

# The CONVICT COUNTRY:

## or FIGHTING for a MILLION

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER

Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Tempest Tragedy," "Anita," etc.  
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### CHAPTER IV.

#### An Important Clue.

For about a year Lang served his apprenticeship under the instruction of Denver. He became known as a suspicious character, and his past was raked up in great shape, not to his credit to be sure. Through the process of appearing "flush" of money one day and on "his uppers" the next he got the reputation of being "crooked," or at least "sporty," which in some circles are considered synonymous.

Lang one evening was strolling down Clark street rather aimlessly, swaggering as if under the influence of strong drink, when he was approached by a rather flashily dressed man who demanded rather abruptly: "If your name is Lang, I want to speak with you."

Louis did not start nor hesitate, his year of schooling had prepared him against surprises of this kind. There was no known reason why he should not admit that Lang was his true name, but "instinct" warned him not to be too ready to admit it. He had followed Denver's advice and traveled under the alias of "Smith," though there had never been any attempt at dropping his real identity, for that character was absolutely necessary to the case in hand. "My name is Smith—George Smith," he answered, composedly.

The man shrugged his shoulders incredulously. "You are acquainted with Denver?" he asked.

Louis now recognized the questioner as Regan, the detective, against whom he had been especially warned by Denver. "Denver," queried Lang, as if trying to refresh his memory, and his speech was varied now and then by a half-suppressed hicough. "Seems to me I've heard the name afore, see?"

"Well, Lang," continued Regan in a positive tone, "Denver wants to see you."

"S-a-y, wot're you lookin' fer?" Louis flared up as if angry at Regan's persistence. "Didn't I just tell you my name was Smith?" He stopped walking, and with a half-fierce gesture threw off the detective's hand, which had been resting rather familiarly on his arm, staggering backward as he did so as if losing his balance. "I've want to insult me?" It was a very

The twain entered the first saloon they came to, which chanced to be the same basement palace where Denver had met Lang. They took seats at a convenient table and Louis ordered the drinks. Regan had his back turned toward the door (while Louis faced the doorway) and did not notice the entrance of a third party soon afterwards; but Lang did, and he thought he recognized Denver, though that individual was in disguise. A secret signal given and answered soon proved it true. Denver took a seat in an obscure corner of the room, within hearing distance, in Lang's but out of the line of Regan's sight.

"I have noticed that on several occasions you have drawn money from the Madison bank on Jim Denver's check," said Regan, casting a bomb in Louis's camp.

For a moment Louis was staggered: he could see a shade of annoyance pass over Denver's face. Regan evidently knew more than either Lang or Denver had supposed. "Oh, you have, eh?" the young man blurted out, still sparring for time, resolved now to attempt to "pump" Regan in turn.

"What does he pay you for?" asked Regan leaning at him through bleery eyes.

"That would be telling—and if you knew my graft it wouldn't be worth a cent to me."

The detective now realized now that he had a pretty shrewd antagonist to deal with. Hints, would avail him little, but as he really did not know the truth, that was all the bait he could offer. "Perhaps I can tell you," he said as a leader.

"Perhaps you can," acquiesced Lang.

"For playing the spy upon women whom Denver wishes to blackmail?"

"Pshaw!" whistled Lang, as if acknowledging that such was the case.

"You accuse Jim of blackmailing—what's the matter with my blackmailing him?" Lang made a very neat play here. He did not refute nor assert anything.

"You want to throw me off! Besides you are not the only 'kid' drawing Denver's checks from the bank; that I know, for I have seen his book."

Louis was gratified to learn where Regan got his information from. Hearing the news that Denver was employing others besides himself for a moment shook his faith in Denver.

bait before the hungry fish's eyes, and when about to give a nibble the tempting morsel was withdrawn. "Have found what?" Regan brightened up from his half-drunken lethargy.

Louis saw an opening to hurl some hot shot; he was himself astonished at the mere thought of it. "Nothing," he said exasperatingly. "But I have come to the conclusion, Regan, that you wouldn't arrest a thief even if you caught him in the act with the swag in his hands!" It was a bold insinuation.

Regan flushed up as if ashamed of the imputation. "I get the 'swag' whether I get the man or not!" That was a sufficient excuse for him.

"You are smarter than I can believe!" said Lang highly elated at the coup.

The intoxicated detective smiled with an idiotic smirk. "Yes," he said, "I have nearly enough to leave the business on. One more haul and I am off!"

"Off where?" and Louis bit his tongue to keep from seeming expectant. "Not the C. C.?"

"Yes, the C. C.!" straightening up again. "But who are you that gives the sign of the society?"

"Oh, I'm one of the 'boys,'" replied Lang. "Here, waiter," he cried to hide his agitation. "Two glasses of beer."

Denver had evidently heard enough. He realized that Louis was the master of Regan in the pumping art, so rather than jeopardize his interest now by having the treacherous detective discover that he was being overheard by his rival he quietly arose from his seat, going to the rear of the saloon, where he motioned to Lang to follow. Louis continued to converse for a moment even after drinking that which had been ordered.

"You are one of the boys, eh?" queried Regan. "Then you are the man I'm looking for. I have a game on hand that I need assistance in; are you with me?"

"Am I with you? Well, you can bet your sweet existence that I am! But don't you think that we will be overheard here. Hadn't we better get a room where we can have privacy?"

And then he excused himself for a moment to retire to the rear ostensibly to make arrangements for a room, but in reality to meet Denver.

"Is Regan playing me or is he really on to the 'country'?" asked Lang.

"No! He is in earnest! Work him for all he is worth! This is certainly a masterpiece! We play the game of our lives to-day to win or lose a fortune! At last we have a real clue as to the existence of the 'country.'"

(To be continued.)

### THE WEDDING AS HE SAW IT.

Half Faded Recollections Revived in Brain of Widow's Eldest Boy.

It was the youngish widow's wedding day, and the signs and omens were fruitfully in the brain of her oldest, a bright chap of eight. He had wondered much at the sewing that had been in progress for weeks past.

The whispering and chattering of the women, too, had stirred some half faded leaves in his memory. This particular day above all set him thinking very hard.

His mother had kissed him tearfully and then retired into seclusion. Then, after he had been dressed—a mere incidental matter—he was told to be good and keep quiet and not give any trouble.

The appearance of his grandmamma and aunts was also suggestive. Of course, there were a good many other people, and he recognized therein a divergence from long past experiences, but he looked out of the window and chanced to see the clergyman arrive, carrying a small black leather valise.

Then he heard the word passed around that the "doctor" had come—the clergyman was a D. D.—and then he was sure that he was on the right track.

He at once sidled up to one of the youngest and prettiest of his aunts, and remarked to her in that style of whisper which always concentrates attention:

"I know, now."

"Do you, dear?" said the pretty aunt. "What do you know?"

"I know what is going to happen. I'm going to have a new brother or sister. I saw the doctor come in with his big bag that he carries with him. You can't fool me."

His memory had been going back to the birth of his youngest sister, about two years and a half before, and the explanations that had been made him at that time.

### The Soft Answer.

Our notes upon handwriting have brought from a bank cashier the story of his encounter with a clergyman who came in a fury to complain that his written instructions had been ignored, says the London Chronicle.

"Really, sir, your hieroglyphics completely baffled me," began the cashier. "Hieroglyphics!" shouted the clergyman. "Bless my heart!" (he was a cautious speaker). "I won't have my writing questioned. Send for my pass book. I'll close my account."

From the cashier came the soft answer: "But between scholars the hieroglyphics should be a compliment."

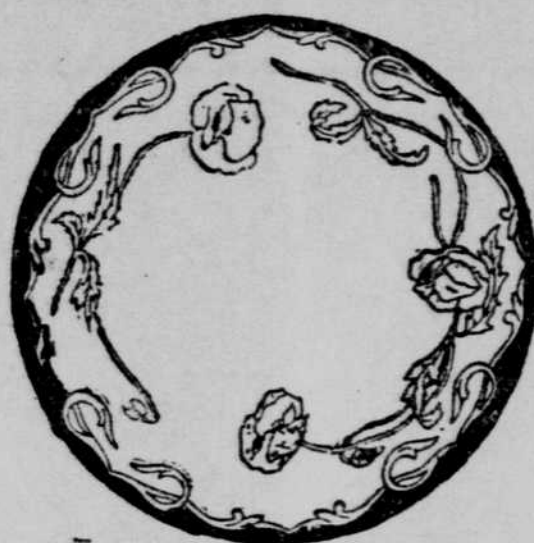
The clergyman reflected. "All right," he said. "I don't want that pass book." For he had remembered that "hieroglyphics" denotes simply the handwriting of priests—the scholarly caste.

### Books in Tibet Temples.

Beautiful books have been discovered in the temples of Tibet. These books have covers made of close-grained wood divided into three panels, each one carved with minute and exquisite workmanship.

In the center are one of two Buddhas seated on a lotus throne surrounded by the foliage of the "bo" tree. The whole cover is heavily gilded, the first page of the manuscript being covered with silk veil of green or red. This page is of a deep Prussian blue, with an inlaid panel in the middle, bearing the opening words of the book in raised gold letters. The book is printed in large regular letters of gold or with alternate lines of gold and silver. The holes for the binding straps are left clear and the leaves are held together by a thin gold circle.

## NEW IDEAS IN FANCY WORK DESIGNS



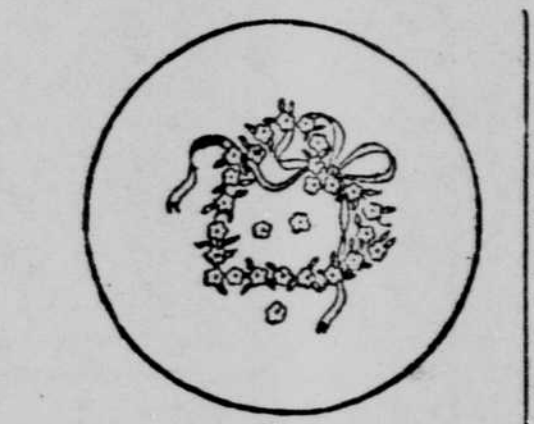
POPPY DESIGN CENTREPIECE.



MONOGRAM DOLLY.



CHRYSANTHEMUM CENTREPIECE.



HEART-SHAPED CUSHION TOP.



PRETTY PIN CUSHION TOP.

### AMBITION SHOULD NOT WANE.

If It Does, There Is Surely Something Wrong Somewhere.

The idea seems to be pretty general that ambition is born in us; that we have little or nothing to do with its acquisition or cultivation, and that we cannot modify, enlarge, stimulate or improve it to any great extent, says Success. A study of life does not confirm this idea; that the ambition is a cultivated quality, capable of being molded or destroyed, according as we will, is demonstrated every day in the lives of those about us. We see people in whom the spark of ambition is kindled suddenly by the reading of a book, the hearing of a lecture or the speaking of a kindly word by a friend or teacher, and, on the other hand, we see those who allow their ambition to slowly die out for want of fuel.

The death of ambition is one of the tragedies of life. When a young man feels his ambition begin to fade there is trouble somewhere. Either he is in the wrong environment and his faculties protest against what he is trying to do, or some vicious habit is draining his energy, or his health is poor, or he is being led into dissipation by bad companions. A youth whose ambition begins to wane is not in a normal condition. When he is not stimulated by a noble purpose, and filled with a desire to become a strong man, there is something wrong somewhere.

### Carnation Changes Color.

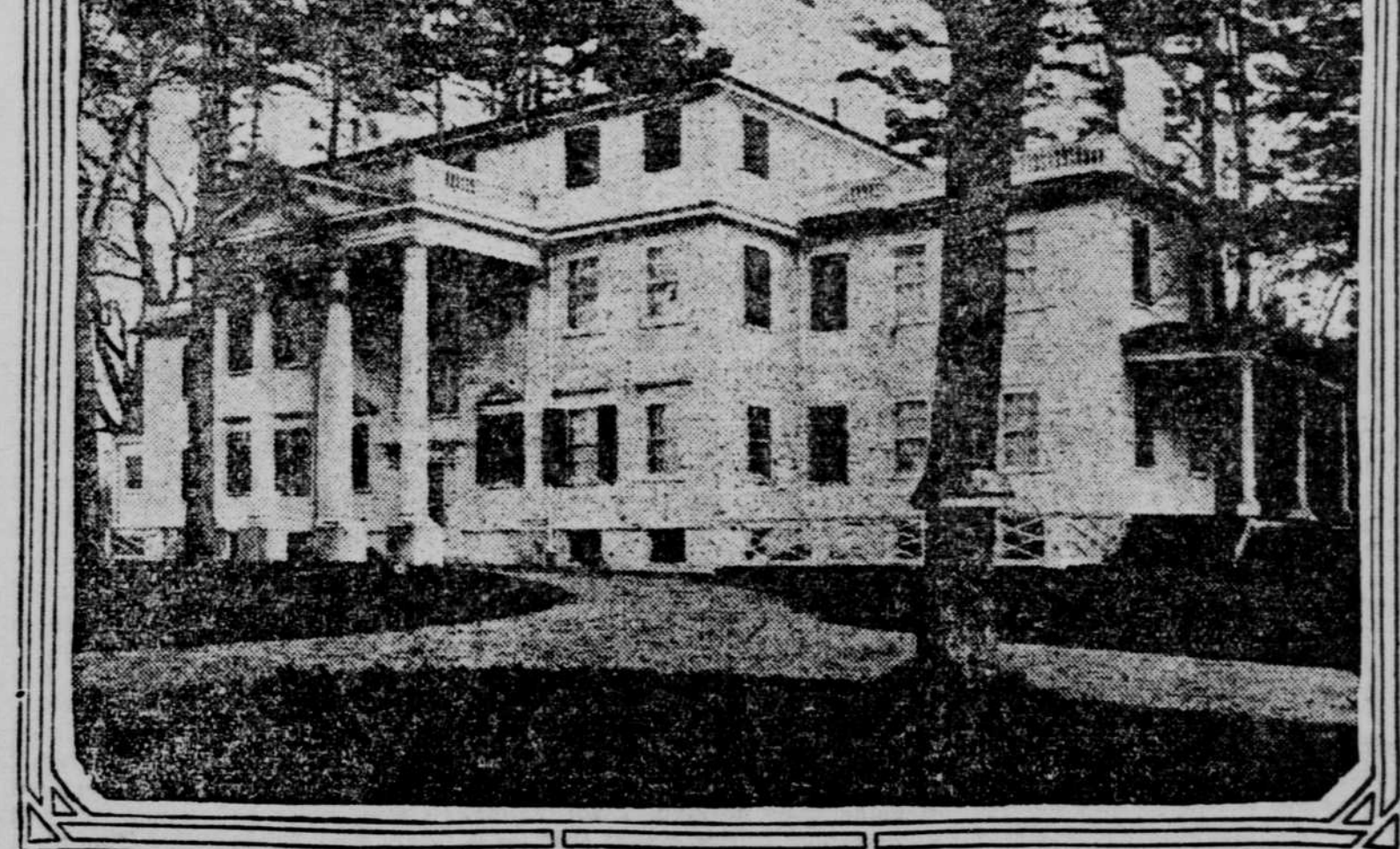
Luther Burbank, the horticulturist, has produced a carnation which changes its color three times on the first three days it comes into bloom.

On the first day the carnation is pure white, the second day it is pink and on the third day it changes to a deep red, which is retained until it fades. Gophers obliterated this type of carnation, but Burbank is at work trying to reproduce it.

### Cuban Shells and Sponges.

The value of shells, tortoise and others, gathered in Cuba last year amounted to about \$75,000, and of sponges, \$600,000. Of the latter the United States received about 35 per cent and Europe the remainder, France being the principal buyer.

### Old Endicott Mansion at Danvers, One of the Most Interesting of the Historic Places in Massachusetts



History, art and romance have all had a share in developing and giving interest to the beautiful home of Mrs. William Crowninshield Endicott at Danvers, Mass. In the seventeenth century Danvers Centre was known as Salem Village, and it was in this neighborhood that some of the thrilling scenes of the witchcraft period were enacted. A short distance from the main road out of Danvers stands a tablet upon which is recorded the fact that Nathaniel Ingersoll gave the town a plot of land to be used forever as a training field. Beyond this tablet one passes to an opening where stone gate posts indicate the entrance to the grounds of Mrs. Endicott.

The estate in part, was once the home of Nathaniel Ingersoll, and remained in his family for many years, until it was purchased from one of his descendants in 1814 by Joseph Peabody, one of Salem's richest and most influential merchants. It was bought as a safe retreat for Mr. Peabody's family, in case of an attack by the British upon Salem, and in the barns upon the estate, one of which is still standing, he stored some of the rich cargoes brought by his ships from all parts of the world.

For nearly eighty years this was the summer home of the family, descending from Joseph Peabody to his son, George Peabody, and at the death of the latter it came into the possession of Mrs. Phil Lydig's Fans.

Only a woman blessed with a clear olive complexion, superimposed on a rich red, and a dark, lustrous eye, like Mrs. Phil Lydig, would dare to present the bold contrast she does in carrying a peacock feather fan, says the New York Press. A woman of fair complexion would look positively pallid if she dared bring the iridescent colors in contrast with her face, but the former Mrs. Stokes can do it safely and to advantage. Her collection of fans, by the way, is one of the most varied and costly in New York and they are of historical as well as of intrinsic value. Indeed, she has two curio cabinets set aside for them alone, here she exhibits tiny be-spangled affairs of the empire period so small that they are called fans only by courtesy; others of ostrich plumes, with jewel laden sticks; Spanish fans, painted with scenes from the arena or bedecked by dark-eyed senators who smile from latticed windows on the minstrels who are caroling their lays. This collection as it stands would take hours to look

through and now that Mrs. Lydig's friends have learned of her weakness in this direction, they are sending her as many new treasures that it is likely a third cabinet will be called into requisition.

Great Discovery. The tourist found the little town in Arkansas in a great state of jubilation.

"Fair day?" ventured the tourist. "Better than that, suh," replied the lanky native in the stick-candy shirt. "Circus in town?"

"Wrong again, stranger." "Ah, I have it! The town has just had an election?"

"No, siree!" "Then what on earth is the cause of all the excitement?"

"Well, you know, stranger, mosquitoes breed malaria."

"Yes." "Well, our local doctor has just discovered that great results are brought about by giving the mosquitoes quinine pills instead of the people. That's why we are celebrating"

Followed the Fashions. The little daughter of a fashionable mother is accustomed to hear a great deal about the things that have "come in" or "gone out" of style. After a visit to Sunday school she attempted to repeat to her younger brother some of the miracles performed by our Lord. He was a most attentive listener, and when she had finished said:

"Do you believe that, sister?" "Why, of course I believe it, Jacky. It is true."

"I didn't know things could really happen like that."

"Oh, they don't now," she replied in a superior tone. "All that sort of thing was years ago and has gone entirely out of style."

Upon one occasion she had visited several stores with her mother during the millinery openings. As they were returning home they passed a market, with its wares displayed in the window.

"Oh, mamma!" she cried. "Look, quick! Turkeys are coming in style again. The windows are full of them."

### STORY OF "DEANS" KINDNESS.

How Jefferson Gave a Treat to a Shut-in.

At the Drexel institute one recent afternoon a group of people recalled a very charming incident in which the recently deceased actor, Joe Jefferson, acted a kindly part a few years ago, at the Philadelphia Record.

President McAlister had introduced Mr. Jefferson, who had made his address to the students, and was about to leave, when the doctor told him how delighted a certain art student would be if she could meet him. This girl was brought every day in her roller chair and had been a shut-in up to that time.

The veteran actor was delighted. So was the girl.

He talked, and talked well, and she listened.

In the course of the conversation he learned that not only had she never seen him act, but that she never had been to a theater, and didn't think it possible to go.

That was enough for Joe Jefferson. It was arranged in less time than it takes to tell it to have her brought to the stage door ten minutes before the raising of the curtain that evening.

When she was brought to that door, around which clings so much mystery, she was met by "Rip" himself in his quiet make-up, just as he has been received thousands of times by applauding audiences.

Throughout the performance the girl in her roller chair remained a charmed listener at one side of the stage.

### IS NATION OF CHAUFFEURS.

Every Boy in France Will Soon Be Familiar With the Machine.

The French nation so closely guards her supremacy in the motor world that plans are being made so that every French boy will be made familiar with the operation and principles involved in the construction of the automobile, says the Philadelphia Record. A course of instruction is being arranged for introduction into the public schools. There are a number of technical schools where the details of automobile instructions are imparted to those who desire such knowledge.

It is said that no city in the world gives the same encouragement to auto-mobiling as Paris. It has been decided that all the public hospitals shall be equipped with self-propelled ambulances and a very speedy car has been ordered to be attached to the municipal laboratory, where all the bombs found on the streets of that city shall be taken for investigation and destruction.

### Tobacco in Olden Times.

Master Prynce, the weak, well-meaning puritan, who is 1623 written an attack upon the stage, tells us that in his day tobacco pipes were offered to ladies at the theater in lieu of apples between the acts. A French traveler, M. Torevin de Rochefort, who published his journal in 1677, confirms this by telling us that he found smoking a general custom in England, as well among women as among men. Both sexes, he adds, held that life without tobacco would be intolerable, "because they say it dissipates the evil humors of the brain." When ladies stopped smoking they look to sniff. Women of quality about a century ago would not stir without their snuffboxes—beautiful enameled receptacles of perfumed midil rappee Lord Bolingbroke said of Queen Anne and her grace of Marlborough: "The nation is governed by a pair of snuffers; no wonder the light of its glory is extinguished!"

### Call of the Wild.

The bee in the clover,  
The bird in the tree,  
Are happy and laughing,  
As loud as can be.  
An' I'm here a-workin',  
An' doggone it all!  
The meadows and bayous  
Are givin' their call.

The meadows are callin':  
"The plover is here!"  
The bayou's are callin':  
"Our waters are clear."  
An' doggone it all!  
I'm here a-workin'; I wish  
I could get just a day  
An' could hike out and fish!

Could hike out and fish  
Where bayous are wide,  
And where trout are waiting  
Down deep in their tide;  
Or, I'd love to lie  
Beneath a wide tree  
The lazy bird's brother,  
The chum of the bee!

The lazy bird's brother,  
The chum of the bee,  
The bee sleeps all winter  
An' that 'ud suit me;  
The bird hops a twig  
The first thing in the spring.  
An' don't do a thing  
But just perch there an' sing.  
—Houston Post.

### Cured the Habit Suddenly.

Key, the new office boy, was smoking a cigaret and puffing violently, issuing large clouds of smoke, when the manager stopped his work, turned to him, and said:

"Do you smoke many cigarets?" "Yes, sir."

"Does your father know it?" "O, yes."

"Why don't he stop you?" "He can't. I've got the habit."

"Well, I'll break your neck if you smoke any around here." The boy never smoked another cigaret while employed by that manager.

### His Story of the War.

"So you were all through the evil war, were you?" some one asked the old colored veteran, who was cheering the band.

"Every step of it, suh!" "At the surrender, too."

"Ever' step of it, suh!" "What did Gen. Lee say to Grant?"

"Never said nuttin' suh—des chopped off his head an' went on!"—Atlanta Constitution.

### Arabian Horses for Kaiser.

A report from Adis Abeba, the capital of the Negus of Abyssinia, to the effect that the Emperor Menelik, the king of the kings, has presented six of the finest Arabian horses ever raised to the representative of the German emperor now at the Abyssinian capital. The horses will be shipped to Germany, for his majesty's stables.

### Would Aid Palestine Jews.

Archibald Forster, known as the "Arabian Livingstone" for his extensive travels in Arabia, is in the United States in the interest of the poorer Jews in Palestine.



"If your name is Lang, I want to speak to you."

good example of drunken and offended dignity.

"You're a good one," exclaimed the detective in evident admiration. "But it won't work. I know you are Lang and you may as well own up to it. Jim is lying at the point of death and wants to see you."

The mistake would have been costly had Louis acknowledged that he and Denver were on friendly terms, that there was a bond between them. Lang thought deeply, while apparently attempting to straighten himself up from the position his drunken actions had placed him. "If Jim really wants me, I will see him later. But I must not give myself away to this man under any circumstances—leastwise our secret bond." Satisfied that Regan knew him in his double role of himself and Smith, and also that he had been recognized as a visitor in Denver's office at least, he essayed to work a dodge on him to throw him from the scent. "Let the d—d scoundrel die! What do I care!"

"So you admit you know him? You are Lang, then?"

"I may be Lang, and I may be Smith, but it is as George Smith I owe Jim Denver a grudge—and George Smith never forgets a wrong! With all his shrewdness, all his cunning, Denver has never penetrated my disguise. D— him! I'll be even with him yet, if he don't die too soon!" Then as if recollecting himself, he suddenly asked, "Who are you?"

"My name is Regan, and I am a detective," the man admitted without hesitation.

"And who is Regan?" asked Lang, puzzling his brain to concoct some story of a plausible name to tell him in reference to the "great wrong" done himself by Denver.

"I'm Denver's side partner."

"Then what do you want of me? You can bet that Denver don't want to see me?"

"I want to find out why you go to his office." Regan was candid itself.

Lang leered drunkenly. "I'll not tell you. You'll give it away. You and Denver are too thick."

"Oh, I'm no particular friend of Denver," said the sleuth.

"Let's have a drink," said Louis, looking around and noticing for the first time that their stoppage in the open street and their conversation not being carried on in low tones, had attracted considerable attention.

Regan had realized the same thing. "You are right, we had better move on."

He had given Jim the credit of being an honest man. "Perhaps after all Denver is playing a crooked game; but I will not believe him treacherous on the evidence of such a man as Regan. He pays my expenses regular; he has never asked me to do a 'dirty' trick yet; he has made physically a new man of me, and if nothing more, rescued me from the gutter." Then to carry out his part before Regan he said:

"You may be right about Denver carrying on an outside business, but I'm not in it, see! Denver pays me a certain sum of money every month just to keep my mouth shut, and that is all there is about it."

"What's to hinder me from running you in?"

"What can you prove? You know nothing."

"Well, you are not much afraid of me," exclaimed Regan, with a threatening gesture.

During the conversation the two had drunk quite freely of beer. Louis, though apparently the worse for liquor before he met Regan, was far from being intoxicated even now; his brain was as clear as a bell. Regan on the contrary, was quite under the influence, for he had no sleep the night before and had been drinking heavily for several hours; it was only with a struggle that he managed to keep from going to sleep.

"Why should I be?" asked Lang. "You admit that Denver is not a friend of yours. Being only a private detective, you can only send me into your private sweatbox, where your enemy would release me."

"Who said anything about my being an enemy of Jim's?"

"You just said so! You would ruin him if you could."

"So I would, the d—d police hound!"

"Ough!" said Louis, to himself. "This police officer talks against his kind—he speaks like a thief! This man is either playing me for a fool to trap me, or else is not an honest man. I am glad that Denver is here to hear the declaration." Aloud he said, "Why don't you ruin him?"

"I'd do it quick enough if I got the chance! But he is too d—d honest to give me an opening."

This admission was a relief to Louis. If Denver was an honest man, then everything was all right so far as their compact was concerned. "You are smarter than I am, yet I have found—"

Louis was dancing the tempti-