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THE MILLIONAIRE'S BURDEN.

In a recent interview, John Arbuckle, the millionaire coffee man, laments the sorrowful spectacle of the sons of rich Americans who travel over Europe and haunt home pleasure resorts making fools of themselves, says the Omaha Bee. Mr. Arbuckle is not the only American who is ashamed of these money-burners, for every self-respecting American blushes at the recital of their insane doings. He is unable to comprehend how men whose energy and business acumen have accumulated vast fortunes can possibly be fathers of such worthless sons. Every rich young man who starts out to demonstrate his eligibilty to the fool-killer class finds plenty of help, and so long as the money lasts it is a continuous performance on a 24-hour schedule. His assistants will even show him how to improve on his home training, and by the time he reaches middle age he can qualify for stellar roles. The millionaire's son may have no greater natural ability in this line than the poor man's boy, but he has superior opportunities for improvement and better press agents to spread his fame.

Kodama Ocamateu, a Japanese explorer, is on the way to Australia, where he will establish a base of operations having the attainment of the south pole in view. He has had considerable experience in the Antarctic and his prospective effort has the financial support of prominent Japanese capitalists. The Jap is a small eater, as has been shown by the remarkable endurance of the Japanese soldiers in the war with Russia, on short rations, and as Lieut. Shackleton's failure was due to the exhaustion of his food supply, Kodama Ocamateu may by carrying meals in his vest pocket be able to advance the flag of his nation to the very pole.

Traditions of the American southwest in the period immediately following the civil war are recalled by the information from Germany that brigands held the highway between Augustowe and Lipsk on the Russo-German frontier, one day last week, and captured fifty or sixty travelers, taking all their money. Most of the victims were horse-dealers, carrying large sums, and the total haul is estimated at $25,000. That such things can be in an old settled country seems astonishing to Americans, and is probably in part attributable to the political convulsions of the past four years in Russia.

The trouble between Bolivia and Argentina seems to represent on a grand scale the spirit of "Kill the Empire!" Bolivia and Peru had a boundary dispute. It was referred to arbitration, and Argentina was the arbitrator. The decision which has been handed down displeases Bolivian hotheads, and a mob of them in La Paz attacked the Argentine legation. Argentina would be able to give Bolivia a lesson if the bad blood should result in war, but Bolivia's position is so clearly wrong that probably her own sober second thought will cause her to recede from it.

Only a few months ago the police dogs of New York were regarded as a joke. Now the residents are demanding more of them as a protection against burglars. There is no denying the efficiency of these canine sleuths. They are not grafters, and their fidelity to duty often rises to the heroic.

A woman in Atlantic City dived from her yacht to rescue a drowning guest and swam with the latter to safety, while the men on the yacht looked on. Here is another clear case of feminine invasion of masculine privileges.

The band of departed gypsies in New York who used their children as clubs on the officials in their fight against deportation proved very plainly the government's point against them as undesirable citizens.

A socialist, sued for breach of promise, has invoked the French law in his defense. It is odd how promptly these enemies of law resort to it when their own rights, privileges and property are in danger.

A shipload of South American parrots recently landed in Mobile, Ala., serves to remind the public that Africa is not our only source of rare and valuable zoological specimens.

Automobile tires have been marked up. This is more likely to encourage speeding to get the increased cost back than to slowing down for economy's sake.

It was a St. Louis man who died of sleeping sickness, not a Philadelphian. The disease is not usually fatal in Philadelphia.

The fact that undertakers now call themselves "morticians" will not make them any the more welcome.

The VANISHING FLEETS

BY ROY NORTON

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WEIL

The Wires Were in Charge of Military Operators.

SYNOPSIS.

"Vanishing Fleets," a story of "what might have happened," opens in Washington with the United States and Japan near war. Guy Hillier, secretary of the British embassy, and Miss Norma Roberts, chief aide of Inventor Roberts, are introduced as lovers. Japan declares war and takes the Philippines. Guy Hillier starts for England. Norma Roberts leaves Washington for the Florida coast. Hawaii is captured by the Japs. All ports are closed. Tokyo learns of missing Japanese fleet and whole world becomes convinced that United States has powerful war agency. England decides to send a fleet to American waters as a Canadian protection against what the British suppose is a terrible submarine flotilla. Hillier is sent with a message. Fleet mysteriously disappears. The kaiser is missing. King Edward of England is confronted by Admiral Bevins of the United States. The Dreadnaught, biggest of England's warships, is discovered at an impassable point in the Thames. The story now goes back to a time many months before the war breaks out, and Inventor Roberts visits the president and cabinet, telling of and exhibiting a metal production. This overcomes friction when electrified and is to be applied to vessels. A city for the manufacture of the mysterious discovery is built. The mystery of true levitation is solved. Roberts evolves a great flying machine. The cabinet plans a radioplane war against Japanese. The start for the scene of conflict with a large fleet of monster airships is made with Norma in command. The Japanese fleet, believing Nippon supreme, suddenly discerns the radioplane fleet. After maneuvering the airships descend, and by use of strong magnets lift the airships, one by one, from the sea. The trip to the west coast of America is then commenced. Because of a partially disabled radioplane, one of the warships is dropped into the sea after the men are transferred to another. The vessels are deposited in a mountain lake in the United States to await peace.

CHAPTER XIX.—Continued.

"Men," he said, "I take no credit for the result, and I'm big enough so to report to Washington. This battle brought out three heroes. Brockton, Jenkins and above all this little girl, Norma Roberts." His "God bless her!" was lost in the tumult. They were men intoxicated with the wine of victory. They yelled themselves hoarse. They patted one another on the back, hurled their caps into the air, and finally formed escorts of honor to conduct the men and officers of the fleet to their cabins, asking over and over for details of the fight.

And even as those tired fighters went to rest, in a city across the continent newsboys were crying their extras through the streets, and the citizens of a great city were asking one another how the night had worked its miracle. A lounging patrolman in Ravenna park, which bordered on Lake Washington, had sleepily rubbed his eyes as the sun was tinting the everlasting snows of the Olympics, and had come to a sudden stop, leaning against a tree and wondering if he was still asleep; but with his knuckles he could not obliterate the floating vision before him. He convinced himself by a lusty hail: "Hello, out there! What are you doing? Get off that lake!" and back to him there volleyed a storm of objurgations in an unknown tongue. Not until he had called a fellow officer and rowed a boat round those fallen monarchs of the deep did he learn that they were captive to his country, and then, elated with the news, he hastened to impart it.

But this was not the only surprise for Seattle. For some days preceding troops had been pouring into the port, and it had been the general belief that they were being mobilized preparatory to embarkation for the Philippines or Japan. On this morning, however, there was an exodus. Nearly all the troops had disappeared in the night. Likewise there were strange happenings in the telegraph offices. When men went to consign messages they were met with the intelligence that the wires were in charge of military operators, that nothing could be received for any point beyond the borders of the United States, and that all messages without exception would be censored before transmission. The newspapers fumed and roared, until they learned that all incoming news would pass uninterruptedly; but that for purposes known only to the government the story of the presence of the Japanese fleet would be closely guarded for the time being. For once the Post-Intelligence, the Times and Star united in attacking the administration.

Polite officers forwarded appeals from the chamber of commerce to Washington; but the government answered that there was no alternative, because if the secret was known throughout the United States the chances for its leakage across the lines would be augmented. All Sound traffic stopped, and from the great union depot no departing trains rumbled. Within an hour it was known that a cordon of soldiers surrounded the city, and that all traffic or communication with the outside world was interdicted. Seattle had been isolated.

Thus it was that the presence of the captured fleet and the method of its taking were unknown to the country at large. Seattle extended all consistent courtesies to the vanquished; but it afforded little balm.

And thus it was that for many days, imprisoned, powerless, and lost, with crippled tops, crushed stacks and under the white flag of surrender, the flower of Japanese prowess floated on an inland sea in sullen mourning, while the gasping world shuddered in contemplation of its fate.

CHAPTER XX.

What Befell the Emperor.

Like a lonely rock that has withstood the fury of a storm and the battering of the seas to emerge again into sunlight, the president felt his time of justification approaching. His hour of triumph was at hand, and his prayers were being answered; but the task was not yet done.

The unqualified victory over the Japanese fleet made the outcome of the war a certainty; hence it was with patience that the administration waited for the next move in the far east, which must of necessity come China. There was no doubt that she would assist her ally. At first this seemed an imminent action; but several days passed bringing through the secret service no news save that her fleet, huge and well manned, was making preparations to sail. The president, knowing that for the accomplishment of his purpose oriental power must be broken, indulged in the fervent hope that the attack might come soon.

There was less trouble internally, as the people were beginning to have faith in the administration, though they were speculating as to what course of procedure was being followed. It was while affairs were in this condition that the sailing of the British fleet was duly announced through secret channels of information. The coterie saw before it the necessity of either abandoning the hope of teaching China a drastic lesson and announcing its secret to the world or meeting the British squadrons and holding them hostage in the interest of peace. They chose the latter alternative, and thereby was caused the strangest chapter in the history of war.

Like that other sally outward to the western seas, this one was timely. It was made when the British fleet might be met beyond the reach of wireless telegraph communication, and the departure from the key was also under cover of darkness. Again there was a resemblance to the Japanese affair, in that the appearance of the radioplanes created surprise and consternation on the warships. Here, however, the similarity ended. The Anglo-Saxon mind knows no such thing as surrender when once it is stirred to the depths of its stubbornness. It can read only two answers to the riddle of conflict—victory or death—as has been attested by many a hard-fought battle on land and sea.

The armada of Great Britain had sailed with apprehensions, being fully cognizant that it was invading a territory of mystery and danger, and the vigilance of its watch, therefore, was never relaxed. The consternation caused by the first sight of the aerial fleet was immediately followed by a hurried clearing of the decks for action, although defeat in a battle against such overpowering odds was a foregone conclusion. No gun was fired, however, and all stood expectantly awaiting a declaration of intent from the monsters of the air which had come upon them in the full glare of the afternoon sun.

With slow and stately majesty the radioplanes approached, each flying the flag of the United States and beneath it the emblem of truce. The Dreadnought, answering sluggishly to the swell and hurling great cascades of water from its bow, was in the heart of the formation, and in its ponderous might seemed fearless of anything afloat. Toward it the foremost radioplane directed its course, dropping steadily down until full abreast and on a level with the great fighting tops, while the officers of the battle ship watched with amazement its splendid control. Not till then was there a visible display of life aboard it. A port opened and into the blackness of its frame Bevins emerged, while directly behind him stood the scientist, who had recovered, and was to witness the first full demonstration of the power he had evolved. On the bridge of the battle ship the British admiral stood, surrounded by staff officers.

"Good afternoon, admiral," the American hailed. "Glad to see you. How do you like the looks of us?"

Across Fields' face flitted a half smile. "We are very well indeed, Admiral Bevins; but can't say we are particularly glad to see you, or sure that we like you until we know more. Clever invention that. Must have been conceived by an Englishman."

Behind the United States officer a withered little figure became imbued with a sudden frenzy of passion that threatened to interject an unpleasant remark; but Bevins checked him with a laugh and grew serious again.

"Admiral," he said, "my country isn't at war with yours. You understand that."

Fields looked relieved, and lost somewhat of his air of set defiance. At the head of his men he crossed to the end of the bridge where he might be nearer the one addressing him. The nervous strain of the situation was being rapidly diminished. "Frankly, I'm glad to be reassured," he replied. "There are a lot of things we'd rather know."

"And which I shall be glad to explain if you and a dozen of your immediate subordinates will come aboard as my guests."

The invitation was immediately accepted; but it was a trying interview for the Britons. The machine on which they were received was the Roberts, which was the latest production of the plant on the key. It was larger than its predecessors, and had been made the most pretentious. It was elegantly appointed. Amidships it contained a drawing room on which the most careful workmanship had been lavished. The guests gathered round a huge mahogany table, whose polished top reflected the light from the colored ports of the dome, and were served with refreshments before Bevins recurred to the object of his visit. He drew from his pocket an official packet and laid it open before him.

"Gentlemen," he began, "of course you are interested in all that you have seen, and in the attitude of the United States. What I shall read to you are my orders. I have come out here to meet you for the purpose, first of all, that you may hear them."

The Roberts had ascended to an altitude above the others of the American fleet, and was resting in mid air. It was very still, the light hum of a small dynamo from behind the partitions being the only disturber of silence. He opened the document and read:

"You are instructed to intercept the British fleet and assure its officers of the good will of the United States toward his majesty, King Edward VII., and all his subjects. You are to explain to them that the United States is compelled, in pursuance of its adopted policy formulated at the commencement of the war with Japan, to maintain the secret of its power until such time as it is deemed expedient to announce it to the world. You will then endeavor to induce the British fleet to surrender itself into your hands as guests of this country, assuring those in command that all damages accruing will be repaired by the United States. You are to use all due caution to avoid injury to life, property, or pride, and to transport the entire fleet to the waters of Chesapeake bay, after which for a brief period the officers and men of Great Britain will be entertained by the United States."

Bevins stopped and looked into the faces confronting him, which expressed a variety of emotions, running the gamut from stolidity to wonder and from compliance to indignation.

The British admiral's visage was a frowning one. "Your country asks too much!" he said, almost explosively. "And really it volunteers no explanation of its acts or intentions.' Some of his companions nodded their heads in approval. "We can't accept."

Bevins reopened the parchment. "I must then read you the concluding clause," he said, and began:

"It is strongly desired that there be no clash at arms; but in any event you are to return with the fleet."

There was brief silence in the room, which was broken by Fields, who jumped to his feet. Bevins rose, and the other officers did likewise. The situation threatened unhappy conclusions; but Bevins held up a restraining hand and went on:

"Here! Before you underestimate the force of this last clause, let me give you a demonstration of what we can do and how difficult it would be for you to offer any defense or effective resistance whatever."

He turned to a speaking tube, gave a curt order and requested his visitors to look through the transparent ports, which were suddenly opened beneath their feet. The Roberts swept up into the air to such a prodigious height that the internal pressure against her shell became terrific. She was at such an altitude that no mortal being could have withstood the strain, and only her splendid anchorable construction and cohesive qualities kept her from flying apart. The world below was reduced in appearance until its surface was obliterated in a dull haze and the shadows of the sun were marked against its eastern outline.

In great circles she descended, until the water again became visible, then the vessels upon it, and last of all the crests of the waves. Now she swooped lower, and then at a speed of nearly 600 miles an hour whipped a straight line close above the tops of the fighting masts, slowed down, and whirled in and out, about and above the British ships as easily as would a swallow in playful flight. On the decks of the vessels men stared in wide-eyed amazement at this demon of the air, at first fearing that control had been lost and the lives of those aboard were in jeopardy. Then at the splendid exhibition of speed and handling they were dumbfounded. The Roberts then rose in one quick lift until it was above the plane of altitude assumed by the other machines, poised for a moment, and came to a stop. In all this time no one had spoken a word. Now they turned to the American, unloosing their convulsive clutches from the seats and liberated from the spell.

(TO BE CONTINUED.

ICY BREEZE MENACES TRIP IN BALLOON

REMARKABLE EFFECT OF SUDDEN GUST OF COLD AIR ON GAS BAG.

New York.—In narrating a trip in a balloon in California, a writer in Harper's Weekly gives the following graphic description:

San Jacinto and San Bernardino were blue behind when luck forgot us and our globule of floating gas. The barometer was firm at 16,500 feet when the wind turned fickle. With the sweep of a northern chinook from the south, where the waters of the Gulf of California breed coolness, a whipping breeze clutched the balloon. Our flight was checked, and, from the warmth of a moment before, we shivered.

Instantly the gas reacted. The needle that showed our height trem-

"Don't Jump," He Shouted.

bled and whirled away from the three-mile mark. I gasped as we fell and looked at Mueller for the signal "Sand overboard." He had seized the barometer in his hand. Its point flew toward zero.

The desert rushed up to meet us. Sage-brush and cactus that had been mere dots sprang into vivid relief. Hills became mountains, while the watch ticked once. Bottomless canyons yawned under us with jaws wide for the prey from the skies. In all the wilderness of rock and ruin there was but one tiny spot of yellow sand where death, perhaps would look the other way.

My ears seemed to burst. Blood rushed to my head and drummed in my temples. My head reeled in the heavier atmosphere. I saw the horizon that had been a thousand leagues away swept out of sight by the teeth of the peaks that hemmed us in. And still we dropped as though a catapult had hurled us.

Mueller said never a word. Motionless, he watched the patch of level sand. A reef of lava, sharp as a knife, bordered it. Yet he made no sign.

He dropped the barometer and clutched at a sandbag. I heard through the throbbing of my ears a voice that shouted: "Hang to the ring! Don't jump!"

I grabbed at the stout wooden ring that held the ropes above my head. We struck. Sand flew into my face and my head roared with the terrific impact. My body swung across the basket and flattened Mueller against the rigging. Then, before I had time to think, we were racing skyward again and I was lying limp against the wickerwork.

As rapidly as a moment before it had whirled to zero, the barometer was now dancing over the thousands toward the black mark that registered 16,500 feet, as far as the barometer would go. Again we were back in the skies that tossed us to destruction one moment, and the next suddenly snatched us from the claws of rock.

So fast did we rise that we shot through the colder wind in the rush of a second. The barometer needle cast a shadow on the last mark on the dial, and still the big bag of gas careened upward. Mueller had brushed the dust from his face, and now stood silent, watching the world drop away.

"Eighteen thousand," he figured, "19,000, 20,000—we're far over 20,000, and still rising."

Here our lost wind gripped us again and we were kiting eastward. The San Jacintos were but a mere blur of fading blue and the hollow into which we had been thrown was far lost among the desert ranges that our speed piled behind us.

Concrete House Collapses.

Winnipeg, Man.—Four men were injured, two mortally, when the handsome reinforced concrete apartment block known as the "Bredalbane," being erected in Margreave street at a cost of $250,000, collapsed with a crash. Heavy rains had moistened the concrete so that the steel girders gave way and the heavy floors fell to the basement. The four men were inspecting the work at the time.

Police End Long Sleep.

Los Angeles, Cal.—The rattle of a patrol wagon that came to take him to a hospital awoke Edward W. Clark from a three-day sleep. He had been in a comatose condition that Mrs. C. M. Donald, his landlady, could not explain. When he awoke he sat up in bed, rubbed his eyes and inquired what all the noise was about.