

The ORIOLE

By Booth Tarkington

Copyright, 1921
by the Bell Syndicate, Inc.

WALLIE TORBIN.

Synopsis—Proud possessor of a printing press and equipment, the gift of Uncle Joseph to his nephew, Herbert Illingsworth Atwater, Jr., aged thirteen, the fortunate youth, with his chum, Henry Rooter, about the same age, begins the publication of a full-fledged newspaper, the North End Daily Oriole. Herbert's small cousin, Florence Atwater, being barred from any kind of participation in the enterprise, on account of her intense and natural feminine desire to "boss," is frankly annoyed, and not at all backward in saying so. However, a poem she has written is accepted for insertion in the Oriole, on a strictly commercial basis—cash in advance. The poem suffers somewhat from the inexperience of the youthful publishers in the "art preservative." Her not altogether unreasonable demand for republication of the masterpiece, with its beauty unmarred, is scorned, and the break between Miss Atwater and the publishers of the Oriole widens. The Sunday following, Florence's particular chum, Patty Fairchild, pays her a visit. They are joined, despite Florence's openly expressed disapproval, by Herbert and Henry. Florence will not play. Patty and the visitors indulge in a series of innocent Sunday games. Among them is one called "Truth," the feature of which is a contract to write a question and answer, both to be kept a profound secret. The agreement is duly carried out. Florence is told as a family secret that her beautiful aunt, Julia Atwater, has apparently become engaged to a man named Crum, altogether unknown to the Atwaters. Florence finds the notes in the "Truth" game, in which both Herbert and Henry admit that they have pretty eyes.

PART II—Continued.

As he grew older, his insatiable curiosity enabled him to expose unnumbered weaknesses, indiscretions and social misfortunes on the part of acquaintances and schoolmates; and to every exposure his noise and energy gave a hideous publicity; the more his victim sought privacy the more persistently he was sought out by Wallie, vociferous and attended by hilarious spectators. But above all other things, what most stimulated the demoniac boy to prodigies of satire was his tender episode or symptom connected with the dawn of love. Florence herself had suffered excruciatingly at intervals throughout her eleven spring, because Wallie discovered that Georgie Beck sent her a valentine; and the humorist's many, many squandings of that valentine's affectionate quatrains finally left her unable to decide which she hated the more, Wallie or Georgie. That was the worst of Wallie; he never "let up"; and in Florence's circle there was no more sobering threat than, "I'll tell Wallie Torbin!" As for Henry Rooter and Herbert Illingsworth Atwater, Jr., they would as soon have had a head-hunter on their trail as Wallie Torbin with anything in his hands that could incriminate them in an implication of love—or an acknowledgement of their own beauty.

The fabric of civilized life is interwoven with blackmail; even some of the noblest people do favors for other people who are depended upon not to tell somebody something that the noblest people have done. Blackmail is born into us all, and our nurses teach us more blackmail by threatening to tell our parents, if we won't do this and that—and our parents threaten to tell the doctor—and so we learn! Blackmail is part of the daily life of a child; displeased, his first resort to get his way with other children is a threat to "tell"; but by-and-by his experience discovers the mutual benefit of honor among blackmailers. Therefore, at eight it is no longer the tinker to threaten to tell the teacher; and, a little later, threatening to tell any adult at all is considered something of a breakdown in morals. Notoriously, the code is more liable to infraction by people of the physically weaker sex, for the very reason, of course, that their inferiority of muscle so frequently compels such a sin, if they are to have their way. But for Florence there was now no such temptation. Looking toward the demolition of Atwater & Rooter, an exposure before adults of the results of "Truth" would have been an effect of what might be accomplished by a careful use of the catastrophic Wallie Torbin.

All in all, it was a great Sunday for Florence. On Sunday evening it was her privileged custom to go to the house of her fat, old great-uncle, Joseph Atwater, and remain until nine o'clock, in chatty companionship with Uncle Joseph and Aunt Carrie, his wife, and a few other relatives who were in the habit of dropping in there on Sunday evenings. In summer, lemonade and cake were frequently provided; in the autumn, one still found cake, and perhaps a pitcher of clear new cider; apples were always a certainty.

This evening was glorious; there were apples and cider and cake and walnuts, perfectly cracked, and a large open-hearted box of candy. Naturally, these being the circum-

stances, Herbert was among the guests; and, though rather at a disadvantage, so far as the conversation was concerned, not troubled by the handicap. The reason he was at a conversational disadvantage was closely connected with the unusual supply of refreshments; Uncle Joseph and Aunt Carrie had foreseen the coming of several more Atwaters than usual, to talk over the new affairs of their beautiful relative, Julia. So, when he had any relative's new affairs been more thoroughly talked over than were Julia's that evening, though all the time by means of various symbols, since it was thought wiser that Herbert and Florence should not yet be told of Julia's engagement, and Florence's parents were not present to confess their indiscretion, Julia was referred to as "the traveler," and other makeshifts were employed with the most knowing caution; and all the while Florence merely ate inscrutably. The more sincere Herbert was as placid; such foods were enough for him.

"Well, all I say is, the traveler better enjoy herself on her travels," said Aunt Fanny finally, as the subject appeared to be wearing toward exhaustion. "She certainly is in for it when the voyaging is over and she arrives in the port she sailed from, and has to show her papers. I agree with the rest of you; she'll have a great deal to answer for, and most of all about the shortest one. My own opinion is that the shortest one is going to burst like a balloon."

"The shortest one," as the demure Florence had understood from the first, was her Ideal—none other than Noble Dill. Now she looked up from the stool where she sat with her back against a pilaster of the mantelpiece. "Uncle Joseph," she said—"I was just thinking. What is a person's reason?"

The fat gentleman, rosy with firelight and cider, finished his fifth glass before responding. "Well, there are



It Staggered Him. "What—What—You Mean?"

persons I never could find any reason for 'em at all. 'A person's reason'! What do you mean, 'a person's reason,' Florence?"

"I mean like when somebody says, 'They'll lose their reason,' she explained. 'Has everybody got a reason, and if they have, what is it, and how do they lose it, and what would they do then?'"

"Oh, I see!" he said. "You needn't worry, I suppose since you heard it, you've been hunting all over yourself for your reason and looking to see if there was one hanging out of anybody else, somewhere. No; it's something you can't see ordinarily, Florence. Losing your reason is just another way of saying 'going crazy!'"

"Oh," she murmured, and appeared to be somewhat disturbed.

At this, Herbert thought proper to offer a witticism for the pleasure of the company.

"You know, Florence," he said, "it only means acting like you most always do." He applauded himself with a burst of changing laughter which ranged from a bullfrog croak to a collapsing soprano; then he added: "Especially when you come around my and Henry's newspaper building! You certainly 'lose your reason' every time you come around that ole place!"

"Well, course I haf to act like the people that's already there," Florence retorted, not sharply, but in a musing tone that should have warned him. It was not her wont to use a quiet voice for reproof. Thinking her humble, he laughed the more raucously. "Oh, Florence!" he besought her. "Say not so! Say not so!"

"Children, children!" Uncle Joseph remonstrated.

Herbert changed his tone; he became seriously plaintive. "Well, she does act that way, Uncle Joseph! When she comes around there you'd

think we were runnin' a lunatic asylum the way she takes on. She hollers and bellers and squalls and squawks. The least little teeny thing she don't like about the way we run our paper, she comes flappin' over there and goes to screechin' around, you could hear her out at poorhouse farm!"

"Now, now, Herbert," his Aunt Fanny interposed. "Poor little Florence isn't saying anything impolite to you—not right now, at any rate. Why don't you be a little sweet to her just for once?"

Her unfortunate expression revolted all the cousinly manliness in Herbert's bosom. "Be a little sweet to her?" he echoed, with poignant incredulity, and then in candor made plain how poorly Aunt Fanny inspired him. "I just exactly as soon be a little sweet to an alligator," he asserted; such was his bitterness on this subject.

"Oh, oh!" said Aunt Carrie. "I would!" Herbert insisted. "Or a mosquito. I'd rather, to either of 'em, because, anyway, they don't make so much noise. Why, you just ought to hear her," he went on, growing more and more severe. "You ought to just come around our newspaper building any afternoon you please, after school, when Henry and I are tryin' to do our work in, anyway, some peace. Why, she just squawks and squalls and squ—"

"It must be terrible," Uncle Joseph interrupted. "What do you do all that for, Florence, every afternoon?"

"Just for exercise," she answered dreamily; and her placidity the more exasperated her journalist cousin.

"She does it because she thinks she ought to be runnin' our own newspaper, my and Henry's; that's why she does it! She thinks she knows more about how to run newspapers than anybody alive; and that is, she don't have anything more to do with my and Henry's newspaper. We wouldn't have another single one of her ole poems in it, no matter how much she offered to pay us! Uncle Joseph, I think you ought to tell her she's got no business around my and Henry's newspaper building."

"But, Herbert," Aunt Fanny suggested, "you might tell Florence have a little share in it of some sort. Then everything would be all right."

"It would!" he demanded, his voice cracking naturally, at his age, but also under strain of the protest he wished it to express. "It woo-wud? Oh, my goodness, Aunt Fanny, I guess you'd like to see our newspaper just utterly ruined! Why, we wouldn't let that girl have any more to do with it than we would some horse!"

"Oh, oh!" both Aunt Fanny and Aunt Carrie exclaimed, shocked.

"We wouldn't," Herbert insisted. "A horse would know any amount more how to run a newspaper than she does; anyway, a horse wouldn't make so much noise around there. Soon as we got our printing press: we said right then that we made up our minds Florence Atwater wasn't ever goin' to have a single thing to do with our newspaper. If you let her have anything to do with anything she wants to run the whole thing. But she might just as well learn to stay away from our newspaper building, because after we got her out yesterday we fixed a way so's she'll never get in there again!"

Florence looked at him demurely. "Are you sure, Herbert?" she inquired.

"Just you try it!" he advised, with heartiest sarcasm; and he laughed tauntingly. "Just come around tomorrow and try it; that's all I ask!"

"I certainly intend to," she responded, with dignity. "I may have a slight surprise for you."

"Oh, Florence, say not so! Say not so, Florence! Say not so!"

At this she looked full upon him, and already she had something in the nature of a surprise for him; for so powerful was the still balefulness of her glance he was slightly startled. "I might say not so," she said—"if I was speaking of what pretty eyes you know you have, Herbert."

It staggered him. "What—what—you mean?"

"And her reply left him paralytic with horror." Wallie Torbin!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Told of John Burroughs.

John Burroughs, the naturalist, was not interested in nature's larger aspects. Geysers and volcanoes bored him. His one exception was the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, which he called "the Divine Abyss." Despite his intusness on study when a boy, Burroughs was fond of girls and kept a systematic record of his engagements with them, writers on his life say.

Fortuitous Circumstances.

"Did you have a good time at Smith's last evening?" "Can't say that I did, Mrs. Smith is an old sweetheart of mine and I owe Mr. Smith \$10."

Furs Must Be Kept in Style

Furs lasting for years without repair, so often talked about, are all very well under certain circumstances, but when one views the changes in fashion in this department of women's attire, the possibilities of variety become perfectly astounding. This year, writes a fashion authority in the New York Times, the gorgeousness of furs and fur trimmings and fur linings appear to know no limitation, and it would seem as though the American woman had decided to be as luxurious and comfortably coated as she could possibly manage to be.

Of course, all this has to be judged by what the shops are showing and by what the women are buying. But at the salons of the leading furriers there is nothing to indicate the least falling off of fur buying or a tendency to wear handsome, not to mention costly, furs.

A furrier who in the course of his business had become used to the costliness of words as well as to the value of the products which he was selling, said: "Now here is a cheap mink wrap. This is something that we are selling in quantities and which the American women are showing their preference for." "And what is the retail price of that?" said I, hopefully. It looked so much the sort of thing that would complete my dream of life. He scratched his head and pondered for a brief moment. "That," he said, "would retail for only about \$3,000." So, there is the standard, if you are thinking about furs, though there are other prices lower on the scale as well as those which soar and soar until they sound like the figures in a war loan. Fifty thousand dollars paid for an evening wrap of fur has been known to happen, and not as a single occurrence either, for it has been repeated often.

Caracul is Popular.

For a standard in fashionable furs there is nothing with more claim to prestige than caracul. In almost all of the known ways in which fur is ever used this variety makes its appearance, and as far as its youthfulness and becomingness are concerned it has everything in its favor. Then there is another quality about caracul to be whispered among those who still acknowledge some allegiance to the ways of economy. It is that caracul wears wonderfully. Indeed, the furriers have a way of lapsing into the sentence, "There is no wear-out to caracul." Not only in the old standard black is it seen, but in all the lighter shades that are so fashionable just now it is plentifully distributed about the smart gowns and wraps. It is used for trimmings, and for linings, and for the makings of whole coats, and wherever it makes its appearance it is with an elegance and grace that can be envied by all of the rest of the fur families.

Other Smart Attire.

All of the remainder of the shorter furs, especially in the gray and taupe tones, are among those present when it comes to smart attire. There are the short coats of squirrel, and the longer wrapper ones of the same skins, and any number of trimmings of this gray and eminently becoming fur. Have you noticed that when there is enough of

wrap of this general character. In coats the combination is seen over and over again among the better things. And as for the matter of capes! Well, they are more popular than they ever have been before. There seems to be no such idea as going out of fashion included in their scheme of existence. But the shorter furs are used to trim all manner of materials. There is a particularly interesting coat of purple homespun trimmed with lavish collars and cuffs of moleskin, which is one



Winsome Dress of Moleskin, With Monkey Fur Edges.

of the most attractive showings. It has a sister coat of that rich brownish tan homespun that is trimmed with seal most interestingly shaped into widely enveloping collar and cuffs.

All in Tones of Gray.

All sorts of little baby lambs have cropped up to take their places in the dressing of society. And these are all in tones of gray. Sometimes the hair is very curly and sometimes almost straight, while again it is of that pressed variety so well demonstrated by the American broadtail in all of its expressions. In other words, if you see some fur trimming or a coat of something that looks like fur, then be certain that it is a manner of woolly lamb which has been pressed into the service of fashion.

The pleasantest suits that are lamb trimmed are those with a distinctly Russian flavor. You see, the whole idea sprang from the Krimmer inspiration, and that is the fur of the Russian coats and things in their original state. And the sprightliest parts of these costumes are the high Russian turbans, made entirely of fur and to match the trimmings of the bloused suits or coats. At a smart restaurant there was seen a coat fitted to the waist with tight sleeves and high collars and wide cuffs of this gray lamb. It had a flaring skirt that reached the bottom of the dress, where the band of fur was repeated all the way round the circular width of the end of the skirt. There was a high and untrimmed turban worn with it, and the effect of the whole thing was something to be gloried in because of its complete originality. Of course, baby lamb still holds good as the smartest and by all odds the most expensive of all the lambs. For one of the most alluring parts of these newer lamb skins is the fact that they do not run into terrifying figures when their prices hang in the balance.

Monkey Fur Prominent.

For trimming and for a few coats monkey fur is among the most prominent of the animal skins used in the making of the mode. It has a charming way of falling so loosely and carelessly that constitutes itself a really important asset to the wardrobe of the well-dressed woman. A collar of monkey fur is a matter of delight, be it large or small. And fringes of monkey fur continue to take their places on many of the season's models. A coat of black broadcloth had a simple tight, choker collar of monkey fur that spread away under the ears in a most becoming manner. Its wearer happened to have the softest and curliest of white hair, and she had had the good sense to top that with a rose red velvet hat that drooped a trifle at the sides and framed her face, with the monkey fur balance, quite artistically.

There is a fur that they call "real monkey fur" which is far heavier and thicker than that which is ordinarily recognized as monkey. It is, as might be imagined from the name, among the more highbrow prices; but for that reason, as things go, it is the more desirable. There is no record that it is any more becoming, but if it is more expensive, that is enough for the standards of some of the buyers.



The Suit of American Broadtail That Appeals to Many.

It laid on in many layers it assumes all of the softening quality of the furs with much longer hairs? Yes, there is that characteristic to squirrel—that it becomes the majority of women, even adding that portion of charm that one expects to find after all the money which is necessary has been spent upon fur coats or embellishments of any sort.

Black duvetyne coats and wraps with gray fur trimmings are quite the rage of the moment. The richness and the depth of the black material against the thick grayness of the fur makes the contrast which becomes the lure of a

Home Town Helps

ADDS TO VALUE OF PROPERTY

Effective Argument as to the Necessity for Carefully Thought Out City Planning.

City zoning and city planning tend to stabilize real estate values and make it easier for the real estate dealers to offer permanent investments to prospective purchasers. This forms part of the advice that J. C. Nichols of Kansas City has offered his fellow realtors. He says:

"In talking last summer with the comptroller of a life insurance company which loans a larger amount of money on real estate than any other company in the world, I asked him if he thought \$100,000,000 was too large an amount to place on the destruction of property values in our cities from year to year by the shifting of downtown business centers and by the abandonment of high-class residence property."

"Why," he said, "Nichols, \$100,000,000 would not begin to cover it." I said: "What do you think—\$500,000,000?"

"Well," he said, "I doubt very much if that would cover the annual loss in money from the unnecessary shifting of our property values."

"Now, with what confidence can we present to an investor the proposition of buying property if we have to admit right on the face of it that we are in a business that deals with uncertainties, that we are in a business that deals with shifting values of property?"

"There is the very keynote of city planning from the standpoint of the realtor. It stabilizes the very product which you are presenting to your investors, and I cannot understand why the National Real Estate association has not yet realized that the city-planning movement that is starting in this country will have more effect upon the business of every real-estate man than all the other movements put together."

BLACK WALNUT TREE BEST

Department of Agriculture Points Out Its Excellent Qualities as a Roadside Ornament.

In line with movements launched by automobile clubs and associations, state highway departments, the American Legion, the American Forestry association, and various good roads organizations, the Department of Agriculture is urging the planting of black walnut trees along the highways. The late war drew heavily upon the black walnut timber supply for airplane construction but it ended before the larger trees entirely disappeared. The supply has been greatly reduced, however, and the department urges that it be increased without delay. It is believed that by planting walnuts in the soil and rearing trees along the roads ample seed can be secured from these trees to re-establish the walnut forests whenever they again become depleted. Few species of trees have a wider geographic range, few are more rapid growers when given a favorable environment and few are more effective as to shade and landscape. In addition, the black walnut produces a nutritious food.

Unpaid Commission Does Best Work.

A Department of Agriculture bulletin insists that providing shade on city streets is as much a municipal function as providing lights or sidewalks, and should, therefore, be cared for by public officials. Probably the most efficient way of arranging for proper supervision, it says, is through an unpaid commission of three or five members, which, in turn, employs an executive officer. Methods of organization are described, and numerous illustrations show how trees should be planted. There are chapters also describing pruning, spraying, transplanting and other subjects of importance to every town or city, whether it has trees or wishes to have them. The bulletin may be had free upon application to the division of publications, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

"Roads of Remembrance"

The "Roads of Remembrance" idea, originated by the American Forestry association in the avenue of memorial trees leading to the tomb of the late President McKinley, are now being planned in many sections of the country, according to reports received by the association.

National patriotic organizations have adopted the idea of marking points of unusual interest, and civic improvement groups are using it to beautify local roads and highways.

A County "Home Bureau."

The Livingston county (Illinois) "home bureau" has resumed its regular activities. The principal study in foods, but citizenship and child welfare have been added, and two thoroughly trained leaders have been secured to direct these subjects.—Chicago Daily News.

White Blocks for Traffic Lines.

White concrete blocks instead of painted lines are used in Portland, Ore., to mark cross-walks and other traffic lines placed on the streets.