A Flying March.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

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PART I.

One day Prof. Van Wagener and I were walking together on our way to the postoffice, when we met a regiment of infantry. Of course we stopped to look at them, for I don't suppose there is a man living who doesn't like to look at soldiers. Even a regiment of counter-jumpers, dressed in a ridiculous uniform, and playing at soldiers, interests me, and as for this particular regiment, it was one of the best in the federal army, and that's saying a good deal. The professor looked at the men in the critical sort of way that everybody puts on in such circumstances, and presently he said: "Colonel, isn't it your opinion that a regiment that could march two hundred miles a day would be much more efficient than one that could only march twenty miles?"

"All other things being equal, it certainly would," I replied; "but the soldier who can march a hundred miles a day, not to speak of two hundred, isn't born yet."

"I think you are mistaken, colonel!" said he. "It's my idea that by the use of proper means it can be made just as easy to march at the rate of twenty miles an hour as it is now to march at the rate of four miles an hour."

"There you are again!" said I. "You're thinking of some invention that is going to revolutionize the art of warfare! My dear professor! You've been revolutionizing warfare ever since I knew you, but I haven't noticed that it has been revolutionized to any great extent."

Well! nothing more was said on the subject at that time, but about a month later Van Wagener came over to my house one morning with a big basketful of machinery and chemicals on his arm and asked me to lend him the use of my backyard for an hour or two, while he revolutionized the art of warfare. Of course, I told him he could do anything in my backyard that he might want to do, provided he didn't do it with dynamite or any other explosive, and he assured me that this time there was nothing in the slightest degree dangerous in what he meant to do.

"I will explain the whole matter to you," he said, sitting down on a bench in my back yard, and wiping his forehead with a cloth stained with chemicals, for the basket was heavy, and the day was hot. "You remember we were speaking the other day about the marching abilities of infantry regiments. Now, let me ask you what it is that makes it hard to work for a soldier to march, or for any man to walk. Isn't it the force of gravitation, which holds him down to the ground, and prevents him from lifting his foot except by a muscular effort?"

"I suppose it is," said I.

"Very good," said Van Wagner. "Now if you could reduce the force of gravitation one-half, or, say, two-thirds it would be just that much easier for a man to walk than it is in existing circumstances, wouldn't it?"

"I admit it," said I. For it was always necessary to admit Van Wagner's premises, provided you wanted to carry on a conversation with him.

"You are really an intedlligent man, colonel!" said he, "although at times you are rather slow to perceive the merits of any valuable invention. As I was saying, the thing to do if you want to make walking or marching easier, is to reduce the force of gravitation. Now, this is what I propose to do in the case of every individual soldier. Why no one has hit on the same idea long ago is something I can't understand. But that's the way with most inventors. They never see what is directly before their eyes, but always look for something that is miles away."

As this was what I had said hundreds of times to Van Wagener about his own inventions, I began to think that he wasn't as utterly unteachable as a scientific man generally is.

"Please to look at my shirt for a moment," continued the professor. "As you see, it is made of very thin cloth coated with a coating of india rubber. Also, you will perceive that it is made of two thicknesses of rubber cloth, joined together at the neck and the waist, and that just where the collar buttons would ordinarily come at the back of my neck, is a small valve. Now this shirt will hold as many cubic feet of hydrogen gas as would be sufficient to lift a man of my weight, together with eighty pounds of arms and accoutrements."

"Don't you find the rubber shirt rather warm?" I asked.

"It is a little warm," he replied, "but I can easily overcome that. Besides, the warmth of the shirt has nothing to do with the question. The fact on which I wish you to fix your mind is that by filling this shirt with hydrogen, I overcome the effect of gravitation. That is to say, I make myself as light as air."

"Then you mean a soldier shall fly instead of march?" I said.

"Not at all," said Van Wagener. "I simply propose to make him so light that he will be able to take steps thirty or forty feet long, and to jump over hedges and streams with perfect ease."

I wanted to remind the professor of a jumping machine that he had once in-

"THIS," SAID HE, "IS THE GENERATOR."

vented, and that had nearly killed him when he tred to use it, but I kept quiet.

"Now," said my friend, taking off his coat and waistcoat, and wiping off his perspiration that was streaming down his face, "I will proceed to give you a practical illustration of the value of my invention. This is the first time I have actually experimented with it, but I have absolute confidence in its practicability."

With that Van Wagener opened his basket, and took out a sort of tin knapsack with a rubber tube attached to it. "This," said he, is the generator. I fasten this on my back, and you will understand that if I were a soldier I should carry it outside my knapsack. I connect this tube with the shirt-valve, and turn this little stop-cock. The moment the stop-cock is turned the gas begins to generate and flows through the tube into the shirt. When I have gas enough to reduce my weight one-half, I shut off the supply and march on my way, taking steps twenty feet long, and feeling almost as light as a bird. But first, I must fasten these leaden soles to my boots, so that I can be sure of preserving an upright attitude. You see, I shall be in just the same condition as a diver, the weight of whose body is reduced as he sinks in the water. He s obliged to wear shoes weighted with lead, for without them he might go down head first."

Van Wagener carefully tied his lead soles to his feet, and then he buckled the generator on his back, and tried to turn the stop-cock of which he had spoken. He had so much difficulty in finding it that he asked me to turn it for him, which, of course, I did.

Presently the gas began to hiss as it was generated, and the professor began to swell as his shirt gradually filled. When it was apparently about half full he asked me to turn off the gas, and then he started to walk across my back yard. There is no denying that the Wagener went across that yard taking steps that were about ten feet long and bounding gently into the air every time his feet touched the ground. Still, his walk was to all appearance the drunkenest walk that has ever been seen

MOSTLY AT AN ANGLE OF FIFTY DEGREES WITH THE GROUND.

since the days when Noah made his great invention of drunkeness. The professor's body was swinging forwards and backwards and sideways, and was mostly at an angle of, say, fifty degrees with the ground. It was clear that if it hadn't been for the lead soles fastened to his boots, he would have done a good deal of walking on his head. I followed pretty close after him, and he evidently enjoyed himself immensely, for he kept calling out to me to notice how light he was, and demanded to know whether he hadn't knocked gravitation endways with his gas machine. Even when he came down with both feet in a briar bush, and stuck there until I pulled him out by main force, leaving a large proportion of his trousers in the bush, he never lost his spirits. He had walked twice around the yard when a little accident happened which interrupted his experiment. He came down with both feet on one cat's tail. Now Tommie was one of the best-tempered cats I ever knew, that is to say so long as you treated him with proper respect. He was also the champion cat-fighter of New Berlinopolisville, and there wasn't hardly a night that he didn't have a match with some rival cat, and, as a rule, he won it in two, or at the most three rounds. He was lyng asleep under a small rose bush when the professor came down on his ail, and it irritated him, as was only natural. I should have been irritated myself if I had been in his place. Being mad all over, Tommie frees his mind with a few remarks, and then he makes a jump for the professor's shoulder, where he stopped long enough to give him a couple of good one on the cheek that drew the blood, and then he went over the fence in search of a quiet spot where he coud make repairs to his tail. He came up to the professor to sympathize with him while he was wiping the blood from his face, but he sang out to me not to bring my cigar anywhere near him, for the gas was leaking, and an explosion might be brought about. I could see that hs size was rapidly growing less, and in a little while the gas had all escaped through half a dozen holes that the cat's claws had made in the shirt, and the professor was able to walk like an ordinary Christian.

"I can't do anything more," said Van Wagener, "until I have mended the leaks in my shirt." And then he used a lot of scientific language about cats in general, which was excusable in the circumstances.

I said to him that Tommy was one of the leading cats of New Berlinopolisville, and was universally respected. As for his getting angry when a scientific man with leaden soles landed on his tail, that was only human, and he ought not to blame the cat for it.

"I don't blame him so much for getting angry," said Van Wagener, "as I do for not taking any interest in science. But that's just the way with a cat. Any cat would sooner spoil an experiment than not. A friend of mine who does a good deal of vivisecting tells me that he has more trouble with cats than with any other animals. However, the mischief's done now, and there's no use in saying anything more. "You'll admit, I think, that my experiment was a great success?"

"I'll admit," said I, "that any army in the world would run away from an enemy approaching in the same style as you circulated round my yard."

"Wait till I have had a little more experience," said the professor. "I did not have quite gas enough in my shirt, and my shoes were not quite heavy enough. When I find out the exact quantity of gas I ought to use, and the precise weight that needs to be attached to my feet, all that will be necessary will be practice. I venture to say, that with about three days of practice, I shall be able to walk at the rate of thirty miles an hour, with perfect steadiness, and without the least danger of accident. Tomorrow, at about this hour, I will come back here with my shirt repaired, and everything ready for a final and conclusive experiment. I hope you will have the goodness to lock up that abominable cat, for I can't promise to succeed in my experiment if that beast is on hand."

"All right," said I, "the cat shall be locked up. But I ask you what will happen when your army marches across country with their shirts inflated with gas? Cats are awfully common, and if the army treads on a cat's tail there'll be a panic that will be worse than a defeat."

Van Wagener didn't condescend to answer me, but he marched out of my yard with his basket on his arm, and a glow of triumph in his face, which struck me as being a little previous, in view of all the facts.

Well! the next day the professor turned up at the same hour in the very best of spirits.

PART II.

This time he had extra heavy lead weights to his feet, and when everything was ready, I turned on the supply of gas for him, until he judged that his weight had been reduced to about one-third of what it ordinarily was. Then he gave me the word to turn off the gas, and he started to walk across the yard. His walk was only a little drunker in appearance than it had been the day before, but he certainly did get over the ground at a tremendous rate. Every time his feet touched the earth he bounded about ten feet into the air, and came down again a good thirty feet from where he had started. He went the length of the yard, which was fully five hundred feet, in no time at all, and as he passed me on the way back, he was so exclted that he tried to clap his feet together, and to crow like a rooster. I don't say this was quite worthy of a respectable scientific man, but allowance must be made for an inventor who finds that his invention works. But the professor made the biggest mistake in his life when he tried to clap his feet together. In so doing, one of his lead soles, which had been tied on by the professor himself, with a sort of knot that was of no manner of use, dropped off, and Van Wagener went up into the air like a shot. I saw him trying to reach the stopcock that shut off the gas from his shirt, but he could not find it, and it would have done him no good if he had found it. What that shirt needed was some sort of safety valve for letting the gas escape in case of accident, but Van Wagener had omitted to furnish it with any such valve. Without his lead sole he was considerably lighter than the atmosphere, and consequently there was nothing to prevent him from going up. There was a gentle breeze from the southward, and as Van Wagener rose slowly and seemed to be drifting towards a thickly-built part of the town I was in hopes that he would be able to catch hold of some building and hold on till some one could come to his aid. He never said a word as he sailed upwards, but I'm ready to bet that he would have given a good deal if the cat could have jumped on him from the roof of the house and punctured his shirt. I sang out to him to keep cool, which is the easiest thing to say to a man who is in difficulties, but he simply smiled a resigned sort of smile, and disappeared behind the house.

I ran out of the front door and chased the professor, keeping my eye on him just as a sailor keeps his eye on a man who falls overboard, though there wasn't any chance of sending a lifeboat, or for that matter, a life-balloon, after him. He drifted along at an elevation of perhaps fifty feet, and presently I saw that he was heading directly for the Presbyterian church. The church itself was only about thirty feet high from the ground to the roof, but it had a steeple that was a good hundred feet in height, though it didn't look it. In fact it looked as if it was lower than the Baptist steeple, which was only eighty-five feet high, and the Presbyterians used to win no end of bets by inducing strangers to bet on the comparative height of the two steeples. However, that is neither here or there. Van Wagner drifted along amid the general enthusiasm of the inhabitants, who all rushed out of doors to see him, and imagined that he had contrived some new way of navigating the air, and was making a big success of it. Everybody said that this time the professor had made the greatest invention of the century, and that New Berlinopolisville would have a chance to put up a monument to him, after his death, that would attract thousands of visitors. I said nothing, for nothing that I could say would be of any help towards getting the professor down to the ground in safety, and I hadn't the heart to destroy the reputation that he had so suddenly and accidentally made.

By rare good luck, Van Wagner happened to hit the very top of the Presbyterian steeple, and caught hold of it and held on for all he was worth. There wasn't much to hold on to except the lightning rod, for, of course, there wasn't any cross there, and in the place where a cross ought to have been there was a big gilt pineapple which was too big to put one's arms around. I never could understand why a gilt pineapple was put there. I asked the head deacon about it one day, but he didn't condescend to answer me, and merely suggested that I had better study the Scriptures. Now, I've been in the habit of studying them ever since I was a boy, but I never remember coming across any allusion to pineapples. Some day I'm going to inquire into the thing and get a satisfactory answer. My own idea is that when the committete that was building the church came to deciding on a decoration for the top of the steeple, old Deacon White, who was an importer of pineapples and bananas and such, though he could advertise his business by putting a big gilt pineapple where nobody could fail to see it.

By the time I got alongside of the church there were about two thousand people, men, women and children there, waiting to see the professor fall, and speculating as to what extent he would be smashed by the time he should strike the ground. They were all in the best of spirits, as folks generally are when they are admitted free to some attractive show. Deacon White was the only exception; he disapproved strongly of Van Wagener's conduct, and said that it was little better than sacrilege. Of course, I knew that the professor was in no danger of falling down. What he wanted to do was to avoid falling up, whenever it should become necessary for him to let go his hold. I saw that the thing to do was to get a rope to him as soon as possible, calculating that he would have sense enough to know how to use it. The difficulty was how to get the rope to him, for the steeple was perfectly smooth on the outside, so that nobody could possibly climb it, and there was no ladder in the town that would reach half way up to the pineapple. Pretty soon I saw my way. I sent a man to get two hundred feet of stout line, and then I found a boy who was flying a kite, and bought out his whole stock for fifty cents. I used to be a middling good kite flyer when I was a boy, and it didn't take me very long to manuever that kite so that the string fell across Van Wagener's shoulder, and I saw him seize it with one hand. Then I bent the two hundred feet of line to the kitestring, and shook it as a signal to the professor to haul away. He did so, and in a little while he had one end of the line in his possession, and he cast the kite adrift, string and all.

Any man who wasn't a scientific person would have known that I expected Van Wagener to tie the line to his ankles, and let me pull him gently down. But the professor never thought of that. He tied the line fast to the lightning rod, and started to slide down it. Naturally, his inflated shirt made that impossible. We could see him hanging on to the line with both hands, and with his body swinging out at right angles, but in spite of all he could do he couldn't manage to climb down the line a single foot. The public got more excited than ever, and the betting on the professor's ultimate fate was lively. But after a time he came to the conclusion that he had made a mistake, and I was never more relieved in my life than when I saw him climb back to his perch on the pine-

THERE WASN'T MUCH TO HOLD ON TO BUT THE LIGHTNING ROD.

apple and begin to unfasten the line. He kept me on the anxious seat for the next ten minutes while he waited to rest, and then I was delighted to see him make the line fast to both his ankles. I hauled away on my end till the line was taut, and then Van Wagener let go his hold, and I began gently to gather him in. The crowd cheered when they saw what was going on, and though there was a good deal of wrangling about the bets, which some people claimed that I had interfered with by providing Van Wagener with the means of escape. Of course, there was something to be said in support of this view of the matter, for if it hadn't been for me the men who bet that Van Wagener would fall and kill himself must have won. However, the dispute was settled by arbitration, and Deacon White, the arbitrator, declared all bets off, in consequence of my interference, which, he added, was entirely justifiable in the circumstances. He wasn't a very sociable sort of a chap, but he was a perfectly square man in all business dealings, and the public had confidence in him.

It was a beautiful spectacle, the way in which the professor came down as I hauled in on the line. He kept perfectly erect, but he also kept slowly revolving on his axis, as you might say. His arms were stretched out at right angles to his body in order to steady himself a little, and the general effect of him was that of an angel without wings in the act of blessing the public. There was a sweet smile on his face when he came near enough for us to notice it, and his eyes were closed, probably because he

THE GENERAL EFFECT WAS THAT OF AN ANGEL WITHOUT WINGS.

felt a little dizzy, and that gave him a peaceful sort of look that aroused universal admiration. When he reached the ground, I got a good hold of him and slit his inflated shirt with my penknife. Then, when the gas had all escaped, I untied his legs, and, giving him my arm, for he was more or less weak with the excitement of his adventure, I took him home, followed by a cheering and enthusiastic crowd composed of all the leading citizens of the place, without distinction of creed or politics.

For my part I consider that Van Wagner's invention was a success, but, curiously enough, he never made any further experiments with it. You see he had got a pretty big scare when he was drifting over the town and clinging to the Presbyterian steeple, and the result was that he weakend, as you might say, on his invention. I never could get him to speak of it afterwards, and when I saw that it really troubled him to have me remind him of it, I dropped the subject. Now, that Van Wagner is dead, it is open to anyone to take up his invention and make a practical success of it. I shouldn't be at all surprised if Edison took it up some day, for he is a master hand at working out other people's ideas. Of course, I don't intend to meddle in the thing. The world is good enough for me as it stands and if I had my way ther wouldn't be anything fresh invented for the next hundred years.

(THE END.)

THE LATE KATE FIELD.

[From the Chicago Times-Herald. By the Courtesy of H. H. Kohlsaat.]

PSYCHIC PUZZLES.

Phenomena That Bewilder the Wisdom of Men---Human Efforts to Comprehend Their Meaning.

A person placed under the influence of ether sometimes cries out piteously during a surgical operation. An hour later, having entirely regained his senses, he declares that he was utterly oblivious to the occurrence and felt no pain whatever. A bookkeeper, troubled over his failure to balance his accounts rises in his sleep, goes to his office, straightens out the error and then returns home. On reaching his place of business next day he is as completely surprised at the discovery as any one else connected with the establishment. A man, falling from a ladder, receives a blow on the back of his head, and for six weeks cannot speak, fails to recognize his friends and shows a wonderful change in disposition although evidently as intelligent and conscious as ever. In short, he appears to be a different person. Then suddenly a violent headache, which has bothered him during the intervals, abates. He looks around like one awakened from sleep, and asks: "Where am I?" He has become himself again, and has no recollection of anything since he lost his footing on the ladder. A good subject, having been placed in a hypnotic trance, may be made to believe himself a greater actor than Irving, a finer singer than either of the De Rezskes, or a daintier verse writer than Shelley. The delusion is as complete as that of the worst lunatic in an asylum. But with a snap of the finger the hypnotizer can bring the fellow back to his normal condition.

These and many other unusual and puzzling cases resemble, in one respect at least, the more familiar experiences of sleep and dreams (such as perfectly healthy people may have) and of hysteria and insanity. They all suggest that human beings possess various faculties which may be active without their being aware of it. Hence, a few of the scientists who have studied the matter carefully have acquired the habit of distinguishing, in their talk, between the conscious and the unconscious self. They also call the latter the "sub-liminal" self, because as they say, it is the part of the mind which lies "below the threshold of consciousness." Whether this part of a person's nature is a unit or is subdivided into several personalities is a question on which leading psychologists still differ, but there is now a general disposition to concede the "subliminal" self great dimensions and more startling possibilities than would have been granted a few years ago

HYPERAESTHESIA.

A wonderful power of obtaining information by other than the ordinary methods of communication is among the gifts in which some of these cold-blooded, skeptical scientists evince faith. They do not believe that everyone possesse it. On the other hand, at present, they are inclined to limit it to a comparatively small class. But evidence on this point is inadequate. The matter is still under investigation. It is suggested on the one hand that in many, if not all, instances there is only an exercise of usual sensibilities exceptionally sharpened. That sort of perception is called "hyperaestehesia." But some of the facts are thought to point, on the other hand, to the existence of a distinct faculty, still in rudimentary state, perhaps, and found only here and there; as if evolution were about to add still further the equipment of man's higher nature. However this may be, a dilligent hunt has been made for years after stories of telepathy, mind-reading, second sight, clairvoyance, crystal vision and so on, by the Society for Psychical Research, and great pains have been taken to obtain corroboration if possible

One of the most experienced and indefatigable workers in that organization, Frederic W. H. Meyers, embodies scores of these narratives in a paper printed in the last report of the proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research. A few are selected for reproduction here to illustrate some of the supposed workings of the mysterious faculty in qusetion.

QUEER INSTANCES.

D. J. Parsons, a physician in Sweet Springs, Mo., says he discovered years ago that he was able to see things mentally which had happened many miles away and years before. He wrote in 1891: "While in company with Dr. Trotter, of Lexington, Mo., I could see before and near to him a delicate hand, on which was a dark red kid glove. The hand was all the time in motion. I called his attention to it, and he was much surprised. I told him the hand had a history, and if he had no objection I would be pleased to know it. He said: "I was traveling in Canada on the cars, and one day we ran up to a train that had been wrecked, and about the first thing that I saw was a young lady lying upon the ground dead. One hand was naked and one was covered with a dark red kid glove.' Instantly upon his uttering the words the dark red kid glove and the hand had vanished."

Subsequently the Dr. Trotter here mentioned sent a full account of the accident and the conversation with Dr. Parsons to an officer of the Psychical Research in reply to inquiries. He corroborated the foregoing story fully, adding that the gloved hand made a strong impression on him, "which has remained to this day, about 40 years." He was astonished at Dr. Pearson's remark to him nearly 30 years after the event, and even yet cannot understand how that person should have broached the subject, inasmuch as Dr. Trotter had never, to his knowledge, mentioned the sight of the dead girl to a living soul.

OTHE EXAMPLES.

A well known member of the society for Psychiest Research in England, a woman who veils her identity from the general public by the name of "Miss X," has had many such experiences. For instance, on meeting for the first time a mature gentleman whom she had every reason to esteem highly, she perceived near him a vague but persistent image of a lad, wearing a terror-stricken aspect and holding his arm up in self-defense. Later she learned in boyhood at school, for some misbehavior, he was obliged to "run the gauntlet." Mr. Myers cited these two stories as suggesting the "adherence of phantasmal scenes to a living person."

A large group of incidents found in this collection occurred almost exactly at the same time when the "percipient" received a corresponding impression. Shipwrecks, more trifling accidents, the recovery of a lost dog and the position in which a watch that had been dropped in a hayfield a few hours before still lay were paralleled by visions, either in sleep or half-waking condition. Thus, on the morning of October 7, 1885, the wife of a Chicago man asked him, while they were both dressing and before either of them had left their sleeping room, if he had ever known a person named "Esdaile." He replied in the negative. Then she narrated a dream in which she saw a coffin on the lake shore so marked. Later in the day the man discovered in the morning paper of that date an account of the disappearance of William E. Esdaile, but with no theory as to his fate. After elaborate inquiry it seems to be established that this was the first public mention of the fact that he was missing. For several days the Chicago papers referred to the topic, but suggested that he was alive but insane, and would be found. The notion of suicide was scouted. On October 10 Esdaile's body was found. He had been drowned.

In the great majority of cases the vision came entirely unsought and unexpected. Sometimes it was the only experience of the kind which that particular person had had, and sometimes the seer was accustomed to receiving such impressions. Very often they related to people and things in which the "percipient" had not the slightest interest, and of which perhaps he had no previous knowledge.

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