The Vanishing Fleets

BY ROY NORTON

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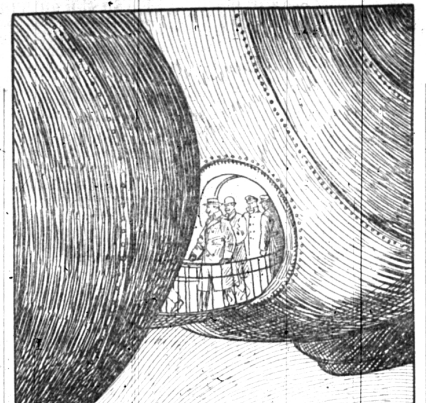
ILLUSTRATED BY A. WEIL

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. England's 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. Inventor Roberts exhibits a metal production. This covers comes frosting when electrified and is to be applied to warships. Roberts evolves a great flying machine. The cabinet plans a radioplane war against Japanese. The start is made for the scene of conflict. After maneuvering the airships descend, and by use of strong magnets lift the warships, one by one, from the sea. The vessels are deposited in the United States. The British fleet accepts American hospitality and is conveyed to the United States. The kaiser is taken on a trip—his first visit to America—this accounting for his disappearance. King Edward is brought to America on a radioplane for conference with the president. They agree to work for world peace. Announcement of the secret of the radioplane is made in Central park, New York, to the wonder of millions. The king meets his men.



"The Soldierly Form of the Kaiser Appeared."

CHAPTER XXII.—Continued.

The British officers exchanged quick side glances of relief. Barr alone had the temerity to break into an open smile of satisfaction. They were not, then, to be censured by their country, and the situation would bear no disgrace. His majesty continued:

"You have unwittingly assisted in reuniting the Anglo-Saxon race, I hope, after its separation of nearly a century and a half. You have been made involuntary guests by a man whose friendship I esteem, and whom I honor above all men. I refer to the president of this nation, and I ask that you remember him as kindly as I do. Your countrymen will have no just cause for criticising you or your actions. Instructions will be sent you in due time through the admiralty. Until then you are to maintain patience. I wish you good night."

With dignified grace he bowed to them, took a step backward, turned on his heel, and was going before they grasped the significance of his speech or awakened from the wonder of his unexpected visit to this alien land. The clang of an elevator door recalled them and stirred them to action. They ran after him, rang for and surged into the elevators, to debouch on the street a minute later a group of hatless men craving further explanations and wishing to honor their ruler. They crowded to the edge of the pavement beside which the motor car was humming in readiness for its start.

The king saw them coming, smiled at their eagerness, and turned to Bevins with a question which they could not hear. The American admiral gave a laughing reply, and the monarch leaned over to Jimmy Barr, who was standing on the curb close at hand.

"My host, the admiral," the king said, "says lack of time prevents your accompanying us. Otherwise we should ask you to witness our embarkation. We are returning to London on a radioplane to-night, and the world's mystery is at an end. We must say good night."

The lights of the hotel entrance were full upon them, bringing out in detail to the curious guests who were gathering on the marble steps the men with bared heads and the gray-bearded English gentleman in the machine. They saw him nod to the chauffeur, who was looking back, saw the latter turn to his work, and then the machine leaped away into the broad drive toward the nearest park entrance. And to the amazement of the onlookers the men in uniform stood at salute until the machine had disappeared. Not even then did they disperse, but stood there silently watching the skies. Pedestrians joined the group, speculating as to the cause of this uniformed gathering.

Several minutes elapsed, and then from one and another came startled exclamations. Up from the silent park, soaring above the trees and shrubbery with stately sweep, camp a strange row of brilliant lights. The secret was out at last, and the American officers gave a frantic cheer, which was joined in by the Englishmen, and taken up by the crowd. As if to recognize their parting shouts, the searchlights of the Roberts in dazzling ripples of color flared suddenly upward, and round in fan-shaped sweeps, which were finally directed full upon the streets below. At a comparatively low altitude the craft went slowly across the city and headed toward the Atlantic, while men upon the pavements beneath took up the cry, until from all sides windows opened and the people rushed into the streets for a sight of this mysterious aerial visitor. Reaching the lower edge of the city, the radioplane shot up and up until it was a speck of light against the stars, took one last circling flight, and with marvelous speed disappeared in the east. And while America was gaining her first knowledge of this incredible flying machine, the Roberts was shooting away in a long straight track for the old world.

The king had watched the sights below as long as they were visible. Through his glasses he had seen the streets become filled with excited men, women and children, and their shoutings had come to him faintly above the hum of the dynamos. The glimmerings of the great harbor dimmed and died away, and here and there could be descried the lights of the slow steaming patrol ships keeping the outpost watch upon the sea. When the last sign of life had vanished, he turned to his companions in silence, thinking of all that had taken place within the few recent hours.

Only a short time ago they had entered this aerial chamber, standing in dread of the unknown terror of the waters and the menacing silence of this western continent they were leaving behind. Only a few hours past they had trembled at the powerlessness of their nation and shudderingly awaited the shock of invasion.

Now they were going back to England bearing news that would upset old ideas, remove all fear for the future, and ally her with the most powerful nation history had ever known. They had sailed away furtively with darkened posts, and were now returning in a glare of white light, careless of who might observe. Events had followed each other in such remarkable sequence, with such astounding rapidity, that it wearied the mind to follow them. The king was pondering over the new situation when with no preliminary notice, every light in the radioplane went out and they were left in darkness.

From without and through the open door came the voices of the admiral and engineer in conversation:

"It can't be an enemy."

"Hardly, but we dare take no chances."

"What do you think it is?"

"I don't know. A minute or two will tell if they have seen us."

The king and his countrymen fumbled for their glasses in the darkness, found them, and lined themselves up against the transparent port which had not been closed. The cause of the sudden cautionary measures was apparent. There, comparatively far away, and high up against the starlit sky, they saw the blazing line of a searchlight thrust up into the darkness. It wavered uncertainly for an instant, and then slowly, as if feeling its way, approached them. It seemed uncertain and for a moment disappeared. Their own machine had come to a halt.

For an instant nothing was visible, and then there leaped into the air a vertical beam of red. Beside it came another steady ray of brilliant white, and then to complete the color trio a vivid shaft of blue arrayed itself beside the other two. Outside in the hood they heard a wild unrestrained burst of cheering, and the cabin was again flooded with light. The old admiral stepped hurriedly in, his face aglow, and his cap in his hand.

"We have sighted the Norma, your majesty, the craft which disappeared with his Imperial majesty, the emperor of Germany."

Before he had finished speaking the signal calling hearers to the wireless telephone buzzed insistently, and he turned to answer. From the dome above they could see answering lights playing rapidly from their own craft. They heard Bevins talking to some one excitedly, and peering once more through the side ports saw they were rushing onward to meet this other traveler of the spaces. With decreasing speed the two approached each other, retaining their altitude high above and beyond sound of the sea. Now they were floating abreast, and finally, after a moment's density, they came to a stop. Their metal sides came together with an almost imperceptible jar, and they adjusted themselves for further communication.

Simultaneously their great ports slid open, and the king, who had gone to the companionway, saw the interior of the other radioplane. Bevins and Brockton in delight were shaking hands and congratulating each other. They talked for a moment, and then the rear admiral retired from view. Bevins turned to the king and said: "Your majesty, the emperor of Germany wishes to come aboard."

Before the king could give his assent the soldierly form of the kaiser appeared outlined in the light of his own port, took a cautious step across the threshold, and stood before the men of England. Whatever doubts he may have had of his reception were set aside by the hands outstretched to receive him and the words of welcome which the king hastened to give him. The bulky form of the chancellor came behind, and then, conducted by the king, they turned and entered the cabin. Brockton and Bevins brought up the rear. At one end of the table stood the American secretary of state, and beside him were the prime minister of England and the lord of the admiralty. The chancellor ponderously edged his way forward until he was near them, leaving the king and his imperial nephew on the opposite side of the table.

The visitors greeted and were presented to the others, and then, for the fraction of a minute, they all stood confronting and expectant until the king with his usual tact put an abrupt end to the restraint by inviting all to be seated, and asking for an explanation of the accident. The kaiser curbed his anxiety for news of developments, and briefly recounted his adventure, appealing now and then to Brockton for details which he did not understand. He concluded, and hesitated for an instant in embarrassed silence. Before he could formulate the opening question in a delicate subject the king had again stepped into the breech.

"The world will soon be at peace," he said meaningly, looking at his kinsman. "We have come from a meeting in America with the man who has so decreed it, and I have had the honor of joining him in plans for the future."

"And Germany?"

"Will be glad."

"But her allotment?"

"The privilege of being one of the foremost in the movement."

"With dignity and honor?"

"Yes, and with an opportunity to play her part voluntarily."

England's king, grave and gray and reading men from the serene heights of long life and philosophy, had expected a tempestuous outburst, but to his contentment none came. He studied the face of the ruler who had gained a world-wide reputation for warlike ambitions and constant truculence, whose mailed fist had long been clenched in readiness for a blow, and was surprised. No sign of storm was apparent, but instead a calm and placid pair of eyes stared back at him.

In rapid sentences he told of the president's design, which Great Britain would accept and which she had helped outline in detail, and closed by predicting the results which would follow. He talked low and earnestly, leaning his elbows on the table before him and addressing himself only to the emperor. His summary concluded, he straightened back into the hollow of his chair and waited for the others to speak.

The chancellor, who had been so intent that he had never changed attitude or expression, shifted his gaze from the king to his sovereign, who for a time sat wrapped in thought. As if he had come to a quick conclusion, he looked up and in three words expressed his views. "It looks perfect," he said. The chancellor smiled, the king looked satisfied and the prime minister with a sigh of relief gave a quick sideglance at the American secretary of state. The lord of the admiralty was rubbing his hands.

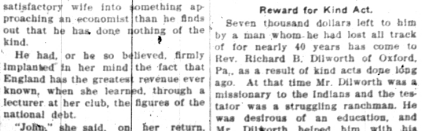
"Germany asks nothing more than fairness," the emperor said, "and I think she will gladly accept and enter into the conclave. It will upset her more than any other nation perhaps, because she is founded on military form; but the whole world shall understand that she permits no nation, race or people to go beyond her in enlightened methods." His stern expression changed to one of warmth. He smiled at some thought of his own and continued:

"We all change, I suppose, as we advance. I have learned that one may have his ideas enlarged by accident. I have known for many days what it is to be free to think, to learn profound lessons in philosophy from the forest and streams, and have come nearer to men of the American nation than I had ever hoped. I have formed new friendships, and by the camp fires at night have been given other views of life, of men and humanity, by a most admirable teacher."

He nodded his head toward Brockton, paused for a moment and then laughed aloud. "I caught a trout that weighed nearly four pounds and shot four caribou!" he chuckled.

At this incongruous termination of his speech his hearers gasped, and then waited for him to continue, which he did in humorous vein, interspersed with comments of graver trend. And in this recountal of adventure they read of his broadening. By suggestion he conveyed to them that he had gone away on a strange journey wrapped in the cares and dignities of position to be taught many lessons in democracy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



THE DUTCH SUCCESSION

WHAT IT MEANS TO EUROPE

THE HOPE OF HOLLAND

A Composite Photograph Which, Under the Title of "A Royal Drum," is in Great Demand as a Picture Postcard Throughout Holland.

With the birth of an heir to the house of Orange-Nassau, of which Queen Wilhelmina is a representative, it is assured that the succession to the throne of Holland will not pass to one or other of the German princely families. So long as there is a representative of the house of Orange to whom fealty can be paid, it is not believed that the Dutch will ever consent to barter away their existence as a nation.

Queen Wilhelmina is perhaps today the most interesting of royal personages to the world at large and the public never tires of particulars as to her daily life.

Like most sovereigns, Queen Wilhelmina, when in her usual state of health, is an early riser; as a rule she is up about seven, though in the country the queen and the prince are often out riding or walking much earlier. Not long ago, when the royal couple followed the maneuvers near the Loo with great interest, they often rode out at 4 or 5 a. m.

After a typically Dutch breakfast of different kinds of bread, eggs, cheese in thin slices, cakes, honey and coffee, the queen sets to work on affairs of state; the different ministers are received to discuss impending measures; letters are read and appointments are signed; then the queen goes out for a walk or a drive till lunch time.

In winter the queen goes out again immediately after lunch, as those are the finest hours of the short winter days, but in summer walks and rides are often taken much later in the day.

The rest of the afternoon is spent, when in normal health, in visiting hospitals, exhibitions, receiving ladies in private audience or hearing the account of a new discovery, distant travels or feats of arms from any one in evidence.

The queen lives most of the year at her summer residence of Het Loo, in Gelderland, near Apeldoorn. To the palace belongs a large park, besides which vast woods and moors are included in the royal domain, which has been steadily enlarged by purchases of land since the queen's majority.

The prince takes a keen interest in fertilizing those grounds. He works hard to improve the soil and to better the condition of his laborers.

That part of Gelderland, the Veluwe, used to be among the poorest parts of the country, but under the skillful management of the prince conditions have been made prosperous.

The four winter months are spent at The Hague; there the queen's life is of necessity spent less in the air; the evenings are in ordinary times often taken up by dinner parties, concerts and receptions.

Yet as often as possible the queen and the prince dine together in their apartments, the queen mother often joining her children.

The young queen leads a very busy life, from childhood a strong sense of duty has been implanted in her.

Even during her serious illness in 1902 she wanted to deal with the most pressing affairs of state; she insisted so much that the doctors allowed her to sign a few letters every day so as to give their patient rest.

Again, in November last year, when her health demanded all possible precautions, she traveled to The Hague lying on a couch, going on foot from the station to the palace, because foreign complications made it necessary for the sovereign to remain in closer touch with the government than she could be at the Loo.

The queen has always taken a great interest in children, and has many ideas of her own regarding a suitable upbringing and education for them. During her yearly visit to Amsterdam the queen always finds time for a pleasant morning in the nursery at Lady Roell's to play with the children, the oldest boy of whom is her godchild.

At Christmas the queen distributes presents to the children of her suite. Then the ballroom presents a most animating scene, the prince showing some of the youngsters how to blow the trumpet or to wind their automatic toys, and the queen wheels them about in their little carts or dresses and undresses the dolls for the little girls.

At the Loo, overlooking the lake, is the queen's little house, where she played at housekeeping when a child.

It is a two-storied building; down stairs a kitchen and dining-room with French windows; upstairs two bedrooms and a sitting-room. There the queen used to cook and to sew her dolls' garments.

Near it is a little house built by the queen's own hands, when she had to learn the use of trowel and mortar for the future laying of foundation stones, and her own garden where she planted and dug.

The queen's favorite dog at this moment is a dachshund, who on his low legs has often great difficulty in following his mistress. Then there is a deer, who comes at the sound of the queen's voice, and in a corner near the stables there is the burial place of her first pony, and the dog of her childhood, Swell, an Irish setter.

Queen Wilhelmina Helene Pauline Maria was born August 31, 1880, and is one of the wealthiest of reigning monarchs.

President Gets Many Gifts.

George F. Parker, in his reminiscences of Mr. Cleveland in McClure's Magazine for March, tells of the enormous number of gifts sent to a president. After his first term Mr. Cleveland insisted on going through his vast collection, and in describing the incident Mr. Parker says: "Upon unlocking the disused room into which perhaps ten or twelve thousand separate articles had been cast, we might well have thought ourselves in a photographic warehouse. There must certainly have been between six and seven thousand photographs."

Is Ashamed of Nation's Debt

English Woman Mortified at Huge Sum Owed by Country.

An English gentleman rather plaintively confides to the London Outlook that he no sooner flatters himself that he has turned his otherwise perfectly satisfactory wife into something approaching an economist than he finds out that he has done nothing of the kind.

He had, or he so believed, firmly implanted in her mind the fact that England has the greatest revenue ever known, when she learned, through a lecturer at her club, the figures of the national debt.

"John," she said, on her return, "didn't you tell me that England has the greatest revenue ever known?"

"Yes," he said.

"Then how is it," she said, keenly, "that we have such an enormous debt? Do we really owe that terrible sum?" She named it with great deliberation and awe.

He admitted that the figures were correct.

"Well, if that is so," his wife said, firmly, "I will never again admit abroad that I am an Englishwoman. I could not travel in comfort known as one of a nation so shamefully indebted."—Youth's Companion.

Reward for Kind Act.

Seven thousand dollars left to him by a man whom he had lost all track of for nearly 40 years has come to Rev. Richard B. Dilworth of Oxford, Pa., as a result of kind acts done long ago. At that time Mr. Dilworth was a missionary to the Indians and the testator was a struggling ranchman. He was desirous of an education, and Mr. Dilworth helped him with his studies. The two men drifted apart, and Mr. Dilworth heard nothing whatever of him until he was notified that he had been left a beneficiary in his will.

The testator did not know his whereabout, and the bequest was made simply to R. B. Dilworth, so detectives have been searching for him for several months.

CLING TO ANCIENT BELIEFS

French Peasants Maintain Strong Faith in Cures by Means of Devout Faith.

They have an odd way of curing headaches near Billers in France. The sufferer pricks his or her forehead with a needle until blood flows, then with the same needle he or she pricks a certain cross that was erected in 1874 near the village. By this means it is believed that the headache is made to "enter the wood," where it will remain for at least a fortnight.

This cure, says the Wide World Magazine, is attributed to the intervention of the Virgin Mary, who is said to have appeared in the above-mentioned year where the cross is erected with a promise that she would perform miracles "to prove her descent at that spot."

Adjoining the cross for curing headaches is another that is reputed to be of great service in the cure of diseases of the scalp. All that the sufferers need do is to come and grey there, leaving their bonnets or caps behind them, attached to a forked branch stuck in the earth.

The inhabitants of Billiers have other superstitions. They put a large cross in whitewash over the doors of their cottages so as to protect them against lightning; they stretch cords over their huge iron stew pots and sit watching them for hours to see if they are vibrated by some unseen power, vibration being a sure sign that those who take part in the experiment are to be happy for the remainder of the year, and on the fishwomen receiving the first proceeds of a sale they fall down on their knees to make the sign of the cross, which will insure a profitable day's work.

Municipal Ownership in Leeds.

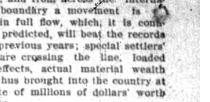
In the last 11 years, according to officially reported returns, the city of Leeds, England, has earned a profit of $5,605,000 from its municipally owned tramways, water-works, gas works and electric light plant.

WESTERN CANADA'S HAPPY PROSPECTS.

In no year since the development of Western Canada began has spring brought a brighter outlook than it brings this year. In no preceding spring has there been greater assurance of advancing development and prosperity. The movement of immigration has already assumed large proportions, and is as desirable in character as it is satisfactory in volume; from across the Atlantic sturdy, industrious and thrifty newcomers are arriving in large numbers, homeseekers from Ontario and the other older Provinces are coming in a steady stream, and from across the international boundary a movement is already in full flow, which, it is confidently predicted, will beat the records of all previous years; special settlers' trains are crossing the line, loaded with effects, actual material wealth being thus brought into the country at the rate of millions of dollars' worth monthly.

The movement is so unprecedented by large (for extra Dominion Immigration officials have had to be provided at both North Portal and at Emerson, and it is estimated that the total number of new settlers from the United States this year will be 70,000, at least, and may run well up toward 100,000. Last year's total of new settlers from the South was 53,723; thus the area that will be placed in wheat and other grains this year will greatly exceed that of last year. Settlers are making extraordinary efforts to get on their lands and begin seeding operations. The price of wheat now, away above the dollar mark, is incentive enough, and when one has in view the splendid results that the past few years have shown, it is not to be wondered at that the present will be the banner year for Immigration to Canada. Ask your nearest Canadian Government Agent for rates of transportation, and he will also send you illustrated pamphlets.

A FACER.



He—You have looked on my face for the last time!

She—Why? Are you going to grow a beard?

CURED ITCHING HUMOR.

Big, Painful Swellings Broke and Did Not Heal—Suffered 3 Years.

Tortures Yield to Cuticura.

"Little black swellings were scattered over my face and neck and they would leave little black scars that would itch so I couldn't keep from scratching them. Larger swellings would appear and my clothes would stick to the sores. I went to a doctor, but the trouble only got worse. By this time it was all over my arms and the upper part of my body in swellings as large as a dollar. It was so painful that I could not bear to lie on my back. The second doctor stopped the swellings, but when they broke the places would not heal. I bought a set of the Cuticura Remedies and in less than a week some of the places were nearly well. I continued until I had used three sets, and now I am sound and well. The disease lasted three years. O. L. Wilson, Puryear, Tenn., Feb. 8, 1908."

Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Props., Boston.

Uncle Jim's Treachery.

"Pa, is it true that the good always die young?"

"Oh, no, not always. I was a very good little boy."

"Didn't you ever disobey your parents?"

"No."

"Nor fight with your little brother?"

"No, I always was very kind to him."

"And didn't you ever tell lies or play hookey?"

"Certainly not."

"Nor steal jam nor cookies out of your mother's pantry?"

"Of course I never did such wicked things."

"Gee, what an imagination Uncle Jim must have. He was tellin' me, this morning, about when you and him were boys."

Don't Cough, But Live Long.

If every cough were cured before it got a strong hold, human life would be lengthened by many years. If every coughing sufferer knew that Kemp's Balsam would stop the cough in a few minutes, he would be glad to escape the serious consequences. If any medicine will cure a cough, Kemp's Balsam will do it. At druggists' and dealers', 25c.

His Daughter Played.

Wife—I can't understand, John, why you always sit on the piano-stool when we have company. Everybody knows you can't play a note.

Husband—I'm well aware of it, dear. Neither can any one else when I'm sitting there.

Important to Mothers.

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it

Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher.

In Use For Over 30 Years.

The Kind You Have Always Bought.

When Love is Young.

Mabel—Who was the best man at your wedding?

Ethel—Why, my husband, of course.

Red, Weak, Weary, Watery Eyes

Relieved by Murine Eye Remedy. Compounded by Experienced Physicians. Murine Doesn't Smart; Soothes Eye Pain. Write Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago, for Illustrated Eye Book. At Druggists.

Age and Experience.

Bacon: As we grow less young, the aged grow less old.

Garfield Tea has brought good health to thousands! Unequalled for constipation, liver and kidney diseases. Composed of Herbs. Buy from your druggist.

In one year the escapement wheel of a watch makes 731,860 revolutions.