SYNOPSIS.

"Vanishing Fleets," a story of "what might have happened," opens in Washington with the United States and Japan on the verge of 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 with military officers also leaves Washington on mysterious expedition 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 some 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 also sent to Canada to attempt to force his way through American lines with a message. British fleet departs amid misgivings of English. Fleet mysteriously disappears. Hillier makes a failure of effort to deliver message to the president. War between Great Britain and Germany is threatened. The kaiser disappears. King Edward of England is confronted by Admiral Bevins of the United States, and upon promising to present the missing British admiral, the monarch agrees to accompany Bevins on tour, which the latter says will uncover the agent of war and end all conflicts. The Dreadnaught, biggest of England's warships, is discovered at an impassable point in the Thames, much to the mystery of the kingdom. The story 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 produce. This overcomes friction when electrified and is to be applied to vessels to increase speed to over 50 miles an hour.

CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

The secretary of the navy, obeying a suggestion from the chair, read off a long list of figures, explaining them as he went, and concluding with an unqualified indorsement of the plan. So infectious was his blunt enthusiasm and confidence, that those who at first had hesitated at the irregularity of the procedure found themselves won over, and bound with complete unanimity into a coterie which was to assume responsibility for a war. And thus was the issue accepted.

The early hours of the morning were upon them as they dispersed, but Norma, resting back in the corner of the cab which conveyed her homeward, did not share the elation of her father, who was already building workshops, conducting new experiments and equipping a navy. Yesterday she had looked forward to confiding the story of their great success to Guy Hillier; for in the preceding month, when she and her father had been trembling on the very edge of a great discovery in unknown fields, she had given no intimation of their work or their prospects, planning this surprise, and now, by the rigid embargo of silence thrust upon her, her dream was dissipated. To her the production of the radioactive metal had meant a goal; but now that it was reached and she was anxious to satisfy a heart hunger, she had been given another task, and was to undergo more silence and repression and another siege of work in a world of figures, of test tubes and retorts, a slave to the lamp of science and her father's success. Not even the knowledge that she was sacrificing herself on the altar of duty to country, whose protection and welfare were bartens that she must share, palliated the bitterness of holding love aloof. And in this light the triumphs of invention seemed hollow and the night filled with dreariness.

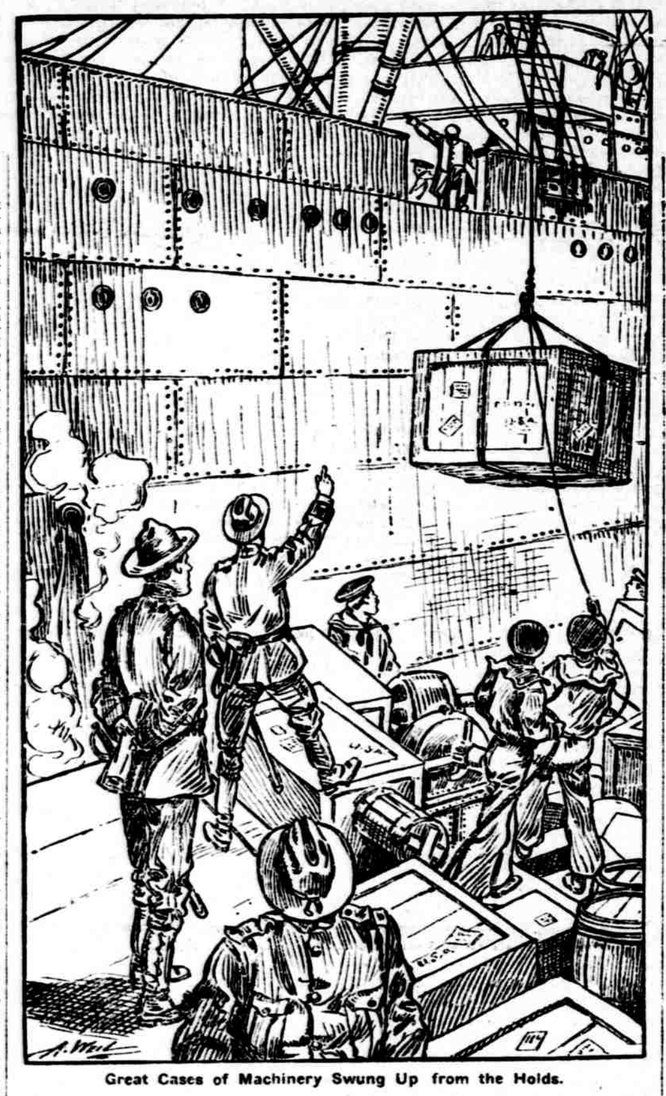
There were no more regular meetings of those who conspired for the national good; but it was a season of terrific activity, and February was yet young when there sailed away from New York harbor one night a gunboat, a collier and a small transport, whose destinations were unknown, and which slipped their moorings in silence and passed down the bay with scarcely a sound to announce their departure.

On board the gunboat were men accustomed to unquestioning obedience, and on the transport was a little army of skilled mechanics and engineers who had been called from their usual occupation by imperative orders and requested to tell none but their families that they might be absent for several months. There was not a man aboard any of the craft who had not taken a pledge of absolute secrecy.

The collier, black and massive, was loaded almost beyond her carrying capacity, and even on her decks were piled lumber and great sheets of corrugated iron, bearing evidence of full holds below. And all this cargo had the history of rushed work behind it. Strange pieces of machinery, sections of engines, powerful dynamos, and unheard of apparatus were stowed away with cases of chemicals, and the mines of the north, the west and the south had contributed crude metals or partially smelted ores to the assortment. Driven by expert minds and masters of executive work, an army of men in different walks of life had given their ingenuity and effort toward something of which they knew not, and then the result of their labors had poured out upon a wharf, been swallowed up by the cavernous holds of a collier, and were now being carried out into the broad reaches of the Atlantic, with destination unknown.

A general order had been issued and made public, that, inasmuch as the poaching of Cuban fishermen on American grounds round lower Florida and the keys demanded attention, the gunboat Penobscot had been detailed to patrol those waters. In the United States this attracted no attention; but the swarthy fishermen of the tropics took warning and no longer steered their smacks to the forbidden waters, shrugging their shoulders in impotent wrath.

Rumor had it that the transport was carrying mechanics and laborers to the Philippines, where a new drydock was to be constructed, and the collier was generally supposed by men of the waterfront to be laden with materials for this work. And so, despite the momentous significance of the sailing of these three ships, the world remained in ignorance, paid little heed, or forgot.


Great Cases of Machinery Swung Up from the Holds.

Those voyagers who were in the secret looked forward with eagerness to the task before them, realizing to the full that on them depended much. And of these was Norma, who leaned over the stern rail of the Penobscot as it dropped down the harbor, watched the lights of the city grow dim in the distance, saw the great, silent statue of liberty rear itself against the sky, and felt the first free swell lift and sway the deck beneath her feet. Her departure had not been pleasant.

There on the land behind was the man whom she seemed doomed forever to hold at arm's length. She had parted from him with the announcement that her father was compelled to go south for a time, and had insisted on her accompanying him. For how long? Ah, that could be but conjecture; perhaps for two or three months. Was he ill? No, not exactly; but he was going away and needed her. Yes, she would write occasionally from Miami, Fla.; but not often, because her charge would demand her time. And so, answering and evading, filled with yearning, and yet debarred from giving confidence, she had bidden him good-by and come to this: Sailing away in the night with all the furtiveness and mystery which enshrouded pirate ships of old bent on plunder and ravine.

The days of the voyage were much alike; filled with work. Down in the cabins the engineers and machinists drew hasty plans of buildings, then marked spots where machines were to have floor space, drew diagrams for transmission of power, and consulted charts showing the depths of water round their prospective shipyard. They had not even time to watch the devious course in and out among the islands which marked their entry to the scene of toil. When the pulsations of the screw stopped and the ship ceased her vibrations, they were still at their several tasks, and were disturbed when the anchor chains went rumbling through their hawser pipes.

Like an army of ants, drilled and acclimated, they swarmed out upon the land, the sappers clearing the way, the carpenters donning their aprons and grasping their tools while piles of lumber, kegs of bolts and nails, and mountains of iron sheathing accumulated upon the beach. And then, as the ringing of a multitude of hammers and the steady biting song of the saws filled the air with sounds of industry, great cases of machinery swung up from the holds, floated dizzily to the bulwarks, and went slowly down to the lighters. A city of tents sprang up as by necromancy, with gutters to carry off the rains, and sewers to prevent disease. Camp surgeons accustomed to sanitation superintended these outposts, paying as much attention to the spreading of a mosquito net to keep away the dread stygomia, as to tautening the canvas roofs and clearing the grounds.

All available means of a resourceful nation had been gathered together as an expert driver seizes the reins of a four-in-hand and guides his horses along a known road to a given destination, and all with the regularity which would distinguish the work had it been the most unimportant action of every day industry.

Norma, having no part in this task of construction, wandered idly up and down the decks or round the clearing throughout the day; and as she watched she saw the birth of a miniature city, saw the heaps of material on the beach dissipated, saw tall steel smoke stacks poke their summits upward supported by spider-like cables, saw shining, corrugated roofs spread themselves protectingly over floors whereon machinery was already being placed, and wondered at the accomplishment.

The sun went down, losing itself among the keys and waters of the farther west, before a bugle gave a quick imperative summons and the toilers dropped their tools for the evening meal. Many of the officers, some of them grimy and stained with work, their linen no longer immaculate, and their hair unkempt, came aboard the gunboat for dinner. They ate hurriedly like men in the field, and one by one, with scant apology to their fellow diners, disappeared. Norma was almost the last to leave the cabin and appear on deck, which to her surprise was vacant. Even as she glanced along its deserted length there came a whistle from the shore.

Darkness had descended abruptly and piled its blackness over the islands and the seas of the tropics. The palm trees and shrubbery out to the west were silhouetted against the last faint light of day, and from the swamps of the island came the cries of night fowl, the whir and chirruping noise of insect life, and the monotonous croaking of frogs. Swinging here and there in erratic circles, like fairies of the jungle carrying lighted lanterns, went the fireflies on aimless journeyings, not a few but many thousands of them, as if in a wild dance of curiosity, looking through the night to learn what manner of things these were that had come upon them so suddenly, ripped away their forests and built strange mansions in their solitudes.

It was not this, however, that chained her attention. High up over this mushroom city where all had been silent and darkening when she went below, now gleamed myriad lights strung as by a genii of the lamp while others rested from their toil. White, flaring streaks of brilliance thrust spearlike rays into the gloom, illuminating below them the creation of a day. From the distance came the steady hum of steam driven dynamos, telling with monotonous insistence that there would be no cessation until the last spike was driven, the last machine set and the last belting hung. Into this spot of the night began to come black figures answering the call of the siren. On a sudden, as if by preconcerted signal, the echoes again awoke to the clang of hammers on steel and the hum of voices in command. Like weird pygmies doomed to twist their thews in never-ending effort, she saw them resume their uncompleted task, exerting themselves unceasingly for its accomplishment.

A launch which had come alongside on some errand was sputtering spasmodically at the foot of the ladder below as if impatient to be off. She boarded it, and in a few minutes a smart young naval officer stepped into the stern, gave a curt order, and they raced away toward the shore.

"Ah, good evening, Miss Roberts," he said, suddenly spying her. "Looking for your father, who went ashore awhile ago, I presume? I'm going right in his direction, and will be glad to guide you." He seemed too busy for further conversation, and almost before the boat had come to a stop sprang to the shingle and offered his hand.

Through steadily working groups of men, past unfinished buildings, and over lighted floors where machinists wrought with levers and wrenches, they went to the far side of the camp. Here were officers with coats cast off and sleeves rolled up, and laborers in overalls intent on setting a huge blast furnace; and in the very heart of this activity, besmirched with dirt, his hat discarded and his shirt thrown open, she found her father. Not even he with all his weight of years could resist this terrific call of energy. She stood and watched for a few minutes while he, the master spirit of the group, directed the work. It seemed to have passed its critical point, and after some final instructions to the engineer in charge he straightened up and looked round.

"Hello, here's the assistant," he said, walking toward her and looking fondly into her eyes. She besought him to rest, and her appeals were seconded by those of the officers who feared for the physical strength of this man on whom so much depended, and who would have guarded him as a precious jewel of untold worth. He protested at first, and then, like one waking from a dream and suddenly conscious of a great weariness, made no objection when the rear admiral, who now looked like a workman, put his hat upon his head and tendered him his coat. He permitted them to throw it over his shoulders, and finally, with a look of infinite satisfaction at the growing structure before him, took his daughter's arm and tramped away. He was an old man again, yielding the tribute of age to the toil of youth.

They boarded the boat and sought their cabins; but even as they retired there came to them through the open portholes, like a lullaby, the sounds of unremitting labor intermingled with the lap of waves on the coral beach. The first creative step toward a national victory and supremacy had been taken in a day, even while the war cloud across western seas was gathering strength for its overcast; and, waiting, wondering, and expectant, the world was unaware.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Happy Despite Their Poverty

Residents of Sunny Naples Seem Never to Repine.

It is estimated that a quarter of a million people in Naples live from hand to mouth, and there are hundreds of children who subsist out of the garbage boxes, and who sleep in churches and on doorsteps.

The taxes in Italy to provide warships and to keep the nation on a war footing with the other powers are really stupendous. There is a tax on everything, says the Delineator—grain in the field, fruit on the vine, old bottles. Fuel and foodstuffs are very dear—only labor is cheap. For the very poor, meat is a luxury unheard of and even macaroni is too dear to be indulged in often. There are any number of perambulating street kitchens, where various kinds of soup, cakes and fruits are sold in portions costing one cent. And yet these people seem very happy. Bands of musicians are always playing in the streets; the guitar and the mandolin are to be heard everywhere—on the boats, in the hotels—and the stranger is lulled to sleep by a soft serenade under his balcony.

The story teller thrives in Naples, as there are so many idlers there. He collects a little crowd around him and proceeds in the most dramatic way, gesticulating wildly and working his face into the most excruciating expressions, to relate stories of adventure or other events, much to the edification of his hearers, who, to show their appreciation, are often betrayed into giving a sou which might have been better spent for bread or polenta.

The public letter writer is another street dignitary of importance, and in great demand, especially with timid and buxom maids of all work, who have themselves neglected to learn the art of writing. Of such the public letter writer holds all the secrets of their loves and is often their adviser as well as amanuensis.

Discoveries in the Air.

The growth of ballooning has led to many curious investigations touching the atmosphere and its inhabitants. By the use of anchored balloons with self-registering instruments some of the experiments of deep-sea sounding have been repeated aloft. At Strasburg sounding balloons have been sent to a height of nearly 26,000 yards, and 19,000 yards to 20,000 yards is not an uncommon height. One of the astonishing things said to have resulted is the discovery at a height of 14,000 yards of an isothermal zone in which, contrary to experience up to that height, temperature does not diminish with recession from the earth.

BUSINESS FIRST.

"Here is a little present for you—a superb $5,000 necklace—"

"Oh! How nice of you!"

"—that I will let you have for $1,000."

The Vicar's Watch.

A joke unconsciously perpetrated by the vicar of St. John's, Keswick, ought to rank high in the annals of pulpit humor. Before the service started the vicar was handed a lady's watch which had been found in the churchyard. After making the customary announcements, says the North Mail, he referred to the finding of the watch, which, he stated, was in the vestry awaiting an owner, and then solemnly said: "Hymn No. 110: 'Lord, her watch thy church is keeping.'"—Christian Register.

How's This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.

We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry out any obligations made by his firm.

WALDING, KINNAN & MARVIN, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Price 75 cents per bottle. Sold by all Druggists.

Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

Playing 'Possum.

"How do yoah 'possum taste, suh?" asked the solicitous waiter.

"Well," responded the patron who had ordered the article, "it tastes pretty good, but it isn't 'possum."

"No, suh," rejoined the waiter; "an' dat's a sign it's genuine. De genuine 'possum is a great pretender, suh; yas, suh."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Safe and Sure.

Among the medicines that are recommended and endorsed by physicians and nurses is Kemp's Balsam, the best cough cure. For many years it has been regarded by doctors as the medicine most likely to cure coughs, and it has a strong hold on the esteem of all well-informed people. When Kemp's Balsam cannot cure a cough we shall be at a loss to know what will. At druggists' and dealers', 25c.

The Elopers.

"Did you telegraph your father?"

"Yes and got his answer."

"What is it?"

"I asked him if he would forgive us if we came back and he said the only condition on which he would forgive us would be that we shouldn't come back."—Houston Post.

With a smooth iron and Defiance Starch, you can launder your shirtwaist just as well at home as the steam laundry can; it will have the proper stiffness and finish, there will be less wear and tear of the goods, and it will be a positive pleasure to use a Starch that does not stick to the iron.

Defined.

The Writer's Child—Pa, what is penury?

The Writer—Penury, my son, is the wages of the pen.

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.

Just the Thing.

"How is the little bootblack getting on whom you started?"

"He? Why, he's a shining success."

Your working power depends upon your health! Garfield Tea corrects disorders of liver, kidneys, stomach and bowels; overcomes constipation, purifies the blood—brings good health.

A good singer can always make women cry by singing "Home, Sweet Home." So many people long for a home, and so few have one.

Pettit's Eye Salve First Sold in 1807 100 years ago, sales increase yearly, wonderful remedy; cured millions weak eyes. All druggists or Howard Bros., Buffalo, N. Y.

Ambition makes a man feel that he could do something, if he only knew how.

PILES CURED IN 6 TO 14 DAYS. PAZO OINTMENT is guaranteed to cure any case of Itching, Blind, Bleeding or Protruding Piles in 6 to 14 days or money refunded. 50c.

A man talks about love as though he felt ashamed of the conversation.

Lewis' Single Binder costs more than other 5c cigars. Smokers know why. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

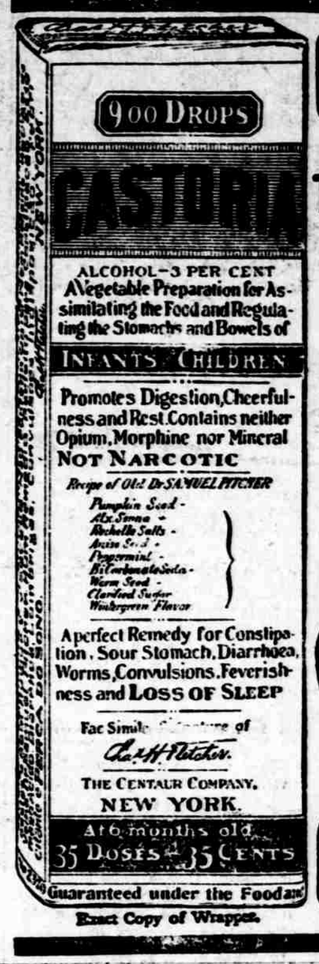
It's easy for a man's wife to dress well if his creditors can afford it.

Feet Ache—Use Allen's Foot-Ease Over 30,000 testimonials. Refuse imitations. Send for free trial package. A. S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

It takes a has-been a long time to find it out.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup. For children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

Love is not blind, but those whom it affects are.



Exact Copy of Wrapper.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

The Kind You Have Always Bought

Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher

In Use For Over Thirty Years

CASTORIA

THE CENTAUR COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY.

BIG COME DOWN IN PRICES

Famous Sure Hatch Incubators Will be sold CHEAP the next few weeks. Best machine in the world. Built for real business, and will make you money. Get into the business now and raise chickens while Poultry and Eggs are high priced. Send for big free book about our Incubator and the Poultry Business.

Sure Hatch Incubator Co., Box 173, Fremont, Neb.

SPOHN'S DISTEMPER CURE

For **DISTEMPER** Pink Eye, Epizootic Shipping Fever & Catarrhal Fever

Sure cure and positive preventive, no matter how horses of any age are infected or "exposed." Liquid, given on the tongue; acts on the Blood and Glands; expels the poisonous germs from the body. Cures Distemper in Dogs and Sheep and Cholera in Poultry. Largest selling live stock remedy. Cures La Grippe among human beings and is a fine Kidney remedy. 50c and $1 a bottle. Sold by druggists. Cut this out. Keep it. Show to your druggist, who will get it for you. Free booklet, "Distemper, Causes and Cures." Special agents wanted.

SPOHN MEDICAL CO., Chemists and Bacteriologists GOSHEN, IND., U. S. A.

HAMLINS WIZARD OIL THE OIL THAT PENETRATES GREAT FOR PAIN

SICK HEADACHE

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS.

Positively cured by these Little Pills.

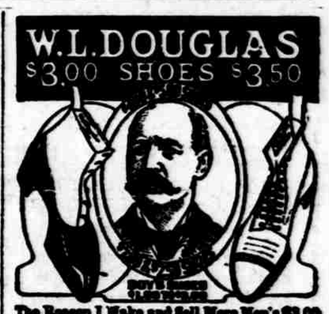
They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

SMALL PILL. SMALL DOSE. SMALL PRICE.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS. Genuine Must Bear Fac-Simile Signature Brent Good

REFUSE SUBSTITUTES.

W.L.DOUGLAS $3.00 SHOES $3.50



The Reason I Make and Sell More Men's $3.00 & $3.50 Shoes Than Any Other Manufacturer is because I give the wearer the benefit of the most complete organization of trained experts and skilled shoemen in the country.

The selection of the leathers for each part of the shoe, and every detail of the making in every department, is looked after by the best shoemaker in the shoe business.

If I could show you how carefully W. L. Douglas shoes are made, you would then understand why they hold their shape, fit better, and wear longer than any other make.

My Method of Tanning the Soles makes them More Flexible and Longer Wearing than any others.

Shoes for Every Member of the Family, Men, Boys, Women, Misses and Children.

For sale by shoe dealers everywhere.

CAUTION! Name and price stamped on bottom. Look for Name and price stamped on bottom. Best Color Eyelets Used Exclusively. Catalog mailed free.

W. L. DOUGLAS, 167 Spark St., Brockton, Mass.

Do You Feel Run Down?

If so, you are an easy victim of disease. You can avoid danger if you build up your system with the natural strength-giver—

DR. D. JAYNE'S TONIC VERMIFUGE

which helps your body do its own building up. It puts the whole digestive system in a perfect condition. Regulates the stomach, imparts new vigor and health to the tissues.

Your Druggist has it.

Two sizes, 50c and 35c

This Trade-mark Eliminates All Uncertainty in the purchase of paint materials. It is an absolute guarantee of purity and quality. For your own protection, see that it is on the side of every keg of white lead you buy.

NATIONAL LEAD COMPANY 1001 Trinity Building, New York

CONTRACTING SEED GROWERS

We wish to place contracts with reliable farmers for the growing of Cucumber, Melon, Squash and Pumpkin seed. Write for prices and information.

CHAUNCEY P. COY & SON EST. 1878 WATERLOO, NEB.

PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM Cleanses and beautifies the hair. Promotes a luxuriant growth. Never Fails to Restore Gray Hair to its Youthful Color. Cures scalp diseases & hair falling. 50c. and $1.00 at Druggists

Salts and Castor Oil

bad stuff—never cure, only makes bowels move because it irritates and sweats them, like poking finger in your eye. The best *Bowel Medicine is Cascarets.* Every Salts and Castor Oil user should get a box of CASCARETS and try them just once. You'll see. 834

Cascarets—10c box—week's treatment. All druggists. Biggest seller in the world—million boxes a month.

If afflicted with sore eyes, use Thompson's Eye Water

Registered U. S. Pat. Office

Ask for the Baker's Cocoa bearing this trade-mark. Don't be misled by imitations

The genuine sold everywhere