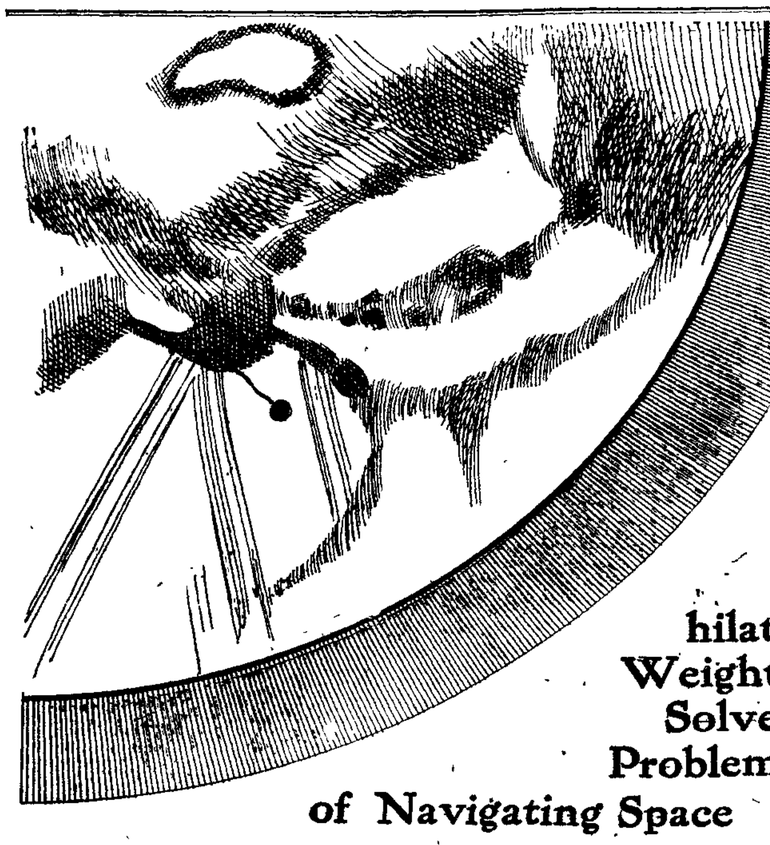
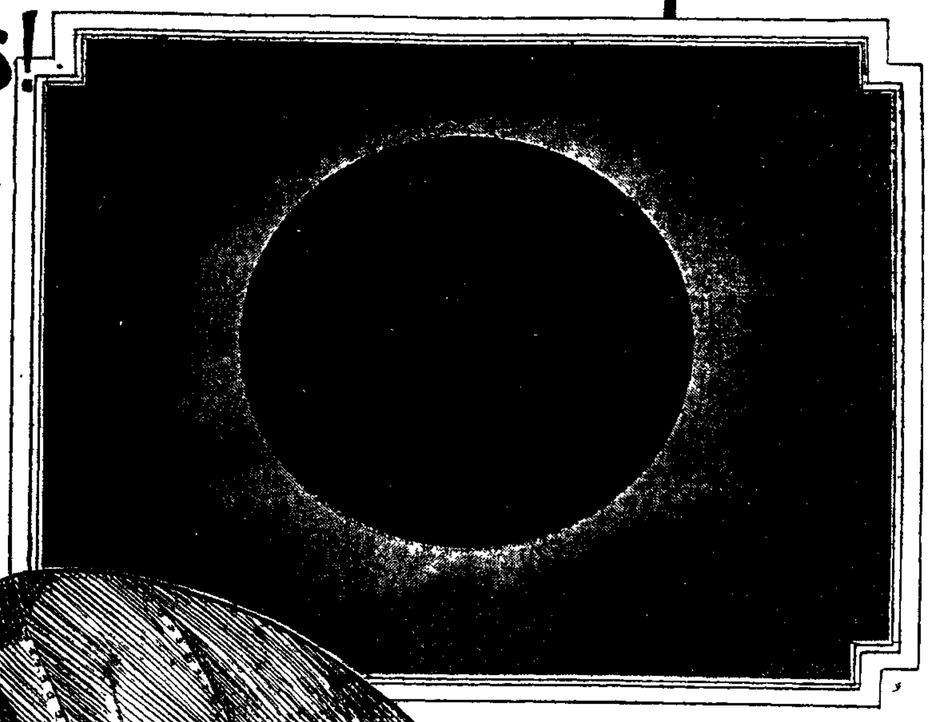


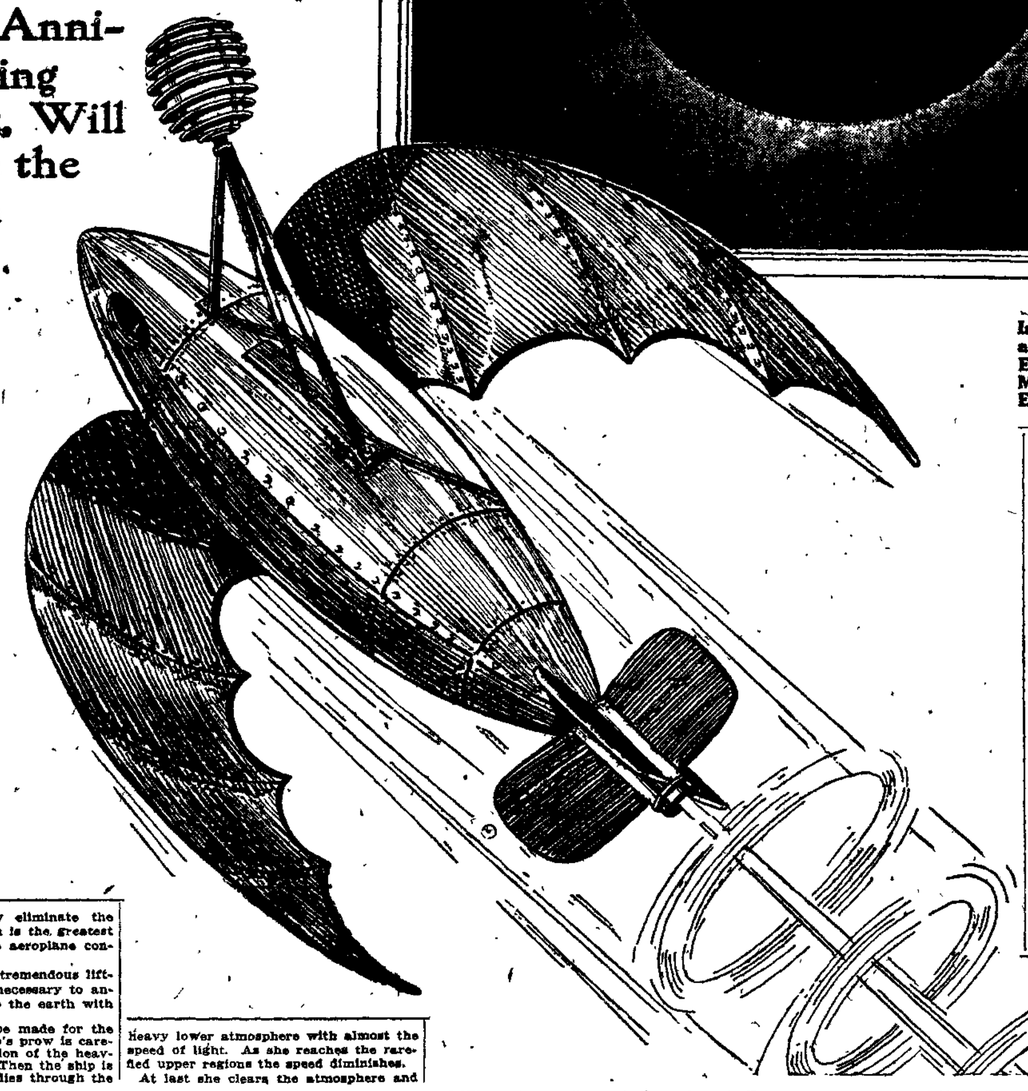
# A Sun Gas that Will Run Expresses to the Stars!

## Professor Nield, Leading British Astronomer, Predicts That the New Gas, Coronium, by Annihilating Weight, Will Solve the Problem of Navigating Space



The Corona of the Sun, Which Is formed of the Gas, Coronium, and Is Visible During a Total Eclipse. Photograph Taken at Mount Wilson, Cal., During the Eclipse of May 28, 1906.

The lifting power of coronium is so great that a balloon filled with it the size of a baseball would raise an elephant.



"Enclosed in a Steel Fortress Forming Part of an Aeroplane Freed from Weight and Gravity by the Gas, Coronium, the Voyagers Will Fly to the Planets and Stars with the Speed of Light!"

London, May 16.

EXPRESSES to the stars, half-day excursions to the sun, and evening trips to the moon are within the wonderful possibilities of the near future, according to a British scientist.

H. Krauss Nield, one of the leading British astronomers, is authority for this statement.

Prof. Nield believes that interplanetary traveling will be brought about with the help of the newly discovered gas coronium, which forms part of the corona of the sun.

This gas is so light that a quantity of it the size of a baseball has sufficient lifting power to raise an elephant. Applied to the dirigible balloon or the aeroplane, it would increase the lifting power of the machine hundreds of times.

The corona is that part of the sun which is most prominent during a total eclipse, and coronium forms the greater part of it. Coronium has never been found on earth. Its properties, its gravity, and its lifting power have been calculated from spectroscopic analysis and from its behavior in association with other substances of which more is known.

### Lighter Than Comet's Tail.

It is calculated that if a comet could be condensed into the density of a piece of iron it could be packed in a dress suitcase, although it is millions of miles long. Now, a comet has been observed passing through the sun's corona at a speed of 350 miles a second—that is, without the slightest retardation of speed. This shows that the corona is much lighter than a comet's tail, and enormously lighter than hydrogen, which we now use to lift balloons.

It is believed that coronium exists in the upper regions of the atmosphere. Many new atmospheric gases, such as krypton, neon, and argon, discovered by Sir William Ramsay, have been identified in recent years, and it is highly probable that others still remain to be found. If coronium exists in the atmosphere it must be in combination with other substances which hold it down.

"When we are successful in isolating coronium we shall solve the problem of aviation both within the atmosphere and beyond," said Mr. Nield. He is a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, and was chief of the solar eclipse expedition to Burgos, Spain, in 1905, and also leader of the British Astronomical Society's expedition to Cape Matifou, Algeria, in 1900.

"There is nothing lighter than coronium," he continued. "Although it seems a rather extraordinary prediction, I maintain that some day this coronium will be harnessed, and we will have an opportunity of visiting our neighbors upon the other planets. This may not be during our generation. But it is sure to come. And when it does we will be able to discover for ourselves what sort of people reside on Mars.

"Coronium is closely allied in nature to nebulum, which exists in large quantity in a great number of the nebulae of the heavens, and like nebulum, it exists in a free state there.

"The coronium line has only been observed something slightly under two hours in the whole history of the human race. In other words, it has been seen at the total eclipse observations for only a few seconds every two years. With specially prepared chemical plates I succeeded in photographing the corona at the moment of totality. I prepared my plates, placed my camera, and had everything in readiness ten minutes before the eclipse, and was able to get a photograph before the totality was over. The totality lasts only 67 seconds, so you can readily see that there is not much time to be lost, and everything must be in readiness.

"An eclipse, with the corona furnishing a sort of halo around it, is a most beautiful sight to behold, and one not to be forgotten."

Mr. Nield and his colleagues have been planning the type of machine which would be best adapted for navigating space with the help of coronium. This machine would have a car of fish-like form, constructed of steel, in order to resist every kind of pressure from within and without. Inside this little fortress the voyagers to the stars would operate the machinery and guide the course of the vessel. They would be provided with everything to make them safe and comfortable during such a hazardous and uncertain voyage.

Along the roof of the car would be little reservoirs of the precious gas coronium, arranged in balls of corrugated steel of peculiar construction to guard against the enormous pressure from within, and also against any possibility of leakage.

The machine would be propelled by an arrangement of planes and propellers similar to those used in aeroplanes. The coronium would entirely eliminate the problem of weight, which is the greatest difficulty with which the aeroplane constructor has to deal.

Coronium having such tremendous lifting power, it would be necessary to anchor the airship down to the earth with strong cables.

When the start is to be made for the heavenly spaces, the ship's prow is carefully aimed in the direction of the heavenly body to be visited. Then the ship is released, and away she flies through the heavy lower atmosphere with almost the speed of light. As she reaches the rarefied upper regions the speed diminishes.

At last she clears the atmosphere and the wonders of the whole celestial universe are revealed to the adventurers in the steel car. All the stars and planets appear as balls of light upon a black ground, for where there is no atmosphere there is no diffusion of light. All about them is absolute zero.

The watchers peering through the windows see the surfaces of the heavenly bodies just as if they were a foot away, for distance cannot obscure the vision where there is neither dust nor vapor.

Let us suppose that the travelers are bound for Venus. That will provide a comfortable dwelling place for man when the earth becomes uninhabitable from the cold, as we know it must become in course of time. Venus has a high temperature, for the density of the atmosphere causes the retention of the heat. It is probably inhabited by gigantic reptiles, for its conditions are similar to those of the Jurassic period, when the earth was peopled by dinosaurs. Those conditions would be better than a world without heat, for that would make life impossible, and in time to come the climate of Venus will be modified.

A heavy struggle through the heavy atmosphere awaits the coronium airship, and when the voyagers alight they may meet monsters never before seen by human eye.

### Would Carry Oxygen.

The difficulties of this undertaking appear to be in steering a vessel accurately through the ether.

The atmosphere extends to a distance of 60 miles beyond our planet. After that comes the ether, the hypothetical substance occupying the space between the planets and stars and pervading all matter.

It is usually held by science that an object entering the ether would retain the impetus it had on leaving the atmosphere. An aerial vessel, under such conditions, would therefore continue on its course until it reached the atmosphere of some other heavenly body or some solid object. That was the theory upon which Jules Verne based his famous scientific romance, "A Trip to the Moon." It was assumed that as a vessel was propelled through space without effort it would be stopped by a solid object without shock. Hence Jules Verne's travelers were able to alight safely on the moon.

The nature of the ether is, however, still subject to discussion, since it is a hypothetical substance whose existence is based on reasoning and not on physical perception. There are scientists who argue that an airship could be made to navigate the ether if it could be projected there.

There are various ways in which the object could be attained. The airship might throw out an atmosphere of its own when it wished to change its course. The vessel would, in any case, have to carry a great supply of compressed oxygen for the use of its occupants.

### When Man Is Emancipated.

There are scientists, however, who argue that the ether possesses a certain resisting power, since this must be included in the power to conduct light waves and electricity. They believe that an aeroplane constructed with sufficient lightness and delicacy could drive itself with propellers through the ether.

Many scientists besides Mr. Nield have discussed the possibility of reaching the other heavenly bodies. The great French chemist, Berthelot, believed that it would be done some day. Maeterlinck, who combines considerable scientific knowledge with his great philosophic and literary gifts, believes that the final service of aviation will be to carry man away from the earth when it is no longer fit for human habitation. H. G. Wells, the most scientific of all novelists, has also explained why we shall be able to navigate the ether.

When man is able to roam through the universe at will he will be completely emancipated from the bonds of hunger, disease and ignorance, which are largely the creation of conditions that keep him rooted to one narrow spot.

# CLEEK, SOLVER OF RIDDLES, INVESTIGATES THE FLYING DEATH

CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE.

names, but the bearer of those names is now known to be that one crafty and clever female."

"Oho!" said Cleek, with a strong rising inflection. "That puts a different complexion upon the matter altogether. When and how did you discover this, Mr. Wilson-Hargraves, may I ask?"

### Arielle Is Insured, Too.

"Only the day before yesterday. A bit of carelessness—the similarity of one signature to another—a little discovery made between my friend and colleague Mr. Hopgood, of the Mutual company, and myself set the ball rolling; then my son did a bit of amateur detective work on his own account, with the result that yesterday afternoon left no doubt upon the point. I at once decided to begin investigations—relying on my friend Mr. Narkom to see that you, and you only, were put upon the case—and so last night wrote the letter which has brought you here.

"I was egged on to do this with as little delay as possible, Mr. Cleek, by a discovery made yesterday afternoon. Naturally, I took our manager, Mr. Alexander Pollack—into my confidence when I discovered this matter regarding the identity of the beneficiary, and, together we went over the books to ascertain if there was any discrepancy—any little thing that might be worth while laying before you as promising to lead to a connecting link. Judge of my amazement, my dear sir, when, in doing this, I made the startling discovery that the woman herself was insured in this company—insured for the sum of £10,000—and that the beneficiary was 'Harvey Halstead Sniffer,' her putative brother; the policy having been issued six months ago, and the 'risk' accepted by Mr. Pollack himself as a sound one."

"Hum-m-m" half sighed, half groaned Cleek, pinching up his chin and scowling at the carpet. "That's letting the enemy into the camp in real earnest. Still, I don't attach much importance to it as a clue to the reputed swindling operations of the lady. She couldn't get much out of a thing that she would have to die to win and she would hardly be likely to take out such a policy in favor of her brother if she could not trust him and was not absolutely certain that her life was in no danger of being shortened at his hands. So —— Hum-m-m—— Ah yes—you said you call Mr. Pollack in, Mr. Wilson-Hargraves? There's a question or two I'd like to ask him."

Mr. Wilson-Hargraves did. As he was [illegible] the moment of his award, the [illegible] entered the room. He was a good-[illegible] middle-faced [illegible] little man in the neighborhood of 50, looking as much like Father Christmas after he had indulged in a clean shave as anything Cleek could [illegible] at the moment—[illegible] and Eton [illegible] [illegible] was [illegible] to [illegible] Mr. [illegible]

Mr. [illegible] telling me about the discovery made yesterday, Mr. Pollack," said Cleek, coming to the point at once. "Would you mind answering a couple of questions? Thanks, very much. First, then: how did you come to indorse the lady as a safe risk?"

"On the report of Dr. Lowther—one of our staff of physicians. He made the medical examination and informed me that she was sound, healthy, and in every way a desirable 'risk.'"

"Hum-m-m! Dr. Lowther anywhere within reach at this moment?"

### "A Striking Face."

"No; very much 'out of reach'—if you will pardon my making a joke upon such a serious subject, Mr. Cleek. The lady was almost the last, if not, indeed, the very last, applicant he examined. He was killed in a motor accident that same day."

"Hum-m-m! That is most unfortunate; as he, of course, saw the lady's face and would be in a position to identify her should identification ever become necessary."

"Oh, but I, too, am in a position to do that, Mr. Cleek. As soon as I heard of the accident I drove in post haste to break the news to the widow—he was such a dear friend I could not bring myself to leave the authorities to do that. It happened that Miss Sniffen had, during the course of the examination, laid aside a valuable bracelet and upon returning home missed it. She returned to the doctor's residence for it, and it was my melancholy task to break the news of the doctor's death to her and assist her in finding the mislaid trinket. Her face was a very striking one, I should know it again—know it in an instant—if I were to meet her once more."

"Good!" said Cleek. "That simplifies matters immensely. A great deal may depend upon your identification of the lady. Mr Pollack. What's that? No, I don't attach the slightest importance to the fact that there is a policy upon her own life. What I want to do is to connect her with two or more cases regarding the people who had died by accident—connect her as the person who collected payment on the policies. I mean—and your knowledge of her appearance will be of immense benefit then. In the meantime, Mr. Wilson-Hargraves, I believe you suggested my accompanying you to the aviation grounds for the purpose of seeing the lady fly this afternoon, and if this is still your wish——"

### On the Wrong Track.

"It certainly is, Mr Cleek. From the record of the past I am convinced that there will be another of these 'accidents' this afternoon, that another person who is on the books of this or some kindred company will be done to death in her and as you are shrewd and farsighted and things that would be mere specks in my eyes would be mountains of damning evidence in yours, I wish you to watch and see if you can discover how the thing is done, so that you can bring it home to her and put an end to this crafty fraud."

"Right! You are!" said Cleek, in reply. "I am at your service any hour you please, Mr. Wilson-Hargraves and—if he can spare the time to get away and has the inclination to do so—I wish you would invite Mr. Pollack to come with us."

"Certainly, Mr. Cleek. He can 'find the time' readily enough, and as for the willingness, he's an enthusiast on the subject of airships and aeroplanes, aren't you, Pollack? Wait a bit. I'll just step out to the main office and phone to the garage to have my motor sent round here at once. We can start immediately then and stop at some inn on the way for lunch. Ah! I have a feeling, Narkom, that we shall have that creature by the heels this time and that we shall see her with syves on her wrists before this day is done."

"I wish I might share that belief," said Cleek with one of his curious one-sided smiles, as the door closed and Mr. Wilson-Hargraves vanished. "Do you know, Mr. Pollack, that I've an odd idea we are going on the wrong track altogether regarding 'Arielle's' complicity, and that we shall find the lady a quite different sort of person than we expect?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, Mr. Cleek, so do I," said Mr. Pollack, his genial face brightening. "The little I saw of her that day she did not strike me as at all the kind of woman likely to be mixed up in any swindling operations, and if you will keep it to yourself, I'm afraid that there's a leetle grain of prejudice at the back of Mr. Wilson-Hargraves' opinion of the lady. He doesn't like American people, and from the minute he learned that she is a Yankee—well, there you are! Personally, I thought her a most charming lady. And, really, now, she can't be very bad can she? when, as you doubtless know, the gate money at each and every one of her public flights is given entirely to charity."

"Bluff!" sniffed Narkom. "Dust for the eyes of the unthinking. She can well afford to do that sort of thing when she gets her little lot out of the insurance companies! I knew she was a bad lot, Cleek—I told you she was!"

"That's right—crow over me," said Cleek, good-humoredly. "I'll lay you a fiver, however, that none of the policies she collects are large ones. Are they, Mr. Pollack?"

"No—quite small; none of 'em over a hundred pounds. Of course, if they had been for very large sums, there would have been more inquiry in the beginning."

"Oh, she knows her little book, be sure of that," put in Narkom, with a jeering laugh. "A hundred pounds here and another hundred there will do very well and keep the pot boiling whilst she and her brother are laying the pipes for a future 'big haul.'"

But Cleek only smiled.

"By the way, Mr. Pollack, ever see that 'brother?'" he questioned suddenly.

"No, never. I believe he has been at one or two of her public flights, but never when I witnessed one. Of course he may be at the aviation grounds today, but from past experiences I should say it was very unlikely."

"Yes, I suppose so," agreed Cleek, abstractedly—for he was busy scribbling something in his note book. When he had finished it, he tore out the leaf and handed it to Mr. Narkom. "I told Dollops I should be back in half an hour, and the poor beggar will be wondering what has become of me," he said. "Just give him that as you go back, will you, Mr Narkom? That will ease his mind and——. Ah, back again already, Mr. Wilson-Hargraves? As they used to say in the 'Pantos'—'Now we sha'n't be long!'"

Nor were they. Ten minutes later, Narkom, with the little bit of scribbled paper in his hand, was pelting off in the red limousine—not in the direction of Scotland Yard, but in the way that led to Islington—and Cleek and Mr Pollock and Mr Wilson-Hargraves were scudding off in the latter's motor car to the grounds of the Anglo-Gallic Aviation Club and to an end which even the shrewdest guesser could not have foreseen.

### Arielle's Assistant.

It was 3.30 when after having stopped on the way at a picturesque country inn for luncheon the three occupants of the motor passed the turnstile of the aviation ground and entered the inclosure. The place was literally "packed" to interest in this daring and mysterious aviatress, whose face was always screened from public view by a close-fitting black velvet mask, was every day on the increase, and the judiciously disseminated report that that mask hid a face which was no stranger at court served but to add to that interest.

Already the attendants were busy wheeling the biplane into position for the start, and as they sank into their seats in the grand stand Cleek felt Mr. Wilson-Hargraves' hand shut sharply on his arm and heard Mr. Wilson-Hargraves' excited voice whispering in his ear.

"Watch!" he was saying agitatedly. "It will be one of those fellows who are helping or one who comes to help when she descends after the flight. Watch—watch sharply and find out if you can how it is done. My God, man! what an awful thing it is, isn't it, to know that some one here today is to be deliberately murdered and that that 'some one' is already marked?"

Before Cleek could make any reply to this—if, indeed, he contemplated doing so—a slim, girlish figure issued from the doorway which led to the rooms set apart for the use of the aviators in changing their costumes for flight and getting back into their regular dress afterward, and proceeding straightway to the spot where the flying machine was being manipulated into "position" began forthwith to inspect levers and brakes and wings and steering gear with the air of one well versed in the matter. That she was not "Arielle" herself was evidenced by the fact that she wore a close-fitting walking costume of heliotrope cloth, a huge "beehive" hat of purple straw enveloped in a thick purple motor veil, which entirely covered her face and was tightly tied about her neck, and, in addition to these things, she wore stout walking boots and gloves of gray suede stitched up the back with bands of heliotrope. Clearly no one who intended to go skyward in a biplane would be attired like this.

Cleek twisted an inquiring glance round in Mr Pollack's direction. As that gentleman had confessed to witnessing Arielle's flights before, he fancied that he might be able to throw some light upon the identity of this graceful and charmingly costumed female. He could, and did.

"Miss Layburne," he volunteered in a whisper.

"Miss Layburne? Who's she?"

It was Mr Wilson-Hargraves who replied.

### Nothing Suspicious.

"The girl I told you of who is assistant to that reputed brother of the Sniffen woman," he said cautiously. "The silly little sapheid who's gone on the hunter and helps him to keep up the farce of the 'Dental Association.' That's how we got to know of who 'Arielle' really is and the connection between her and Sniffen. Mr Pollock followed Miss Layburne's name after the [illegible] [illegible] our last visit to Mr Sniffen's [illegible] with her father—a sad dog and [illegible] maker—was named Jennie Layburne and was employed as assistant typist at Sniffen's place in Islington."

"Assistant and typist to a dentist—hum-m-m!" commented Cleek in an undertone. "She seems to know a jolly lot about aeroplanes for a girl of that sort, judging from the manner in which she examines that one."

"I suppose Arielle has put her up to that—schooled her in all those little wrinkles in order to give color to the 'high-born lady' rumor. A woman who was really a lady of that type wouldn't have any hounder of a man like that Sniffen fellow messing about her affairs in public, you know, and—well, that Layburne girl certainly has an 'air' about her, hasn't she, eh?"

But—if he heard—Cleek did not answer. He was watching the trim veiled figure with an intentness which seemed to suggest that he was on the lookout for anything she might do which would lend an air of plausibility to the "accident," if, as he had been told, one would be sure to occur either in the ascent or the coming down to earth again when the flight was done. But nothing that was in the slightest degree suspicious came to pass. The examination over, the veiled figure returned to the dressing room and did not again appear until, at a signal from some one, the band struck up a flourish of trumpets, the people in the seats rose and cheered, and, to the accompaniment of the figure of a woman dressed in a short-skirted suit of white woolen material and wearing in addition to a concealing mask of black velvet which completely covered her face down to the upper lip, a sort of "pirate's cap" of white worsted and a white sweater with a high-rolled woolen collar. It was Arielle at last.

**To be concluded next Sunday.**

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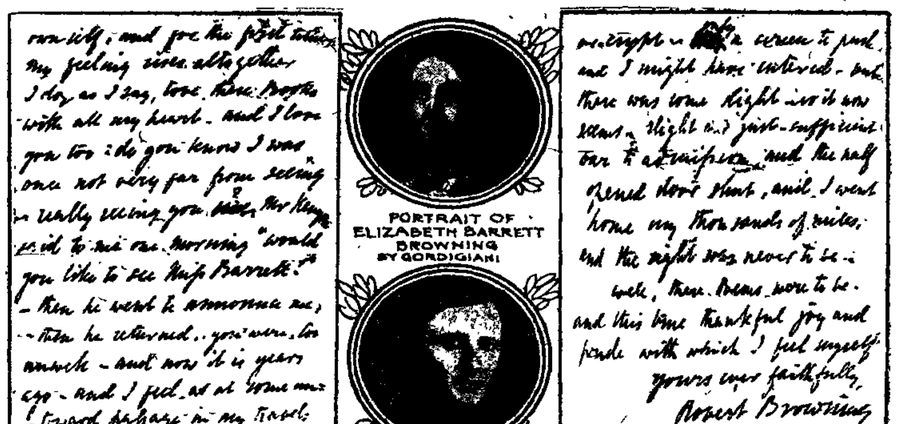
## FAMOUS BROWNING LOVE LETTERS SOLD



my feeling since all together I day, as I say, love thee dearest with all my heart—and I love you too: do you know I was once not very far from seeing a really seeing you, dear, Mr. Kenyon said to me one morning "would you like to see Miss Barrett?"—then he went to announce me,—then he returned..."you were too much—and now it is years ago—and I feel as at some moment I toward perhaps in my travels—as if I had been close, so close, to some world-wonder in chapel or crypt—or [illegible] a screen to pull, and I might have entered—but there was some light—as it was silent a light and just sufficient for I discovered—and the half opened door shut, and I went home my three miles of miles, and the night was never to be—well, there seems were to be.

and this time thankful joy and pride with which I feel myself yours ever faithfully,

Robert Browning

PORTRAIT OF ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING BY GORDIGIANI

PORTRAIT OF ROBERT BROWNING BY GORDIGIANI

PART OF ONE OF THE FAMOUS BROWNING LOVE LETTERS

(FROM ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS)

RECENTLY there were sold in London the love letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett. All of them were written before their marriage, for after it, according to the Illustrated London News, they were never separated for a day.

The letters were sold in the original cases in which their owners had preserved them for so many years. Mrs. Browning's in a marqueterie box and Robert Browning's in a collapsible, gold-tooled leather case. 284 of his and 287 of hers. Tomorrow runs one of the last: "at this time, I shall have you only to love me, beloved. You only—as if we said God only, and we shall have Him beside."

"I love you with all my heart, dear, Miss Barrett," confessed Browning in one of the early letters, "and this is no offhand complimentary letter that I shall write. Since the day last week when I read your poems I quite laugh to remember how I have been turning and turning in my mind what I shall be able to tell you of their effect upon me, for, in the first flush of delight, I thought I would this once get out of my habit of purely passive enjoyment, when I do really enjoy, and thoroughly justify my admiration—perhaps even as a loyal fellow craftsman should try and find fault and do you some little good to be proud of hereafter—but nothing comes of it all—so into me has it gone and part of me has it become, this great living poetry of yours, not a flower of which but took root and grew."

In the same letter he refers to a time years before when some one had promised to present him to her and it had fallen through because she was not feeling well at the time. "I feel," he writes, "as at some untoward passage in my travels, as if I had been close to some world's wonder in chapel or crypt—only a screen to push aside and I might have entered."

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## WHITESIDE AS HAMLET.

### Probable That Star of "The Typhoon" Will Reenter Classic Field.

Walker Whiteside, who has just closed a remarkably successful transcontinental tour in "The Typhoon," may reenter the lists as a Shakespearian actor next season with a production of "Hamlet," according to his own ideas. It will be remembered that Mr Whiteside gave to playgoers of New York at the Union Square Theater a score of years ago his conception of the singularly complex character that has engaged the analysis of the best players the stage has known. It was with credit to himself since the critical writers of that period acclaimed him the legitimate successor to Edwin Booth as the delineator of parts really big. Mr. Whiteside is a man of decided convictions. If he decides to give a production of "Hamlet" it will have the merit of scholarly thought.

Not only [illegible] friends of Mr Whiteside [illegible] in its [illegible] speculation [illegible] "Typhoon" [illegible] tour next season [illegible] be under the direction of Walter Floyd, his manager for the last two years.