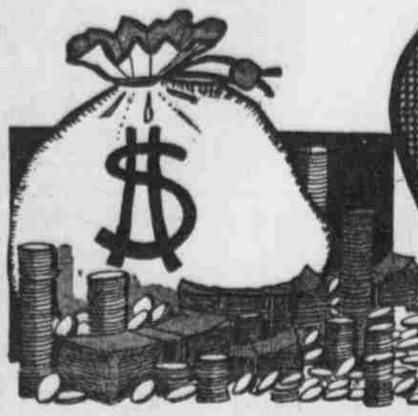
THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE MAGAZINE PAGE



THE NEW ADVENTURES OF J. RUFUS WALLINGFORD

READ IT HERE-Then See It In Motion Pictures

Presented By This NEWSPAPER in COLLABORATION With The FAMOUS PATHE' PLAYERS

WRITTEN BY
GEORGE RANDOLPH CHESTER
Author of "Get-Rich-Quick-Wallingford"

DRAMATIZED BY
CHARLES W. GODDARD
Builder of the World's Greatest Serials

INTRODUCING

BURR McINTOSH - - - - - - - J. Rufus Wallingford
MAX FIGMAN - - - - - - - - - - - Blackie Daw
LOLITA ROBERTSON - - - - - - - - - - - - Violet

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"Beat him to it, Morley," advised Onion, as Blackie commenced writing

THE BANG SUN ENGINE

"DANA T. MORLEY," repeated J. Rufus Wallingford, gazing at Fanny Warden's little notebook. Six names on the list above this had been crossed off. "Floozy name, but does he look the part?"

"We have never seen him," returned Fanny. "We only know that he is the president of a bank, and lives in Cinderburg."

"And that he robbed us of seventy thousand dollars!" interrupted Violet Warden, her blue eyes turning to Blackie Daw indignantly.

"Show us Morley!" and Blackie Daw grabbed up his saxophone and blew a long, shrill, high note. "That for Morley! And this one for the Falls railroad clique which stole the Warden estate! And this for——"

"For the love of Mike, save it for them," implored Wallingford, stopping his ears. "Girls, we should have some information about Morley before we hike out to his town. Suppose we hunt up a Cinderburg man, and pump him."

"Oh, I suppose you just telegraph for one," retorted Blackie, fingering his saxophone with Violet Warden's fingers, which he picked up for the purpose.

"Not so," chuckled J. Rufus, his round, pink face reddening, his eyes half closing, and his broad shoulders heaving. "There's always at least one man from any town in New York; so we'll scatter, and look at hotel directories."

At the third hotel on Wallingford's list, he found a Cinderburg man by the name of Bang, and had him paged, and found him sitting disconsolately in the bar, and stopped with a frown as he catalogued and cross-indexed the prize; hat of last year's shape, hair untrimmed, collar frayed, tie soiled, clothing unbrushed and unpressed. Evidently Mr. Bang was not overburdened with wealth, and he was quite clearly out of place amid the magnificence of the Hotel Bullion.

"You're from Cinderburg, I believe."

"Yes sir," said Mr. Bang.

"Glad to meet you," and J. Rufus extended a large, warm hand. "My name is Wallingford; J. Rufus Wallingford." He sat down at the little table and rang for the waiter. "Will you break a bottle of bubbles with me or stick to the stein?"

Mr. Bang's rather helpless blue eyes widened. A bottle of bubbles! That meant champagne!

"I don't mind changing my drink," he observed, with speculative anticipation. Also, he began to look a little brighter. This man J. Rufus Wallingford might be a capitalist. Must be!

"I'm thinking of buying some Cinderburg bonds," said Wallingford grandly, and stopped to order a quart of champagne. "What kind of a town is it?"

"Pretty good," Mr. Bang glanced down at his frayed cuffs.

"How many banks?"

"Three," a little hesitation, "I think." Apparently the man from Cinderburg was not well acquainted with banks.

"What's the best one?"

"The Commercial." Quite sure about this, though it gave him no pleasure.

"Who's the president?"

"Dana T. Morley," and this answer gave Mr. Bang even less pleasure than the other.

"Morley." J. Rufus smiled and stroked his stubby mustache. "Seems to me I've heard that name. What sort of a man is he?"

Mr. Bang considered that question in silence for a moment, his brows knotting, his neck swelling, and his face purpling.

"Rotten!" he finally exploded. "He's my landlord. He's a mean, stingy, greedy little cuss. He's a detriment to the town. If there's any good business comes along, and he can't gobble it all up, he wants to choke it to death."

The waiter set down two champagne glasses of delicate shape, and Mr. Bang reached out for one. At that moment the swing door opened, and a flash of sunlight shot into Bang's eyes. He pushed the glass off the table and it shivered into countless fragments.

"Damn the sunlight!" he exploded; then he apologized.

"What's the matter with the sunshine?" the round-faced one wanted to know. "I'm stroking for it myself. Seems to me we've been having the sort of weather that could be framed and sold for the gem of the Morgan collection."

"That's just the trouble," complained Mr. Bang. "I wanted sunshine on my transformer these two weeks, and got it; but it might as well have rained."

"Your transformer?" questioned Wallingford, with polite interest.

"A sun motor," replied Mr. Bang, introducing somewhat shyly the subject nearest his heart. "I have been working on it five years. I mortgaged my place to perfect it, secure patents, make a working model, and come on here to interest capital."

"The only principle in which you can interest capital is the principal that draws interest," declared J. Rufus. "Capital is about as cordial as a slice of raw fish, and it distinctly wants to be shown. Now, if you'd show that your model would draw a little tin wagon, it might perk up."

Mr. Bang smiled, though it was a sort of underdone smile, but he studied the big stranger with a growing hope, and invited him to look at the model.

On the broad roof of the hotel, the man of ready money was shown an unattractive combination of coils and rusty metal, of about the size of a steam-radiator, lying flat in the sunshine, and to it was attached a dial.

"Is that it?" asked the million in the flesh, profoundly impressed.

"That's it," assented Mr. Bang with the just pride of the creator. "See, not only fifteen but almost sixteen watts!"

"Fine!" declared the visitor. "But what is a watt, and why? Do you mean to say you tried to get money on this?"

"Why, certainly!" stated Mr. Bang, perplexed at his tone.

"But that needle don't even wiggle! Don't anything go round?"

"Well, early in the morning, before sun-up, the needle's at zero," exclaimed Mr. Bang, "and as the sun warms up it gradually moves to where you see it now."

The other stood in astonishment at this colossal inadequacy, and then he surveyed Mr. Bang in pity. "You ought to have sent for a junk-dealer if you wanted an offer," he said.

"But it is the master invention of the century!" piteously insisted Mr. Bang. "This device, covering the roof of a house, will supply all the electricity needed for lighting and heating, and factories having a large expanse can utilise their roofs in the same way to furnish their own power. Inside of ten years, at most, all this will be possible."

"Did you tell them ten years?" This in a hushed and awed voice.

"Why, of course."

"Go right back to Cinderburg." This town won't listen to anything that makes a noise like returns in longer than five minutes. What it wants is things conceived in a flash and finished in an explosion. Why wait ten years to cash in? If this dingus were mine I'd collect on it right now." Again he paused to think. Suddenly he slapped his knees, and walked up and down, chuckling, then he came back to the astonishment of Bang: "Tell you what you do. To-morrow morning, at eleven o'clock, you call me up at my rooms. I'll find a way to take this silent little marvel to the mint, and coin it."

"I say, Blackie, we have to make a quick dash. Can we scour up a real sudden bunch of gilt-edged kick securities?"

"Consider your life saved," grinned Blackie. "At eleven-thirty that morning, Wallingford, making an errand of a thousand dollar check which had been given him by a certain E. B. Lott, took Mr. Bang into the Guarantee and Fidelity Bank, known as the G. and F. to its patrons, and as the Grafters & Fakers to the police, and displayed the precious "securities" provided him by Mr. Daw—displayed them quite incidentally, something like a million dollars' worth of them, while he "clipped some bonds." Then he cashed Mr. Lott's check and stuffed the bills nonchalantly into his trousers pocket for "change."

"And now about your sun-motor," he said as they went out. "I've about decided to finance the International Bang Sun Engine Company. Have you had any newspaper men up to look at your machine?"

"Why, no," faltered Mr. Bang. "I've been afraid of them. I have been afraid of newspaper men all the five years I've been working on this, for fear they'd give away my principle, and I sort of got in the habit, I guess."

"But how did you get to your people?"

"Wrote them letters."

"Wrote 'em letters!" repeated Wallingford in scathing scorn. "I suppose it never occurred to you to drop them a postal. I can see what happened. A few fourth-assistant secretaries sent twelfth-assistant secretaries up there, and they saw a dinky dial with a needle on it pointing one-fourth of an inch north-northeast by north. It's a wonder they didn't have you pinched. You say you're broke?"

"Not quite."

"All right; when you get back to Cinderbrug mortgage the dog and the gasoline stove and the family album, then beg, borrow, buy on credit, or steal—wait a minute. By George, you won't have to! Anyhow, you get enough material to make about three more of those junk-coils of yours. I suppose they'll work when coupled up?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Bang, gathering anew his somewhat dampened enthusiasm.

"By the time you get back to Cinderburg," said Wallingford, impressively, "they'll hand you the town on a velvet cushion. Just step in here a moment."

"In here" was a toy-store, where Wallingford purchased five different sizes of toy electric motors, to which he had fitted rainbow-colored disks of light cardboard of about a foot in diameter. Then he bundled the five motors and Mr. Bang into a taxicab and drove to a ready-made clothing establishment, where, with grave care, he had Mr. Bang outfitted in as near an imitation of his own prosperous-looking, up-to-date clothing possible to obtain. Next he drove to the Bullion.

"Now," he said to Mr. Bang, "I'm going to telephone some people. In the meantime I want you to go into the barber-shop, get a shave, hair cut, a singe, a shampoo, a massage, and a shine, and get manicured. Have them all working on you at once. Get through as quick as you can and join me on the roof."

As one in a daze Mr. Bang obeyed instructions. When, at the end of an hour, he ascended to the roof of the Bullion, he found there the resplendent Mr. Wallingford in the midst of a group of keen-eyed and laughing young men. Some of them were smoking Mr. Wallingford's big black cigars, and others were smoking monogrammed cigarettes from his diamond-studded case. A small serving table stood near them upon which were several partly filled champagne glasses.

"You see, gentlemen," Wallingford was saying, "with you holding this engine free of the roof, there can be no possible connection with outside sources of electricity unless it should come up through your feet, and I think that any current of electricity having the nerve to pass through this bunch would be frazzled to the limpness of spaghetti by the time it got to where its ticket was punched for. By the way, gentlemen, allow me to introduce Mr. Bang."

Instantly the four men who were holding the Bang sun-engine deposited it upon the roof, and with one accord surrounded the refurbished Mr. Bang. Where did Mr. Bang live and how long had he worked upon his invention? And how did he first get the idea? And what was the size of Cinderburg?

They still asked questions; more arrived and asked questions; photographers, hastily 'phoned for from the different papers, took snaps of the invention, of Mr. Wallingford and Mr. Bang, of New York as seen from the roof of the Hotel Bullion, of the table with the champagne glasses on it, of the butler who served the wine, of the chimneys and water tanks, and of the houseman who looked after the roof. But when electrical experts began to be mentioned Mr. Wallingford announced the interview at an end. The last thing to which he called their attention as he led them to the roof exit was the spectacle of the little motor bravely twirling the rainbow disk.

Cinderburg had bidden good-by to Ed Bang in a spirit of more or less contemptuous tolerance. He was a good, honest, steady young workingman, but it was a pity he had gone daffy on patent rights, to the neglect of his job and his family! Cinderburg received Mr. Edison Morse Bang with awe, as a hero home from glorious victory, for Cinderburg boasted two morning and three afternoon papers, and the night before all these papers had been feverishly asked by wire for details concerning the life and work and personal characteristics and habits and family antecedents of the illustrious inventor, who had just disposed of his wonderful sun-engine to the eminent financier and capitalist, J. Rufus Wallingford.

Gathering sudden dizzy confidence from the cordial reception given him by this particular old friend, Mr. Bang went forth and ordered other supplies and tools that he needed. Then he went to the leading grocery store, which had never before received his patronage, and ordered with a lavish hand, repeating the same operation at the leading dry goods store. Overnight Mr. Bang had become a man of credit, and the feeling was such a pleasant one that he regretted knowing of nothing more which his family needed. Oh well, he could send his wife down.

President Morley, of the Commercial Bank, met him on the car and came right across to sit down with him. "Your negotiations entirely closed with Mr. Wallingford?" Mr. Morley asked.

"Well, not exactly," confessed Mr. Bang. "Mr. Wallingford will be here on the twenty-first to complete the deal and take hold of things."

"Exactly," said Morley, his ashen-gray face contorting to a colorless smile of cordiality. "Whenever you are ready, Mr. Bang, the Commercial Bank would like you to consider its advantages as a repository for your funds."

When J. Rufus Wallingford stepped from the train at Cinderburg and shook hands with the eager Mr. Bang, the "eminent financier" knew that the preliminary work had been well done, for he overheard the baggage-master say to the express agent, "That's him."

"I am afraid that Cinderburg cannot furnish you the accommodations to which you are used," said Mr. Bang apologetically, as he led the way to an automobile borrowed for the great occasion from his old friend Morley, "but I have done the best I could for you."

J. Rufus nodded in approval. "You'll do," he said. "I never in all my experience met an inventor who made my work so easy."

Mr. Bang was deeply grateful for that dubious compliment. Had he been a dog he would have wagged his tail. Mr. Wallingford himself was all that the eye or the imagination could wish, and as he walked into the lobby of the New Auditorium Hotel, the highly uniformed bell-boy who carried his grips followed that resplendent gentleman in humble admiration to the desk. Mr. Wallingford, however, was not required to register, for Mr. Bang had enthusiastically attended to that detail himself. Bustling up to the desk, Mr. Bang smiled triumphantly upon the suave gentleman who presided there.

By the next morning all Cinderburg knew that the great Wallingford had arrived, and Wallingford knew that never in all his varied career had he landed upon a fruitful city under better auspices or more perfectly vouched for. By ten o'clock he had picked out a four-thousand dollar automobile on trial, and was riding in it. First, he called with Mr. Bang to the Commercial Bank, and made a small deposit.

Mr. Morley came right over and did the business himself, and there was a wide smile on his ash-gray face as he was introduced to the great capitalist.

"Eddie Bang was always a great favorite of mine," he crackled. "I'm mighty glad he's struck it rich."

"I suppose, Mr. Wallingford," ventured the alert banker, "that it will take a lot of money to handle my friend Edison's invention? When do you organize?"

"We have already formed the companies," stated Mr. Wallingford politely, producing his diamond studded cigarette case. It was a glittering objective, which held the eye and filled it with visions of wealth.

"The companies?" Mr. Morley's thin eyebrows arched up in surprise. "Will there be more than one?"

"Several," returned Mr. Wallingford, smiling condescendingly. "I don't believe anyone, Mr. Morley, realizes the enormous scope of the future of the Bang Sun Engine."

Mr. Morley blinked, and slowly ran the tips of his fingers over his sparsely thatched head.

"Oh, yes; I see." But he didn't. "There'll be a chance for local investors, I suppose?"

"Scarcely," replied Mr. Wallingford, looking out through the window, and changing the subject. The back window of the bank looked on a broad level of arid land, and beyond that rose a stretch of a mile or more of steep, barren hillsides, which were almost as unbroken a vertical surface. "Ideal!" The great capitalist was suddenly very much excited. "We'll buy that hillside, Mr. Bang, for the Cinderburg Bang Sun Engine Light, Heat and Power Company, and cover the entire mile with sun engines. I suppose that worthless property could be bought for a song."

"By jinks, now I see it!" Mr. Morley's ash-gray face turned suddenly green. "That's Pinkus Hill, and you're stung. If you expect to buy it cheap! There's been two young women and a middle-aged one here, for more than a week, taking options on all the land they could get!" He was deeply pained. "They wanted mine, but they offered me so much I wouldn't sell it. I had some oil experts go out, but they didn't find anything. By jinks! All this time they were cornering Sun Engine land!" He scowled savagely. "From New York, they are! Even the women in New York are slick!"

On Thursday forenoon, there appeared in Court House Square a long table upon which were arranged four of the Bang sun engines, all painted red with gilt stripings, and surrounded by a brass rail.

On Friday evening, Mr. Wallingford entertained in the dining room of the New Auditorium. Present, besides Mr. Wallingford and Mr. Bang, who sat respectively at the head and the foot of the table, were the flower of Cinderburg's finance, the acme of its commercial achievement, the leaders of all its progressive movements which promised a profit, and the owners of nearly all its cash.

"Gentlemen, this little meeting was the beginning of a new world-epoch. There sat among them to-night, a man, a modest man, who, disguising himself for years among them as a mere earnest, plodding workman (applause), had toiled in poverty to give to the world its greatest gift since Prometheus brought down fire from Heaven."

Mr. Morley nodded his head in grave approval, and three others pursed up their lips to show that they had heard about Prometheus; the others looked perplexed, and Pete Scallop clicked back his teeth. Wallingford himself paused to admire the patness of that illustration, and to thank the lucky star which had, just the night before, laid his eyes for the first time upon the fable of Prometheus.

However, he did not want a false impression to get about. Cinderburg must not expect, within a week or a month or possibly within even a year, to see its trolley cars and its factories run by the Bang Sun Engine to the exclusion of all other motive powers.

Although in the meantime the work of organization went on steadily forward, and to-night these friends would be given an opportunity to consider the claims to local support of the Cinderburg Bang Sun Engine, Light, Heat and Power Company. This, an organization restricted to the furnishing of local light, heat and power, was to be left to local capital entirely, except that fifty-one per cent. of the stock would be subscribed by the International Bang Sun Engine Company, which was the parent company and which would hold an invariable fifty-one per cent. of all branch organizations. However, he was not ready for their capital.

Thoughtful figuring on the part of the Cinderburg capitalists.

The American Bang Sun Engine Manufacturing Company was a different matter. It was a larger concern, incorporated for a quarter of a million dollars. It would, if all went well, develop into a business of enormous extent, perhaps the most important manufacturing proposition in the world. Gentlemen, the main factory and the headquarters of this monster organization were to be instituted and held in Cinderburg, making this beautiful little city one of the most important commercial centers of the Middle West."

Wild applause.

There was no necessity for pointing out the advantages of investment in the Cinderburg Bang Sun Engine, Light, Heat and Power Company. Equally obvious, he thought, were the advantages of investment in the American Bang Sun Engine Manufacturing Company, for it would manufacture all the sun engines used in the United States. However, he was not yet ready for capital in this company.

Mr. Morley shook his head. "A million-dollar company without a cent in its treasury!" he protested. "Absurd."

"We don't need a cent!" exulted Wallingford. "The parent company is to be entirely self-sustaining. In all other places but Cinderburg it will require a cash premium from new companies, as well as fifty-one per cent of the stock; and its total business, aside from procuring and protecting patents, will be to collect its own income from dividends and from royalties of a dollar a unit upon each Bang Sun Engine manufactured. The Bang patents are worth billions, and there is one place where, through the parent company, the inventor has to secure the benefit of his own genius. Gentlemen, that inventor needs no introduction to his townsmen. Gentlemen, Mr. Bangs."

Mr. Bangs, realizing at last his actual possession of the gigantic fortune enumerated by that human radiator of financial warmth and good cheer, the eminent Wallingford, was affected almost to tears, and indeed his voice shook as he stood up in answer to a demand for a few remarks. He tried to tell them something about the drudging years he had spent upon his invention, but his voice broke. He could not live long enough to thank his dear friend Wallingford for having rescued him at a moment when all the world was dark. Mr. Wallingford, in the tenderness of his heart and in the broadness of his human sympathy and understanding, quite conspicuously wiped his eyes and called the waiter sharply to open more champagne.

"Gentlemen," said he, carefully suppressing the quiver in his own voice, and smiling sweetly, "after all, we are cold-headed men of business. He paused to clear his throat of its concreted emotion. "I have something in my rooms to show you. Let us drink one parting glass to the success of the various Bang Sun Engine enterprises, to the health of Mr. Bang, and to the future honor and glory and greatness of Cinderburg, and then return to my apartments."

But after all had been said and done, Mr. Wallingford was not yet ready for capital. A magnificent suite of offices was equipped in Cinderburg's most recent and most imposing skyscraper. In the meantime Wallingford set Mr. Bang at work upon some minute models of the wonderful Bang Sun Engine, not over a foot in length and six inches in width and two inches in depth, neat and beautifully gilded, and these supported the tiniest imaginable of buzzers—mere shreds of tongues which alternated between tiny electric magnets—and after these had been set in the sun for a short while they each set up a keen, sharp, small, high note, like an infant cricket's, which spoke volumes for the wonders that the big machines could accomplish.

Then Mr. Wallingford went to Mr. Morley at the Commercial Bank, and exposed the full breadth of his chest and shoulders, the full pinkness of his round face, the full radiance of his confident smile.

"Morley," said he in the pleasant tone of one requesting a match from a boon companion, "I want to borrow a checking account of five thousand dollars."

"Glad to accommodate you," said Mr. Morley, his gray face wreathing in an unctuous smile.

"Well," said Wallingford, smiling. "I guess I'll offer you some International Bang Sun Engine stock."

Mr. Morley shook his head and viewed Mr. Wallingford in kindly reproof. "While that stock is undoubtedly of high worth, it isn't collateral, Mr. Wallingford. It represents at present no tangible value, and, in fact, is not even issued by an operating concern."

"Oh, I see," said Wallingford, smiling.

"No, I don't believe you do," returned Mr. Morley, complimenting himself internally for being a devil of a sly fellow and an ingenious wag. "Even I personally would not care to loan money upon the security."

Mr. Wallingford's face apparently fell. In reality he heaved an inward sigh of satisfaction. "You would not?" he inquired in a crestfallen tone.

"No," insisted Mr. Morley, and then he smiled ingenuously and placed his hand in friendly confidence upon Mr. Wallingford's knee. "I might, however, consider the purchase outright of a block of it, if the price were made attractive."

"The International Stock is not for sale," said Mr. Wallingford stiffly, and arose.

"Now look here, Wallingford," protested Morley; "sit down. Of course, I know you've made your money by looking out for the main chance. I understand that you hold personally only five shares of stock, each, in the local company and in the manufacturing company; but you hold almost five thousand shares of stock in the parent company, which will hold fifty-one per cent of the stock in every other branch company ever formed, which will, in addition, collect a cash license premium from all other branch companies and take a dollar royalty for every sun engine unit manufactured during the life of your overlapping patents, which means indefinitely. Your parent company, Mr. Wallingford, is a great scheme for making Standard Oil look like a small retail concern. But in the meantime the Commercial Bank will be in a position to do a great many favors for all three of your companies. For instance, you say the International has no treasury stock for sale."

"No," Wallingford assented.

"Then when it gets ready to extend its business it will need funds."

"Not at all," denied Wallingford. "The premiums it receives for the establishment of new local branches will carry on all its necessary expenses. Later on patent litigation may take quite a bit, but that cannot come before receipts begin to pour in. You may not know that ten per cent of International's receipts from all sources is to go into a sinking fund for patents and patent litigation alone."

"Correct," said Morley, nodding his head in decided approval. "That shows your shrewd wisdom, the far-sighted business principles, Mr. Wallingford, which have made you what you are, and which have inspired the confidence of bankers men in you," and he looked anew at Mr. Wallingford's well-fed, well-irrigated, and well-groomed bulk. "I will buy some of that stock right now, Mr. Wallingford. Five thousand dollars worth."

"You will not!" decided the great capitalist angrily, and stalked out, refusing to turn at Morley's urgent call.

Wallingford, listening comfortably to his big auto chugging away down at the curb, sat waiting for the time to arrive when he should go to the train to meet the girls, and looked about the magnificent offices of the International Bang Sun Engine Company with much satisfaction.

Into this hive of golden activity came, with a quick, nervous step, an extremely ministerially garbed man, tall and slender, his eyes and hair as black as his Prince Albert and as shiny as his silk hat. This gentleman, refusing to send in his name, pushed breezily into the inner sanctum and slapped J. Rufus on the broad back. "You're pinched for loitering in a graveyard," he announced.

"Hello, Blackie!" exclaimed Wallingford, clasping the hand of the visitor.

"Ready for the grand tableau," said Wallingford, closing his eyes to chuckle. "You're the red fire."

"All right," said Blackie, "touch a match to me."

"I'll do that on the way down to the train," returned J. Rufus. "The girls are coming."

"That's why I'm here ahead of time," grinned Blackie.

The chauffeur was not visible when they reached the sidewalk, and, after honking the horn a few times, Wallingford and Blackie climbed into the tonneau.

"How's the game, J. Rufus?" asked Daw. "Good, I guess, from the front you put up. Any time I see too much padded leather in a new office I shift my wad to an inside pocket and button my vest."

Further intimate conversation was stopped by the appearance of the chauffeur, who came through a near-by swinging door, hastily wiping his mustache.

"I'm afraid, however, Mr. Daw," went on Wallingford blandly, as the chauffeur came within hearing, "that we cannot let you have the Boston franchise without a cash bonus!"

For just one second Blackie looked blank, and then, in an equally business-like tone, he replied, "How much of a bonus do you want?"

"Fifty thousand dollars," returned Wallingford, smiling gleefully as he noticed the chauffeur's head stiffen in listening attention.

"I won't pay it," declared Blackie firmly.

"Yes, you will," insisted Wallingford easily. "The Boston franchise will carry a five-million-dollar stock company, and you know it. What's the matter, Arthur, that you're not starting? Something froze up?"

When he had a minute with Blackie at the station, secure from inadvertent earsedropping, Wallingford explained.

"You see, in a little burg like this, all the chauffeurs know each other, and they tell everything they know. They're better than a newspaper. I'll bet you five dollars against a rusty beer-stopper that the president of the Commercial Bank was about this Boston franchise talk before he gets home to dinner."

When the train came thundering in a few moments later, the two knights of industry hurried back to the Pullman, from which there emerged the two beautiful Warden girls, in exquisite traveling suits, Fanny in brown and Violet in blue. Aunt Pattie, in gray, came last, with a face full of concern.

There was no hilarious greeting, however. The Warden ladies were demurely courteous to Mr. Wallingford, who introduced himself; and they suppressed the dance in their eyes as Wallingford, in the sight of such Cinderburgians as were there assembled, gravely introduced the Boston millionaire. Then the five climbed into the auto, and the chauffeur, his ears reddening from their intent listening, drove up Main Street, past the Commercial Bank, to the offices of Mr. Wallingford and Mr. Bang; and went over immediately to tell Dana T. Morley's chauffeur that these were the same New York women who had bought the options, and that they had come to sell the Sun Engine Company some land, and that there was a millionaire here that wanted to buy the privilege of lighting and heating and furnishing power to Boston with Bang Sun Engines; and that his, the chauffeur's, head was so full of parent company talk that he didn't dare take another drink or he'd be too dizzy to drive.

BOSTON MILLIONAIRE!

Those were the two words which in great, black letters, spread across each front page. Told all about it, too. The millionaire had purchased from the International Bang Sun Engine Company a thirty-day option to form the Boston Bang Sun Engine Light, Heat and Power Company, with a capitalization of five million dollars, two million five hundred and fifty thousand of which were to become the property of the International Bang Sun Engine Company, in return for doing business under the Bang patents! And the Boston millionaire had paid five thousand dollars for his thirty-day option! In cash!

There was another important item in the paper. The Bang Sun Engine Company had paid seventy thousand dollars for the Pinkus hillside! And they would probably purchase, from the same parties, other valuable sun spots!!

Seventy thousand dollars! Morley turned the color of an olive, as he considered that price for the worthless Pinkus hillside; and then he went back to the larger and more appalling parent company transaction.

The International Bang Sun Engine Company, though having a million-dollar capitalization, had not been put to a dollar's worth of expense, except for the furnishing of offices and a trifling bit of clerk hire. It could have no expense. All the income of this parent company was "pure velvet." Already, in the first stages of its existence, it had taken in five thousand dollars net cash profit, and, moreover, it owned fifty-one thousand dollars' worth of stock in the Cinderburg Bang Sun Engine Light, Heat and Power Co., over one hundred and twenty-seven thousand dollars' worth of stock in the American Bang Sun Engine Manufacturing Company, and over two and a half million dollars' worth of stock, tentatively, in the Boston Bang Sun Engine Light, Heat and Power Company. Think of it! Nearly three million dollars' worth of stock in other and necessarily good dividend-paying companies, in return for an outlay which was almost nil. The parent company! Morley's mouth fairly dripped as he thought of it!

A man so bald that a near-sighted porter had once mistaken him for an arc lamp, came into the Commercial just at the time of opening, and presented a check drawn by Mr. Daw on the Guarantee and Fidelity of New York. The check was made out to W. O. Jones, was for a hundred dollars, and bore the endorsement of J. Rufus Wallingford.

"This guy Daw says he ain't got any account here," explained Mr. Jones; "but I guess this guy Wallingford's all right."

The names of Mr. Daw and Mr. Wallingford brought President Morley straight over to the paying teller's window.

"The check is perfectly good," he observed, but he looked dubiously at W. O. Jones. "Do you know Mr. Daw or Mr. Wallingford?"

"Say, I know this guy Daw like a thief knows a fly cop," growled "Onion" Jones. "Say; there's a guy has so much money that if he drops any he kicks it out of the road. Say; you get that guy Daw pickled, and he'll tell his past, present and future. Say, him and this guy Wallingford are as chummy as a pair of apes. Say; split one of those bills, will you, so I can get two-thirty-five out of it."

Mr. Morley was thoughtful for a long half hour after Mr. Jones had left him, then he walked slowly out of the side door of the bank and went over to Wallingford's hotel. In the bar he walked slowly over to Mr. Wallingford, and received an introduction to Mr. Daw, and greeted that Boston millionaire with great effusiveness, and invited him to dinner, and hastily declined an invitation to a drink.

He was not a drinking man, Dana T. Morley; he was a teetotaler; but on his way home he bought some whiskey, and hid it from his wife, who was more of a teetotaler than he. When the Boston millionaire came, Mr. Morley dragged him into the library, and produced the whiskey and poured two tumblers, and emptied his drink into a tall vase, when Mr. Daw was not looking. Mr. Daw took one sip, and choked, and emptied his drink in the vase when Mr. Morley was not looking. Between them they emptied two bottles, in this fashion, and both men were very drunk—that is, to the outward eye; but Mr. Morley leaned babbily on the arm of Mr. Daw's chair, and said:

"Is there no way, friend Daw, in which a man with money to invest, could secure some of that parent company stock?"

Blackie Daw grinned loosely. He cast an unstable eye at the ceiling, and winked his profound wisdom. He snickered; and he smacked Mr. Morley a resounding smack on the top of his head a resounding smack with his open palm.

"Becher life," he mumbled thickly, and he winked again. "Goana buy it myself." Another prodigious wink. "The Warden girls took parent company stock for their land. But they wanted cash." Another wink. "See?" Another wink. "I'm goana buy it myself."

Laughing hilariously at this good joke, Blackie Daw rose and wandered out of the house. Morley grabbed his hat. At the library door he met Mrs. Morley, whose nose went straight up.

"Dana!" she shrilled. "What is this I smell?"

"Whiskey!" he snapped, and dashed out of the front door.

He was on the dead run when he overtook, and passed, Blackie Daw, and he was out of breath when he sent up his card to the Warden ladies at their hotel.

Yes, they were not adverse to selling him their stock, but still Daw should not be totally disregarded.

Morley puffed and urged and exhorted and finally gained the promise of the young ladies to accompany him to his bank. As they left the hotel and, of course quite by chance, Onion Jones put in his appearance, and confided to Morley that he would help him put the deal over.

Reaching the bank Morley called excitedly to the paying teller and with trembling fingers began to count the money which that grave young man pushed through the grating.

Suddenly the door burst open and in staggered Daw, still feigning intoxication. He seemed to appreciate what was happening, however, and hastily drew forth his check book. Astonished and chagrined the girls looked scornfully at Blackie. Quietly Onion sidled over to Morley and tapping him on the shoulder whispered, "Beat him to it, pal. Beat him to it!" Morley realized Blackie's purpose and, as the later fumbled with his fountain pen and check book, he quickly turned to the orphans and almost forcibly thrust the money into Fannie's hands, taking in return the precious stock of the parent company. Then, as Blackie started to protest, Morley smiled grimly and tightly hugging his dearly bought stock hurried from the bank.

* * * * * *

"Fine work," chuckled J. Rufus Wallingford, as Fanny Warden vigorously crossed the name of Dana T. Morley from the little book.

"It was the Boston Millionaire who did the trick," exulted Blackie.

"Yes, it was," admitted Wallingford, considering the matter from a scientific standpoint. "Without that, Morley wouldn't have bought as much as seventy thousand dollars' worth."

"He wanted a hundred thousand dollars' worth," suggested Aunt Pattie thoughtfully. "But I wouldn't have sold him more than the amount he owes the Warden estate, even if we had had it."

"We'll instruct Ed Bang to come back and sell him the other thirty thousand dollars' worth," laughed Wallingford, "then Ed can experiment the rest of his life. By George!" He suddenly frowned. "We forgot to sting him for the expense fund!"

"Oh! no we didn't!" and Violet giggled, as she unsnapped her handbag. "I'm getting to be a financier myself. It was my happy little idea to sell Dana T. Morley the balance of our options on future sun spots!" And she triumphantly laid in Wallingford's hand, which already held Morley's check for seventy thousand, his further check for twenty thousand.

"Shake, pal!" shouted Blackie, and she dodged him.

(Another Adventure next week.)