

The Yadkin Ripple

TAXI

An Adventure Romance

By George Agnew Chamberlain

SYNOPSIS.

PART I.—Robert Hervey Randolph, young New York man-about-town, leaves the home of his sweetheart, Madge Van Teller, chagrined because of her refusal of his proposal of marriage. His income, \$30,000 a year, which he must surrender if a certain Miss Imogen Pamela Thornton (whom he has seen only as a small girl ten years before) is found, is not considered by the girl of his heart adequate to modern needs. In a "don't care" mood Randolph enters a taxi, ordered by the driver, and is driven to the stage door of a theater. A man he knows, Duke Beamer, induces a girl to enter the cab. Beamer, attempting to follow, is pushed back by Randolph and the cab moves on. His new acquaintance tells Randolph she is a chorus girl, and has lost her position. She is in distress, even hungry, and he takes her to his apartment. There, after lunch, a chance remark convinces him the girl is the missing Pamela Thornton. He does not tell her of her good fortune, but secures her promise to stay in the flat until the morning and leaves her. In a whimsical mood, also realizing that the girl's reappearance has left him practically penniless, he bribes the taxi driver to let him take his job, and leaving word with the legal representative of the Thornton estate where he can find Pamela, takes up his new duties under the name of "Slim Hervey." He loves the girl, but his pride forbids him approaching her under their changed conditions.

PART II.—One evening he is engaged by Beacher Tremont, notorious profligate, to drive him and Madge Van Teller to a hostelry known as "Greenwood." Aware of the evil nature of the place, Randolph drives the pair to Greenwood cemetery. Infuriated, Beacher gets out of the cab and Randolph leaves him there, taking the girl (who has awakened to a realization of her folly) to her home. Madge recognizes him.

Five minutes later, his cab was carrying, in the persons of Mr. Morgum, above mentioned, and another, the potential pivots of very tight-vested interests.



"Good Ideal Friday It Is."

terests to the tune of twelve billion dollars. It may be thought that it was Slim Hervey's intention to wait this precious pair to some hoasty retreat, cover them with leaves, and hold them for ransom, but such was not the case. He desired nothing from these two potentates among a race of lucre giants beyond what might come to him through his ever-open speaking slot. This is all he heard: "Lewisfader is getting kind of fresh." "That's what I been thinkin'." "When?" "What about Friday, when the Bankers-Baltimore report comes out?" "Good ideal Friday it is." Not another word, but as it happened, it was enough to start Mr. Randolph looking up when the moment he had had of his leisure was at their next meeting. He had to tell Miss Imogen Lewisfader, he had been college with her husband's son, and if there was anything about all others that said otherwise was good at, it was blowing his father's horn. Lewisfader was this and Lewisfader was that, but principally and especially he was the central root in the money market known to the stock market as "Anal. J. S. & C." who had only lately dared to scell his portentous belly in the company of the most de-

veloped and vicious saurians of the financial world.

All the way uptown, Mr. Randolph's face was concentrated in the nearest approach to a frown of which it was capable. He was not, however, weighing the substance of what he had heard this way and that, for the simple reason that the moment the one word, "Lewisfader," had reached his ears, he had seen the great light and grasped his hunch beyond any thought of looking back. That part of it was settled; what worried him now was the amount of ways and means in his pocket. By thinking very hard, he added up his capital without bringing it forth to the light of day. The exact sum was sixty-eight dollars and fifty cents.

No sooner had he passed the test in mental arithmetic than he drew up a little beyond the front door of the Rockefeller club. He started to leave his cab, paused, considered, and then deliberately lowered the flag. As he entered the lobby of the club, four scandalized fronts leaped to bar his way. They asked him a variety of biting questions: Did he think it was a night lunchwagon? Which chambermaid was he calling on? Was he looking for Mills hotel?

"Herbert!" roared Mr. Randolph.

The functionary named, head doorman for the Rockefeller club since first it started on its appropriately meteoric career, leaped from his dignified seat on the sermoilent side lines and stared wide eyed at the servile apparition that had dared sput the open sesame to that inviolate portal.

"Mr. Randolph!" he gasped at last, and the stumped fronts started to slink away.

"Hold on, there!" said Mr. Randolph, and divested himself of cap to one, overcoat to another, gloves to the third, and asked the fourth for a light. "Herbert," he continued, in modulated tones, "the cab outside is waiting for Mr. R. H. Randolph. It may be there for some time. Have an eye kept on it."

"Yes, Mr. Randolph. I'll see to it, Mr. Randolph. George, Mr. Randolph's letters."

"Never mind the letters," countermanded the oft-named one, and proceeded to thread his way to a certain small room strategically placed well within the depths of the edifice and far from the maddening tumult of the streets. The said apartment at the moment of his arrival contained five occupants seated round a circular table of convenient height and clothed in pale green, kindest of all shades to the eye of man. There were no mirrors on the walls.

Mr. Randolph's entry was greeted first with consternation and then with shouts.

"Bobby, you old scout!"

"Herv, by great balls of sweat!"

"Tandy, from where the devil?"

The speakers arose and pumped Mr. Randolph's arm.

"Ye gods, man, where you been? Strayed in from a fancy dress?"

"Never mind the glad rags, fellows," said Mr. Randolph. "I was just feeling lonely for the sound of chips. Room for another?"

"The surest thing! You don't know these two chaps, do you? Mr. Seegar, passed on to us from Frisco, and Mr. Bowling-True, our latest new member. Gentlemen, this is Mr. Randy Randolph of New Haven and New York, in disguise but still the best ever."

"Table stakes?" murmured Mr. Seegar, as he took his place, and sat at random, but at the left of the two comparative strangers.

"Of course! Same old ante. Same old game. You talk as though you'd been away for a month."

For a moment, but for a moment only, Mr. Randolph was dazed. Was it possible that the last three weeks hadn't been a year? He drew out his sixty-eight dollars and fifty cents nonchalantly, as though they were merely the loose change he had on his person, bought fifty in chips, and laid the small heap of what was left of his cash on the board. The strain on his nerves during the next half-hour put that of the five days' wait for a hunch on the Street to the bluish. There came a moment when all his chips were gone, and he was forced to see with a full house for his small pile of change only.

"Serves you right, Randy," said Mr. Mein. "For forgetting to pile up the ready in a table-stake game; there are two and a half million walking the streets—"

"Oh, show it!" murmured Mr. Randolph, as he counted out his share, amounting to ninety-two dollars and fifty cents, and pushed across the rest of the fat pot to the next best hand. He looked up and smiled. "Boys," he remarked frankly, "I'm riding a hunch with four legs. Watch me."

The spectators did, but got little amusement of their pains. Mr. Randolph was playing that most difficult and uninteresting of poker corollaries—a light game. Mr. Seegar turned impatient as the conviction grew upon him that he had run up against the original hard-shell who never drew to less than a pair, of tens, never bluffed and could surrender three kings without a sigh to a low straight unseemly began to make facetious remarks

In connection with the safety-first campaign which was then at its height.

Mr. Randolph nursed his pile through five long hours up to eighteen hundred dollars. Then it was that he suddenly met a raise of two hundred on the part of Mr. Seegar, tacked on three hundred more, waited for that individual to throw in his very good hand, face up, with the resigned smile of a wise one, and then carelessly displayed in the same manner, his own three-flush, so bobtailed that the attention of the S. P. C. A. should have been called to the case.

The roar of laughter that went up from all but Mr. Seegar was more full and free than even such occasions usually produce. Mr. Mein pounded Mr. Randolph on the back.

"Bobby, old boy," he said, "that was the eternalist, patientest, and deepest-laid trap I've ever witnessed in a life-long pursuit of the only national pastime!"

The light merely flickered in Mr. Randolph's blue eyes, and he returned to his old job of sawing wood. Not for nothing had he made that grand gained. A new seriousness, masked in cold-edged, classic poker smiles, settled upon the table as a whole. The idea that they were gathered together merely to while away an idle evening faded into the background, and, one by one, like stars coming out at evening time, support trays began to make their appearance. All but Randolph, they had been toying with poker; now they began to play it.

That gentleman continued for the nonce the even tenor of his stride except for a Lenten concession to his insides. He ordered placed on a stand at his elbow a large jar of ice water and a platter containing four dozen sandwiches. No added touch could have done more toward persuading his friendly antagonists that he, Randolph, was out for thick blood. If any one of the five had joyed in the knowledge that two slices, thin, of buttered bread embracing a sliver of meat had been named eternally after the eat of Sandwich on just such an epochal occasion, as this, he would probably have seen the high sign and beat it for home and bed.

Night was fast joining the disceard when the weary Herbert dared to interrupt.

"Please, Mr. Randolph, the officer on the beat says the grass is lifting your cab, sir, and he thought he ought to report anything like that."

"Tell him to undo the check and let it feed itself down again," growled Mr. Randolph.

The day passed; night fell. Now one and then another of the six devotees of a science which even in the youth of this nation had forestalled all the wonders of the submarine, the flight of man, and wireless telegraphy withdrew just long enough to connect with the Daily Night bank round the corner or some other convenient base of supplies and returned to set new money to catch old. But Mr. Randolph had no occasion to do this. His heap of chips and cash of the realm rested on too solid a base of its own.

There may be recorded an amusing diversion from the serious business in hand. It was ushered in by the crest-fallen Herbert, who confessed that actual physical exhaustion had driven him to forty winks, during which time a professional purloiner of motor-car accessories had stopped, spellbound by the gaudy antic man registered on Mr. Randolph's taximeter, had promptly stolen the preposterous clock, and was now on the club steps offering to settle with whoever was the interested party on a fifty-fifty basis.

Great was the consternation of the enterprising speculator in theft when he was confronted by two persons in one; namely, Mr. R. H. Randolph, lessee of Car No. 1898, and Mr. R. H. Ran-



"The Officer on the Beat Says the Grass is Lifting Your Cab, Sir."

Ten Prisoners Sent to Serve Sentences

The largest bunch of prisoners ever sent up to serve time for crimes was sent from Yadkin court last week. Six were taken Saturday to the State prison at Raleigh and four were taken to the Rockingham county roads Monday.

The six taken to the State prison were Spencer McNeill, Joe Ham and Bryant Whitaker, all to serve three to six years each for storebreaking; Colonel Haynes and Dewey McNeill were sent up for 12 months each for storebreaking, and Will Myers was given 18 months for housebreaking. Will was rather anxious to go, he said, as he had served on most of the county road forces in this section, he wanted to try the state prison.

The four taken to the Rockingham county roads by Sheriff Moxley were John Freeman, who escaped some time ago; Charlie Dan Dinkins, six months for blockading; John Gray, colored, six months for housebreaking, and Ross Lindsey, colored, sixty days for stealing a sack of bran.

Captured Still Yesterday

Sheriff Moxley and Deputy Norman captured a still yesterday afternoon in the Baltimore section. The still, worn and five gallons of whiskey was brought in by the officers. Two men were working at the plant when the officers approached but they succeeded in making their escape.

The Lawyer.

He's a man of sorrow,
And acquainted with grief;
Among all the sinners
He's considered the chief.

His friends all admire him
When he conquers for them;
When he chances to lose
They are quick to condemn.

They say, "Ah! he's bought,"
If he loses a case.
They say, "Ah! he's crooked,"
If he wins in the race.

If he charges big fees,
They say, "He's a grafter."
If he charges small fees,
"He's not worth going after."

If he joins the church,
It's for an effort.
If he don't join the church,
"He's as wicked as heck."

But here is one fact
We all will admit.
When we get into trouble,
Our Lawyer is "It."

—Jennie Lee Blanton.

Keeping Company.

The 10-cent store is showing nice things for a quarter.

You can see a 5-cent movie anywhere for 30 cents and tax.

There is a delicious 15-cent beef stew being made for 40 cents.

We note that \$15 suits have been marked down from \$65 to \$38.63.

dolph, alias Slim Hervey, the frate driver of said cab. His glib tongue, loaded to the gills with arguments, as to how much the fare would save through the sudden exit of the clock from the ken of man, tripped hopelessly on this vision of wrath in the shape of a driver in whose interests the ticker had been faithfully slaving.

It took Mr. Randolph just thirty-two precious minutes to force the crest-fallen one to replace and readjust the busy bee of meter readings. When he returned to the fray upstairs, he noticed a strange phenomenon of poker—

To be continued.

Some Remarks by Judge T. J. Shaw.

During the closing hours of court here last week Judge Thomas J. Shaw took occasion to make a few remarks about the course of events in this country in general and this section in particular, especially the present crime wave and its causes.

Judge Shaw has been on the bench for a long time and has learned many things about crime. He has learned, like Blackstone, that criminal laws must be construed strictly and administered impartially or the object of the law loses its usefulness; to be lenient with criminals only breeds crime. He discussed the pardoning record in this state and expressed his wonder at the course pursued by juries in some cases.

Talks to Jury

"For instance," said Judge Shaw in addressing the jury, "in the beginning of this term two men were tried for manufacturing whiskey and the verdict was not guilty and now you have convicted a man for housebreaking and the evidence against the two men, and especially one of them, was five times stronger than against this old darkey."

Miscarriage of Justice

"If the lives and property of the people are to be protected the laws must be enforced," continued his Honor, "but the court is powerless unless the jury co-operates with it and then let the sentence be carried out. Here you have a case in this county where the Sheriff was killed while in the act of putting down crime, and to my mind it was a clear case of murder in the first degree, and the outcome of the case was a pure miscarriage of justice, that's all. People have the habit of as soon as a man is convicted of signing petitions to get clemency and prevent the execution of the sentence. Let the law take its course, because the jury and court that hears the evidence is more competent to judge the degree of punishment than others."

Admits Mistake

In discussing the merits of Sheriff Zachary Turner Judge Shaw said: "I have no reason to doubt the evidence of this man Caudle (meaning Rev. T. A. Caudle) but I had a talk with this man in my room the other day and Caudle admitted that he had made a mistake. You must stand behind the officers and if you do you will create a good moral atmosphere up here that lawbreakers can stand in."

"I think," continued the judge "that we have a man on the Governor's chair now who does not lay at night trying to think of someone he can pardon before breakfast next morning."

The judge said this breaking into houses was a serious matter and would have to deal with severely. He also remarked that the present governor had refused to pardon criminals as had his predecessor in office.

Two Deer With One Bullet.

Swanzy, N. H.—The killing of two deer with a single bullet is reported by Marshall Hill of this town. Hill fired at a large buck, which immediately bolted. When he reached the spot where the buck had stood he found that he had killed a doe. Following the trail a short distance, the hunter came upon the body of the buck. The bullet had passed through the neck of the buck into the head of the doe.

The Inauguration of President Harding

Washington, March 5, 1921.

Editor Ripple:

I guess the news of the simplicity of the Inauguration kept a lot of people from Yadkin away, but I think it was one of the most momentous inaugurations that has been in this country for many years.

There were about 100,000 people on the Capitol grounds to see the oath administered and to hear the inaugural address. In former years only the fortunate few thousands who were near the stand could hear the address, but on yesterday's occasion every one of the one hundred thousand people heard every word. Telephone experts had arranged a system of amplifiers or a series of transmitters and horns which were not visible to the crowd, but "enlarged" the voice of the president to such an extent that every one could hear distinctly. This device consisted in a row of transmitters in front of the president, but below the stand, and wires leading from them into a room in the lower part of the speaker's stand. Here a very complex and intricate mechanism "enlarged" the words and sent them through horns in the top of the superstructure far above the president's head. It was the first time in history that every one in the vast throng could hear.

His address created a profound impression on the hearers. Each time he referred to a pro-American foreign policy great cheers arose from the crowd. When he said that we wanted no entangling alliances with the old world the applause was a roll of thunder. Without a doubt the words of the president in his inaugural address were the most outspoken of any since he became a candidate for the presidency. The papers of this morning say that the French Chamber of Deputies was deserted by its members while a General was speaking in order to get out in the lobby to read the inaugural address. It was a source of keen displeasure to the French people, and well enough it might be. It meant the death knell to the hopes of European people that America would finally enter into a treaty.

Faithfully yours,
PAUL B. EATON.

Two Cent Piece May Come Again

Washington.—The house committee on coinage, weights and measures, of which Representative Brinson is a member, has under consideration the proposition to revive the old Roosevelt two cent piece, which was formerly in general circulation, but which subsequently was retired because it was thought to be of no advantage. Now, however, it seems, a demand has arisen on account of changed conditions brought about by the inauguration of odd prices in street car traffic and other things. It seems that a majority of the committee have been impressed with the contention that the two-cent coin would serve as a convenience in making change and it is believed the committee will recommend the issue.