The Call of the **Cumberlands**

By Charles Neville Buck

With Illustrations from Photographs of Scenes in the Play

(Copyright, 1913, by W. J. Watt & Co.) SYNOPSIS.

On Misery creek Sally Miller finds George Lescott, a landscape painter, unconscious, and, after reviving him, goes for assistance. Spicer South, head of the family, tells Samson South and Sally that Jesse Purvy has been shot and that Samson is suspected of the crime. Samson denies it. The shooting of Jesse Purvy breaks the truce in the Hollman-South feud. Samson reproves Tamarack Spicer for telling Sally that Jim Hollman is hunting with bloodhounds the man who shot Purvy. The bloodhounds lose the trail at Spicer South's door. Lescott discovers artistic ability in Samson. While sketching with Lescott on the mountain, Tamarack discovers Samson to a jeering crowd of mounts is sketching with Lescott on the mountain, Tamarack discovers Samson to a jeering crowd of mountaineers. Samson thrashes him and denounces him as the "truce-buster" who shot Purvy. Lescott tries to persuade Samson to go to New York with him and develop his talent. Sally, loyal but heartbroken, furthers Lescott's efforts.

CHAPTER VI-Continued.

"Thar's a-goin' ter be a dancin' party over ter Wile McCager's mill come Saturday," he insinuatingly suggested. "I reckon ye'll go over thar with me, won't ye, Sally?"

He waited for her usual delighted assent, but Sally only told him absently and without enthusiasm that she would "study about it." At last, however, her restraint broke, and, looking up, she abruptly demanded:

"Air ye a-goin' away, Samson?" "Who's been a-talkin' ter ye?" demanded the boy, angrily.

For a moment, the girl sat silent. Finally, she spoke in a grave voice:

"Hit hain't nothin' ter git mad about, Samson, The artist man 'lowed as how ye had a right ter go down thar, an' git an eddication." She made a weary gesture toward the great beyond.

"He hadn't ought to of told ye, Sally. If I'd been plumb sartin in my mind, I'd a told ye myself-not but what I knows," he hastily amended, "thet he meant hit friendly."

"Air ye a-goin'?" "I'm studyin' about hit."

He awaited objection, but none came. Then, with a piquing of his masculine vanity, he demanded: "Hain't ye a-keerin', Sally, whether

I goes, or not?" The girl grew rigid. Her fingers on the crumbling plank of the stile's top tightened and gripped hard. Her face did not betray her, nor her voice, "I Reckon Hit's A-goin' Ter Jest About though she had to gulp down a rising lump in her throat before she could

answer calmly. The boy was astonished. He had

avoided the subject for fear of her opposition-and tears.

Then, slowly, she went on:

"There hain't nothin' in these here hills fer ye, Samson. Down thar, ye'll word of argument after kinsmen had friends," he said, shortly, "they've got I don't low ter let him lay in no jailin's." Her glib words ran out and ended in a sort of inward gasp.

Compliment came hardly and awkfor the girl's hand, and whispered: "I reckon I won't see no gals thet's as purty as you be, Sally. I reckon ye knows, whether I goes or stays, we're

a-goin' ter git married." She drew her hand away, and laughed, a little bitterly. In the last day, she had ceased to be a child, and become a woman with all the soul-aching possibilities of a woman's intuitions.

"Samson," she said, "I hain't askin' ye ter make me no promises. When ye sees them other gals-gals thet kin read an' write-I reckon mebby ye'll think diffrent. I can't hardly speil out printin' in the fust reader.'

Her lover's voice was scornful of the imagined dangers, as a recruit may be about her and drew her over to him.

"Honey," he said, "ye needn't fret of white liquor had been emptied. about thet. Readin' an' writin' can't

ter awhile," she insisted. "When ye mans," the elders were deep in ways hain't a-goin' ter bust hit," said the . But"-tha

"Sally!" The boy rose, and paced up and down in the road. "Air ye breach of terms, and struck, he would my word." see that I wants ter have a chanst? Can't ye trust me? I'm jest a-tryin' to amount to something. I'm plumb tired of bein' ornery an' no 'count."

She nodded. "I've done told ye," she said, wearily, "thet I thinks ye ought ter do hit."

matter frequently. At times the boy ly put up to Samson, and it must be was obstinate in his determination to done today. His answer must be defito the yearnings for change and oppor- Spicer South, Lescott was entitled to senile indignation.

The dance on Saturday was to be ambassadors. something more portentous than a None the less, the vital affair of the shrilly demanded. "Hev ye done been hain't a goin' ter be bothered afore I mere frolic. It would be a clan gath- clan could not be balked by considera- follerin' atter this here puny witch- gits back?"

when war-clouds were thickening.



Kill Me."

"I think ye had ought to go, Sam- books, which the mountaineer eagerly agreed to devour in the interval.

Lescott consented, however, to remain over Saturday, and go to the what pressure was brought to bear on the suggestion.

mountains steaming under a reek of mustn't meddle in my business." fog and pitching clouds.

But, as the morning wore on, the wardly to Samson's lips. He reached of overhead blue. From log cabins an invitation to accompany him. and plank houses up and down Misery Cager. Already, the picket fence was thewed and sullen. lined with tethered horses and mules.

From the interior of the house came crete thing told him, that under the the eldest son of the eldest son, shallow note of merry-making brooded problem. The seriousness was below up with it in a fashion, which might ter leave the mountings?" become dangerous, when a few juga

Hit's mighty important fer a man, but truculent lads escaped to the road to stick? Thet's what we wants ter pass the jug, and forecast with youth | know." "You're a goin' ter think diff'rent at- ful war-fever "cleanin' out the Hoiland means. If the truce could be pre- boy, quietly. "When the war com- "This Hain't No Time for Squabblin' resolution in her voice for a moment three years, it was, of course, best. In in the meantime, hit hain't nobody's quavered as she added—"but God three years, it was, or course, best. In in the meantime, but name nobody a that event, crops could be cultivated. business. I hain't accountable ter no to gain accurate information and an and lives saved. But, if Jesse Purvy man but pap, an' I reckon, whar he is, answer to one vital question. Was strike hard, and, in that event, best defense lay in striking first. Samson Wile McCager put another question: would soon be twenty-one. That he clan had until now never been ques- mountings?" tioned-and he was talking of desertion. For that, a pink-skinned forribbon at his collar, was to blame. Lescott and Samson discussed the The question of loyalty must be square go ter the mountain, I reckon."

that consideration which is accorded ering to which the South adherents tion for a stranger, who, in the opin doctor twell ye can't keep a civil Wile McCager promptly gave the as-

abouts" and "over yon." From fore- chief-maker. Ostensibly, the truce still riner outen the country with tar an' "I seed Jim Asberry loafin' round noon until after midnight, shuffle, jig held, but at no time since its signing feathers on him. Furthermore, I'm in jest beyond ther ridge, as I rid over and fiddling would hold high, if rough. had matters been so freighted with the favor of cleanin' out the Hollmans. I hyar," volunteered the man who had carnival. But, while the younger folk menace of a gathering storm. The was jest a-sayin' ter Bill-" abandoned themselves to the a diver- attitude of each faction was that of "Never mind what ye war jest sions, the grayer heads would gather several men standing quiet with guns a sayin'," interrupted the boy, flushing blame fool," dissuaded Wile McCager. in more serious conclave. Jesse Purvy trained on one another's breasts. Each redly to his cheekbones, but con- "Hixon's plumb full of them Hollmans, had once more beaten back death, and hesitated to fire, knowing that to pull trolling his voice. "Ye've done said an' they're likely ter be full of lickerhis mind had probably been devising, the trigger meant to die himself, yet enough a'ready. Ye're a right old man, hit's Saturday. Hit's apt ter be shore during those bed-ridden days and fearing that another trigger might at Caleb, an' I reckon thet gives ye some death fer ye ter try ter ride through nights, plans of reprisal. According any moment be drawn. Purvy dared license ter shoot off yore face, but ef Main street—ef ye gits thet far. Ye to current report, Purvy had an not have Samson shot out of hand, be any of them no count, shif less boys of dassent do hit." nounced that his would-be assassin cause he feared that the Souths would yores wants ter back up what ye says, dwelt on Misery, and was "marked claim his life in return, yet he feared I'm ready ter go out that an make em boy, with a flash of sudden anger. down." So, there were obvious exi- to let Samson live. On the other hand, eat hit. I hain't a-goin' ter answer no "Some liar 'lowed awhile ago thet I gencies which the Souths must pre- if Purvy fell, no South could balance more questions." pare to meet. In particular, the clan his death, except Spicer or Samson. must thrash out to definite under. Any situation that might put condistanding the demoralizing report that tions to a moment of issue would urnine giant, whose hair was no black- He turned and made his way to the Samson South, their logical leader, either prove that the truce was being er than his expression, rose, and a fence where his mule stood hitched. meant to abandon them, at a cr. is observed, or open the war—and yet semblance of quiet greeted him as he each faction was guarding against such spoke. The painter had finally resolved to an event as too fraught with danger. cut the Gordian knot, and leave the One thing was certain. By persuasion ter take the stude this a-way, an' ter vantage, rose and mounted the horse mountains. He had trained on Sam- or force, Lescott must leave, and Sam- refuse ter answer our questions, but that stood hitched behind a nearby son to the last piece all his artillery of son must show himself to be the youth argument. The case was now submit- he had been thought, or the confessed in this hyar country. Ef ye lows ter young cedars, Sometimes, he rode just ted with the suggestion that the boy and repudiated renegade. Those ques- quit us, I reckon we kin quit you- one bend of the road in Samson's rear. take three months to consider, and tions, today must answer. It was a and, if we quits ye, ye hain't nothin' Sometimes, he took short cuts, and that, if he decided affirmatively, ne difficult situation, and promised an more ter us then no other boy thet's watched his enemy pass. But always should notify Lescott in advance of his eventful entertainment. Whatever gettin' too big fer his breeches. This he held him under a vigilant eye. coming. He proposed sending Samson | conclusion was reached as to the art- furriner is a visitor here today, an' Finally, he reached a wayside store

> tion in part, as he stood at the door of risky. That thar's final." the house watching the scene inside.

In the group about the door, Lescott

"Thet's ther damned furriner thet's done turned Samson inter a gal," pro- added, "I'll tell ye another thing. I eling ahead of him. What he did not The painter paused, and looked

coat with hands that had become clumsy and unresponsive. "Let me git at him," he shouted, with a wild whoop and a dash toward fer damn cowards." the painter.

Lescott said nothing, but Sally had heard, and stepped swiftly between. Buddy," she said, quietly. "I reckon

CHAPTER VII.

Several soberer men closed around the boy, and after disarming him, led blin' amongst ourselves. We're all the stone coping of the well. None of him away grumbling and muttering. Souths. Tamarack South has done them spoke, and Samson pretended while Wile McCager made apologies to gone ter Hixon, an' got inter trouble. that he had not seen them. He rode

"Jimmy's jest a peevish child," he explained. "A drop or two of licker leb's high, broken voice. "Let's go an' windows. At the hitching rack directmakes him skittish. I hopes ye'll look take him out." over hit."

a small library of carefully picked Lescott chiefly as an indication of with McCager, and, at its end, the host tiously along the brick walk to the what might follow. Unwilling to in- of the day announced briefly: troduce discord by his presence, and dance, since he was curious to observa Misery, but the boy's face clouded at ter Henry South's boy."

ter account ter me. You stay right house, unlessen he's got a right ter be Saturday morning came after a night hyar, and I'll stay clost to you. I done thar. What's he charged with?" gals thet kin read an' write, gals of torrential rain, which had left the come hyar today ter tell 'em that they

A short while later, Wile McCager invited Samson to come out to the sun fought its way to view in a scrap mill, and the boy nodded to Lescott

The mill, dating back to pioneer and its tributaries, men and women be- days, sat by its race with its shaft now Hollman forces were gathering in he confessed. idle. It looked to Lescott, as he ap- Hixon, and, if the Souths went there cott rode in the wake of Samson, who proached, like a sc.ap of landscape had Sally on a pillow at his back. They torn from some medieval picture, and came before noon to the mouth of Dry- the men about its door seemed mediehole creek, and the house of Wile Mc- val, too; bearded and gaunt, hard-

All of them who stood waiting were men of middle age, or beyond. A numthe sounds of fiddling, though these ber were gray-haired, but they were all strains of "Turkey in the Straw" were of cadet branches. Many of them, like only by way of prelude. Lescott felt, Wile McCager himself, did not bear though he could not say just what con- the name of South, and Samson was

"Samson," began old Wile McCager, the major theme of a troublesome clearing his throat and taking up his duty as spokesman, "we're all your the surface, but insistently depressing. kinfolks here, an' we aimed ter ask ye of the battle terrors—before he has the saw, too, that he himself was mixed about this here report thet yer 'lowin'

"What of hit?" countered the boy. "Hit looks mighty like the war's make no difference fer a woman. and "sparked" within, and the more ye a-goin' ter quit, or air ye a-goin' ter

served for its unexpired period of mences, I'll be hyar. Ef I hain't hyar chose to regard his shooting as a he knows whether I'm a-goin' ter keep Tamarack held as a feud victim, or

There was a moment's silence, then "Ef ye're plumb sot on gettin' larnin' would take his place as head of the why don't ye git hit right hyar in these liver him over to the enemy.

Samson laughed derisively. eigner, who were a woman's bow of cally inquired. "Ef the mountain won't and the boy turned to Lescott come ter Mohamet, Mohamet's got ter

remain; at other times he gave way nite and unequivocal. As a guest of wrath and his voice quavering with ther country a piece, ter see a sick

fer yore kinfolks, Samson South?" he I've got yore promise that Mr. Lescott would come riding up and down Mis- ion of the majority, should be driven tongue in yer head fer yore elders? surance. ery and its tributaries from "nigh from the country as an insidious mis- I'm in favor of runnin' this here fur- "I gives ye my hand on hit."

ment, until "Black Dave" Jasper, a sat- hears from me-an' keep 'em sober.'

ist's future, he was, until the verdict we don't 'low ter hurt him-but he s where a local telephone gave communicame in, a visitor, and, unless liquor got ter go. We don't want him round cation with Hollman's Mammoth Deinflamed some reckless trouble-hunter. hyar no longer." He turned to Les- partment store. that fact would not be forgotten. Pos- cott. "We're a-givin' ye fair warnin'. sibly, it was as well that Tamarack stranger. Ye hain't our breed. Atter South's done left the party et ther this, ye stays on Misery at yore own Lescott himself realized the situa- risk-an' hit's a-goin' ter be plumb Shall I git him?"

"This man," blazed the boy, before the storekeeper. There was, of course, no round danc- Lescott could speak, "is a-visitin' me ing-only the shuffle and jig-with an Unc' Spicer. When ye wants him champions contending for the honor ye kin come up thar an' git him. Every can tend ter him hyar, ef necessary. damned man of ye kin come. I hain't So Jim withheld his hand, and merely a-sayin' how many of ye'll go back | shadowed, sending bulletins, from time passed a youth with tow-white hair He was 'lowin' that he'd leave hyar ter- to time. and very pink cheeks. The boy was morrer mornin', but atter this I'm the earliest to succumb to the tempta- a-tellin' ye he hain't a-goin' ter do hit. son started. It was near six when he tion of the moonshine jug, a tempta- He's a-goin' ter stay es long es he reached the ribbon of road that loops tion which would later claim others. likes, an' nobody hain't a-goin' ter run He was reeling crazily, and his albino him off." Samson took his stand be- His mule was in a lather of sweat. He fore the painter, and swept the group knew that he was being spied upon, with his eyes. "'An' what's more," he and that word of his coming was travhadn't plumb made up my mind ter know was whether or not it suited leave the mountings, but ye've done Jesse Purvy's purpose that he should back. The boy was reaching under his settled hit fer me. I'm a-goin'."

There was a low murmur of anger. and a voice cried out from the rear: "Let him go. We hain't got no use

ed the boy. Lescott, standing at his escape. That was the question which side, felt that the situation was more would be answered with his life or "You've got ter git past me fust, than parlous. But, before the storm could break, some one rushed in, and ye'd better run on home, an' git yore whispered to Wile McCager a message ing of home-made brick, squatting at tention.

> This here hain't no time fer squab- themselves behind the tree trunks and He's locked up in the jailhouse,"

"Samson's got somethin' ter say ter

count, he suggested riding back to by us, I reckon we're willin' ter listen creep around a trunk when a hunter is

"Ef they kain't be civil ter my Spicer," said the boy, succinctly, "but "I hain't got no use for Tam'rack

But no one knew that. A man supposedly close to the Hollmans, but in reality an informer for the Souths, had seen him led into the jailyard by a posse of a half-dozen men, and had seen the iron-barred doors close on en masse, a pitched battle must be the Hixon?" inevitable result. The first step was



was his arrest legitimate? How to learn that was the problem. To send a body of men was to invite bloodshed. To send a single inquirer was to de-

"Air you men willin' ter take my word about Tamarack?" inquired Sam-"Who'll I git hit from?" he causti- son. There was a clamorous assent,

"I wants ye ter take Sally home with ye. Ye'd better start right away, afore man. Don't tell her whar I'm a goin ;" "Hev ye done got too damned good He turned to the others. "I reckon I just want to see if your ear is

brought the message.

"Go slow now, Samson. Don't be no

was a coward. All right, mebby I be. There was a commotion of argu- Unc' Wile, keep the boys hyar tell ye

When Samson crossed the ridge and entered the Hollman country, Jim As-"Mebby, Samson, ye've got a right berry, watching from a hilltop point of we've got a right ter say who kin stay screen of rhododendron bushes and

mill, an' he's a-ridin' towards town.

"Is he comin' by hisself?" inquired "Yes."

"Well, jest let him come on. We

slide from his mule, dead, before he turned homeward. If Tamarack had been seized as a declaration of war, the chief South would certainly not be allowed to return. If the arrest had "Whoever said thet's a liar!" shout not been for feud reasons, he might

death. that caused him to raise both hands the rear of the courthouse yard. As above his head, and thunder for at- Samson drew near, he saw that some ten or twelve men, armed with rifles, "Men," he roared, "listen ter me! separated from groups and disposed his mule at a walk, knowing that he "We're all hyar," screamed old Ca- was rifle-covered from a half-dozen ly beneath the county building, he Samson's anger had died. He turned, flung his reins over a post, and, swing-Jimmy's outbreak was interesting to and held a whispered conversation ing his rifle at his side, passed caujail. The men behind the trees edged involve Samson in quarrels on his ac- ye. So long as he's willin' ter stand ing themselves protected, as squirrels lurking below. Samson halted at the jail wall, and called the prisoner's name. A tousled head and surly face appeared at the barred window, and the boy went over and held converse from the outside.

"How in hell did ye git into town?" demanded the prisoner. "I rid in," was the short reply.

'How'd ye git in the jailhouse?" The captive was shamefaced. "I got a leetle too much licker, an' I

was shootin' out the lights last night," "What business did ye have hyar in

"I jest slipped in ter see a gal." Samson leaned closer, and lowered his voice. "Does they know that ye shot them shoots at Jesse Purvy?"

Tamarack turned pale. "No," he stammered, "they believe you done hit." Samson laughed. He was thinking

of the rifles trained on him from a dozen invisible rests. "How long air they a-goin' ter keep ye hyar?" he demanded.

"I kin git out tomorrer ef I pays the fine. Hit's ten dollars." "And' ef yo don't pay the fine?" "Hit's a dollar a day."

"I reckon ye don't 'low ter pay hit,

do ve?" "I 'lowed mebby ye mont pay hit fer me, Samson." "Ye done 'lowed plumb wrong, I

come hyar ter see ef ye needed help, but hit 'pears ter me they're lettin' yo off easy." He turned on his heel, and went

back to his mule. The men behind the trees began circling again. Samson mounted, and, with his chin well up, trotted back along the main street. It was over. The question was answered. The Hollmans regarded the truce as still effective. The fact that they were permitting him to ride out alive was a wordless assurance of that. Incidentally, he stood vindicated in the eyes of his own people.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Hadn't Looked for That. "When we bought dear little Bobby the electric flashlight he had been begging for so long," says a mother. "we never anticipated that the first time we had company he would hold it up to the guest's ear and say: 'Oh, clean!""

Riches From Gift Bestowed. When you give away happiness you all de time gits richer an' richer in it. -Atlanta Constitution.

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