

THE HERITAGE OF JULES VERNE

We think it appropriate that we initiate the first issue of SATURN, new and latest science-fiction magazine, by presenting for the first time the final work of science-fiction to be written by the founder of this specifically 20th Century literature, Jules Verne. To the best of our knowledge this outstanding novel has never been previously translated. Yet those who are familiar with Verne (who is enjoying renewed popularity through the medium of *Around the World in Eighty Days* and *Journey to the Center of the Earth*) will recognize that *Eternal Adam* truly is the climax of Verne's creative life.

Eternal Adam is a novel that seems to have been designed for the modern science-fiction reader, for alone of all Verne's works, it reaches into the farthest future and dares to envision the kind of world-shaking changes that only we of the Atomic Age have learned to appreciate and savor.

This, we think, fittingly dedicates our new venture. Like Saturn, the ringed planet whose unique image stirs the human imagination over that of any other celestial object, SATURN seeks the unique in science-fiction, the stories which encompass the greatest thrills which have built upon the Verne heritage a whole new literary cosmos of science-fantasy.

We sincerely hope you enjoy SATURN. Your letters and comments will be welcomed.

THE EDITORS

SATURN

THE MAGAZINE OF SCIENCE-FICTION

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ETERNAL ADAM

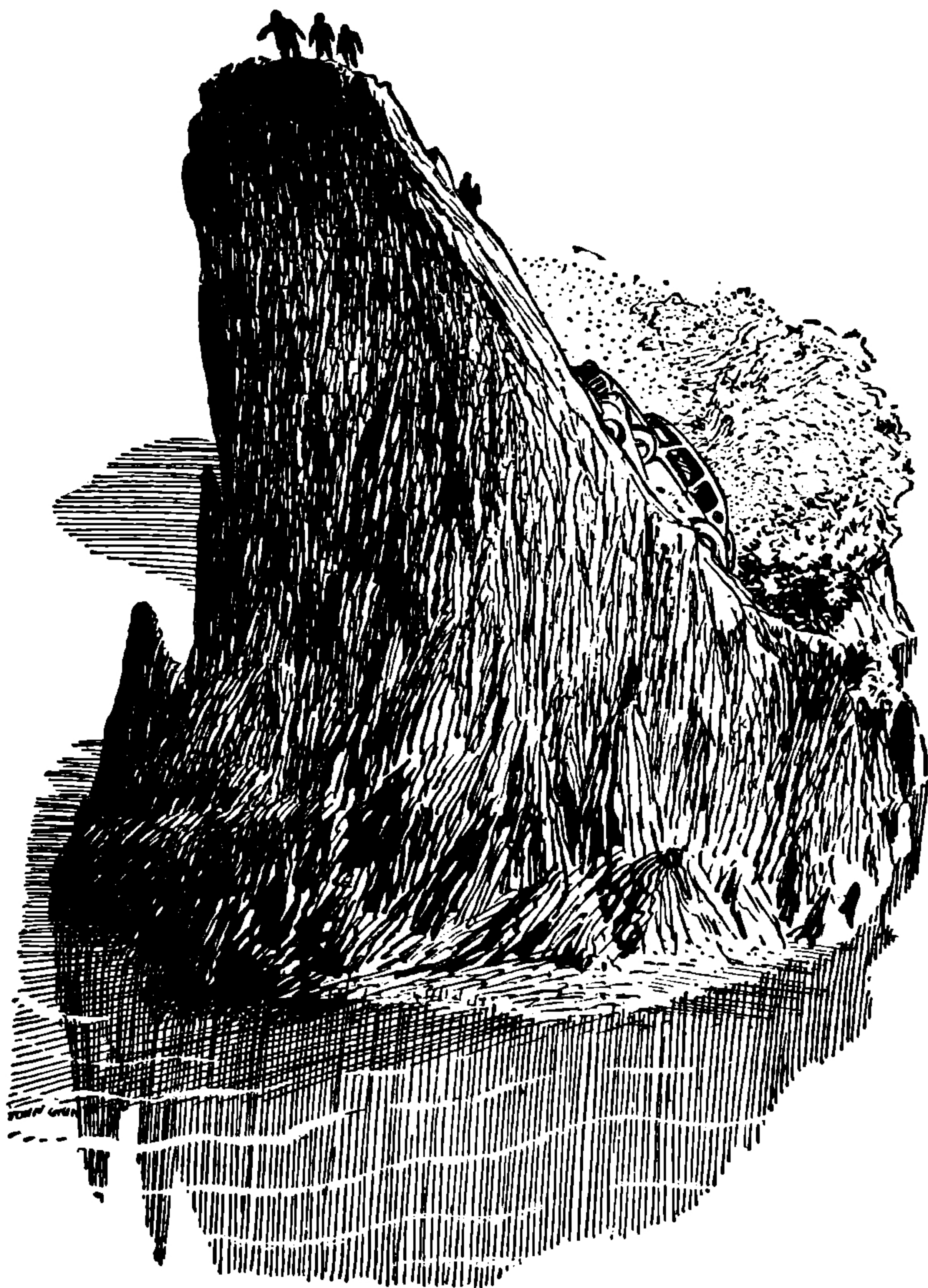
Author of *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, etc.

Biographers and students of the immortal Jules Verne have declared Eternal Adam to be the author's final word on this world and its future. For it turned out to be the very last story his talented hand was to write. Shortly after the ink had dried on the closing lines, Verne went to his grave in March, 1905. Never before translated, it is unique for having a farther vision than any of his previous writings. For just this once, facing his own death, he dared to look into the farthest future, beyond the last horizon. Based upon theories of geology and evolution current in his days, it retains a sweep and imaginative challenge particularly applicable to these atom-haunted times. Willis T. Bradley, who translated the new Ace Book edition of JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH, expresses the opinion that ETERNAL ADAM may some day be counted as Verne's masterpiece. SATURN is proud to present ETERNAL ADAM for the first time in the English language to a science-fiction audience.

by JULES VERNE

Translated by Willis T. Bradley

THE ZARTOG SOFR-AI-SR—that is, the learned Doctor Sofr, youngest member of the hundred-and-first generation of his lineage—was making his way at a comfortable pace along the chief street in Basidra, capital of the Hars-Iten-Schu, the Empire (as we should call it) of the Four seas. These four seas, the Tubelone, or Northern, the Ehone, or Southern, the Spone, or Eastern, and the Merone, or Western, bounded the vast, irregularly shaped continent,



the limits of which (to reckon in terms known to my reader) reached, in longitude, as far as the fortieth degree east and the seventieth degree west, and, in latitude, as far as the fifty-fourth parallel north and the fifty-fifth parallel south. The extent of none of these seas could be guessed, even roughly, since each merged with each, and a navigator putting out from any one of the four coasts, and sailing always in a straight line, must gain the diametrically opposite coast. For, over the entire surface of the globe, save for one useless islet in the *Merone-Schu*, there existed no other land than that of the *Hars-Iten-Schu*.

Sofr was walking very slowly, first of all because the day was warm: they were entering the hot season, and at Basidra, situated on the shore of the *Spone-Schu*, or Eastern Sea, less than twenty degrees north of the equator, a fierce heat fell from the sun, then approaching its zenith.

But, even more than his weariness in that high heat, the very burden of his thoughts was slowing the steps of Sofr, the scholarly *Zartog*. While absent-mindedly mopping his forehead, he was turn-

ing over in his mind what had been said at the meeting that had just been held, during which so many gifted speakers (among whom, to his honor, he had himself numbered) had hailed the hundred-and-ninety-fifth year of the Empire.

Some, for topic, had chosen history, not only that of the Empire, but the entire history, indeed, of mankind. They had told again the story of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu*, the Land of the Four Seas, originally divided among uncounted savage peoples who lived in wild loneliness, having almost no knowledge of each other. Back to those folk were traced the most ancient traditions. Of still earlier things, nothing was known. True, the natural sciences were now beginning to make out some light, hardly more than a feeble glimmer, in the baffling darkness of those earlier times. But even so, by their very remoteness, they shunned truly historical study. True history could first take root only in a dim memory of those scattered ancient clans.

During more than eight thousand years, by degrees more fully told and more sharp in detail, the story of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu* was

nothing but a succession of strife and warfare, first between man and man, then between family and family, and finally between tribe and tribe—every living being, every group, small or large, having, in the course of the ages, no other goal than to prove its strength against its rivals, and striving, with diverse and often contrary success, to bring them under its own laws.

On this side of that span of eight thousand years, men's memories became a little keener. At the outset of the second of the four periods into which the annals of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu* were commonly divided, legend began to deserve more justly the name of history. But still, whether history or legend, the recitals seldom varied: they told always of bloodshed and butchery—no longer, it is true, of tribe by tribe, but from then on of people by people. So, all in all, this second period was much different from the first.

And it was much the same thing with the third, brought to a close just short of two hundred years ago, having lasted through nearly six centuries. It differed only in that it was more brutal, a period during which, gathered into

endless armies, and fired with endless fury, men had drenched the earth with their blood.

THE FACT was that a little less than eight centuries previous to the day when the *Zartog* Sofr was strolling along the chief street in Basidra, mankind had felt itself ripe for a vast and decisive effort. By that time, brute force having already fulfilled a part of its necessary task, and the weak having bent before the strong, the men of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu* formed three distinct and fairly matched nations, within each of which the passing of time had softened the differences between the winners and the losers of former days. It was about then that one of those nations had undertaken to subdue its neighbors. The men who dwelt in the middle of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu*, the *Andarti-Ha-Sammgor*, or Men with Bronze Faces, strove ruthlessly to enlarge their frontiers, within which their fiery and fertile people were being squeezed. In succession

the land to the south, and the *Andarti-Mitra-Psul*, the Men of the Fixed Star, whose country lay to the north and west.

And nearly two hundred years had gone by since the last desperate uprising of those two peoples had been bloodily put down, and the land had known for the first time what it was to have peace. Now came the fourth historical period. When everyone had been drawn into a single Empire, with everyone subject to the law of Basidra, there followed a gradual blending of the three races. No longer did anyone speak of Men with Bronze Faces, or Men of the Snow Country, or Men of the Fixed Star. The land now held a single people, the *Andarti-Iten-Schu*, the Men of the Four Seas.

At the present moment, of course, after two centuries of peace, a fifth period was perhaps in the making. Rumors were afloat that furtive trouble-makers were at work. Certain thinkers had arisen with ideas calculated to reawaken memories of things long forgotten. The old feeling for race was being brought to life, but given a new character by new words. There was much talk of *throw-backs*, *blood-ties*,

racism, and so forth—all terms of fresh coinage, which, since they answered a need, had promptly been accepted. Depending upon what men had in common, whether bodily likeness, agreement of the mind, shared interests, or simply the accident of living together in the same climate, they were forming groups that little by little were gaining in membership and beginning to show signs of restlessness.

What might be the drift of this new trend? Was the Empire to be torn apart so soon after its birth? Was the *Ma-hart-Iten-Schu* to be split, as in the old days, into a great number of nations? Or must it again have recourse to the dreadful slaughter that for so many thousands of years had turned this land into a charnel house?

WITH A shake of his head, Sofr rejected such thoughts. Neither he nor other men knew anything of the future. Why, then, grieve in advance over what might never

Emperor of the *Hars-Iten-Schu*, whose staff of office was guiding his people toward a high destiny.

For a *Zartog*, more than for most, there was much reason to take the cheerful view. After the historians had done reciting the chronicles of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu*, a half dozen scientists had taken the floor. Each had given a summary of human knowledge in his own special field, and had stressed how far mankind had been brought by centuries of effort. And surely, if the first speakers, in retracing the slow, winding road by which man had made his escape from his animal state, had touched upon some shameful matters, the later speakers had fed in full measure the lawful pride of their hearers.

Yes, most truly, it was a wonderful thing to put man as he once had been—when first he came, naked and unarmed, upon earth—alongside of what he was today. Down through the ages, despite his quarrels and his murderous feuds, not for an instant had he broken off his struggle against nature, and ceaselessly had he enlarged his area of conquest. Two hundred years ago he had been still comparatively crawl-

ing; but then he had found his feet, and his triumphal march had begun. The power of his leaders, the soundness of his laws, and the resulting world-wide peace had given a remarkable push to science. No longer relying almost solely upon the strength of his body, man had learned to win with his mind; he had summoned councils, instead of wasting himself in senseless wars. Thus, in the course of the last two centuries, he had moved ever more rapidly through the realm of knowledge toward the day when he should hold the physical world in bondage.

As Sofr followed the long street in Basidra under the scorching sun, his mind swiftly sketched the chart of this fulfillment.

First of all, back somewhere in the Age of Darkness, man had hit upon the art of writing, with the object of fixing and transmitting his thoughts; next—and this was more than five hundred years ago—he had found the means of spreading the written word by way of any number of copies, all struck from

edge was increased by that of his neighbor, and the number of new findings, both theoretical and practical, could no longer be counted.

Man had dug deep into the earth and was drawing out coal, that great source of heat. He had set free the latent energy of water, and now steam was pulling heavy trains on ribbons of steel and was giving motion to all kinds of powerful, delicate, precise machines; with these machines man could weave vegetable fibers into cloth and work his will on metals, marble, and granite. In a less applied field, or at least less directly applied, he was gradually solving the riddle of numbers and exploring the infinite range of mathematical truth. With this tool he had taken the measure of the heavens. He now knew that the sun was only a star gravitating through space, obedient to rigorous laws, sweeping a train of seven planets along its flaming orbit. He knew the art of combining certain crude substances in a way to form new substances having nothing in common with the old, and of separating certain other substances into their simple components. He was submitting sound, heat, and light to anal-

ysis and was beginning to determine the nature and laws of each. Fifty years ago he had learned how to produce the force so terribly active in thunder and lightning, and at once he had made it his slave: already this mysterious agent was carrying written messages over immeasurable distances; tomorrow it should carry sound; day after tomorrow, no doubt, light. Yes, man was great—greater than the immense universe that one day, and soon, he should govern as a master!

BUT EVEN then, if the whole truth were to be grasped, this final problem would have to be resolved: Who was man, this master of the world? Whence came he? Toward what unknown goal was his unflagging effort driving him?

This was exactly the vast problem that the *Zartog* Sofr had discussed near the close of the ceremonial meeting. To be sure, he had only skimmed the surface, for such a problem was at present insoluble, and doubtless it would remain so for a long time to come. The solution of some related problems, however, would help clear up the mystery. And had

not the *Zartog* Sofr been the one to make the most promising advance when, after having systematized and codified the patient observations of earlier investigators and his own personal findings, he had come out with his law of the evolution of living substance—a law that was everywhere accepted and no longer met with a single opponent?

His theory stood upon a threefold foundation.

First of all, upon the earth sciences, which, born on the day when digging in the interior of the earth began, had progressed along with the development of mining operations. The crust of the globe had been so thoroughly studied that its age could be unhesitatingly fixed at four hundred million years, and that of the *Mahart-Iten-Schu*, in its present form, at twenty thousand years. At an earlier period this continent had been sleeping under the waters of the sea, as witness the thick bed of marine clay that uninterruptedly covered the underlying beds of rock. By what mechanism had it been thrust up above the waves? Perhaps by the contracting of the globe as it cooled. But, however that might be, the emersion of the

Mahart-Iten-Schu must be considered a certainty.

The life sciences had furnished Sofr with the two other foundations of his system. By proving the close kinship of all plants and the equally close kinship of all animals, Sofr had gone farther: he had discovered evidence that nearly all existing vegetable life had descended directly from an ancestral marine plant, and that nearly all land or aerial animals came from ancient marine animals. By a slow but continuous evolution, the animals had adapted themselves little by little to living conditions at first close to, but afterwards more remote from, those known to their forbears; and so they had fathered most of the present species of animals and birds.

Unhappily, this ingenious theory was not flawless. That most living things, whether of the animal or the vegetable order, had descended from marine ancestors seemed not to be denied; but the same could not be said of all, for there did exist a number of plants and animals seemingly unrelated to any known aquatic species. Though they might be explained as freaks, here was one

of the two weak points in the system.

Man—and Sofr did not pretend otherwise—was the other weak point. There was no bringing together of man and animal. Of course, the basic essential functions, such as respiration, digestive processes, and locomotion, were the same; but there was a gulf between the physical development of the two orders that could not be crossed: a gulf between the number, disposition, and capacity of organs. Whereas, by a chain with only a few links missing, the great majority of animals could be joined with progenitors that had come from the sea, such a linkage for man was not to be found. Hence, to make the theory of evolution complete, it was necessary to conceive, without a shred of evidence, of a hypothetical stock common to both mankind and the denizens of the sea. And nothing, absolutely nothing, indicated that such a stock had ever existed.

AT ONE time, Sofr had hoped to find evidence under the soil that would be favorable to his thesis. At his urging, and under his direction, excavations had been car-

ried on for a long period of years, only to turn up results exactly opposite to those expected by their promoter.

After having passed through a thin skin of humus formed by the rotting of plants and animals similar or comparable to those seen every day, his diggers had got to the thick bed of marine clay, wherein the vestiges of former life were of a different kind. In the clay had been found no more of the existing flora or fauna, but instead a vast accumulation of fossils that were exclusively marine, with congeners still living, for the most part, in the oceans surrounding the *Mahart-Iten-Schu*.

What else must be concluded, if not that the scientists had been right in teaching that the continent had formerly served as part of the floor of those same oceans, and that Sofr had not been wrong, consequently, in affirming the marine origin of contemporary animals and plants?

But unfortunately for the attempt to fit man into the system, still another finding had been made. Scattered throughout the humus, and down into the topmost portion of the clay deposit, innumer-

able human bones had been brought to light. There was nothing exceptional in the structure of these fragments of skeletons, and Sofr had long since given up hope of finding among them intermediary types that might prove his theory: these bones were the bones of men, no more, no less.

At the same time, something totally unexpected had been confirmed. Reaching back to a certain age, which could be roughly put at two or three thousand years, the older the bones, the smaller the skulls uncovered. But, inconsistently, beyond this period the progression was reversed. From that point on, the further the retreat into the past, the greater the capacity of the skulls, and, by implication, the size of the brains that they had contained. The largest of all, in fact, had been found among the remains, few though they were, in the surface of the bed of clay. Careful examination of these venerable remains had left no doubt that the men living in that distant epoch had already acquired a growth of brain very much greater than that of their successors—including even the contemporaries of the *Zartog* Sofr. Clearly, then, there had been a

backward movement for a hundred and seventy centuries, followed by a new advance.

Troubled by these strange facts, Sofr had pushed on with his searchings. In many places he had had the bed of clay probed to its bottom, and its depth was such that, by the most conservative estimate, its deposit had required not less than fifteen to twenty thousand years. Below it came the surprising discovery of faint remains of an ancient layer of humus, and finally, beneath the humus, solid rock of a nature that varied with the site of the digging.

But the crowning astonishment was the uncovering of some vestiges, incontestably human in origin, buried at these mysterious depths. They included not only portions of the bones of men, but also fragments of weapons or tools, bits of pottery, scraps of writing carved in an unknown tongue, and hard stone objects, artfully sculptured. Considering the uniform quality of these artifacts, it could only be supposed that some forty thousand years ago—that is, twenty thousand years before the coming (none knew whence or how) of the first members of the present race—another

race had dwelt in these same places and had reached a highly advanced degree of civilization.

SUCH WAS, in fact, the conclusion generally admitted. Still, there was at least one who dissented.

The dissenter was none other than Sofr himself. To admit that other men, separated from those who came after by a gap of twenty thousand years, had first populated the earth was, in his opinion, sheer folly. For, in that event, how to account for their abrupt disappearance and the equally abrupt appearance of their descendents so long afterward, with no discoverable link between the two? Rather than entertain so absurd a hypothesis, far better wait for more data. Just because these odd findings had failed to explain something, it was not necessary to conclude that it was inexplicable. One day the answer would come. Until then, it was wiser to take no sides, and for the time being to hold to principles that completely met the requirements of sound reason. They could be summed up as follows:

Planetary life is divided into two phases: pre-human and

human. In the first phase, the Earth being in a state of continuous change, it is for this very reason uninhabitable and uninhabited. In the second, the crust of the globe has reached a degree of cohesion affording stability. And given this stability at last, life at once appears. It begins in its simplest forms and moves always toward the more complex, finally producing man, its most perfect expression. And no sooner does man come to Earth than he immediately sets out to seek his own improvement. Slowly, proudly, he is marching toward his end, which is complete understanding and absolute domination of the universe.

CARRIED AWAY by the fever of his stubborn belief, Sofr had gone past his house. He turned back with an impatient scowl.

"What would they have me do!" he muttered. "Admit that men forty thousand years ago enjoyed a civilization like our own, and perhaps a better one? Admit that their wisdom and their skill and goods could then vanish

forced to begin the task once more at the bottom, thinking themselves pioneers in a world without men before their time? Why, that should be to gainsay the *future*, to cry out that *our* effort is in vain! That all human change is as aimless and as little secure as a bubble in the froth of the waves!"

Sofr halted in front of his house.

"No, no! Certainly not! Man is the *master* of things!" he whispered fiercely as he pushed open his door.

AFTER THE *Zartog* had rested for a few moments, he lunched with a good appetite, and then he lay down to take his daily nap. But the questions that had shaken him while on his way home continued to torment him, and they banished sleep.

Despite all his eagerness to establish an absolute uniformity in nature, his mind was too critical to miss the weakness of his system whenever he tackled the problem of the origin and development of man. To force facts to square with a hypothesis set up in advance is one way to convince others, but it is no way to convince oneself.

Had Sofr not been a schol-

ar, a very eminent *zartog*, and had he been instead a member of the illiterate class, he should have had no trouble. The people, indeed, wasted no time in profound speculation. They were content to shut their eyes and repeat the old legend that had been transmitted, since time forgotten, from father to son. Explaining one mystery by another mystery, they traced the origin of man back to the interference of what they called a Higher Will. One day, this unearthly Power had created out of nothing, and for no apparent reason, *Hedom* and *Hiva*, the first man and first woman, whose descendants had peopled this world. Thus everything was linked up very simply....

Much too simply! mused Sofr. When a man

the name *Hedom*! What was the source of this fantastic word, of outlandish sound, that seemed foreign to the tongue of the *Andarti-Iten-Schu*? Un-numbered scholars had worn themselves pale over just this little philological difficulty, and had found no satisfactory answer. Come, then! All this was idle stuff, unworthy of the attention of a *zartog*.

Sofr went down, in something of a temper, to his garden, for the hour had come when it was his custom to go there. By now there was less fire in the rays of the declining sun, and a soft breeze was beginning to blow in from the *Sponc-Schu*. The *zartog* wandered along the paths, shaded by trees whose shivering leaves were set to whispering by the on-shore wind, and little by little his nerves found again their habitual poise. He could shake off his absorbing thought, calmly enjoy the fresh air, and inspect with interest the fruits, which were the wealth of his gardens, and the flowers, their ornaments.

His idle steps brought him by chance back toward his house, and he paused at the edge of a deep excavation, around which were scattered a number of tools. Therein

would be laid, within a short time, the foundations of a new building that should double the size of his laboratory. But on this holiday the workmen had left their toil to take in the public games.

Sofr was absently sizing up the amount of work already done and of work still to be done, when, in the gloom of the excavation, a brilliant point caught his eye. Puzzled, he climbed down to the bottom of the hole and pulled a queer object out of the dirt three-quarters covering it.

Having climbed again into the light, the *Zartog* examined his find. It was some kind of case, with round ends, made of an unfamiliar metal, gray in color, granular in texture; its luster, dulled by the long time it had spent underground, gleamed only where it had been grazed by a workman's pick. A slit one

sheets peppered with strange marks of a regularity suggesting written characters—but forming an unknown script, of a kind that Sofr had never seen, nor even anything like it.

Trembling with excitement, the *Zartog* hastened to lock himself in his laboratory, and, having spread out the precious document with care, he stood contemplating it.

Yes, it was some kind of handwriting; nothing could be more certain. But it was no less certain that the writing in no way resembled any that within historic times had been used anywhere on Earth.

WHENCE CAME this document? What message did it carry? These two questions now occupied Sofr's mind to the exclusion of all else.

To answer the first, he must be in a position to answer the second. The problem, then, was first of all to decipher the document and translate it—for it could be affirmed in advance that the language would be as unknown as the script.

Would this task prove impossible? The *Zartog* Sofr did not think so, and without delay he set eagerly to work.

That work took a long time—long, dull years, in fact. But

Sofr kept tirelessly at it. Undiscouraged, he pursued his methodical study of the mysterious script, advancing step by step toward the light. Finally came a day when he discovered a remote likeness between this ancient tongue and the most archaic dialect of the *Andarti-Iten-Schu*, and he held the key to the puzzle; the day when, at last, with much hesitation, he could put the message into the tongue of the Men of the Four Seas.

In what language shall I write? In English or Spanish, which I speak fluently? No! I shall write in the language of my own country: in French.

On this day, May 24, I was entertaining some friends in my villa near Rosario. Rosario is, or rather was, a Mexican city on the Pacific coast, a little south of the Gulf of California. Some ten years previously I had installed myself there in order to direct the working of a silver mine that was entirely my own property. My affairs had prospered astonishingly. I was a rich man—the word makes me laugh aloud today!—and was planning to return in a short time to France, the land of my birth.

My villa, among the most luxurious, was situated at the upper end of an extensive garden that sloped down towards the sea and ended abruptly in a perpendicular cliff more than a hundred meters high. Behind my villa, the terrain continued to rise, and by a winding road one could reach the summit of a mountain range having an altitude exceeding fifteen hundred meters. It was an agreeable drive and I frequently made the ascension in my automobile, a superb and

powerful double Phaeton, one of the best French makes.

It had been while living in Rosario with my son Jean, a handsome lad of twenty, that, upon the death of cousins distant in blood but dear to my heart, I had taken in their daughter Helene, left an orphan with no fortune. Since that time, five years had elapsed. My son Jean was now twenty-five; Helene, twenty. I secretly intended them for one another.

We were well served by my valet, Germain, Modeste Simonat, a most resourceful chauffeur, and two girls, Edith and Mary, daughters of my gardener, George Raleigh, and his wife Anna.

In the twilight of this day, May 24, eight of us were seated round my table in the soft light of electric lamps that drew their current from my own generators. In addition to the master of the house, his son, and his ward, there were five guests, of whom three were of the Anglo-Saxon race and two were natives of Mexico.

of the word did not prevent them from being rarely in agreement. But they were gallant gentlemen, and the best friends in the world.

The two other Anglo-Saxons were Williamson, proprietor of an important fishery in Rosario, and Rowling, an enterprising young man who raised early fruits and vegetables in the outskirts of the city and was in the way of reaping a substantial fortune.

As for the last guest, he was Senor Mendoza, President of the Rosario Tribunal, an estimable gentleman, a cultivated mind, of unquestioned integrity on the bench.

NOTHING WORTH recording occurred until we arrived at the end of the meal. I have forgotten what words we had exchanged up to this point. But, on the contrary, I well remember what was said over our cigars.

Not that our remarks had in themselves any particular importance; it was the brutal commentary on them, shortly to be made, that could not fail to give them a certain piquancy, and they have consequently stayed fresh in my memory.

We had entered into a discussion of the marvelous

achievements of man. At a certain point, Doctor Bathurst said:

"It is a fact that if Adam" (naturally, as an Anglo-Saxon he pronounced it *Eddem*) "and Eve" (he said *Eeve*, you understand) should return to earth, they'd be jolly well astonished!"

That was the origin of the discussion. Being a fervent Darwinist, a convinced partisan of natural selection, Moreno asked Bathurst in an ironic tone if he seriously believed in the legend of the Earthly Paradise. Bathurst answered that at least he believed in God, and that, since the existence of Adam and Eve is affirmed in the Bible, it was not his privilege to dispute it. Moreno replied

