

# A Journey in Other Worlds

by John Jacob Astar

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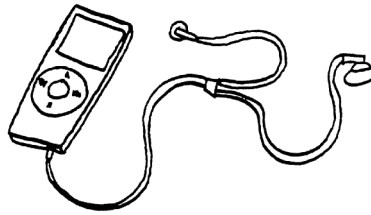
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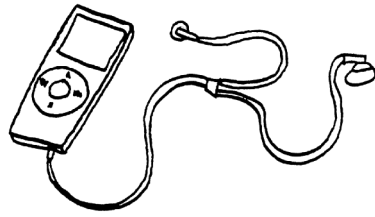
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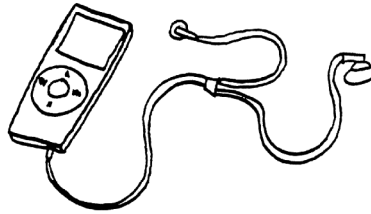
## *Preface*

The protracted struggle between science and the classics appears to be drawing to a close, with victory about to perch on the banner of science, as a perusal of almost any university or college catalogue shows. While a limited knowledge of both Greek and Latin is important for the correct use of our own language, the amount till recently required, in my judgment, has been absurdly out of proportion to the intrinsic value of these branches, or perhaps more correctly roots, of study. The classics have been thoroughly and painfully threshed out, and it seems impossible that anything new can be unearthed. We may equal the performances of the past, but there is no opportunity to surpass them or produce anything original. Even the much-vaunted “mental training” argument is beginning to pall; for would not anything equally difficult give as good developing results, while by learning a live matter we kill two birds with one stone? There can be no question that there are many forces and influences in Nature whose existence we as yet little more than suspect. How much more interesting it would be if, instead of

reiterating our past achievements, the magazines and literature of the period should devote their consideration to what we do NOT know! It is only through investigation and research that inventions come; we may not find what we are in search of, but may discover something of perhaps greater moment. It is probable that the principal glories of the future will be found in as yet but little trodden paths, and as Prof. Cortlandt justly says at the close of his history, "Next to religion, we have most to hope from science."



*Part One*



1

## *Jupiter*

**J**upiter—the magnificent planet with a diameter of 86,500 miles, having 119 times the surface and 1,300 times the volume of the earth—lay beneath them.

They had often seen it in the terrestrial sky, emitting its strong, steady ray, and had thought of that far-away planet, about which till recently so little had been known, and a burning desire had possessed them to go to it and explore its mysteries. Now, thanks to APERGY, the force whose existence the ancients suspected, but of which they knew so little, all things were possible.

Ayrault manipulated the silk-covered glass handles, and the Callisto moved on slowly in comparison with its recent speed, and all remained glued to their telescopes as they peered through the rushing clouds, now forming and now dissolving before their eyes. What transports of delight, what ecstatic bliss, was theirs! Men had discovered and mastered the secret of apery, and now, “little lower than the angels,” they could soar through space, leaving even planets and comets behind.

“Is it not strange,” said Dr. Cortlandt, “that though it has been known for over a century that bodies charged with unlike electricities attract one another, and those charged with like repel, no one thought of utilizing the counterpart of gravitation? In the nineteenth century, savants and Indian jugglers performed experiments with their disciples and masses of inert matter, by causing them to remain without visible support at some distance from the ground; and while many of these, of course, were quacks, some were on the right track, though they did not push their research.”

President Bearwarden and Ayrault assented. They were steering for an apparently hard part of the planet’s surface, about a degree and a half north of its equator.

“Since Jupiter’s axis is almost at right angles to the plane of its orbit,” said the doctor, “being inclined only about one degree and a half, instead of twenty-three and a half, as was the earth’s till nearly so recently, it will be possible for us to have any climate we wish, from constantly warm at the equator to constantly cool or cold as we approach the poles, without being troubled by extremes of winter and summer.”

Until the Callisto entered the planet’s atmosphere, its five moons appeared like silver shields against the black sky, but now things were looking more terrestrial, and they began to feel at home. Bearwarden put down his note-book, and Ayrault returned a photograph to his pocket, while all three gazed at their new abode. Beneath them was a vast continent variegated by chains of lakes and rivers stretching away in all directions except toward the equator, where lay a placid ocean as far as their telescopes could

pierce. To the eastward were towering and massive mountains, and along the southern border of the continent smoking volcanoes, while toward the west they saw forests, gently rolling plains, and tablelands that would have satisfied a poet or set an agriculturist's heart at rest. "How I should like to mine those hills for copper, or drain the swamps to the south!" exclaimed Col. Bearwarden. "The Lake Superior mines and the reclamation of the Florida Everglades would be nothing to this."

"Any inhabitants we may find here have so much land at their disposal that they will not need to drain swamps on account of pressure of population for some time," put in the doctor.

"I hope we may find some four-legged inhabitants," said Ayrault, thinking of their explosive magazine rifles. "If Jupiter is passing through its Jurassic or Mesozoic period, there must be any amount of some kind of game." Just then a quiver shook the Callisto, and glancing to the right they noticed one of the volcanoes in violent eruption. Smoke filled the air in clouds, hot stones and then floods of lava poured from the crater, while even the walls of the hermetically sealed Callisto could not arrest the thunderous crashes that made the interior of the car resound.

"Had we not better move on?" said Bearwarden, and accordingly they went toward the woods they had first seen. Finding a firm strip of land between the forest and an arm of the sea, they gently grounded the Callisto, and not being altogether sure how the atmosphere of their new abode would suit terrestrial lungs, or what its pressure to the square inch might be, they cautiously opened a port-hole a crack, retaining their hold upon it with its screw. Instantly

there was a rush and a whistling sound as of escaping steam, while in a few moments their barometer stood at thirty-six inches, whereupon they closed the opening.

“I fancy,” said Dr. Cortlandt, “we had better wait now till we become accustomed to this pressure. I do not believe it will go much higher, for the window made but little resistance when we shut it.”

Finding they were not inconvenienced by a pressure but little greater than that of a deep coal-mine, they again opened the port, whereupon their barometer showed a further rise to forty-two, and then remained stationary. Finding also that the chemical composition of the air suited them, and that they had no difficulty in breathing, the pressure being the same as that sustained by a diver in fourteen feet of water, they opened a door and emerged. They knew fairly well what to expect, and were not disturbed by their new conditions. Though they had apparently gained a good deal in weight as a result of their ethereal journey, this did not incommode them; for though Jupiter’s volume is thirteen hundred times that of the earth, on account of its lesser specific gravity, it has but three hundred times the mass—i. e., it would weigh but three hundred times as much. Further, although a cubic foot of water or anything else weighs 2.5 as much as on earth, objects near the equator, on account of Jupiter’s rapid rotation, weigh one fifth less than they do at the poles, by reason of the centrifugal force. Influenced by this fact, and also because they were 483,000,000 miles from the sun, instead of 92,000,000 as on earth, they had steered for the northern limit of Jupiter’s tropics. And, in addition to this, they could easily apply the apergetic power in any degree to themselves when beyond the limits

of the Callisto, and so be attracted to any extent, from twice the pull they receive from gravitation on earth to almost nothing.

Bearwarden and Ayrault shouldered their rifles, while Dr. Cortlandt took a repeating shot-gun with No. 4 shot, and, having also some hunting-knives and a sextant, all three set out in a northwesterly direction. The ground was rather soft, and a warm vapor seemed to rise from it. To the east the sky was veiled by dense clouds of smoke from the towering volcanoes, while on their left the forest seemed to extend without limit. Clumps of huge ferns were scattered about, and the ground was covered with curious tracks.

“Jupiter is evidently passing through a Carboniferous or Devonian period such as existed on earth, though, if consistent with its size, it should be on a vastly larger scale,” said the doctor. “I never believed in the theory,” he continued, “that the larger the planet the smaller should be its inhabitants, and always considered it a makeshift, put forward in the absence of definite knowledge, the idea being apparently that the weight of very large creatures would be too great for their strength. Of the fact that mastodons and creatures far larger than any now living on earth existed there, we have absolute proof, though gravitation must have been practically the same then as now.”

Just here they came upon a number of huge bones, evidently the remains of some saurian, and many times the size of a grown crocodile. On passing a growth of most luxuriant vegetation, they saw a half-dozen sacklike objects, and drawing nearer noticed that the tops began to swell, and at the same time became lighter in colour. Just as the doctor was about to investigate one of them with

his duck-shot, the enormously inflated tops of the creatures collapsed with a loud report, and the entire group soared away. When about to alight, forty yards off, they distended membranous folds in the manner of wings, which checked their descent, and on touching the ground remained where they were without rebound.

“We expected to find all kinds of reptiles and birds,” exclaimed the doctor. “But I do not know how we should class those creatures. They seem to have pneumatic feet and legs, for their motion was certainly not produced like that of frogs.”

When the party came up with them the heads again began to swell.

“I will perforate the air-chamber of one,” said Col. Bearwarden, withdrawing the explosive cartridge from the barrel of his rifle and substituting one with a solid ball. “This will doubtless disable one so that we can examine it.”

Just as they were about to rise, he shot the largest through the neck. All but the wounded one, soared off, while Bearwarden, Ayrault, and Cortlandt approached to examine it more closely.

“You see,” said Cortlandt, “this vertebrate—for that is as definitely as we can yet describe it—forces a great pressure of air into its head and neck, which, by the action of valves, it must allow to rush into its very rudimentary lower extremities, distending them with such violence that the body is shot upward and forward. You may have noticed the tightly inflated portion underneath as they left the ground.”

While speaking he had moved rather near, when suddenly a partially concealed mouth opened, showing the unmistakable tongue

and fangs of a serpent. It emitted a hissing sound, and the small eyes gleamed maliciously.

“Do you believe it is a poisonous species?” asked Ayrault.

“I suspect it is,” replied the doctor; “for, though it is doubtless able to leap with great accuracy upon its prey, we saw it took some time to recharge the upper air-chamber, so that, were it not armed with poison glands, it would fall an easy victim to its more powerful and swifter contemporaries, and would soon become extinct.”

“As it will be unable to spring for some time,” said Bearwarden, “we might as well save it the disappointment of trying,” and, snapping the used shell from his rifle, he fired an explosive ball into the reptile, whereupon about half the body disappeared, while a sickening odour arose. Although the sun was still far above the horizon, the rapidity with which it was descending showed that the short night of less than five hours would soon be upon them; and though short it might be very dark, for they were in the tropics, and the sun, going down perpendicularly, must also pass completely around the globe, instead of, as in northern latitudes on earth in summer, approaching the horizon obliquely, and not going far below it. A slight and diffused sound here seemed to rise from the ground all about them, for which they could not account. Presently it became louder, and as the sun touched the horizon, it poured forth in prolonged strains. The large trumpet-shaped lilies, reeds, and heliotropes seemed fairly to throb as they raised their anthem to the sky and the setting sun, while the air grew dark with clouds of birds that gradually alighted on the ground, until, as the chorus grew fainter and gradually ceased, they flew back to their nests. The three

companions had stood astonished while this act was played. The doctor then spoke:

“This is the most marvellous development of Nature I have seen, for its wonderful divergence from, and yet analogy to, what takes place on earth. You know our flowers offer honey, as it were, as bait to insects, that in eating or collecting it they may catch the pollen on their legs and so carry it to other flowers, perhaps of the opposite sex. Here flowers evidently appeal to the sense of hearing instead of taste, and make use of birds, of which there are enormous numbers, instead of winged insects, of which I have seen none, one being perhaps the natural result of the other. The flowers have become singers by long practice, or else, those that were most musical having had the best chance to reproduce, we have a neat illustration of the ‘survival of the fittest.’ The sound is doubtless produced by a shrinking of the fibres as the sun withdraws its heat, in which case we may expect another song at sunrise, when the same result will be effected by their expanding.”

Searching for a camping-place in which to pass the coming hours, they saw lights flitting about like will-o’-the-wisps, but brighter and intermittent.

“They seem to be as bright as sixteen-candle-power lamps, but the light is yellower, and appears to emanate from a comparatively large surface, certainly nine or ten inches square,” said the doctor.

They soon gave up the chase, however, for the lights were continually moving and frequently went out. While groping in the growing darkness, they came upon a brown object about the size of a small dog and close to the ground. It flew off with a humming

insect sound, and as it did so it showed the brilliant phosphorescent glow they had observed.

“That is a good-sized fire-fly,” said Bearwarden. “Evidently the insects here are on the same scale as everything else. They are like the fire-flies in Cuba, which the Cubans are said to put into a glass box and get light enough from to read by. Here they would need only one, if it could be induced to give its light continuously.”

Having found an open space on high ground, they sat down, and Bearwarden struck his repeater, which, for convenience, had been arranged for Jupiter time, dividing the day into ten hours, beginning at noon, midnight being therefore five o’clock.

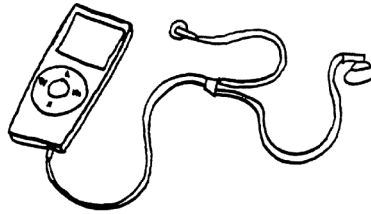
“Twenty minutes past four,” said he, “which would correspond to about a quarter to eleven on earth. As the sun rises at half-past seven, it will be dark about three hours, for the time between dawn and daylight will, of course, be as short as that we have just experienced between sunset and night.”

“If we stay here long,” said the doctor, “I suppose we shall become accustomed, like sailors, to taking our four, or in this case five, hours on duty, and five hours off.”

“Or,” added Ayrault, “we can sleep ten consecutive hours and take the next ten for exploring and hunting, having the sun for one half the time and the moons for the other.”

Bearwarden and Cortlandt now rolled themselves in their blankets and were soon asleep, while Ayrault, whose turn it was to watch till the moons rose—for they had not yet enough confidence in their new domain to sleep in darkness simultaneously—leaned his back against a rock and lighted his pipe. In the distance he saw the

torrents of fiery lava from the volcanoes reflected in the sky, and faintly heard their thunderous crashes, while the fire-flies twinkled unconcernedly in the hollow, and the night winds swayed the fernlike branches. Then he gazed at the earth, which, but little above the horizon, shone with a faint but steady ray, and his mind's eye ran beyond his natural vision while he pictured to himself the girl of his heart, wishing that by some communion of spirits he might convey his thoughts to her, and receive hers. It was now the first week of January on earth. He could almost see her house and the snow-clad trees in the park, and knew that at that hour she was dressing for dinner, and hoped and believed that he was in her heart. While he thus mused, one moon after another rose, each at a different phase, till three were at once in the sky. Adjusting the electric protection-wires that were to paralyze any creature that attempted to come within the circle, and would arouse them by ringing a bell, he knocked the ashes from his pipe, rolled himself in a blanket, and was soon asleep beside his friends.



2

## *Antecedental*

**C**ome in!” sounded a voice, as Dr. Cortlandt and Dick Ayrault tapped at the door of the President of the Terrestrial Axis Straightening Company’s private office on the morning of the 21st of June, A. D. 2000. Col. Bearwarden sat at his capacious desk, the shadows passing over his face as April clouds flit across the sun. He was a handsome man, and young for the important post he filled—being scarcely forty—a graduate of West Point, with great executive ability, and a wonderful engineer. “Sit down, chappies,” said he; “we have still a half hour before I begin to read the report I am to make to the stockholders and representatives of all the governments, which is now ready. I know YOU smoke,” passing a box of Havanas to the professor.

Prof. Cortlandt, LL. D., United States Government expert, appointed to examine the company’s calculations, was about fifty, with a high forehead, greyish hair, and quick, grey eyes, a geologist and astronomer, and altogether as able a man, in his own way, as Col. Bearwarden in his. Richard Ayrault, a large stockholder and one

of the honorary vice-presidents in the company, was about thirty, a university man, by nature a scientist, and engaged to one of the prettiest society girls, who was then a student at Vassar, in the beautiful town of Poughkeepsie.

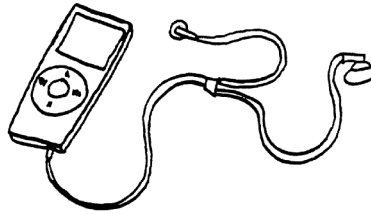
“Knowing the way you carry things in your mind, and the difficulty of rattling you,” said Cortlandt, “we have dropped in on our way to hear the speech that I would not miss for a fortune. Let us know if we bother you.”

“Impossible, dear boy,” replied the president genially. “Since I survived your official investigations, I think I deserve some of your attention informally.”

“Here are my final examinations,” said Cortlandt, handing Bearwarden a roll of papers. “I have been over all your figures, and testify to their accuracy in the appendix I have added.”

So they sat and chatted about the enterprise that interested Cortlandt and Ayrault almost as much as Bearwarden himself. As the clock struck eleven, the president of the company put on his hat, and, saying au revoir to his friends, crossed the street to the Opera House, in which he was to read a report that would be copied in all the great journals and heard over thousands of miles of wire in every part of the globe. When he arrived, the vast building was already filled with a distinguished company, representing the greatest intelligence, wealth, and powers of the world. Bearwarden went in by the stage entrance, exchanging greetings as he did so with officers of the company and directors who had come to hear him. Cortlandt and Ayrault entered by the regular door, the former going to the Government representatives’ box, the latter to join his fiancée, Sylvia

Preston, who was there with her mother. Bearwarden had a roll of manuscript at hand, but so well did he know his speech that he scarcely glanced at it. After being introduced by the chairman of the meeting, and seeing that his audience was all attention, he began, holding himself erect, his clear, powerful voice making every part of the building ring.



3

## *President Bearwarden's Speech*

**T**o the Bondholders and Stockholders of the Terrestrial Axis Straightening Company and Representatives of Earthly Governments.

*GENTLEMEN,*

*You know that the objects of this company are, to straighten the axis of the earth, to combine the extreme heat of summer with the intense cold of winter and produce a uniform temperature for each degree of latitude the year round. At present the earth's axis—that is, the line passing through its centre and the two poles—is inclined to the ecliptic about twenty-three and a half degrees. Our summer is produced by the northern hemisphere's leaning at that angle towards the sun, and our winter by its turning that much from it. In one case the sun's rays are caused to shine more perpendicularly, and in the other more obliquely. This wabbling, like that of a top, is the sole cause of the seasons; since, owing to the eccentricity of our orbit, the earth is actually fifteen hundred thousand miles nearer the sun during our winter, in the northern hemisphere, than in summer. That*

*there is no limit to a planet's inclination, and that inclination is not essential, we have astronomical proof. Venus's axis is inclined to the plane of her orbit seventy-five degrees, so that the arctic circle comes within fifteen degrees of the equator, and the tropics also extend to latitude seventy-five degrees, or within fifteen degrees of the poles, producing great extremes of heat and cold.*

*Venus is made still more difficult of habitation by the fact that she rotates on her axis in the same time that she revolves about the sun, in the same way that the moon does about the earth, so that one side must be perpetually frozen while the other is parched.*

*In Uranus we see the axis tilted still further, so that the arctic circle descends to the equator. The most varied climate must therefore prevail during its year, whose length exceeds eighty-one of ours.*

*The axis of Mars is inclined about twenty-eight and two thirds degrees to the plane of its orbit; consequently its seasons must be very similar to ours, the extremes of heat and cold being somewhat greater.*

*In Jupiter we have an illustration of a planet whose axis is almost at right angles to the plane of its orbit, being inclined but about a degree and a half. The hypothetical inhabitants of this majestic planet must therefore have perpetual summer at the equator, eternal winter at the poles, and in the temperate regions everlasting spring. On account of the straightness of the axis, however, even the polar inhabitants—if there are any—are not oppressed by a six months' night, for all except those at the VERY pole have a sunrise and a sunset every ten hours—the exact day being nine hours, fifty five minutes, and twenty-eight seconds. The warmth of the tropics is also*

*tempered by the high winds that must result from the rapid whirl on its axis, every object at the equator being carried around by this at the rate of 27,600 miles an hour, or over three thousand miles farther than the earth's equator moves in twenty-four hours.*

*The inclination of the axis of our own planet has also frequently considerably exceeded that of Mars, and again has been but little greater than Jupiter's at least, this is by all odds the most reasonable explanation of the numerous Glacial periods through which our globe has passed, and of the recurring mild spells, probably lasting thousands of years, in which elephants, mastodons, and other semi-tropical vertebrates roamed in Siberia, some of which died so recently that their flesh, preserved by the cold, has been devoured by the dogs of modern explorers.*

*It is not to be supposed that the inclining of the axes of Jupiter, Venus, the Earth, and the other planets, is now fixed; in some cases it is known to be changing. As long ago as 1890, Major-Gen. A. W. Drayson, of the British Army, showed, in a work entitled *Untrodden Ground in Astronomy and Geology*, that, as a result of the second rotation of the earth, the inclination of its axis was changing, it having been 23@ 28' 23" on January 1, 1750, 23@ 27' 55.3" on January 1, 1800, and 23@ 27' 30.9" on January 1, 1850; and by calculation one hundred and ten years ago showed that in 1900 (one hundred years ago) it would be 23@ 27' 08.8". This natural straightening is, of course, going on, and we are merely about to anticipate it. When this improvement was mooted, all agreed that the **EXTREMES** of heat and cold could well be spared. 'Balance those of summer against those of winter by partially straightening the axis; reduce the*

*inclination from twenty-three degrees, thirty minutes, to about fifteen degrees, but let us stop there,' many said. Before we had gone far, however, we found it would be best to make the work complete. This will reclaim and make productive the vast areas of Siberia and the northern part of this continent, and will do much for the antarctic regions; but there will still be change in temperature; a wind blowing towards the equator will always be colder than one blowing from it, while the slight eccentricity of the orbit will supply enough change to awaken recollections of seasons in our eternal spring.*

*The way to accomplish this is to increase the weight of the pole leaving the sun, by increasing the amount of material there for the sun to attract, and to lighten the pole approaching or turning towards the sun, by removing some heavy substance from it, and putting it preferably at the opposite pole. This shifting of ballast is most easily accomplished, as you will readily perceive, by confining and removing water, which is easily moved and has a considerable weight. How we purpose to apply these aqueous brakes to check the wabbling of the earth, by means of the attraction of the sun, you will now see.*

*From Commander Fillmore, of the Arctic Shade and the Committee on Bulkheads and Dams, I have just received the following by cable telephone: 'The Arctic Ocean is now in condition to be pumped out in summer and to have its average depth increased one hundred feet by the dams in winter. We have already fifty million square yards of windmill turbine surface in position and ready to move. The cables bringing us currents from the dynamos at Niagara Falls are connected with our motors, and those from the*

*tidal dynamos at the Bay of Fundy will be in contact when this reaches you, at which moment the pumps will begin. In several of the landlocked gulfs and bays our system of confining is so complete, that the surface of the water can be raised two hundred feet above sea-level. The polar bears will soon have to use artificial ice. Perhaps the cheers now ringing without may reach you over the telephone.*

The audience became greatly interested, and when the end of the telephone was applied to a microphone the room fairly rang with exultant cheers, and those looking through a kintograph (visual telegraph) terminating in a camera obscura on the shores of Baffin Bay were able to see engineers and workmen waving and throwing up their caps and falling into one another's arms in ecstasies of delight. When the excitement subsided, the president continued:

*Chairman Wetmore, of the Committee on Excavations and Embankments in Wilkesland and the Antarctic Continent, reports: 'Two hundred and fifty thousand square miles are now hollowed out and enclosed sufficiently to hold water to an average depth of four hundred feet. Every summer, when the basin is allowed to drain, we can, if necessary, extend our reservoir, and shall have the best season of the year for doing work until the earth has permanent spring. Though we have comparatively little water or tidal power, the earth's crust is so thin at this latitude, on account of the flattening, that by sinking our tubular boilers and pipes to a depth of a few thousand feet we have secured so terrific a volume of superheated steam that, in connection with our wind turbines, we shall have no difficulty in raising half a cubic mile of water a minute to our*

*enclosure, which is but little above sea-level, and into which, till the pressure increases, we can fan or blow the water, so that it can be full three weeks after our longest day, or, since the present unimproved arrangement gives the indigenes but one day and night a year, I will add the 21st day of December.*

*We shall be able to find use for much of the potential energy of the water in the reservoir when we allow it to escape in June, in melting some of the accumulated polar ice-cap, thereby decreasing still further the weight of this pole, in lighting and warming ourselves until we get the sun's light and heat, in extending the excavations, and in charging the storage batteries of the ships at this end of the line. Everything will be ready when you signal "Raise water."*

"Let me add parenthetically," said Bearwarden, "that this means of obtaining power by steam boilers sunk to a great depth is much to be commended; for, though the amount of heat we can withdraw is too small to have much effect, the farther towards the centre our globe can be cooled the deeper will the water of the oceans be able to penetrate—since it is its conversion into steam that prevents the water from working its way in farther—and the more dry land we shall have."

*You see, the president continued, the storage capacity at the south pole is not quite as great as at the north, because it is more difficult to excavate a basin than to close the exits of one that already exists, which is what we have done in the arctic. The work is also not so nearly complete, since it will not be necessary to use the southern reservoir for storing weight for six months, or until the south pole, which is now at its maximum declination from the sun, is turned*

*towards it and begins to move away; then, by increasing the amount of matter there, and at the same time lightening the north pole, and reversing the process every six months, we decrease the speed at which the departing pole leaves the sun and at which the approaching pole advances. The north pole, we see, will be a somewhat more powerful lever than the south for working the globe to a straight position, but we may be sure that the latter, in connection with the former, will be able to hold up its end.*

*[The building here fairly shook with applause, so that, had the arctic workers used the microphone, they might have heard in the enthusiastic uproar a good counterpart of their own period.]*

*I only regret, the president continued, that when we began this work the most marvellous force yet discovered—apergy—was not sufficiently understood to be utilized, for it would have eased our labours to the point of almost eliminating them. But we have this consolation: it was in connection with our work that its applicability was discovered, so that had we and all others postponed our great undertaking on the pretext of waiting for a new force, apergy might have continued to lie dormant for centuries. With this force, obtained by simply blending negative and positive electricity with electricity of the third element or state, and charging a body sufficiently with this fluid, gravitation is nullified or partly reversed, and the earth repels the body with the same or greater power than that with which it still attracts or attracted it, so that it may be suspended or caused to move away into space. Sic itur ad astra, we may say. With this force and everlasting spring before us, what may we not achieve? We may some day be able to visit the planets, though many may say that,*

*since the axes of most of those we have considered are more inclined than ours, they would rather stay here. 'Blessed are they that shall inherit the earth,'” he went on, turning a four-foot globe with its axis set vertically and at right angles to a yellow globe labelled “Sun”; and again waxing eloquent, he added: “We are the instruments destined to bring about the accomplishment of that prophecy, for never in the history of the world has man reared so splendid a monument to his own genius as he will in straightening the axis of the planet.*

*No one need henceforth be troubled by sudden change, and every man can have perpetually the climate he desires. Northern Europe will again luxuriate in a climate that favoured the elephants that roamed in northern Asia and Switzerland. To produce these animals and the food they need, it is not necessary to have great heat, but merely to prevent great cold, half the summer’s sun being absorbed in melting the winter’s accumulation of ice.*

*When the axis has reached a point at which it inclines but about twelve degrees, it will become necessary to fill the antarctic reservoir in June and the Arctic Ocean in December, in order to check the straightening, since otherwise it might get beyond the perpendicular and swing the other way. When this motion is completely arrested, I suggest that we blow up the Aleutian Isles and enlarge Bering Strait, so as to allow what corresponds to the Atlantic Gulf Stream in the Pacific to enter the Arctic Archipelago, which I have calculated will raise the average temperature of that entire region about thirty degrees, thereby still further increasing the amount of available land.*

Ocean currents, being the result of the prevailing winds, which will be more regular than at present, can be counted upon to continue practically as they are. It may not be plain to you why the trade winds do not blow towards the equator due south and north, since the equator has much the same effect on air that a stove has in the centre of a room, causing an ascending current towards the ceiling, which moves off in straight lines in all directions on reaching it, its place being taken by cold currents moving in opposite directions along the floor. Picture to yourselves the ascending currents at the equator moving off to the poles from which they came. As they move north they are continually coming to parts of the globe having smaller circles of latitude than those they have left, and therefore not moved forward as rapidly by the earth's daily rotation as the latitudes nearer the equator. The winds consequently run ahead of the surface, and so move east of north—the earth turning towards the east—while the heavier colder surface currents, rushing towards the equator to take the place of the ascending column, coming from regions where the surface whirls comparatively slowly to those where it is rotating faster, are continually left behind, and so move southwest; while south of the equator a corresponding motion results. Though this is not the most exact explanation, it may serve to make the action clear. I will add, that if any one prefers a colder or a warmer climate than that of the place in which he lives, he need only go north or south for an hour; or, if he prefers his own latitude, he can rise a few thousand feet in the air, or descend to one of the worked-out coal-mines which are now used as sanitariums, and secure his object by a slight change of altitude. Let us speed the departure of racking

*changes and extremes of climate, and prepare to welcome what we believe prevails in paradise—namely, everlasting spring.*

*Appended to the address was the report of the Government Examining Committee, which ran: “We have critically examined the Terrestrial Axis Straightening Company’s figures and calculations, also its statements involving natural philosophy, physics, and astronomy, all of which we find correct, and hereby approve.*

*[Signed]*

*For the Committee: HENRY CHELMSFORD CORTLANDT*

*Chairman.*

The Board of Directors having ratified the acts of its officers, and passed congratulatory resolutions, the meeting adjourned sine die.

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