The CONVICT COUNTRY: or, FIGHTING for a MILLION

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER.

(Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Tenement Tragedy," "Hate," Etc.)

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CHAPTER V.

Golden Escapes From Joliet.

Regan had drunk a cocktail during Louis' absence, and managed to clear his brain enough to realize that the conversation being carried on should (as Louis had suggested) be more secret; so when the youth returned he was ready to accompany him to the room engaged.

"How did you manage to get into the club?" Regan asked in a suspicious tone.

"I never got in."

Regan started. "How did you know about it, then?" he asked, amazed.

"I know very little about it," was the candid answer. "You know I am supposed to have killed a man? It was during my imprisonment in the Tombs that I first learned of the existence of such a society. I was invited to join it, but at the cost of more 'stuff' than I could then raise. But learned enough to know that there was such a place as the 'city,' and I now want to find out how to get there."

"I am looking for a bright confederate," said Regan. "I've got onto one of the easiest 'snaps' afloat these days. One of those bold daylight robberies that only requires nerve to successfully carry it out. There is about two thousand apiece for three good men who can carry it through."

"I'm your man," replied Louis promptly.

"All right," acquiesced Regan, "if you really have the nerve (sneeringly) to undertake a real 'job,' I'll put you in the way of it."

"You'll excuse me, Mr. Regan," said Louis, calmly, still intent upon drawing his antagonist out, "but how am I to judge of the sincerity of your statements? A while ago you admitted to me that you were making a good living—not by arresting 'us boys'—but by extorting 'bush' money from 'my people.' How am I to be convinced that you are not trying to trap me?"

"How was the escape brought about?"

"You needn't fear me," coolly replied Regan, biting at the tempting morsel of injured innocence held out by Louis, "for I am going to take a hand in the game myself. You will feel satisfied if I am with you?"

"Yes, if you work on the inside. But who is your partner?"

"That is the worst part of the scheme; otherwise it would be perfectly safe. The concoctor, the instigator, the man I want to please in this, is a person who has just escaped from Joliet. A dangerous criminal, with an enormous reward offered for his recapture, and of course the police are on the look out for him in Chicago."

"Say no more," said Lang. "I know who you mean—Simeon Golden!"

"You know him, then?"

"He was my companion in the Tombs."

"This is indeed a streak of 'luck,'" said Regan enthusiastically. "When Sim broached this job, he had fears of not being able to find a pal he could trust. I am certain now that he will be satisfied with you. It takes a powerful lot of money to get into the club you know; but it will take less if you can interest 'the scout' in your favor. You have as much at stake as I. You have a plan on foot to raise your wind, what is it?"

"Regan," replied Lang, in a tone meant at once to be respectful yet positive, "what I have in view requires but a single head to work. And, in fact, no one but me could work it. Should you come in on the deal, you would want your divy, and I need it all to pay my way into the country. You want me to aid you in your scheme but no help is needed in mine."

"Your scheme ain't ripe yet! How long do you suppose Golden will consent to remain in town after working our racket with all Chicago on the look out for him?"

Lang appeared crestfallen at this. "Don't you think he can be prevailed upon to remain long enough for me to work it? You know he is paid to bring recruits to the city. How do you suppose he escaped from impregnable Joliet, unless he had help from the outside?"

"Why do you suppose Golden places himself in my power?" asked Regan, proudly.

"Don't know," replied Lang, but he guessed pretty shrewdly.

"Simply because it was I, Jack Regan, who got him out of limbo! I was told that by giving Golden this aid I could save my entrance fee. I am as much a member of the club as he is; but he knows the way to the city, and I don't."

"Well, I must say you have made a 'killing.' How was the escape brought about."

"Oh, easily enough!" replied the flattered Regan. "I will tell you about it. I engaged the services of a lawyer, and went down to Joliet for the ostensible purpose of getting Golden to confess that he had a partner who was implicated with him in the crime. The judge, in passing sentence told Golden that if he would confess to having had an accomplice he would give him a light sentence, and we worked on the plan as if we were after such a confession; and readily obtained permission to interview the prisoner.

"Golden was brought into the prison reception room; a guard was placed over him, but no suspicion was entertained of me or the lawyer, so we were quite free to talk out of hearing of the guard. Golden asked for a chew of tobacco, and wouldn't write, until he got it. I was prepared for this, and was the only one who had any. In it was a fine tempered steel saw for sawing iron. The confession was filled out with the name of a man whom Golden knew to be dead. As a reward, the prisoner was given more comfortable quarters, an outside room, where he was allowed to breathe a little outside air. This room over looked the stone-yard and side-track which ran through it.

"This was over a month ago. In the meantime Golden managed to saw partially through the bars of his window, during the moments when there was a good deal of noise being made by passing trains. A week ago I went down to Joliet and engaged a suitable room and wardrobe for his reception when he should make his escape. At last came a rainy night and our Fortune seemed to play into our hands; I saw the opportunity to open the switch leading into the prison yard, and a freight train backed down and ran into the prison gate and wall and was wrecked. All night long workingmen and wrecking engines were working upon the wreckage to clear the track.

"Of course the prison guards were doubled, but that made no difference with Golden's escaping. I managed to mingle unperceived among the wrecking crew. At a signal from me, when the din was at its height, Golden let himself down from the window, by means of a rope made from tearing his blanket into strips and dropped unperceived into a rain water cistern directly beneath. At a second signal from me, just when a passenger train hove in sight, whose noise increased the din and attracted attention, Golden made his run for liberty across the open space to where conveniently upon the track stood a car with a derrick upon it. He climbed to the top of the swinging arm of the hoisting machine, threw the end of the chain over the wall, where I caught it and held it in place while he drew himself over unseen. I had clothes and disguises handy, and it wasn't more than five minutes before I had made a new man of Golden; and he was safe in the room prepared for him."

"You certainly worked it slick! And I will have to do something pretty foxy to outdo you if I go," said Louis with admiration in his tone.

"That's what you will!" said the gratified Regan. "And you will have to do it quick! Golden, you must know, is not going alone. His escape was planned by one of the agents, and the same party has deputized Madam Mendom to get together a small company of 'lady emigrants' to take to the city. That is another reason why he can't stop. If you can manage to rob a bank in the early morning, and assist us in the evening, you can go—but whether you do or not, you can make a couple of thousand as your share in our deal."

"I am certain that you mean your remarks to be highly sarcastic," said Lang, as a brilliant plan flashed through his mind. "But I will show you that I can rob a bank in the morning, just as you say, and will be on hand to help you in the evening. I tell you right now, I'm going, see? When do we three meet to plan this scheme of yours?"

"We don't have to meet," answered Regan. "If Golden arrives safely from Joliet, as I am positive he will, I will see him to-night and tell him about you, and if he thinks everything all right in the morning I will go down to John Atley's livery stable and charter a horse and light delivery wagon for the day. Should the deal be on, you will find the horse hitched in front of Pat Karragan's saloon, which is next door to Stephen Johnson's dry goods store. About twelve o'clock, whether you make your play or not, you come around and drive off with the wagon, and see that the horse is well fed and rubbed down, bringing him back about four o'clock.

"During this time I will be inside the saloon playing pool or cards for a blind. In bringing the horse back, drive into the alleyway facing west, so that when we draw off with the swag we can trail several blocks through the alleys without running across a car track. All you will have to do will be to watch the mouth of the alley, between seven at night and possibly twelve or one o'clock in the morning, and at the right moment help load up a lot of silks and linens, and drive off. Golden and I will do the work unless the program is changed."

"Well, if that is all you want of me," said Louis, "I'll leave you and kind of get my thinking cap on; I must pull strings for myself."

"Don't the magnitude and daring of the scheme paralyze you?" asked Regan, gazing in astonishment at the calm composure of the lad.

"No!" replied Lang quietly, rising to go. "My palm doesn't even itch. You imagine that I am giving you taffy about robbing a bank? While you are getting ready to work your scheme for $2,000, I'll raise $10,000! Do you think I can do it?"

"I am not so sure you can't."

"And it will be at the Jim Denver's expense, see?"

"I don't see how," replied Regan half questioningly, "and I'll have to take your word for it. But I've come to the conclusion that you are capable of anything."

They walked out to the bar together, and Regan took his parting drink alone, while Louis lit his cigar. Then they bade each other good night.

If the treacherous detective had not been under the influence of drink, he never would have made a confidant of Lang. When he began to ponder on the doings of the evening, he could not but realize the amount of valuable information he had been foolish enough to give away. And he fully realized that Lang had in nowise compromised himself. It was a matter of chagrin to him.

"What if Lang should play us false?" soliloquized Regan. "What wouldn't Golden do to me if he knew that I had given away the secret of the existence of the city? Treachery! I must not hint at it! I must not act but as if Lang was already a member of the society. In helping Golden to escape I have gone too far! I must enter the country. It is my only chance of freedom. I must make myself rich and famous. It has been the one dream of my life!"

What could these words of Regan mean? There is no doubt that Regan was two-faced, neither an honest detective nor a thief recognizing the code of "honor among thieves." Evidently Regan has an object in desiring to enter the city. Did he intend to betray his confederates? Time will make his intentions clear.

(To be continued.)

SENSE OF SMELL IN BIRDS.

Many Proofs That It Is Not Acutely Developed.

A study of the habits of flesh-eating birds shows that if they possess the sense of smell at all it is not sufficiently acute to enable them to use it in finding food.

All observers agree that when a carcass is hidden, by never so slight a screen, it is safe from the attacks of vultures and other carrion seekers; but the most remarkable proof of the ineffectiveness of the sense (if it exist at all) is afforded by experiences which Dr. Guillemard was good enough to relate to me. Many times it has happened, he tells me, that, having shot a wild beast or other game, which was too heavy to carry home, he has disemboweled it and hidden the carcass in the hole of an "ant bear."

On returning with natives to carry it to camp he has found a circle of vultures standing round the spot where the offal had been thrown, completely unaware of the carcass within a few yards of their beaks. Of observations proving the possession of the sense I know none, unless we are willing to accept as evidence the belief, which is very general among fanciers, that birds are attached to the smell of anise, and the similar belief of gamekeepers in some parts of the country that they are attracted by valerian. It is said that pigeons may be prevented from deserting the dovecote by smearing their boxes with oil of anise. Poachers are supposed to lure hen pheasants from a wood by anointing gateposts with tincture of valerian.—Nature.

THE PLAYWRIGHT-STAR.

Odette Tyler, Famous Actress, Values Doan's Kidney Pills.

Miss Odette Tyler is not only one of the best known dramatic stars in America, but has written and produced a successful play of her own. Miss Tyler has written the following grateful note, expressing her appreciation of Doan's Kidney Pills:

Odette Tyler

Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Gentlemen:—My experience with your valuable remedy has been equally gratifying to both myself and friends.

(Signed) ODETTE TYLER.

Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y. For sale by all dealers. Price, 50 cents per box.

Acetylene Gas as Explosive.

Acetylene gas is now used as an explosive. By means of an air mixture a force is obtained from it which can compete with that of powder and dynamite. Carbide of calcium is reduced to small particles and put into a tin box. In this the carbide lies at the bottom and above it is a partition filled with water. After the drill hole has been completed the cartridge is placed in it and the hole is closed with a wooden stopper. Then the partition is perforated by a blow from a pin and the water comes in contact with the carbide, whereby acetylene gas is generated. This mixes with the air of the drill hole. After five minutes the gas is ignited by an electric spark.

GRATEFUL TO CUTICURA

For Instant Relief and Speedy Cure of Raw and Scaly Humour, Itching Day and Night—Suffered Months.

"I wish you would publish this letter so that others suffering as I have may be helped. For months awful sores covered my face and neck, scabs forming, itching terribly day and night, breaking open, and running blood and matter. I had tried many remedies, but was growing worse, when I started with Cuticura. The first application gave me instant relief, and when I had used two cakes of Cuticura Soap and three boxes of Cuticura Ointment, I was completely cured. (signed) Miss Nellie Vander Wiele, Lakeside, N. Y."

Water Beds Drying Up.

That the earth will eventually dry up and all living things will die of thirst is the theory of a scientific writer. He says that in both Africa and Asia, and indeed in all the great levels of the world, the water beds are drying up. Many lakes well known during the historical period have entirely disappeared, while others are shrinking rapidly. "Explorations in central Asia have proved that for centuries a zone stretching from the east to the southeast of this part of the czar's dominion has been drying up. Deserts are gradually spreading and reports show that it is only in the neighborhood of mountains, round whose brows vapors condense and fall, that irrigation can be carried on or life itself can be preserved."

Friendly Offer Declined.

During the recent raids on the fishermen on Vermont streams a warden held up Michael Flynn of Pownal, a veteran of the civil war. Flynn objected to being searched and the officer drew his revolver to emphasize his authority. Flynn smilingly remarked that he had faced that sort of thing before and drawing a bad looking weapon from his own pocket asked the warden to step back twenty paces and exchange a few shots. Flynn brought home what trout he had caught.

EVER TREAT YOU SO?

Coffee Acts the Jonah and Will Come Up.

A clergyman who pursues his noble calling in a country parish in Iowa, tells of his coffee experience:

"My wife and I used coffee regularly for breakfast, frequently for dinner and occasionally for supper—always the very best quality—package coffee never could find a place on our table.

"In the spring of 1896 my wife was taken with violent vomiting which we had great difficulty in stopping.

"It seemed to come from coffee drinking but we could not decide.

"In the following July, however, she was attacked a second time by the vomiting. I was away from home filling an appointment, at the time, and on my return I found her very low; she had literally vomited herself almost to death, and it took some days to quiet the trouble and restore her stomach.

"I had also experienced the same trouble, but not so violently, and had relieved it, each time, by a resort to medicine.

"But my wife's second attack satisfied me that the use of coffee was at the bottom of our troubles, and so we stopped it forthwith and took on Postum Food Coffee. The old symptoms of disease disappeared and during the 9 years that we have been using Postum instead of coffee we have never had a recurrence of the vomiting. We never weary of Postum, to which we know we owe our good health. This is a simple statement of facts." Name given by Postum Company, Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book "The Road to Wellville," in each pkg.

HORTICULTURE.

Quality of Fruit.

Although the quantity of fruit now being produced in the United States is less than the growing demand, yet the improvement in quality is more needed than an increase in quantity, at least from the standpoint of the grower. At the present time we are producing a large percent of fruit that is unmarketable because of being wormy or under-sized. If an orchardist will separate his fruit into three general lots, one the marketable, second, the unmarketable on account of being wormy, and third, the unmarketable on account of being under-sized, he will be astonished at the results. The orchards are few that produce a high percentage of good-sized apples entirely free from worms or scab. It is evident to any student of orcharding that if we can make all of our fruit first class, the receipts will be doubled for the amount of fruit we now raise. Two general lines of procedure must be followed in the improving of the quality of our apples. The first is to get rid of the worms and scab through spraying. This is a science the value of which has been fully demonstrated, yet we find comparatively few orchardists that have yet come around to making spraying a part of their regular work, but without it it is impossible to check the codling moth, or destroy the fungus of the apple scab, which is the more destructive of the two. The second line of effort must be in the thinning of the fruit of the trees so that the fruit matured will be of good size. No matter how perfect fruit may be, if it is small it brings a very small price on any market. An apple tree that is thinned in time will produce as great a weight of large fruit as it would have borne of small fruit if it had not been thinned. Since as much is produced and a better price is obtained, it is evident that the thinning process is a profitable one to follow. It does not take as long to pinch off fruit when small as it would to gather it when mature, and the surplus fruit is worth more out of existence than it would be if left to mature and thus decrease the size of all the rest of the fruit on the trees.

Apple Tree Blight.

W. F. Weeks of Republic County, Kas., writes: "My apple trees have made an excellent early growth, but something has blighted all the new growth on the ends of the limbs and they now look as if fire had scorched them. Can you tell me what is the trouble and remedy?"

* * *

In reply to the inquiry made by your subscriber, would say that his apple trees are undoubtedly affected with the bacterial disease known as pear blight. This is my opinion, simply formed from the meager information which he gives. To positively know, it would be necessary to examine the tree or the affected part. But we feel sure that it is "blight." There is no known remedy whereby the disease can be held in check or killed by means of spraying. It can be held in check to considerable degree by removing the diseased twigs or branches. The cut should be made from four to six inches below the point where the bark is brown and dead. The branches thus removed should be burned, thus lessening the danger of further spread of the disease. The disease is more likely to attack trees that are succulent and growing rapidly. Thus conditions of soil or care which would produce less rapid and more hardened wood growth would tend to make the tree more resistant and less susceptible to the disease. Excessive a rapid, luxuriant growth favors the disease, therefore a rich soil, plenty of moisture and continued cultivation favor it. The affected branches should be removed with care and burned. Secondly, cultural methods should be adopted whereby a more resistant tree may be produced."—Chas. F. Eastman, Asst. Horticulturist, Kansas Agricultural College, Manhattan, Kansas.

Hillside Orchards.

The orchard on the hillside should not be handled as an orchard on the plain. The level orchard can be cultivated whenever cultivation is necessary without detriment to the soil, but on the hillside it is always necessary to take into consideration the possibility of washing by heavy rains. While it is necessary to cultivate the level orchard to get the best results, the hilly orchard must not be cultivated more than enough to permit of the sowing of cowpeas, clover, vetches or something else for a cover crop. This cultivation should be done in the dry time of summer when there is little likelihood of rain. If the seed is sown at once there will be enough moisture in most soils to germinate it, and by the time the fall rains come, the crop will have covered the ground with a rich verdure, and the soil will be full of roots which will act as soil binders. As we travel about the country we observe here and there hillside orchards where cultivation has been attempted. The result is that many of these hillsides are seamed with deep gullies and the rich surface soil has been washed away, leaving only the sub-soil, which is often deficient in fertility and humus.

In building a hog house see that its arrangement is such that it can be kept clean and cleaned easily when dirty.

Musical instruments in the home help to keep the boys contented to remain at home nights.

MISS ELLA OFF, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

SUFFERED FOR MONTHS

Pe-ru-na, the Remedy That Cured.

Miss Ella Off, 1127 Linden St., Indianapolis, Ind., writes:

"I suffered with a run-down constitution for several months, and thought that I would have to give up my work.

"On seeking the advice of a physician, he prescribed a tonic. I found, however, that it did me no good. On seeking the advice of our druggist, he asked me to try Peruna. In a few weeks I began to feel and act like a different person. My appetite increased, I did not have that worn-out feeling, and I could sleep splendidly. In a couple of months I was entirely recovered. I thank you for what your medicine has done for me."—Ella Off.

Write Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, Ohio, for free medical advice. All correspondence is held strictly confidential.

Do You Know

That death may lurk in your walls?

In the rotting paste under wall paper; in the decaying glue or other animal matter in hot water kalsomines (bearing fanciful names)? Use nothing but

Alabastine

Destroys disease germs and vermin.

A Rock Cement in white and delicate tints. Does not rub or scale. You can brush it on—mix with cold water. Exquisitely beautiful effects produced. Other finishes, mixed with either hot or cold water, do not have the cementing property of Alabastine. They are stuck on with glue, or other animal matter which rots, feeding disease germs, rubbing, scaling, and spoiling walls, clothing, etc. Buy Alabastine only in five pound packages, properly labeled. Tint card, pretty wall and ceiling design, "Hints on Decorating" and our artists' services in making color plans, free.

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Similar projects have made and are now making many millionaires. This has opportunities greater than others and merits of a sterling character. Not a mining or kindred proposition. Space is too costly and limited to explain fully here, but our literature tells all and it will interest you. Let us send it, also book and other references.

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207 acres, 125 acres in cultivation, balance in timber, which will average 1,000 feet high; good 8-room dwelling, 3 tenant houses, 250 apple and peach trees bearing, and other improvements; price $5,000. Situated 11 miles north of Gadsden, Etowah county, Ala. Have other farms larger and smaller at bargains. No trouble to answer questions. Write to-day.

Jesse Rogers, Jr., Knoxville, Tennessee.

A RAIN

on an unshingled roof will soon rust out the cover when you need it. Send for circular and prices of all roofing materials.

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