

One Hundred Years Hence

(New York World)

Feb. 1. 2011. Seven o'clock In the morning. The closed shutters prolong the night. John Smith sleeps peacefully. Suddenly at his bedside the clapper of the phonograph-alarm trembles and produces sweetly harmonious sounds.

John opens his eyes. Reaching out his hand he finds an electric button, whlct he presses. Automatically the shutters open, the window closes, and the sunlight pour, into the room.

John Smith's chamber is furnished with taste and even with a certain amount of luxury: not because he is rich, but that in this twenty-first century luxury costs little and no one is poor. The brass bed is no longer that heap of blankets, feathers, wool, and hair against which hyglenists used to rail. A metal mattress supports pneumatic cushions inflated with air, the temperature of which is regulated at pleasure. All Is ready for his toilet and his bath.

Through the room the air circulates freely, ceaselessly renewed by ingenious mechanism. Within the. wall conduits of water, warmed by a central electric furnace, distribute everywhere an equal heat In the cold season. In summer the same conduits serve to cool the air.

Such Is the apartment occupied by John Smith on the forty-fifth floor of One Hundred and Eighteenth avenue. New York.

But Mr. Smith has not yet risen He Is talking to the table beside his bed.

"I want a cup of synthetic cocoa, very hot." he says.

In a few minutes the table opens and the aromatic breakfast appears before the eyes of the hungry man. This is no magic table: no spirit is concealed in it: It Is simply provided with a microphone by means of which Mr. Smith expres.es his wants to the officials of the public alimentation service, which has Its branches on the ground floor of every house of any importance.

While drinking his chemically produced cocoa Mr. Smith listens to the morning papers. Every house with 'modern conveniences' communicates with a central information bureau which gives it at all hours the news only to slip a small coin into a slot, and a speaking trumpet Is uncovered, which at once begins in a sonorous voice to recite the telegrams of the night, the news items, the political news, the stock quotations. literary and dramatic criticisms. When Mr. Smith has heard enough o! one article he presses an electric button and the voice tells something else. This continues till his toilet is finished.

Mr. Smith Is something of a dandy. He is dressed In a full tunic in Grecian style, which sets off his powerful and youthful figure and allow a perfect ease of movement. His shoes are polished by mechanical brushes, operated by electric buttons.

What vehicle shall he take to go to his business? The railway that runs under every street? Thr moving sidewalk that passes before all the shop fronts? Shall he go on foot over the innumerable bridges which unite all the buildings of the city at all heights? He deddes upon an aerotaxi. Let us follow him in the elevator, which sets him down upon the terrace of his dwelling un-der a sky that Is shadowed by great wings that vibrate with the sirens of the

aerobuses.

A Harbor in the Air

The sky resembles the harbor of a great port in which multitudes of vessels are moving in every direction. Aerocabs, with polished hoods, buzz about like big beetles. The ventripotent Tottenvillie-Pougkeepsie aerobus passes like a flash in a whirlwind. As it is scarcely 8 o'clock few private airships, with solemn footmen in livery and gauntlets, are seen. But many clerks mounted upon old-model Blerlots, bought at second hand, hasten to their morning work.

Upon a biplane of archaic model, which looks like a flying bureau, they mount a crippled sandwich man, who mutters handbills as he dodges about in the crowd with all the skill of the New York street arab.

The use of balloons has not been abandoned: those cumbrous bladders inflated with inflammable gas, those, dangerous toys with which our ancestors used to allow themselves to float, not yet knowing how to fly. They are to be seen everywhere but without aeronauts. Reduced in size and always captive, they serve as buoys and marks, bearing the names of the several streets that lie below, or of the landing stations, like baskets. great incandescent electric lights are hung from them to illuminate the air routes at night. And then there are the advertising balloons, launched from the roofs of the great stores like soap bubbles, which float in all directions to announce the great white sale here or the bargains in furniture there.

Mr. Smith mounts a cab which has come to a stop beside the terrace. Off he goes over New York. Some of the small antiquated buildings of the early twentieth century still exist--the Metropolitan Tower, the Public Library, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. But these once magnificent structures are insignificant now in this forest of fifty-story buildings, with their spacious roof terraces, built for all time, of steel and cement, proof against fire or earthquake. These gigantic structures are studios, factories, shops, hotels. Manhattan Island is the heart of the city. It is covered from one end to the other with these buildings in which nothing but business is done, for no one lives on Manhattan Island any more.

These buildings are tied to each other at almost every story by suspension bridges, which give the city the aspect of fifty cities superimposed, each black with moving multitudes.

Electricity the Only Motive Power

All chimneys have disappeared. Electric light, heat and power have long since done away with the use of steam, even for cooking. From the height at which Mr. Smith is flying he looks down upon avenues of trees and flowers through which circulate the moving sidewalks. There is no dust, for there are neither wagons nor horses.

Suddenly a platoon of flying police dashes into the cloud of airships, making a lane among them for a giant that darkens the horizon. A siren booms and a majestic shadow soars over the city. It is the express aerial Atlantic liner Paris-New York, which arrives at 8 a. m. every day and settles like an albatross to discharge its passengers upon a vast landing stage where Central Park was a hundred years ago.

The great co-operative societies absorbed the small factories and shops long ago. Each has a tower in which all branches of its industry are conducted. It is upon the terrace of one of these that John Smith's aerotaxi sets him down. It is called the Shoe House. For the elegant John Smith is a working shoemaker in the morning. The extreme division of fortunes and labor abolished all

idlers in this society, where every one takes his share of moderate work that is never tiring and even manual labor is no longer considered to be degrading.

The workshop is vast. As well it has fifty tiers of cells lighted from the outside—like the cells of a giant dove-cote a thousand feet high. Each cell contains one man or several men. but machinery does everything and the workman is only the intelligence that directs.

On arriving Mr. Smith registers his presence and goes to his own compartment, where he sits comfortably in an arm chair at a table covered with instruments. Mirrors enable him to watch in the space occupied by the machines, which fills the center of the skyscraper from cellar to roof, that particular bit of mechanism which is his department. From time to time he touches a spring, interrupts or opens a circuit or sends a message over the telephone, holding in his plump hand—as soft as that of a bureaucrat—the little lever which regulates the movement of a wheel a hundred feet in diameter that performs automatically the work formerly done by a hundred men.

Mr. Smith's every movement is registered by a dynamometer. Another machine registers the number of hours he is at work. These records are transmitted to a central machine which automatically calculates his salary.

When his attention is not immediately necessary he chats with distant persons. listens attentively through the microphone to the lectures some professor at Columbia or Harvard is giving to his pupils.

The clocks of the city chime noon. The workman's day is over. A few hours have sufficed for a world of workers to produce whatever mankind needs in food, clothes, paper, light, heat, etc., for a day. A slot above his desk opens and John Smith's diurnal salary falls out. He is free for the rest of the day.

The flood from the factories pours out upon the city, flows over the bridges, spreads out upon the terraces, humming with life. On the edge of the streets three sidewalks move at graduated speeds, in order that people may step from one to the other without danger. That nearest the houses permits the promenaders to inspect the window displays in the shops. There is a sidewalk for those who are in a hurry and one for those who merely want to loaf. The latter has seats, telephones, and little cafes upon it.

An appetizer guides Mr. Smith to a restaurant. No waiters are to be seen. He glances over the menu, which is a record of the progress of culinary chemistry, and selects for his luncheon two scrambled eggs with grated cheese, a beefsteak, a salad, and strawberry ice cream. He speaks his order to the table as he would have done years ago to an attentive head-waiter.

The table opens and from the hollow arise a plate, bread, forks, wine, and a steaming dish full of a golden mass. Needless to say, no hen laid those eggs: they are an admirable composition of artificial albumen. No cow gave the milk from which this cheese was made: no vine grew grapes to make this wine.

A periscope in the middle of the table reflects into the basement the image of this man and his luncheon, so that when he has finished the first course and pushes back his plate this vanishes instantly and is replaced quickly by a fine juicy synthetic beefsteak and artificial lettuce.

His meal costs him only a few cents. There is no waiter to tip, no cashier to pay. The price is fixed. On leaving he slips the amount into a slot by the door.

John Smith generally employs his afternoons in perfecting his education. He often goes to the Museum wherein are presorted specimens of extinct animals such as horses, dogs, cats, sheep, and chickens. He loves to study the day in which such beings were the companions of

men.

For now, such progress have chemistry and mechanics made that man has no more need of animals. He has killed off some and neglected to foster the multiplication of others. So they have disappeared. The whistle of machinery and the hum of motors have taken the place of the song of birds. The forests are deserted and the fields without moos, whinnies, or larks.

Entering the great hall of the Museum, Mr. Smith attends the inaugural lecture of a course that is to trace the history of the conquest of the moon. It was in 1950 that a new Christopher Columbus, long foreshadowed by the story-writers, landed upon our satellite. A vehicle was built, moved by apery, that etheric force which counteracts the attraction of gravitation and enables a body to pass through interplanetary space. The car, contained an abundant provision of oxygen in solid form, of which it was only necessary to melt a small piece in order to feed the lungs of the daring explorer for several days.

After six months of anxiety and hope this modern caravel landed its captain upon the moon at the bottom of an arid hollow which astronomers had called the Sea of Serenity. The man, in a diver's suit, took several steps outside his car, enough to gaze upon a vast amphitheatre, dazzling in the crude light and bristling with hard ridges and mineral efflorescence. He proved that this dead world was utterly uninhabitable.

Through the hermetically closed costume which covered him he could feel a glacial chill: his limbs swelled and gave him acute pain; death was lying in wait for him.

Hurriedly he started on his return voyage to the earth. Unfortunately the greater part of the stored oxygen had leaked out and spread itself over the surface of the moon, so that on the return trip he was obliged to put himself on short rations of air, as ancient mariners used sometimes to have to do with fresh water, and he arrived home half asphyxiated about a year after his departure.

But he opened the way. Crowds ventured to make the terrific voyage. Many never returned. Visionary persons suggested that, as weight counted for nothing in the etheromobile, tons of solidified air might be transported to be liberated on the moon, where, held by the attraction of gravitation, it would little by little form an atmosphere. Such a task would have required centuries and would have impoverished our own supply of air. Instead of this, chemical reagents were employed which started a chemical revolution on the moon and liberated vast quantities of the oxygen that had been in combination with its minerals.

After many voyages and many experiments a thin stratum of breathable air spread over the lower places at the surface of the ground. Slender though it was it sufficed for the vegetation of humble plants such as mosses and lichens, and through natural chemistry to form vapor. Seeds were planted and they grew. From that time the dead moon was reborn: its atmosphere increased in volume through the sole agency of the respiration of the plants. Little by little the inhabitants of the earth noticed changes in the appearance of their satellite, now covered by fine, misty flakes, which broke up the light into exquisite twilight tints. It was at last possible to live there. The higher plants were now beginning to grow; the decay of vegetable matter was forming soil. A few small animals were taken there: then a whole Noah's ark. These, by supplying organic matter, were contributing to make the moon at some later day habitable to man.

Matters have reached this stage now, when John Smith is listening to the story in the Museum. If man has not yet taken possession of his colony he has made many excursions to it and is accustoming himself to its severe climate. The species of animals that are now extinct upon the earth, save in a few zoological gardens, are developing at liberty and transforming themselves

naturally to adopt themselves to their new conditions of existence.

Catching a Bank Thief

When John Smith left the Museum it was about 3 o'clock. He was struck by the unusual aspect of the streets. The sidewalks moved, unoccupied. scarcely a vehicle flew through the air. But a vast crowd was gathered in one of the squares and all eyes were turned upon a white sheet that hung before a window. Suddenly, streams of ink began tracing letters upon the sheet and Smith read:

"3 P. M.--In checking the accounts of a certain Lafulte. cashier of the Boston Bank, away on his vacation, a deficit of \$3,000,000 has just been discovered. At this moment the portrait of the defaulter is being sent by wireless telephotography to all points of the world. It is known that he is not In New York."

Then the sheet was drawn up and an immense photograph of the dishonest cashier was shown. The crowd greeted it with hoots.

At this very moment this very portrait was being displayed in every city and town in the world, from the cold abode of the Esquimaux to that of the Terra del Guegens. from the Island dots in the middle of the oceans to the highest peaks of Asia. It was also appearing upon the receiving boards of ships upon the sea. of subterranean railroads and airships far above the clouds. It was appearing in the submarine abysses in which men were travelling or working. There was scarcely a human being at this moment who had not this picture before his eyes. Ah! how difficult has the profession of thief become! Throughout the city the news was discussed. Soon a new dispatch was posted:

"3:15 P. M--It is announced that an etheromobile disappeared twelve days ago from a garage In Brooklyn. Lafuite is believed to have taken possession of it at night in order to elude pursuit by taking refuge on the moon. If this prove true all hope of finding him must be abandoned. We do not yet possess thanks to the carelessness of the Government any means of arresting a man upon the surface of our satellite."

Yes. the moon. 238.850 miles from the earth, a five months journey, as a safe refuge for the criminal. If the villain has twelve days' start he can never be caught and at the end of his. journey he will have a whole world to himself.

The crowd Is struck with admiration for the audacity of the criminal and half hopes this rumor may prove true. The whole city is excited. Vast crowds gather before the bulletin boards of the newspapers. More than 30,000 are assembled before that of The World, now an hourly paper. From the balcony a vast trumpet rows despatches as they are received from all over the earth.

At 4:45 a shout goes up. The disappearance of the etheromobile has been explained It is carrying a committee of four members of the University to observe meteorological phenomena. So Lafulte Is still on earth.

At 5:30 a despatch from Vera Cruz announces that a mau corresponding to the description of Lafuite and traveling alone in an aeroplane descended in that city six days ago to get gasoline and food. He left again for the South at a speed estimated at 300 miles an hour.

At last, at 6:05, a thunderous despatch proclaimed that the defaulting cashier has just been

arrested in a cafe at Buenos Ayres, where he was identified In spite of the fact that he had shaved off his beard and was wearing black goggles.

Night falls upon the excited city. This is only a phrase, for there is no more night except in the rooms where men sleep. When the sun set, myriads of electric moons make an artificial day, as bright as the real, a terrestrial daylight that mounts into the sky and puts the stars to shame. It is the hour of evening promenaders. The citizens of New York, mounted upon rapid airships, go out with their families for fresh air in the Catskillis and the Berkshire Hills, which have become city parks, full of crowds and music. Dinner by Pushing Electric Buttons.

For New York, which once was the tiny city bounded by Yonkers and the ocean, has swallowed its suburbs, eaten up the adjacent counties. It is no longer a city--it is an urban region. Around a monstrous nucleus, the centre of business and pleasure, wherein no one lives outside working hours, extends in every direction, the garden city of which the ancient hygienists used to preach. In this smiling country, filled with parks and gardens, the New Yorker lives. if he has a family. There are a few bachelors, like John Smith, who prefer to dwell on the upper floors of skyscrapers on the edge of the business centre, but all others must have their own houses. There is no home so humble that it is not tied to the universe by telephone. telegraph, and telephone, wireless, of course. The moving sidewalks and subterranean railroads take them to and fro. to say nothing of the aerobuses and aerotrains. All these pretty homes are heated, cooled and lighted by electricity and provided with automatic apparatus that dispenses their inhabitants from work.

John Smith gladly accepts an invitation to dine with friends. This evening he goes out to the house of Mr. Barrett, a widower who lives among his rhododendrons on the southern slops of Slide Mountain, with his centenarian mother and a charming daughter.

As soon as he arrives Miss Barrett cooks the dinner with her own dainty fingers. For neither here nor in the palaces of the banker-princes are there servants any more. The fairy electricity has reduced culinary operations to a series of daintv gestures. very similar to those made by typewriters or pianists. All dishes are prepared in the dining-room, right on the table, by means of glittering instruments of precision of copper and nickel.

A Theatre in the Drawing Room

When they rose from the table after dinner Mr. Barrett expressed the hope that Mr. Smith would pass the evening with them and suggested that they go to a theatre. His daughter suggested the opera. Mr. Barrett thought Mr. Smith might like to hear that ancient classic "Chantecler", which was being given at Daly's.

"I like those old-fashioned simple things." said tho host. "and in music I confess that I do not understand those new composers. I have not go beyond Strauss: yes. Strauss, simple and old-fashioned as he is. And I really enjoy an evening of that antiquated Wagner, strange as It may seem. Mother, will you accompany us?"

The aged Mrs. Barrett shook her head.

"I will leave you." she said. "I have my own theatre, that of the old folks.

"My mother," said Mrs. Barrett. "scarcely sleeps now by reason of her age. and she passes the greater part of her nights calling up the past. She has in her room a phonocinematograph and is never tired of making it unroll the films on which her whole life is registered. It Is a tradition in our family to register all important events such as births, marriages, deaths, family feasts, conversations with dear friends, etc."

They went Into the drawing room and sat down in silence.

"Daughter." said Mr. Barrett, "put out the lights and give us communication with the Old Theatre."

Mr. Barrett had the telephototheatrophone in his house.

Darkness filled the room. Only the great mirror that covered one of the walls seemed full of fluorescent light. A luminous vapor passed over it. The light grew stronger and a great red curtain appeared. At the sides of the mirror moved the heads of spectators, the horseshoe of the balconies spread: fans quivered over flashes of diamonds on bare shoulders. Expectant life seethed upon this animated picture. The buzz of conversation could be heard. The three persons had all the impression of being in the theatre.

The curtain rose. The performance took place.

Three hours later Mr. Smith took his leave, and before midnight was back in the city lighted by a thousand artificial moons, and was regaining his apartment in One Hundred and Eighteenth avenue. His day was over.