

The City of Numbered Days

By Francis Lynde

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SYNOPSIS.

Brouillard, chief engineer of the Niqoua irrigation dam, meets J. Wesley Cortwright and explains the reclamation work to him. Cortwright organizes a company and obtains government contracts to furnish power and material. Steve Massingale threatens to start a gold rush if Brouillard does not use his influence to bring a railroad branch to the place, thus opening an easy market for the "Little Susan" mine ore. Brouillard tells Amy Massingale of his need for money to pay off his dead father's debts. She tells him to be true to himself. He decides for the extension. Mirapolis, the city of numbered days, booms. Cortwright persuades Brouillard to become consulting engineer of the power company in return for \$100,000 stock. Stoppage of work on the railroad threatens a panic. Brouillard spreads the Massingale story of placer gold in the river bed and starts a gold rush, which promises to stop the reclamation project. Amy tells Brouillard that her father is in Cortwright's financial clutches. He tells her he has made \$100,000 and declares his love. She loves him, but shows him that he has become demoralized. A real gold find is made. Brouillard sells his stock but does not pay his father's debts. Cortwright's son shoots Dave Massingale. Brouillard threatens Cortwright with exposure if he pushes Massingale to the wall.

There comes a time in the life of every young man who is smothering his soul to gratify his senses and selling his character for money, when opportunity is given him to turn about face, to rediscover his ideals and get back to common honesty. Has Brouillard reached this point?

CHAPTER XV—Continued.

The promoter pulled himself erect with a grip on either arm of the chair. "Brouillard, do you know what you are talking about?" he demanded. "No; it is only a guess. But as matters stand—with your son indictable for an attempted murder . . . if I were you, Mr. Cortwright, I believe I'd give David Massingale a chance to pay those notes at the bank."

"And let him blackmail me? Not in a month of Sundays, Brouillard! Let him sell his ore and pay the notes if he can. If he can't, I'll take the mine."

"All right," said the visitor placably. "You asked, and I've answered. Now let's come to something more vital to both of us. There is a pretty persistent rumor on the street that you and your associates succeeded in getting a resolution through both houses of congress at the last session, appointing a committee to investigate this Coronida claim right here on the ground. Nobody seems to have any definite details, and it possibly hasn't occurred to anyone that congress hasn't been in session since Mirapolis was born. But that doesn't matter. The committee is coming; you have engaged rooms for it here in Bongras'. You are expecting the private-car special next week."

"Well?" said the magnate. "You're a pretty good kindergartner. But what of it?"

"Oh, nothing. Only I think you might have taken me in on the little side play. What if I had gone about town contradicting the rumor?"

"Why should you? It's true. The congressional party will be here next week, and nobody has made any secret of it."

"Still, I might have been taken in," persisted Brouillard suavely. "You'll surely want to give me my instructions a little beforehand, won't you? Just think how easily things might get tangled. Suppose I should say to somebody—to Garner, for example—that the town was hugely mistaken; that no congressional committee had ever been appointed; that these gentlemen who are about to visit us are mere complaisant friends of yours, coming as your guests, on a junketing trip at your expense. Wouldn't that be rather awkward?"

The mayor of Mirapolis brought his hands together, fist in palm, and for a flitting instant the young engineer saw in the face of the father the same expression that he had seen in the face of the son when Van Bruce Cortwright was struggling for a second chance to kill a man.

"Damn you!" said the magnate savagely; "you always know too much! You're bargaining with me!"

"Well, you have bargained with me, first, last and all the time," was the cool retort. "On each occasion I have had my price, and you have paid it. Now you are going to pay it again. Shall I go over to the Spotlight office and tell Harlan what I know?"

"You can't bluff me that way, Brouillard, and you ought to sense it by this time. Do you suppose I don't know how you are fixed?—that you've got money—money that you used to say you owed somebody else—tied up in Mirapolis investments?"

Brouillard rose and buttoned his coat.

"There is one weak link in your chain, Mr. Cortwright," he said evenly; "you don't know men. Put on your coat and come over to Harlan's office with me. It will take just about two minutes to satisfy you that I'm not bluffing."

For a moment it appeared that the offer was to be accepted. But when he had one arm in a coat sleeve,

The newspaper man rose and held out his hand.

"You're a man and a brother, Brouillard, and I'm your friend for life. I'm going to stay until you give me the high sign to crawl out on the bank. Is that asking too much?"

"No. If the time ever comes when I have anything to say, I'll say it to you. But don't lose sight of the 'if,' and don't lean too hard on me. I'm a mighty uncertain quantity these days, Harlan, and that's the truest thing I've told you since you butted in. Good night."

Mirapolis awoke to a full sense of its opportunities on the morning following the departure of its distinguished guests. By ten o'clock it was the talk of the lobbies, the club, and the exchanges that the reclamation service was already abandoning the work on the great dam. One-half of the workmen were to be discharged at once, and doubtless the other half would follow as soon as the orders could come from Washington.

Appealed to by a mob of anxious inquirers, Brouillard did not deny the fact of the discharges, and thereupon the city went mad in a furor of speculative excitement in comparison with which the orgy of the gold discoverers paled into insignificance. "Curb" exchanges sprang into being in the Metropole lobby, in the court of the Niqoua building, and at a dozen street corners on the avenue. Word went to the placers, and by noon the miners had left their sluice-boxes and were pouring into town to buy options at prices that would have staggered the wildest plunger elsewhere, or at any other time.

Brouillard closed his desk at one o'clock and went to fight his way through the street pandemonium to Bongras'. At a table in the rear room he found David Massingale, his long, white board tucked into the closely-buttoned miner's coat to be out of the way of the flying knife and fork, while he gave a lifelike imitation of a man begrudging every second of time wasted in stopping the hunger gap.

Brouillard took the opposite chair and was grimly amused at the length of time that elapsed before Massingale realized his presence.

"Fity a man has to stop to eat on a day like this, isn't it, Mr. Massingale?" he laughed; and then: "How is Steve?"

Massingale nodded. "The boy's comin' along all right now. They're sayin' on the street that you're lettin' out half o' your meen—that so?"

Brouillard laughed again. "Yes, it's true. Have you been doing something in real estate this morning, Mr. Massingale?"

"All I could," mumbled the old man between sips. "But I can't do much. If it ain't one thing, it's another. 'Bout as soon as I got that tangle with the Red Butte smelter straightened out, the railroad hit me."

"How was that?" queried Brouillard, with quickening interest coming alive at a bound.

"Same old song, no cars; try and get 'em tomorrow, and tomorrow it'll be next day, and next day it'll be the day after. Looks like they don't want to haul any freight out o' here."

"I see," said Brouillard, and truly he saw much more than David Massingale did. Then: "No shipments

"The last half o' the last day," Massingale amended.

"That being the case, there is no help for it; you'll have to take your medicine and pay the notes. Do that, take an iron-clad receipt from the bank—I'll write it out for you—and get the stock released. After that, we'll give them a whirl for the thirty-three and a third per cent they have practically stolen from you."

The old man's face, reminding now of his daughter's, was a picture of dismayed incertitude.

"I reckon you're forgettin' that I hain't got money enough to lift one edge o' them notes," he said gently.

Brouillard had found a piece of blank paper in his pocket and was rapidly writing the "iron-clad" receipt.

"No, I hadn't forgotten. I have something over a hundred thousand dollars lying idle in the bank. You'll take it and pay the notes."

It was a bolt out of a clear sky for the old man tottering on the brink of his fourth pit of disaster, and he evinced his emotion—and the tease strain of keyed-up nerves—by dropping his lifted coffee cup with a crash into his plate. The little accident was helpful in its way—it made a diversion—and by the time the wreck was repaired speech was possible.

"Are you—are you plumb sure you can spare it?" asked the debtor huskily. And then: "I can't seem to sort o' surround it—all in a bunch, that way. I knowed J. Wesley had me down; the 'Susan's' the only piece o' real money in this whole blamed free-for-all, and he knows it."

After they had made their way through the excited sidewalk exchanges to the bank, and Brouillard had written his check, the old man, with the miraculously-sent bit of rescue paper in his hand, hesitated.

Will Old Dave Massingale go himself to Amy and tell her what Victor has done to get the Massingale mine out of Cortwright's clutches?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Jelling His Complacency.

The most humiliating experience that can befall a man is that of being jilted in love. The possibility that a woman would not care to marry him never occurs to a man.

Not more than that? . . . Oh, yes; you say the Hillman check is in; I had overlooked it. All right, thank you."

When the waiter had removed the desk set, the engineer leaned toward his table companion:

"Mr. Massingale, I'm going to ask you to tell me frankly what kind of a deal it was you made with Cortwright and the bank people."

"It was the biggest tom-fool razzle that any livin' live man out of a lunatic asylum ever went into," confessed the prisoner of fate. "I was to stock the 'Susan' for half a million—oh, she's worth it, every dollar of it; you might say the ore's in sight for it right now"—this in deference to Brouillard's brow-lifting of surprise. "They was to put in a hundred thousand cash, and I was to put in the mine and the ore on the dump, just as she stood."

The engineer nodded and Massingale went on.

"I was to have two-thirds of the stock and they was to have one-third. The hundred thousand for development we'd get at the bank, on my notes, because I was president and the biggest stockholder, with John Wes, an indorser. Then, to protect the bank accordin' to law, they said, we'd put the whole bunch o' stock—mine and their'n—into escrow in the hands of Judge Williams. When the notes was paid, the judge'd hand the stock back to us."

"Just a moment," interrupted Brouillard. "Did you sign those notes personally, or as president of the new company?"

"That's where they laid for me," said the old man shamefacedly. "Right there is where John Wes' ten-dollar-a-bottle sody-pop stuff was soppin' up most 'a' foolish me plumb silly."

"So it amounts to this: You have given them a clean third of the 'Susan' for the mere privilege of borrowing one hundred thousand dollars on your own paper. And if you don't pay, you lose the remaining two-thirds as well."

"That's about the way it stacks up to a sober man. Looks like I needed a janitor to look after my upper story, don't it? And I reckon mebbe I do."

"One thing more," pressed the relentless querist. "Did you really handle the hundred-thousand-dollar development fund yourself, Mr. Massingale?"

"Well, no; not exactly. Ten thousand dollars of what they called a 'contingent fund' was put in my name; but the treasurer handled most of it—natchury, we bein' a stock company."

Brouillard took out his pencil and began to make figures on the back of the menu card. He knew the equipment of the "Little Susan," and his specialty was the making of estimates. Hence he was able to say, after a minute or two of figuring:

"It's a bad business any way you attack it. What you have really got to yourself out of the deal is the ten thousand-dollar deposit to your personal account, and nothing more; and they'll probably try to make you a debtor for that. Taking that amount and a fair estimate of the company's expenditures to date—say thirty-five thousand in round numbers, which is fairly chargeable to the company's assets as a whole—they still owe you about fifty-five thousand of the original hundred thousand they were to put in. If there were time—but you say this is the last day?"

"The last half o' the last day," Massingale amended.

"That being the case, there is no help for it; you'll have to take your medicine and pay the notes. Do that, take an iron-clad receipt from the bank—I'll write it out for you—and get the stock released. After that, we'll give them a whirl for the thirty-three and a third per cent they have practically stolen from you."

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Browning's Peculiar Eyes. Browning's eyes were peculiar, one having a long focus, the other very short. He had the unusual accomplishment (try it and prove) of closing either eye without squinting and without any apparent effort, though sometimes on the street in strong sunshine his face would be a bit distorted. He did all his reading and writing with one eye, closing the long one as he sat down at his desk. He could see an immense distance. He never suffered with any pain in his eyes except once when as a boy he was trying to be a vegetarian in imitation of his youthful idol Shelley.—Boston Transcript.

Taking Her Seriously. "I've begun to think that fellow is really seriously in love with me."

"What makes you think so?"

"He's taken me to the theater three times now and not once has he ever tried to kiss me good night."

"How was the table of the Aviation club's dinner decorated?"

"With air plants."

If You Need a Medicine You Should Have the Best

Although there are hundreds of preparations advertised, there is only one that really stands out pre-eminent as a remedy for diseases of the kidneys, liver and bladder.

Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root is not recommended for everything. A sworn certificate of purity is with every bottle. You may receive a sample size bottle of Swamp-Root by Parcel Post. Address Dr. Kilmer & Co., Birmingham, N. Y., and enclose ten cents.

For sale at all drug stores in bottles of two sizes—60c and \$1.00, also mention this paper.—Adv.

Necessary. "So you've bought a car at last. I knew you'd come to it sooner or later."

"It wasn't because I wanted it. You see, our cook married a chauffeur, and the only way we could keep from losing her was to give him a job also."

Every man has his strain of usefulness. Some fellows make first-class pullbearers.

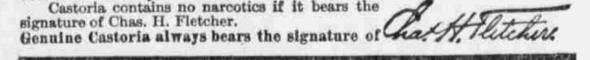
The Effects of Opiates.

THAT INFANTS are peculiarly susceptible to opium and its various preparations, all of which are narcotic, is well known. Even in the smallest doses, if continued, these opiates cause changes in the functions and growth of the cells which are likely to become permanent, causing imbecility, mental perversion, a craving for alcohol or narcotics in later life. Nervous diseases, such as intractable nervous dyspepsia and lack of staying powers are a result of dosing with opiates or narcotics to keep children quiet in their infancy. The rule among physicians is that children should never receive opiates in the smallest doses for more than a day at a time, and only then if unavoidable.

The administration of Anodynes, Drops, Cordials, Soothing Syrups and other narcotics to children by any but a physician cannot be too strongly decried, and the druggist should not be a party to it. Children who are ill need the attention of a physician, and it is nothing less than a crime to dose them willfully with narcotics.

Castoria contains no narcotics if it bears the signature of Chas. H. Fletcher.

Genuine Castoria always bears the signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher*



Shipping Fever

Influenza, Pink Eye, Epizootic, Distemper and all nose and throat diseases cured, and all others, no matter how "exposed," kept from having any of these diseases with SPOHN'S DISTEMPER COMPOUND. Three to six doses often cure a case. One 50-cent bottle guaranteed to do so. Best thing for brood mares; acts on the bowels, keeps the bowels open, keeps the bowels open. Druggists and harness shops or manufacturers sell it. Agents wanted.

SPOHN MEDICAL CO., Chemists, Goshen, Ind., U. S. A.

AMERICAN SILO IN HOLLAND.

The first American ensilage tower in Holland, which was erected last year on the Johannhoeve farm at Oosterbeek by the Institute for Agricultural Improvements, has given such good results that two other towers are now to be built on the same farm, which will provide sufficient ensilage maize to keep the entire farm stock during next winter.

The head of the Johannhoeve project asserts that the American method is preferable to that hitherto in use there. An excellent fodder for all kinds of animals is thus produced, he says, while the losses by fermentation are considerably less. He comes to the conclusion that as many as 44 cows can be maintained on 37 acres by the new method, and that with exclusive stable feeding they might even be maintained on about 2 1/2 acres, only an albuminous fodder needing to be added in the winter.

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Free sample each by mail with Book. Address postcard, Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

Germany and Her Waterways.

Although Germany has three times as many miles of railway in proportion to area as the United States, she has spent hundreds of millions of marks in the enlargement and improvement of her waterways. What the statesmen of Germany think of the importance of the waterways is shown by the fact that in the midst of the greatest war in all history, when the empire is fighting for its very life, they are not only maintaining and operating the waterways they already have, but are actually building more.

Surprisingly Ungracious.

"Germany's reception of President Wilson's last note was ungracious." The speaker was Joseph H. Choate, diplomat and lawyer.

"Germany, in this instance," he continued, "reminds me of the chap whose office a beggar entered."

"I ain't had nothing to eat for two days, boss," said the beggar. "Can't ye help me out?"

"I'd like to, my man," was the reply, "but I sprained my foot on a bill collector yesterday."

Sorry for Husband.

A husband who says his wife chased him out of the house when he was end in his night shirt and pursued him in the direction of an electric arc light admits that she spanked her with a fence picket. Considering the lack of distinction which marks the night shirt and the pitiless publicity which the arc light might have given the costume it is easy to sympathize with the husband if his whole statement is true.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

His Bluff Called.

Bluffman—I owe you ten dollars old chap—can you change a fifty-dollar bill?

Banks—Certainly!

Bluffman—Ah—er—since you're so flush, I guess I won't pay you till next week.—Boston Evening Transcript.

In this Matter of Health

one is either with the winners or with the losers.

It's largely a question of right eating—right food. For sound health one must cut out rich, indigestible foods and choose those that are known to contain the elements that build sturdy bodies and keen brains.

Grape-Nuts

is a wonderfully balanced food, made from whole wheat and barley. It contains all the nutrient of the grain, including the mineral phosphates, indispensable in Nature's plan for body and brain rebuilding.

Grape-Nuts is a concentrated food, easy to digest. It is economical, has delicious flavor, comes ready to eat, and has helped thousands in the winning class.

"There's a Reason"



"Looks Like I Need a Janitor to Look After My Upper Story, Don't It?"