

SCIENCE ON THE EVE

OF TALKING WITH OTHER WORLDS
THAN THE ONE WE INHABIT.

Tesla, the Great Electrician, Declares We Shall Talk With Mars in a Short Time—The Ground of His Confidence and Enthusiasm.

Tesla, the world's greatest scientist, believes that the day is not far distant, when science measures time, when a serious attempt may be made to transmit intelligence to the planet Mars.

This belief is the direct outgrowth of his discovery that the earth is the great conductor of telegraphic messages, and that news, and even power, may be conveyed from one part of the globe to another without the use of wires.

The inimitable large scale of the earth's bosom he has learned to climb, and in climbing it has learned how mighty it is.

It is sufficient, he believes, to carry our messages across the space which separates the worlds, and science stands on the verge of a revelation which will link the whole firmament in a chain of thought.

Tesla has a scientist's faith. So firmly does he believe that the intelligence of other worlds is akin to that of ours, that he conceives and outlines a theory of rudimentary signals upon which a code of communication may be built up.

The only method, he declares, by which this overmastering marvel of all ages may be brought to pass is the utilization of the earth's electricity, which he has already found to be a carrier spinning the finite transmitters.

The man who masters this problem of all the ages will be the greatest of his race. Kings and princes, and conquerors of whatever age will be only puppets and things of tinsel in the light of a genius which binds worlds together.

The nights and days are not long enough for Tesla now. Since this startling announcement that he has mastered the problem of transmission of power and intelligence he has been working upon his enlarged apparatus that he may further augment his triumph over the obstacle of distance.

He is quite firmly believe, he said to a New York Journal representative, who visited him at his laboratory, "that this transmission is immediately possible, and on a large scale."

"And have you faith that the communication may be extended to the stars?"

"I prefer to phrase my answer this way; that if it ever is accomplished it will be by this means—the utilization of the static electricity of the earth. There is no other system by which it is possible."

Serious consideration has been given by scientists to the scheme of signaling by means of enormous light, but that is not, to my thinking, practicable. Why? Because there is no means of concentrating it upon any given point.

A light might be generated which would seem enormous, and which would in fact be enormous. But the difficulty is that in its journey to Mars that light would be dissipated, and that it would fall over all the greatest circumference of the planet. So, in receiving any light signal which might be transmitted to us we would be practically helpless. Of course, we might employ a mirror twenty feet square, for example. But that would be infinitesimal compared with the whole area over which the light might fall. Any concentrating agent representing only a millionth of the whole area would be useless.

"But a sound wave can be set in motion, conveying a definite impression, to be delivered in a definite direction, and the force which can be summoned for each service is stupendous."

"And do you actually believe that such communication is possible?"

"Yes, I do; and it is plain that the belief is not an uncommon one among scientific men. Aside from popular and imaginative writings, the serious studies of scientists, and their studies looking toward the perfection of devices, give proof that the belief has become concrete and practical."

"In the first place, it is not to be believed that other planets are not peopled. No more is it to be believed that their inhabitants are devoid of intelligence. Without it their life could not be prolonged. Their world, we know, is matter—the same elements, in all likelihood, which compose our world. It must be that they have comprehension of the same entities that we have."

"And that brings us to the vital point of the whole matter. Assuming these things to be true and with the machines which will be used of the earth's electricity have control of force sufficient to transmit a sound or signal over such a vast distance, what method is possible to convey any understanding to the people of a far-off planet? How can we make them know or understand what we are trying to convey to them?"

Tesla's eyes fairly sparkled as he listened to the question, waiting for his answer with eagerness that he might begin his answer. He was enthusiastic and spoke rapidly and with enchanting force.

"It is simple," he said. "Listen. I have said that the inhabitants of the planets, Mars, for example, must have intelligence. Their life must be made up of events. They must have a conception of time. And therefore they must have means of measuring time, of recording events. Without that they could have no history."

"Now, this idea of time is the foundation upon which we must lay the rudiments of our system of communication. It is not to be supposed that we can leap at once into the free interchange of intelligence. That is not possible even between the earth and the planet, though they have the same structure, the same elements, the same made and apparatus of thought. The man shipwrecked and crying out for help, who knows no syllable of their speech. He begins with a rudimentary sound to express some certain thing. Even if he were bound hand and foot, and the power of gesture taken from him, still, by repetition and experiment and contemplation of their world he would ultimately learn their language, and in ten years would speak it perfectly, perhaps to the exclusion and forgetting of his own. It is in the same way we would have to begin our communication with the inhabitants of Mars."

"That fundamental, universal idea of time is the key of the uncovering of the difficulty. Suppose that with the aid of our appliances we sent a signal, a shock, or whatever you chose to term it, which was audible or appreciable to the dwellers upon Mars. Suppose at the expiration of a minute we sent another, and after another minute a third, and so on. Any intelligence which is capable of measuring time would at least leap to the conclusion that the interval elapsed between the signals was one unit of time. Then say four signals, at minute intervals, followed by four in rapid succession. Our whole system of notation could thus be made plain to them."

"Thus, upon a mathematical basis I believe a system could be founded which in the course of time could be developed into an intelligible code, capable even of conveying the most intricate communications. There is no limit to the possibilities of its development."

"Do you not believe, gauging the future steps by past progress in science, that an attempt at communication with Mars will be made within a comparatively short time, as time is counted in human progress?"

"You mean a serious attempt?"

"Yes, I do. And that point of the ratio of human progress is a very interesting one, too—one upon which I began many years ago to make mathematical calculation. I was curious to know at what rate science moved."

"You mean more than that," answered the inventor. "It is more nearly like the multiplication of germ life. It is almost incredible. Take, for example, the bacteria of carbon. Each one of millions reproduces millions. It preys upon organic matter and destroys it, but fortunately it is the only safeguard that living beings have. If it were not for that we would be utterly destroyed. It is the same way with races. A race grows in civilization and power until at last its over-civilization weakens it, and some barbarian people comes in and destroys it. But the seed of that civilization, left behind, is taken up and developed until the barbarian himself becomes over-civilized and in his turn falls. So history goes on forever, but the sum total of all these accomplishments furnishes the rate of human advancement, and it is sufficient."

"It is on the result of that calculation that I base the declaration of my belief that a serious attempt at transmission of intelligence to Mars will be made within a short time. Of course, I mean 'short' in the scientific sense. But I would undertake to say how short or how long that time will probably be."

But it is an easy task to read in the enthusiasm of Tesla upon the half conviction, the hope and the half conviction, that in his lifetime the crowning triumph of science will be achieved and speech journey across infinite space.

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HABIT OF NOT PAYING

THIS MODERN QUALITY SEEMS TO
BE SPREADING ITS BOUNDS.

A Natural and Understandable Habit
Treated Philosophically and Therefore
Uniquely—The Scientific Side of a
Humorous and Off-Patient Subject.

The habit of not paying, which seems to have been spreading, says the New York Times, was treated of in a masterly way by Mr. James G. Cannon in his address on "Individual Credits" at the University of Chicago. The habit of not paying has frequently been a topic of the humorists, and its adaptation to the scientific side of the subject was a humorous and off-patient subject.

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RETROSPECTIVE

Religio! The ball last night I thought
(Although the men for dances fought,
And I looked at my best)
The slowest, stupidest, dullest,
(That I have ever seen),
To send Jack west!

—Except one waits. He danced like Jack—
I shut my eyes and thought him back,
So well did it deceive!
And then, while we were circling round,
Just looked in silence at the ground
And made believe.

The music stopped. He begged my card.
"What! Full?"—then he took his pencil
And wrote a little sign.
"You dance so like her," he confessed,
"A girl I know at home, out west."
"How strange!" said I.

The difference.
He made a careful examination of the
'96 and the '97 wheels, marked
respectively \$50 and \$100, and could detect
no difference between them.

"These wheels seem to be pretty much
alike," he remarked to the salesman.
"The '97 model has exactly the same kind
of frame as the '96, hasn't it?"
"Yes," answered the salesman.
"The tubing is just the same?"
"It is."

"There is no difference in the sprocket
wheels?"
"None."
"The hubs are alike?"
"Precisely."
"It is the same chain on both?"
"Yes."
"The tires are of the same make?"
"They are."

"There is no change in the handle
bars this year?"
"And the rims, spokes and pedals are
alike in both wheels?"
"Yes."
"Well, then, what is the difference be-
tween the two wheels?"
"Fifty dollars."

The Retort-Courtesy.
Poet (whose verse was rejected)—Permit
me to tell you, sir, that the "World"
owe me a debt of gratitude when I die.

Editor (wearily)—Yes, I think it will
get out of it.

Involving the Work of Reading.
"And the postage is more for open than
for sealed letters?" faltered the Spirit of
the Past, incredulously.

Certainly, the original Power re-
quired, with fitting scorn, "It's more work
to handle an open than a sealed letter."

The reader will readily conjecture that
it was now the turn of the "sealed letter,"
and the fourth-class postoffice were
open to both sexes, and woman, far from
being merely the better half, was the
whole thing.—Detroit Journal.

At a Mountain Resort.
Proprietor—I tell you, sir, this is the
grandest site on the face of the earth.
The elevation is simply incomparable.
You can look as far as the eye can
reach, and you will find to see anything
but the best.

Guest—With one exception.
Proprietor—There is no exception, sir.
Guest—But pardon me, please. I have
just heard from a friend who has been
your charges are much higher.—Rich-
mond Dispatch.

Design.
The new Aspirin in Art stirred un-
easily.
"Why, are you a poster girl?" it de-
manded, with fervent impudence.
"I had a designing mamma," answered
the Culmination of the Movement, and
shivered as she drew her prospective
more closely about her.

His Krugers.
"What makes you think Stokes has
no regard for public opinion?"
"Look at his whiskers. No man wears
them that way unless he has weak lungs
or wishes to defy the public, and I
know Stokes' lungs are all right,
because I once heard him make a free
silver speech."—Cleveland Leader.

The Working Maid.
"Thou art fairer than day!" he cried,
with a poet's fervor.
The warm color suffused his cheek.
"Fairer than the eight hour day?" she
asked caustically; for she had been taught
to think that very fair indeed, and to all
parties concerned.—Detroit Journal.

Quite a Genius.
"Herbert Watts is a clever fellow. He
couldn't find an unwholesome cover made for
his cane."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Semper Idem.
Professor of Modern Literature—But
must you, young man, you must have
read Heine's poems?
Mathematician—Oh, dear me, scarcely
a page. Tell me, now, what was really
said by those verses?—Pittsburgh
Blatier.

Train Up a Child, Etc.
Binks—Yes, sir, I bought my boy that
jelly-sauce because I believe in children
learning useful trades.
Jinks—What has he made so far?
Binks—Ah, sawdust mostly.

A Big Welcome.
Mawson—What have all the under-
takers got flared out for?
Binks—Why, man, there's a doctors'
convention in town.—Philadelphia North
American.

He Had His Way.
Telephone Proprietor—Step up, ladies
and gents, and view the planet Mars,
one penny, mum.
Old Lady—Oh, taw! Hain't it sound
an awful lot like Mars?
Telephone Proprietor—Will the bald-
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