

THE WORLD AND ALL

By CHARLES B. DRISCOLL

IN NEW YORK

Sam Hampton is an optometrist, with a shop in Rector street, just around the corner from the Wall street financial district. All day Sam Hampton works in his little second floor room, testing the eyes that have been strained by the reading of much ticker tape in the midst of great turmoil.

But every night, from soon after dinner until suburban bedtime, Sam Hampton may be found working away in another little room in the rear of a jewelry shop in South Broadway, Yonkers. The work is the same kind of work that busies this indefatigable worker throughout the day. Fitting glasses, testing eyes, repairing frames, making the hundreds of delicate adjustments that require so much patience and nice nervous poise.

Now, when I return home in the evening, after a day in Times Square, I am almost too tired to write these little vignettes of life and opinion that I love so well to write. All too frequently I do myself the kindness of pronouncing myself too tired to write, and spend the evening luxuriously reading the really good writings of other men.

But Sam Hampton isn't too tired to hustle from his dinner table down to his shop and to walk back home near midnight with a springy step and an ebullient spirit. I am amazed at such vitality; such industry!

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I discovered, quite by accident, that this industrious Hampton is a neighbor of mine in Yonkers. I stepped into his suburban shop to have my glasses adjusted. There was a customer ahead of me, and from the conversation of this customer and Hampton I discovered that both were from my own part of the country—Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri. So there was little work done during the rest of that evening. Until midnight the three of us talked of Kansas and Nebraska and Missouri.

"My father, Wade Hampton," said the optometrist to me, "used to buy cattle from your father at Wichita."

So the world was doing its favorite trick of making itself smaller to accommodate friends.

The other customer said his name is Bennett, and that he used to live at Scottsbluff, Neb.

"Did you ever know a farmer there that was known as 'Barefoot Bill?'" I asked.

"He was my neighbor," replied Bennett, "and I was once a witness for him in a lawsuit."

"My brother," I came back, excitedly, "was Bill's attorney in that lawsuit!"

And three westerners spent the rest of a pleasant evening discussing the smallness of the globe and the glories of the prairie states.