

SYNOPSIS.

"Vanishing Fleets," a story of "what might have happened," opens in Wash-ington 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 con-vinced that United States has powerful war agency. England decides to send a fleet to American waters as a Canadian protection against what the British sup-pose is a terrible submarine flotilla. Hillier is sent with a message. Fleet mys-teriously disappears. The kaiser is miss-ing. King Edward of England is con-fronted 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 new 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 produc-This overcomes friction when electrified and is to be applied to vessels to increase speed to over 50 miles an hour. A city for the manufacture of the mysterious discovery is built on the coast of Florida. Dr. Roberts' first attempt to electrify plates proves a failure. In a second effort Norma is knocked unconscious, but the mystery of true levitation is solved, making the most important discovery of centuries. Roberts evolves a great flying machine, rendering warships useless. The cabinet is taken for a visit and plans for a radioplane war against Japanese are started. The first radioplane is christened "Norma," in honor of the inventor's daughter. The start for the scene of conflict with a large fleet of monster airships is made with Norma in cotamand.

CHAPTER XVII.-Continued. And what a difference there was

between this fleet and those to which the men aboard were accustomed! On those battleships of the seas were magnificent forces of men trained to fight, which were numbered by thousands; but here each crew consisted of a bare half-dozen. In the hulls of those vessels of the sea strove a army, watching over and driving hage engines, and supplying them with steam; here were only one man and an assistant standing before levers, switches and buttons, which did their work instantaneously The cheer below had died away, and the supernatural or the unknown. and with no noise. In those destroyers of the waters throbbed mighty engines considered the modern triumph of speed; here was a craft that by a finger's pressure could almost run abreast the sun. Those ships bristled with mighty guns; here were no frowning muzzles or unwieldy turrets. Science was bringing an end to brute force, and the last battle against barbarism was at band.

For the first time since its birth the great plant was silent and idle and the men who had created it and by its means built this new fleet of the air were at rest. They had done all they could, and now gathered silently and homes, across mountain and plain. round the radioplanes, which stood in orderly array with portlike doors yawning wide to receive their crews. was steadily sailing to its doom. The "Fighting" Bevins stood by his flag- sword of a nation's vengeance was craft, the Norma, and looked at the cleaving the night skies in its deliverforce under his command. Captains ance of an overwhelming blow. who had handled hundreds of men and driven their great floating crafts of steel, and engineers who had learned new callings waited attentively for his last instructions.

The battle-scarred veteran addressed them in a voice that needed no high pitch to be audible to all his hearers. "Gentlemen," he said, "I have nothing more to say to you. You are going out to fight what will probably be the last great battle in history. You are active participants in the final chapter of international war. The time is approaching when our profession will be useless, and I for one shall gladly turn to ways of peace."

Norma, who had left the bedside of the sleeping inventor, joined the officers, and Bevins stopped and saluted her.

"With us," he continued, "is a girl who has laid all her talents on the alter of country, and is now prepared to jeopardize her life for victory. We can do no less. It may be that some of us will not return—the hazards of war can never be foreseen. You have been put in a strange position, and are even robbed of the sailor's right to send a last message to your homes; but that, too, has been for the country's good. To my personal knowledge you have all passed your lives in trying to do what was right, and have given the best that was in you to the flag. You will do no less now."

In the glare of the arc lights he took one last look at his comrades in arms, and then, as if once more at sea, loudly ordered: "Board ship, all!"

He uncovered and stood aside in an attitude of the greatest respect while Norma passed and entered the flagship bearing her name. With steady precision the other officers saluted, took possession of their radioplanes. and as the doors clanged shut behind gigantic objects unpictured in the lore and smiled with grim joy. By his side them a mighty cheer burst from those of flight. Onward it came until al- stood Norma, and not even he, trained outside. Before it had subsided the most above, when it stopped and ma- to strife and accustomed from early dynamos in the strange collection jestically hovered over them, and manhood to scenes of carnage, was leashed energy, and the unshuttered eyes of fire suddenly opened from pallid blue of those far-floating bodies eyes a sign of regret or weakness, and sleep.

red, white and blue, the night signal sumed their speed, and swept round in asking if all was ready. From the circles.



Then, as if answering the call of a air was riven by a mighty chorus from beneath. Mounting upward there penfervor, the cry of invincibility voiced in the majestic words of that death-

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where his grapes of wrath are stored: He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:

less song of battle:

His truth is marching on. Out to the west, over sleeping cities chasing the long set sun, they went to meet the fleet of an enemy which

### CHAPTER XVIII. The Battle.

It was in the long gray dawn of the summer morning, and the wide reach-

ing ocean, slate colored in the early light, seemed asleep in its quietude save where it was disturbed by movin fancied security, knowing that not on Pacific waters were there enemies capable of staying its progress, and insolently careless in superb strength, went the Japanese fleet. The huge flagship, the Ito, forced her way in advance, the apex of a great and formidable triange, whose sides were formed by other battle ships of scarcely less tonnage, graceful cruisers, and swift-moving destroyers, while bringing up the far rear were the colliers in whose hulls were carried fuel for the great armada.

Here was the Kashima, which could drive her 17,000 tons of steel through the water at 19 knots speed; the Kafast: the Asahi, the Mikasa, the Asama, them. the Tokiwa, and others which were dear to the heart and pride of Nippon - a gallant navy, carefully planned, well constructed, and of invincible size and strength. No squadron that breasted the waves might cause it to

In the stillness of the morning there came a sudden, sharp exclamation from the man on the lookout, an excited call to the bridge, and the quick and the wait and preparation were at step of an officer in answer to the sum- an end. The issue was in the lap of mons. Almost instantly he was fol- the gods. lowed by another, who brought with him a pair of powerful binoculars, through which he gazed in the direc- Bevins with his own hand had sigtion indicated by the sailor. There in naled his followers to reduce speed. the immeasurable void of the upper Now he stood at the transparent ports, air, so high above that it floated in heard the sudden booming alarm, witthe broader light, soared a covey of nessed the excitement on the decks, seemed to be watching and waiting at her questioningly, wondering ports stared out into the gloom like for some ray of broader light. The whether or no he should read in her rendered them almost indistinguish- turned from her with a glow of admi-From the Norma there shot up into able, save when now and then they the sky swiftly alternating streaks of swung broadside to in deploying, re-

other monsters came flashing answers | Puzzled and amazed, the officer of acquiescence. There was an in- handed the glasses to his companion stant's pause. The flagship gave a and watched his face attentively, as if slight upward shock and lifted slowly hoping to read from its expression into the air. Immediately behind in some solution of this mysterious visistately upward sweep followed anoth- tation from 'the immense unclouded er radioplane, and in quick succession, space above. The glasses were low- report of a gun, and a shell flew past stants and bringing relief to the weeplike gigantic birds of the night, they ered, and the two men with the super- at such close range that its screaming er. This is the way in which tears

Again they looked, and saw that the flying specks traveled with incredible baton swung by a god, the palpitant rapidity, and were apparently observing them, after which, as they watched, they saw them come to an etrated to them, quivering with terrific abrupt stop. It was enough. Whatever they were, their presence would be made known.

> The officers sprang to the alarms, and in an instant thunderous volleys bellowed out across the waters, awakening the other vessels. Shrill pipings, the staccato blare of bugles, and the sound of running feet told the story of excitement and that welldrilled crews were answering the cath in the light, had taken a swift down-The hour was early for the perfect use of flag signals; so from one warship to another flashed the searchlight warnings, and wireless operators in their cabins ticked frantic messages

to outlying members of the fleet to close in for action. Admirals and captains, who had fought successfully in other wars and counted their service as valuable adjuncts in any engagement, stood upon the bridges or the flanks of the great turrets and stared spellbound at this apparition which had come upon them in the night. There it was, a silent fleet of the air, sinister and menacing, lowering over them as if waiting opportunty or biding its time to strike. A sudden evolution brought one of

those terrible adversaries to the outer edge of the aerial formation, and through their glasses they saw thrown out to the winds of the morning, whipping and writhing, the flag of the nation they had come to conquer; the oldest banner in the world, and the one they had been taught through months of consideration to despise. Stars on a field of blue, fit emblem for warriors of the clouds! And then ere the air around was churned as by a dethe first flag had straightened out its mon's wrath. heavy folds, the colors fluttered from each birdlike craft, a challenge to battori, but little smaller and almost as the in which the odds were against

Aloft in that fleet of the air, where watched and waited for the appearance of the enemy, and when he was sighted far below in the murk of the dawn each man took his post without words; but the martial spirit which sends men to battle burned clear, and high. The supreme test was at hand.

The Norma had been the first to decry the oncoming fleet, and Fighting were humming and droning with un- ing prows. Steaming across its bosom more cool or determined. He looked cheering below ceased; but from the

> "Who is going to handle her?" he queried, glancing at the hood. "I am," she replied, as quietly as if answering a query of no moment.

He held out his hand and shook hers where the angle was not too sharp to of a slight local loss of blood, duiling prevent its elevation, came the sullen the nerve centers to pain for some intook flight in a great swinging circle stition of ages behind them turned to came to them through the thickness come to the aid of the suffering soul. until they reached a common altitude. each other with pallid faces, fearing of their plate and the open upper Paris Cosmos.

ports, sounding its challenge and de fiance above the droning hum of the dynamos. The girl glanced apprehensively upward, but the admiral continued his calm inspection of the Japanese fleet. Again from a vessel closer at hand

came a series of sharp reports. The radioplane felt a shivering impact, and careened slightly in answer to its force. The admiral was hurled against her metal side, and one of the engineers seized a rail to prevent being thrown headlong against the machinery.

"They're trying four-inch shells on us! are they?" shouted Bevins. "Well, we'll put an end to that right now!" He sprang to the signal box, and Norma, reading his intention, hurried to her post in the hood. He ordered the other craft to increase speed and traverse circles till he should notify them which war vessels of the fleet beneath were to be their individual prey. Now the small shells were fairly rending the air around them. The sharp clang of metal against metal and quick explosion told that hits were being made, and through the ports the radioplanes which suffered could be seen to rock convulsively when struck. The air seemed whining with death which was clamoring for admission to its prey. Shot and shell swept through space; but higher and higher soared the radioplanes, while the old war dog studied the formation of the fleet be-

"My God! Seventeen is hit! Seventeen is hit!" screamed the lookout, and the admiral and Norma stared hrough a side port.

In long, weird, dizzy circles, like a wounded man striving to recover his balance, a radioplane was dropping slowly down toward the waters, ineffectually fighting to regain its balance. The four-inch shells had done no damage; but the far outlying eruiser had made an accidental hit with a heavy gun. Zigzagging here and there in erratic swoops the radioplane continued to plunge. From the waters below came the sounds of exultant cheering. The enemy were gaining heart. They had found what they believed to be a chance for hope and an invulnerable spot in the American's armor. Norma started back to her levers; but the admiral called excitedly:

"Look, look! Good boy, Nineteen! Good boy!"

Again she looked through the port and was transfixed with the daring attempt of another radioplane. Nineteen, with its big white letters blazing ward shoot.

"It's Jenkins! It's Jenkins!" Norma called in excitement, knowing that the little scientist was manning the hood of that craft.

Then before she could say more. Nineteen's object was made plain. The great radioplane shot to a lower altitude than that of its crippled fellow. dove here and there like a bat, caught a simultaneous speed, and rounding upward in a deft swoop poised itself firmly beneath the lower plate of Seventeen. For an instant the two, locked together and overweighted, slid slowly downward through the air, and then Nineteen seemed to gather itself, came to a stop, hesitated for a moment, and began a steady upward movement.

As if divining its purpose, two other radioplanes swooped down toward the stricken monster till their sides touched, and then, like a group of warriors carrying a wounded comrade from the field, assisted the ascent into the upper void. Focusing their fire on the group, the Japanese made it a target, and the scream of shot and shell broke into a pandemonium until

Up-up they went till they were mere specks against the dome of the heavens, where they were beyond range and in the profound silence of solitude. The others of the fleet, led all was quiet, there was no sudden call by the Norma, hastened to soar toof excitement. For hours they had ward them; but before they could get within speaking distance the wireless brought to all radioplanes this message:

"Seventeen was struck by a ten-inch shell directly below her dynamos. The jar caused a temporary break which cut off the current for a short time. This is nearly repaired. No damage of consequence has been done, and she will report for duty within two minutes.

Bevins and Norma looked at each other with a great relief. "Thank God for that!" the admiral said, and it was echoed by his subordinate.

They turned again to the port, and as they did so they saw the specks above disintegrate, and in a few moments Seventeen, repaired, and again capable, was in line of battle. The doomed battle ships and cruisers a continuous hail of ineffectual shots was fired, while the admiral of the aerial fleet, his plans formed, was calmly sending orders.

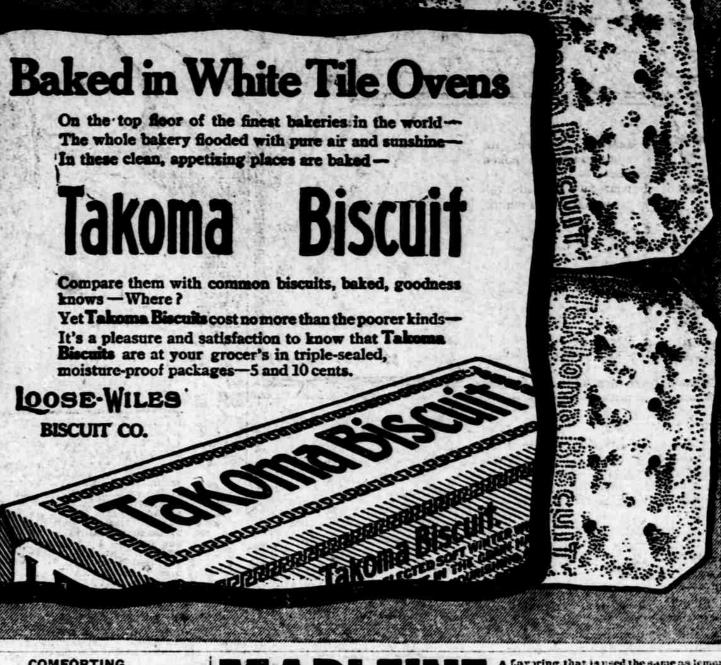
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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boast of his wonderful self-control.

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COMFORTING.



consulted me. I'm just the very man to-er-cure-vou.

Patient-Ah, that's lucky! You are quite familiar with my complaint, then?

Doctor-Familiar? My dear sir, I've had it myself-er-this 20 years!

Deafness Cannot Be Cured by local applications, as they cannot reach the dis-eased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Fustachian Tube. When this tube is inflamed you have a rumbling sound or im-periect hearing, and when it is entirely closed, Deaf-ness is the result, and unless the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal conditaken out and this time resource to his northest consistent on, hearing will be destroyed forever; nine cases out of ten are caused by Catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces.

We will give One Hundred Dollars for any case of Deafness (caused by catarrh) that cannot be cured by Hali's Catarrh Cure. Send for circulars, free.

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picked up the receiver and shouted: "Hello, who's there?" The answer came back: "I'm 105." "Go on," said the boy. "It's time

you were dead."

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Strain, incident to the average School
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Remedy Co., Chicago, Will Send You Interesting Eye Books Free. Eyes Are Relieved By Murine

Too Wise. "Will you take a chance on kissing pretty girl?" asked the young lady with the raffle tickets at the church fair. The crusty and confirmed bachelor held up his hands in horror. "What, me.!" he gasped. "No, indeed, I don't take any such chances as those. Chap took a chance like that one time and six months later he married the young lady."

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The Tally. "What are those notches in your gun?" asked the flirt, who was visiting the ranch.

"They represent men," replied Cactus Sim, "who thought they wuz smarter than I wuz." "A good idea! I'll have to notch my parasol handle."

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"You are consuming a great deal of valuable time with your tariff argument." "Yes," answered Senator Sorghum. "I find satisfaction in trying to demon-

Seeking to Be a Comforter.

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Spohn Medical Co., Chemists and Bacteriologists, Goshen, Ind., U.S.A. W. N. U., OMAHA, NO. 19-1909.

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"Ah! What a rich chord! Isn't it, dear?"

"Er-ah-yes-how much would you say it's worth?" he murmured.

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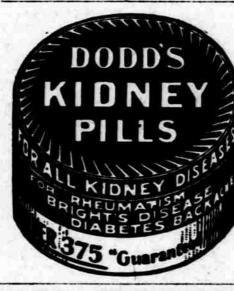
He that hires one garden will eat birds; he that hires many gardens, the birds will eat him.

Lewis' Single Binder straight 5c. You pay 10c for cigars not so good. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

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Mrs. Window's Soothing Syrup. lidren tecthing, softens the gums, reduce tion, allays pain, cures wind coile. Ec a be

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Positively cured by these Little Pills.

They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect rem-edy for Dizziness, Nau-sea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Conted Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

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and often leads to hasty disease and death when neglected. There are many ways to treat a cold, but there is only one right way-use the right remedy.

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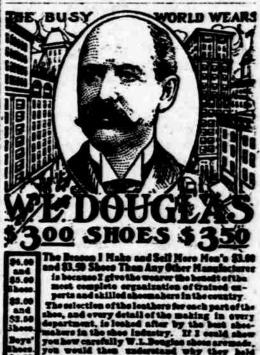
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