

# THE LAST MAN AND WOMAN.

A Graphic Story of the Extinction of the Human Race.

The Desperate Battle of Science with the Inevitable—Crowded to the Equator by the Conquering Ice.

## CHAPTER IV.

We have left our aerial expedition in the midst of the stupefaction caused by the avowal of the Americans. No more women in America. The same situation, or almost the same, in Africa. Europe buried beneath the snows. Asia forgotten for more than a century, and doubtless sharing the same fate as Europe. There was nothing left for the travellers but to return to their own country, and that was decided on the very next day.

They visited the ruins of the American metropolis, the glories of which had been celebrated by the historians, and which now lay forgotten. For one instant they thought of uniting in one group to two wrecks of male humanity, and of all leaving together for Suntown: but, on the one hand, these men wished only to sleep forever in the tombs of their ancestors, and, on the other hand, the travellers, who had carefully concealed the existence of women in their own country, did not insist on this brotherly project. They resumed their way through the air, deciding, however, as they had come by the east, to follow the same direction along the equator on their return, in order to see whether, by some unforeseen circumstance, they might not discover some other last living tribe.

Thus it was that after having crossed the immense Pacific Ocean, and having stopped over all the points that emerged above its surface, even at the moment when they had noticed that the eternal winter announced by scientists extended over the lands of Siam, of Java, of Sumatra, and of Malacca, entirely deserted, they noticed in Ceylon a region less invaded than the others by the ice and snow, and, stationing themselves for some time above a ruined city, they discovered a small group of women in mourning.

In one instant, and before they had had time to recover from their surprise, the celestial travellers were at their feet. At other periods, when the right of might governed humanity, these last five daughters of Eve would have been rudely seized and carried away at full speed through the air toward the African city, perhaps not without a struggle, for the number of the men was superior to that of the women. But for a long time they had ceased to exert their strength; sentiment, reason, intelligence, freedom of choice, always decided.

They told the object of their explorations, and had no difficulty in convincing the fair Asiatics. Their despair, which had seemed eternal, disappeared like a mist; their brows were cleared, their lips smiled, and a few hours after the arrival of the aeronauts the five nuns in mourning had given way to the most elegant of women.

They even discussed the advantages of a return to Suntown, and it seemed that from the point of view of peace, happiness, and tranquillity, it would be preferable to remain in Ceylon. But the old provision stores were well-nigh exhausted, the fields and gardens were wanting, the ice was near; while in Africa the fatal moment seemed perhaps many years off. From the first interview, Omegar and Eva had experienced the effects of mutual attraction, and had understood each other as though they had met again after a long separation. Omegar had a deep affection for his mother, and would be proud to present his companion to her. A fortnight after their arrival, the explorers, rich in their discovery, embarked on their aerial flotilla, and set sail for Suntown. The resurrection of humanity was assured. What a triumph and what rejoicing on their return!

But what was their disappointment, on arriving above the antique city, to see none of their fellow citizens come forward to receive them; to find the public square, where they were in the habit of meeting, silent and deserted to have before their eyes naught save a sort of desolate cemetery! Descending from their aerial boats they first rushed with their companions to the government palace. A frightful spectacle offered itself to their gaze. Their relatives, their friends, lay around, dead or dying. The population of the city, reduced after the departure of the travellers to about thirty persons, had undergone during their absence of a few months a snow cyclone, which had destroyed the last vegetable growth and part of the habitable dwellings. The small remnant had chosen as a refuge the spacious and stronger rooms of the palace; but an epidemic, a sort of typhus, had attacked first the weaker constitutions and had afterward stricken the others. The strength of the bravest had finally given way, and the first care of the travellers was to assist their unhappy fellow citizens.

Unfortunately the cold increased daily, a bitter wind blew unceasingly, and the pale rays of the sun could not even penetrate the thick mists. The only means of preserving a little heat was by keeping up fires and cutting off almost every communication with the outdoor air; but the bravest, the most courageous, lost all hope. At every new death, they counted each other. From fifteen they descended in a few weeks to ten, then to five; and at last Omegar and Eva remained alone, seeing without delusion the fate which awaited them, and well knowing that no other spring would ever bloom on earth.

However, after a long succession of disastrous days the sun showed itself in a clear spot between the clouds, the wind ceased, the blue sky reappeared.

The young couple then rose in an aerial boat to judge of the fast invasions and the snow, and perceived that the whole city was buried, and that it was only toward the north that the country had been a little spared.

Carrying away with them all the provisions they could find, they decided to follow the direction of the spared districts and see if some oasis could not be found in the midst of the immense fields of ice.

## CHAPTER V.

In consequence of the nature of the soil, and because of the scarcity of rains, of snow, and of clouds in that region, the great African desert that extends south of the Sahara had remained one of the least cold zones of the globe, and a warm current blowing from that desert on Nubia and Arabia, to return to the equator by Ceylon, had for a long time left a part of Egypt free from the invasion of ice and snow. Following the in-

dicated direction, the last human couple hovered above the regions formerly watered by the Nile, henceforth frozen. They perceived the great pyramid, ruined, but still standing.

This first monument of humanity, this testimony to the antiquity of civilization, was still standing. Its geometric stability had saved it. It was perhaps the only human idea that had attained its end. Created by Cheops to eternally protect his royal mummy, this tomb had survived the revolutions which had destroyed everything else. The last man had come to join the first King and shelter himself beneath his shroud.

But the wind of the tempest was blowing again. A fine powdery snow was spreading over the immense desert.

"Let us stop here and rest," said Eva, "since we are condemned to death; and, besides, who has not been? I wish to die in peace in thine own arms."

They looked for a cavity among the ruins and seated themselves, contemplating the endless space covered with powdery snow.

The young woman crouched feverishly, holding her husband in her arms, trying to struggle with her energy against the invasion of the cold that penetrated her. He had drawn her to his heart and warmed her with his kisses. But the wind and the tempest had resumed their sway, and the fine snow beat in clouds around the pyramid.

"My beloved," he resumed, "we are the last inhabitants of the earth, the last survivors of so many generations. What remains of all the glories, of all the countries, of all the works of the human mind; of all the sciences, of all the arts, of all the inventions? The entire globe is at this moment only a tomb covered with snow."

"Yes," she said, "I have heard of the beauties who reigned over the hearts of kings and shone like admirable stars in the history of humanity. Love, beauty, all must end. I love you, and I die. Oh! how I would have loved that dear treasure, the one who will never live. But no, we must not die, must we? No! \* \* \* Come, I am no longer cold. Let us walk."

Her feet, already frozen and numb, had become inert. She tried to rise and fell back. "I seem to be sleepy," she said. "Oh, let us sleep."

And throwing her arms around Omegar, she pressed her lips to his. The young man lifted her beautiful form and laid her on his knees. She was already asleep.

"I love you," he said again. "Sleep, I shall watch over you."

Then his fixed gaze, shining with a last light, lost itself in a search for the unknown in the desolate gray sky and in the silent and endless plain. No sound came to trouble the death of nature; the snow wind alone moaned around the pyramid, and seemed to wish to awaken the old Pharaoh sleeping in its depths for so many million years.

Suddenly the noise of footsteps and moans was heard, lost in the distance. Was it some lethargic awakening in the interior of the monument? Was it a heavy bird, thrown by the tempest against the dismantled steps? Was it some polar bear come with the snow? The noise ceased. A joyful cry sounded, and with one bound a dog, broken by fatigue, jumped on the sleeping couple.

It was Omegar's dog that had looked for him, followed him (how?), and found him in spite of the distance, the solitude, and the snow.

He called his master and mistress, licked their face and hands and covered them with his body to warm them. But they did not awake.

And the snow continued to fall in a fine powder on to the entire surface of the earth.

And the earth continued to return on its axis night and day, and to float through the immensity of space.

And the sun continued to shine, but with a reddish and barren light. But long afterward it became entirely extinguished, and the dark terrestrial cemetery continued to revolve in the night around the enormous invisible black ball.

And the stars continued to scintillate in the immensity of the heavens.

And the infinite universe continued to exist with its billions of suns and its billions of living or extinct planets.

And in all the worlds peopled with the joys of life, love continued to bloom beneath the smiling glance of the Eternal.

CAMILLE FLAMMARION.

### Twenty-two Knots An Hour.

The idea of building swift ships for passenger traffic only, that will get an unheard-of maximum of speed out of an undreamt-of minimum of coal, is to be tested by the Howard Cassard, an extraordinary ship, which, according to our most recent consular reports, has just been launched at Baltimore. As she is to be incombustible and unsinkable, so that she will even right herself if upset, she will be most interesting to steam-yacht builders as well as to shippers. She has, it seems, 415 weight below waterline for every 11b above it. Her keel weighs 35 tons, and acts as "outside ballast." As nearly half its depth goes through the hull into the water, it will act also as a kind of centre-board. It will have safety compartments, some of which will be filled with air, whilst others will be ordinary watertight chambers, and 136 of them will be on each side of the ship. The engine will yield 1600 horse-power, giving 25 knots an hour per ton of coal consumed. It is like reading about legerdemain to be told by our Consul that the valve-gearing is so fine that the valves can be opened and shut in the twentieth of a second! This should, of course, give twice as much power as has ever yet been obtained over engines of the same size. The new ship is 222 ft long and 16 ft beam; but if successful one more than twice as big is to be built; and if that one answers a line for ocean service, consisting of purely passenger steamers that can neither be burnt nor sunk, and that will "whip creation" in the matter of speed and coal consumption, will be sent out from Baltimore.

### They're All Deceivers.

Miss O'Hallehan—Shure, an' niver trust a peirceman. They're a deavin lot.

Mrs. O'Grogan—They are that. Me man Moike was completely taken in by one last night, an' hasn't got out yet.

### The Pleasures of Friendship.

"So the Marquis gave you those flowers?"

"Yes; and oh, Maud, he actually said that life without me meant nothing."

"Yes, dear; everybody says you are his last chance."

# AGRICULTURAL.

## To Kill Cut Worms.

To the Editor:

I saw inquiries last year for a remedy for cut worms in cornfields. As it is getting near planting time I send this remedy. I have tried it and know it to be good, as I have counted as high as seventy-six worms under a branch as large as my two hands:

Put a barrel of water in the wagon, add paris green enough to make it twice as strong as for potato bugs, keep it well stirred up. Gather a supply of green white elder brush, dip a handful of brush in the barrel, break off a few twigs at a time, and scatter through the corn every ten or twelve feet. Commence as soon as the worms begin to work.

C. E. CURRY.

## Onions for Lice on Cattle.

From general report and appearance, cattle lice were very prevalent last winter, and surely your correspondent had more than usual trouble with them, especially on young stock. I used kerosene and lard mixed, curried and brushed over them, also camphor dissolved in alcohol and carbolic acid in lard, but without satisfaction; and being determined that the lice must go, I tried onions after waiting about a week. One particular animal, a yearling bull, was very full, even after being treated with the other remedies. I took a large onion, cut in two, and rubbed him hard all over till I had used three or more onions and my eyes smarted. Then I gave him some of the pieces that were left and a few other small scullions which he ate with relish as did all others, and then I awaited results. The second day I examined him, and to my astonishment and joy, the hair was full of carcasses, but not a live one could I find. Since then I have treated all the stock in the same way, but fed none to the cows giving milk, for fear of spoiling the butter. I am going to treat the poultry also, by rubbing their roosts well. I should be pleased to hear the results with others who may try the remedy. It will save many an animal an uneasy night.

JACOB ENGLE.

## The Value of Sheep.

When I came to Iowa I thought I would raise horses, but the damage from barb wire is so great as to cut down the profits, and I found that cattle did not pay, so I tried to get hold of sheep. Mr. Brewster got his sheep for \$5 per head, but I went to the same man the other day and had to pay \$10 a head. Take a cow brute and in running in pasture the droppings are in a pile a foot across, where no grass can grow, and then for a foot around the grass is so rank that cattle do not like it; but with sheep the droppings are scattered evenly over the ground. One load of manure from a sheep shed, where it has been covered is worth three loads from the cattle yard. A man in Michigan who was a careful observer told me that sheep paid their way in manure, and he took me out on a sand knoll that before he got it would not raise white beans, and you know it takes but little fertility for them. Nothing but fox-tail, pigeon grass and milk weeds would grow there. He scattered salt on the milk weeds and the sheep killed them out, and he then sowed to rye and pastured with sheep, plowing under, then planted beans and got a good crop. This worthless land was, by use of sheep, soon converted into fertile land. Sheep can be wintered on bean pods, and if so wintered will produce one to one and a half pound of wool more than on ordinary feed.

GEORGE H. VAN HOUTEN.

## Small-Fruit Culture.

PAPER BY P. W. VAN NESS.

The successful fruit-grower must have a love for the business. This love for the work will inspire in him a desire to seek out the best kinds, to learn of their adaptation to soils, and to put into practice the best methods. Plant on clean soil which has been tilled at least two years with some hoed crop.

The strawberry is a large feeder, and requires a strong, deep soil, or one fed with rich manures. There should be an early kind and later varieties, so as to protract the season. Stable manures are best; but at the same time the commercial fertilizers, plentiful in potash and phosphoric acid, will prove to be a great aid. The earlier the plants are set, the better. The hill system will produce the finest berries. Use only plants of last year's growth; plant with care. It is possible to obtain three hundred bushels of strawberries on an acre. Plant Crescent, Captain Jack, Wilson, and a few Mount Vernon to lengthen out the season. Set the plants in hills for field culture, twelve inches apart, and in rows four feet apart.

The roots should be spread out in a proper hole, and covered with fine earth, well pressed about them. In winter, cover with some straw manure, as this much will protect the plants and also afford them nourishment during the summer. A new bed should be set every year. From the new beds we get the largest and most berries.

The raspberry requires much the same treatment as the strawberry, and clean, rich ground. Stable manure is a natural fertilizer for raspberries, and they will use a large quantity of it. The best early varieties of the blackcap are Souhegan and Ohio. They should be planted in rows six feet wide and three feet apart in the row. Fifty bushels is a good crop per acre. Among the red varieties, the Cuthbert stands without a peer. The Marlboro is a few days earlier to ripen. It is not equal in any other respect to the Cuthbert. The Golden Queen is a seedling of the Cuthbert. It is a choice berry, but its color is too delicate for a general market berry.

Blackberries will grow on poor soil. Too much manure will make too much wood. The Snyder and the Taylor are both hardy and productive, but the fruit is small. The Erie is a new and vigorous variety; its fruit is of the largest size. Blackberries should be set in rows seven to eight feet apart and three feet from each other. One hundred bushels to the acre is a fair average yield.

Every one should have a few grapes. They must have a sunny exposure. The vines should be well pruned, and the land should be well drained. The universal grape is the Concord; the vine is strong, hardy and naturally prolific. The Delaware is the finest or quality, but not so profitable as other kinds. The Pockington and the Empire State are good white grapes. Moor's Early, Hartford Prolific and some others are particularly hardy.

Currants are one of the best small fruits we can grow. We must wage a ceaseless war against the currant worm, but with white hellebore it can be destroyed. The currant is a very healthful fruit, and when the bushes are kept clean from grass and weeds, and well fertilized, there will be an abundant crop. Currants should be planted in rows, so that the ground can be cultivated and kept clean and mellow. The rows should be six feet apart and the plants an equal distance from each other, or perhaps four feet.

## Progressive Australia.

Australia to-day is as far advanced in civilization as any country in the world. The roads are better than any on this continent; the daily and weekly papers, and the development of literature and art, are far in advance of the age of the colonies or the population. The new Commonwealth has all Europe and America as a field in which to seek the improvements of the time and the means to secure them. Its present wealth is almost beyond belief, and its resources are almost incalculable. It produces more than one-fourth of the wool of the world—twice as much as the United States. It produces one-half the tin of the world, and there is no precious metal that has not been found within its domain. Its coal fields on the coast, convenient for export to all countries, are inexhaustible. The inward and outward shipping of one port alone exceeds 2,500,000 tons per annum, and the value of its commerce with Great Britain alone exceeds £100,000,000 sterling. \* \* \* Last year's estimate of the annual industrial productions of the population, including both agricultural and mineral wealth, was no less than £95,042,000. \* \* \* Its cities also are among the finest of modern times. The public buildings, shops and parks compare favorably with any in Europe or America, while the floating palaces of the Peninsula and Oriental Steamship Company, and the Orient Steamship Company give weekly communication with the Old World. In out-door sports the Australians excel, and their racing establishments and courses are the wonder and admiration of all visitors from abroad. Who has not heard of the champion boatmen and cricketers of Australia?

## Each Has Killed His Man.

"Do you know," a well-known South Carolinian said to an Atlanta *Constitution* man, last evening, "that of our present delegation in congress, consisting of nine or ten, four of them have killed a man each. But in each case the killing was either justifiable or in self-defense. Senator Irby, you know, killed a fellow by the name of Kilgore in a street-fight at Laurens. There was a fellow named McLinch in it, too, and it was never known exactly whether Irby's or McLinch's ball struck Kilgore. The shooting occurred, I think, in 1874. McLinch was tried and served a short while in the penitentiary. Irby forfeited his bail and went out to Arkansas for a few years. He was tried on his return and acquitted.

"Col. George Tillman, you know, when a mere boy, killed another young fellow named Christian. The row occurred over a game of cards. Col. Tillman didn't give bond, but went to jail for about a year, when he was either tried and acquitted or else convicted and pardoned. Anyhow Col. Tillman went to jail an uneducated boy, but during that year he studied all the time and came out well educated. To-day there is not a more thoroughly educated or a brainer man in the next case Col. Tillman.

"The next case everybody remembers, for it occurred only a few days ago. It was the fight in a justice's court in Newberry, between Col. George Johnston and Mr. Jones, in which the latter was killed. It was an act purely of self-defense. By the way, Col. Johnston will show up well in congress. He is a man of eminent ability and a splendid speaker.

"The fourth man is Col. Schell, who is said to have killed Jow Crews, the notorious carpet bagger and negro organizer. Crews and a party of negroes had shot into a party of young men a few days before and Col. Schell's brother was killed. Col. Schell was tried for the killing but was acquitted."

## Caught.

A man was on trial for stealing a gold watch, says the *Continent*. A pawn ticket had been found upon him, and the watch was identified by a gentleman as one that had recently been stolen from him. The prisoner's lawyer set up the defence that the case was one of mistaken identity, that the watch was really the property of the accused man, but that he had fallen into difficulties and was obliged to pawn it.

Several witnesses testified that they had seen the prisoner have such a watch before the date of the robbery, and matters seemed to be progressing smoothly for the defence. At last the accused took the witness stand on his own behalf.

He stoutly denied his guilt, and declared that he had owned the watch for at least five years.

On the cross-examination the prosecuting attorney drew the prisoner's mind away from the watch for a time, and then suddenly asked him how often he had been in the habit of winding it. He answered promptly: "Every night, just before going to bed."

"And that has been your custom for the last five years."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, how would you wind it—from right to left?"

The fellow grinned at the idea. "No, sir, from left to right."

"Well, now," said the attorney, handing him the watch and a key, "please show the jury how you wound it up."

Unsuspectingly the witness took the watch and key, turned to the jury with a confident smile, opened the back case, and sought to fit the key into the hole—but the watch was a stem-winder.

## A Good Example.

The late Mr. Barnum showed his customary good sense when, after making his will several years ago, he called in a number of physicians and caused himself to be examined as to his mental condition, the physicians attesting that he was entirely sane. The result is that his will has been promptly admitted to probate without so much as the suggestion of a contest. Many of the prolonged will contests which have occupied the time of the courts in recent years might have been prevented had the rich men with millions to bequeath adopted a course similar to Mr. Barnum's. As an example it carries a lesson that ought not to go unheeded.

# Latest From Europe

No Dissolution—Russia's Political Operations—Williams Speech to the Students Crop Prospects.

There will be no dissolution of Parliament at present.

Continental Europe waits in a hushed expectancy of apprehension upon the results of Russia's huge financial and political operations, details of which are discussed elsewhere. Nobody dares break the general silence except the Young Kaiser, and his voice seems to an attentive listener to have slight hysterical quaver. His remark in his Dusseldorf speech the other day about his regret that he was not the sole custodian of the peace of Europe has been much commented upon. It is universally construed to signify that the Czar was the one who did hold the balance in his hands, but perhaps that merely testifies to the general nervousness.

William's speech to the Bonn student dealt with less weighty subjects, but attracted even more attention. He went out of his way to eulogize the dueling customs of the German students, offering a pious wish that they might long continue joyfully to wield the rapier. Inasmuch as dueling is an offense against both Prussian law and the regulations of all universities, this incitation from the throne sounds very funny indeed—almost as funny as the duels themselves, with bodies swathed in pads and bandages up to the ears, and eyes protected by brass goggles, notoriously are.

During the past ten days there has been a most beneficent change in the harvest prospects of Europe. An unusually severe winter was for a long time succeeded by a chilly drought, so that grave fears were entertained of damaged Spring crops everywhere; but latterly there has been a spell of warm, wet weather, which has altered everything for the better. France is still likely to be some thirty million hectoliters short in the year's yield, and such of the Autumn-sown wheat as still stands is pretty nearly a complete failure, but the Spring wheat has now begun to look very well. Much the same reports come from Germany and Russia, while here in England there is promise of a more than average yield. Both in France and Germany recent high prices have had the effect of discovering considerably larger stores of old grain than had been supposed to exist, while it is reported hereto-day that, by some mysterious error in the Board of Trade returns last month, England was represented to have a visible supply much less than what actually exists, while her imports for the period in wheat and flour were understated by 526,657 quarters.

For weeks past people have been talking of the influenza and the personal columns in the papers have recorded numerous prostrations by it among public men, but we only now come to realize its actual presence as a gravely alarming epidemic. Nearly forty members of Parliament are now confined to their houses by it, and everywhere public offices are shorthanded or shut, dinner parties are abandoned, and the closing gaieties of the London season are clouded over by deaths or illness in the family. Fortunately the proportions of deaths to seizures is very small, but the mortality list embraces many other distinguished names besides Archbishop Magee, and the malady seems to be spreading daily. Thus far we hear little of it on the continent.

## He took Chances.

A white boy about ten years of age was playing with a colored boy a year or so younger when the mother of the latter called from the open door:

"Rebuen, what you doin' out dar?"

"Playin'."

"Who you playin' wid'?"

"Playin' wid' Albert."

"Is he cull'd or white?"

"White."

"Den you walk yourself straight in yere in a minit! How many times has I got to tell ye dat you can't pick up wid all dese white boys dat cum along widout dun losin' your reputashun? Skin for dat back yard, sah!"

## Why Bridget Left.

"Well, Bridget, why did you leave your former mistress?"

"Och! She was a queer one. When her baby, the shwate darlint died, she only missed one meal, an' sure, when her pet dog—the oogly, woolly baste! kicked the bucket, she laid in bed one whole week an' never ate a thing."

"You had a just reason for leaving. You may consider yourself hired to me, Bridget."

## Yes Bigobz.

Gilligan—"That's a foine, handsome picture, Maggie."

Mrs. Gilligan—"Dade it is a beautiful thing, Moike."

Gilligan—"That dead feller in the corner is nacheral, ain't he?"

Mrs. Gilligan—"Yis begobz; he must have been painted from loife."

## The Late Bird Got There.

"What's the matter?" asked the early bird's mother. "Didn't you get the worm?"

"Yes," whimpered the early bird.

"Well, then, what are you snivelling about?"

"The late bird came along and took it away from me just because he was bigger than I."

Cloth-like fabrics are very popular this season.

One of the French provincial law courts has had an odd discussion as to the precise definition of "night." A man was charged with breaking a law nearly 50 years old, which forbids sportsmen to shoot at night. The prisoner pleaded that the day was not yet over. After much scientific discussion it was decided that night began with the close of twilight, or when the sun had descended six degrees below the horizon. The almanac showed that on the day in question twilight, as thus described, ended 37 minutes after sunset, and the sportsman was adjudged guilty upon that ruling.