The CONVICT COUNTY or FIGHTING for a MILLION

BY CHARLES MORRIS BUTLER

Author of "The Revenge of Pierre," "A Tenement Tragedy," "Hallo," Etc.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.—Continued.

It was thought by Denver that the retreat to civilization should be begun at once, while the confusion reigned on the inside, and before the main entrance to the tunnel should be discovered.

When the party reached the main quarters in the cave, the plunder was divided up as to weight and value. It was estimated by the leaders that considerably more than a million had been captured, besides a large quantity of rare "Gems" and the counterfeiting plate which fell to Lang alone.

When darkness fell, the cavalcade set out. The party was rather handicapped for lack of horses, on extras being procured. Some of the hardy rangers started out on foot, leading their mounts, trying to keep their stock fresh for the race they expected would follow detection when their flight was discovered.

An advance and rear guard were placed over the train to guard against surprise. The party had not proceeded very far before word was sent in from the front and rear both that suspicion pointed towards an ambush and trap. The lines were drawn closer and preparations made to engage in a running fight; the idea being to put as much space between the rangers and the city during the night as possible, to get into the open country before any real fighting would begin.

To chronicle in detail the adventures of each of the important characters in this history would take up too much space—and their mode of escape or death would be so similar that it could hardly be of interest. Suffice to say, then, that there was a running fight kept up between the regulars and a band of convicts all the night long.

The regulators were handicapped by desiring to retain possession of the treasure as well as to escape. To do this, all the horses were massed in the center of the party, while two out of every three of their riders were sent in advance and rear guards to draw off the fire. The Denver party went to work systematically, forming a square with sentinels about twenty feet apart each way. Knowing just where each man was stationed, the rangers fired repeatedly at their enemies with certain results, while the convicts were unable to distinguish friend from foe and often shot at one another by mistake.

"String me up at once and be done with it."

When dawn broke the rangers with their treasure were within sight of Sub-station No. 1, and there they were reinforced by Johnson, four rebellious German girls, who could wield a gun as well as some of the men, and about twenty head of horses. This placed the regulators in very much better condition, as there were not over twice as many convicts pursuing them, and their stock in condition.

The Paradisians were reinforced during the day by the inhabitants of the surrounding stations and new stock which, when evening came, made it look quite blue for the treasure party. It was evident to Denver that if the convicts should make a determined rush they at least his little band would be overpowered, not, however without loss of life to the citizens. If the citizens had been as brave and fearless a band of fighters as were Hanchett's troops, the fight would not have lasted an hour. But different motives actuated the two rival factions. One was fighting for life, the other simply to regain a fortune.

Just as evening fell again the Denver party arrived in sight of a range farm house, a huge wooden structure, shedlike, surrounded by a fence of rock and turf, making quite a place of defence. By consent of the owner, who came down from his house to meet the party and find out what the matter was, the Denver party were allowed to drive into the enclosure and there for a time secure from attack rest their steeds and get a bite to eat. The man dared not harbor our friends for any great length of time, for fear of the consequences—neither did the rangers dare to remain very long for year that too big a crowd could be amassed who could simply overwhelm them by force of numbers.

Jim the yard was a coach belonging to the Overland Mail Line, which had been abandoned by the owners during a raid made by prairie outlaws. A desperate scheme was concocted by Denver. The outlaws had so surrounded the enclosure that it was next to impossible to get out into the open country without great loss of life; but it would be necessary to get out, and the quicker the better, while the convicts little thought the rangers would do so. Denver's scheme was to form an attacking party, by fitting the coach with one and all empty to ride into the very midst of the gang dealing as much destruction as possible.

Lots were drawn by the rangers to see who would form the party; each man knowing full well that he was risking his very life on slim chances.

Denver and Lang volunteered to be of the party of sixteen who were to fill the coach, so only 14 others were chosen by lottery; eight of the best and most spirited horses were then hitched to the coach and the regulators took their places, armed to the teeth.

It fell to the lot of Philip Farnum to drive the quintette. But Louis Lang was no coward, and knowing the chances the driver had of ever living to get the coach outside the enclosure, mounted the box with him, ready to grab the lines in case Farnum was wounded. Lang protected himself as much as possible by placing a box and a few rail supports on the top of the coach in a manner that would give the outlaws but one direction to shoot at him.

The intention of the coach party was to cut an opening through the mob when they least expected it; to cause confusion by stampeding the horses and to draw off a large part of the outlaws after the coach to enable the regulators to withdraw from the farm carrying the treasure with them.

Each moment was precious, for the convicts were being constantly reinforced by strangers, fully armed, and who imbued spirit into the attacking squad by force of numbers.

At last the moment came for action. The regulators prepared to open the gate preparatory to sending the coach out into the crowd. The gate swung in, the teams whipped into a maddening gallop, but guided by a masterhand, carried the coach loaded with human freight into the very center of the convict camp. Then real fighting began from inside the coach. The crack of guns were heard from all sides, but as luck would have it, the onslaughter was very much a surprise and the coach got fairly through the crowd before the truth dawned upon the outlaws.

The time necessarily taken up in capturing and mounting their horses gave the coach a good start. The outlaws not knowing but that the gold was being sent out this way, had to give chase, and a running fight was kept up for perhaps a half hour, before the convicts succeeded in crippling the horses to such an extent that the coach was brought to a stand still. The darkness aided the regulators more than the convicts and many of the pursuers bit the dust before the coach was surrounded. Then for about five minutes ensued a hand-to-hand struggle, but finally the regulars were either overpowered and captured, killed, or had been enabled to escape in the darkness. Among those who had managed to escape in the darkness were Louis Lang and Farnum.

And among the captured and alive was Jim Denver!

The loss of a number killed, the chagrin of not recapturing the treasure, so enraged the outlaws that they were little better than wild Indians. Schiller was among the victorious party, and his rage was something terrible. He recognized Denver at once—as did Bill Hawks, wounded but still in fighting shape. Both of these worthies had only been released from the treasury vault upon promise of doing something desperate to regain the treasure stolen, and were on their mettle to save their own necks.

The helpless Jim was kicked and cuffed and spit upon. He was hacked and cut most unmercifully by the enraged convicts, who recognized in him the head and front of the expedition which had cost them the loss of fortune and homes and the loss of many of their kind. They would have torn Jim limb from limb if they had not been restrained by a few led by Schiller, who desired to see a hanging!

Near by, was a clump of trees—an oasis in the desert of prairie—and toward this Jim was carried for the last act in his drama of life. Through it all Jim acted heroically, and stood the taunts and jeers and tortures like a martyr. Though he felt that his doom was sealed, Denver uttered no cry, nor begged for mercy. The only request he made was: "String me up at once and be done with it."

Then Schiller thought to make Denver beg and cringe for mercy by delaying his death. "You will swing soon enough," retorted Schiller, "but before you do we shall allow you to look upon the cringing, tossing forms of a couple of your confederates! Death, instantaneous, would be too easy a let-off for you!"

Jim shuddered, and tears, the only ones that ever came to his eyes, dropped down his hardened face at the sight of two of his half-dead comrades slowly strung up to the trees with ropes around their necks. But he did not cry for mercy—neither did he attempt to buy his freedom, which he could possibly have done. At last, after, as it seemed, an age to Jim, he stood beneath a tree with a halter around his neck, while swinging by his side were the blackened bodies of his comrades.

While Schiller was fastening the rope around Denver's neck, a great shout went up: "To the train! To the money! We can save it yet!" and during the silence which for a moment prevailed, far in the distance could be heard the rapid discharge of firearms—and now and then the gleam of a light could be seen like the waving of a torch!

In a moment the desire to obtain money overpowered the convicts' sense of gratification which the mob would have experienced in seeing Jim Denver strung up, and a few on the outskirts mounted their steeds preparatory to following after the regulators' train.

"String him up and leave him tied to the tree," was Hawks' orders, and quick as a wink was Denver swung off into air, and the end of the rope tied around the tree.

Scarce was this ghastly deed performed before the whole gang set off hunting for the rapidly disappearing treasure train, as guided by the noise of firing and the flaring of torches.

And Jim Denver's body was left swaying in the breeze!

(To be continued.)

ALMOST A PARDONABLE DECEIT.

Woman's Triumph Over Envious Friend, Mrs. Shoddy.

The portly woman in the cross seat of a Subway car was confiding in her thin friend in a voice which was heard above the rattle of the train.

"I had just picked out the table I wanted—a trim little thing to fit in a corner of my parlor—when who should come in but that horrid Mrs. Shoddy. I wouldn't have her know, for the world, that I was paying only $3.50 for the table, so I turned to one marked $18 before she saw me.

"'Buying a table?' she asked, with that deceitful smile of hers.

"'Yes,' I said coolly. 'I have almost decided upon this one,' I said, pointing out the expensive affair.

"You should have seen her face. Isn't it rather expensive?' she said.

"'Oh, no,' I said. 'You can't expect to get good things for nothing. Send that table to my address,' I said to the salesman. 'I'll pay for it on delivery.' Then I walked out. I waited outside until Mrs. Shoddy went away, then ran back to the store, countermanded the order that $18 table and took the one for $3.50. I was sorry afterward that I hadn't selected a table worth about $100 just to spite that woman."—New York Press.

Still Had Hopes.

Mr. Tyte-Phist had scraped an acquaintance with another passenger on the train.

"From Cincinnati, are you?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"In business there?"

"Yes."

"Long?"

"Seventeen years."

"Do you know a man named Hurdlestone?"

"I don't recall any such man just now."

"Rasselas Hurdlestone—he has a hare lip and he's crosseyed. You'd know him in a minute if you saw him. Walks with a kind of stoop. He went to Cincinnati twenty-seven years ago, and I reckon he is there yet. Had a short, stubby mustache the last time I saw him. Can't you seem to remember him now?"

"No," said the other passenger. "I have no recollection of him. Is he a relative?"

"Gosh, no," said Mr. Tyte-Phist. "I lent the measly cuss twenty-five cents the day before he went away from our town, and I'd kind o' like to get on track of him that's all."—Chicago Tribune.

England's Semi-Tropical Vegetation.

Few people have any idea that within five hours' railway journey from London there is a semi-tropical belt equal to many in South Africa. Ten minutes only by steamer across the sound from Plymouth will convince the most skeptical of this fact. In the private gardens belonging to the Earl of Mount Edgecumbe there is one place sheltered than the rest, though only separated by a short but stiff climb from the sea below. Here in the open flourish all the year round fine tree camellas of the true Cape varieties—rich and pink and creamy white, one tree exhibiting the peculiarity of its blossoming at once; sturdy blue gums grow here twenty feet high; fine clumps of giant and dwarf bamboo, splendid fruit and tree palms, the aromatic nutmeg and other spices, enormous geraniums, ferns from all parts of the world, and last, but not least, healthy oranges, lemons and citrons, all growing vigorously on their respective trees—a wonderful testimony to the mildness of the South Devon and Cornish coasts. —Pall Mall Gazette.

Misjudged the Chinese Cook.

A professional man has a Chinese cook and he recently instructed Joan to make a large handsome cake for a birthday occasion. When the cake appeared on the table it was a triumph of art, frosted and decorated with great skill, but to the surprise of everyone present it bore the initials "J. C.," which were not those of any member of the family.

Reluctantly, but certainly, the host was forced to the conclusion that John's religious enthusiasm had become perverted. The more conservative of the guests were shocked, and after the feast was over the host went to explain to John why those initials must not be used for such purposes in future. As the explanation proceeded John became much excited.

"Oh hellee, dam no!" he exclaimed. "Him Jelly Cake!"—New York Sun.

Couldn't See Rogers.

H. J. Allen, editor of the Ottawa (Kan.) Herald, tells of his efforts to interview H. H. Rogers when the Standard Oil magnate's special train stopped at his town.

"Get off the cars, you," yelled a voice from the inside.

Upon the next car Allen reached the second step.

"Was you aiming to see any pusson aroun' here?" inquired a dark complexioned party. He swung himself carefully on one foot and moved the other through the air as though to try its movement.

"You all clear outen dis, and do hit lively," said the porter. "Mistah Rogers done allow to be seen by nobody at no time, least of all no newspaper folk."

OLD TRAILS

Life's Seasons.

From his fingers to his toes,
Back again to Baby's nose,
Pinker than the pinkest rose,
Gurgling softly as he goes,
Free from care and flaring woes,
In the Spring of Life.

Rushing, tearing, schoolboy fun,
Chasing butterflies in the sun,
Aimless' when his work is done,
Thoughtless of the task begun,
Happy that the times have come,
The Summer of his Life.

Now his hair is tinged with gray,
Straight the path before him lay,
World wealth gathered in the way,
Strewn with roses, thorns astray,
Many toned the passing day,
The Autumn of his Life.

To this life, his heart he gave,
Tears and sorrings, his to save,
Now in twilights, softly wave,
Bending grasses over his grave,
Chained he lies, Death's silent slave,
The Winter of his Life.
—Marion B. Owens in Sunset Magazine for October.

Fighting Spirit in Family.

"Do you know," said the Doctor, "that Lieut. Stephen G. Grubb, who saved Sherman ammunition at Resaca, had four brothers in the Union army? Christian Grubb was with the Illinois contingent of the family and enlisted at Ottawa early in 1861, in Capt. Charles Houghtaling's battery (C, First Illinois artillery), and saw hard service in the Western armies, serving until June 12, 1865. About the same time Emanuel Grubb enlisted in company I, Second Pennsylvania calvary, and the three other brothers in different Eastern regiments.

"Stephen G. Grubb was promoted in due time to First Lieutenant, and in May, 1864, was serving as ordinance officer in charge of the immense quantity of ammunition stored at Resaca for use in Sherman's campaign against Atlanta. One day the great pilet of ammunition was set on fire by the lightning, and Lieut. Grubb and Dan R. Anderson of the First Kentucky infantry went among the exploding shells and put the fire out.

"That was a gallant act to remain unrecognized by the government. However, that story has been told, although I never heard it until a few weeks ago. Then it reminded me of an adventure of another Grubb, which, while less heroic, showed the same quality of courage and daring. In the later months of 1863 Edmund Grubb, first sergeant, company I, Second Pennsylvania calvary, and his chum, "My" Southwick, were at their homes in Crawford county, Pennsylvania, on veteran furlough.

"They had been ordered to take the train at Meadville for return to the front on a certain day. The day before that fixed for their departure there was a riot at Meadville in which two soldiers were killed and others wounded. As the mob controlled the city the United States marshal of the district notified Grubb and other soldiers of the county that it would be advisable for them to take the train two miles from Meadville, so as to not come in conflict with the mob.

"Grubb rebelled against this order and declared he would take the train at Meadville or he wouldn't take it at all. Southwick joined him at the Grubb home. They had their cavalry sabers and their Colt revolvers with them, but no ammunition. They made or secured ammunition, and on the appointed day went to Meadville. Their friends accompanied them in a wagon until they met the mob ready for action. Then, under orders of Serg. Grubb, the friends retired and the Sergeant and Southwick went forward to meet the mob.

"The leader of the mob explained that no soldier would be permitted to board any train at Meadville. Grubb explained that he and his comrade had been ordered to take the train at Meadville; that they were veteran soldiers and must obey orders; that they were both good shots and handy with the saber, and that if necessary they would shoot or cut their way through by force that obstructed their march. Thereupon he and Southwick drew their sabers, cocked their revolvers, and side by side marched down the street. The mob made way for them, but followed threateningly. But the two soldiers marched down the main street and boarded their train

"Grubb served through the war, but Southwick was killed at the crossing of the Rapidan. One morning he came to Grubb then in command of the company, and said his time had come. He had a severe pain in the chest and had a presentiment that he was to be shot just where the pain was severest. Grubb tried to laugh him out of the despondency, showing him that there was no sign of a fight anywhere. In the afternoon the regiment was ordered forward, went unexpectedly into a fight, and Southwick was struck where he said he would be and was killed."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

A Postponed Christmas.

December, 1863, the night before Christmas (the time above all others when our thoughts were of home) found the Seventh Ohio Cavalry on outpost duty closely observing the veteran army of Gen. Longstreet, then in upper Tennessee.

The Christmas feast was by no means ready for either the Confederate or Union troops in East Tennessee, as both armies were then living off the country, which had long before been almost denuded of every edible thing suitable for man or beast. The veteran cavalrymen of our regiment were sharing their exceedingly light rations with their horses, five nubbins of corn per day for each man and his horse being the generous allowance from our limited supplies.

Under these circumstances it was necessary to postpone our Christmas dinner until the February following. By this time Longstreet had retired from East Tennessee to rejoin Gen. Lee's army preparatory to the campaign in Virginia against Gen. Grant.

In February we found ourselves relieved from duty in close proximity to the enemy, and in order to recuperate our men and horses, took station in Tuckaleechee Cove, at the base of the Great Smoky Mountains, south of Knoxville, near the North Carolina line. Here there was fairly good grazing for our horses, and moderately generous foraging opportunities for the men. It was here and in the month of February that we had our Christmas dinner. Somewhere and somehow (I am sorry now he was to know or to ask) our mess had secured a turkey—maybe a wild one, which had been killed in trying to bite some of our boys—and under the skilful hands of Private Sam Woods of Co. I, the most expert cook in the regiment, the turkey was roasted over a fire of live coals, which Sam, with the utmost care, had prepared and arranged. The turkey was suspended from a rigging of poles at the proper distance from the coals, and by the dexterous hand of Sam was kept gently turning around and around that the roasting process might properly proceed. Out of the sky had dropped a mess of sweet potatoes along with some pickled cabbage, much like sauerkraut, which went to complete our Christmas dinner. The mess was composed of the colonel, the surgeon and the adjutant, sat close by to watch proceedings, to "shoo away" self-invited guests, who had been attracted to our camp fire by the aroma of the roasting turkey, and incidentally to see that Sam did not allow himself to frequently ask Sam if he could not hurry matters along a little faster, as we had our appetites with us. It seemed to us hungry souls that never before did it take so long to roast a turkey.

As we were nearing the completion of the repast a little rainstorm passed over, but soon the sun shone brightly, showing the tops of the mountains tippel with snow. We were all in a frame of mind to enjoy this beautiful but fleeting scene, when Sam, the cook, pointing to the snow-capped mountains, said: "Gentlemen, there is ice cream for desert, help yourselves."

As I look back now through the slats of forty years—never before or since did a Christmas dinner seem so good as that one of turkey, sweet potatoes and sauerkraut, all topped off with ice cream on the mountains. —Los Angeles Times.

Colonel Walker Dead.

The death of Col. Ivan N. Walker, past commander-in-chief, G. A. R., and assistant adjutant general of the department of Indiana, G. A. R., is reported from Indianapolis. Col. Walker attended the last national encampment at Denver and marched in the parade, but his ill-health was apparent in his shrunken face and figure. He had been ill ever since his return from Denver and died Sept. 22 of uremic poisoning.

Comrade Walker had a long and conspicuous career in the war of the rebellion, in Indiana politics and in the Grand Army of the Republic. He went out in the beginning of the war in an Indiana regiment and later became lieutenant-colonel of the Seventy-third Indiana. He was captured in the Streight raid and suffered a long period of imprisonment. On his discharge from the army he returned home and resumed the practice of law, but was from time to time appointed to important state offices, the duties of which he discharged to the great credit of himself and the state. He was always an active member in the G. A. R., and in 1891 was elected Commander of the Department of Indiana, G. A. R. He was elected Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief at Indianapolis in 1893. In 1895 he was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic and gave the order a very successful administration. Of late years he has been one of the commissioners of Railroad Taxation. He was a brave, devoted soldier of the Republic, and since the war had been a loyal comrade and an excellent public spirited citizen. He had many friends in every part of the country, who will sincerely mourn his death.—New York Press.

Had to Have His Tobacco.

Dr. R. A. Woodward, mayor of Somerset, Ohio, a position of honor he has held for the past seventeen years, having before that been in the village council for a matter of six years, is also a veteran soldier. He fought under Sheridan and was his intimate friend at home. Mr. Woodward is one of the younger set, being only 66 years of age, and, according to the local way of figuring, is good for thirty or forty years more of useful life. Dr. Woodward recently regaled some friends with this story, which he relates, Gen. Sheridan told him the last time he and the General talked of their war experiences:

"'It was during the fiercest fighting of the battle of Cedar Creek,' said the General, 'that an Irish gunner came up to apparently great haste and cried: "Have you any tobacey, General?"

"'I handed him my plug, from which he bite a mouthful, and, having placed it comfortably within his jaw, said:

"'Tank yez, Gineral. Now O'ill git back to me wurrk an' sind thim Johnnies some complimints they'd be glad t' hav missin'.'"

"'You're all right now?'

"'Ol am thot—intirely. But, Gineral, a man can't fight wurrth a dom widdout t'baccy.'"

Daughters of Veterans.

Miss Martin, the newly elected president, with thirteen other enthusiastic young women, founded the Daughters of Veterans twenty years ago, at Massilon, Ohio. She was national secretary of the organization for two consecutive terms, junior vice president for one term, and was elected senior vice president at the convention last year. She organized the Department of Ohio and has held every office in its bestowal.

The Daughters of Veterans is the most exclusive of all the woman auxiliaries of the Grand Army, as it admits to its membership only daughters and granddaughters of veterans. The motto of the association is "Lest we forget," and last year a large sum was expended by it in relief work among the destitute old soldiers and their families.

WORE HAT AS A DECORATION.

Antiquary's Idea of the Beginning of Human Headgear.

Discoursing on the subject of hats, an antiquary expressed the opinion that the hat was first used quite as much for decoration as for protection. The ancestor of all hats he considers to have been the fillet or band around the hair worn by the ancient Greeks, among others. Probably the first hint gained by men regarding head ornaments was through observing the crests, plumes and antlers of various birds and beasts. The eastern races with their fondness for ceremony and display, afford the most notable instances of the use represented as wearing elaborate forms of headgear. In Korea the fashion attains its height, no fewer than fifty kinds of hats being worn by the natives as indications of their social position.

Next Step in "Suffrage."

A man in Brooklyn has learned again through bitter experience that a little learning is a dangerous thing. He taught his wife how to box, and she became so proficient in the art of self-defense that, finding she could whip a man, she refused to obey her husband. This was the last straw, and he filed a petition for a divorce. The improvement was decidedly marked after I had taken two boxes. Three more lessons removed my hands and feet and legs to natural size and feeling and then I stopped taking medicine and have since been perfectly well."

Mr. F. Le Roy Blair lives at No. 122 Constitution street, Bristol, R. I. Any one can get convincing evidence that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have cured anemia, rheumatism, neuralgia and other serious diseases of the blood by simply writing to the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Schenectady, N.Y.

CONVINCING EVIDENCE

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"It was really all in my blood. I first felt a twinge in my left foot and ankle in the middle of last January, following exposure to cold. I realized I had rheumatism and I knew that really comes from bad blood. Cold simply develops it. Then my hands and feet were cold and clammy even in hot weather, and numb a great part of the time. I concluded that my blood was thin and poor and the circulation sluggish.

"After a time my feet and ankles swelled so badly that I could only hobble about with a cane. My legs swelled terribly and I could walk only a short distance before giving out completely.

"When I read of the cures of all kinds of blood diseases, that had been effected by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, I was convinced that they were just the remedy for my case, and so it proved. I could see that they were benefiting me before I had quite used up the first box. The improvement was decidedly marked after I had taken two boxes. Three more boxes removed my hands and feet and legs to natural size and feeling and then I stopped taking medicine and have since been perfectly well."

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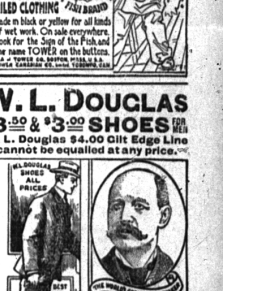

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