

The City of Numbered Days

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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SYNOPSIS.

Brouillard, chief engineer of the Niangua irrigation dam, goes out from camp to investigate a strange light and finds an automobile party camped at the canyon portal. He meets J. Wesley Cortwright and his daughter, Genevieve, of the auto party and explains the reclamation work to them. Cortwright sees in the project a big chance to make money. Brouillard is impervious to hints from the financier, who tells Genevieve that the engineer "will come down and hook himself if the bait is well covered."

Do you believe there is as much grafting going on among our government officials, including congressmen, as muck-raking critics have frequently charged? Who's to blame in this story?

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

During the weeks which followed, the same trail, and a little later that from the Navajo reservation on the south, were strung with antlike processions of laborers pouring into the shut-in valley at the foot of Mount Chirringo. Almost as if by magic a populous camp of tents, shelter shacks and Indian tepees sprang up in the level bed-bottom of the future lake; campfires gave place to mess kitchens; the commissary became a busy department store stocked with everything that thrifty or thriftless laborer might wish to purchase; and daily the great foundation scarpings in the butressing shoulders of Jack's mountain and Chirringo grew deeper and wider under the churning of the air-drills, the crashings of the dynamite and the rattle and chug of the steam shovels.

It was after the huge task of foundation digging was well under way and the work of constructing the small power dam in the upper canyon had begun that the young chief of construction, busy with a thousand details, had his first forcible reminder of the continued existence of Mr. J. Wesley Cortwright.

It came in the form of a communication from Washington, forwarded by special post-rider service from Quesado, and it called a halt upon the up-river power project. In accordance with its settled policy, the reclamation service would refrain, in the Niangua as elsewhere, from entering into competition with private citizens; would do nothing to discourage the investment of private capital. A company had been formed to take over the power production and to establish a plant for the manufacture of cement, and Brouillard was instructed to govern himself accordingly. For his information, the department letter writer went on to say, it was to be understood that the company was duly organized under the provisions of an act of congress; that it had bound itself to furnish power and material at prices satisfactory to the service; and that the relations between it and the government field-staff on the ground were to be entirely friendly.

"It's a graft—a pull-down with a profit in it for some bunch of money leeches a little higher up!" was the young chief's angry comment when he had given Grislow the letter to read. "Without knowing any more of the details than that letter gives, I'd be willing to bet a month's pay that this is the fine Italian hand of Mr. J. Wesley Cortwright!"

Grislow's eyebrows went up in doubtful interrogation. "Ought I to know the gentleman?" he queried mildly. "I don't seem to recall the name."

"No, you don't know him. It was his motor party that was camping at the Buckskin ford the night we broke in here—the night when we saw the searchlight."

"And you met him? I thought you told me you merely went down and took a look—didn't butt in?"

"I didn't—that night. But the next morning they wanted to see the valley, and I showed them the way in. Cortwright is the multimillionaire pork packer of Chicago, and he went up into the air like a lunatic over the moneymaking chances there were to be in this job. I didn't pay much attention to his chortlings at the time. It didn't seem remotely credible that anybody with real money to invest would plant it in the bottom of the Niangua reservoir."

"But now you think he is going to make his bluff good?"

mapping pen on his thumb nail. "Curious that this particular fly should drop into your pot of ointment on your birthday, wasn't it?" he remarked.

"O suffering Jehu!" gritted Brouillard ragefully. "Are you never going to forget that senseless bit of twaddle!"

"You're not giving me a chance to forget it," said the mapmaker soberly. "You told me that night that the seven-year characteristic was change; and you're a changed man, Victor, if ever there was one. Moreover, it began that very night—or the next morning."

Brouillard laughed. "All of which is bad enough, you'd say, Murray; but it isn't the worst of it. I've just run up against another thing that is threatening to raise merry hell in this valley."

"I know," said the hydrographer slowly. "You've been having a seance with Steve Massingale. Leshington told me about it."

"What did he tell you?" Brouillard demanded half angrily.

"Oh, nothing much; nothing to make you hot at him. He said he gathered the notion that the young sorehead was trying to bully you."

"He was," was the brittle admission. "See here, Grizzly."

The thing to be seen was a small buckskin bag which, when opened, gave up a paper packet folded like a medicine powder. The paper contained a spoonful of dust and pellets of metal of a dull yellow luster.

The hydrographer drew a long breath and fingered the nuggets. "Gold—placer gold!" he exclaimed, and Brouillard nodded and went on to tell how he had come by the bag and its contents.

"Massingale had an ax to grind, of course. You may remember that Harding talked loosely about the Massingale opposition to the building of the dam. There was nothing in it. The opposition was purely personal, and it was directed against Harding himself, with Amy Massingale for the exciting cause."

"That girl—the elemental brute!" Grislow broke in warmly. He knew the miner's daughter fairly well by

with him. You know that long, narrow sandbar in the river just below the mouth of the upper canyon?"

Grislow nodded. "That is where we went for the proof. Massingale dipped up a panful of the bar sand, which he asked me to wash out for myself. I did it, and you have the results there in that paper. That bar is comparatively rich placer dirt."

"Good Lord!" ejaculated the mapmaker. "Comparatively rich, you say?—and you washed this spoonful out of a single pan?"

"Keep your head," said Brouillard coolly. "Massingale explained that had happened to make a ten-strike; that the bar wasn't any such bonanza as that first result would indicate. I proved that, too, by washing some more of it without getting any more than a few 'colers.' But the fact remains: it's placer ground."

It was at this point that the larger aspect of the fact launched itself upon the hydrographer.

"A gold strike!" he gasped. "And we—we're planning to drown it under two hundred feet of a lake!"

Brouillard's laugh was harsh. "Don't let the fever get hold of you, Grislow. Don't forget that we are here to carry out the plans of the reclamation service—which are more far-reaching and of a good bit greater consequence than a dozen placer mines. Massingale drove the peg down good and hard. If I would jump in and pull every possible string to hurry the railroad over the range, and keep on pulling them, the secret of the placer bar would remain a secret. Otherwise he, Stephen Massingale, would give it away, publish it, advertise it to the world. You know what that would mean for us, Murray."

"My Lord! I should say so! We'd have Boomtown-on-the-pike right now, with all the variations! Every white man in the camp would chuck his job in the hollow half of a minute and go to gravel washing!"

"That's it precisely," Brouillard acquiesced gloomily. "Massingale is a young tough, but he is shrewd enough, when he is sober. He had me dead to rights, and he knew it. You don't wait any gold camp starting up here in the bottom of your reservoir; he said; and I had to admit it."

Grislow had found a magnifying glass in the drawer of the mapping table, and he was holding it in focus over the small collection of grain gold and nuggets. In the midst of the eager examination he looked up suddenly to say: "Hold on a minute. Why is Steve proposing to give this thing away? Why isn't he working the bar himself?"

"He explained that phase of it, after a fashion—said that placer mining was always more or less of a gamble, and that they had a sure thing of it in the 'Little Susan.' Of course, if the thing had to be given away he and his father would avail themselves of their rights as discoverers and take their chance with the crowd for the sake of the ready money they might get out of it. Otherwise they'd be content to let it alone and stick to their legitimate business, which is quartz mining."

"And to do that successfully they've got to have the railroad. How did you settle it finally?"

"He told me to take a week or two and think about it."

"You're Brillard, the Government Man, I Take It!"

"No, you don't know him. It was his motor party that was camping at the Buckskin ford the night we broke in here—the night when we saw the searchlight."

"And you met him? I thought you told me you merely went down and took a look—didn't butt in?"

"I didn't—that night. But the next morning they wanted to see the valley, and I showed them the way in. Cortwright is the multimillionaire pork packer of Chicago, and he went up into the air like a lunatic over the moneymaking chances there were to be in this job. I didn't pay much attention to his chortlings at the time. It didn't seem remotely credible that anybody with real money to invest would plant it in the bottom of the Niangua reservoir."

"But now you think he is going to make his bluff good?"

"That looks very much like it," said Brouillard sourly, pointing to the letter from Washington. "That scheme is going to change the whole face of nature for us up here, Grislow. It will spell trouble right from the jump."

"Oh, I don't know," was the deflating rejoinder. "It will relieve us of a lot of side-issue industries—cut 'em out and bury 'em, so far as we are concerned."

"That part of it is all right, of course; but it won't end there, not by a hundred miles. Jobson says in that letter that the relations have got to be friendly! I'll bet anything you like that I'll have to go and read the riot act to those people before they've been twenty-four hours on their job!"

Grislow was trying the point of his

CHAPTER V

A Fire of Little Sticks

Two days after the arrival of the letter from Washington announcing the approaching invasion of private capital, Brouillard, returning from a horseback trip to the Buckskin, where Anson and Griffith were setting grade stakes for the canal diggers, found a visitor awaiting him in the camp headquarters office.

One glance at the thick-lipped, heavy-faced man chewing an extinct cigar while he made himself comfortable in the only approach to a lounging chair that the office afforded was sufficient to awaken an alert antagonism. The big man introduced himself without taking the trouble to get out of his chair.

"My name is Hosford, and I represent the Niangua Improvement company as its manager and resident en-

ginner," said the lounge, shifting the dead cigar from one corner of his hard-bitten mouth to the other. "You're Brillard, the government man, I take it?"

"Brouillard, if you please," was the crisp correction. And then with a careful effacement of the final saving trace of hospitality in tone or manner: "What can we do for you, Mr. Hosford?"

"A good many things, first and last. I'm two or three days ahead of my outfit, and you can put me up somewhere until I get a camp of my own. You've got some sort of an engineers' mess, I take it?"

"We have," said Brouillard briefly. "You'll make yourself at home with us, of course," he added, and he tried to say it without making it sound too much like a challenge.

"All right; so much for that part of it," said the self-invited guest. "Now for the business end of the deal—why don't you sit down?"

Brouillard planted himself behind his desk and began to fill his blackened office pipe, coldly refusing Hosford's tender of a cigar.

"You were speaking of the business matter," he suggested bluntly.

"Yes, I'd like to go over your plans for the power dam in the upper canyon. If they look good to me I'll adopt them."

"I am very far from wishing to quarrel with anybody," said Brouillard, but his tone belied the words. "At the same time, if you think we are going to do your engineering work, or any part of it, for you, you are pretty severely mistaken. Our own job is fully big enough to keep us busy."

"You're off," said the big man coolly. "Somebody has bungled in giving you the dope. You want to keep your job, don't you?"

"That is neither here nor there. What we are discussing at present is the department's attitude toward your enterprise. I shall be exceeding my instructions if I make that attitude friendly to the detriment of my own work."

The new resident manager sat back in his chair and chewed his cigar reflectively, staring up at the log beaming of the office ceiling.

"You're just like all the other government men I've ever had to do business with, Brouillard; pig-headed, obstinate, blind as bats to their own interests. I didn't especially want to begin by knocking you into line, but I guess it'll have to be done. I guess the best way to get you to see a little wire to Washington. How does that strike you?"

"I haven't the slightest interest in what you may do or fail to do," said Brouillard.

"But you have made the plans for this power plant, haven't you?"

"Yes; and they are the property of the department. If you want them I'll turn them over to you upon a proper order from headquarters."

"That's a little more like it. Where did you say I'd find your wire office?"

Brouillard gave the information, and as Hosford went out Grislow came in and took his place at the mapping table.

"Glad you got back in time to save my life," he remarked pointedly, with a shy glance at his chief. "He's been plowing furrows up and down my little potato patch all day."

"Humph! Digging for information, I suppose?" grunted Brouillard.

"Just that; and he's been getting it, too. Not out of me, particularly, but out of everybody. Also, he was willing to impart a little. We're in for the time of our lives, Victor."

"I know it," was the crabbed rejoinder.

"You don't know the tenth part of it," asserted the hydrographer slowly. "It's a modest name, 'The Niangua Improvement company,' but it is going to be like charity—covering a multitude of sins. Do you know what that plank-faced organizer has got up his sleeve? He is going to build us a neat, up-to-date little city right here in the middle of our midst. If I hadn't made him believe that I was only a draftsman, he would have had me out with a transit, running the lines for the streets."

"A city?—in this reservoir bottom? I guess not. He was only stringing you to kill time, Grizzly."

"Don't you fool yourself!" exclaimed the mapmaker. "He's got the plans in his grip. We're going to be on a little reservation set apart for us by the grace of God and the kindness of those promoters. The remainder of the valley is laid out into cute little squares and streets, with everything named and numbered, ready to be listed in the brokers' offices. You may not be aware of it, but this palatial office building of ours fronts on Chirringo avenue."

"Staff," said Brouillard. "What has all this bubble blowing got to do with the building of a temporary dam and the setting up of a couple of cement kilns?"

Grislow laid his pen aside and whirled around on his working stool.

"Don't you make any easy-going mistake, Victor," he said earnestly. "The cement and power proposition is only a side issue. These new people are going to take over the sawmills, open up quarries, build a stub railroad to the Hopha mines, grade a practicable stage road over the range to Quesado, and put on a fast-mule freight line to serve until the railroad builds in. Wouldn't that set your teeth on edge?"

How will Brouillard get rid of Hosford, who seems bent on making trouble? Or will he get rid of him at all?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HOME TOWN HELPS

PARKS MEAN MUCH TO CITY

Playgrounds a Most Important Part in the Welfare of Any Community.

Play and outdoor exercise are as necessary to the modern city dweller as education, according to J. R. Richards, Chicago's superintendent of recreation.

The way in which people spend their lives after the day's journey is over—the way in which they play—offers them the best chance of contributing to the enhancement of one another's lives; that is the view of Herbert Croly in "Progressive Democracy."

Parks are often called the lungs of the cities. That seems to denote health giving. To call them the heart of the cities might give more idea of the moral value of the people's playgrounds.

That there is a moral issue in the use of public parks is the theme of Mr. Richards' paper on the American city. The leisure time period, he declares, is the part of our existence that makes or breaks us. The saloon, offering facilities for getting together, is one resort open to the idle hour, and he asserts that "the first visit is for companionship and not for booze."

Among the recommendations for the development of recreation opportunities for adults is that city authorities should co-operate with organizations already in existence and should have a survey made to put into use for outdoor sports all vacant areas. Growns-up, he believes, should be induced to take more interest in golf, tennis, cricket, boating, skating and other games and should be given plenty of room for sport. Public swimming pools also are urged to spread health and retain it.

Plan the "City Practical."

Something of the right spirit is in St. Louis, where Harlan Bartholomew has been engaged by the citizens' city planning committee. The river front and the street system will first engage his attention.

"The city beautiful idea does not appeal to the general public sufficiently to win financial support," he said shortly after arriving from Newark, N. J., where for three years he had been a city plan expert. "I am interested in the city practical, and I find that the public is inclined to favor it, as is comes to understand what can be done, and the benefits that will follow."

"The river front should be made a public convenience and a business asset, and the improvements to be made should be in the direction of aiding the interchange of freight between rail and water carriers."

"The street system of St. Louis, as of most American cities, is too largely rectangular. Radial highways are needed. Here the work of city replanning has to correct the mistakes of the past, which are often costly mistakes. The only place where it can do new work, and prevent further mistakes is in the planning of subdivisions and additions."

Use Is the Test.

Chicago's effort to promote outdoor recreation recently received tribute from Enos Mills of Colorado. He is an enthusiastic supporter of the movement for increased utilization of America's national parks.

"No city in the country has done so much for outdoor recreation as Chicago," he said. "You are using your parks."

So it would appear that Mr. Richards practices what he preaches in the magazines. The Chicago News, in accepting Mr. Mills' compliment, comments:

"Chicago does not by any means lead in park area, either absolutely or in proportion to population. But, as Mr. Mills remarks, this community makes excellent provision for the people's intensive utilization of the available park facilities. The playgrounds, the bathing beaches and swimming pools are designed to bring opportunities for healthful exercise and enjoyment within easy reach of as many of the people as possible, and a true reason for regret is the delay in the acquisition and conversion of the outlying wooded areas."

City to Build Homes.

The city of St. John, N. B., is preparing to enter the housing business for the benefit of the workmen of the city. The first step was taken at a recent meeting of the common council, when a bill giving the city the required power, was approved and ordered to be forwarded to the legislature.

The bill gives the city power to appropriate lands as they may be required and to erect houses suitable for the homes of working men. It provides for the issuing of bonds to cover the cost of purchase and erection and sets forth an easy-payment scheme under which the properties may be acquired by the citizens.

The plan suggested is a payment of 10 or 15 per cent of the ultimate cost when possession is taken and the balance to be paid in monthly installments, such payments to be arranged to include interest at 6 per cent on the balance outstanding.

HOW TO HEAL ITCHING, BURNING SKIN DISEASES

A Baltimore doctor suggests a simple, but reliable and inexpensive, home treatment for people suffering with eczema, ringworm, rashes and similar itching, burning skin troubles.

At any reliable druggist's get a jar of Resinol Ointment and a cake of Resinol Soap. These are not at all expensive. With the Resinol Soap and warm water bathe the affected parts thoroughly, until they are free from crusts and the skin is softened. Dry very gently, spread on a thin layer of the Resinol Ointment, and cover with a light bandage—if necessary to protect the clothing. This should be done twice a day. Usually the distressing itching and burning stop with the first treatment, and the skin soon becomes clear and healthy again.—Adv.

The only way to successfully argue with a woman is to keep silent.

To keep clean and healthy take Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. They regulate liver, bowels and stomach.—Adv.

A form of parachute has been invented to enable persons to escape from high buildings in case of fire.

ITTS, EPILEPSY, FALLING SICKNESS STOPPED QUICKLY. Fifty years of uninterrupted success of Dr. King's Kidney Pills in curing these and many other ailments. Address: ALLEN S. OLIMATED, Le Roy, N. Y. Adv.

Hard to Believe. "My feet have a habit of going to sleep." "With those loud socks?"

USE ALLEN'S FOOT-EASE The antiseptic powder to be shaken into shoes and used in foot-bath. It relieves painful, swollen, smarting, aching, tired feet and instantly takes the sting out of corns and bunions. The greatest comfort discovery of the age. Sold everywhere. Trial package FREE. Address: ALLEN S. OLIMATED, Le Roy, N. Y. Adv.

The American Way. The Stranger—Why are you driving the car so fast? The American—To get to the ferry. (Later at ferry.) The American—We have 20 minutes to spare.

The Stranger—I know it. In this country you will race the car, burn up gasoline, imperil lives, run the chance of being arrested and kill a chicken to gain 20 minutes for which you have no use when you get them.

How It Impressed Him. Willie's father was trying to impress upon him the tremendous progress that science and invention have made in the past fifty years.

"Just think, Willie," when I was a boy there were no telephones, no electric lights, no talking machines, no moving pictures, no X-rays, no wireless telegraphy, no—

"Gee," interrupted Willie. "What an awful lot of Hicks everybody must have been!"

Patchouli for Moth Prevention. The fragrant dried roots of the patchouli, reports Special Agent Garrard Harris, are held in great esteem in Porto Rico, and it is the general belief in the island that when placed among clothing and in closets they are a sure preventive of moths. In the earlier days of the century the perfume of patchouli was in great favor. It is believed that, if the properties of patchouli were more generally known, there would be a demand for it in the United States in preference to moth balls. It should have as much vogue as lavender for putting between sheets and placing among garments; and if it were manufactured or shredded into a finer substance and sold in small bags, it would be a decided novelty that undoubtedly would prove popular. Great quantities of it grow wild in Porto Rico, and a demand for it from the United States would afford employment to many of the poor country people. In Porto Rico natives bring the patchouli to town and sell it in small bundles that retail at two to five cents.

GLASS OF WATER Upset Her.

People who don't know about food should never be allowed to feed persons with weak stomachs.

Sometime ago a young woman who lives in Me, had an attack of scarlet fever, and when convalescing was permitted to eat anything she wanted. Indiscriminate feeding soon put her back in bed with severe stomach and kidney trouble.

"There I stayed," she says, "three months, with my stomach in such condition that I could take only a few teaspoonfuls of milk or beef juice at a time. Finally Grape-Nuts was brought to my attention and I asked my doctor if I might eat it. He said, 'yes,' and I commenced at once.

"The food did me good from the start and I was soon out of bed and recovered from the stomach trouble. I have gained ten pounds and am able to do all household duties, some days sitting down only long enough to eat my meals. I can eat anything that one ought to eat, but I still continue to eat Grape-Nuts at breakfast and supper and like it better every day.

"Considering that I could stand only a short time, and that a glass of water seemed 'so heavy,' I am fully satisfied that Grape-Nuts has been everything to me and that my return to health is due to it.

"I have told several friends having nervous or stomach trouble what Grape-Nuts did for me and in every case they speak highly of the food."

"There's a Reason." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.