

# The Convict Country: or, Fighting for a Million

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER  
Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Truancy Tragedy," "Antis," Etc.  
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## CHAPTER XVI.

### Lang Enters the City.

The order to his dogs to spring upon Lang and Wilson were the last words spoken by Paradise Pete, the brutal keeper. Wilson giving his attention to the dogs. For a moment there was a terrible time. Both Wilson and Lang fired point blank into the savage beasts' faces and with deadly effect, for it did not become a tussle—flesh against flesh, but one only of bullets.

When Golden arrived upon the scene with the torch and lit up the surroundings he was surprised to find the battle ended. Paradise Pete and his six man-killers, who on more than one occasion had been instrumental in tearing limb from limb the quivering flesh of escaping prisoners, lay dead upon the ground and standing back to back stood Lang and Wilson unharmed, yet vigilant.

"This is a bad business!" said Golden, "hacking his head at Lang, 'but I am not it's all over. Huilo, Wilson, is it?"

"Yes, this is me—or what's left of me," said that worthy coolly, and he put out his hand to shake with Golden.

"How is it that you were being pursued by the dogs?" Golden asked.

"Well, you see it was like this: Schiller last night brought home two captives, a Dr. Huntington and his daughter, of whom you no doubt have heard. It was his intention to lock the doctor in the haunted house, a prisoner, and take Miss Huntington to his palace as his wife, yet without the formality of a marriage, leastwise this is what he said to Huntington. Of course, this nearly crazed the father, and Miss Huntington, who is the bravest little woman I ever saw, knelt at the king's feet and prayed to him to permit her to remain but one night with her father—for her father's sake.

"Advance and give the sign," was the order.

Golden placed himself in position before the opening, one foot advanced, and holding up his right hand, palm outward, whispered "K."

"I'm in shape of a half question was the sentinel's ejaculation. "N," added Golden.

"G," said the sentinel. "What does that stand for?"

"K-i-n-e," spelled Golden. "The King of Paradise."

"This well. Who are you, where do you come from, where do you go?"

"I am Golden. I hail from Chicago. I go to the king!"

"Unbar the gates!" was given as a command to some one on the inside.

As the gate swung open far enough to admit a person, Golden stepped aside, so that Lang could be seen. "I have in my charge a candidate, who having paid his rightful fee, is entitled to the freedom of our city," said Golden.

and is enclosed on three sides. Walls of rock and shrubbery close up the gaps not otherwise provided by nature. The largest opening, toward which they were now journeying, was inclosed by a huge wall, through which the near base of one of the mountains, a huge gate had been left up to which the road ran. To one not acquainted with the geography of the country would have thought that beyond this wall, overrun with clinging vines, lay a city, so completely isolated appeared the place. No lights could be seen from the outside and no sound broke the stillness of the night. The roadway was hardly perceptible, yet Golden without hesitation approached the gate, and knocked with the head of his revolver upon the frame work. A wicket appeared open and through it came the sound of a voice. "Who comes here?" was the challenge. "Friends!" answered Golden.

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"Advance, candidate. Who else is with you?"

"Wilson."

"What does he do with you? He has been sentenced to life imprisonment in the mines and tried to escape!"

"At my request he returns to Paradise," said Golden.

"Why don't you disarm him?" was the sentinel's question, as the gates were closed behind the three friends.

"He is carrying Lang's gun. I consider him harmless."

"The man has been condemned to death by the king. It is my duty to arrest him!"

The party was now standing upon a high bluff, looking down upon the city, which was spread out before them. Lang, for a moment was bewildered at what he saw. The town was laid out in a circle. The houses, built close together, and of but a single story in height, were situated close up to the walls on all sides, as if it were to form a double barrier. From the lone window in each dwelling shone bright lights completely illuminating the paths which ran in front of the cottages, giving a very cozy and homelike appearance to the surroundings. In the center of the city was a massive building, in comparison with the others, at least fifty feet high, with plenty of windows, through which light streamed. Nearby were three other buildings of large dimensions, which were comparatively dark and deserted. There were streets and lawns, and here and there bridges spanned the canyon, which completely split the city in twain.

The well-lit building was the general assembly hall. In this building were conducted all the important society events. Off to one side, Lang noticed it at once, because it was dilapidated, lonely and dark, was a house which he recognized as the haunted cottage. Right in front of it, in bold outline, was the palace of the king. This was a grand structure, far superior to any of the other homes, for it was built of stone and enclosed on all sides by gardens of flowers and a well kept lawn. It was truly a grand sight, this city! Civilization in the very heart of the woods.

The trio were surrounded by an armed guard, several of whom at the seeming order of the person who had been conversing with Golden, laid their hands upon Wilson. He did not resist.

"Halt!" cried Golden to the guards, in a voice of thunder. "I am Golden, and I command you to leave this man alone!" The guards hesitated. It was evident, that they held him in high esteem.

"All right," said the first guard, motioning his followers back. "Of course, Golden, if you become responsible for Wilson, that is your affair, but you understand that it is a crime punishable by death to disobey the orders of the king."

"Do you mean to tell me, John Rogers, that the people of Paradise have granted Schiller the power of life and death?"

"It has not been granted him openly," replied the guardsman humbly, as if ashamed to acknowledge the fact. "Nevertheless, Schiller has usurped this function from the people. He is surrounded by a pack of bloodthirsty scoundrels who, for the privilege of living in luxurious idleness, are always ready to carry out his orders. The toughs are in power now; the really honorable citizens are in the majority, though of course I know that none is actually in love with him."

"This power must be taken away from this man," said Golden. "It is not right that he possess it. Then Golden told Rogers how the attempt had been made on his own life. "It may be your turn next; for that reason it should be your duty to enforce the law—the law is what we want."

"Well, you can depend on me, and my men also, for that matter. What are you going to do?"

"I am first going to get Lang, my friend here, the oath administered. Then I am going to see that the two prisoners who were brought in last night are not dealt harshly with. Though we are outlaws, Rogers, it need not necessarily mean that we are heartless wretches!"

"I will go with you," replied Rogers. "I have a bone to pick with Schiller myself. I owe him no good turn, and will be glad to do you a favor if in doing so I can revenge myself on the unprincipled scoundrel. It was but a month ago that he condemned poor Silverman and Reynolds to life imprisonment in the mines because they refused to do some dirty work for him. A short time before that Schiller made overtures to Dickinson, a bank defaulter, who ran away from Chicago with Genevieve Johnson, 'pretty Jennie,' they call her here, to allow him to live with her. Of course Dickinson was infuriated at the man's audacity. He struck Schiller. Schiller was too cowardly to strike back and protected with his power, he sentenced Dick to death. His miserable hirelings pounced upon the defenseless and wronged man, and threw him into the lion's den without a chance; without even a knife to protect himself with!"

Louis Lang could feel the horrors creep up and down his spine at the recital of the case of Dickinson and his wrong. What if Schiller should take a sudden dislike to him? Of what value would be his life? In saving Wilson from the dogs, he had, under the new regime, forfeited his life to the crown! Would it be exacted of him? But Louis Lang was not of the faint-hearted kind; he resolved that if he had to die, he would die bravely.

(To be continued.)

## OLD OF THE VETERANS

At Gettysburg.  
What is a conqueror more  
Than he who has conquered here?  
That one be lauded or e'er,  
The other scorned of men,  
Is there in the true scale  
One whit between the two?  
In which class, then,  
Are the better men?  
In which of the two are you?  
'Tis not material gain  
Nor show of outward part  
That hits mankind to a higher plane—  
'Tis the worth of the secret heart;  
And he with colors cased  
May truly surpass the one  
Whose colors fly  
In the evening sky  
So vainly do they try  
Belief that his cause is right  
As God gives him to see,  
And zeal in the final fight  
That one was the  
With this alone our guide.  
We pause o'er these mounds to say:  
To the Northern Blue,  
And this to the Southern Gray."  
—Floyd D. Haze, Kindred, N. D.

Roosters Carried as Pets.  
"The battle of Bentonville came as a surprise to most of Sherman's army, and there were some stirring incidents. But the scene that comes up first in my mind when Bentonville is mentioned is one to make me laugh. On that North Carolina march our brigade or division used pack mules instead of wagons, and the pack train was a picturesque affair, the mules being loaded with all sort of plunder. In addition to other things, nearly every mule carried at least one live rooster, and some mules two or three roosters."

"The roosters had been gathered up on the long march and had become great pets. So it was arranged they should be put in large wooden pails confiscated along the route, and these pails tied on the tops of the packs on the mules. The roosters took kindly to the locomotion, and while the mules were moving were very quiet. But when the train halted the roosters, anticipating release and the freedom of camp, would crow lustily."

"This was not so comical when the mules were scattered at camping time among the several companies. But at Bentonville there had been much hurrying and the whole pack train was collected in a sheltered position to await the issue of battle. As the cavalry and artillery moved forward into the fight we passed the pack train. The unusual racket and confusion had kept the roosters quiet, but one old fellow looking over the top of his bucket roused us as old friends and crowed vigorously. This started another until the whole aggregation went in action, every one of a hundred roosters crowing for dear life."

"It was ludicrous beyond description. The fun of it took possession of officers and men, and we went into the fight laughing and talking back to the roosters. We could hear them crow after we got down to business, and the boys thought it was a good omen and they told some of their prisoners about it. When we went into camp after the battle, the roosters, it seemed to us, crowded louder than ever, and certainly they were greater pets than ever before."

"Despite their affection for their pet roosters the boys in good time became so chicken hungry that the roosters began to disappear. A man who would not kill his own rooster would willingly sacrifice the last rooster of his best friend, and it became necessary to closely guard our pets at night. One night I tied my rooster to a long pole and pushed the pole over the roof of the house in which I had established headquarters for the night. A little after 12 o'clock I sneezed and there was a vigorous crow right under my head."

"That rooster crowed from that hour until daylight every time any one sleeping on the floor moved, and the next day my noisy rooster was the talk of the camp. Even Gen. Kilpatrick sent an orderly to me with his compliments, begging to inform me that he had at his headquarters a rooster that could lick mine and teach him manners. I sent my compliments to Kilpatrick and begged to inform him that my rooster was true blue, and fought only secesh chickens. I stuck to my rooster, and not a few of the boys carried their North Carolina roosters in the grand review at Washington.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Record of Illinois Soldiers.  
We may be very sure that no Illinois standard is taken by the confederates in the war of the rebellion, was captured without heavy cost, says a writer in the Chicago Record-Herald. The victors paid dearly for their prizes. It is refreshing, not from the standpoint of revenge, but as showing the caliber and tenacity displayed by the men in the West in that marvelous conflict, to get carefully through the old histories of the various regiments of the state and see how, in nearly every case, the disaster of a captured battle-standard was redeemed many, many times by the acquisition of flags taken from the enemy after a display of the most heroic and magnificent self-sacrifice.

Take, for instance, the case of the One Hundred and Fourth Illinois, known as "The La Salle County Regiment," and which lost two battle flags at Huntsville, Tenn., on Dec. 7, 1862. These two flags are part of the collection returned to the remnant of this gallant regiment. The One Hundred and Fourth had never been under fire before this date. Gen. Morgan, with a large force of confederates, entirely surrounded a few Union regiments after a record march of twenty-five miles to the Cumberland river. The entire command was inexperienced, but the One Hundred and Fourth was the only regiment that had never been engaged before.

Only a few months earlier these men from La Salle county had gathered together at Ottawa and stood with tears streaming down their cheeks while the women of that town presented them with their beautiful standards. And now, at their very first meeting with the enemy, the colors had been captured, and all La Salle county was in mourning. Over 150 soldiers in the regiment were killed on that day, and the majority

## NEW PROFESSIONS PAY WELL.

Expert Knowledge of One Subject Always in Demand.  
"New professions pay well, in spite of all that is said against them," said a man of forty who had abandoned a general law practice to take a specialist's position in a technical training school. "We don't hear so much about the overcrowding of professions as we used to. The technical training schools scattered over the land teach doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and editors to divide their work into separate departments. Salaries for specialists drawn from all the old professions range from \$6,000 to \$30,000 a year. A man who commands more than the last-named figure must be exceptionally clever in one line of work."

"It is never too late for a man to begin. I know a New York physician who thought he was doing very well with \$3,000 in the general run of his profession until he was 50 years old. But he was fond of roses, and read everything that he could get hold of about their culture, the question of reducing the cost of existing varieties and the secret of producing new ones. He gets \$12,000 a year now from a farm that sends the highest-priced roses to New York, Boston and Philadelphia."

"There is no end of variety of pursuits for which a man can prepare himself through a technical education. The telephone alone has opened up a vast field. Then there is mining, bridge building, electrical specialties and chemistry. The main thing is to screw up courage to get out of the rut."

VILLAGES ARE TO VANISH.  
Three Hamlets to Be Obliterated to Increase New York's Water Supply.  
Three more of the Croton valley's most picturesque villages are soon to be obliterated to meet the ever-increasing demand of New York city or water. The hamlets doomed by the watershed authorities are Croton Falls, Cross River and a part of the town of Somers. The houses, churches, stores, shops and even the cemeteries are to be blotted out, leaving only the bare land, which will be flooded with water, making two lakes, each about four miles long. The first of the villages to go will be Cross River, where New York has begun the erection of an immense dam to cost \$2,900,000, one of the busiest manufacturing centers of Westchester county. It has a population of 500, with a postoffice, three churches, two schools, a cemetery and a half dozen stores and shops.

The place was founded in revolutionary times and was famous generation ago for its paper manufacturing. The people will be paid for their property at "market value," but this will hardly compensate them for the loss of their homes and the breaking up of their associations.

About 700 persons in the three condemned towns will lose their homes and business, and most of them will be compelled to go out in the world and begin life over among strangers. In the case of the old people the circumstances are pathetic, and many sad scenes are expected when the time arrives for them to bid farewell to the homes and neighbors they have known since childhood.

Though the moon looks best when it is full, it's different with a man. Advice that has no value is the kind most people hand out gratis.

## Printed Wartime "Extra."

"That story of Major L. H. Drury at Gordon's Mills," said the Colonel, "interested me greatly. It reminded me that before the war Major Drury published at Berlin, Wis., the Green Lake Democrat, and thereby hangs another story. Knowing Drury well, a good many printers enlisted in the Third Wisconsin or Badger battery. After Corinth Drury's battery was ordered to Iuka, Miss. After the command had gone into camp some of the printer boys strolled into town and were attracted by the sign 'Printing Office.' They went in, to find only the devil, who said he was in charge and that the office force had gone into the Confederate army to get their rights. Thereupon the devil disappeared."

"Major Drury was a good disciplinarian, and from force of habit the boys proceeded formally to elect an editorial staff and to detach them selves for duty at the cases. They threw off their blouses, set to work to get out an issue of the Badger Bulletin, and kept at work until the new paper was replete with grapevine news from the front, special telegrams from home, spicy paragraphs, and comments on the doings of the battery and the regiments brigaded with it. Then the soldier printers detached themselves for special service as newboys."

"The brigade was electrified by the cry, 'Here's your Badger Bulletin! All the latest news for 10 cents!' The papers sold like extras on election night, but the story goes that the circulating department never accounted for money received and that the treasurer never declared a dividend. Some of the printers of that day pretend to believe that the treasurer is still looking for them to distribute the fund produced by the sale of the only issue of the Iuka Badger Bulletin.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Was a Veteran at 15.  
Gustav A. Schurmann, who died recently at his home in Harlem, was probably the youngest veteran of the civil war. He was 55 years old, and he and his friends in his Grand Army post claimed that he was the youngest veteran. He went to war when he was 11 years old as a drummer boy in the Fortieth New York volunteers. At Harrison's Landing the boy was detailed to act as an orderly to Gen. Phil Kearny."

After Kearny's death at Chantilly the boy served as a bugler for Gens. Birney, Stoneman and Sickles. It was with Gen. Sickles that he met the Lincoln. The President, Mrs. Lincoln, and Tad, then 10 years old, came from Washington to pay the commanding general a visit. Tad and the drummer boy became chums, and Schurmann went to Washington with the President's family and lived at the White House as Tad's playmate until he was recalled to act as bugler for Gen. Sickles.

Schurmann remained at the front until the close of the war and then came home as a veteran, aged 15.

Gen. Pepperell's Victory.  
Years before this country declared its independence of Great Britain the men of the American colonies engaged in many fierce and sanguinary wars with the French who dwelt to the north of them in what is now the Dominion of Canada. One of the strongholds of the French was Quebec on the River St. Lawrence. Another, more heavily fortified even than Quebec was the city of Louisbourg on the island of Cape Breton, which is now a part of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia. Take a good map and you will find the site of Louisbourg quite near the present city of Sydney, which is the biggest town in Cape Breton. In 1745 the people of New England fitted out an expedition against Louisbourg. It was commanded by Gen. William Pepperell, who was born at Kittery in Maine, June 24, in the year 1696. It was not thought that the New Englanders with their comparatively slight knowledge of engineering could compel the surrender of a place so carefully and scientifically fortified as Louisbourg, but they succeeded, nevertheless, and after the surrender of the city, Gen. Pepperell received the honor of knighthood from the grateful English government.

Officers of G. A. R. Departments.  
The recently elected officers of the Grand Army of the Department of Kansas are: Department commander, P. H. Coney of Topeka; senior vice commander, George W. Thatcher of Great Bend; junior vice commander, R. D. Talbot of Parsons; medical director, Dr. George W. McNailey of Quenemo; chaplain, the Rev. W. H. Irvin of Lawrence.

The newly elected officers of the G. A. R. in the Department of Missouri are: Department commander, Henry Fairback of St. Louis; senior vice commander, John M. Williams of California; junior vice commander, A. J. Laning of Brookfield; medical director, Dr. Henry N. Keener of St. Louis; chaplain, the Rev. T. J. Ferril of Bowling Green.

## AGRICULTURE



The Army Worm.  
Reports from various sections of Illinois and Indiana show the army worm to be present and doing considerable damage. There are several varieties of army worms, but the one that is most commonly met with is known scientifically as Leucania unipuncta. This worm is a little more than an inch in length, gray or dingy black in color, with black stripes and narrow lines of white on the back, and under side greenish. On the sides are narrow lines of yellow running from the tail to the head and also a black stripe. The head is smooth and yellowish. The insect is common in many places, but little attention is generally paid to it, as it does not become troublesome until it appears in sufficient numbers to constitute an army. The

Fruits on the Farm.  
It has been my observation that the farm that has on it a complete array of fruit-bearing trees, canes and vines is the farm that sells at a fancy price in the market. The ordinary mortal, if he has the money with which to purchase a farm, will pay a good deal more for one on which are the different kinds of fruits growing in considerable quantities than he will pay for a few farm buildings and barren land. The money value of a well-ordered farm is out of all proportion to the money that has been put into it.

As an illustration of this I have in mind a little place on the edge of a neighboring village. A man had bought a lot for \$200 and put on a \$400 house. Then he spent a few dollars in trees of various kinds and set them out. He did nothing more, except live on the place for a few years and incidentally take care of the trees and shrubs. He told me that he thought he could get \$550 or \$700 for the place if he wanted to.

But in the meantime the little place had grown into a thing of beauty, and anyone passing would say that it had the best arranged yard on the street and that the shade trees were artistically arranged. A man living on the street was looking at the place and admiring it and asked the owner what he would take for it. "Oh, a thousand dollars," he replied, thinking this price one that would stagger the other. But the other man quietly said, "I'll take the place," and he did. The few years of growth in the trees and shrubs had done the work. They had been growing into money while the owner was sleeping.

Fruits on the farm are no less enticing to the buyer, but on the other hand endear the farm so to the occupants that they seldom want to let go of it. If you wish to wear your family from the old place, don't plant fruit trees, fruit canes or vines.—Milton Knight, Cherry Co., Nebr., in Farmers' Review.

Good Foliage; Good Fruit.  
There is a saying among some orchardists that good foliage means good fruit. While this is not true in every respect, yet it is true that good foliage is necessary if we are to have a large amount of fruit. The growing apple cannot use food material that has come up through the tree directly from the roots. It must pass up through the tree and into the limbs and leaves, in which latter place it is combined with the carbon from the air, and is then ready to be carried back to the fruit, into which it passes and is used in the development of the tender cells that form the flesh of the apple as well as every other part of it. It is obvious, therefore, that the amount of fruit the tree can produce will be regulated largely by the amount of material that can be prepared in the leaves. If, therefore, blight or rust, or caterpillars are permitted to destroy the leaves, the preparation of food is stopped, and no more fruit can be developed. Many a farmer has seen his trees defoliated when the fruit was half grown, and has seen that fruit ripen without increasing in size. This was because of this same lack of foliage. Therefore the protection of the foliage becomes one of the most important objects of the intelligent orchardist. Therefore he sprays his trees with fungicides and with insecticides that he may have a healthy foliage during the entire growing season.

Humus in Orchard Soils.  
The soil of the orchard frequently becomes exhausted without the owner suspecting it. In many orchards the grass is mowed and made into hay. This removes annually a certain amount of humus from the ground. In the meantime the trees themselves are removing humus by their roots and putting it into fruit and foliage. The fruit is carried away, and the leaves fall to the ground. These leaves do not get back into the ground to form humus, as they would in a state of nature, but are driven by the wind into windrows and then raked up and burned by the orchardist, intent upon improving the appearance of his orchard, or of destroying the insects and fungi that are on the leaves and twigs mingled with them. Under modern orcharding these processes cannot be changed. The supply of humus, however, must be kept up, and there is no other way of doing this than by plowing in large quantities of farm yard manure, or of growing leguminous crops to be turned under. All these are commended for the use of the orchardist whose orchard gives signs of falling in productivity, or of becoming more subject to death. The less humus there is in the soil, the more quickly does it harden during the dry spell. The more humus there is in the soil, the more mellow is it, and the easier does it resist drouth.

The Blight Spore.  
Professor Craig, of Cornell University, has for several years been studying the cause of blight on the pear tree, apple and other fruits. No greater result has been obtained, and none more necessary to the understanding of blight, than his discovery of the character of the spore itself. It has always been supposed that blight spores were blown by the wind, and that certain warm winds, in moist weather, carried the spores to numerous trees, where they germinated quickly. But he has discovered that the spore is glutinous, that is, sticky, and is transported only by adhesion to some moving object. The object most commonly used as a point of adhesion for the spore is the honey bee. Hence the problem resolves itself into several others, one of which is the coating of the tree affected by the blight with something that will prevent the bees from visiting it and carrying the spores to the blossoms and tender leaf ends of healthy trees.

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## HORTICULTURE



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Golden knocked with the head of his revolver upon the gate.

"King Schiller seemed to revel in the pain and torture that he was making Huntington undergo, and he brutally refused the request of the girl. As I understand the case, Schiller has never asked the girl to be his wife, and you know, as you helped to frame the laws, that a woman once within the walls of our city has an equal right with the man to say whether she will be that man's wife or not. As Miss Huntington refused to become his wife voluntarily, Schiller attempted to carry out his threat. The case appealed to me.

"I stepped forward and demanded that Schiller grant her request. Schiller turned on me like a savage beast and addressed me as a meddling upstart, heaping curses of a most horrible nature upon my head! I was enraged at his gross villainy and I struck him.

"I realized my mistake the minute I struck him; my chances for aiding the doctor and his daughter were now slim. The king sentenced me then and there to work in the mines for life! But to a certain extent I carried my point, for he relented and allowed the girl and her father to remain together last night, and I was locked in the cellar preparatory to being sent to the mines. During the night I managed to make my escape through the cellar window and, as I thought, over the walls of the city without being seen. It appears, however, that Schiller had purposely left this chance open to me, for Paradise Pete and his dogs were set on my trail early this morning and have kept it up all day, until at last they routed me out of my hiding place, as you are aware. Now that I am free I swear I will be even with Schiller, king though he is!"

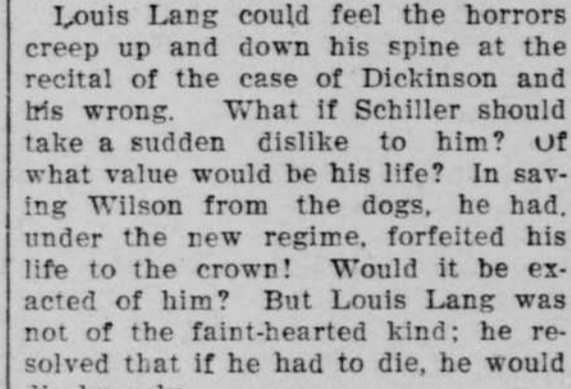
"I am with you in that!" said Lang. "Count me in!" said Golden. "I am afraid, though, that you boys have gotten yourself into serious trouble by killing the dogs. (Then to Lang) "You can escape if you want to!"

"I am still resolved to go on," replied the youth. "I cannot, and I will not while I live see a helpless woman wronged if in my power to prevent it."

"Them's my sentiments, also!" replied Wilson. "I am willing to go back and run the death gauntlet, if necessary. But I don't think that it will amount to that, for you, Golden, with a majority of the citizens at your back can enforce the law that will give me a chance and that's all I want!"

"You are right," returned Golden. "I can enforce the law, and I will! And if you are as handy in a fight with man as you are with beasts, to-morrow, no matter if you are condemned to die to-night, you may be a free man. Let us go to the city."

The City of Paradise, as Golden said, lies between three mountains, or rather hills of large dimensions,



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and is enclosed on three sides. Walls of rock and shrubbery close up the gaps not otherwise provided by nature. The largest opening, toward which they were now journeying, was inclosed by a huge wall, through which the near base of one of the mountains, a huge gate had been left up to which the road ran. To one not acquainted with the geography of the country would have thought that beyond this wall, overrun with clinging vines, lay a city, so completely isolated appeared the place. No lights could be seen from the outside and no sound broke the stillness of the night. The roadway was hardly perceptible, yet Golden without hesitation approached the gate, and knocked with the head of his revolver upon the frame work. A wicket appeared open and through it came the sound of a voice. "Who comes here?" was the challenge. "Friends!" answered Golden.

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As the gate swung open far enough to admit a person, Golden stepped aside, so that Lang could be seen. "I have in my charge a candidate, who having paid his rightful fee, is entitled to the freedom of our city," said Golden.

"Advance, candidate. Who else is with you?"

"Wilson."

"What does he do with you? He has been sentenced to life imprisonment in the mines and tried to escape!"

"At my request he returns to Paradise," said Golden.

"Why don't you disarm him?" was the sentinel's question, as the gates were closed behind the three friends.

"He is carrying Lang's gun. I consider him harmless."

"The man has been condemned to death by the king. It is my duty to arrest him!"

The party was now standing upon a high bluff, looking down upon the city, which was spread out before them. Lang, for a moment was bewildered at what he saw. The town was laid out in a circle. The houses, built close together, and of but a single story in height, were situated close up to the walls on all sides, as if it were to form a double barrier. From the lone window in each dwelling shone bright lights completely illuminating the paths which ran in front of the cottages, giving a very cozy and homelike appearance to the surroundings. In the center of the city was a massive building, in comparison with the others, at least fifty feet high, with plenty of windows, through which light streamed. Nearby were three other buildings of large dimensions, which were comparatively dark and deserted. There were streets and lawns, and here and there bridges spanned the canyon, which completely split the city in twain.

The well-lit building was the general assembly hall. In this building were conducted all the important society events. Off to one side, Lang noticed it at once, because it was dilapidated, lonely and dark, was a house which he recognized as the haunted cottage. Right in front of it, in bold outline, was the palace of the king. This was a grand structure, far superior to any of the other homes, for it was built of stone and enclosed on all sides by gardens of flowers and a well kept lawn. It was truly a grand sight, this city! Civilization in the very heart of the woods.

The trio were surrounded by an armed guard, several of whom at the seeming order of the person who had been conversing with Golden, laid their hands upon Wilson. He did not resist.

"Halt!" cried Golden to the guards, in a voice of thunder. "I am Golden, and I command you to leave this man alone!" The guards hesitated. It was evident, that they held him in high esteem.

"All right," said the first guardsman, motioning his followers back. "Of course, Golden, if you become responsible for Wilson, that is your affair, but you understand that it is a crime punishable by death to disobey the orders of the king."

"Do you mean to tell me, John Rogers, that the people of Paradise have granted Schiller the power of life and death?"

"It has not been granted him openly," replied the guardsman humbly, as if ashamed to acknowledge the fact. "Nevertheless, Schiller has usurped this function from the people. He is surrounded by a pack of bloodthirsty scoundrels who, for the privilege of living in luxurious idleness, are always ready to carry out his orders. The toughs are in power now; the really honorable citizens are in the majority, though of course I know that none is actually in love with him."

"This power must be taken away from this man," said Golden. "It is not right that he possess it. Then Golden told Rogers how the attempt had been made on his own life. "It may be your turn next; for that reason it should be your duty to enforce the law—the law is what we want."

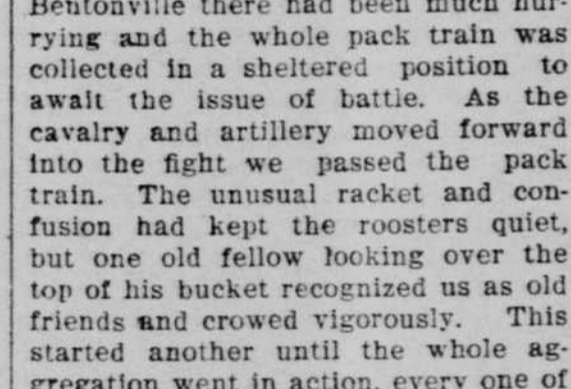
"Well, you can depend on me, and my men also, for that matter. What are you going to do?"

"I am first going to get Lang, my friend here, the oath administered. Then I am going to see that the two prisoners who were brought in last night are not dealt harshly with. Though we are outlaws, Rogers, it need not necessarily mean that we are heartless wretches!"

"I will go with you," replied Rogers. "I have a bone to pick with Schiller myself. I owe him no good turn, and will be glad to do you a favor if in doing so I can revenge myself on the unprincipled scoundrel. It was but a month ago that he condemned poor Silverman and Reynolds to life imprisonment in the mines because they refused to do some dirty work for him. A short time before that Schiller made overtures to Dickinson, a bank defaulter, who ran away from Chicago with Genevieve Johnson, 'pretty Jennie,' they call her here, to allow him to live with her. Of course Dickinson was infuriated at the man's audacity. He struck Schiller. Schiller was too cowardly to strike back and protected with his power, he sentenced Dick to death. His miserable hirelings pounced upon the defenseless and wronged man, and threw him into the lion's den without a chance; without even a knife to protect himself with!"

Louis Lang could feel the horrors creep up and down his spine at the recital of the case of Dickinson and his wrong. What if Schiller should take a sudden dislike to him? Of what value would be his life? In saving Wilson from the dogs, he had, under the new regime, forfeited his life to the crown! Would it be exacted of him? But Louis Lang was not of the faint-hearted kind; he resolved that if he had to die, he would die bravely.

(To be continued.)



Golden knocked with the head of his revolver upon the gate.