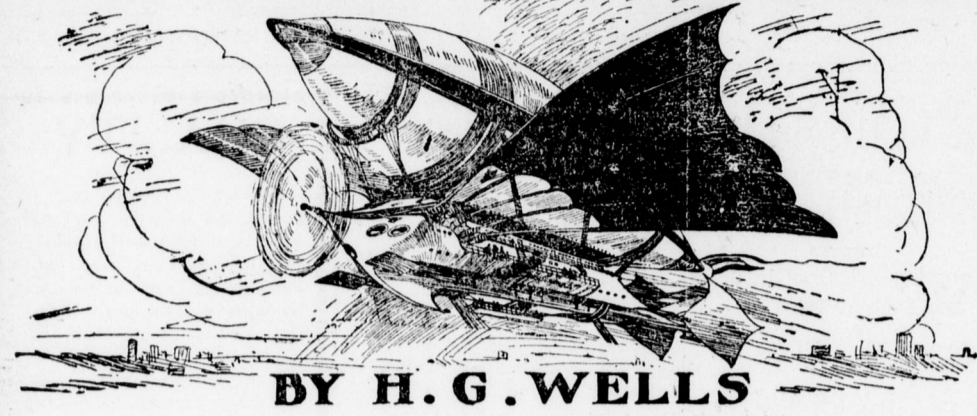


The War in the Air



BY H. G. WELLS

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PROLOGUE OF THE STORY.

Germany, hating the Monroe doctrine and ambitious for world's supremacy, secretly builds a vast fleet of airships and plans to surprise the United States by means of a sudden attack. Her airship fleet consists of great dirigibles of the Von Zeppelin type and small aeroplanes called Drachenflieger.

Prince Karl Albert commands the German airships. Germany and England have both been endeavoring to buy an extraordinary flying machine invented by Alfred Butteridge, who arrives at a British seaside resort in a runaway balloon, accompanied by a lady in whom he is interested.

Bert Smallways, a motorcycle dealer in hard luck, who is in love with Miss Edna Bunthorne, and his partner, Grubb, are impersonating a pair of "desert dervishes" at the seashore. Bert catches hold of the basket of the balloon and falls into it just as Butteridge and the lady fall out.

The balloon carries Bert across the North sea. He finds drawings of Butteridge's airship in some of Butteridge's clothing and hides the plans in his chest protector. His balloon drifts over Germany's immense aeronautic park. German soldiers shoot holes in it and capture Bert. They think he is Butteridge. Soldiers carry him to the cabin of the Vaterland, flagship of the air fleet. Lieutenant Kurt guards him. The vast fleet starts across the ocean to attack New York. Graf von Winterfeld denounces Bert as an impostor, but offers him £500 for Butteridge's secret. The prince agrees to take Bert along "as ballast." An American fleet of warships is destroyed by German warships and Germany's air fleet. A boy on the Vaterland is killed.

How War Came to New York.

OTHER voices at a lower, more respectful pitch replied. "Der prinz," said a voice, and all the men became stiffer and less natural. Down the passage appeared a group of figures, Lieutenant Kurt walking in front carrying a packet of papers.

He stopped point blank when he saw the thing in the recess, and his ruddy face went white. "So!" said he in surprise.

The prince was following him, talking over his shoulder to Von Winterfeld and the kapitan. "Eh?" he said to Kurt, stopping in midsentence, and following the gesture of Kurt's hand. He glared at the crumpled object in the recess and seemed to think for a moment.

He made a slight, careless gesture toward the boy's body and turned to the kapitan.

"Dispose of that," he said in German, and passed on, finishing his sentence to Von Winterfeld in the same cheerful tone in which it had been begun.

The deep impression of helplessly drowning men that Bert had brought from the actual fight in the Atlantic mixed itself up inextricably with that of the lordly figure of Prince Karl Albert gesturing aside the dead body of the Vaterland sailor. Hitherto he had rather liked the idea of war as being a jolly, smashing, exciting affair, something like a bank holiday rag on a large scale, and on the whole agreeable and exhilarating. Now he knew it a little better.

Late that afternoon Kurt came into the cabin and found Bert curled up on his locker and looking very white and miserable. Kurt had also lost something of his pristine freshness.

"Seasick?" he asked.

"No!"

"We ought to reach New York this evening. There's a good breeze coming up under our tails. Then we shall see things."

"Yes?"

Kurt did not answer him. He was measuring their distance from New York and speculating. "Wonder what the American aeroplanes are like," he said. "Something like our drachenflieger. We shall know by this time tomorrow. I wonder what we shall know—I wonder. Suppose, after all, they put up a fight. Rum sort of fight!"

He whistled softly and mused. Presently he fretted out of the cabin, and later Bert found him in the twilight upon the swinging platform, staring ahead and speculating about the things that might happen on the morrow. Clouds veiled the sea again, and the long, straggling wedge of airships, rising and falling as they flew, seemed like a flock of strange new birds in a chaos that had neither earth nor water, but only mist and sky.

The city of New York was in the year of the German attack the largest, richest, in many respects the most splendid and in some the wickedest city the world had ever seen. She was the supreme type of the scientific commercial age. She displayed its greatness, its power, its ruthless anarchic enterprise and its social disorganization most strikingly and completely. She had long ousted London from her pride of place as the modern Babylon. She was the center of the world's finance, the world's trade and the world's pleasure, and men likened her to the apocalyptic cities of the ancient prophets. She sat drinking up the wealth of a continent, as Rome once drank the wealth of the Mediterranean and Babylon the wealth of the east. In her streets one found the extremes of magnificence and misery, of civilization and disorder.

For many generations New York had taken no heed of war save as a

thing that happened far away, that affected prices and supplied the newspapers with exciting headlines and pictures. The New Yorkers felt perhaps even more certainly than the English had done that war in their own hand was an impossible thing. In that they shared the delusion of all North America. They felt as secure as spectators at a bullfight; they risked their money perhaps on the result, but that was all. And such ideas of war as the common Americans possessed were derived from the limited, picturesque, adventurous war of the past. They saw war as they saw history, through an iridescent mist, deodorized, scented indeed, with all its essential cruelties tactfully hidden away. They were inclined to regret it as something ennobling, to sigh that it could no longer come into their own private experience. They read with interest, if not with avidity, of their new guns, of their immense and still more immense ironclads, of their incredible and still more incredible explosives, but just what these tremendous engines of destruction might mean for their personal lives never entered their heads.

And then suddenly into a world peacefully busied for the most part



Crowds Assembled to Listen to and Cheer Patriotic Speeches.

upon armaments and the perfection of explosives war came—the shock of realizing that the guns were going off; that the masses of inflammable material all over the world were at last ablaze.

The immediate effect upon New York of the sudden onset of war was merely to intensify her normal vehemence.

The newspapers and magazines that fed the American mind—for books upon this impatient continent had become simply material for the energy of collectors—were instantly a cornucopia of war pictures and headlines that rose like rockets and burst like shells. To the normal high strung energy of New York streets was added a touch of war fever. Great crowds assembled, more especially in the dinner hour, in Madison square about the Farragut monument to listen to and cheer patriotic speeches.

Critics of the American character are disposed to consider that up to the actual impact of the German attack the people of New York dealt altogether too much with the war as if it was a political demonstration. Little or no damage, they urged, was done to

either the German or Japanese force by the wearing of buttons, the waving of small flags or the songs. War was a matter of apparatus, of special training and skill of the most intricate kind. It had become undemocratic. And whatever the value of the popular excitement, there can be no denying that the small regular establishment of the United States government, confronted by this totally unexpected emergency of an armed invasion from Europe, acted with vigor, science and imagination.

They were taken by surprise so far as the diplomatic situation was concerned, and their equipment for building either navigables or aeroplanes was contemptible in comparison with the huge German parks. Still they set to work at once to prove to the world that the spirit that had created the Monitor and the southern submarines of 1864 was not dead. The chief of the aeronautic establishment, near West Point, was Cabot Sinclair, and he allowed himself but one single moment of the posturing that was so universal in that democratic time. "We have chosen our epitaphs," he said to a reporter, "and we are going to have 'They did all they could.' Now run away!"

The curious thing is that they did do all they could. There is no exception known. Their only defect, indeed, was a defect of style.

One of the most striking facts historically about this war and the one that makes the complete separation that had arisen between the methods of warfare and the necessity of democratic support is the effectual secrecy of the Washington authorities about their airships. They did not bother to confide a single fact of their preparations to the public. They did not even condescend to talk to congress. They burked and suppressed every inquiry. The war was fought by the president and the secretaries of state in an entirely autocratic manner. Such publicity as they sought was merely to anticipate and prevent inconvenient agitation to defend particular points. They realized that the chief danger in aerial warfare from an excitable and intelligent public would be a clamor for local airships and aeroplanes to defend local interests. This, with such resources as they possessed, might lead to a fatal division and distribution of the national forces. Particularly they feared that they might be forced into a premature action to defend New York.

They realized with prophetic insight that this would be the particular advantage the Germans would seek. So they took great pains to direct the popular mind toward defensive artillery and to divert it from any thought of aerial battle. Their real preparations they masked beneath ostensible ones. There was at Washington a large reserve of naval guns, and these were distributed rapidly, conspicuously and with much press attention among the eastern cities. They were mounted for the most part upon hills and prominent crests round the threatened centers of population. They were mounted upon rough adaptations of the Doan swivel, which at that time gave the maximum vertical range to a heavy gun. Much of this artillery was still unmounted, and nearly all of it was unprotected when the German air fleet reached New York. And down in the crowded streets, when that occurred, the readers of the New York papers were regaling themselves with wonderful and wonderfully illustrated accounts of such matters as:

- THE SECRET OF THE THUNDERBOLT
- AGED SCIENTIST PERFECTS ELECTRIC GUN
- TO ELECTROCUTE AIRSHIP CREWS BY UPWARD LIGHTNING
- WASHINGTON ORDERS FIVE HUNDRED
- WAR SECRETARY LODGE DELIGHTED
- SAYS THEY WILL SUIT THE GERMANS DOWN TO THE GROUND
- PRESIDENT PUBLICLY APPLAUDS THIS MERRY QUIP

The German fleet reached New York in advance of the news of the American naval disaster. It reached New York in the late afternoon and was first seen by watchers at Ocean Grove and Long Branch coming swiftly out of the southward sea and going away to the northwest. The flagship passed almost vertically over the Sandy Hook observation station, rising rapidly as it did so, and in a few minutes all New York was vibrating to the Staten Island guns.

[To be continued.]

A GLANCE AT WORLD AFFAIRS

THE expedition into Abyssinia led by Childs Frick, son of Henry C. Frick, to make natural history collections for the Smithsonian Institution is of particular interest because Mr. Frick followed close on the trail of Colonel Roosevelt when the latter was bringing down big game in Africa, and his party was said to have bagged as much as did the former president and his party.

Mr. Frick plans to return with a great variety of specimens of the animals in the Abyssinian region. These will be prepared for the national museum by Lieutenant Colonel Edgar A. Mearns, U. S. A., retired, associate zoologist of the museum, who accompanies Mr. Frick on the trip.

The region of Lake Rudolf, discovered as late as 1888 by Count Telek and one of the wildest and most dangerous sections of the dark continent, is to be covered by the expedition. It is inhabited by the Hamatic people, wholly uncivilized, yet intellectually superior to the average tribes of Africa. The Samal, Gallas and Boranna tribes will also be encountered.

The actual work of the expedition is scheduled to cover about seven months.

Presidential Politics.

The presidential campaign is warming up, the battle for delegates in both parties now being well under way. A meeting of northwestern Democrats held at Fargo, N. D., was attended by leaders from all this section. Several



Copyright by American Press Association. Governor John Burke of North Dakota, Who Was Boomed by Friends.

Democratic governors were present and spoke. As there has been a movement to give North Dakota's delegation to her governor, John Burke, this love feast was regarded in some quarters as an effort to promote his presidential boom. Throughout the nation it may be said, in the time honored language of the correspondents, that "the political pot is simmering."

Another Trust Faces Fire.

Detroit is the scene this time of the United States government's fight to break up a so called trust, the alleged illegal combination of bathtub manufacturers. In that city are assembled an impressive array of counsel for both sides, who are ready for the battle, which takes place in the federal court.

An important point involved in the case is the debated right of the defendants to control the manufacture and sale of enameled ware with patent tools.

Taft Again on the Move.

President Taft, following his attendance at the Ohio society dinner and the dinner of the Aero Club of America in New York city, hurries to Cleveland, O., for the banquet of the Tippecanoe club in celebration of President McKinley's birthday. Political sharps said as soon as the president declared his intention of going to Ohio that the visit would mark the real opening of the Taft campaign for renomination.

Federal Aid to Good Roads.

There has long been agitation for federal aid to good roads, and the movement toward this end has grown especially strong in the present congress. At a meeting of the federal aid committee of the American Association For Highway Improvement and a convention of other friends of good roads held in Washington the majority of the thirty or more members of congress who have introduced bills on the subject were present. Other speakers were Charles A. Barrett, president of the Farmers' union, and representatives of the American Federation of Labor and of the national commission of prison labor. One session was devoted to a discussion of convict labor on the roads. The meeting also endorsed the plan for a Lincoln memorial highway from Washington to Gettysburg.

Has Most Per Capita Wealth.

Kansas has the largest per capita wealth based upon the assessed valuation of any state in the Union, according to figures computed by Mark Tully, state treasurer. The per capita assessment valuation is \$1,642.30.

Enough Ammunition For Years.

There is now enough ammunition on hand to supply the United States army and navy and state militia for three and a half years. Brigadier General

Crozier, chief of ordnance of the army, told the house committee on military affairs when it was drafting the army bill for 1913. General Crozier explained that of late the government had been contracting for enough ammunition from private companies to keep them running as an "insurance" against war.

"I am certain," said the general, "that the government arsenals and the private ammunition manufacturers can produce enough ammunition to supply our army as fast as it can be recruited."

The Treaty Split With Russia.

The abrogation of the treaty between the United States and Russia does not go into effect until Jan. 1, 1913, and efforts will be made to frame a new treaty before that time. At any rate, there is hardly a possibility that peace between the two nations will be disturbed.

Prober Stanley.

Representative Augustus Owsley Stanley of Kentucky, chairman of the special committee to inquire into the affairs of the United States Steel corporation, was the author of the house resolution to make the investigation. The special aims of the inquiry were to find out how the restriction or destruction of competition, the capitalization and bonding of the various subsidiary concerns of the corporation and the combination between the officers and agents of one corporation and those of others had been effected. The committee was especially authorized to ascertain if financial panics had been influenced by the steel trust's operations.

Mr. Stanley is a native of Kentucky and is forty-four years of age. He was educated at Center college, Danville, Ky., and began the practice of law in 1894. In 1900 he was a presidential elector, which is the only public office he ever held prior to his election to congress.

International Ski Tournament.

The Norge Ski club of Chicago has been hard at work to make the international skiing tournament, Jan. 27, 28 and 29, at Cary, Ill., the biggest ski meet in the west. The tournament opens with exhibitions by the best professional and amateur jumpers in the world.

The Northwest.

Dr. Charles A. Eastman, a full blooded Sioux Indian, author of "The Soul of the Indian" and other books, believes that the climate of the northwest is so fine that living there makes a man big. "Colonel Roosevelt would never have become president if he had not spent years out in that country," solemnly declared Dr. Eastman at the annual dinner of the Northwestern society in New York city. Dr. Eastman pointed out that the northwest was a part of the country that had produced such great men of his own race as Red Cloud and Sitting Bull.

The Northwestern society is composed of New York men who have migrated from the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Montana, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Idaho.

State Life Insurance.

A system of state life insurance is officially approved for Wisconsin.

Insurance Commissioner H. L. Ekern has been at work on forms for policies and blanks for the proposed plan. Wisconsin will be the first state to attempt to write life insurance. The legislature of 1911 passed a bill providing for beginning the system. The state treasurer will be custodian of all moneys, and town, city and county clerks will accept applications and forward premiums. The state does not assume any responsibility beyond paying the expense.

Our Young Men of Eighty.

Noted as a public and after dinner speaker, Joseph H. Choate, the predecessor of Whitelaw Reid as United States ambassador to the court of St. James, celebrated his eightieth birthday.



Joseph H. Choate, Who Recently Celebrated Eightieth Birthday.

day anniversary on Jan. 24, with no thought of giving up. He was admitted to the bar in 1855, and the completion of his eightieth milestone finds him still a worker in his profession. Mr. Choate was born in Salem, Mass. He was one of the committee of seventy which smashed the Tweed ring in New York in 1871. [4 B]

TALKED THROUGH ROCK.

Inventor Made His Voice Penetrate Steel and Concrete.

John L. Griffiths, consul general at London, in the Consular Reports wrote of experiments conducted near Chestow for the transmission of the human voice over long distances with the aid alone of the natural elements.

The inventor Grindell Matthews submitted his discovery to a severe test in the presence of a number of experts. He was placed in the strong room of a big London commercial house and locked in, with nine inches of armor steel, nine inches of fire brick and six feet of concrete between him and the outer world. By means of his small portable apparatus he carried on a conversation with an operator in another room on the farther side of the building. So distinct and faithful was the transmission that the experts in attendance were actually able to hear the tick of his watch notwithstanding the almost impenetrable mass between the two instruments.

The inventor was then engaged in long distance tests in connection with the war office and had spoken from Beachley, in Gloucestershire, to a point more than five and a half miles away near the Severn tunnel outlet on the opposite side of the river.

The inventor named his instrument the aerophone.

THE HIGHEST RAILWAY.

Tracks at an Altitude of 15,865 Feet in Peru.

To the question, "Which is the highest railway in the world?" the answer is the Central Railway of Peru. In other words, the highest point reached by any railway line is touched by this road, where the altitude of the rails reaches 15,865 feet above sea level. To reach this point from sea level the line passes through fifty-seven tunnels, over a dozen of principal bridges, and utilizes thirteen switchbacks, but has no gradient up to 4½ per cent, nor does it resort to rack propulsion.

A handcar started at Tielio will run unaided to Callao, the seaport, and, as a matter of fact, such a car, equipped with safety brakes, runs before each passenger train, carrying an inspector on the lookout for fallen rocks or other dangers.

Tielio is the highest station in the world.

The next highest line in the world is that from Antofagasta, Chile, to Oruru and La Paz, Bolivia. This line has also the distinction of being the narrowest gauge line for such a long distance. The highest point is at Collahuasi, where the altitude is 15,800 feet, sixty-five feet lower than the Peruvian line.—London Tit-Bits.

That Well Meaning Person.



The man who insists that you share his umbrella.—Browning's Magazine.

Anvil Sparks.

The truth is stained by the lips of gossip. Trifling vices set the precedent for greater ones.

Figures do not lie, nor should figures of speech.

You can always overcome insult by overlooking it.

He is blind indeed whose only organ of sight is the eye.

It is better to be the subject of scandal than its dispenser.

Lofty thought does not need to be clothed in high sounding words.

The really good man doesn't enjoy hearing folks talk too much about his goodness.

Who depends upon the inspiration of the moment is apt to meet with many an hour that is not very inspiring.—Christian Herald.

Safe and Perilous Oils.

It has been shown that oil with a flash point of 239 degrees Fahrenheit will not ignite if fired into with a shell, and if dynamite is exploded in a reservoir of this oil it only throws up jets of oil which do not ignite. The only dangerous liquid fuel oils are those which have not parted with their volatile, inflammable gases, such as absolutely crude oils. In all ordinary commercial fuel oils these portions are removed, and the oil is safe and contains no power of spontaneous combustion. Oil with a fire test of 180 to 200 degrees Fahrenheit is as safe as coal, and it will not ignite when stirred with a red-hot poker nor when hot coals are thrown on it.