

# The CONVICT COUNTRY:

OF FIGHTING FOR A MILLION

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER

Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Tragic Comedy," "Aids," 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, compositely.

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 hiccup. "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?"



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

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. "D'ye want to insult me?" It was a very 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 nature 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."

The twin 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 stairway) 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 bleary 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!" "Phew!" whistled Lang, as if acknowledging that such was the case.

"You accuse him 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. 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 rattle 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 dangling the tempting 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 masterstroke! 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 youngest widow's wedding day, and the signs and omens were fruitifying 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 there in. 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.

## GOVERNMENT LIGHT.

### HISTORIC CHICKAMAUGA PARK ABLAZE WITH ILLUMINATION.

United States System of Lighting Military Post Pronounced Gratiatingly Successful—Six and One-Half Miles of Mains—Sixty-Five Street Lights.

Chickamauga Park Ga., May 31.—The United States government has here in operation one of the largest acetylene gas plants in the world. The military post at the entrance of the historical Chickamauga battlefield where thirty thousand Union and Confederate soldiers were lost in the memorable battle of Sept. 19 and 20, 1863, contains about one hundred buildings, the seventy-five principal ones of which are lighted with acetylene. To accomplish this six and one-half miles of mains and two miles of service pipes are in use, while sixty-five street lamps brilliantly illuminate the avenues of the post.

In 1903 the War Department installed a test acetylene plant at Fort Meyer, Virginia. The results were so gratifying and the superiority of the illuminant so evident that the government, March 20, 1904, placed the contract for the Chickamauga plant, in which every citizen of the United States should have his pro rata of pride.

But the government has not confined its acceptance of acetylene to this military post. Since becoming satisfied of the efficiency, superiority and economical advantages of this particular illuminant, the United States has installed a number of plants in Indian schools and other government institutions.

Acetylene gas is one of the simplest as well as the most perfect of artificial lights. It is made by the contact of water and carbide, (a manufactured product for sale at a nominal price), is absolutely safe and gives a beautiful white light soothing to the eyes and nerves. It can be produced anywhere—in the farm home, the village store, the town hall, the church—and is so easily maintained as to be practical for all classes.

It is a matter for national congratulation that in beautifying so historic a spot as Chickamauga, nothing but the best, including the lighting system, has been deemed good enough for the American people.

### Fatigue of Work Feels Good.

Says a railroad man: "Men who grumble at work or fret about an eight-hour working day forget that a man will be tired at the end of the day whether he works or not. The fatigue of work is much better than the fatigue of idleness, and there is no pleasure like that which comes from the consciousness of having accomplished something."

### In a Pinch, Use ALLEN'S FOOT-EASE.

A powder. It cures painful, smarting, nervous feet and ingrowing nails. It's the greatest comfort discovery of the age. Makes new shoes easy. A certain cure for sweating feet. Sold by all druggists, 25c. Trial package FREE. Address A. S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

### Cure for Consumption.

A six months' tour by bullocky in South Africa is the latest cure for consumption, as advertised by a London doctor. Your own milk cow accompanies you, the pace is only two miles an hour, there are frequent out-spans, and vegetables, butter, butcher's meat, fowls and eggs are easily obtainable, it is said. The total cost is only \$525.

### Returned the Salute.

A traveler who visited the small Siberian town of Kansk tells how surprised he was by an incident in the theater. The first actress who made an appearance on the stage bowed to the audience, whereupon the whole gathering rose as one man and returned the bow in the most polite manner.

### Boston Tot Asks a Blessing.

"And, dear Heavenly Father," finished a Boston child at prayer time, "please bless my cat. Bless every part of him, for I love him so much that the very whiskers of his face are numbered. Bless his emerald eyes, his little rice teeth, his crushed-strawberry tongue and the little baked beans beneath his feet."

### Shortest Title of a Novel.

The shortest title ever given to a novel was "B"—sub-title "An Autobiography"—by E. Dyne Defton, in three volumes. Whyte Melville, in 1869, published a novel to which he gave the title "M or N?" a term well known to every student of the Church of England Catechism.

### Length of Rivers.

The longest river in the world is the Nile, 4,000 miles; in Europe the Volgo, 2,114 miles; in Asia, the Yangtse Kiang, 3,160 miles; in America the Mississippi-Missouri, 3,656 miles; in Australia the Murray, 2,350 miles. The short important river in the world is the Thames, 215 miles.

### Grows Six Inches a Day.

Catalpa grows at the rate of a third of an inch in diameter a year on good soil, says a writer in Country Life in America. There are fine summer days when the sprouts on a stump of sturdy root growth will grow six inches in the twenty-four hours. You can see catalpa grow, you can hear it grow.

### One room at Tsalkoe, the czar's palace near St. Petersburg, has walls of lapis lazuli and a floor of ebony inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Another has walls of carved amber, and the walls of a third are laid thick with beaten gold.

## STORY OF "DEAN'S" 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, says the Philadelphia Record.

President McAllister 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 quaint 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 automobiling 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.

### Might Have Been Worse.

Notwithstanding her tender years, Catherine's characteristics are in evidence; and the most pronounced of them all is the unfailing tendency, in the most harrowing situations, to look on the bright side.

On one occasion, having got hold of a hammer, she ambitiously endeavored to drive a tack into the wall, on which to hang her doll's hat. After repeated failures to hit the troublesome tack by clutching the hammer in both fat hands and thus delivering a terrific blow, she next tried holding the tack in one hand and dealing a less powerful stroke with the hammer in the other hand. The result of this experiment brought the whole family running to the nursery.

After the damaged finger had been bathed and kissed and bandaged, in the midst of various consolations and commiserations, Catherine's tears began to stop and her philosophy to rise.

"It don't hurt so awful bad now, mama. 'Sides, when my finger got hit, I was jus' holdin' the hammer in only one han'—an' jus' s'pose I'd beer strikin' with both hands!"

### Tobacco in Olden Times.

Master Prynne, the weak, well-meaning puritan, who is 1633 wrote 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 took to snuff. 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 snuff-boxes; 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 laughin'  
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 bayous are callin':  
"Our waters are clear."  
"An' doggone it all!  
I'm here workin': I wish  
I could get just a day  
—And 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 hike  
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.

## THINK OF IT!

This Pretty Matron Had Headache and Backache and Her Condition Was Serious.

### PE-RU-NA CURED



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The reason of so many failures to cure cases similar to the above is the fact that diseases peculiar to the female sex are not commonly recognized as being caused by catarrh.

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Address Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, O.

Every housekeeper should know that if they will buy Defiance Cold Water Starch for laundry use they will save not only time, because it never sticks to the iron, but because each package contains 16 oz.—one full pound—while all other Cold Water Starches are put up in 3/4-pound packages, and the price is the same, 10 cents. Then again because Defiance Starch is free from all injurious chemicals. If your grocer tries to sell you a 12-oz. package it is because he has a stock on hand which he wishes to dispose of before he puts in Defiance. He knows that Defiance Starch has printed on every package in large letters and figures "16 ozs." Demand Defiance and save much time and money and the annoyance of the iron sticking. Defiance never sticks.

It's better to believe all you say than half you hear.

I am sure Piso's Cure for Consumption saved my life three years ago.—Mrs. THOS. ROMBINS, Map's Street, Norwich, N. Y., Feb. 17, 1905.

A society man is neither ornamental nor useful.

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