The CONVICT COUNTRY: or, FIGHTING for a MILLION

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER

Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Tenement Tragedy," "Anila," 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 shot him through the heart before 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, shaking his head at Lang, "but I am glad it's all over. Hullo, Wilson, is it you?"

"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.

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, tomorrow, no matter if you are condenmed to die to-night, you may be a free man. Let us on to the city."

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

"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?" 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-g," spelled Golden. "The King of Paradise."

"'Tis 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.

"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 cosy 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 also 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.)

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 specialities and chemistry. The main thing is to screw up courage to get out of the rut."

Though the moon looks best when it is full, it's different with a man.

Japanese Keep Secrets

The minds of the greatest naval and military strategists of the world are now intensely interested in solving the problem of the phenomenal successes of Japan in the Far Eastern conflict. The overwhelming victory in the Strait of Tsushima, annihilating one of the finest fleets of modern times, requires an explanation. It is easy to say that Rojestvensky simply placed himself in the hands of Togo, and the result could not have been other than as it was. This, however, does not explain why the brilliant Russian admiral sailed into the trap with apparently open eyes. As a matter of fact, he did not know there was a trap, for he imagined, or was led to believe, that the Japanese fleet was miles away from its actual position. This again but adds to the mystery.

The question now is not as to the superior fighting ability of the Japanese, but how the imperial government was able successfully to accomplish the unprecedented fact of keeping its

Gateway to Temple.

own people and the rest of the world for more than two months in absolute ignorance of the plans and whereabouts of the combined naval forces of the empire. As one somewhat familiar with the enigmatical features of Japanese character, I believe that in accounting for this marvelous strategic achievement a large place must be given to the persistent esotericism which forms so marked a characteristic of the whole nation.

In Japan esotericism is a fine art. Here in the West the word reminds us only of Buddhistic cults or the occult vagaries of the late Madam Blatvatsky, but in Japan the word stands for life itself. A not inconsiderable experience among the natives of Dai Nippon leads me to the conviction that they always have secrets to keep, and that none knows better how to keep them. The humblest citizen of Tokio is absolutely silent on any question he deems none of the foreigner's business, and there is everywhere among the people a persistent and inscrutable reticence on all matters of which it is thought the foreigner may disapprove. This obtains more so on questions under the ban of the censor.

No offense in the category of crime is deemed worthy of more condign punishment than the giving away of secrets, or even intermeddling with them. One of the greatest Ministers of State, Viscount Mori, who had graced the office of Plenipotentiary at the Court of St. James and also as Minister at Washington, was stabbed to death by a government clerk for daring to push aside with his cane a curtain that guarded the secret chamber where only a priest might gaze on the repose of the imperial ancestors. In Japan the secrets of the dead are as inviolable as those of the living.

Due to Two Influences.

This esoteric tendency of the Japanese mind, which has played so conspicuous and important a part in their past social and political history and in their recent victories over Russia, is due to two influences that for centuries have been running as a united stream through the minds of the people, bearing them on its way.

It is undoubtedly, first of all, a characteristic inherited from China, where from the remote past, by the institutions of guilds and other secret bands, the inner life of the people becomes

Jinrikisha.

largely a mystery to the foreigner, and he to them nothing but a "white devil." There it stands as a wall that no intruding curiosity has yet been able to pierce. International honesty and genuine brotherhood may some day break it down, but so far diplomacy has signally failed to enter the sacred precincts. As in China so in Japan, the oracular words, hidden, "secret tradition"; hijutsu, "secret art," and okugi, "inner mysteries," have a high place in all achievement. "It is not only a question of advisability or of delicacy and good taste," but the national way of doing things, and in times of war, at least, has proved a most efficient factor, not only in concealing plans from the enemy but from the whole world.

Influenced by Shintoism.

A second influence under which this historic inheritance from China has been developed and employed is esoteric Shintoism. The adherent of this faith believes that the human spirit never dies, but, under the influence of the gods, is in constant circulation on behalf of men. Every Japanese is open to the influence of these ancestral spirits, because, being a son of Heaven, he is no less holy than his neighbors. Esoteric Shintoism teaches that the ancestral spirits can be made to circulate for particular ends, and in this way the Emperor can make the infinite myriads of the immeasurable past permeate the finit human forces of to-day.

It is difficult for us to realize or even appreciate the apparently superhuman courage with which a man is inspired who believes that the infinite life of the past is pouring itself out through him for the defense of his ancestral shores. Depend upon it, this accounts in no small measure for the unexampled bravery and patriotism of the Japanese soldier.. Let any who doubt this read the imperial message to Admiral Togo, where in his Majesty takes occasion to say, "We are glad that by the loyalty of our officers and men, we have been able to respond to the spirits of our ancestors," to which the Admiral duly replies, "That we have gained a success beyond our expectation is due to the brilliant virtue of your Majesty and to the protection of the spirits of your imperial ancestors, and not to the action of any human being."

Family Is the Unit.

In another and no less effective way, also, does this faith tend to perfecting the Japanese soldier. In that country the family, not the individual, is the unit of the nation. He is taught from childhood to sink his individuality in his family, and that of his family in the nation. If you ask him how old he is, do not be surprised if he answers four or five hundred years, meaning his family; as for himself, he has no individual existence or age. Japan is a nation of families, and the whole nation is one family. In the language of

Image of Buddha at Kamakura.

the people distinctions of person and number are generally ignored, and true personal pronouns are entirely lacking. In ancient times if one member of the family came under the condemnation of the law, all the members had to suffer with him, even wife and children. The duty of primary importance to the head of a house is to perpetuate the family and keep the State supplied with defenders.

Higher than duty to family and arising out of it is duty to the Emperor, which supersedes all the duties of man. In a recent tidal wave in the northern part of Japan a father turned a deaf ear to the cries of his drowning wife and children, permitting them to perish, that he might save the Emperor's picture, and he was applauded for the act. A spirit of patriotism such as this, heartless as it seems, leaving wife and children to chance charity and piling up the dead in war, when charged with a faith in the influence of teeming myriads of its ancestral ghosts under the guidance of esoteric Shintoism, is a not unimportant factor in producing the invincible soldier that is to-day driving Russia out of the East.—J. Ingram Bryan in Philadelphia Ledger.

Following Carnegie's Example.

Morris K. Jessup, the New York millionaire, is emulating the example of Andrew Carnegie by giving $20,000 to the town of Westport, Conn., to erect a public library. Westport was once Mr. Jessup's home and the building is intended as a memorial for the Jessup family. The town agreed to appropriate $1,000 annually for the library's maintenance.

History of Kustenji.

Kustenji, the Roumanian port in which the mutineers of the Kniaz Potemkins surrendered, is the ancient town to which the poet Ovid was banished by the Emperor Augustus and where he died.

Doctor Brigham Says

MANY PHYSICIANS PRESCRIBE

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

The wonderful power of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound over the diseases of womankind is not because it is a stimulant, not because it is a palliative, but simply because it is the most wonderful tonic and reconstructor ever discovered to act directly upon the generative organs, positively curing disease and restoring health and vigor.

Marvelous cures are reported from all parts of the country by women who have been cured, trained nurses who have witnessed cures and physicians who have recognized the virtue of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and are fair enough to give credit where it is due.

If physicians dared to be frank and open, hundreds of them would acknowledge that they constantly prescribe Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound in severe cases of female ills, as they know by experience it can be relied upon to effect a cure. The following letter proves it.

Dr. S. C. Brigham, of 4 Brigham Park, Fitchburg, Mass., writes:

"It gives me great pleasure to say that I have found Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound very efficacious, and often prescribe it in my practice for female difficulties.

"My oldest daughter found it very beneficial for uterine trouble some time ago, and my youngest daughter is now taking it for a female weakness, and is surely gaining in health and strength.

"I freely advocate it as a most reliable specific in all diseases to which women are subject, and give it honest endorsement."

Women who are troubled with painful or irregular menstruation, bloating (or flatulence), leucorrhœa, falling, inflammation or ulceration of the uterus, ovarian troubles, that bearing-down feeling, dizziness, faintness, indigestion, nervous prostration or the blues, should take immediate action to ward off the serious consequences, and be restored to perfect health and strength by taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and then write to Mrs. Pinkham, at Lynn, Mass., for further free advice. No living person has had the benefit of a wider experience in treating female ills. She has guided thousands to health. Every suffering woman should ask for and follow her advice if she wants to be strong and well.

Slight Cause of Quarrel.

"You wouldn't think there'd be enough difference between the definite and the indefinite article to matter much, would you?" said a woman who writes for a living. "I made a lifelong enemy of a woman once just by writing 'the' where I meant 'a'. It was an account of her wedding I was doing. I said something about the ceremony being performed at the home of the bride's aunt and then I added that there were present 'only the few friends of the family.' The bride never got over that 'the' in front of few. It happened over five years ago and when my name is mentioned she still froths at the mouth."

When Labor Did Not Tell.

A home missionary who visited Sing Sing prison recently took occasion to have a heart to heart talk with one of the convicts. "Don't you know, my friend," said he, "that crime never brings success? It is only achieved by hard labor." "I did six months of it at a stretch once, and I didn't come out no richer than I went in."

Ways of Criminals.

Prof. Ferriani declares that 75 per cent of criminals perpetrate crimes in ignorance of their consequences. Many criminals, he also says not only boast of their crimes, but exaggerate them, even in court, and, to their own detriment, from a perverse sort of vanity.

Wild Dogs in Australia.

Victoria, Australia, is overrun with wild dogs, the descendants of stray domestic animals. They are as bad as wolves, and are ravaging the flocks.

HEART RIGHT

When He Quit Coffee.

Life Insurance Companies will not insure a man suffering from heart trouble. The reason is obvious.

This is a serious matter to the husband or father who is solicitous for the future of his dear ones. Often the heart trouble is caused by an unexpected thing and can be corrected if taken in time and properly treated. A man in Colorado writes:

"I was a great coffee drinker for many years, and was not aware of the injurious effects of the habit till I became a practical invalid, suffering from heart trouble, indigestion and nervousness to an extent that made me wretchedly miserable myself and a nuisance to those who witnessed my sufferings.

"I continued to drink Coffee, however, not suspecting that it was the cause of my ill-health, till, on applying for life insurance I was rejected on account of the trouble with my heart. Then I became alarmed. I found that leaving off coffee helped me quickly, so I quit it altogether and having been attracted by the advertisements of Postum Food Coffee I began its use.

"The change in my condition was remarkable, and it was not long till I was completely cured. All my ailments vanished. My digestion was completely restored, my nervousness disappeared, and, most important of all, my heart steadied down and became normal, and on a second examination I was accepted by the life insurance Co. Quitting Coffee and using Postum worked the cure." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

There's a reason, and it is explained in the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in each pkg.