

The CONVICT COUNTRY: or: FIGHTING for a MILLION

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER
Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Terrible Tragedy," "Amid, Etc."
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CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

"We can run no chances, you know, Doc," laughed Pearson, insinuatingly, then as if in apology for his act, "besides, it will be to your own interest in case the haunt was discovered. If you do not know where it is, you at least will not be held responsible for any harm that may come through the discovery, see?"

"We kill traitors!" said the matter-of-fact Sharkey, complacently.

"It may save your life," said Pearson, as he satisfied himself that the doctor was completely blinded. But he took no pains to insure the doctor's comfort, for he placed a pair of handcuffs upon his wrists. "I am obliged to do this," he said, as he changed places with the boy and sat upon the seat with Schiller, driving the team, "so the boys won't think me unkindful of the duty I owe them in protecting them from possible danger from treachery."

The doctor sat in silence for quite a time, meditating upon the strangeness of his adventure. Oft and anon, from the distance, could be heard the baying of dogs, so that the doctor knew he was being driven past farm houses now and then. But they met no one. At last the team came to a halt and the doctor was assisted to alight.

The trio left the roadway and the doctor heard the team drive off. Pearson walked arm in arm with Schiller, guiding his footsteps, so that the doctor did not fall into any of the numerous ruts or bark his shins against any of the snags in the underbrush. Sharkey followed on behind, carrying the doctor's case of instruments.

Again Doctor Schiller broke the silence: "What kind of a place are you taking me to?" he asked.

This time Pearson condescended to keep up the conversation. "Did you

stance, we shoot a man for interfering with another man's wife. If there is any law we do respect, it is the law of marriage. Most all of our penalties are death. A man is compelled to be honest to another if he desires to live. We are not justified in taking life. We are not the law, but it cannot be otherwise with us."

"How do you live? That is how do you obtain your supplies?" asked the doctor.

"We have agents who supply our wants. They have many acres of fine agricultural land, supplied with modern machinery, and plenty of help to till the soil. What we do not raise, we buy, or in extreme cases, like the present, we raise by force."

"You talk of schools. I should think there would be no need of such a thing as an educational institution. The country cannot exist, it will be depopulated through poverty, if nothing else. You certainly have not been in existence long enough to have raised children to the age of schooling."

"Not so. We have existed for twenty years or more unmolesied. We are self-supporting. We dig gold from the mountains. We have manufactures (in a remote form) for the making of shoes, and supply a large portion of one of the states with this article. In fact our treasury is on a sound basis, better to-day than it ever was."

"Why do you divulge to me the secret of your existence?" asked the doctor.

"For the simple reason, my dear doctor," replied Pearson, complacently, "that it is my wish that you take up residence with us. We are in need of a few professional men like yourself, to make life pleasant for us. You are one of our kind—an outcast—and have nothing to lose by joining us. As for a money consideration, we can pay you a salary princely in magni-

tude in comparison with your present income!"

The doctor was somewhat prepared for the offer. "All I want is money and revenge in this world," he said, as if assenting. "Money to be happy—revenge on the man who is the cause of all my trouble!"

"You can command money in plenty," said Pearson—what kind he did not say. "Revenge depends upon yourself. Whom have you such bitter feelings against?"

"A doctor who was instrumental in sending me up."

"How, and in what way do you mean to accomplish your ends?"

"How I don't know, nor care. But I want to make him suffer as I have suffered. Disgrace him before the world as he has disgraced me! Reduce him to poverty and want! Ruin him; imprison him; do anything to make him feel what it is to be damned—an outcast of society. That is my only aim and desire!"

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A sentinel, armed to the teeth, guarded the door, but upon receiving the password, allowed the party to pass. Hewed logs at the rear of the room formed a "blind door," which led into another room twenty feet long and sixteen feet wide, along one side of which bunks were arranged after the fashion of berths on a steamboat, and from the number of these at least thirty persons were finding sleeping accommodations in the abode. In one corner of the room, on a lower berth lay the wounded man.

Up to this point the doctor had not been relieved of the bandage from his eyes. This was now taken off, together with the handcuffs. The room was dimly lighted by a candle stuck in the neck of a bottle. The doctor first rubbed his eyes, then his wrists, while he accustomed himself to his surroundings. A groan from the direction of the corner berth made him look toward it. There were two villainous looking men sitting at the side of the bunk, holding the hands of a wounded man.

The doctor threw off the covering which was over the man, who lay stretched upon a rude mattress, a bandage roughly tied around his waist and over one limb. He was soaked in blood.

"A basin of warm water," said Schiller to Pearson. "Hand me my instrument case," he said to Sharkey. With one hand on the wounded man's wrist he was counting the number of heartbeats to the minute. This being done, the doctor opened his case and laid out a package of clean bandages, and selected several instruments to have them handy. After the water arrived he bathed the hurt with a sponge, and examined the wound made by the bullet.

"We will administer a little chloroform," said the doctor, as he saturated his handkerchief with the fluid taken from his case.

When the man was thoroughly under the influence of the drug, he was lifted upon the table. The doctor then began probing for the bullet and succeeded, in locating it almost immediately. It was but the work of a moment to remove it, and to thoroughly cleanse the wound with a preparation taken from his case. The flow of blood was stopped as well as possible, and the wound bound up. The patient was placed upon the bunk again, before the chloroform was taken from him.

(To be continued.)

BEATEN AT HIS OWN GAME.
Sure Thing Gambler for Once Gets the Worst of It.

"There was a sure thing gambler down in Mississippi named Gambler-good name by the way," said John Sharpe Williams. "He never made a bet unless he was sure he would win. He was out at a country fair, staying at a hotel. One morning a man who was in the sporting line himself got up early and looked out of the window. He saw Gambler carefully measuring with a tape-line the hitching post in front of the hotel. He knew something was up, and when Gambler went out to the fair he went out and measured the hitching post himself. Then he took a sledge hammer and drove the post into the ground an inch and a half."

"That night, after supper, while they were sitting on the hotel porch, Gambler craftily led the conversation around to the difficulty of judging distances and heights."

"Now," he said, "there's that hitching post out yonder. I'll bet a hundred I can come nearer its height than any body here."

"How high would you reckon it is?" said the sledge hammer artist, who after a lot of conversation, had put up a hundred with Gambler.

"Oh," said Gambler. "I'll take it at 30 inches."

"Oh, no," replied the other man. "You are wrong. I'll bet it is less than 29."

"They measured and it was 28 1/2. Gambler hasn't smiled since that day."—Rehoboth Herald.

Which He Took.
You probably remember the school-boy who, in a composition on pins, said, "Pins have saved the lives of many people."

His teacher was astonished at this statement and asked him to explain it. He replied: "By people not swallowing them."

That was not the case with the man in the following incident:

"My dear Mr. Finnicky said to his wife, 'I don't think those pills I have been taking have done me much good.'"

"Why, you haven't been taking any for three weeks."

"Yes, I have; I've swallowed one three times a day as directed."

"You have? Then why is it that there are as many left in the box as there were three weeks ago? What box have you been taking them from?"

"This one—marked for me."

"Dear me, John! That is my shoe-button box!"—Birmingham Herald.

An Energetic Builder.
One of the most energetic nest-builders is the marsh wren, in fact, he has the habit to such a degree that he cannot stop with one nest, but goes on building four or five in rapid succession. And there is nothing slovenly about his work either. Look among the cat-tails in the nearest marsh, even within the limits of a great city, and you will find his little woven balls of reed stems with a tiny round hole in one side. There is a certain method even in his madness, for the nest in which his wife is brooding her seven or eight eggs is less likely to be found when there are so many empty ones to be around. Then, too, he uses the others as roosting places for himself.—C. Wm. Beebe in Recreation.

Heard of Oiler.
She—They say the Kongo dwarfs, six specimens of whom have been brought to London by Col. Harrison, never reach a greater age than 40 years.

He—What do you suppose does it—chloroform?

A Dangerous Character.
Shorte—They've dubbed Sponger "Antlightning."

Sharpe—How's that?

Shorte—He always strikes more than once in the same place.

LITTLE EXPLOSIONS

Courageous.
"Are the Americans courageous as a rule?" asked the visitor from abroad.

"I should say so!" answered the patriotic citizen. "You should see the way the average American eats sardines and pie at a picnic."

Two Cases Widely Different.
"Why do you have your pew so near the church door?"

"In case of fire, you know—I could escape easily."

"Ah! And what's your idea in always demanding a seat in the front row at the theater?"

All His Time Occupied.
Father—So you think his intentions are serious. Do you know anything about his habits?

Mother—Yes, that's what makes me think his intentions are serious.

Father—How do you mean?

Mother—His principal habits seem to be calling on Mabel and writing to her.

The Piffing Soubrette.
"Did you say that Miss Lightly, the soubrette, had been guilty of larceny?"

"Yes. She stole a Ham who had a walking part in the third act."

In Need of a Rousing.
The Pastor—What in the world was the matter with the choir to-day? I never heard such tame and absolutely listless singing. Haven't been fighting again, have they?

The Organist—No; just now they are as amiable as turtle doves.

The Pastor—Then tell 'em to fight.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Curious Circumstance.
McSosh—Mish'r Bartender, think I'll take 'nother one o' them p-p-ppous—pussy-cat-p—

Bartender—Another pousse-cafe, Mr. McSosh?

McSosh—Thash ri'. 'S funny thing—th' more closely I b'come soshiated an' 'gualted with tha' drin'k th' less I c'n r'member its name!

The Riddle of the Sphinx.
The Sphinx had just propounded her riddle.

"What goes on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening?" she demanded.

"An auto," they answered, readily.

With a heavy groan, she realized that the moderns had gone her one better.

Same There as Here.
She—"I see not one bride was over 22 years of age in the 346,590 marriages which took place in Japan last year."

He—"That looks as if the women were as backward about telling their ages over there as they are over here."

At the Play.
"She handles the part exceptionally well. That outburst of jealousy in the first act was one of the best things I ever saw."

"No wonder. Her understudy took the part the night before and made a decided hit."—Detroit Tribune.

The Safe Side.
Reporter—Were you quoted correctly in that interview in the morning papers?

Senator—Come around the day after to-morrow. How can I tell until I see how the interview is going to be taken?—St. Louis Star.

Above Suspicion.
"What a fine thing a reputation for scrupulous honesty is!"

"Apropos of what?"

"I was thinking of Dr. Goodman. He walked down the street this morning with an umbrella under each arm and nobody winked!"

The Lightning Cure.
"Here is a story of a man who was cured of rheumatism by being struck by lightning."

"I'll risk de rheumatism every time," said Brother Dickey. "I don't want no doctor what's ez quick ez dat!"

Saw the Opening.
Cholly—Yaas, I was only looking for an opening to propose.

Algy—Well?

Cholly—She yawned.

Further Dilution Unnecessary.
Philosoph—There's no use crying over spilt milk.

Dittow—No, there's probably enough water in it already.

THEY'RE STRANGERS NOW.



Bell (actress)—I promised mother I would never become an actress.

Nell—And you kept your word, didn't you?

Why He So Decided.
"My wife has been talking a good deal about plans for the summer, so I decided to have a plain, straightforward talk with her to-day. I just delivered my ultimatum and the result is we go to Newport."

"Spunky of you, old man; but where did she want to go?"

"Why, Newport; haven't I just told you."

Atrocious.
Richard Mansfield, the actor, was never known to forget his profession. The other evening he was smoking with a few men. All of a sudden his cigar went out. He lit a match on the sole of his shoe which flared up greatly.

"My," said he, "that was quite a footlight, wasn't it?"

Not Hard to Locate.
Mr. Pheeder—Don't go to bed yet. We'll have some lunch first. I brought home a tidbit to-day and left it in the back kitchen.

Mrs. Pheeder—It's dark out there. You'll find a candle—

Mr. Pheeder—Oh, I can find it in the dark. It's Limburger cheese.

Embarrassing Circumstances.
Chicago Maiden—I actually started downtown yesterday without my overskirt. Never noticed the omission until I got in the car. Oh, I was so mortified.

Boston Damsel—I know just how you felt, dear. I once went out and forgot to put on my glasses.

Didn't Notice It.
A sudden death in Georgia is told by one of Representative Griggs's constituents in this way:

"Judge, I guess he died of heart disease, or something or other like that. He was sittin' on his chair and all at once he died—and he never noticed it, Judge."

When Affinities Marry.
"Ninety-nine blue bottles a-hanging on the wall," commenced the titubulous Billings in a mandolin tone of voice.

His wife looked up quickly.

"Dear me," said she. "You gave me such a start, dear. I was afraid something must have happened to the other one."

Something Like It.
"What have I told you, Tommie, about asking for a second piece of cake?" said the mother to her youthful son.

"Why, you told me never to ask for a second piece of cake with my mouth full," replied Tommie.

Asphyxiated.
Wilkins—"Those Philadelphia thieves got the worst of it in that gas steal, didn't they?"

Bilkins—Yes, they tried to take too much at one time, and were overcome by the fumes!"—Detroit Free Press.

What the Professor Forgot.
Water—Haven't you forgotten something, sir?

Professor—Yes, I can't remember in what year Charlemagne was crowned, can you?—New York Sun.

Detective at a Disadvantage.
Chief—Do you mean to say that you haven't been able to get a single clew as to the perpetrator of this crime?

Detective—Now. Them newspaper reporters is down on me and they won't tell me anything.

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Shorte—They've dubbed Sponger "Antlightning."

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Wet Below.
Satan—How long has it been raining up on earth?

New Arrival—All this month.

Satan—That's what I thought. It's beginning to leak through and put the fires out.—Detroit Tribune.

Accounting for It.
Mrs. Bacon—Don't you think a person's work has much to do with his disposition?

Mr. Bacon—Yes; I suppose that's what makes our cook so crusty.

Changeable.
The Wife—You see some shades of hair look better in sunlight and others look better when it is cloudy.

The Husband—It seems to be cloudy to-day; which colored hair are you going to put on to-day?

School Census.
Parker—"Have you read 'The Count of Paris'?"

Streeter—"No, but I've read the count of Cincinnati, and I think it's exaggerated by about 50,000."

Quick and Thorough.
Mrs. Paddock—I thought Bobbie had a system for playing the races.

Mr. Paddock—He had, but he bet on a horse named Sarsaparilla and it cleaned his system out.—Puck.

Too Old and Too Young.
"If I were younger," said the rich old man, "I believe I might win you for my wife."

"Yes," replied the old beauty, dreamily considering his 65 years, "or, say, fifteen years older."

Another Kind of Soft Answer.
"Come back for something you've forgotten, as usual?" said the husband.

"No," replied his wife, sweetly. "I've come back for something I remembered."—New Yorker.

THRIFT AS A FINE ART.

Peasants of Normandy Adepts in Its Application.

Writing of "A Corner in Normandy" in the June Delineator, F. Berkeley Smith gives an interesting side light upon the real character of the Norman peasant. These ruddy old Norman farmers understand economy to a finesse, he says. It is the secret of their wealth. And thus, when one morning I came across Pere Trebard munching a withered pear while he sunned himself beside the snug barn and asked the old man why he did not choose a good one from his fine crop he exclaimed:

"Ah! but, monsieur, we might sell it!"

The character of the shrewd Norman is interesting. Never will he give you a direct answer; a definite "yes" or "no" seems to have been expressly left out of his vocabulary.

"It is a fine morning." I ventured to a grizzled old dealer in oxen.

"It might be worse," he answered.

"That's splendid cider of yours, Le-grosjean."

"Some say it is," he retorted guardedly.

Neither does the true Norman ever seem pleased or satisfied.

"Beautiful apples this year, Pere Mallet."

"Bah! they are so few," he replies, gloomily, with a shrug of his shoulders. The next year the tree are bent under the weight of a rich crop, and you hail this rich old agriculturist as you pass his gateway:

"A quantity of cider this year, Pere Mallet, you surely have enough apples," you say convincingly as the old peasant looks up from his work to bid you bon jour.

"They are so small," he groans, "it take more time to pick them than they are worth."

PLACE TO TAKE PRESENTS.
Colored Youth Was Explicitly Following Instructions.

Representative Griggs of Georgia employs a colored youth who is not a shining example of mental alertness.

Recently this servant, who shall be called Tom, received an invitation to a church wedding, the bride-elect being a first cousin of his.

The morning of the ceremony found Tom in a state of great excitement. He started for the church some hours before the time set for the great event.

Griggs chanced to meet Tom wandering about, clad in his shoniest raiment, and carrying a small bundle under his arm.

"Tom," he said, "why on earth are you scurrying about dressed like that this early in the morning?"

"Why, I've gettin' ready for de wedding, sah!" replied Tom reproachfully.

"Indeed!" said the Congressman. "And I suppose you are doing some errand on the way."

"No, sah, I ain't doin' no errand."

"But you're not going to a wedding with a bundle under your arm?"

"Cert'n'y I is, sah," replied Tom, a look of wonder coming into his eyes. "Dat's my present."

"Present?" ejaculated Griggs. "Why, boy, you mustn't take your present to the church; you must send it to the house of the bride."

"Sho, Mistah Griggs, is dat so?" muttered the now bewildered negro. "Den why does dis card I got heah say: 'Present at the church'?"—The Sunday Magazine.

In These Days of Operations.
A husband came home one evening to find a note left for him by his wife. Carelessly he opened it, but as he read his face blanched. "My God!" he exclaimed, "how could this have happened so suddenly?" And, snatching his hat and coat, he rushed to a hospital which was near his home.

"I want to see my wife, Mrs. Brown, at once," he said to the head nurse, "before she goes under the ether. Please take my message to her at once."

"Mrs. Brown" echoed the nurse. "There is no Mrs. Brown here."