

Wallingford In His Prime

By GEORGE RANDOLPH CHESTER

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CHAPTER XVI. Anything to Oblige.

At 8:45 the telephone rang—once, twice, thrice. Diamally lamenting, Wallingford upon that third long, discordant, insistent call dragged his numbly protesting avoirdupois out of bed, commenting fiercely upon the curious fact that civilized man has made himself an accused slave to that jangling twin bell. The hotel reporter of the afternoon forum wished to see Mr. Wallingford upon business of the most pressing nature. He failed, however.

"What time is it?" inquired the sleepy voice from the pink bedroom.

"Nearly 9," returned Wallingford wearily.

"Church opens some place around breakfast time, doesn't it?"

"Eleven o'clock. I wish you'd keep still."

"Call a boy for me, won't you, Jim?" Wallingford groaned and turned back to the telephone and gave the desired order.

"What do you want with a boy in the middle of the night?" he demanded.

"I'm going to church," insisted Blackie. "Wake me up when the boy comes, won't you?"

The reply of J. Rufus to that request was inarticulate as he shuffled painfully back to bed. He had just cast off his slippers when the telephone bell rang. The gently flowing Venetian lace curtain of his own open window brushed his face. He pushed it aside. The bell rang. The curtain gently brushed his face. He dashed it aside. The bell rang and rang. The curtain slapped him. He grabbed that curtain with both hands and jerked it out by the roots.

"Oh, Jim, your telephone bell's ringing," called Blackie cheerfully.

"Well, what is it?" demanded Wallingford.

"This is Charley Jackson," snapped an equally aggravated voice in the telephone. "Say, Wallingford, you upset the canary seed when you gave out that interview to the Record. I thought you knew the first principles, anyhow."

"The leak had to come through you," insisted Wallingford sharply. "You had a good start when you left here."

"I got home as sober as a judge!" indignantly denied Jackson. "I never get pickled, and if I did I wouldn't even talk with my fingers."

Wallingford's own judgment corroborated that. "The damage is done, though," he concluded. "From what you say about keeping Collop and Tannison in the dark, you won't need to show that thousand to the boys, so you might as well bring it back."

"I don't know where it is," Jackson promptly informed him. "I hid it. Say! It bores me to sleep, anyhow, and I think I'll take an eye opener and dress and come right up to see you. We'll cook up some kind of a mess."

Wallingford, turning resignedly away from the telephone, glared sullenly in the direction of the pink bedroom. "What in the name of heaven do you call that noise?" he implored.

"I am singing," returned Blackie—"singing one of those sweet, soothing old church hymns which come back to me out of my happy childhood days; only I get the darned thing tangled up in the second line with a slice out of my big song hit in 'The Llama's Goat,' and I have to start all over again every time. That's what may make it seem a shade similar to itself, but even the attempt is uplifting. You ought to try it, Jim. Suppose you take the bass, and I'll sing it with you. Now! One, two, three! Ready, sing!"

Wallingford was able to chuckle at last, as Blackie's clear voice in all gravity began upon the good old church hymn and he looked into the pink bedroom. Blackie's eyes were wide open, but he had not moved a muscle otherwise. The door bell rang.

"That's my boy," stated Blackie.

"Let him in, Jim, and tell him to fill the tub with cold water and stuff the buttons in my stiffest shirt, and lay out my gray cravat and a straight collar, and shine my buttons above and get my shaving kit ready, and hang fresh linen in the bathroom, and bring me a cigarette and a match, and do any other little thing you may think of. Aw, hum!" and he yawned in prodigious comfort.

Wallingford jerked open the door. "Now you start and I'll tell you what I want while you're going," he directed the grinningly expectant boy who stood there. "I want some strong coffee, two prairie oysters and this morning's Record and I don't want you to tell that you'll send a waiter to find out what I want."

"The waiter's almost starting with the coffee now," the boy briskly assured him and was gone.

"I begin to feel better," observed Wallingford, heading for the sideboard.

"That's the only satisfactory interview I've had this morning. Have a drink of something, Blackie?"

"Not me," virtuously asserted Mr. Daw. "Tobacco shall not stain my lips nor run down my throat. I can't remember the rest of it, but it had to end in death, for that's the only word that rimes with it. Appropriate, too, Jimmy, for everything ends in death, or did when I went to church. Those happy, happy boyhood days. Why, J. Rufus—"

The rest of his speech was drowned in the rush of cold water in the bath tub. Wallingford, making swift preparations for his own bath and a shave, was presently aware of agonized calls from the still recumbent Blackie and stepped to the door, brush in hand, where he could hear above the rush of the water.

"Now what do you want?" he asked.

"I want a box of my own."

plained Blackie. "You used mine."

For answer to that Wallingford snatched the covers from Blackie, pulled that gentleman into the middle of the floor and daubed his face with lather.

"My other eye might be jealous, but it isn't," remarked Blackie good naturedly and with one eye screwed shut rubbed for the bathroom, where, without taking the trouble to remove his pajamas, he plugged into Wallingford's half filled tub. Thereupon, after clearing his eye, he proceeded to remove his sleeping garments.

"That little affair restored Wallingford's equanimity perfectly, and he bustled ahead with his shaving.

Wallingford and Blackie were both fully dressed and in their right minds upon the arrival of Charley Jackson, who had put on his laugh with his clothes. Mr. Jackson vociferously insisted that Blackie change to a white apron and get busy, but Blackie declined, with great haughtiness, and bade both gentlemen goodby.

"Where are you going?" asked Wallingford in surprise.

"To church, I told you," retorted Blackie. "The deep toned bells are ringing. I cannot stay away. I spurn the hosts of evil, which pester me to stay. Brethren, please sing." And he solemnly departed, looking anxiously for any possible flecks of dust upon his silk hat.

"Well, the polls are closed," regretfully announced Jackson. "Collop and Tannison both called me up since I phoned to you, and enough opposition has developed to put the breaks on a cyclone. I paid three dry goods bills at the same store with that \$1,000 or I'd give it back."

"If you succeeded in that on Sunday morning you're entitled to the reward," returned Wallingford, with a laugh, refusing the two \$500's which the other reluctantly proffered him. "You acted in good faith, Jackson."

"Thanks," exclaimed Jackson in astonishment, stuffing the bills hastily back into his pocket and laughing heartily with both cheeks. "I wish you'd tell me how you get these."

"I have a friend who works in the mint," explained Wallingford suavely. "I'm rather glad this deal is off anyhow. I hope you fare better in your county courthouse scheme than we did in the park thing."

Mr. Jackson stopped laughing. "There are all sorts of rumors about that courthouse," he declared earnestly.

"They're all alike," Wallingford rejoined, feeling sure of his ground. "The only difference in the rumors is in the name of the sideman who is to be the goat and buy-it in his own name and turn it into a restaurant, with beer hall and dance hall attachments. The tide of the rumors seems to set against you in the direction of Charley Jackson."

"I wish it would stay there," confessed Mr. Jackson. "Courthouse square is the swalest location in this town for a free and easy joint under friendly police suspicion."

"That listens very musically," acknowledged Wallingford. "Why don't you grab it?"

"Nobody dares," regretted Mr. Jackson. "If we could put the thing off till after the campaign it would be all right, but the church element in this town is so strong that a mere little thing like turning the courthouse into a human pickle factory might swing the campaign."

"I don't see who that would hurt," objected Wallingford. "You all stay in year after year, no matter which way the election goes."

"It's a point of honor," explained Mr. Jackson promptly. "Everybody's fussy about being on the winning side, like quitting with the most chips in a parlor poker game where the white ones are sold by the pound."

"Why don't you get a stranger to buy it for you?"

"Where would you find a stranger who would submit to being chained to the floor till after the campaign is over?" demanded Jackson wearily.

"Show me that stranger and I'll slip him this thousand."

"Pass it over," invited Wallingford.

"I spoke too quick," hedged Jackson, pressing his hand over his pocket. "I'd rather arrange to hand over ten thousand out of the purchase price of the courthouse. Besides that, you know, Wallingford, the stranger oughtn't to be too strange."

"There's no danger," Wallingford reassured him. "I'll do it for you," and he was very careless about it. "You furnish me the money to bid in the property for you and I'll give you a secret bill of sale for it. You can go right ahead with your alterations in my name if you like. When the campaign is over I'll transfer the deed to any name you say. If I tried to sell the property the sale would have to be recorded and your bill of sale would invalidate it."

"That's very kind of you," asserted Mr. Jackson, "but you're not working for your health."

"No, I have too much health now," retorted Wallingford, adroitly repeating Jackson's answer to a similar remark. "I ought to charge you the local 20 per cent, but if you'll make me a present of that \$10,000 you mentioned and another one like it I'll be satisfied."

"What's the property worth?"

"Four hundred thousand; but good, handy political experts ought to be able to bring it home for two."

"The only difficulty I see," observed Wallingford with knitted brows, "is that some private interest may overbid you. That property is too valuable to be overlooked as an investment."

"If any private individual has the nerve to put in a bid for that property my county commissioners will throw it out because it wasn't written in green ink, or because the bidder has a mole on his neck," avowed Mr. Jackson indifferently. "They're so used to that here that nobody will kick."

Blackie returned from church in a state of magnificent exaltation.

"Jim, we've been overlooking a box," he declared. "I never felt so calm and peaceful in my life."

He was very much in earnest about it. The religion that has withstood the assault of scoffers for nineteen centuries had impressed him with its cheer-

weight and, though his words seemed unthought, his tone was seriously respectful.

"I'm glad you enjoyed yourself," said Wallingford. "You should go to church oftener. You need it."

"I'm going," asserted Blackie decisively. "You'll see Uncle Horace seated in the pew reserved for well dressed strangers on every Sunday morning until I get back home; then you'll see him with a season ticket for some place about row D."

Wallingford, rather glad to be away for a moment from the train of calculation that the visit of Charley Jackson had set in motion, lent himself to the smiling consideration of Blackie's new development.

"What will Violet Bonnie say?" he wanted to know.

"I don't know if she ever tried it, but she'd fall for it like a Guinea boot-sock to a grand opera ticket. In the first place, she buys from twelve to fifteen hats a year and she'd be tickled into giggle fits with a new line of competition. In the second place, she's as strong for music as I am. It isn't fashionable in our set to be dippy over high brow music, but every once in a while we slip away to Carnegie hall and wonder what it's about and love some of it till it gasps. I heard pipe organ stuff today that made me feel like a balloon and if I could have found a friendly shoulder I'd have sniffled. In the third place she'd be plumb pitcho about this right hand of fellowship surprise that they spring on distinguished strangers."

"Call the wagon," interrupted Wallingford. "You're in Dutch on that last bet. They skip women. They're willing to take chances on a burglar, but they have to insist upon knowing all about a lady."

"I don't see why," indignantly objected Blackie. "Violet Bonnie has always made good wherever she was put and she's as fussy a dresser as any of them."

"That doesn't make women love each other," laughed Wallingford. "I'm glad they made you feel like the guest of honor, though. How did it happen? Did you make a speech?"

"I helped sing," admitted Blackie, "but, outside of that, I kept my mouth so shut that it aches yet, except once in a while when I caught up with an 'A-a-a-ah-men.' I lapped over one and said it alone, but nobody giggled. I never saw such a polite bunch in my life, but, at that, I don't see why they don't have a better road map for the prayer book, so a stranger could hauf his way around without having all the natives offer him assistance. I watched one real sweet faced old lady for my guide, but darn her, she got up in the wrong place."

"You must have picked out a church with as fussy a service as seven garcons and a head waiter making a Suzanne pancake," observed Wallingford, chuckling. "You should have chosen an easier one to begin on. Who sent you there?"

"The pipe organ," answered Blackie earnestly. "It was the rattiest looking church in town from the outside, but the inside, so high and dim and quivering with stillness, made me afraid. Say, Jim, I'm against the corrupt political system in this town."

"So am I," agreed Wallingford heartily. "I'd like to hand it a jolt."

"I'm helping," stated Blackie, with happy self approbation. "Do you know what the political thieves and outcasts are trying to do in this town? They are trying to steal the courthouse and turn it into a den of infamy. My church is going to save the city from its shame. We raised a fund of nearly \$300,000 today to buy Courthouse square, and another day's hustling will give us enough. As soon as we get that we're going to start another subscription list to build the finest cathedral in the middle west on the site that was to have been turned into a common dive that would sap the manhood and womanhood of every young person who passed beneath the shadow of its walls."

His adoption of the morning's pulpit phrases was entirely unconscious. An habitual enthusiast, his partisanship here was absolutely without a question.

(To Be Continued.)

gained. The kimono bodice opens over a vest of frilled net and is embroidered with pearl motifs. Deep founces of tulle supplement the short sleeves. The tunic is of tulle, open in the front and weighted with pearl embroideries.

Left in the Lurch.

Robinson was one of those really good natured souls who are always ready to lend a hand to a pal in distress.

One day, as he was pegging along on his bicycle down a narrow country road, he came across a man holding a ram by the horns.

"Hello!" cried Robinson. "Can I help?"

"I should be much obliged," replied the other, "if you'd hold this ram just while I get that gate over there open."

"Certainly," replied Robinson; and, dimly aware of the hold he had seized the ram by the horns,

"Thank you awfully!" replied the stranger, now on the farther side of the gate. "The brute attacked me more than an hour ago, and I've been struggling with him ever since. So long, old chap! Hope you'll be as lucky as I was!"

JOHN P. HOLLAND, INVENTOR OF THE SUBMARINE, DEAD

JOHN R. HOLLAND

While the great nations of Europe are plunged in war, in which submarines of the type he invented are taking part, John P. Holland, one of the first inventors of successful under surface craft, lies dead. The famous submarine inventor died at Newark, N. J., aged 72. Mr. Holland was born in Ireland. He was a school-teacher when the American civil war broke out, and it was reading of the encounter between the Monitor and the Merrimac that first suggested to him the idea of a submarine. After many experiments he finally succeeded in building one, but it did not come up to his expectations, and he sank it in the Passaic river at Newark, where it remains to this day. It was near this spot that later the Holland Submarine Works, of which the inventor was the head, built their plant. At the present time the navies of many of the powers are using submarines of the Holland type. The first boat of Mr. Holland's construction is to be raised soon by the Patterson (N. J.) chamber of commerce and presented to the government as a memorial to the inventor. It will be taken to the Panama-Pacific exposition at San Francisco and then probably will be placed in the museum at Washington.

65-MILE RACE WITH DEATH.

Gypsies Drove at Desperate Speed to Save Baby's Life.

Lashing their horses to desperate speed, a caravan of gypsies raced with death sixty-five miles from their camp near Vinita to Muskogee, in an attempt to save the life of a little child of the Stanley tribe, the aristocrats of the gypsy race. They reached Muskogee, but the child died in a hospital three hours later.

The child had been ill several days. The gypsy cronies, wise in the administration of their native medicines, worked over him and continued their travels. Finally in the camp near Vinita, the child's fever blazed up, and it became apparent that only the most skillful attention could save him.

A council was held, and it was decided to bring him to Muskogee. The swiftest horses in the camp were hitched to the lightest wagons, and the caravan started in the long race to save the child, William Stanley, 1 year old.

The baby was swung in a stretcher in one of the wagons, and the horses were driven almost to death to reach the hospital in time.

Every gypsy who dies in this section of the country is buried at Muskogee. They are already several of their graves in the cemetery. Two years ago a very old woman, said to have once been a queen of a gypsy tribe, died in a camp near here. The body was embalmed and held for many days, and finally buried with much ceremony. The Stanley child was buried here. In conformity with an ancient custom, all the child's playthings were placed in the casket, and in addition a bar of soap, a clean towel, and a comb and brush.—Muskogee (Okla.) Dispatch to Kansas City Star.

A Bird of a Retort.

"Here you are," scolded the robin, "putting your egg in my nest and expecting my wife and me to hatch it. You have a mighty bad reputation for your irregular habits!"

"Oh, I don't know," saucily replied the cuckoo. "I never heard of any clocks being named after you.—Chicago Evening Post.

Providing Entertainment.

"Say, friends!" exclaimed the man who had come suddenly out of the bushes. "I've had all kinds o' trouble to get any fish to stay in this part o' the stream."

"Then I suppose you object to my fishing?" said the stranger.

"How long have you been here?"

"About two hours."

"Catch anything?"

"No."

"Well, I guess there ain't no objection to your gettin' out on a rock an' thrashin' around a while longer. Maybe it'll help to amuse the fish."—Washington Star.

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Contest closes Sept. 5, 1914, and all answers must be received by that time. All contestants will be notified of the results by mail as soon after the close of the contest as possible. Write your name and address plainly and mail your solution to

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