

was bound to go home to sleep with the Count; but, as he didn't seem to have the faintest idea where the Count lived, it was quite possible he would turn up again among people who stoned him from the tops of houses.

"You see," he explained, "they may get at the Count if I'm not there. I've got to look after him. There's no one he'll allow 'round him 'cept me. I'm not takin' any chances."

That being so, I wondered why he had been wasting his time firing bricks at people who were so much higher up in the world; but I refrained from saying anything, and contented myself with hauling him up to my quarters by the back of the collar. That was the quickest way, and I was sleepy.

When we came into the light I saw he had a nasty gash above his left ear. But examination disclosed that his small head was as neatly mapped as a German student's—it was part of his business, and probably came from his habit of lifting people in the ribs, as he did with the Count.

He would have talked all night, but a strong "peg" bowled him over and put him to sleep.

In the morning, when sober, he was quite different; as silent and shamefaced as a sweeper. He seemed to fully appreciate my kindness in looking after him. "It was very good of you, sir," he said, "to put yourself out about me, and I suppose I talked like a drunken idiot."

"Well, you talked a good deal about the Count——"

"Sh-h-h," he interrupted, "please don't say a word about it, sir—don't mention the name; only——" and he looked at me thoughtfully—"don't forget what I said about him, and don't never mention the name to anybody. But if at any time, sir, you want to know anything, or if I can help you, don't be backward in asking me. The Count'll do more for me than he will for any other—man or boy. And now good morning, and thank you, sir," and he was gone.

"Deuced funny chap," I thought; "but I expect he'll catch it from the

Count, whoever he is, when he gets home. I expect the lift in the ribs will be the other way about."

That I knew nothing about betting and horse-racing, which are one and the same thing in India, was more than made up by Steel; in fact, he was a sort of perambulating turf guide. He was always at me to go down to the Calcutta Meet to see this kingly sport.

A week after my experience in the gharry, the big Calcutta race took place. Steel was importunate that I should go with him; reluctantly I consented. In reality, of course, I had nothing to do with it; it was The Thing which drew me to the chance.

I noticed that Steel worked wondrous hard for a man who was simply out for amusement. Back and forth from the horse paddock to the little inclosure where vociferous chaps were shouting all sorts of unintelligible exclamations, he raced; and just as each race was being run he would bear over to where I was sitting quietly in the stand, and watch the horses through his glasses.

On one of these excursions he said to me: "I've been losing, but I'll get it all back on Sir Michael. He's the straight tip for the next race—I've had it from the owner."

"Sir Michael!" I gasped, as The Thing whispered in my ear about the mad gharry ride.

"Yes, Sir Michael," he replied. "You don't know anything about him, do you?"

"Sir Michael is a horse then?" I asked.

"Why, certainly; did you think he was a bullock, and this a race for native stock?"

I paid no attention to his facetious remark. It was only Steel's way, but a nebulous something was trying to stir the leaven of more connected thought in my mind.

"Do you know anything of a Count something?" I queried. "He's from Australia I think. Does he own this—ah—Sir Michael horse?"

Steel looked at me queerly for a minute. He satisfied himself that I