialist? Is it a game or a musical inshtrumint?' Wit' that he goes into p'ticulars. 'Well,' thinks I, 'there's th' ride, annyhow; an' I ain't had a carriage ride since Eat-'em-up-Jack packed in—saints rest him! So I goes out to th' broom; an' bechune th' restlessness av thim bob-tailed horses an' me not seein' a carriage fer so long, I nearly br-r-roke me two legs gettin' in. However, I wint. An' I sat on th' stage; an' I lishtened to th' wind-jammin'; an' not to go no further, a socialist is simply an anarchist who don't believe in bombs."

There arose laughter and loud congratulatory sounds about the door. Next, broadly smiling, utterly complacent, Big Mike Abrams walked in.

"Did youse lobsters hear me handin' it to th' monkeys?" he asked, and his manner was the manner of him who doubts not the endorsement of men. "That chink, Low Foo, snakes two of me shirts. I sends him five, an' he on'y sends back three. So I caves in his block wit' a flatiron. You ought to

pipe his joint! I leaves it lookin' like a poolroom that won't prodooce, after the wardman gets through."

"An' Low Foo?" queried Tony, who had shirts of his own.

"Oh, a couple of monks carries him to his bunk out back. It'll take somethin' more'n a shell of hop to chase away his troubles!" Mike refreshed himself with a glass of beer, which he called suds. "Say," he continued with much fervor, "I wisht I could get a job punchin' monks at a dollar a monk!"

Mike Abrams, alias Big Mike, was a pillar of Chinatown, and added distinctly to the life of that quarter. He was nearly six feet tall, with shoulders as square as the foretopsail yard of a brig. His nervous arms were long and slingy, his bony hands the size of hams. Neither the Dropper nor yet Big Myerson could swap blows with him, and his hug —if it came to rough-and-tumble—was comparable only to the hug of Mersher the Strong Arm, who had out-hugged a bear for the drinks.

While he lived, Little Maxie greatly appreciated Big Mike. Little Maxie is dead now. He ranked in the eyes of Mulberry Street as the best tool that ever nailed a leather. To be allowed to join out with his mob was conclusive of one's cleverness as a gon. For Maxie would have no bunglers, no learners about him.

And, yet, as he himself said, Big Mike's value

lay not in any deftness of fingers, but in his stout, unflinching heart, and a knock-down strength of fist like unto the blow of a maul.

"As a stall he's worse'n a dead one," Maxie had said. "No one ever put up a worse back. But let a sucker raise a roar, or some galoot of a country sheriff start something—that's where Mike comes on. You know last summer, when I'm followin' Ringling's show? Stagger, Beansey an' Mike's wit' me as bunchers. Over at Patterson we had a rumble. I got a rube's ticker, a red one. He made me; an' wit' that youse could hear th' yell he lets out of him in Newark. A dozen of them special bulls which Ringling has on his staff makes a grab at us. Youse should have lamped Mike! Th' way he laid out them circus dicks was like a tune of music. It's done in a flash, an' every last guy of us makes his get-away. Hock your socks, it's Mike for me every time! I'd sooner he filled in wit' a mob of mine than th' best dip that ever pinched a poke."

Big Mike had been a fixed star in the Gangland firmament for years. He knew he could slug, he knew he could stay; and he made the most of these virtues. When not working with Little Maxie, he took short trips into the country with an occasional select band of yeggs, out to crack a P. O. or a jug. At such times, Mike was the out-side man —ever a post of responsibility. The out-side man watches while the others blow the box. In case

things take to looking queer or leary, he is to pass the whistle of warning to his pals. Should an officer show unexpectedly up, he must stand him off at the muzzle of his gatt, and if crowded, shoot and shoot to kill. He is to stand fast by his partners, busy with wedges, fuse and soup inside, and under no circumstances to desert them. Mike was that one of ten thousand, who had the nerve and could be relied upon to do and be these several iron things. Wherefore, he lived not without honor in the land, and never was there a fleet of yeggs or a mob of gons, but received him into its midst with joy and open hearts.

Mike made a deal of money. Not that it stuck to him; for he was born with his hands open and spent it as fast as he made it. Also, he drank deeply and freely, and moreover hit the pipe. Nor could he, in the latter particular, be called a pleasure smoker nor a Saturday nighter. Mike had the habit.

At one time Mike ran an opium den at Coney Island, and again on the second floor of Number Twelve Pell. But the police—who had no sure way of gauging the profits of opium—demanded so much for the privilege that Mike was forced to close.

"Them bulls wanted all I made an' more," complained Mike, recounting his wrongs to Beansey. "I had a 50-pipe joint that time in Pell, an' from the size of the rake-off the captain's wardman asks,

you'd have thought that every pipe's a roulette wheel."

"Couldn't you do nothin' wit' 'em?" asked Beansey, sympathetically.

"Not a t'ing. I shows 'em that number-one hop is $87.50 a can, an' yen-chee or seconds not less'n $32. Nothin' doin'! It's either come across wit' five hundred bones th' foist of every month, or quit."

Mike sighed over his fair prospects, blighted by the ignorant avarice of the police.

"W'at was youse chargin' a smoke?" inquired Beansey.

"Two bits a shell. Of course, that's for yen-chee. I couldn't give 'em number-one for two bits. After all, w'at I cares most for is me cats—two long-haired Persians."

"Cats?" repeated Beansey, suspiciously. "W'at be youse handin' me?"

Beansey, by the way, knew nothing of opium.

"W'at am I handin' youse?" said Mike. "I'm handin' you th' goods. Cats get th' habit same as people. My cats would plant be some party who's cookin' a pill, an' sniff th' hop an' get as happy as anybody. Take 'em off the pipe, an' it's th' same as if they're Christians. Dogs, too. Let 'em once get th' habit, an' then take 'em away from a pipe joint, an' they has pains in their stummicks, an' twists an' yowls till you think they're goin' mad. When th'

cops shut down on me, I has to give me cats to th' monk who's runnin' th' opium dump on th' top floor. Sure t'ing! They'd have croaked if I hadn't. They're on'y half happy, though; for while they gets their hop they misses me. Them toms an' me has had many a good smoke."

Folks often wondered at the intimacy between Mike and Little Maxie—not that it has anything to do with this story. Little Maxie—his name on the Central Office books was Maxie Fyne, alias Maxie English, alias Little Maxie, alias Sharapatheck—was the opposite of Big Mike. He was small; he was weak; he didn't drink; he didn't hit the pipe. Also, at all times, and in cold blood, he was a professional thief. His wife, whom he called "My Kytie"—for Little Maxie was from Houndsditch, and now and then his accent showed it—was as good a thief as he, but on a different lay. Her specialty was robbing women. She worked alone, as all good gon-molls do, and because of her sure excellencies was known as the Golden Hand.

Little Maxie and his Golden Hand, otherwise his Kytie—her name was Kate—had a clean little house near Washington Square on the south. They owned a piano and a telephone—the latter was purely defensive—and their two children went to school, and sat book to book with the children of honest men and women.

The little quiet home, with its piano and defensive

telephone, is gone now. Little Maxie died and his Golden Hand married again; for there's no false sentiment in Gangland. If a husband's dead he's dead, and there's nothing made by mourning. Likewise, what's most wanted in any husband is that he should be a live one.

Little Maxie died in a rather curious way. Some say he was drowned by his pals, Big Mike among them. The story runs that there was a quarrel over splitting up a touch, and the mob charged Little Maxie with holding out. Be that as it may, the certainty is that Little Maxie and his mob, being in Peekskill, got exceeding drunk—all but Little Maxie—and went out in a boat. Being out, Little Maxie went overboard abruptly, and never came up. Neither did anybody go after him. The mob returned to town to weep—crocodile tears, some said—into their beer, as they told and re-told their loss, and in due time Little Maxie's body drifted ashore and was buried. That was the end. Had it been some trust-thief of a millionaire, there would have been an investigation. But Little Maxie was only a pick-pocket.

Big Mike, like all strong characters, had his weakness. His weakness was punching Chinamen; fairly speaking, it grew to be his fad. It wasn't necessary that a Chinaman do anything; it was enough that he came within reach. Mike would knock him cold. In a single saunter through Pell

Street, he had been known to leave as many as four senseless Chinamen behind him, fruits of his fist.

"For," said Mike, in cheerful exposition of the motive which underlay that performance, "I do so like to beat them monks about! I'd sooner slam one of 'em ag'inst th' wall than smoke th' pipe."

One time and another Mike punched two-thirds of all the pig-tailed heads in Chinatown. Commonly he confined himself to punching, though once or twice he went a step beyond. Lee Dok he nearly brained with a stool. But Lee Dok had been insultingly slow in getting out of Mike's way.

Mike was proud of his name and place as the Terror of Chinatown. Whether he walked in Mott or Pell or Doyers Street, every Chinaman who saw him coming went inside and locked his door.

Those who didn't see him and so go inside and lock their doors—and they were few—he promptly soaked. And if to see a Chinaman run was as incense to Mike's nose, to soak one became nothing less than a sweet morsel under his tongue. The wonder was that Mike didn't get shot or knifed, which miracle went not undiscussed at such centers as Tony's, Barney Flynn's, Jimmy Kelly's and the Chatham Club. But so it was; the pig-tailed population of Chinatown parted before Mike's rush like so much water.

One only had been known to resist—Sassy Sam, who with a dwarf's body possessed a giant's soul.

Sassy Sam was a hatchet-man of dread eminence, belonging to the Hip Sing Tong. Equipped of a Chinese sword, of singular yet murderous appearance, he chased Mike the length of Pell Street. Mike out-ran Sassy Sam, which was just as well. It took three shells of hop to calm Mike's perturbed spirit; for he confessed to a congenital horror of steel.

"That's straight," said Mike, as with shaking fingers he filled his peanut-oil lamp, and made ready to cook himself a pill, "I never could stand for a chive. An' say"—he shuddered—"that monk has one longer'n your arm."

Sassy Sam and his snickersnee, however, did not cure Mike of his weakness for punching the Mongolian head. Nothing short of death could have done that.

Some six months prior to his caving in the skull of Low Foo, because of those shirts improperly missing, Mike did that which led to consequences. Prompted by an overplus of sweet, heady Chinese rum, or perhaps it was the heroic example of Sassy Sam, Ling Tchen, being surprised by Mike in Pell Street, did not—pig-tail flying—clatter inside and lock his door. More and worse, he faced Mike, faced him, coughed contumeliously and spat upon the cobbles. To merely soak Ling Tchen would have been no adequate retort—Ling Tchen who thus studied to shame him. Wherefore Mike killed him

with a clasp knife, and even went so far as to cut off the dead Tchen's head. The law might have taken notice of this killing, but some forethoughtful friend had had wit enough to tuck a gun beneath the dead Tchen's blouse, and thus it became at once and obviously a case of self-defence.

There was a loose screw in the killing of Ling Tchen. The loose screw dwelt not in the manner of that killing, which had been not only thorough but artistic. Indeed, cutting off Ling Tchen's head as a finale was nothing short of a stroke of genius. The loose screw was that Ling Tchen belonged to the Hip Sing Tong; and the Hip Sing Tongs lived in Pell Street, where Mike himself abode. To be sure, since Ling Tchen did the provoking, Mike had had no choice. Still, it might have come off better had Ling Tchen been an On Leon Tong. An On Leon Tong belongs in Mott Street and doesn't dare poke his wheat-hued nose into Pell Street, where the Four Brothers and the Hip Sing Tongs are at home.

Mike's room was in the rear, on the second floor of Number Twelve. It pleased and soothed him, he said, as he smoked a pill, to hear the muffled revelry below in Tony's. He had just come from his room upon that shirt occasion which resulted so disastrously for Low Fee.

Mike was among friends in Tony's. Having told in full how he did up Low Foo, and smashed

that shirt thief's laundry, Mike drank two glasses of beer, and said that he thought now he'd go upstairs and have a smoke.

"There must be somethin' in lickin' a chink," expounded Mike, "that makes a guy hanker for th' hop."

"It's early yet; better stick 'round," urged Tony, politely. "There is some high-rollers from Newport up here on a yacht, an' crazy to see Chinatown in th' summer when th' blankets is off. Th' dicks w'at's got 'em in tow, gives me th' tip that they'll come lungin' in here about ten. They're over in Mott Street now, takin' a peek at the joss house an' drinkin' tea in the Port Arthur."

"I don't want to meet 'em," declared Mike. "Them stiffs makes me sick. If youse'd promise to lock th' doors, Tony, an' put 'em all in th' air for what they've got on 'em, I might stay."

"That'd be a wise play, I don't think," remarked the Dropper, who had just come in. "Tony'd last about as long as a dollar pointin' stuss. Puttin' a chink on th' bum is easy, an' a guy can get away wit' it; but lay a finger on a Fift' Avenoo Willieboy, or look cockeyed at a spark-fawney on th' finger of one of them dames, an' a judge'll fall over himself to hand youse twenty years."

"Right youse be, Dropper!" said the sophisticated Tony.

Mike climbed the creaking stairway to his room.

Below, in Tony's, the beer, the gossip, the music, the singing and the dancing went on. Pretty Agnes sang a new song, and was applauded. That is, she was applauded by all save Mollie Squint, who uplifted her nose and said that "it wasn't so much."

Mollie Squint was invited to sing, but refused.

About ten o'clock came the Newport contingent, fresh from quaffing tea and burning joss sticks. They were led by a she-captain of the Four Hundred, who shall go here as Mrs. Vee. Mrs. Vee, young, pretty, be-jeweled, was in top spirits. For she had just been divorced from her husband, and they put brandy into the Port Arthur tea if you tell them to.

Tony did the honors for Number Twelve. He and Mrs. Vee, surrounded by a fluttering flock of purple doves, all from aristocratic cotes, became as thick as thieves. The Dropper, who was not wanting in good looks and could spiel like a dancing master, went twice around the room with Mrs. Vee —just for a lark, you know—to a tune scraped from Tony's fiddles and thumped from that publican's piano. After which, Mrs. Vee and her flutter of followers, Willieboys and all, went their purple way.

Tony, with never flagging courtesy, escorted them to the door. What he beheld filled his somewhat sluggish soul with wonder. Pell Street was thronged with Chinamen. They were sitting or

standing, all silent, faces void of meaning. The situation, too, was strange in this. A Chinaman could have told you that they were all of the Hip Sing Tong, and not a Four Brothers among them. He wouldn't of course, for a Chinaman tells a white devil nothing. Pell, by the way, was as much the home street of the Four Brothers as of the Hip Sing Tong.

Tony expressed his astonishment at the pig-tailed press which thronged the thoroughfare.

"This is how it is," vouchsafed the explanatory Tony to Mrs. Vee and her purple fluttering doves. "Big Mike's just after standin' Low Foo's wash-shop on its nut, an' these monks are sizin' up th' wreck. When anything happens to a monk his tong makes good, see?"

Tony might not have said this had he recalled that Low Foo was a Four Brothers, and understood that no one not a Hip Sing Tong was in the crowd. Tony, however, recalled nothing, understood nothing; for he couldn't tell one Chinaman from another.

"How interesting!" cooed Mrs. Vee, in response to Tony's elucidation; and with that her flock of purple doves, in fluttering agreement, cooed, "How interesting!"

"Did youse lamp th' ice on them dames?" asked Sop Henry, when the slumming Mrs. Vee and her suite were out of ear-shot.

Sop had an eye for diamonds.

"That bunch ain't got a thing but money!" observed the Wop, his eyes glittering enviously. "I wisht I had half their cush."

"Money ain't th' whole box of tricks."

This deep declaration emanated from old Jimmy.

Old Jimmy's home was a rear room on Second Street near the Bowery, which overlooked a graveyard hidden in the heart of the block. There, when not restoring himself at Tony's or Sirocco's or Lyon's, old Jimmy smoked a vile tobacco known as Sailors' Choice, in a vile clay pipe as black as sin, and meditated. Having nothing to do but think, he evolved in time into a philosopher, and it became his habit to unload chunks of wisdom on whomsoever seemed to stand in need. Also, since he was warlike and carried a knife, and because anyone in hard luck could touch him for a dollar, he was listened to politely in what society he favored with his countenance.

"Money ain't th' whole box of tricks," old Jimmy repeated, severely, wagging a grizzled head at the Wop, "an' only you're Irish an' ignorant you wouldn't have to be told so."

"Jimmy, you're nutty," returned the Wop.

"Never mind me bein' nutty," retorted old Jimmy, dogmatically. "I know all about th' rich." Then, in forgetfulness of his pension and the liberal source of it, he continued: "A rich man is

so much like a fat hog that he's seldom any good until he's dead."

Old Jimmy called for beer; wisdom is always dry.

"Say?" observed the Dropper, airily, "do youse guys know that I'm thinkin' I'll just about cop off some dame with millions of dough, an' marry her."

"Would she have youse?" inquired Mollie Squint, with the flicker of a sneer.

"It's easy money," returned the Dropper; "all I has to do is put out me sign, see? Them rich frails would fall for me in a hully second."

"You crooks can't think of a thing but money," snorted old Jimmy. "Marry a rich dame! A guy might as well get a job as valet or butler or footman somewhere an' let it go at that. Do you mutts know what love is? Th' one married chance of happiness is love. An' to love, folks must be poor. Then they have to depend upon each other; and it's only when people depend upon each other they love each other."

"Jimmy," quoth the Dropper, with mock sadness. "I can see your finish. You'll land in Bloomingdale, playin' wit' a string of spools."

"Did you ever," demanded old Jimmy, disregarding the irreverent Dropper, "see some strapping young party, up against the skyline on an iron building, workin' away wit' one of them rivetin' guns? Well, somewhere between th' two rivers there's a girl he's married to, who's doin' a two-step 'round a

cook stove, fryin' steak an' onions for him, an' keepin' an eye out that their kids don't do a high dive off th' fire-escape. Them two people are th' happiest in th' world. Such boneheads as you can't appreciate it, but they are. Give 'em a million dollars an' you'll spoil it. They'd get a divorce; you'd put that household on th' toboggan. If this Mister Vee, now, had been poor an' drove a truck instead of bein' rich an' drivin' a 6-horse coach, an' if Mrs. Vee had been poor an' done a catch-as-catch-can with th' family washtub instead of havin' money to burn an' hirein' a laundress, she'd never have bucked th' divorce game, but lived happy ever after."

"But, Jimmy," interposed Tony, "I've seen poor folks scrap."

"Sure," assented Jimmy; "all married folks scrap —a little. But them's only love spats, when they're poor. Th' wife begins 'em. She thinks she'll just about try hubby out, an' see can he go some. Th' only risk is him bein' weak enough to let her win. She don't want to win; victory would only embarrass her. What she's after is a protector; an' if hubby lets her put him on th' floor for th' count, she don't know where she's at. She's dead sure she's no good; an' if he's a quitter she's left all in th' air. Havin' floored him, she thinks to herself, 'This thing protect me? Why, I can lick him myself!'

After that, hubby might better keep close tabs on little Bright-eyes, or some mornin' he'll call the family roll an' she won't answer. Take a boy an' a girl, both young, both square, both poor—so they'll need each other—an', so he's got her shaded a little should it come to th' gloves, two bugs in a rug won't have nothin' on them."

Old Jimmy up-ended his glass, as one who had settled grave matters, while the Dropper and the Wop shook contemplative heads.

"An' yet," said the Wop, after a pause, "goin' back to them rich babies who was here, I still say I wisht I had their bundle."

"It's four for one," returned old Jimmy, his philosophy again forging to the fore—it's four for one, Wop, you'd have a dead bad time. What street shows th' most empty houses? Ain't it Fift' Avenoo? Why be they empty? Because the ginks who lived in 'em didn't have a good time in 'em. If they had they'd have stuck. A guy don't go places, he leaves places. He don't go to Europe, he leaves New York."

Old Jimmy turned to Tony.

"Fill up th' crockery. I'm talkin' 'way over th' heads of these bums."

"Ain't he a wonder?" whispered Pretty Agnes to the Nailer.

"I should say as much," responded the admir-

ing Nailer. "He ought to be sellin' gold bricks. He's talked th' Dropper an' th' Wop into a hard knot."

The Dropper was not to be quelled, and insisted that Jimmy was conversing through his sou'wester.

"I don't think so," broke in Jew Yetta; "I strings wit' Jimmy. Take a tumble to yourself, Dropper. If you was to marry one of them money dames, you'd have to go into high society. An' then what? W'y, you'd look like a pig on a front porch."

"Don't youse bet on it," declared the Dropper loftily. "There's nothin' in that high society stuff. A smart guy like me could learn his way t'rough in a week."

"Could he?" said the Nailer, and his tones were tones of derision.

"That's w'at I says!" replied the Dropper. Then, heatedly: "W'y, do you geeks think I've never been north of Fourteenth Street? Youse make me tired, Nailer. While you was up-th'-river, for toinin' off that loft in Chambers Street, don't I go to a shindy at th' Demmycrat Club in honor of Sen'tor Depew? There was loidies there—th' real thing, too. An' wasn't I another time at th' Charlie Murphy dinner? Talk of high society!—if that ain't high society, what is?"

Having squelched the Nailer, the Dropper proceeded more moderately.

"I remember th' scare that's t'run into me at the

Depew racket. I've been put up ag'inst some hot propositions, but if ever I'm faded it's then when, for th' foist time, I lamps a full-blown dame in evenin' dress. On th' dead, I felt like yellin' 'Police!' "

"Phwat was it scared yez, Dropper?" asked the Wop.

"It ain't that I'm so scared as rattled. There's too much free-board to them evenin' dresses."

"An' the Charlie Murphy banquet," said Pretty Agnes, wistfully. "Didn't yez get cold feet?"

"Naw, I don't git cold feet. I admits I falls down, I don't try to sidestep that; but it wasn't my fault. Do it over again, an' I'd go t'rough wit' bells on."

"How did youse fall down?"

"It's be accident; I takes th' wrong steer, that's all. I makes it a point, knowin' I'm none too wise, to plant meself when we pulls up to the feed opposite to a gilded old bunk, who looked like ready money. 'Do as he does, Dropper' I says to meself, 'an' you're winner in a walk!' So, when he plays a fork, I plays a fork; if he boards a chive, I boards a chive; from soup to birds I'm steerin' be his wake. Then all of a sudden I cops a shock. We've just made some roast squabs look like five cents worth of lard in a paper bag, an' slopped out a bunch of fizz to wash 'em down, when what does that old Rube do but up an' sink his hooks in a bowl of

water. Honest, I like to 've fell in a fit! There I'd been feelin' as cunning as a pet fox, an' me on a dead one from th' jump!"

"Did any of them smart Alecks give youse th' laugh?" asked the Nailer.

"Give me th' laugh," repeated the Dropper, disgustedly. "I'd have smashed whoever did in th' eye."

While beer and conversation were flowing in Number Twelve, a sophisticated eye would have noted divers outside matters which might or might not have had a meaning. On the heels of Big Mike's laundry deeds of desolation and destruction at Low Foo's, not a Chinaman was visible in Pell Street. It was the same when Mike came out of Tony's and climbed the stairs to his room. Mike safely retired from the field, a handful of Four Brothers—all of them Lows and of the immediate clan of Low Foo—showed up, and took a slant-eyed squint at what ruin had been wrought. They spoke not above a murmur, but as nearly as a white devil might gather a meaning, they were of the view that no monsoon could have more thoroughly scrap-heaped the belongings of Low Foo.

Other Chinamen began to gather, scores upon scores. These were Hip Sing Tongs, and they paid not the slightest heed to Low Foo's laundry, or what was left of it. What Four Brothers were abroad did not mingle with the Hip Sing Tongs,

although the two tribes lived in friendship. The Four Brothers quietly withdrew, each to his own den, and left the Hip Sing Tongs in possession of the street.

Being in possession, the Hip Sing Tongs did nothing beyond roost on the curb, or squat in doorways, or stand idly about. Now and then one smoked a cigarette.

About 11.20 o'clock, a Chinaman entered Pell Street from the Bowery. Every one of the Hip Sing Tongs looked at him; none of them spoke to him. Only, a place was made for him in the darkness of the darkest doorway. Had some brisk Central Office intelligence been there and consulted its watch, it might have occurred to such intelligence that had the newcomer arrived from Philadelphia over the B. & O. by latest train, he—assuming him to have taken the ferry with proper dispatch—would have come poking into Pell Street at precisely that hour.

Trinity struck midnight.

The bells sounded dim and far away. It was as though it were the ghost of some dead midnight being struck. At the sound, and as if he heard in it a signal, the mysterious Chinaman came out of the double darkness of the doorway in which he had been waiting, and crossed to the stairway that led up to the room of Mike. Not a whisper came from the waiting Hip Sing Tongs, who watched him

with that blend of apathy and eagerness observable only in the Oriental. No one went with the mysterious Chinaman. Nor did the stairs creak—as with Big Mike—beneath his velvet shoes.

Five minutes passed.

The mysterious one emerged from Mike's stairway as silently as he had entered it. He tossed a claw-like hand palm outward, toward the waiting, watching Hip Sing Tongs, and then went slippering towards the Bowery. Had that brisk Central Office intelligence been there to see, it might have reflected, recalling a time table, that by taking the Cortlandt Street ferry, the mysterious one would be in time for the 12.30 train to Philadelphia over the Pennsylvania.

Before the mysterious one had reached the Bowery, those scores of waiting, watching Hip Sing Tongs had vanished, and Pell Street was as empty as the promise of a politician.

"Now," whispered Ching Lee to Sam Kum, who kept the chop suey shop, as they turned to go—"now he meet Ling Tchen, mebby so!"

One o'clock.

Tony began to think about locking his front door. This, out of respect for the law. Not that beer and revelry were to cease in Number Twelve, but because such was Tony's understanding with the precinct skipper. Some reformer might come snooping

else, and lodge complaint against that skipper with the Commissioner of Police.

Just as Tony, on bidding "Good-bye!" to Mrs. Vee and her purple fluttering flock, had been impressed by the crowded condition of Pell Street, so now, when he made ready to lock up, was he impressed by that causeway's profound emptiness.

"Say," he cried to his guests in the rear, "you stews come here! This is funny; there ain't a chink in sight!"

"D'youse think th' bulls are gettin' ready for a raid?" asked Sop Henry. Sop, with the Nailer and the Wop, had joined Tony in the door. "Perhaps there's somethin' doin' over at th' Elizabeth Street station, an' the wardman's passed th' monks th' tip."

"Nothin' in that," responded Tony, confidently. "Wouldn't I be put wise, too?"

Marvelling much, Tony fastened his door, and joined old Jimmy, Pretty Agnes and the others in the rear room. When he got there, he found old Jimmy sniffing with suspicious nose, and swearing he smelled gas.

"One of your pipes is leakin', Tony," said Jimmy, "leakin' for fair, too, or I'm a Dago!"

Tony, in refutation, called attention to a patent truth. He used electric light, not gas.

"But they use gas upstairs," he added. Then,

half-anxiously; "It can't be some hop-head has blown out the gas?"

The thought was enough to start the Dropper, ever full of enterprise.

"Let's have a look," said he. "Nailer you an' th' Wop come wit' me."

Tony again opened the front door, and the Dropper, followed by the Wop and the Nailer, filed into the stairway that led to the floor above. They made noise enough, blundering and stumbling in the sudden hurry of spirit which had gripped them. As they reached the landing near Mike's door, the odor of gas was even more pronounced than in Tony's rear room.

The hall was blind black with the thick darkness that filled it."

"How about this?" queried the Dropper. "I thought a gas jet was always boinin' in th' hall."

The Dropper, growing fearful, hung back. With that, the Wop pushed forward and took the lead. Only for a moment. Giving a cry, he sprang back with such sudden force that he sent the Dropper headlong down the stairs.

"Th' Virgin save us!" exclaimed the Wop, "but I touched somethin' soft!"

"What's th' row?" demanded Tony, coming to the foot of the stairs.

At the Dropper's request, Tony brought a can-

dle, used by him in excursions to those crypts wherein he kept his whiskey.

In a moment all was plain. That something soft which had so told upon the Wop was a rubber tube. There was a gas jet in the hall. One end of the rubber tube had been fastened over the gas jet, and the other stuffed into the keyhole of Mike's door. Trap arranged, the gas had been set flowing full blast.

"Well, what do youse think of that?" exclaimed Tony, who understood at a glance.

With one swift move, Tony turned off the gas and tore away the rubber tube. There was no talk of keys. He placed his powerful shoulder against the door, and sent it crashing. The out-rush of gas drove them, choking and gasping, into the open air.

"Take it from me," said the Dropper, as soon as he could get his breath, "they've croaked Mike."

"But the window," urged the Nailer; "mebbe Mike has the window open!"

"Not a chance!" retorted the Dropper. "No one has his window up while he hits th' pipe. They don't jibe, fresh air an' dope."

The Dropper was right. Big Mike, stark and still and yellow, lay dead in his bed—the last place his friends would have anticipated—poisoned by gas.

"Better notify th' cops," advised Jimmy, the practical.

"Who did it?" sobbed Pretty Agnes. "Mike never handed it to himself."

"Who did it?" repeated the Dropper, bitterly. "Th' chinks did it. It's for Low Foo's laundry."

"You're down wrong, Dropper, said old Jimmy. "It's that Ling Tchen trick. I knew them Hip Sings would get Mike."

XII.

THE GOING OF BIFF ELLISON

The jury returned a verdict of guilty. Thereupon the judge, fixing Ellison with hard and thoughtful eye, gave him "from eight to twenty years." When a man gets "from eight to twenty years" he is worth writing about. He would be worth writing about, even though it had been for such crimes of the commonplace as poke-getting at a ferry or sticking up a drunken sailor. And Ellison was found guilty of manslaughter.

Razor Riley would have been sentenced along with Ellison, only he had conveniently died. When the Gophers gather themselves together, they give various versions of Razor Riley's taking off. Some say he perished of pneumonia. Others lay it to a bullet in his careless mouth. In any case, he was dead, and therefore couldn't, in the nature of things, accompany Ellison to Sing Sing.

Razor was a little one-hundred-and-ten-pound man, with weak muscles and a heart of fire. He had, razorwise, cut and slashed his way into much favorable mention, when that pneumonia or bullet —whichever it was—stopped short his career.

While the width of the city apart, he and Ellison were ever friends. They drank together, fought together, and held their foes as they held their money, in common.

When the jury said "Guilty," it filled Ellison with resentful amazement. His angry wonder grew as the judge coldly mentioned that "from eight to twenty years." He couldn't understand! The politicians had promised to save him. It was only upon such assurance that he had concluded to return. Safe in Baltimore, he could have safely continued in Baltimore. Lured by false lights, misled by spurious promises, he had come back to get "from eight to twenty years!" Cray and Savage rounded him up. All his life a cop-fighter, he would have given those Central Office stars a battle, had he realized what was in store for him and how like a rope of sand were the promises of politicians!

My own introduction to Ellison and Razor Riley was in the Jefferson Market court. That was several years ago. The day was the eighteenth of March, and Magistrate Corrigan had invited me to a seat on the bench. Ellison and Razor were arraigned for disorderly conduct. They had pushed in the door of a Sixth Avenue bird and animal store, kept by an agitated Italian, and in the language of the officer who made the collar, "didn't do a thing to it."

"They are guilty, your honor," said their lawyer,

manner deprecatory and full of conciliation, with a view to softening the magisterial heart—"they are guilty. And yet there is this in their defense. They had been celebrating Saint Patrick's Day, over-celebrating it, perhaps, your honor, and they didn't know what they were about. That's the mere truth, your honor. Befuddled by too much and too fervently celebrating the glorious day, they really didn't know what they were about."

The lawyer waved a virtuous hand, as one who submitted affairs to the mercy of an enlightened court.

Magistrate Corrigan was about to impose sentence, when the agitated Italian broke forth.

"Don't I get-a my chance, judge?" he called out.

"Certainly," returned Magistrate Corrigan, "what is it you want to say?"

"Judge, that-a guy"—pointing the finger of rebuttal at the lawyer—"he say theese mans don't know what-a they do. One lie! They know what-a they do all right. I show you, judge. They smash-a th' canaries, they knock-a th' blocks off-a th' monks, they tear-a th' tails out of th' macaws, but"—here his voice rose to a screech—"they nevair touch-a th' bear."

Magistrate Corrigan glanced at the policeman.

The latter explained that, while Ellison and Razor had spread wreck and havoc among the monkeys and macaws, they had avoided even a re-

motest entanglement with a huge cinnamon bear, chained in the center of the room. They had prudently plowed 'round the bear.

"Twenty-five and costs!" said Magistrate Corrigan, a smile touching the corners of his mouth. Then, raising a repressive palm towards the lawyer, who betrayed symptoms of further oratory: "Not a word. Your people get off very lightly. Upon the point you urge that these men didn't know what they were about, the testimony of our Italian friend is highly convincing."

When a gentleman goes to Sing Sing for longer than five years, it is Gangland good manners to speak of him in the past tense. Thus, then, shall I speak of Ellison. His name, properly laid down, was James Ellison. As, iron on wrists, a deputy at his elbow, he stepped aboard the train, he gave his age as thirty-nine.

His monaker of Biff came to him in the most natural way in the world. Gangland is ever ready to bestow a title. Therefore, when a recalcitrant customer of Fat Flynn's, having quaffed that publican's beer and then refused to pay for it, was floored as flat as a flounder by a round blow from Ellison's fist, Gangland, commemorating the event, renamed him Biff.

Ellison was in his angular, awkward twenties when he made his initial appearance along the Bowery. He came from Maryland, no one knew why

and a youthful greenness would have got him laughed at, had it not been for a look in his eye which suggested that while he might be green he might be game.

Having little education and no trade Ellison met existence by hiring out as bar-keeper to Fat Flynn, who kept a grog shop of singular vileness at 34 Bond. Its beer glasses were vulgarly large, its frequenters of the rough-neck school. But it was either work in Flynn's or carry a hod, and Ellison, who was not fanatically fond of hard labor, and preferred to seek his bread along lines of least resistance, instantly and instinctively resolved on the side of Flynn's.

Gangland is much more given to boxing gloves than books, and the conversation at Flynn's, as it drifted across the bar to Ellison—busy drawing beer—was more calculated to help his hands than help his head. Now and then, to be sure, there would come one who, like Slimmy, had acquired a stir education, that is, a knowledge of books such as may be picked up in prison; but for the most those whom Ellison met, in the frothy course of business, were not the ones to feed his higher nature or elevate his soul. It was a society where the strong man was the best man, and only fist-right prevailed.

Ellison was young, husky, with length of reach and plenty of hitting power, and, as the interests of

Flynn demanded, he bowed to his environment and beat up many a man. There were those abroad in Bond Street whom he could not have conquered. But, commonly sober and possessed besides of inborn gifts as a matchmaker, he had no trouble in avoiding these. The folks whom he hooked up with were of the *genus* cinch, *species* pushover, and proceeding carefully he built up in time a standing for valor throughout all the broad regions lying between Fourteenth Street and City Hall Park.

Let it be said that Ellison had courage. It was his prudence which taught him to hold aloof from the tough ones. Now and then, when a tough one did insist on war, Ellison never failed to bear himself with spirit. Only he preferred to win easily, with little exertion and no injury to his nose and eyes. For Ellison, proud of his appearance, was by Gangland's crude standards the glass of fashion and the mould of form, and flourished the idol of the ladies. Also, a swollen nose or a discolored eye is of no avail in winning hearts.

Every dispenser of beer is by way of being a power in politics. Some soar higher, some with weaker wing—that is a question of genius. One sells beer and makes himself chief of Tammany Hall. Another rises on the tides of beer to a district leadership. Still others—and it is here that

Ellison comes in—find their lower beery level as Tammany's shoulder-hitting aides.

In the last rôle, Ellison was of value to Tammany Hall. Wherefore, whenever he fell into the fingers of the police—generally for assault—the machine cast over him the pinion of its prompt protection. As the strong-arm pet of the organization, he punched and slugged, knocked down and dragged out, and did all these in safety. Some soft-whispering politician was sure to show a magistrate —all ears—that the equities were on the side of Ellison, and what black eyes or broken noses had been distributed went where they truly belonged and would do the most Tammany good.

In his double rôle of beer dispenser and underthug of politics, Ellison stood high in Gangland opinion. From Flynn's in Bond Street he went to Pickerelle's in Chrystie Street. Then he became the presiding influence at a dive of more than usual disrepute kept by one Landt, which had flung open its dingy doors in Forsyth Street near Houston.

Ellison took an impressive upward step at this time. That is, he nearly killed a policeman. Nicely timing matters so that the officer was looking the other way, he broke a bottle over the blue-coat's head. The blue-coat fell senseless to the floor. Once down and helpless, Ellison hoofed him after the rules of Gangland, which teach that only fools are

fair, until the hoofed one was a pick-up for an ambulance.

The officer spent two weeks in a hospital cot, Ellison two hours in a station house cell. The politicians closed the officer's mouth, and opened Ellison's cell. The officer got well after a while, and he and Ellison grew to be good friends. The politicians said that there was nothing in it for either the officer or Ellison to remain at loggerheads. No man may write himself "politician" who does not combine the strength to prosecute a war, with the wisdom to conclude a peace. Hence, at the command of the politicians, Ellison and the smitten officer struck hands, and pooled their differences.

Ellison, smooth-faced, high-featured, well-dressed, a Gangland cavalier, never married. Or if he did he failed to mention it. He was not a moll-buzzer; no one could accuse him of taking money from a woman. He lived by the ballot and the bung-starter. In addition once a year he gave a racket, under the auspices of what he called the "Biff Ellison Association," and as his fame increased his profits from a single racket were known to reach $2,000.

At one time Ellison challenged fortune as part proprietor of Paresis Hall, which sink of sin, as though for contrast, had been established within the very shadow of Cooper Union. Terminating his

connection with Paresis Hall, he lived a life of leisure between Chick Tricker's Park Row "store" and Nigger Mike's at Number Twelve Pell.

Occasionally he so far unbuckled as to escort some lady to or from Sharkey's in Fourteenth Street. Not as a lobbygow; not for any ill-odored fee of fifty cents. But as a gentleman might, and out of sheer politeness. The law, as enforced from Mulberry Street, was prone to take a narrow view of ladies who roamed alone the midnight streets. The gallant Ellison was pleasantly willing to save night-bound dames of his acquaintance from this annoyance. That was all.

Who has not heard of the celebrated Paul Kelly? Once upon a time, a good woman reading a newspaper saw reference to Paul Kelly in some interesting connection. She began to burn with curiosity; she wanted to meet Paul Kelly, and said so to her husband. Since her husband had been brought up to obey her in all things, he made no objection.

Guided by a pathfinder from the Central Office, the gentleman went forth to find Paul Kelly, his wife on his arm. They entered Lyon's restaurant in the Bowery; the place was crowded. Room was made for them at a table by squeezing in three chairs. The lady looked about her. Across, stale and fat and gone to seed, sat an ex-eminent of the prize ring. At his elbow was a stocky person,

with a visage full of wormwood and a chrysanthemum ear. He of the ear was given to misguided volubilities, more apt to startle than delight.

The woman who wanted to see Paul Kelly looked at the champion gone to sulky seed, listened to the misguided conversationist with the chrysanthemum ear, and wished she hadn't come. She might have been driven from the field, had it not been for a small, dark personage, with black eyes and sallow cheeks, who sat next her on the left. His voice was low and not alarming; his manner bland but final. And he took quiet and quieting charge of the other two.

The dark, sallow little man led those two others in the wordy way they should go. When the talk of him of the unsatisfactory ear approached the Elizabethan so closely as to inspire terror, he put him softly yet sufficiently back in his hole. Also, when not thus employed, in holding down the conversational lid, he talked French to one man, Italian to another, English to all. Purringly polite, Chesterfield might have studied him with advantage.

The woman who wanted to see Paul Kelly was so taken with the little dark man's easy mastery of the situation, that she forgot the object of the expedition. When she was again in the street, and had drawn a deep, clear breath or two of long relief, she expressed astonishment that one possessed

of so much grace and fineness, so full of cultured elegancies, should be discovered in such coarse surroundings.

"Surely, he doesn't belong there," she said. "Who is he?"

"Who is he?" repeated the Central Office delegate in a discouraged tone. "I thought your hubby wised you up. That's Paul Kelly."

Paul Kelly owned the New Brighton in Great Jones Street. One evening, as the orchestra was tuning its fiddles for the final *valse,* a sudden but exhaustive bombardment then and there broke loose. In the hot midst of it, some cool hand turned off the lights. They were never again turned on. The guests departed through window and by way of door, and did not come back. It was the end of the New Brighton.

Gangland, which can talk betimes, can also keep a secret. Coax, cozen, cross-question as you will, you cannot worm from it the secret of that New Brighton bombardment. Ask, and every one is silent. There is a silence which is empty, there is a silence which is full. Those who will not tell why the New Brighton was shot up that night are silent with the silence which is full.

As usual, the Central Office is not without its theories. The Central Office is often without the criminal, but never without the explanation. One Mulberry Street whisper declared that it was a

war over a woman, without saying which woman. Another whisper insisted that money lay at the roots of the business, without saying what money. Still another ran to the effect that it was one of those hit-or-miss mix-ups, in their sort extemporaneous, in their up-come inexplicable, the distinguishing mark of which is an utter lack of either rhyme or reason.

One officer with whom I talked pointed to Ellison and Harrington as the principals. Paul Kelly, he said, was drawn into it as incident to his proprietorship of the New Brighton, while the redoubtable Razor became part of the picture only through his friendship for Ellison. Another officer, contradicting, argued that there had been a feud of long standing between Razor and Paul Kelly; that Ellison was there in Razor's behalf, and Harrington got killed because he butted in. Both officers agreed that the rumpus had nothing to do with Eat-'em-up-Jack's run in with Chick Tricker, then sundry months astern, or the later lead-pipe wiping out of Jack.

The story of the taking off of Eat-'em-up-Jack has already been told. The New Brighton missed Jack. He whom Paul Kelly brought to fill his place no more than just rattled about in it. The new sheriff did not possess Jack's nice knowledge of dance hall etiquette, and his blackjack lacked decision. Some even think that had Jack been there

that night, what follows might never have occurred at all. As said one who held this view:

"If Eat-'em-up-Jack had been holdin' down th' floor, th' New Brighton wouldn't have looked so easy to Biff an' Razor, an' they might have passed it up."

The dancing floor of the New Brighton was crowded with Gangland chivalry and fashion. Out in the bar, where waiters came rushing bearing trays of empty glasses to presently rushingly retire loaded to the beery guards, sat Paul Kelly and a select bevy. The talk was of business mixed with politics, for a campaign was being waged.

"After election," said Paul, "I'm going to close up this joint. I've got enough; I'm going to pack in."

"What's th' row?" asked Slimmy, who had drawn up a chair.

"There's too much talking," returned Paul. "Only the other day a bull was telling me that I'm credited with being the first guy along the Bowery to carry a gun."

"He's crazy," broke in Harrington, who with the lovely Goldie Cora had joined the group. "There were cannisters by the ton along the Bowery before ever you was pupped."

The Irish Wop, whose mind ran altogether upon politics, glanced up from a paper.

"Spakin' av th' campaign," said he, "how comes

it things is so quiet? No one givin' th' banks a bawlin' out, no one soakin' th' railroads, no one handin' th' hot wallops to th' trusts! Phwat's gone wrong wit' 'em? I've found but wan man—jusht wan—bein' th' skate who's writin' in th' pa-a-aper here,"—and the Wop held up the paper as Exhibit A—"who acts loike he has somethin' to hand out. Lishten: After buck-dancin' a bit, he ups and calls Willyum Jinnins Bryan th' 'modern Brutus,' says 'Cæsarism is abroad,' an' that Willyum Jinnins is th' only laddybuck who can put it on th' bum."

"It's one of them hot-air students," said Harrington.

"But about this Brutus-Cæsar thing? Are they wit' th' organization?"

"It's what a swell mouth-piece like Bourke Cockran calls a 'figger of speech'," interjected Slimmy, ever happy to be heard concerning the ancients. "Cæsar an' Brutus were a couple of long-ago Dagoes. Accordin' to th' dope they lived an' croaked two thousand years ago."

"Only a pair av old wops, was they! An' dead an' gone at that! Sure I thought be th' way this writin' gezebo carried on about 'em they was right here on th' job, cuttin' ice. An' they're nothin' more'n a brace av old dead Guineas after all!"

The Wop mused a moment over the unprofitable meanness of the discovery. Then his curiosity began to brighten up a trifle.

"How did yez come to be so hep to 'em, Slimmy?"

"Be studyin'—how else? An' then there's Counsellor Noonan. You ought to hear him when he gets to goin' about Brutus and Cæsar an' th' rest of th' Roman fleet. To hear Noonan you'd think he had been one of their pals."

"Th' Counsellor's from Latrim," said the Wop; "I'm a Mayo man meself. An' say, thim Latrim la-a-ads are th' born liars. Still, as long as the Counsellor's talkin' about phwat happened two thousand years ago, yez can chance a bet on him. It's only when he's repo-o-rtin' th' evints av yisterday he'll try to hand yez a lemon."

"I wisht I was as wise as youse, Slimmy," said Goldie Cora, wistfully rubbing her delicate nose. "It must be dead swell to know about Cæsar an' th' rest of them dubs."

"If they was to show up now," hazarded the Wop, "thim ould fellies 'ud feel like farmers."

"Oh, I don't know," observed Slimmy: "they was lyin', cheatin', swindlin', snitchin', double-crossin' an' givin' each other th' rinkey-dink in th' old days same as now. This Cæsar, though, must have been a stiff proposition. He certainly woke up young! When he's only nineteen, he toins out one mornin', yawns, puts on his everyday toga, rambles down town, an' makes a hurrah touch for five million of dollars. Think of it!—five million!—an'

him not twenty! He certainly was a producer—Cæsar was!"

"Well, I should yell," assented Harrington.

"An' then phwat?" asked the Wop.

"This what," said Slimmy. "Havin' got his wad together, Cæsar starts in to light up Rome, an' invites the push to cut in. When he's got 'em properly keyed up, he goes into the forum an' says, 'Am I it?' An' the gang yells, 'You're it'!"

"Cæsar could go some," commented Goldie Cora, admiringly.

"Rome's a republic then," Slimmy went on, "an' Cæsar has himself elected the main squeeze. He declares for a wide-open town; his war cry is 'No water! No gas! No police!'"

"Say, he was a live one!" broke in Harrington; "he was Rome's Big Tim!"

"Listen!" commanded Goldie Cora, shaking her yellow head at Harrington. "Go on, Slimmy."

"About this time Brutus commences to show in th' runnin'. Brutus is th' head of th' Citizens' Union, an' him an' his fellow mugwumps put in their time bluffin' an' four-flushin' 'round about reform. They had everybody buffaloed, except Cæsar. Brutus is for closin' th' saloons, puttin' th' smother on horse racin', an' wants every Roman kid who plays baseball Sunday pinched."

"He gives me a pain!" complained Goldie Cora.

"An' mind you, all th' time Brutus is graftin' with both hooks. He's in on the Aqueduct; he manages a forty per cent. hold out on the Appian way; an' what long green he has loose he loans to needy skates in Spain at pawn shop rates, an' when they don't kick in he uses the legions to collect. Brutus is down four ways from the jack on everything in sight. Nothin's calculated to embarrass him but a pair of mittens."

"An' at that," remarked Harrington, who had a practical knowledge of politics, "him an' his mugwump bunch didn't have nothin' on th' New York reformers. Do youse guys remember when the city bought th' ferries? There was——"

"I'd sooner hear Slimmy," said Goldie Cora.

"Me too," agreed the Wop.

Slimmy looked flattered. "Well, then," he continued, "all this time Cæsar is the big screech, an' it makes Brutus so sore he gets to be a bug. So he starts to talkin'. 'This Cæsar guy,' says Brutus, 'won't do.'

" 'Right you be,' says Cassius, who's always been a kicker. 'That's what I've been tellin' you lobsters from th' jump.'

"With this an old souse named Casca sits up, an' says he ain't seen nothin' wrong about Cæsar.

" 'Oh, roll over!' says Cassius. 'Why even th' newsboys are on. You know Cæsar's wardman—that fresh baby, Mark Antony? It's ribbed up right

now that at th' Lupercal he's to hand Cæsar a crown.'

"Casca an' th' other bone-heads turns to Brutus.

" 'Yes,' says Brutus, answerin' their looks; 'Cassius has got good information. He's givin' youse th' correct steer.' "

"An' did Cæsar cop off the crown?" asked Goldie Cora, eagerly.

Slimmy shook his head.

"Th' Lupercal comes 'round," said he, "an' Mark Antony is there with bells on. He makes a funny crack or two about a crown, but nothin' goes. Th' wind-up is that Brutus, Cassius, Casca, an' th' rest of th' Citizens' Union, gang Cæsar later in th' forum, go at him with their chives, an' cut an' slash till his hide won't hold his principles."

"An' wasn't there," demanded the Wop, with heat, "so much as wan strong-arm la-a-ad up at Cæsar's end av th' alley, wit' th' nerve to git even?"

"Never fear!" returned Slimmy, reassuringly; "th' day they plant Cæsar, Mark Antony goes in to make th' funeral spiel. He's th' Roman Senator Grady, Mark Antony is, an' he burns 'em up. Brutus an' his bunch get th' tip up at their club house, an' take it on th' run. With that, Cæsar's gang gets to goin', an' they stand Rome on its nut from the Capitoline Hill to the Tarpeian Rock. Brutus an' the' other mugwumps gets it where th' baby wore th' beads, an' there ain't been a Seth

Low or a Fulton Cutting along th' Tiber from that day to this. Oh, they've got us left standin' sideways, them Guineas have, in some things."

About the time Slimmy began his lucid setting forth of Brutus, Cæsar and their political differences, Ellison and Razor, down at Nigger Mike's in Pell Street, were laying their heads together. A bottle of whiskey stood between them, for they required inspiration. There were forty people in the room, some dancing, some drinking, some talking. But no one came near Ellison and Razor, for their manner showed that they did not wish to be disturbed. As the Nailer observed, "They had a hen on," and when gentlemen have a hen on they prefer being quiet.

"I've no use for Paul Kelly," whispered Razor in response to some remark of Ellison's. "You bet he knows enough not to show his snout along Eighth Avenue. He'd get it good if he did."

"My notion," said Ellison, "is to turn th' trick right now."

"Just th' two of us?"

"Why not?"

"He'd have his guerillas; youse have got to figure on that."

"They wouldn't stand th' gaff. It's the difference between guys who knows what they wants, and guys who don't. Once we started, they'd tear th' side out of the Brighton in the get-away."

"All right," said Razor, bringing down his hand; "I'm wit' you."

"Just a moment," and Ellison motioned Razor back into his chair. "If Paul's dancin', we must stall him into th' bar. I don't want to hoit any of them skirts."

It was the delightful habit of Slimmy, on the tail of one of his lectures, to order beer for his hearers. That's why he was listened to with so much interest. Were every lecturer to adopt Slimmy's plan, he would never fail of an audience. Also, his fame would grow.

Slimmy, having finished with Cæsar and the others, had just signed up to the waiter to go his merry rounds, when Ellison and Razor slipped in from the street. Their hands were on their guns, their eyes on Kelly.

Harrington saw it coming.

"Your gatt, Paul, your gatt!" he shouted.

The rule in Gangland is to let every man kill his own snakes. Harrington's conduct crowded hard upon the gross. It so disgusted Razor that, to show Harrington what he thought of it, he half turned and laced a bullet through his brain.

"Now you've got something of your own to occupy your mind," quoth Razor.

Ellison was too old a practitioner to be drawn aside by the Harrington episode. He devoted himself unswervingly to Paul Kelly. Ellison's first

bullet cut a hole through Kelly's coat and did no further harm. The lights were switched out at this crisis, and what shooting followed came off in the dark. There was plenty of it. The air seemed sown as thickly full of little yellow spits of flame as an August swamp of fireflies. Even so, it didn't last. It was as short lived as a July squall at sea. There was one thunder and lightning moment, during which the pistols flashed and roared, and then—stillness and utter silence!

It was fairish pistol practice when you consider conditions. Paul Kelly had three bullets in him when four weeks later he asked the coppers to come and get him. He had been up in Harlem somewhere lying low. And you are not to forget Harrington. There were other casualties, also, which the police and politicians worked hand in hand to cover up.

Five minutes went by after the shooting; ten minutes!—no one was in a hurry. At last a policeman arrived. He might have come sooner, but the New Brighton was a citadel of politics. Would you have had him lose his shield?

The policeman felt his official way into the barroom:—empty as a drum, dark as the inside of a cow!

He struck a match. By its pale and little light he made out the dead Harrington on the floor. Not a living soul, not even Goldie Cora!

Goldie Cora?

Said that practical damsel, when the matter was put up to her by Big Kitty, who being sentimental called Goldie Cora a quitter for leaving her dead love lying in his blood, "What good could I do? If I'd stuck I'd have got pinched; an' then—me in th' Tombs—I'd have stood a swell chance, I don't think, of bein' at Bill's funeral."

THE END.