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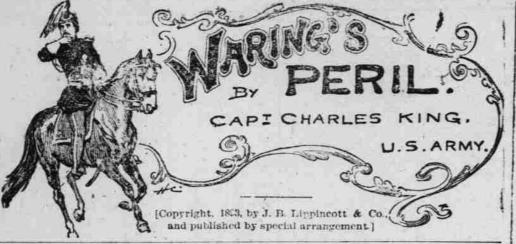
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de room."

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(This story was begun June 22. Back | morning. Did you lock up the others, Mr. Merton?" he asked, as they turned numbers can be had at this office.) awar

sideboard, mixed a mild toddy, sipped it "All but Dawson, sir. I took him reflectively, then lighted a cigar and over to the hospital and put a sentry threw himself into the easy-chair. over him. That fellow looks to be Ananias, meantime, was up and astir. verging on jimiams, and I wouldn't be Seeing that Cram was looking about in . surprised if he'd been talking as Kane search of a paper-cutter, the boy | says." Merton might have added, stepped forward and bent over the "and it's probably true," but courtesy table

to his battery friend forbade. Cram "De lieutenant always uses dis, suh," did add mentally something to the said he, lifting first one paper, then same effect, but loyalty to his arm of another, searching under each. "Don't the service kept him silent. At the seem to be yer now, suh. You've seen | flag-staff the two officers stopped. it, dough, captain-that cross-handled "Merton, oblige me by saying nothdagger wid the straight blade." ing as to the alleged language about "Yes, I know. Where is it?" asked Doyle, will you?" Cram. "That'll do." 'Certainly, captain. Good night." "Tain't yer, suh, now Can't find it Then, as the officer of the day's lanyer, nohow." tern flickered away in one direction. "Well, then, Mr. Waring probably Gram turned in the other, and prestook a knife, after all." ently went climbing up the stairs to "No, suh, I don't tink so. I never the gallery leading to the quarters of knowed him to use it befo' away from his senior first lieutenant. A dim light was shining through the shutters. "Anybody else been here?" said Fram knocked at the door: no answer.

Cram. pening it, he glanced in. The room "Oh! dey was all in yer, suh, dis aftwas unoccupied. A cheap marine ernoon, but Mr. Doyle he was sent for. | clock, ticking between the north winsuh, and had to go." dows and the wash-stand, indicated A step and the rattle of a sword were midnight, and the battery commander heard on the gallery without. The turned away in vexation of spirit.

door opened, and in came Merton of the Lieut. Doyle had no authority to be infantry, officer of the day. absent from the post. "Hello, Waring!" he began. "Oh, it's It was dark and storming furiously

you, is it, captain? Isn't Waring back? when the bugles of the battery sounded I saw the light, and came up to chin the reveille, and by the light of the with him a moment. Beastly night, swinging lanterns the men marched isnet it?" away in their canvass stable rig. look-

"Waring isn't back yet. I look for ing like a column of ghosts. Yet, him by the eleven-thirty car," answered despite the gale and the torrents of the captain. rain, Pierce was in no wise surprised "Why, that's in. No Waring there, to find Cram at his elbow when the

but a half dozen poor devils half norses were led out to water. drowned and more'n half drunk, one of "Groom indoors this morning, Mr. your men among 'em. We had to put him | Pierce. Is Waring home?"

into the guard-house to keep him from "No, sir; Ananias told me when he murdering Dawson, the head-quarters brought me up my coffee." clerk. There's been some kind of a " hold the morning report, then,

until I come to the office. I fear we "Sorry to hear that. Who is the

"Kane. He said Dawson was lying go to town: so get your breakfast about his officer, and he wouldn't stand early. We will ride. I doubt if even an ambulance could get through. Tell

"Kane!" exclaimed Cram, rising. me, Pierce, have you spoken to Waring order, and the lieutenant followed. party rode away, passing the flooded "why, he's one of our best, I never about-about that matter we were

stopped to inquire. We'll ride over to Mine. d'Hervilly's and ask for them. illow came your gate open?" "Mo connais pas; 1 dunno, sare. was lock' last night."

"Why, that's odd," said Cram. "Better bolt it now, or all the cattle along the levee will be in there. You can't lock out the water, though. Who had the key besides Mr. Lascelles or mad-

"Nobody, sare; but there is muddy foots all over the piazza."

"The devil! I'll have to look in for a moment." A nod to Pierce brought mal trip. Cram, with a party of four, him too from the saddle, and the officers handed their reins to the orderwas perhaps the first. Before the driplies. Then together they entered the lieved at nine o'clock every man and gate and strode up the white shell walk, looking curiously about them woman at the barracks was aware that through the dripping shrubbery. foul murder had been done during the Again that dismal howl was raised, night, and that old Lascelles, slain by some unknown hand, slashed and and Pierce, stopping with impatient exclamation, tore half a brick from hacked in a dozen places, according to the yielding border of the walk and the stories afloat, lay in his gloomy old sent it hurtling through the trees. library up the levee road, with a flood With his tail between his legs, the already a foot deep wiping out from the grounds about the house all traces .brute darted from behind a sheltering bush, scurried away around the corner of his assailants. Dr. Denslow, in exof the house, glancing fearfully back, amining the body, found just one deep, then, halting at safe distance, squatted downward stab, entering above the on his haunches and lifted up his upper rib and doubtless reaching the mournful voice again heart-a stab made by a long, straight,

"Whose dog is that?" demanded Cram

"M'sieu' Philippe's; he not now here. He is de brudder to monsieur." At the steps the captain bent and closely examined them and the floor of the low veranda to which they led at the node, with or or; to keep Alphonse and his mother in and every-Both were disfigured by muddy footprints. Pierce would have gone still body else out. farther in the investigation, but his senior held up a warning hand

"Two men have been here," he muttered. "They have tried the door and tried the blinds. Where did you sleep last night, boy?" and with the words he turned suddenly on the negro.

" Did you hear no sound?" "No, sare. I sleep in my bed,-'way back. No, I hear noting,-noting And now the negro's face was twitching, his eyes staring Something in the soldier's stern voice told him that there was tragedy in the air.

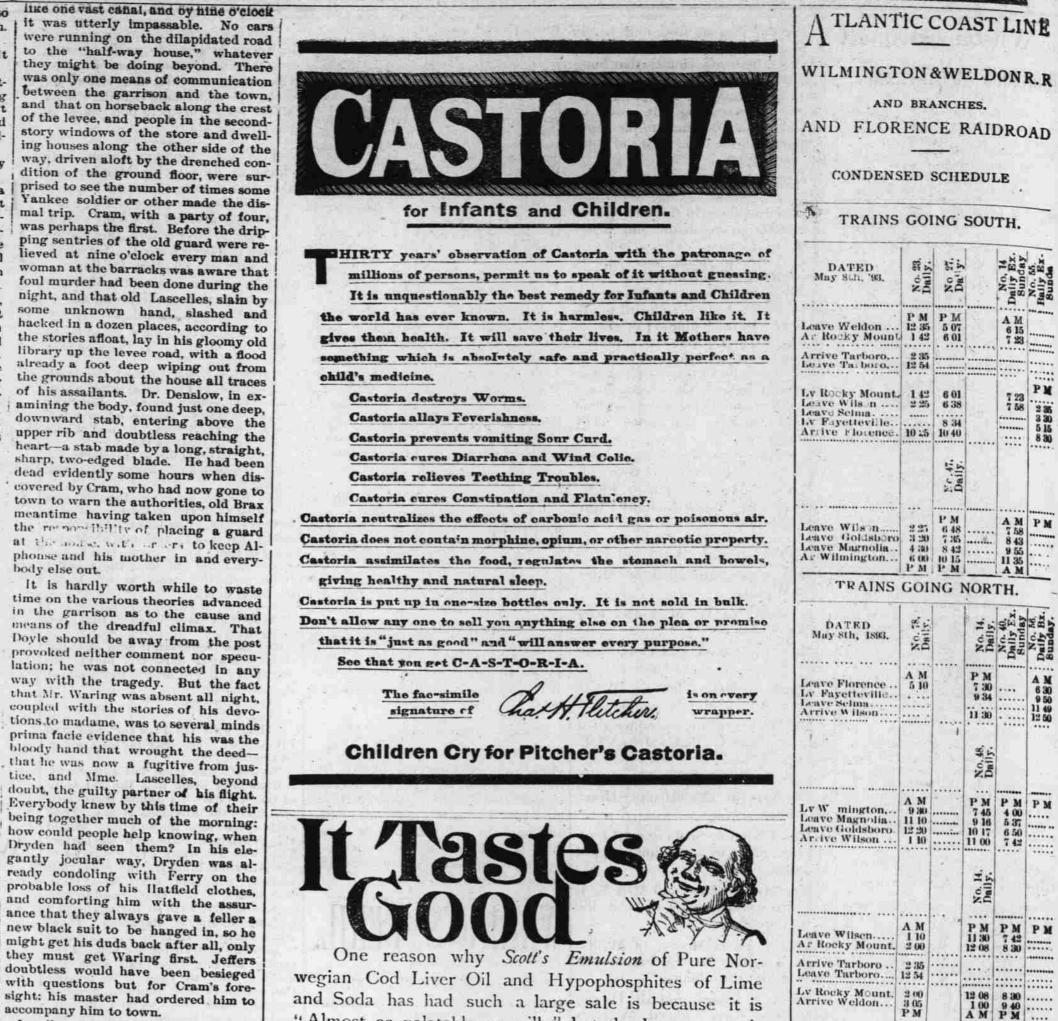
"If this door is locked, go around and open it from within," said Cram, Then, as Alphonse disapbriefly. around the north side, he peared stepped back to the shell walk and followed one of its branches around the other. An instant later Pierce heard him call. Hastening in his wake, the youngster came upon his captain standing under a window, one of whose blinds was hanging partly open, water standing in pools all around him.

"Look here," was all he said, and have both first lieutenants to report pointed upward. absent to-day. You and I may have to

The sill was above the level of their heads, but both could see that the sash was raised. All was darkness within. "Come with me," was Cram's next

Alphonse was unlocking the front homestead where lay the murdered discussing? Has he ever given you door, and now threw it open. Cram man, then, farther on, gazing in mute "He's riotous enough to-night. He any idea that he had received warning strode into the wide hall-way straight curiosity at the closed shutters of the wanted to lick all six of our fellows, of any kind from old Lascelles-or any to a door of the east side. It was premises some infantry satirists had already christened "the dove-cot." What cared they for him or his objectionable helpmate? Still, they could not but note how gloomy and deserted it all appeared, with two feet of water lapping the garden wall. Summoned by his master, Jeffers knuckled his oilskin hat-brim and pointed out the spot where Mr. Waring stood when he knocked the cabman into the mud, but leffers' tongue was tied and his cockney volubility gone. The tracks made by Cram's wagon up the slope were already washed out. Bending forward heels. A broad, flat-topped desk stood | to dodge the blinding storm, the party pushed along the embankment until at last the avenues and alleys to the right gave proof of better drainage. At

accompany him to town.



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heard of his being riotous before. and if I hadn't got there when I did of his friends?" they would probably have kicked him

"Would you mind going down and days ago. letting me talk with Kane? I never knew him to be troublesome before, said Cram, and turned away.

though he sometimes drank a little. He was on pass this evening. "Welf, it's raining cats and dogs, captain, but come along. If you can

stand it I can.'

but he kept on.

captain knows."

stand it, sir."

hands.

the adjutant's office just as its com-A few minutes later the sergeant of the guard threw open one of the wooden horses standing in front. The two compartments in the guard-house, and there sat Kane, his face buried in his through the slit of their ponchos, briskly seated themselves in saddle,

"I ordered him locked in here by and then the colonel hurried forth just himself, because I feared our fellows in time to hail: would hammer him if he were turned "Oh, Cram! one minute." And Cram in with them," explained Mr. Merton, reined about and rode to the side of and at sound of the voice the pris-

the post commander, who stood under oner looked up and saw his commander. the shelter of the broad gallery. dripping with wet. Unsteadily he rose "I wouldn't say anything about this to his feet.

to anyone at headquarters except "Captain," he began, thickly, "I'd Reynolds. There's no one else on the never have done it in the world, sir, staff to whom Waring would apply, is but that blackguard was drunk, sir, there?" and slandering my officer, and I gave "No one, sir. Reynolds is the only him fair warning to quit or I'd hit him.

man I can think of." "Will you send an orderly back with "Ye-es? And what did he say?"

word as soon as you know? "He said-I wouldn't believe it, sir-"Yes, sir, the moment I hear. And-d that Mr. Doyle was that drunk that -shall I send you word from-there" him and some other fellers had lifted -and Cram nodded northward, and him out of the mud and put him to bed then, in a lower tone, "as to Doyle?" up there at-up there at the house, sir, "Oh, damn Doyle! I don't care if he back of Anatole's place. I think the never-" But here the commander of the post regained control of himself, "Ah, you should have steered clear

and with parting wave of the hand of such company, Kane. Did this hapturned back to his office. pen at Anatole's saloon?"

Riding single file up the levee, for "Yes, sir, and them fellers was makthe city road was one long pool, with ing so much noise that the dago turned the swollen river on their left, and the them all out and shut up the shop at slanting torrents of rain obscuring all eleven o'clock, and that's what made objects on the other hand, the party them follow me home in the car and made its way for several squares withabuse me all the way. I couldn't out exchanging a word. Presently the

"You would only have laughed at them if your better judgment hadn't been ruined by liquor. Sorry for you, Kane, but you've been drinking just enough to be a nuisance, and must stay where you are for the night. They'll be sorry for what they said in the

locked. "Open this, Alphonse," he "No, sir. I've had no chance to said.

into a pulp. All were drunk: Kane, too, I should say; and as for Dawson, be sure, he and Mr. Lascelles seemed "I have not the key. It is ever with M'sieu' Lascelles. It is his library." on very excellent terms only a few Cram stepped back, gave one vigor-ous kick with a heavy riding-boot, and "Well, I wish I had spoken myself," | the frail door flew open with a crash.

For a moment the darkness was such That morning, with two first lieu- that no object could be distinguished tenants absent without leave, the rewithin. The negro servant hung back, port of Light Battery "X" went into trembling from some indefinable dread. The captain, his hand on the mander and his junior subaltern went door-knob, stepped quickly into the out and silently mounted the dripping gloomy apartment, Pierce close at his

orderlies, with their heads poked in the center of the room. Some shelves and books were dimly visible against the wall. Some of the draw ers of the desk were open, and there

others were strewn in the big rattan chair, some on the floor. Two studentlamps could be dimly distinguished, one on the big desk, another on a little reading-table placed not far from the south window, whose blinds, half open, admitted almost the only light that entered the room. With its head near this reading-table and faintly visible, a bamboo lounge stretched its length towards the southward windows, where all was darkness, and something vague and indistinguisha-ble lay extended upon the lounge. Cram marched half-way across the floor, then stopped short, glanced down, stepped quickly to one side, shifting his heavily-booted foot as

as those encountered without. "Take care," he whispered, and motioned warningly to Pierce. "Come here and open these shutters, Alphonse," were the next words. But once again that prolonged, dismal, mournful howl was heard under the south window, and the negro, seized with uncontrollable panic, turned back

and clung trembling to the opposite wall. "Send one of the men for the post sur-

geon at once, then come back here," said the captain, and Pierce hastened to the gate. As he returned, the west shutters were being thrown open. There was light when he reentered the room," and this was what he saw: On the

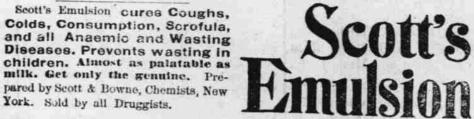
was a litter of papers on the desk, and Encopart street they constance, theres though to avoid some such muddy pool

going on to report the tragedy to the police, Cram turning to his right and following the broad thoroughfare another mile, until Jeffers, indicating a big, old-fashioned, broad-galleried southern house standing in the midst of grounds once trim and handsome. but now showing signs of neglect and penury, simply said; "'Ere, sir." And here the party dismounted. Cram entered the gate and pulled a

langing bell. The door was almost instantly opened by a colored girl, at whose side, with eager joyous face, was the pretty child he had seen so often playing about the Laseelles homestead, and the eager joyous look faded instantly away.

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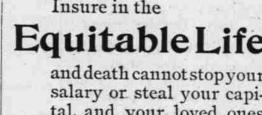
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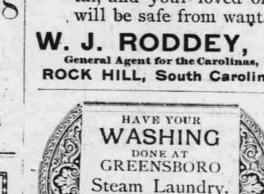
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PM

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Train leaves Tarboro, via. Albemarle & Raleigh R. R., daily, except Sunday, 5 00 p m, Sunday 3.00 p m; arrive Plymouth 9:20 p m, 5:20 p m. Returning leaves Plymouth daily, except Sunday 5:30 a m, Sunday 10:00 a m; arrive Tarboro 10:25 a m, and 12:20 p m. Train on Midland N. C. Branch leaves

Goldsboro daily, except Sunday, 6:00 a m; arrive Smithfield 7:30 a m. Return-ing leaves Smithfield 8:00 a m; arrives

Returning leaves Springhope 8:00 a m; arrives Rocky Mount 6:15 p m; arrives Nash-ville 6:50 p m; Springhope, 7:15 p m. Returning leaves Springhope 8:00 a m. Nashville, 8:35 a m; arriving at Rocky Mount 9:15 a m, daily, except Sunday Train on Latta Branch Florence R R leaves Latta 7 30 p m; arrive Dunbar 8 40 p m. Returning leave Dunbar 6 00 a m; arrive Latta 7 15 a m. Daily except Sunday.

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