

Eat Hearty! By H. I. PHILLIPS

The weight, man's burden, bothered Mr. Winch considerably until he struck the Fat Man's Utopia. But alas!

WILLIS WINCH, age 38, waist 48, weight 208, had arrived at the conclusion that the curse of the nation was lettuce. What America needed more than anything else, he had about decided, was less spinach.

Why was it, he wondered, that no candidate for the Presidency was ever smart enough to come out for a plank abolishing vegetable lunches, morning exercises over the radio, calorie charts and bathroom scales?

Willis had been engaged in the national pastime of Trying to Reduce, or "Glutton, Glutton, Who's Got the Will Power?" for nearly seven weeks now, and it seemed seven years.

Gone Calorie Cuckoo

HE WAS at the moment on the floor beside his bed struggling through Exercise No. 9, as prescribed in "Overweight—Its Cause and Treatment," and had managed to follow with pathetic grunts the instructions, "Raise the body from the waist and touch the toes with fingers," when, overcome by a sense of complete futility, he relaxed and looked down at his stomach.

Surveying his Great Waist Places

made him deeply discouraged. Although he had been dieting and exercising with what seemed great fortitude for nearly two months, he felt more like a sausage balloon than ever.

"You look awfully funny there on the floor like that," said Mrs. Winch as she looked in to summon him for breakfast.

"I don't look any funnier than I feel," snapped Willis, touching his toes once more as a mere demonstration of the power of mind over fatty tissue. He got to his feet slowly and stepped on the bathroom scale. The pointer stopped at 208.

"Laugh that off!" complained Willis, as he came to breakfast. "I've been livin' like a bird and exercisin' like a squirrel for weeks, and I weigh a coupla pounds more than when I gave up enjoyin' life and went calorie cuckoo!"

"You've got to keep it up. You don't exercise half enough, and I'll bet you don't always count your calories at every meal," said Mrs. Winch.

"Listen, I even count the calories in the subway ham and egg advertisements," said Winch. "I don't even chew my lead pencils any more for fear there may be proteins in the eraser."

He looked at his breakfast. Half a grapefruit, one-half slice of toast, one boiled egg and a cup of coffee without sugar or cream. There was nothing in his manner that suggested applause cards.

"No butter?" he asked as he took his toast.

"You know very well no butter, if you want to stick to your diet," insisted

Mrs. Winch. "And don't look so sour. This weight-reduction thing is your own idea, you know. If you want to go around looking like a wagonload of wet wash, it's your own affair."

Willis nibbled at his bird food in silence.

"You're going to walk to the office, aren't you?" said Mrs. Winch rather ex-

since I saw you last, haven't you?"—than which there is no crack more designed to discourage a reducer.

"No," Willis said tartly.

"Well, you look heavier, anyway," they insisted.

Willis went to lunch in one of those cafeterias where they display the most tempting desserts first and make the customer pass the ham, pork chops, beans, creamed potatoes and assorted carbohydrates before he arrives, a weakened, tottering wretch, at the salads. Willis needed all his will power. He chose a vegetable salad, six soda crackers and a glass of tea without sugar. Vegetable salads always left him with a bleak outlook on life. Soda crackers made him despondent. Tea without sugar made him want to hide in doorways and snap at passers-by. He passed a miserable afternoon.

That evening Mrs. Winch had prepared for dinner—what do you think? A lovely vegetable dinner with the spinach motif predominant.

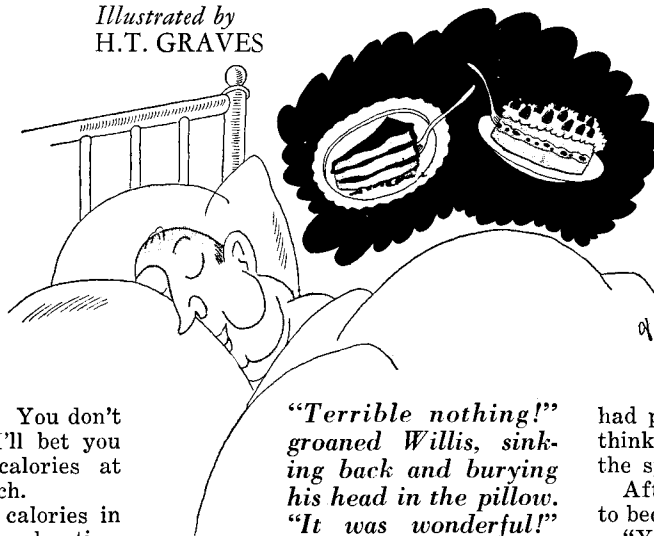
After dinner Willis went immediately to bed.

"You shouldn't go to bed so soon after eating," warned Mrs. Winch. "All the reduction authorities say it is the very worst thing you can do." Willis grunted and closed his eyes. He was very weary. . . .

"TO THE ROTUNDIANS, THE ORDER OF CONTENTED FAT MEN."

This sign, with an arrow attached, pointed up the shady winding road. Birds were singing in the trees. They were all very fat birds. The trees, too, were of unusual (Continued on page 42)

Illustrated by
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asperatingly. Although she didn't exactly goad him along the straight and potatoless path, she wanted her Willis leaner and didn't wish to see him do any backsliding in his battle for better symmetry.

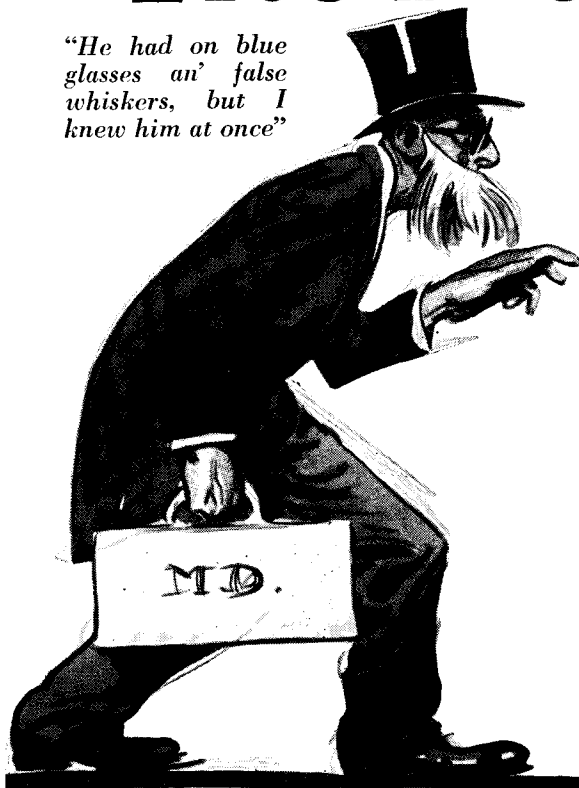
Willis walked to work. It was a walk of two miles, but it seemed a transcontinental hike. He arrived at his office sticky, feverish, exhausted and feeling very empty. Two early callers greeted him with, "You've put on some weight



"A mere Liliputian! You must have been exercising and dieting to shrink up to a size like that!" said the 300-pound gatekeeper accusingly.

The Medical Procession

"He had on blue glasses an' false whiskers, but I knew him at once"



Lungs, glands an' arteries have been gone over so often that they've had to install one-way trails an' offer prizes for a good parking system

Uncle Henry



there? Lungs, heart, liver, kidneys, colon, glands, duodenum an' arteries have been gone over so thoroughly an' so often that they've had to install one-way trails an' offer prizes for a good, efficient parkin' system.

"Perhaps we ourselves are more to blame than the doctors, 'Lonzo, for there's nothin' that the American people love more than a brand-new ailment. Given the same complaint for any length of time, an' we begin to mope and pine, the spring goes out of our step, the lilt from our voices, conversation no longer enlivens the land, an' life becomes a dreary thing, stale an' unprofitable. After a while the person is *actually* ill.

"But with the discovery of a new disease, a new source of infection, or a novelty like some new organ, spirits buck up at once, eyes brighten, laughter rings out, home life takes on the old sprightliness, an' existence is again rich an' colorful.

"An' so, after all, maybe doctors cultivate their infatuations largely as a matter of business. It's all right to talk about baseball an' the movies, but when you come right down to it, 'Lonzo, it's in a doctor's office that everybody finds the maximum of pleasure.

That's where even the dumbest finds his tongue, developin' an' amazin' ability to talk for hours at a stretch without changin' the needle. An' nobody wants to talk about the same thing *all* the time.

"Thank the Lord, however, the thing is comin' to an end, for I have the feelin' that the gall bladder will go down into history as the last big strike. After that, when our poor frames no longer ring to the rumble of steam shovels an' the swish of dredges, maybe we can settle down an' find some enjoyment in good health. I may be wrong, but I'm confident we'd find a lot of fun in feelin' well if we only made up our minds to it."

"Coolidge is a mighty healthy man," commented Mr. Stubbs. "Ain't never had an operation, has he?"

"What a question!" exclaimed Uncle Henry. "He's got a reputation for bein' a silent man, hasn't he?"

"I WONDER what a suit of chain armor would cost," meditatively remarked Uncle Henry. "One that covers you from head to heels, an' with a lot of good safety catches."

"What on earth do you want with anything like that?" demanded Mr. Stubbs.

"For the protection of my gall bladder, of course. What else would I want it for? It isn't as if they were turned out in quantities so that a man could carry a spare. I've only got the one, you know, an' if the doctors get that, where am I? I've had my union suit soldered on, an' my vest is padlocked, but even at that I don't feel safe. Never have I seen the medical profession so hot in a pursuit. Why, they're like hounds on the trail.

"Last night, while the little woman was tellin' me where I wanted to go this summer, I heard a scufflin' noise on the porch, an' looked up to see a pair of gleamin' eyeballs glued against the windowpane. He'd fled by the time I got out, but on the front lawn I found a chloroform cone, an' operatin' knife an' a sponge.

"An' who do you think followed me all day yesterday? Old Doc Jones! Yessir! He had on blue glasses an' false whiskers, but I knew him at once.

The Mode in Maladies

"DOCTORS are a queer lot, 'Lonzo. They give the idea of bein' cold an' hard-boiled, but underneath a bleak exterior they *burn*. Snow-capped volcanoes! Cleopatra an' Sappho never had half of their passion, an' poets, artists, tabloid editors an' Tom Heflin are studies in stolidity compared to 'em. Look back over the last ten years, an' you'll see that with doctors it's been a case of jes' one frenzied, insensate infatuation after another.

"Don't you remember when they were havin' a fit over the appendix, sendin' it flowers an' candy, an' wretched if it was out of their sight? They couldn't think or talk of anything else. It was all that mattered. Every surgeon slept in his hikin' boots, so as to be ready for a journey into the interior; an' professional seamstresses had to be called in to help the internes catch up with their sewin'.

"The next thing we knew, they were givin' tonsils a mad rush. At last they were certain that they had found the cause of every human ill from leprosy to freckles. Why, there was a whole year when it wasn't safe for a man to open his mouth, even to *eat*. One day I found three surgeons an' two medical students crouched under my dinin'-room table, an' after that I packed a lunch basket an' did my feedin' in the hills.

"An' then it was *teeth*! It was a species of delirium, medicos runnin' up an' down the streets, each with a dentist in leash, an' turnin' him loose with a wild 'Yoicks' the minute they saw a man or woman without a plate. No wonder people began tryin' to swim the English Channel. Halfway across was the only safe place.

"An' now it's the gall bladder. Doctors are *mad* over it. The appendix, tonsils, teeth, auto-intoxication, acidosis—all are forgotten; an' the gall bladder is now the undisputed belle of the body. For a medical man it has all the lure an' emotional appeal of a Swinburne poem, a Ziegfeld chorus or a moonlight party in Hollywood.

"It's actually unsafe to enter a doctor's office nowadays even to collect a bill. Only last Sunday I was readin' where three magazine solicitors were suin' for the return of their gall bladders. What's worse, the mania is spreadin'. Yesterday I mentioned the fact that my hair seemed to be fallin' a bit, an' the barber began to mutter somethin' about my gall bladder. Develop a hangnail an' the manicure girl turns a suspicious gaze on your third vest button.

"What makes the whole blamed business so profoundly disturbin', 'Lonzo, is that none of us knows exactly where the darned thing is. The teeth an' tonsils, at least, were more or less out in the open, so you could keep an eye on 'em; but the gall bladder has always gone in for secrecy. Of course, we've heard about it from time to time; but I always figured that a lot of it was nothin' more than idle gossip.

it. Why, throughout the teeth an' tonsil rage, I could actually *hear* the steady splash of the poison as it dripped into my system.

"But with the exact location of the gall bladder shrouded in deep mystery—some sayin' one thing an' some another—an' none of us knowin' exactly how it acts when it goes native, we're in no shape to take a positive stand on any pain except a stone bruise. Anything else *may* be the gall bladder, an' again, it *may not* be the gall bladder.

Benefits of Exploration

"STILL an' all, I don't know as we can blame the doctors. Exploration has always been one of the human race's great passions, an' slowly but surely the chances to work at it are peterin' out.

"The body is about all that's left, an' mighty little of *that* when you come to take stock. Now that the gall bladder has come in for its day, what else is



"I found three surgeons an' two students under my dinin'-room table"