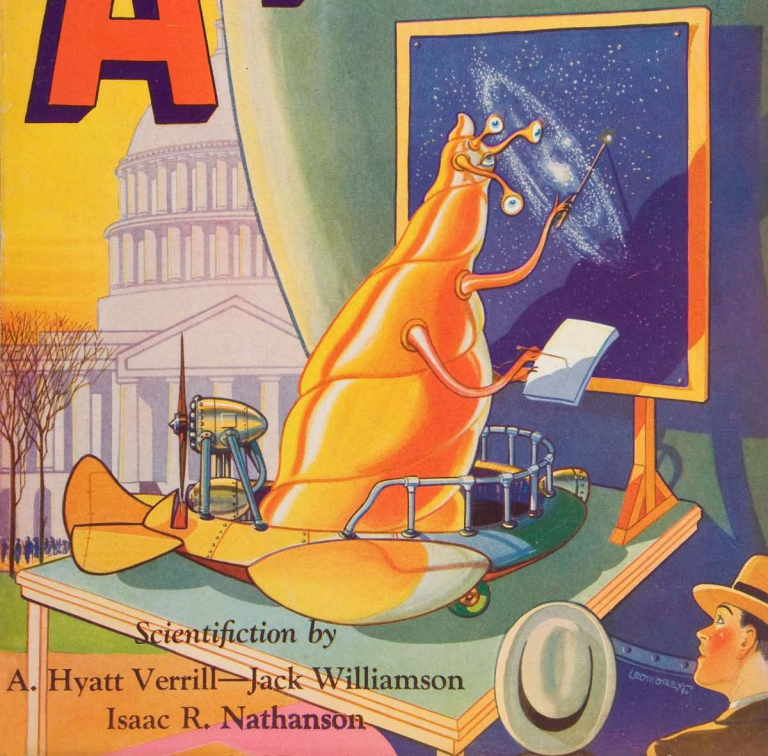


APRIL

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AMAZING STORIES



Scientifiction by

A. Hyatt Verrill—Jack Williamson

Isaac R. Nathanson



JULES VERNE'S TOMBSTONE AT AMIENS
PORTRAYING HIS IMMORTALITY

AMAZING STORIES

April, 1930
Vol. 5, No. 1

Experimenter Publications, Inc.
B. A. Mashinson, Pres. H. K. Fly, Vice Pres. and Treas.

In Our Next Issue:

THE UNIVERSE WRECKERS, by Edmond Hamilton. (A serial in 3 parts) Part I. We are inclined to take everything for granted—particularly the courses of Nature. There is, after all, no absolute assurance that the sun, for instance, should continue indefinitely to turn at its present speed. What would be the final result of the centrifugal force if the sun started to turn more and more rapidly? What would happen to the planets which rotate around this great luminary? Mr. Hamilton needs no introduction, but we do want to say that this surpasses the best interplanetary story by him that we have yet published. Read the first instalment in the May issue.

MADNESS OF THE DUST, by R. F. Starzl. Although this story was written some time ago, an extract taken from "The New York Times" of December 21, 1929, gives almost word for word a similar description of an operation performed by a ship's Captain, following radio instructions from a physician. How then, can we say anything is impossible? But this is only an incident in an unusual story, excellently told, and which contains a good bit of science.

THE IVY WAR, by David H. Keller, M.D. Here is a new story by Dr. Keller, based on the always interesting subject of botany, dealing with a subject that is little known as yet. The "Ivy War" goes on in the good old Keller manner, which some of our readers seemed to have missed recently. It is absorbingly interesting and plausible, without.

SYNTHETIC, by Charles Cloukey. By this time, Mr. Cloukey has become a familiar and well-liked author in *AMAZING STORIES*. In this story, he offers us an exceedingly clever, swift-moving aviation exploit of the future that shows good imagination and excellent knowledge of his subject. (Crowded out of the last issue.)

THE NON-GRAVITATIONAL VORTEX, by A. Hyatt Verrill. Here is another of Mr. Verrill's extraordinary scientific tales, based on the local annihilation of gravitation.

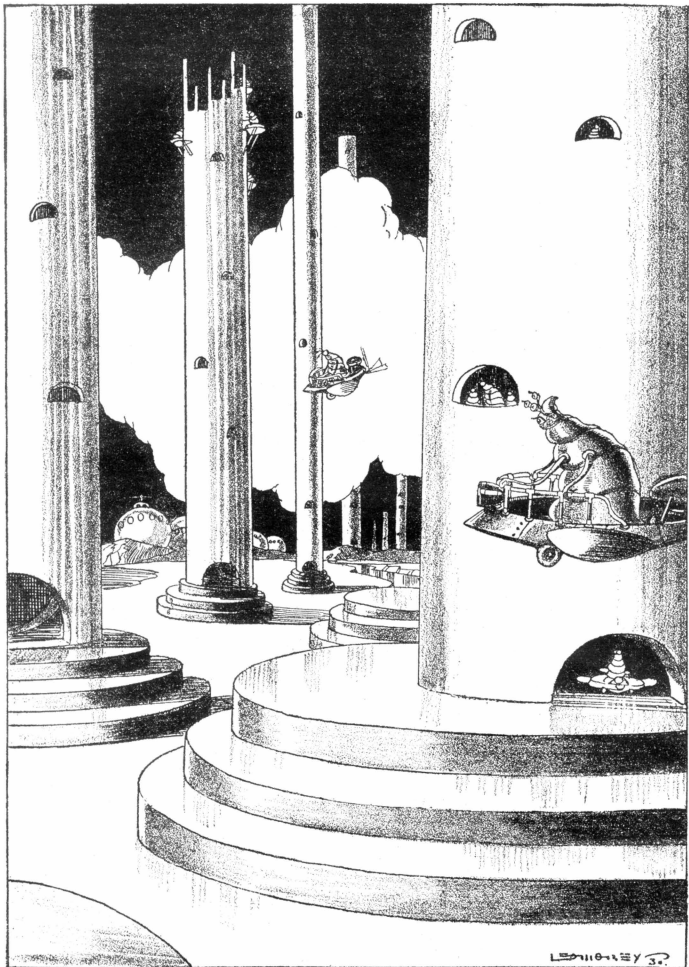
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Our Cover

This issue depicts a scene from the story entitled, "The Conquest of the Earth," by Isaac R. Nathanson, in which the representative of the strange intelligent beings from the nebula of Andromeda is pointing out to the unsuspecting earth people, on a screened easel-like stand, on which it has a picture of the nebula, just where they come from.

AMAZING STORIES MONTHLY, Published at 154-19 Jamaica Avenue, Jamaica, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter at Jamaica, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Title Registered U. S. Patent Office. Copyright, 1930, by E. P. Inc., N. Y. European Agents, G. J. Wisla et Cie., 40 Place Victor, Antwerp, Belgium. Printed in U. S. A. Subscription price is \$2.50 a year in U. S. and Possessions; \$3.00 a year in Canada and Foreign Countries; single copies, 25 cents each. Editorial and Executive Offices, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Publishers are not responsible for loss, although every care is taken for their safety.



A concrete picture of what their unthinkable remote homeland must be like began to take form

The Conquest of the Earth

By Isaac R. Nathanson

SINCE the dawn of man's advent on the earth, he has cut down and eliminated everything—animate or inanimate—that interfered in any way with his safe progress. Rarely did he hesitate in his cruelties, for was man not a superior being? Was he not possessed of the highest intelligence and ruling power? If conditions became reversed—if, for instance, a vastly superior intelligence, in a form entirely different from the human, were suddenly landed in our midst, it is quite probable that it would take man a long while to realize what it was all about. This story, although written by an author new to AMAZING STORIES, reads like the work of an old favorite. It is an exceedingly ingenious tale, dealing with the nebula of Andromeda, the science of which has apparently been carefully checked back. We know you will be glad to know there are more stories by Mr. Nathanson coming soon.

Illustrated by MOREY

IN ALL the long tortuous climb of mankind, from the time when man was but a savage brute to the high tide of civilization of the Twentieth Century, never before was there such great widespread prosperity. It is true, here and there, in this part of the world and that, poverty reared its ugly head. Misery and want, the innumerable indignities of life—even insecurity, still existed, often side by side with immense power and wealth. But taken as a whole, the world in the middle of the Twentieth Century presented a picture of general prosperity far surpassing any period that went before.

Truly man had become like unto the gods. With consummate skill and marvelous ingenuity the materials of the entire earth were called upon to minister to every want of mankind—nay, even every whim. Vast industries, linked by almost instantaneous means of communication, covered with a busy network every continent. Men of learning, the probers after the new and the untried, were steadily adding to the wealth and resources of the whole world. Everything on the face of the earth, under its surface, in the water, in the very air, was subject to man's will. And even with things beyond this earth patient men sat hungrily scanning the shining orbs of immensely far away suns and possible worlds.

One of the great tragedies of this upward surging civilization's forces has been the fate of the subject living

things of the earth. Side by side with man's greatness, his material wealth, stalked cruelty and want. That has been the great blot, the reproach upon the character of mankind. No pity has been shown the weaker forms of life. Thoughtlessly, cruelly, needlessly, many harmless interesting, even useful, creatures have been exterminated utterly. And the weaker brothers of man—they, too, have not always been handled with gentleness.

In the time of which we write, although there were many signs that the world was indeed growing better, mankind as a whole, particularly they who sat in the seats of the mighty, was drunk with power and surfeited with luxury. The comforts of life were everywhere; fine homes were common, and gilded palaces, public and private, dotted the globe. The very taking of food had almost lost its original purpose and become nigh unto a ceremony, elaborate in its ritual. For many idle hands and idle minds, with more than was good for them, waxed foolish with their petty comings and goings—and many sinned mightily.

Thus, after a long age-old struggle, a creature called Man sat on high; and at his behest moved and changed and used this planet as he saw fit—truly lord of creation.

THE inauguration of a president of The United States was going on. It was a chilly day on March 4, 1937; the sky was overcast with dull clouds, and a slight

drizzle was coming down steadily. Washington was bedecked with flags and gay colors; and the multitude patiently stood at every available vantage point bravely enduring the discomfort of the inclement weather in order to view the inauguration ceremony. In spite of the weather the spirit of festival was in the air; the entire capital was gay and holiday-bent. Foremost citizens and leaders in all walks of life from all over the nation, diplomats and representatives from every land on earth were there on this auspicious occasion—nay, lent color and dignity by their very presence. Something of this spirit was even wafted on the instantaneous wings of the radio to the far corners of the world. No more impressive scene than this can be imagined than this symbol of the glorious sovereignty of a great people, this visible splendor of a mighty, prosperous and peaceful nation.

The swearing in of the new president had just been completed. The vast crowds which had been viewing the ceremony, listening in by means of numerous amplifiers, were commencing to move about; when suddenly, like the proverbial thunderclap out of a clear sky, an immensely large globe appeared immediately over the Capitol grounds. It dropped down on the plaza right in front of the inauguration platform; and in settling rapidly—yet apparently under control—barely missed crushing the life out of hundreds of people who were moving about. There was a loud commotion and mad scramble to get out of the way.

Great was the excitement and curiosity aroused all over the city. News of the strange happening quickly found its way over radio and news column. Even the inaugural parade, about to begin, and recorded as the most splendid in history, was forgotten by many.

And no wonder. It was no little thing which had so unexpectedly landed right in the midst of all these festivities at the very steps of the nation's Capitol; it was an extremely large globe over three hundred feet in diameter, of a silvery white metal and highly polished.

The first fleeting impression created on all observers was that a solid globe of metal had come down. But, no. After the first shock of surprise this impression was quickly dispelled by the orderly appearance of the huge body, and its rapid but perfectly controlled landing; what had seemed a solid sphere was now seen to be pierced with rows of symmetrically spaced circular windows. Besides, the distinct whirring and throbbing of mighty engines could be heard. There it stood, shimmering in the sunlight which by now had burst through the clouds—a thing of beauty to behold. Its weight, however, must have been enormous, for the bottom of the sphere, which on closer observation was slightly flattened, settled slowly through the pavements and surrounding ground.

Astonishment soon gave way to impatience, and then to anger. The huge globe obstructed everything in its path. For a long time it gave not the slightest sign of life, although everybody around waited impatiently for its occupants to emerge. That it was an aerial vehicle of some sort—of that there could be no doubt. The police on duty forced their way through the densely packed mob to obtain the identity of the parties in the vehicle, and upbraided them for their temerity and bad judgment in landing in such a place and on such an occasion.

But here was a dilemma indeed; there was no point of entrance and no one appeared from the inside to whom orders might be given, or of whom questions might be asked. The crowds in ever-increasing numbers milled

around and around rendering the police utterly helpless. It was all very interesting, but also highly exasperating. And the huge size and weight of the object rendered immediate removal out of the question. The police stood around in perplexity.

Naturally there was much speculation as to what and where this strange vehicle came from, and to whom it belonged; for here was evidently a new mode of aerial transportation, unguessed and unheard of. All this speculation was natural and aroused great admiration and curiosity; but there was also great irritation with the pilots, whoever they were, as to their manner of arrival—a fine place indeed to choose for a landing! Life and limb was saved by a miracle. It was assumed, of course, that they came from some foreign country, as it would have been almost impossible to construct—much less fly—a vehicle of that kind in this country without it having been widely known and heralded in advance.

It was not long thereafter, however, when signs of life in the huge sphere commenced to take place. Interest became intense. Some of the circular windows began to open inward with a screwing movement; parts of the surface seemed to detach themselves and formed into platforms, and openings appeared disclosing some of the interior. The crowds became uncontrollable, and surged forward expectantly. Still no sign of a human being appeared.

Just as the officials of law and order were discussing ways and means of forcible entry, a number of strange looking objects appeared in one of the openings, then took to the air in slow circular flights around the globe; finally settling on a large platform which extended about ten feet from the ground. These small flying contrivances—for such they were—disk-like in shape, were about three feet in diameter; and on top of each, guiding it, was a strange looking creature. It was hard to determine which was the animate, and where the purely mechanical part of the contrivance began.

The police finally managed to rope off a space surrounding the globe; and forthwith a number of these strange beings, or whatever they were, settled to the ground where they were seen to better advantage. A closer view was positively electric in its effect on the observer. On top of each of the before mentioned flying disks, in a sort of hollow formed therein, sat, or stood, or lay—it was impossible to determine which—a being of the most beautiful appearance imaginable. The body had about it something of the appearance of a big beautiful sea shell, was somewhat conical in shape, the upper part convoluting gracefully; and at its dull apex, which leaned slightly forward, were three bright gray eyes. The rounded sides showed three arm-like members, slim and supple, which were endowed with a number of delicate tenacula; these members they seemed able to extend or withdraw into their bodies at will. The whole body pulsed and shimmered, and was of a beautiful iridescent color. Their average weight was perhaps about one hundred and fifty pounds. They wore various small pouches suspended by silken cords, which were fashioned of flexible metallic-like material; from these they extracted a number of queer articles, some of which were very much like writing pads and pencils. That these creatures, strange in form yet elegant to behold, were no mere animated things, but possessed of high intelligence, was clearly evident.

When night came on the mysterious globe scintillated

with myriads of lights, which shone from its numerous round openings. Numbers of these queer beings flew hither and thither about the city in their little flying machines, small but powerful searchlights flashing; evidently examining and studying what they could, while all night long immense throngs crowded around the Capitol grounds seeking to get as close as the police lines permitted. It was all very mystifying.

THE strange thrilling truth at last dawned on everybody; the scarcely believable truth, that in some miraculous manner strange living things, not of this earth, were here before them—living, thinking, tool-using beings, perhaps just as surprised at seeing us as we were to see them. The thing was incredible, unreal, beyond belief.

For ages man and his forbears had always dealt with life and the things of this earth, and beyond the academic interest of astronomers, pursued his activities as if his planet were the only one really existing—the shining stars but ornaments for his edification. But here for the first time man was brought face to face, as it were, with the outside universe. What at first was thought to be foreign visitors in a new idea of aviation, turned out to be visitors from another world in outer space. The mighty repercussion of interest aroused by such an event beggars description. It was like the first thrill of a million Lindberghs multiplied a thousand fold.

Great screaming headlines appeared in all the newspapers about "other world visitors," "Mars" and "Venus." Long columns were written about the various planets of the Solar System, including a great deal that was speculation, particularly about the "Martians," and their supposedly older and higher civilization. Overnight astronomical subjects became the leading topic of conversation.

What was to be done? Officials racked their heads as to the proper procedure. For one thing, no one knew how best to approach the queer visitors, nor how to establish intercommunication. Even with the most alien of humans one knows what to do—the need of creature comforts, shelter, food; but these beings who had so unexpectedly introduced themselves into our midst were so bewilderingly different, so utterly unlike anything imagined. Somehow it had always been taken for granted—naively so—even in most tales dealing with imaginary life on other planets, that if thinking beings existed thereon they most likely possessed characteristics of a human mold. The natural viewpoint of man makes it hard to conceive otherwise. To be sure, after the true nature of our guests was recognized, it was greatly desired to accord them the welcome they deserved, to extend to them every comfort and courtesy—befitting this amazing event. But there was no end to take hold of.

It was finally decided on a committee to formally welcome our astonishing visitors from another world. Prominent among the welcoming delegation were: Secretary of State George B. Stoddard; ranking Republican Senator T. Jarvis Smith; Speaker of the House, Congressman Willis H. Haynes; Dr. Spencer Adams, of The Smithsonian Institution; Dr. James C. Goodson, of The United States Naval Observatory; Professor Russel H. Hedges, the eminent astronomer; Professor Hiram G. Daniells, eminent biologist; Dr. Ernest W. Porter, president of the Washington Academy of Sciences; and others.

Accordingly, the next morning at ten o'clock, our distinguished delegation approached the large platform extending from the globe, facing the Capitol, where a large number of the strangers were gathered. They had with them large scale charts of the Solar System and stellar constellations; and by graphic means endeavored to converse with the celestial visitors.

That they evidently understood our meaning was immediately obvious; for one of them who seemed to be the leader waved a wand-like staff and at once a large easel-like stand was brought from within the sphere. This stand was covered with white material; and the leader, taking a pencil from one of his pouches, rapidly and skillfully sketched a sidereal chart of the heavens as viewed from our Solar System. Then, pointing to a spiral nebula in the northern constellations, he made an enlarged drawing of it, laid his wand on one of the stars of which it was composed, and made it perfectly plain that the visitors came from that spot in space.

This nebula to which he pointed, was recognized as the Great Nebula of Andromeda, designated in astronomical catalogues as N. G. C. 223. It is one of the hundreds of thousands of extra-galactic nebulae scattered in far off space. A number of the spiral nebulae had at last been resolved in our largest telescopes, and are definitely placed by leading astronomical authorities as way and beyond the uttermost limits of our Sidereal Universe; in fact are distinct and entirely separate universes, immeasurably farther than the most remote star in our Milky Way.

The Great Nebula of Andromeda, from which our visitors had so dramatically come, is distant about a million light-years from our Solar System. Visible to the naked eye as a hazy star of the fourth magnitude, viewed through a large telescope it is one of the most magnificent objects in the heavens. It is the largest known of any of the spiral nebulae, and is in reality an incomprehensibly vast system composed of hundreds of millions of stars, similar in size and physical structure to those of our own universe. The whole system is so remote that its individual stars are indistinguishable except by the largest telescopes.

After further efforts it was learned that the home of our visitors was a small planet approximately the size of our Earth, revolving about a star somewhat larger than the Sun. This was all the information it was possible to get at the time from the celestial voyagers, due to the great difficulty of a mutual medium of understanding. It was only by means of astronomical charts and descriptive drawings on both sides that the above information could be gleaned.

Words cannot describe the tremendous sensation this caused throughout the entire world. It crowded everything off the front pages of newspapers altogether. In fact, so strange and so unbelievable was all this, as to cause a feeling of doubt to persist in many of the best informed quarters. Eminent savants in Germany, France and other countries wrote learned treatises relative to the subject, analyzing the possible from the impossible. There was even a widespread feeling that some gigantic hoax had been perpetrated.

For one thing, how could anything within any conceivable lifetime succeed in bridging the vast unthinkable distances separating our mite of a world from this outside universe? According to our knowledge the speed of light is the fastest possible speed in the universe. And a

simple calculation sufficed to prove, though fast as light is, traveling with the inconceivable speed of over one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second, this enormous speed is but a snail's pace, when it comes to interstellar distances. How, then, could this strange craft ever have bridged a distance which takes light itself the unthinkable time of one million years to span. It seemed preposterous.

And yet, here was stark truth in evidence. Outside of the human species there was no other born of this earth capable of such high powers of thinking and coordinated activities. The extra-mundane derivation of these strangely formed beautiful beings could not be doubted by all those who saw them. They seemed unable to move about without their small mechanical vehicles, which responded to their every touch; on the ground, up or down, in any direction—at least no one saw them apart. These vehicles were of the same metallic substance as that of the huge sphere, and they moved about in them with scarcely a sound, with no more effort than we do in our clothes.

For seven days our extra-terrestrial sojourners, of whom there were several hundred, remained where they were. Efforts were made to invite them into our midst, and minister to their comforts, although no one could tell what these comforts might be. Beyond entering the Capitol, White House and other places, they did not seem to need or care for anything. The Andromedans, as we named them, moved and flew about here and there, examining, testing everything with which they came in contact. Vegetable growths in particular seemed to interest them highly; they hovered about trees, bushes and other growths for long periods. A passing dog or other animal would draw their interest immediately; they would converge on it in numbers for study, and the animal would flee in great fright.

A scientific committee spent every minute possible in the company of the visitors, seeking to learn what they could. They in turn were not only interested in our efforts at interchange of intelligence, but seemed interested and puzzled at the construction of the human body, prodding and touching us constantly—a mildly uncomfortable experience, because their bodies were slightly charged with electricity.

During all this time very little more was learned regarding the Andromedans. Their mentality and ours seemed to offer no common ground for easy communication. They appeared to have no head, as we know it, no ears, nose, nor any other of the animal organs which we are wont to associate with intelligent life. As to the more intimate details regarding these beings, such as anatomical functions as well as means of contact with the objective, our understanding was very limited; insofar as it was impossible to examine them more thoroughly.

Then one morning the huge sphere gracefully lifted off the ground slowly like a mountainous bubble, and with an immense roar of machinery, floated off at an increasingly great speed in an easterly direction. Everyone was disappointed to see them go; and large numbers watched until the huge craft became a mere speck on the horizon.

Ships at sea reported sighting the sphere moving with incredible speed over the Atlantic. A few hours afterwards word was received from Belgium that the Andromedans had landed there, about ten kilometers from Antwerp, causing great excitement.

After a two days stay in Belgium, during which time the most eminent scientists of Europe did their best to get what information they could, the Andromedans moved on and landed in Germany, near Münster. They stayed there a few days, causing the most tremendous furor, many journeying from England and far points of the continent to view the strange sight with their own eyes. Doubt of the extra-mundane origin of the strangers could no longer be entertained. Everywhere the Andromedans went they were followed by vast swarms of curious humanity, often so overwhelming in their forward surgings, despite the best efforts of police and military guards, that the visitors many times had to rise into the air to avoid being crushed.

For over a month the strangers in their flying globe moved on; stopping in Russia, China, India, and touching here and there, humanity eager and all agog. Their craft was continually sighted in various parts of the world, though, at the last, seldom landing. Finally no more was seen or heard of the space voyagers. They totally disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as they had appeared. It was assumed that they departed from this Earth to continue their interstellar voyaging. And for many years the thrilling visit of the Andromedans remained an interesting subject of discussion in wide circles and in much print.

TWENTY-FIVE years passed by. Beyond the mere records of fact, the world had completely forgotten the stirring visit of life from another universe. A few moving pictures of the event, a few stray photographs of their far-off homeland the visitors left behind—that was all there was left to record. Outside of the knowledge that intelligent life in a strange form existed in a far-off pinpoint of space, and the immense impetus given the study of astronomy, the world was not changed one bit. The even tenor of its existence went on from generation to generation.

The world slowly improved, ever growing more efficient, more comfortable, more sanitary—and even more just. But the daily things of life, the good and the bad, continued just the same as they always have done for ages back. For however the outer forms of civilization may change, be it remembered that regardless of his material improvements, the inner life of man, his basic feelings and emotions, change but little—and these very very slowly. The same old vanities, the same old bigotries, the same old hatreds existed, with their resulting strife and miseries. And yet, there was no doubt about it; the world as a whole had grown better—much better and happier. Little did the world know or appreciate how well off it was. Had humanity had an inkling of the tragic drama about to be enacted, the inconsequential things of life, so important to many, would have seemed trifling indeed. The soul of man was soon to be tried with fire—his very existence doubtful.

Suddenly, on June 5, 1962, with a suddenness that staggers the imagination, the same strange beautiful beings which had stirred our world of a generation ago, appeared once more. This time, however, there arrived about a hundred of their huge metallic spheres, somewhat larger even than the first one of twenty-five years ago. The immense fleet landed in open ground eleven miles east of Cincinnati.

The excitement and astonishment caused by this second appearance of the Andromedans, defies description. In

the times of which we write, mechanical advancement had progressed at such an accelerating rate that almost anybody could reach almost anywhere very quickly; and as the day these huge globes landed was the week-end, vast throngs from great distances motored and flew to the spot—it takes very little to attract the multitude. Many even flew clear across the Atlantic to see the strange sight. Once again the whole world was thrilled to its innermost core.

That the Andromedans this time had come for some sort of important business was soon evident. For shortly after landing, their spherical vessels formed into a large circle, and began disgorging vast quantities of machinery and supplies. As each craft was manned by many hundreds of these exotic beings, it can readily be seen that there were several score thousand of them; each moving about in his graceful little airmobile, as we called it.

A scene of tremendous activity commenced, the like of which was never seen by human eye. With powerful machinery of immense size, the Andromedans began excavating, leveling, and building over a large area many square miles in extent. A concrete picture of what their unthinkable remote homeland must be like began to take form. Huge structures, many over a thousand feet high, steadily formed to rear their vast hulks from their deep foundations. And strangely beautiful they were too, so utterly different. The circle and oval, the ellipse and the spiral, were the predominating motifs. All their buildings were circular or oval in shape, gigantic in size, set well apart, the intervening spaces serving as streets. Here and there piercingly tall towers, two to three thousand feet in height, spiraled their graceful way up towards the sky. They constructed their materials right on the spot. Wherefrom they obtained the enormous power necessary to their operations was a mystery. At night the whole sky for miles around was aflame with the fires of their industry.

Gradually more and more was learned of the nature of our extra-mundane guests, which the short visit of a generation ago did not permit. Their power of sight, for instance, was considerably different from the human. Their eyes, of which they possessed three, were very mobile, being located at the tip of three stubs; and unlike ours they had the power of magnification, which they exert at will, when focusing on minute or distant objects. In addition, they had another sense which we humans lack—another sort of an eye, at the base of the triangle formed by the others, by means of which they could register rays of the ultra-violet, thereby enabling the Andromedans to see things forever invisible to us. Hearing they had none, nor could our authorities find any traces of the sense of smell, although our visitors reacted violently in the presence of putrescence. Neither did they have the power of speech, which, however, was no drawback to them, as they conversed among themselves by means of signs, incomprehensible to us, but which their ultrapowerful eyes enabled them to carry on even in the dark and at great distances.

Natural foods, such as we earthly creatures enjoy, they did not need. Their nourishment was of their own compounding, made from the natural elements, of which they partook by means of an organ in the center part of the body. They did not seem to need the intermediation of plants or animals for their sustenance; but had the power to absorb and assimilate and build their bodies directly, as only some of our plant life can. They did need air,

and consumed large quantities of water. The metabolism was very low, and waste products negligible.

The most interesting thing about them was their sex—or rather lack of sex. We learned the amazing fact that these beings were extremely long of life, their average age running into several thousand years, equaled in duration only by our California Sequoias. Death, such as afflicts us mortals, is a thing undreaded with them; for their deaths are births, and their births are deaths, the offspring retaining even the memories of their immediate parents for the duration of their individual life. The Andromedans are monosexual; a form which, though lacking in interest from our viewpoint, nevertheless has its advantages by keeping their kind from division into two highly attractive but often antagonistic camps. At a point of their life comparable to our very ripe maturity, the mutual attraction of two Andromedans results in the beginning of a growth in each, which continues until the parent, usually at an extreme age, is finally discarded, thus giving birth to two individuals, never more nor less. Or it would be more correct to say, that two partly grown individuals take the place of the parents. This form of birth is always a joyful event and is the occasion for much celebration. The offspring at birth are already part grown, or rather, it would be more correct to state, that for a long time they are part of the body of the parent, gradually usurping its entity, until at a certain point the parent dies, and the children take on a separate existence. This, too, although not quite agreeable to our senses, has its advantages—the parent always knows the whereabouts of its children, and the children, after separation, may not have to worry about possible burdensome parents.

The Andromedans, although beautifully built and highly sensitive, are incapable of rapid self-locomotion. They have three appendages by means of which they can move about, but these are entirely too short and unfit for rapid progress either through long disuse or by nature; their movement was very slow and creepy. Practically every minute of their life, except during periods of rest which were very short, they spent in their little airmobiles, much as we do in our clothes. By means of these they became very swift and active indeed. Our scientists, who were free to study the strangers and their ways without any hindrance whatsoever, found these small flyers extremely interesting. As mentioned in a former place, these were small concaved disks in which the Andromedans went about and did their work. Long ago they discovered the related nature of gravitation and electricity as being basically one and the same thing; and so have been able to devise a way of insulating these disks, so as to free themselves at will from the attraction of gravity. The means by which this was done was, however, so extremely complicated as to defy the thorough understanding of our scientists; although they derived some very valuable ideas, which, it is hoped, will some day bear fruit.

The Andromedans were entirely peaceable beings. We looked in vain for any signs of querulousness, or any sort of combativeness. They went about all happily engaged in their various pursuits. Their greatest urge and passion seemed to be work and activity. To describe their social organization, as well as other interesting features, would take too long and is beyond the scope of this short narrative; the interested student, however, may obtain this at the proper sources.

BUT though the Andromedans went ahead steadily about their business of building, erecting and altering—the reasons for much of which we could but guess—apparently offering no harm; nevertheless they were excavating and otherwise changing enormous tracts of land on which were many prosperous farms, small settlements and public highways. All this was done without previous notice or permission. They simply concentrated at any chosen spot a vast amount of equipment, and commenced operations on such a titanic scale and in such large numbers, that one just had to move on. And so a great hue and cry went up, particularly from the farmers and small villagers whose property rights were thus violated without any notice whatsoever.

As the activities of the Andromedans continued, they became more and more objectionable, to say the least. And the complaints of the dispossessed and often homeless property owners became ever louder. Something had to be done. However, as the local authorities did not wish to be rude in any way to the celestial visitors, nor to be criticised by the interested outside world for untoward action—most likely they had no understanding nor idea of what we had long ago come to consider as property rights—an effort was made to communicate with the Andromedan leaders in order to explain to them the discomfort and grievous losses they were causing many citizens. Also at the same time the authorities wanted to know the why of their building operations, which by this time were beginning to assume immense proportions.

Accordingly, Sheriff Harold S. Lowell, of Hamilton County, requested the group of scientists who were in constant touch, to explain the serious situation to the newcomers, so that their stay would be as pleasant and non-irritating as possible; to convey our desire to treat them with the utmost cordiality and good will. No one at the time thought that their second visit to our earth, although on a much larger and more active scale, was anything more than transitory.

This approach was made. But although every effort was made, either they would not, or could not, be made to understand our ingrained repugnance to the violation of property rights. Speech, as we know it, they had none. But they learned to write our language, and we in turn learned to write theirs. A deal more was learned from the Andromedans concerning their home world and manner of existence. And the salient facts of their existence ran something like this:

Their cosmic system, located in one of the spirals of the Great Nebula of Andromeda, on the far side, unlike our Solar System, was a binary, so common in sidereal space. It consisted of a sun larger than ours, and around it revolved a small dark companion about the size of our earth which was their home. The physical nature of their planet was remarkably like ours, which it resembled in its make-up of land, water and meteorological conditions, except that their planet contained about twice our proportion of surface land area, and only about half of the water.

Vegetation and other forms of life they did not know of; or if they ever did exist, they had practically no record of it. For ages and ages as far as their knowledge went, they were the only form of life on their world, there being no other kind coexistent as in our world. They found so few records of former life, and these were so fragmentary in their nature, that although they knew that some time in the remote past there had

been other life on their planet, it was so long ago that the very existence of it had been forgotten. Due to some cataclysm or other causes of which they themselves didn't know the origin or nature, the Andromedans did not have a complete record of their descent.

Their numbers ran into six trillions. So crowded had living conditions become for them on their planet, which we named in our records as Androm, that their habitations had made of it one vast continuous city.

About seventy-five thousand years ago living conditions and requirements had become so intense, that practically the final limit had at last been reached—in spite of all their science and all their art. They had long ago perfected a means of traveling through space; and for scores of thousands of years their space travelers had covered abyssal distances throughout their own universe and many others, seeking another world fit to live on. And always and as far as they went, and wherever they went, they found space void and lifeless; the infinite number of bodies it contained uninhabited and uninhabitable.

For strange to say, although most of us on this earth had always taken it for granted otherwise, our Andromedan visitors informed us that life—any kind of life—is a rare phenomenon indeed throughout the length and breadth of infinite space; that so far as they had discovered—and they had covered incomprehensibly vast reaches of space—there was no other life extant, excepting on their planet Androm and our planet Earth. They found our galactic universe and other universes, although containing uncountable numbers of stars and other forms of matter—these were all either too hot or too cold, too small or too large, their physical content and form in some way entirely unsuited to support the vital processes of life. Even when they did find a body in itself suitable, it was either too close to its luminary or too far, its axial inclinations too oblique or its orbital path too extreme, or the warmth giving rays were of a kind destructive to life altogether. In short, the conditions which give birth to life and permit the vital processes necessary for its continuance, are so infinitely rare, so complicated, of such a rare combination of causes—the necessary fine balance so easily upset; that life, though plentiful on the two planets, was the most rare thing in the whole Universe.

The Andromedans had reached a marvelously advanced plane in their arts, their sciences and engineering skill; and were able to bring about enormous transforming works, greatly controlling the weather and other conditions. But they needed the kind of atmosphere we do, also water, and plenty of it; neither could they thrive, mainly for reasons of gravity, on a world much larger or smaller than our earth.

And so, when they first sighted our system twenty-five years ago, they were impressed with the beauty and changing colors of our Earth. They decided on a closer inspection before moving on, slackening their tremendous speed accordingly. While still far away, there was that about the appearance of our planet which interested them more than any other they had seen before. Their powerful telescopes revealed thrilling signs of what could only be explained by the possible existence of life. When they landed, and saw that terrestrial conditions were tolerable for them, and that above all there was life, they were as stunned as we were to see them.

At last, here was a world to colonize, to take the sur-

plus population of their world! It took them twelve years to return to Androm; and the news which they brought was received with great joy and relief. Their world had practically given up finding another livable globe, and certainly never expected to find life anywhere on any other than their own.

Immediately a great expedition was fitted out and sent speeding its way toward the Milky Way. It took consummate skill to find again our speck of a solar system—our sun being only one of the billions the galaxy contains. Also the disconcerting news was imparted that they were but the advance guard; that many other expeditions were being fitted out as rapidly as possible to follow on their heels; for the biologic pressure of their growing population, although very slowly increasing, had now become absolutely unendurable.

Our physicists and astronomers were greatly puzzled, however, by what means they were able to bridge such vast distances in such a short time as twelve years. But as near as they could gather—for the understanding of it required the knowledge of complicated mathematical operations and physical laws which it would take years to understand, much less to fully master—the Andromedans had a means of rapid acceleration that had no absolute limit. This acceleration they could increase at a geometrical ratio, till they went with the speed of light. Once the critical speed of light was reached, the ordinary laws of time, space, matter and velocity ceased to operate. They moved as if in another dimension, enabling them to attain a speed which covered interstellar distances as an airplane covers earthly distances. And, of course, they were able to decelerate by the same means. In their long voyaging they sometimes passed entirely through a gaseous nebula, hardly knowing it, for many of these gaseous nebulae are millions of times more rarefied than any artificial vacuum. They were equipped with special delicate instruments to automatically avoid accidental collision with bodies of harmful size. Thus we see that the marvel of mind has always been its ability to circumvent, as it were, or rather to take advantage of, the unknown laws of nature.

In the meantime, the Andromedans and their works became increasingly interesting, and excited everyone's imagination. They were the leading news feature. The entire world was kept informed, and they who could not take in the sights on the spot saw and heard with unabated interest the doings of the Andromedans over their televisions and radios.

But what was at first a highly interesting event—for the doings of these other world beings were extremely interesting and on a truly majestic scale—became in time somewhat disconcerting; for it took on all the earmarks of a permanent settlement. And as their activities grew and spread, ever including more and more area, the authorities began to be alarmed. It was also feared that some of the irate farmers, whose homes and farms were destroyed, would take matters into their own hands and resort to firearms—thereby creating an unpleasant complication. For what cared they about the romance of other world visitors, when their homes were at stake.

The local authorities, scarce knowing what to do in this unprecedented situation, and feeling that it had become a matter of more than local importance, appealed to Governor Whalen. However, as the State authorities neither would countenance nor wished the use of

force, it was decided it would be best to leave the Andromedans alone. Besides, the general opinion was that if kept within bounds the tremendous industry of the strange settlers would add enough to the general wealth to more than make up for the few square miles they occupied. The upshot of the whole matter was that the Ohio Legislature, approved by the Governor, voted from the State Treasury indemnification amounts covering the losses suffered by the dispossessed landowners. Also the Andromedans were enjoined from extending their operations beyond certain specified boundaries without conforming to our established laws.

It was soon found that this did not help matters for long. And to add to the growing seriousness of the situation, some months after the first arrival, another expedition as large as the first landed alongside the first. From then on a constant stream of new arrivals came, landing Andromedans by the scores of thousands, who from their first center spread out farther and farther.

By the time a year had gone by the situation had grown serious to the last degree. Their ever-spreading activities reached and threatened the environs of Cincinnati, and had swallowed up all the villages around. They even bridged the Ohio, and commenced their operations in Kentucky. The State authorities, who had exhausted all their efforts to keep the peace, were at their wits' end. The situation was all the harder to handle in so far as these beautiful intelligent beings were very gentle and seemed totally harmless. Except for their usurpation of property and land, not a human hair had been touched. They just didn't seem to understand our laws. So far there had been a constant friendly intercourse. Our experts and men of learning gleaned many valuable processes of a practical nature. The Andromedans were marvelous technicians and artists; and they showed us a few tricks, particularly in the realms of metallurgy, chemistry and mechanics, that made our experts feel like rank novices. Just the same we watched their activities with growing concern.

But when a great important city like Cincinnati appeared to be in the path of certain destruction, it became a different matter altogether. Things had gone entirely too far. The bewildering situation had taken on such enormous proportions that it was too big to be easily handled. It was like an insidious growth in the body, to which growth one does not attach full significance until it is too late. Everyone suddenly woke up to the real danger. And the governors of Ohio and Kentucky, not caring to assume responsibility for a state of affairs which they felt had grown beyond their control, it was decided to throw the whole matter into the hands of the Federal authorities.

Realizing that here was a condition of affairs fraught with possible dynamite, the consequences of which no one could foresee, the Federal authorities decided to take active steps toward a solution of the problem. The Andromedans were informed in a courteous but firm manner that their spreading activities were highly objectionable. They could remain where they were, as they were already settled, by contributing in kind to the general welfare. But all further spreading must cease altogether and immediately.

By this time intercommunication had so progressed that the new settlers fully understood our demands. They made it plain to us, however, that they wished no harm as to our life and human activities; but inexorable necessity

forced them to take whatever space was needed for their ever enlarging population. And as furthermore great numbers of their kin were on the way, and would continue to come in a vast migration to our planet, that we humans had best get accustomed to the idea right now and live our own life as best we may, without bothering or interfering with them, even though their usurpation of land conflicted with our rights.

Of course, all this was utterly preposterous. It was tantamount to conquest of part of our fair land, and could not be suffered in any degree.

It was the constant arrival of these strange beings from another universe which was the most alarming thing about the whole business. The quiet persistent pressure of their peaceful infiltration, the rapid spread of their enormous engineering and building works, produced an ever growing tenseness in an utterly undreamed of situation. They were changing entirely the landscape wherein their activities centered. Had they been some foreign humans who had thus settled uninvited amongst us, action would have taken place sure and swift long before this. But it was the very unusualness of the thing, the unbelievable, astounding happening going on right under our very noses, as it were, coupled with our first natural interest in the strange newcomers, which had disarmed us at first and allayed any apprehension.

The remarkable state of affairs was brought home directly to the Europeans also, by the landing of another large contingent of Andromedans on the western border of Germany, who being aware of our perplexing problem, looked not with kindly eye upon their uninvited guests. Then shortly thereafter in quick succession, a colony settled in Spain, another in England, and still another in southern Russia.

Our first enthusiastic reception and courtesies extended the celestial beings, now gave way to genuine alarm. The situation had become impossible.

The President called an extraordinary session of Congress to meet the growing danger. Pacifists were bowled down, and force was decided upon, distasteful though it was to many.

The War Department was authorized to take whatever steps were necessary. Large numbers of militia and Federal troops were called out, under the command of Major General Bruce T. Wallace, and began concentrating about the affected district. Artillery was massed in close formation, forming a ring of steel about the Andromedans; while large fleets of observation and bombing planes were held in readiness for action.

Be it remembered that all this time the objects of our concern were going peaceably about their business, paying not the slightest attention to our military maneuvers. They did not seem aware of the fact that punitive action threatened them. Our newspaper men, and for that matter anyone else who chose, had perfect access and liberty to the vast city which the Andromedans were building. They were very friendly and took every precaution to avoid bodily injury to man or beast. Beyond their usurpations they were entirely peaceable and harmless. It seemed a shame to fire upon these apparently defenseless, industrious, intelligent beings who were busily engaged in digging canals, building immense industries, architectural structures beautiful to behold, wide streets paved with a shiny metal, and other creations of a wonderful civilization. However there was nothing else to do.

An ultimatum was delivered the Andromedans on July 16th, 1963. It stated that where they had already settled, those that were here could continue as they were, subject to laws of the land; but no new immigrants of their kind would be allowed to remain; that further encroachment on new territory was strictly forbidden; that they were to pay, in a manner to be decided on later, the full amount of the value of the land they occupied and gun-fire would be resorted to if they disobeyed. They were given twenty-four hours to comply with and acknowledge acceptance of the terms of the ultimatum, which expired ten A. M. the following day.

Interest was everywhere at fever heat. The Germans and Russians, who by now each had a very large colony of their own to deal with, were awaiting the outcome on this side of the Atlantic to follow our precedent. No one really knew what the consequences would be, although no one doubted the ability of the military to control the situation. The Andromedans were not warlike. War was a thing unknown in their world. Our military intelligence reported they saw not the slightest sign of means of offence or defense, although no doubt their great knowledge and vast powers of industry were fully capable of a great deal if given time. They could be easily destroyed long before they knew what it was all about.

All civilians were ordered out of the district, and everything was held in readiness for the blow-off.

Evidently the Andromedans either would not or could not understand our warlike intentions, or had decided to pay no attention to the ultimatum. So promptly at ten o'clock, at the expiration of the ultimatum, the military forces let go. A terrific, overwhelming artillery fire was laid over the entire area. Overhead aerial forces dropped huge quantities of the most destructive explosives. Even poison gas of the deadliest kind was liberated in enormous volume, in an effort to wipe out the entire area in the shortest possible time. The din could be heard for miles and miles. It seemed nothing could remain alive. At the end of three hours of continuous bombardment, orders were issued to cease; and reconnoitering planes flew all over the affected area to see the result.

They reported vast damage had been done. Great numbers of the Andromedans were caught in the concentrated fire and killed. But with a shock of amazement it was learned that their huge spheres, of which there were many hundreds had not been injured in the slightest; and the surviving Andromedans had no doubt taken refuge in them. These spherical space flyers had evidently been constructed of a material to withstand any accidental shocks encountered in their cosmic flights; and our mightiest gun fire and explosives had made as much impression on their huge craft as peas would against a concrete building.

Another bombardment was ordered, this time concentrated on the globes, their space fliers. Suddenly these were seen to rise into the air; and in the midst of the deafening noise, there shot forth from all their globes blinding, lightning-like flashes, accompanied by terrific thunderclaps—striking the massed artillery and military forces. These lightning flashes came in a tremendously fast, flickering succession, paralyzing in their searing heat, and striking with all the force of a million thunderbolts, instantly enveloped the entire countryside with continuous white hot, explosive sheets of flame, shattering and destroying everything, and blowing up all

the ammunition and explosives gathered about. The entire earth heaved and shook, as if in the grip of a violent earthquake.

The devastation caused by these electric discharges, for such they appeared to be, is beyond description. Men and guns lay around in indescribable confusion. Many who were not dead seemed paralyzed. In less than fifteen minutes our entire artillery was completely silenced, and of the large fleet of powerful bombers nearly all were brought down. The remaining soldiers were ordered to retreat to avoid utter annihilation. A lesson was taught us in destructiveness, the like and the overwhelming power of which was never before experienced on this planet. Horror, consternation and anger filled everyone's heart.

After the terrible destruction of our military forces, with their sickening loss of life, the Andromedans emerged from their fortress globes, and commenced reconstruction of their shattered area. They made no effort at reprisal nor pursuit; but the way they stationed their globes there could be no doubt that they were now ready to meet another attack very promptly.

THE United States War Department began to make war preparations on a gigantic scale. The General Staff met and decided on another attack. This time the enemy was to be taken by surprise. All available troops were called out and stationed in a far-flung circle far enough removed from the affected area to avoid overwhelming loss of life. After all necessary preparations were made the attack in force was ordered. The Ninth Corps and five full divisions of the Second Mechanized Army, stationed on the west and north, and the entire First Mechanized Army on the east, converged suddenly on the enemy in their speeding armored cars. At the same time, the main force of all-metal war planes, each carrying over a hundred men, shot forward. Across the Ohio River, well concealed, were ranged battery upon battery, to intercept the enemy if they sought safety in flight across the river. The enemy was to be given no preparatory announcement of the impending attack, but were to be taken on all flanks completely by surprise and destroyed before they could get into action.

With great speed our forces rushed forward, and it looked as if nothing could stop them. The orders were to kill or capture every living Andromedan. Then, once again, those terrible, flickering flashes commenced enveloping and annihilating everything. Not one armored car or plane succeeded in getting anywhere near enough to come to grips; they were burned and shattered, or blown up by their own ammunition. Very few escaped when the retreat sounded.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the Germans, aided by the Belgians, on whose border the Andromedans settled, had followed the tactics of the United States forces; and their attacking forces, too, were completely destroyed. The same fate befell the Russians. Following hard upon this, news reached the civilized world that another colony of these unwelcome immigrants had landed in China, near Hankow; and still others in Asia Minor, India, Egypt and Morocco. And from all these centers, reinforced by the constant flood of newcomers, the invaders were rapidly spreading out in all directions.

There was now no doubt about it. This faroff world in the remote reaches of space—the very existence

of which was unknown to us, and such an invasion considered, if at all, as in the realm of the imagination—this far-off world, overpopulated, driven by a vast expanding life-force, and possessed of the power and means—were intent on sending their millions, even their billions, to colonize the Earth; and if need be take forcible possession of whatever portions they wished.

The more timid among mankind counselled that these newcomers should be left in peace, so long as they were not destructive of life. But the general opinion the world over agreed that the situation was impossible; that unless humanity wished to be shoved off the earth, as it were, the invaders must be destroyed, cost what it would.

A GREAT international council took place in London, March 18, 1964. Things had come to such a state that everyone realized the mortal danger which threatened the entire world. Every effort to resist so far had been smothered in destruction and death. No single nation could cope with the power of the Andromedans. All the civil, political and military leaders gathered to decide how best to grapple with the common enemy. For once all nations and peoples were united. The instinct of preservation made the whole world kin.

At a solemn conclave in plenary session it was unanimously agreed that all nations, big and little, should each contribute according to their power and ability, in defense of the common cause. An International Council of War Ministers was formed. The supreme command of all the forces was placed in the hands of a triumvirate, composed of Marshal Francois Fournel of France, Charles H. Biggers, the American industrialist; and Dr. Friedrich Hans Golter, Germany's great scientist. The reason an industrialist and a scientist were placed in command together with a soldier was because it had long been recognized that in a modern war, especially in a war of this kind where industrial and scientific resources were the deciding factors, military strategy alone would not win. This was going to be no mere marching back and forth, or stalemated trench warfare, such as previous wars had been between members of the same human family. Naval power did not even enter into consideration. They could not be starved out. Here was needed science, industry—the artfully conceived and executed application of tremendously destructive power—to the end that these other-world enemies of mankind should be destroyed utterly; or at least be forced to depart. Human civilization marshalled its forces and girded its loins for the titanic struggle.

But every effort proved futile and without avail. There seemed to be no effective way to grapple with the Andromedans. Every new, every supreme effort was overwhelmed again and again. And like fast-spreading, mountainous mushrooms—mushrooms with deep roots of steel and bodies of indestructible material—the Andromedan cities kept growing and spreading, ever usurping and extending—east and west, north and south—in an ever widening belt clear around the world. They altered the courses of mighty rivers; they changed the very topography of the earth to suit the needs of their particular civilization. Like a beautiful, yet malignant growth, they spread and covered the fair face of our good old Mother Earth.

Extensive mine fields of the most destructive kind were planted in belts miles wide completely around their

settlements. To no avail. For as soon as the Andromedans learned of their nature, the mines were quickly blown up from a distance by their terrible lightning forces. The explosions of these mines at times actually aided the enemy in their operations. Deadly aerial bombs directed from a distance by radio were tried. But these proved more of a boomerang than anything else; for just as soon as the Andromedans, by means of their instruments, located our sending stations, they dispatched fleets of their invincible globes and made chaos of entire regions. Poison gas, of a new and deadly kind, invented by the English, was resorted to and a surprise attack simultaneously in many places did cause large loss of life among the enemy; but after that our forces were unable to get near enough to drive home.

In addition to their shattering powers the Andromedans employed a wave length of the ultra-violet type, entirely mysterious to us, but which brought paralysis and death at a great distance to all life it touched.

New ideas, inventions, and suggestions poured in to Great Headquarters from all over the world. Everything that seemed worthwhile was given serious consideration. Holland flooded large parts of their country to stop the enemy's advance, but it proved a useless sacrifice, for the Andromedans soon drained the flooded areas. In India, in northern Africa, large numbers of natives lost their lives in futile, fanatical charges. In Japan two entire armies were wiped out in a vain attempt to save Tokio. Brave men there were and many. But humanity simply was outclassed and overpowered. We could not cross swords with the enemy on an even basis. It was like fighting with bows and arrows against machine guns and artillery.

In desperation the high command was finally turned over to new military and naval heads for a supreme effort. Enormous, frantic preparations were made throughout the wide world. Every Andromedan sector was to be stormed simultaneously with every possible means. It was to be a surprise attack on an epic scale.

At the zero hour a radio signal flashed all around the world; and the entire forces of every nation, big and little were hurled forward to take by storm every stronghold, and overwhelm the invaders with one fell swoop. The attacks were terrific. Persistently and fiercely, with ever-mounting, staggering losses we humans drove on, ever on. There was no stopping, no turning back. Savagely, desperately our attacks continued in the very jaws of death. The heroic greatness of man, won with a billion deaths on countless battlefields, rose to supreme heights. The Andromedans, if they had such feelings at all, must have been filled with admiration for the epic spectacle of this magnificent heroism, which knew no let-up and defied death itself. But they had by this time become fully aware of the determination, the craftiness and the destructive might of us humans, and were fully prepared. They evidently expected it and were not caught unawares. Vast numbers of soldiers and other combatants were annihilated by their irresistible powers of destruction. All efforts were futile. It was maddening not to be able even to come to close quarters with the enemy—it was like hordes of savages against organized steel and explosives.

A GREAT and unexpected tragedy had befallen mankind. That such a state of affairs should have come to pass seemed unbelievable. Here was the shud-

dering, the humiliating spectacle of Man, hitherto the lord of creation, bowing his head before a new master.

The flood of ever-arriving Andromedans spread and spread like an all-engulfing ocean, steadily, surely, relentlessly. Day and night a constant stream of their space-fliers dropped out of the sky, disgorged their passengers, and departed. They came by the millions. To the observer there was something overwhelming, something irresistibly cosmic, about it. As the Andromedans spread, humanity was forced to recede; not east or west, but north and south, for the conquerors were extending themselves in an ever-widening, continuous belt clear around the world. And as they spread, our cities and countrysides were completely leveled and reconstructed according to their own civilization.

For countless ages Man had ruled the earth. Wherever he went all other forms of life receded before him, or became subject to his will. But his sovereignty over the world meant untold tragedy to the lower forms of life. Not always were man's conquests peaceable or bloodless; in fact, they were seldom that. Always, nearly always, man's cruelty to animal life, even to himself, has caused endless suffering—often needless suffering. In his egotism and power man has naively taken it for granted that all living things were placed here for his special benefit—just given him to use as he saw fit. He tortured, he slew—he ate his living contemporaries. In his vanity he built whole religions to justify all this cruelty. And this cruelty to life, although often inevitable, was not always necessary. Many harmless, interesting species that took ages upon ages to evolve in the economic scheme of nature, man has utterly caused to become extinct without benefit to anyone—often for the sake of sport. Have the strong always been kind and generous? What of the Mayas? The North American Indian? And what of all subject peoples?

Overnight, as it were, the conditions had suddenly been reversed. The tragic spectacle of mankind, which for ages had taken its overlordship of the earth for granted, suddenly found itself in the same position in relation to the Andromedans as the inferior creatures formerly bore to mankind. It is true they were spared the horrors of being eaten and used at will, as man has done with his inferiors; for the Andromedans had no need of man nor of the other forms of life. But ever-increasing masses of humanity throughout the globe found themselves homeless and poverty-stricken; forced to move on and on, always north or south. Families of wealth and influence, the rulers, the mighty of this earth, found their property and means of sustenance gone; gradually but surely forced to the level of the lowly and dispossessed. Verily, a mighty nemesis had overtaken mankind, overwhelming and complete in its punishment. The good and the bad, the poor and the rich, the strong and the weak, the just and the wicked, the arrogant and the meek—all were engulfed in this consuming disaster.

Still the inexorable spreading of the conquerors went on; east and west, north and south. The mighty stream of their migration continued until they usurped the best of the habitable globe. Human civilization groped, staggered and fell. Suicide, pestilence, hunger and exposure took their frightful toll. Untold millions perished.

At last the pressure of the conquerors ceased. The avalanche had spent itself. In this most frightful of forced migrations all semblance of order, all former national boundaries and divisions were obliterated. All

humanity, or what was left of it, became as one. And be it said to the everlasting credit and honor of man—bespeaking the truly fine grains of gold hidden in his make-up—that a common lot and a common suffering united all; and heroism, generosity and self-sacrifice were common.

A TERRIBLE pestilence had broken out amidst the surviving masses of humanity, the vast majority of whom were seeking to reconstruct their lives in the hitherto unsettled temperate and arctic lands. It was a new and unknown disease, quick and fatal in its effect. The air was full of it; and in the disorganized condition existing there seemed no effective way to combat the disease. It continued to carry off larger and larger numbers till it was feared that, what the conquering Andromedans left undone, this fearful pestilence would complete.

Prominent among the doctors in Siberia, battling with this new foe that was filling man's cup of woe to the brim, was Dr. Sakaida Kawamura of Japan, formerly a bacteriologist of the now destroyed Flowery Kingdom. With a group of American and Russian colleagues he labored to do what was possible in stamping out the dread disease. Dr. Kawamura had been the leading world authority on bacteriology. He finally succeeded in isolating the germs of this disease. Gradually an idea formed in his mind. He discussed it with his colleagues; secrecy was enjoined. A completely worked-out plan was presented to the Council of War Ministers, which still functioned.

The plan was approved. As drowning men catch at a straw, so did those who kept their heads in this supreme hour of tragedy grasp at the new idea. Throughout untold generations, in his great trials, one of the saving elements of Man has been the magic word: hope. The idea did hold out great hope; news was flashed about without revealing its nature to bolster waning spirits and instill new courage.

A secret expedition was carefully fitted out. It was a dangerous mission, composed solely of volunteers of all races, for it most likely meant sure death. Each man was carefully trained and rehearsed for his part. To be at all successful there could be no slip-up, for the enemy was sharply on the lookout at all times; and it was extremely difficult to get very far into their territory. The plan of action was as follows: Several hundred planes of the new kind, capable of over six hundred miles an hour, were each equipped with thousands of small cylinders containing the active virus of the terrible disease—thanks to Dr. Kawamura—now under control as far as mankind was concerned. The cylinders also contained, in addition to the virulent culture, quantities of fine steel splinters, and were made to float to ground where the slightest touch would detonate them, scattering the deadly messengers far and wide. The planes, stationed clear around the world, each as close as possible to the largest enemy centers, were to dash forward, release their deadly missiles at the right moment, and retreat as best as they could. Thus it was hoped that in thousands of places these virulent germs would start in their deadly work midst the enemy and accomplish in their invisible might that which the most powerful means at our command failed to do.

After every plane had taken its station, each manned by the pick of the world's aviators, a prearranged radio

signal flashed the orders to start these brave heroes on their dangerous mission. Though it probably meant death to them, it might prove the salvation of mankind; and they departed with the fervent prayers of all humanity for their success and safe return.

Time elapsed. Nothing was known of the result. A number of the daring heroes returned; the rest never came back. It was learned that thousands of the deadly messengers, in widely scattered places where the enemy lived in greatest numbers, went home. The disease was respiratory in its effect, and as the Andromedans were air-breathers, unless they were far better equipped to battle with it than we were—in these matters doubtful—the epidemic should spread; and, being most violent in warmer climes, might destroy the hated enemy or, at least cause vast numbers to die. But, alas for the hopes of humanity. Nothing happened. If the pestilence did get a start, either they were more immune or their science was capable of coping with it. The plan failed to produce the desired result. Stark grief and despair seized everyone.

FRANK RUSSELL HOPKINS, Sc.D., Ph.D., formerly of Cambridge, Mass., had settled in Manitoba. Along with the rest of uprooted humanity he was endeavoring to reconstruct as well as possible his shattered life. He had lost his only son and eldest daughter, a daring aviatrix, in the general cataclysm. With his wife and young daughter they had fled from their native New England home, which their forebears had settled centuries ago, and, gathering what meager possessions it was possible to take, moved north, away from the dreaded invaders.

A time came when it meant sure death to remain. At first, great numbers, finding the usurpers benignly indifferent toward taking life, lingered on, trying their best to live among the conquerors. But this was a difficult thing to do. For our bodily habits and manner of living were so distasteful to them that those who lingered were at first unceremoniously pushed to one side—in such a manner as one would disregard a nest of ants—and then, realizing there could be no truce between themselves and revengefully determined humanity, they put to death those who resisted. Finally, exasperated by the tremendous and ceaseless efforts of us humans to defend our birthright, and harassed by our constant incursions—for perseverance is one of the innate qualities which formerly aided Man in world dominance—the Andromedans destroyed on sight any human being within their reach.

For several generations the family of Hopkins had been of the typically inventive type, contributing mightily to our vast industrial progress—usually with small recompense. As is often the case, the dreamer and the inventor does not always share in the fruits of his ideas; so the Hopkinses, though prolific of ideas that enriched civilization, lived with modest means—often even pinched for the good things of life.

For years Dr. Frank Hopkins had been on the experimental laboratory staff of a great industrial firm in Pittsburgh. For a number of years before that he was on the faculty of a large eastern university. But, finding the niggardly pay of the teaching profession shamefully inadequate, he resigned in disgust and joined the laboratory staff of the Pittsburgh firm. He was an indefatigable worker; his knowledge of physical phenomena was

far beyond the ordinary. Many an important discovery or invention, which he always assigned to his company, increasing their huge dividends, meant but a modest increase in his income. However, he was frugal in his habits, and, aided by an extra commission here and there, at the age of fifty managed to save up a modest competence.

The great, all-absorbing dream of Dr. Hopkins was the release of atomic energy. Locked up in every grain of sand, every bit of matter, were enormous stores of energy, which, if it could only be tapped, would revolutionize the world. For years all of Dr. Hopkins' spare time, and more, was occupied with this dazzling possibility. So absorbed did he finally become in his great dream, that as time went on he became more and more absent-minded, and his daily work at the plant suffered in consequence. It prevented the rapid promotion which his recognized great abilities might have brought him. He was a kindly soul, always putting himself out for others and beloved by all.

Upon the inheritance of a legacy left to his wife, the family came into an independent position. She understood her scholarly, dreaming husband for what he really was and was immensely proud of him. She loved him dearly, forever looking to his comfort and shielding him from petty annoyances. They decided to leave Pittsburgh, which they never liked, and once more took up residence in their native town of Cambridge. There Dr. Hopkins devoted all his time to the working out of his great dream.

Several times he had been on the very verge of the epochal discovery—a discovery that would do for civilization what fire did for primeval man in the dim and forgotten past. He knew all this. But always that all-important detail, necessary to complete practicality, eluded him. For hours, for days, his mind would wrestle with the problem, until weary and exhausted he would drop off into slumber, from which he would waken to take up the subject with renewed determination.

On the bitter day of his forced migration, with fear in every heart, and the temperature hovering round zero, he managed to take along his beloved instruments and laboratory equipment. He cursed the Andromedans for interrupting his researches—just when he felt that the long years of his intense efforts, combined with his prodigious knowledge, were at last about to come to a supreme realization. But there was no help for it; the icy breath of death was not far away. And with the fear of the hunted, and the driven, which mankind was experiencing in all its bitterness, Dr. Hopkins and his little family departed in haste from their ancient homeland.

Northward in their machines loaded to capacity, in company with fellow sufferers, they trekked their way in the bitter cold of winter. Whither, no one scarcely knew—nor how it would end. Refugees from all over the world crowded into north Canada, one of the havens of refuge.

In common with some of his former townsmen in far off Manitoba—for thus far had they been driven—Dr. Hopkins took up the loose ends of his existence. Rude shelters were built; bravely the semblance of a civilized life was carried on. Large numbers of people in all walks of life were crowded together, sharing the same hardships. The senseless frivolities, the stupid antics, which formerly loomed so large and important

in the minds of many, were now meaningless—only worthwhile things mattered. In this great transvaluation of all values things were where they belonged, and the true were quickly sifted out from the false.

The first signs of approaching spring were hailed with great joy and thanksgiving. The relentless pressure of the Andromedans had relaxed. There was time to breathe.

Once more Dr. Hopkins took up his long neglected researches in quest of his beloved subject of atomic energy. The profound misery of those about him only redoubled his energy and determination to succeed. Clear as a bell he saw the immense possibilities. If he succeeded, a weapon could be forged whose irresistible might should redeem all for lost humanity; would replace Man on the throne from which he had been so rudely thrown. His great mind bent to the task.

IT was a great day for mankind when his efforts met with success. The final, elusive sides of the problem were solved. Again and again he tested it, thoroughly, positively—proved to himself, beyond the peradventure of a doubt, that he held in his hand a new power, infinitely great, for good or evil.

Dr. Frank Russell Hopkins stood before the august Council of War Ministers—now shorn of power—demonstrating and explaining his tremendous discovery. With bated breath and shining eye he explained as best he could the workings of this infinite storehouse of energy, which he had solved at last through a combination of discovery, intuitive deduction and ingenious invention. With wide open eyes and gaping mouths, they saw and understood. They saw its god-like power and significance. Carefully planned and rightly used, deliverance could be wrung from the conquerors.

The highly mathematical technical details were hard to understand for the layman and could scarcely be followed even by the expert. In general, and briefly, Dr. Hopkins had discovered a method of exciting the potential energy locked within the atom, a way to break down the ordinary relations between its proton and electrons, thereby releasing forces that would all but detonate the whole earth, if not properly controlled. Once this excitation of atomic energy in matter was induced, it had a tendency to spread with an unquenchable fierceness, a degree of heat that would volatilize everything in its path; and unless stopped would continue its steady spread until the entire surface of the earth was in an all-consuming flame. Nothing could put it out. The heat caused by the release of this atomic energy would burn fiercely for months and years, burning itself out only when the atomic energy in the surface it was attacking was dissipated; and a diamond-hard, transcendently heavy substance remained as a residue. The disintegration could not go far below the surface, as the free oxygen in the air was a necessary part of the consuming process.

There was only one substance which was impervious to and could confine this all-consuming energy—a chalk-like substance which Dr. Hopkins had worked out. This could be easily manufactured in great quantities. Its successful formula had been the most difficult thing his genius had to contend with—the doctor had tried every known element and possible combination of elements—and its invention was perhaps the most marvelous part of the whole discovery. (Continued on page 81)

The Conquest of the Earth

By Isaac R. Nathanson

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Of course, there was great danger in handling the whole thing. Such vast forces could not be released without the possibility of its getting out of control altogether, and destroying the whole earth. But the condition of mankind was insufferable and, as far as one could foresee, the end was not yet. Far better a thousand deaths than to be dominated and driven about like wild beasts. It was solemnly decided, that come what will, here was a weapon that offered the only possible salvation—a most terrible, infinitely powerful weapon. The soul of Man rose to its supreme height.

The execution of the project called for a vast amount of labor and the highest technical skill in its preparation. But willing hands there were and keen brains; and desperation had increased everyone's energy. To bring about the desired result the atomic conflagration had to be started right in the midst of the enemy, preferably in many places at once. The technique of induction was a long and skillful process and required a specially trained technical knowledge, which few possessed. In fact, it was extremely difficult to induce this excitation, in view of the newness of the process, which, like all new discoveries, lacked refinements and improvements, such as only the years can develop. But once started the heat generated by the liberated forces within the atoms roared with an explosive fierceness, unapproachable and extinguishable.

A selected number of highly skilled technicians, drawn from men of every nation and clime, were trained under Dr. Hopkins, who carefully and patiently imparted to them the difficult technique of the new discovery. Everywhere, in every place of refuge, in far-off lands of the world, men and women labored—grimly, tirelessly and determinedly. It took over a year to complete the full preparations.

A day came when all was in readiness. As night descended with its enshrouding mantle over the different parts of the earth, those entrusted with the final execution of the great strategy fared forth. Several scores of the new racing planes, each starting from a specifically selected point, sped straight for the enemy. In the darkness, at a tremendous height, they raced on at over six hundred miles an hour toward their definite objectives. It was a very dangerous undertaking. The population of the Andromedans had by now become very dense. In many selected spots, free of the enemy, but in the heart of their territory, landing parties were to start the process which would release the intra-atomic forces. This usually took several hours; and probably only a few of the landing parties would succeed—but that was enough.

With palpitating hearts, with nerves strained to the breaking point, the result was awaited. Of the hundreds of planes, only twenty-three returned. They reported complete success.

HISTORY records that the last effort of mankind succeeded—1977 will forever go down as the year of The Great Deliverance.

In many places, in widely scattered parts right in the midst of the enemy, the irresistible atomic fires had been started. By the time the Andromedans had fully awakened to the full seriousness of their danger, the conflagration had spread to an extent there was no stopping. With all their knowledge, with all their science and skill, with all the tremendous power at their disposal, they were unable to quench the fiery spread.

Although the Andromedan civilization was much older and more developed in many ways, they had never succeeded in solving completely the problem of controlling intra-atomic energy. The energy which they utilized—the nature of which we never discovered, though most likely it was a partial tapping of atomic force—was powerful and terrible enough, and we had been unable to cope with it. But they knew not how to cope with or control this new fierce energy which we released. And it was this supreme stroke of human genius which finally overwhelmed them.

In vain they tried every method. In vain, with every means at their command, they strove to halt its deadly march. The blinding glare lit the skies; night could scarcely be told from day; roaring, deadly gases enveloped larger and larger areas. Until finally, the continuing spread of the all-devouring conflagration had grown to such proportions over such large areas that the Andromedans realized it was only a matter of time when they would all be consumed in its roaring flame.

They made a tremendous effort to escape from this earth. "Let Mankind perish in the fires which it started. A world suicide! When the atomic fires encircled the entire earth, a new star, bereft of all life, would announce itself in the firmament"—so they thought, as revealed by records they left behind. Their whole energies were devoted toward building vast numbers of their space-traveling globes, to take them back to their remote homeland. The clang and din of their hurried and desperate efforts to escape was a sight for the gods; the ever-spreading flames a constant urge.

And now the last of the Andromedans departed from the earth, with the deprecations and curses of all humanity. Many perished in the flames. The few remaining were put to death, as in their terribly disorganized state they could offer no adequate resistance.

Then began a race with the all-spreading atomic blaze. And here was where our complete preparations saved the earth for us. Mountainous quantities of the only substance capable of stopping the world conflagration had been manufactured and held in readiness. An entire willing humanity, young and old, buckled down to the herculean task of building barriers of this insulating stuff—which the Andromedans knew nothing of. Each area in the grip of the fiery disintegration was completely surrounded by these barriers, and when the flames reached these, they could spread no further. Everyone knew that in a few years the burning areas would gradually burn themselves out.

The hosannas, the thanksgiving that rose to high

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heaven have never been equaled. The frenzied joy at the great deliverance will go down in memory as long as the world lasts. The fires which the very soul of man had

passed through had burned out the dross of the ages' old hatreds and divisions which had afflicted mankind from time immemorial; the narrow things and the petty were all wiped out. There would be enough for all.

THE END