The VANISHING FLEET

ILLUSTRATED BY A. Weil — BY ROY NORTON

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SYNOPSIS.

"Vanishing Fleets," a story of what might have happened if events in Washington and the United States and Japan on the verge of war. Day Hillier, secretary of the British embassy, and Miss Norma Roberts, chief aide of Director Roberts, are introduced as lovers. The government is much criticised because of its lack of preparation for strife. At the most inopportune moment Japan declares war. Japan takes the Philippines without loss. Hillier returns to his country in a state of turmoil because of the government's indifference. Miss Hillier starts for England with secret messages and is compelled to leave Norma Roberts behind, which greatly offends officers at Washington. Mysterious explosions occur in the harbor, and point to the Florida coast. Hillier is captured by the Japanese and "disappears" despite the explanation of "leave from London."

CHAPTER III.—Continued.

"Am I right, sir," he said, in an tone that will have the flag raised as a sign of truce? And if that is so, I should like to be informed as to why at the same time you lowered the United States flag from the peak?"

The general, checked with mortification, hesitated for a moment, and then found himself unable to express his relinquishment in words. He slowly withdrew his sword from its belt hooks, and held it, hilt foremost, toward the admiral, who seemed unable to realize that it was tendered in surrender. There was a moment's silence, in which he looked down at that trusty old blade of steel, never before dishonored by a conqueror's hand. He glanced inquiringly at his fellow countrymen, and then at the others, as if questioning their sanity.

"I regret to say, sir," the general answered, that the flag was raised in surrender not only of this fortification, but of all military forces on the islands."

The admiral gave a quick start of surprise and jubilation as the slandt cance" of this unexpected action dawned upon him.

"The total surrender of the Philippines?" he questioned, as if it was beyond comprehension that without further effort this island kingdom of the sea was tranquilly to be turned over to the first enemy who battered a challenge on its gates.

The general, beyond words, nodded in confirmation. In a few quickly spoken sentences the admiral translated the details of the conversation to his compatriots.

Goaded by the sneers and satirical exclamations with which this was greeted, the general broke into a sudden blaze of wrath, shook a clenched fist under the admiral's very nose, and in white heat exclaimed: "Yes, it comes easy, but it's no fault of mine. I'm obeying orders. If I had my way I'd have seen you in hell before this happened. I would, so help me God!"

As a signal to the waiting fleet, they took down the Japanese sun emblem of Japan, while the disconsolate officers of the United States retired to the barracks for the almost hopeless attempt of explaining the situation to the puzzled garrison. These were soldier like, quick moving, wiry men from the west, proud of their country and their corps, had were of the kind that could not understand dishonor through mere obedience to higher orders. They stormed and swore, and for a time it seemed that mutiny would spread throughout the fortress, may the great guns tear down the flag of Japan and send hurtling masses of defiant steel out into the ranks of that force which had come upon them in a night and won an unearned victory. But they, too, were creatures of discipline, and in the end reluctantly accepted fate.

"The great armada slowly gathered way and crept forward almost beneath the towering walls of the silent forts. Boat after boat brought its load of marines ashore and discharged them on ground which in other wars had been stained with the blood of valorous men. Here on these beaches had stepped the armies of old Spain, coming as pioneers to battle with savage foemen. In former years the waters of this bay on another day in May had floated the vessels of brave Dewey's fleet, had rocked and quivered beneath the impact of his guns, and witnessed the raising of his victorious flag over the smoldering ramparts. And with such a history of glory behind it, the moon on this night rose over a land silent, conquered, and abandoned, as if it was of no more value than a tiny pebble cast into a tropical sea."

CHAPTER IV.

The Harness of War.

A breath of summer swept over the land, giving promise of wealth of bloom and prodigality of harvest; but the plow stood idle and rusted in the waiting fields, the meadows went unshorn, and the crops, in which lay the riches of peace, ripened. Everywhere was the growing din of anarchy and the stern clangor of war. A people who had never tamely bowed a head beneath a yoke, nor rebelled at just ruling, found themselves distraught in the whirling current of unreasonable tides which carried them out to they knew not what.

A tame yielding of territory over which their flag had once flown, an equally passive surrender of islands which had come to them of their own volition, seeking in the spread of the eagle's wings the shadows of security, and, last of all, as a crowning climax of folly, the sending of warships to neutral ports! From east to west, as the oceans run, from the border line of the north to that of the south, there swept over the great waiting nation a call to arms. No dam built by mortal man could have stemmed that rising tide of indignation save the one that was erected by the administration in the hours of its stress. News of it came unheralded as had all the ominous stories preceding it.

Even at the moment when an overthrow of the governing power at Washington seemed imminent, there flashed across the wires from governor to governor the quick and insistent demand for fighting men. In every armory was heard the resounding clash of rifles. A hundred thousand men, drilled for the emergencies of a country's need, sprang to their weapons like tensely strung warriors of old awaiting the prince's command to charge. A country, which through days of defeat had seemingly slept, sprang into the harness of strife, as it electrified by the Gift of Battles. Simultaneously with the ordering out of all National Guard men and a further call for volunteers, which received instant response, every railway traversing the country was requisitioned by the war department.

Yet in all this tumult the destination of this, self-only mobilized and splendidly powerful army remained a secret. In vain the press of the country and its most influential citizens demanded knowledge; but not till the day when from all directions swarms of armed men sailed forth, was this information given. And as if blackened by a scourge of locusts, the Canadas awakened one morning to find that about 3,000 miles of border land were spread a line of soldiers, the most singular line of repulse ever stretched between nations. It was one of excommunication.

Not even the commanding officers as they took their stations knew the whys or wherefores of this most remarkable move, although their instructions were of the simplest, and were that under no circumstances were there to be acts of unfriendliness nor, even under provocation, movements of aggression. They were to stand as an insurmountable barrier between the United States and the dominion, prohibiting traffic, passage, and communication, and nothing more. No man might cross the border, and wires, which in years of peace carried from one country to another the news of the day, were cut and torn from their poles as if no further word might ever be transmitted through them.

Nor was this all. Wherever a cable touched on all the outer edges of this great land might be found soldiers in charge. Wireless telegraph stations were abruptly closed, prohibiting the use even of the air itself. Proclamations were issued that instructions had been given for the perforation of any airships attempting outside communication, and the penalty of instant death was threatened any aeronaut who disobeyed this command.

From every seaport vessels of all nations, friendly or unfriendly, were summarily excluded. Protests from captains and from companies were ignored. The United States was suddenly blockading not only its own means of communication, but sealing its ports as well. No message might be carried in or out, and, as if fearing also for its southern border line, the soldiers of the regular army were placed there. The vessels of the navy which were in the home waters of the Atlantic were put on patrol duty, steaming up and down the eastern coast with the regularity of policemen on their beats. To the world at large the United States of America might never have been. The fabled Atlantis of old could have disappeared no more completely nor been cut off more effectually from intercourse with outside mankind than was the great American nation.

Whatever criticism and surprise had been caused among other powers by the abandonment of the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands was outdone by this latest move. Never before in the world's history had a nation enforced complete isolation upon itself, withdrawing within its shell as does a turtle when assailed. Hitherto it had been the custom of a people attacked to maintain an outward seeming of uninterrupted commerce and unimpeded communication. No modern government had yet had the temerity to shut its ports to friendly nations, scorn intercourse with them, and trust to its own resources for support and maintenance. Protests from friendly powers were unheeded or unavailing, because after a few days there was no possibility of conveying such remonstrance to the officials at Washington.

In the capital itself representatives of foreign nations, hearing of this embargo on the ports, stood upon their rights and demanded either their dismissal or the free and uninterrupted passage of their communications. Some of the more importunate ones were politely told that they might take their departure at any time they deemed fit, but were given warning that it must be within 48 hours or they would not be permitted to pass the border line. These discomfited diplomats either hastened to the port of harbor, embarking upon the last steamer leaving, or chose to remain within the country.

The maritime nations of Europe aghast at what they termed the insolence of the United States, discussed means of bringing her to book and compelling her to open her coast stands, but found a lack of unanimity as to method. Great Britain, jealous of Germany, but fearing a swift onslaught from the Kaiser's realm, hesitated to take the initiative and thus leave her own coasts exposed to attack. France, with the memory of an earlier war, remained passive. Russia smarting under the recollection of her own defeat, refused to take any step which directly or indirectly might aid Japan. And the smaller nations awaited a leader.

England was placed in the most peculiar and trying position of all. The last official utterance of the United States to a foreign power had been to her, in the positive assertion that come what might, she of all nations need have no fear of being embroiled, and that under no circumstances need she apprehend war with America.

The English ambassador, who was one of the last to take timely advantage of his opportunity and seek a temporary residence in Montreal, cabled his country a frank admission that the policy of the United States was completely beyond his comprehension, and that whatever of the situation might be known from personal observation would be explained by his secretary, Guy Hillier, due at any moment in London. The ears of Europe were therefore open for such communications as might be imparted by this young man, who for the moment became of paramount importance.

Thus it was that Hillier, arriving at the Liverpool docks, found himself the center of all interest. A swarm of newspaper correspondents, more or less distinguished in their profession, sought interviews; but, warned in advance by wireless telegraph, he declined all conversation. The wharf was black with people, who anxiously craned their necks to catch sight of the man who was expected to elucidate the greatest mystery of the age. A guard of constables formed a hollow square round him and forced their way to the cab, meanwhile shouted leading to the train which was to convey him to London.

When he had gained his seat in a compartment reserved for his use, and the train whirled away past neatly-walled farms, prosperous villages and great cities, he wondered at the strange trend of events which had thrown him so prominently into the foreground. He smiled in irony as he reviewed his own actual knowledge of the situation, and realized how little he had in the way of information in comparison with what he was expected to divulge.

At Euston station he was escorted to a carriage, and whistled a soft note of surprise as he recognized on the panels the prime minister's coat of arms. Evidently he was to be subjected to what in America he had heard called the Third Degree. Surreptitious nods were interchanged by a crowd of loiterers, and soft comments as "That's him" and "E's the bloke 'e's going to tell us about it" floated to him as he stepped from the door behind, mounted the box and whipped the team into a gallop.

He was ushered into the sacred precincts of the prime minister's private chamber, and found awaiting not only that important person but the foreign secretary, and a full lot of the admiralty as well. The ponderously sealed packet from his ambassador was torn open and read aloud. It contained the following startling statement from his perturbed and irate superior:

"I have the honor to inform your excellency that I am in a country evidently inhabited by maniacs. I have painstakingly sought a logical explanation for the acts of this government, and frankly admit that I am unable to understand either its attitude toward his majesty's government, its proposed plan of campaign, or what the effect of this war will be upon other nations. I have been persistently refused any intimation as to what has taken place or is intended. In a personal interview with his excellency, the president of the United States, I have been positively informed that this country will under no circumstances permit any demonstration against Great Britain, but that it may become necessary to suspend intercourse for a time. I cannot tell what is meant by this, nor would he give further information. The attitude of the administration, backed up by congress, is that of supreme egotism and self-sufficiency, despite the position taken by the people and the press, as shown in newspapers which are sent herewith. In view of the uncertainty of the situation, the enigma presented by the United States government's attitude, and the threat that within 48 hours all exchange of communication will be suspended, I deem it wise to suggest that his majesty's gold fleet be in readiness to meet and overwhelm a naval demonstration in the American waters, if need should arise. I am sending this by my secretary, who can answer any questions of a more pertinent nature as well as I could."

The letter, written in the crabbed hand of the ambassador, was slowly read aloud, three present straining their hearing that no word might be lost, and at its conclusion they sat dumbfounded.

"You were there, I believe," said the prime minister, slowly swinging back and forth his swivel chair, and addressing the secretary "when the news of the surrender of the Philippines was received?"

"Yes, your lordship."

"What excuse had the government to make for such unwarranted action?"

"None whatever."

"Do you mean to say that they surrendered without protest or defense the surrender of a fortification which cost millions of pounds, was adequately equipped and able to repel successfully the attack of such a fleet as Japan sent against it?"

"Yes, they even accepted it com placently."

From round the room came murmurs of amazement, while the rustle of newspapers showed the anxiety of those present to glean what information they could be permitted. Losing their phlegmatic air of self possession and casting official dignity to the winds they bombarded Hillier with questions, which in the main he was unable to answer. The voice of the stately lord of the admiralty rose above the others in a sudden, insistent petulant question.

"Do you know anything else worth while?" he asked.

"No," answered Hillier, "I have no knowledge other than that which I have given to you, which in itself was gathered elsewhere than from an absolutely silent and secretive government."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

They Ran Aloft the Rising Sun Emblem of Japan.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

A GOOD DEAL WHEN IT IS THE NAME OF A NATIONAL FOREST

In the process of redistricting the national forests, which has not been completed, numerous changes of name were made. These changes were by no means haphazard or arbitrary. The new names have been chosen on account of their importance in local and national history, and they will serve for all time as reminders of men and events prominently connected with the country's progress from the pioneer days. Merely to read them understandingly is to trace the salient facts of western growth and development. The national forests in New Mexico, with the significance and derivation of their names, are as follows:

The Alamo National forest is named from Fort Alamo, which received its name from the old Alamo mission of Texas. This fort is the site of the most memorable battle which has ever been fought on Texas soil, being the altar on which William B. Travis, Davy Crockett, James Bowie, J. B. Bonham and their heroic compatriots offered up their lives in the cause of liberty and popular government. The name Alamo signifies "cottonwood" or "poplar," and was probably given it by the troops quartered there who come from Fort Alamo de Parras, in the province of Coahuila, in which province Texas was settled. This forest includes 1,151,904 acres, and is under the supervision of Acting Supervisor Arthur M. Neal, with headquarters at Alamogordo.

The Carson National forest takes its name from Kit Carson, who all where were named after the Rocky mountain guide, Kit Carson, one of the most picturesque heroes of western history. His early life was spent on the plains, where he met Gen. John C. Fremont, by whom he was engaged as guide in subsequent explorations. In this capacity he was eminently useful and to him is probably due much of the success of these explorations. He was perhaps better known to a large number of Indian tribes than any other white man, and from his long life among them learned their habits and customs, understood their mode of warfare and spoke their language as his mother tongue. No man did more than he in furthering the settlement of the northwestern wilderness.

The Chiricahua National forest is named from the Chiricahua Apaches, who were one of the most warlike branches of all the Apache nation. They made their home in the depths of what is now the Chiricahua forest, and the Cochise strongholds where Cochise, their greatest warrior of modern times, for years defied the white man, is an important point for sightseers in the region. The word means "mountain" or "lawless," that is, "Indians living in the mountains and having little respect for the white man's laws." This forest includes 466,497 acres and is in charge of Acting Supervisor A. H. Zachar, with headquarters at Douglas, Ariz.

The Datil National forest derives its name from a large mountain spur of the Rockies called the "Datils." There is no certain knowledge of the meaning of the word. It has by some been supposed to be the Spanish word meaning the fruit of the date palm, and various other explanations have been given as to its origin. One of the most probable is that it is an Apache Indian word, because there are several words similar to it in the Apache language. This forest includes 1,848,915 acres and is in charge of Acting Supervisor R. E. Hatthis, with headquarters at Magdalena.

The Gila National forest is named from the county in Arizona and the river in Arizona and New Mexico. The name is said to be of Spanish origin, but the meaning is lost. The area of this forest is 1,782,621 acres. Supervisor W. H. Goddard is in charge, with headquarters at Silver City.

The Jemez National forest takes its name from the Jemez river, which derived its name from a division of North American Indians who occupied the pueblo of Jemez on this river. Supervisor Ross McMillan is in charge of this forest, with headquarters at Santa Fe. The area included is 975,720 acres.

Lincoln county, which was named after Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth president of the United States, gives the name to the Lincoln National forest. Supervisor J. H. Kinney is in charge of this forest, with headquarters at Capitan. The area included is 596,662 acres.

The Magdalena National forest is named from the mountains of that name. When the early Spanish explorers arrived in the region of what is now called the Magdalena mountains they saw in the distance upon one of the isolated buttes a striking representation of a woman's face, and with their simple religious enthusiasm they named it the "Mountain of Our Lady Magdalene." On closer examination the woman's face proves to be a rock formation. At the back of the head a dense growth of oak brush makes a good substitute for hair. At a distance the face and features are almost perfect. The area included in this forest is 558,445 acres. Supervisor John Kerr is in charge, with headquarters at Magdalena.

The Manzano mountains give the name to the Manzano National forest. This range of mountains is called the Manzano, from the Spanish word meaning "apple." In the heart of the Manzano mountains there are several very old and extremely large apple trees near the site of an old ruined mission. They were probably planted by some of the earlier priests who explored the country in either the fifteenth or sixteenth century. These trees are now surrounded by a fence, and every effort is being made by the people of that vicinity to preserve them because of their great age and historical associations.

KEPT GETTING WORSE.

Five Years of Awful Kidney Disease.

Nat Anderson, Greenwood, S. C., says: "Kidney trouble began about five years ago with dull backache, which got so severe in time that I could not get around. The kidney secretions became badly disordered, and at times there was almost a complete stop of the flow. I was examined again and again and treated to no avail, and kept getting worse. I have to praise Doan's Kidney Pills for my final relief and cure. Since using them I have gained in strength and flesh and have no sign of kidney trouble."

Sold by all dealers. 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

LIVED ON TEN CENTS A WEEK.

Bill Doolittle's System a Good One, But Not Attractive.

"D'y'u find smoking hurts y'u?" asks Hi Biddle, a Yankee lawyer, in Willie Brook's story, "The Solar Machine," in Harper's.

"It probably doesn't do me any good," I said; "but I'd have trouble quitting it."

"No, y'u wouldn't. Smoke this." He took from his vest pocket the fellow to the stogey in his mouth and passed it across the table to me. "Ever hear how Bill Doolittle lived on ten cents a week?"

I confessed that Bill's economies had never been brought to my attention.

"Wal," said Biddle, "he took dinner with a friend on Sunday, an' ate enough to last 'im till Wednesday. Then he bought ten cents' wuth o' tripe, an' he hated tripe so like thunder that it lasted 'im the rest o' the week. These seegars work a good deal like that tripe. You take to smokin' 'em, an' y'u won't want more'n one or two a day."

15 YEARS OF SUFFERING.

Burning, Painful Sores on Legs—Tortured Day and Night—Tried Many Remedies to No Avail—Cured by Cuticura.

"After an attack of rheumatism, running sores broke out on my husband's legs, from below the knees to the ankles. There are no words to tell all the discomforts and great suffering he had to endure night and day. He used every kind of remedy and three physicians treated him, one after the other, without any good results whatever. One day I ordered some Cuticura Soap, Cuticura Ointment, and Cuticura Resolvent. He began to use them and in three weeks all the sores were died up. The burning fire stopped, and the pains became bearable. After three months he was quite well. I can prove this testimonial at any time. Mrs. V. V. Albert, Upper Frenchville, Me., July 21, 1907."

The Doctor's Fee.

The average man will give a lawyer $300 to $500, together with a lifetime's pledge to keep him out of the penitentiary for from ten to ten years, and at the same time he will raise a phosphorescent glow and a kick that can be heard around the world if a doctor charges him $50 to $100 to keep him out of hell for a lifetime. We are the only people under God's ethereal tent to-day, who keep open shop 24 hours each day and 365 days in each year. We are also the only laborers to keep on working for people who do not pay. I can carry my part of charity with as good a grace as most men. I can go through rain, snow or mud and do my best, provided the case is one of worthy need, but to reward continually downright rascality, willful drunkenness and wanton laziness is getting out of my line.—Texas State Journal of Medicine.

Revelations of the Breakfast Table.

To girls about to marry one would tender the advice that they study their intended victim's breakfast. If he is feeding like forty, reject him as the direct descendant of Circe's herd of swine. If he is melancholy, beware of the abrupt curves of his temperament. If he be boisterous and fare sour, remember that an empty drum gives the greatest reverberation, and a chatterbox at 8 a. m. is as tiresome as Chanticleer at 3 o'clock in the morning. By their breakfasts you shall know them.—Saturday Review.

PUZZLE SOLVED.

Coffee at Bottom of Trouble.

It takes some people a long time to find out that coffee is hurting them.

But when once the fact is clear, most people try to keep away from the thing which is followed by ever increasing discomfort to the heart, stomach and nerves.

"Until two years ago I was a heavy coffee drinker," writes an Ill. stockman, "and had been all my life. I am now 56 years old.

"About three years ago I began to have nervous spells and could not sleep nights, was bothered by indigestion, bloating, and gas on stomach affected my heart.

"I spent lots of money doctoring—one doctor told me I had chronic catarrh of the stomach; another that I had heart disease and was liable to die at any time. They all dieted me until I was nearly starved but I seemed to get worse instead of better.

"Having heard of the good Postum, had done for nervous people, I discarded coffee altogether and began to use Postum regularly. I soon got better, and now, after nearly two years, I can truthfully say I am sound and well.

"I sleep well at night, do not have the nervous spells, and am not bothered with indigestion or palpitation. I weigh 32 pounds more than when I began Postum, and am better every way than I ever was while drinking coffee. I can't say too much in praise of Postum, as I am sure it saved my life."

"There's a Reason."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

PRAISED THE DOMESTIC BEER

Good Joke on Connoisseurs of Popular Malted Beverage.

In an inconspicuous place in Yorkville there is a resort over which a German of ample proportions presides with the dignity which comes with the possession of a Franco-Prussian war medal. The place is not a club, tavern, hotel, saloon or restaurant, but a little of each, and its patrons, even the one American who goes there regularly, call it "Die Kneipe." A discussion as to the relative merits of the various brands of beer took place there a few nights ago which grew so heated that skat and pinochle games had to be halted for a time. The American contended that the views of the debaters were based on their loyalty to their respective birthplaces more than on their knowledge of the beer which came from them, and to demonstrate this he entered into a conspiracy with the veteran landlord. All were invited to celebrate Mr. Yankee's birthday, and in honor of the occasion a barrel of imported beer was put on tap. It was nearly all gone before the knowing ones were informed that they had been drinking and praising the domestic product.

A Tragedy in Arabia.

Once an old Arab out of stone carved a scarab, as a sort of good luck charm to wear. It was so artistic, such a big realistic, that the sight of it gave him a scare—he thought he had got a case of "mania au pota" from the effects of a night before's tear. While feeling thus oreide he drank some bichloride, thinking the bug would dissolve then and there. But dope can't hurt scarabs, while it is bad for Arabs, and though they buried the Arab, the scarab felt fair.

CHANGE FOR A DOLLAR

In the midst of the speaking, shouting and voting at a recent political convention one of the ragged newsboys in the big hall was seen trying to attract the attention of the chairman. He was a little fellow, and his appealing eyes were about on a level with the floor of the platform. At first no one took any notice of him, because no one saw him, but presently his persistence and the earnestness of his gaze compelled remark. The chairman stepped to the edge of the stage, and said, "What is it, sonny?"

For reply the lad offered a grimy flatful of something. There was a whispered consultation between the two, and then the chairman, reaching down, yanked the little fellow right up on the platform. The hall grew silent, expecting some joke or other.

"Gentlemen," said the chairman, "here's a boy in trouble. Some one here bought a paper from him a few minutes ago, and gave him a dollar to get changed. Here is the change,"—he opened his hand—"but where is the owner? Will he please show himself?"

It was a good-natured crowd so long as politics was not the issue, it was also a typically American crowd in its readiness to show its sentiments. Accordingly a roar of applause and cheering broke out, which fairly scared the small, shabby boy who faced it. There was more genuine enthusiasm in this outburst than in the longer demonstration which had greeted the nomination of a candidate half an hour before. Presently, however, a lull came, and a voice from one side of the hall cried:

"Here's your man, but he says to keep the change!"

At that there was a smart round of hand clapping, and a sudden shower of quarters and small coins began to pelt the stage round the boy.

"Pick 'em up—they're yours," said the chairman, and he instantly obeyed. This unexpected contribution amounted to about ten dollars, and after making it secure in his handkerchief, the small recipient left the politicians to their graver affairs.—Youth's Companion.