

for EABA™

# Verne™

not your grandfather's steampunk...



 **BTRC**

greg porter

## **Verne™** v1.0

©2010 by Greg Porter

ISBN 0-943891-66-3

BTRC#6116

Published by: BTRC  
P.O. Box 1121  
Collinsville VA 24078 USA  
btrc@btrc.net  
[www.btrc.net](http://www.btrc.net)

Design: Greg Porter

Cover art: Douglas Chaffee

Interior art: US National Archives, Harry Grant Dart, J. Allan St. John

Extras & other Greg Porter, by permission of [HeroMachine.com](http://HeroMachine.com) (go visit it!)  
adventurers:

Other thanks: Niles Calder, Helen Forbes

Dedication: for Cathy

**EABA™** and **Verne™** are trademarks of Blacksburg Tactical Research Center. All rights reserved. Protected by the Universal Copyright Convention and coal-fired, punch-card programmed mechanical AI's and their brass and teak mechano-servitors.



# WHERE DO I FIND IT?

## INTRODUCTION

REQUIEM .....	1.2
WHAT IT'S ABOUT .....	1.5

## LIFE IN 1869CE

LIFE IN 1869 .....	2.2
WHAT DO YOU KNOW? .....	2.2
GEOPOLITICS .....	2.4
LAW AND ORDER .....	2.11
BELIEFS .....	2.17
THE MILITARY .....	2.21
CLASS .....	2.23
PROFESSIONS .....	2.25
WOMEN .....	2.26
MONEY .....	2.27
POLITICS .....	2.28
TRAVEL .....	2.28
FASHION .....	2.32
SOCIAL GRACES .....	2.33
TECHNOLOGY .....	2.35
TIMELINE .....	2.39

## STEAMPUNK

INTRODUCTION .....	3.2
CONVENTIONAL TECH .....	3.3
CAVORITE TECH .....	3.7
CLOCKWORK TECH .....	3.9
VRIL TECH .....	3.11
SELENITE TECH .....	3.13
MARTIAN TECH .....	3.14
GAIAN PRIMACY TECH .....	3.16
MORLOCK TECH .....	3.17
MERFOLK TECH .....	3.17
VENUSIAN TECH .....	3.17
SAMPLE VEHICLES & GADGETS .....	3.17
COMBAT NOTES .....	3.36

## ADVENTURERS

INTRODUCTION .....	4.2
SPECIAL NOTES .....	4.2
ATTRIBUTES/SKILLS .....	4.3
TRAITS .....	4.6
PRE-GENERATED ADVENTURERS .....	4.15

## THE GREAT GAME

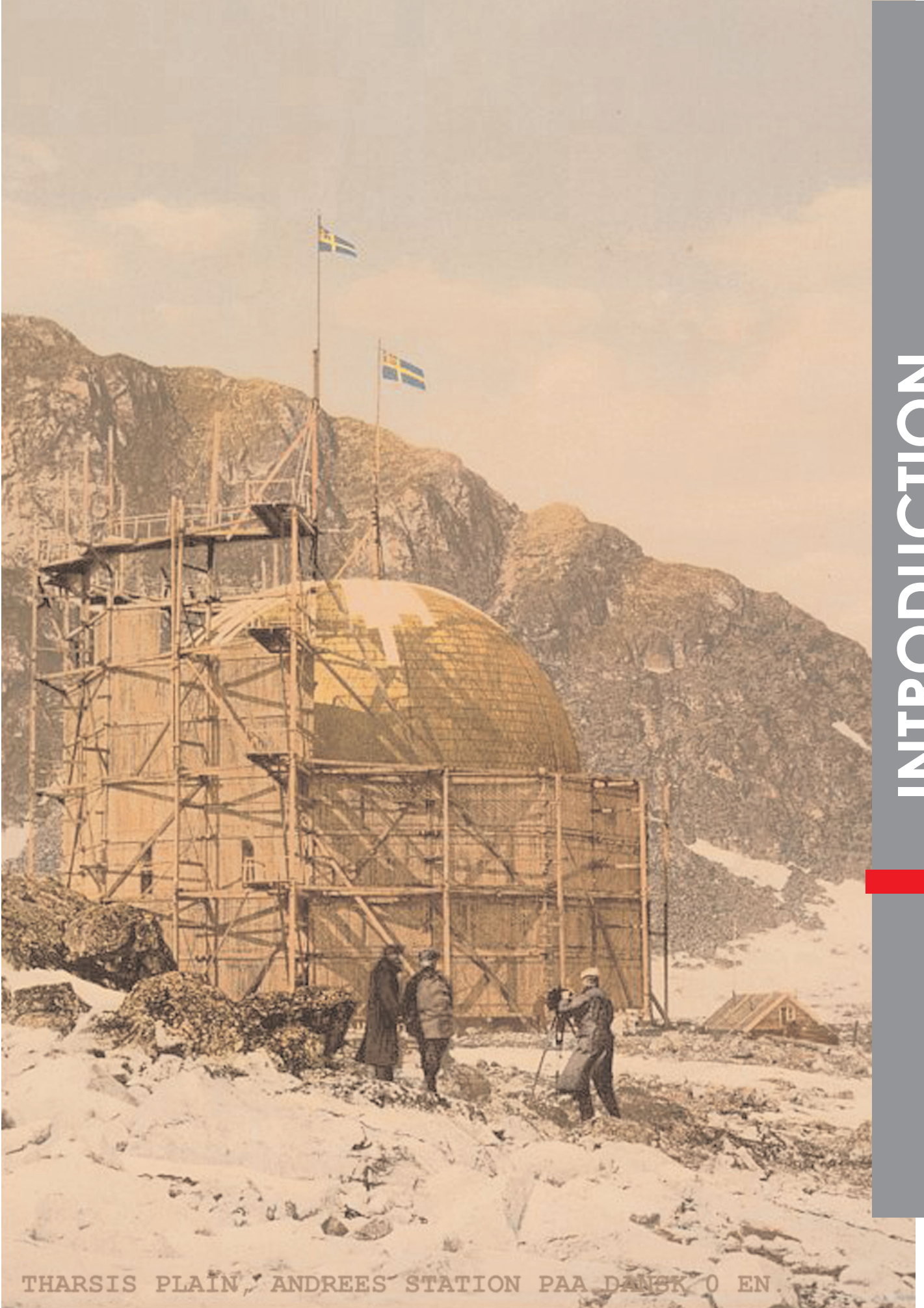
THE GREATER GAME .....	5.2
Adam Wild .....	5.3
The X Club .....	5.3
The Vril Society .....	5.4
Messr. Engine .....	5.5
Scotland Yard .....	5.7
Morlocks & Fey .....	5.8
The Diogenes Club .....	5.10
Occhi di Dio .....	5.11
US Secret Service .....	5.11
League for Gaiian Primacy .....	5.12
Thugee .....	5.13
The Vertue Club .....	5.13
Triads .....	5.14
Martians .....	5.15
Selenites .....	5.18

## CAMPAIGNS

ADVENTURES .....	6.2
THE NATURE OF ADVENTURE .....	6.4
GETTING STARTED .....	6.9
TIMELINE .....	6.12
HISTORICAL EXPEDITIONS .....	6.14
THE GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY .....	6.17
THE TRAVELLER .....	6.24
THE LAST IMMORTAL .....	6.30
WEST OF JAVA .....	6.36
JEKYLL & HYDE .....	6.41
MURDER ON THE ST. PETERSBURG EXPRESS .....	6.48
NOTABLE VICTORIANS .....	6.56
RECOMMENDED SOURCES .....	6.63

## GEAR

INTRODUCTION .....	7.2
SPECIFIC GEAR .....	7.3
GEAR LISTING .....	7.8
EXTRAS .....	7.13
ADVENTURER SHEET .....	7.15
INDEX .....	7.17
EABA OPEN SUPPLEMENT LICENSE .....	7.18



# INTRODUCTION

THARSIS PLAIN, ANDREES STATION PAA DANSK O EN.



*That night they made camp a short distance from the cliffs beside one of the numerous cool springs that are to be found within Caspak, oftentimes close beside the still more numerous warm and hot springs which feed the many pools. After supper the men lay smoking and chatting among themselves. Tippet was on guard. Fewer night prowlers threatened them, and the men were commenting upon the fact that the farther north they had travelled the smaller the number of all species of animals became, though it was still present in what would have seemed appalling plenitude in any other part of the world. The diminution in reptilian life was the most noticeable change in the fauna of northern Caspak. Here, though, were forms they had not met elsewhere, several of which were of gigantic proportions.*

▼ **REQUIEM** - That night they made camp a distance from the cliffs, beside one of the numerous cool springs that are to be found within Caspak, oftentimes close beside the still more numerous warm and hot springs which feed the many pools. After supper the men lay smoking and chatting among themselves. Tippet was on guard. Fewer night prowlers threatened them, and the men were commenting upon the fact that the farther north they had travelled the smaller the number of all species of animals became, though it was still present in what would have seemed appalling plenitude in any other part of the world. The diminution in reptilian life was the most noticeable change in the fauna of northern Caspak. Here, however, were forms they had not met elsewhere, several of which were of gigantic proportions.

According to their custom all, with the exception of the man on guard, sought sleep early, nor, once disposed upon the ground for slumber, were they long in finding it. It seemed to Bradley that he had scarcely closed his eyes when he was brought to his feet, wide awake, by a piercing scream which was punctuated by the sharp report of a rifle from the direction of the fire where Tippet stood guard. As he ran toward the man, Bradley heard above him the same uncanny wail that had set every nerve on edge several nights before, and the dismal flapping of huge wings. He did not need to look up at the white-shrouded figure winging slowly away into the night to know that their grim visitor had returned.

The muscles of his arm, reacting to the sight and sound of the menacing form, carried his hand to the butt of his pistol; but after he had drawn it, he immediately returned it to its holster with a shrug.

"What for?" he muttered. "Can't waste the ammunition." Then he walked quickly to where Tippet lay sprawled upon his face. By this time James, Brady and Sinclair were at his heels, each with his rifle in readiness. "Is he dead, sir?" whispered James as Bradley kneeled beside the prostrate form.

Bradley turned Tippet over on his back and pressed an ear close to the other's heart. In a moment he raised his head. "Fainted," he said. "Get water. Hurry!" Then he loosened Tippet's shirt at the throat and when the water was brought, threw a cupful in the man's face. Slowly Tippet regained consciousness and sat up. At first he looked curiously into the faces of the men about him; then an expression of terror overspread his features. He shot a startled glance up into the black void above and then burying his face in his arms began to sob like a child.

"What's wrong, man?" demanded Bradley.  
"Buck up! Can't play cry-baby. Waste of energy.  
What happened?"

"Wot 'appened, sir!" wailed Tippet. "Oh, Gord, sir! It came back. It came for me, sir. Right it did, sir; strite at me, sir; hand with long w'ite 'ands it clawed for me. Oh, Gord! It almost caught me, sir. I'm as good as dead; I'm a marked man; that's wot I am. It was a-goin' for to carry me orf, sir."

"Stuff and nonsense," snapped Bradley. "Did you get a good look at it?"

Tippet said that he did--a much better look than he wanted. The thing had almost clutched him, and he had looked straight into its eyes -- "dead eyes in a dead face," he had described them.

"Wot was it after bein', do you think?" inquired Brady.

"It was Death," moaned Tippet, shuddering, and again a pall of gloom fell upon the little party.

The following day Tippet walked as one in a trance. He never spoke except in reply to a direct question, which more often than not had to be repeated before it could attract his attention. He insisted that he was already a dead man, for if the thing didn't come for him during the day he would never live through another night of agonized apprehension, waiting for the frightful end that he was positive was in store for him. "I'll see to that," he said, and they all knew that Tippet meant to take his own life before darkness set in.

Bradley tried to reason with him, in his short, crisp way, but soon saw the futility of it; nor could he take the man's weapons from him without subjecting him to almost certain death from any of the numberless dangers that beset their way.

The entire party was moody and glum. There was none of the bantering that had marked their intercourse before, even in the face of blighting hardships and hideous danger. This was a new menace that threatened them, something that they couldn't explain; and so, naturally, it aroused within them superstitious fear which Tippet's attitude only tended to augment. To add further to their gloom, their way led through a dense forest, where, on account of the underbrush, it was difficult to make even a mile an hour. Constant watchfulness was required to avoid the many snakes of various degrees of repulsiveness and enormity that infested the wood; and the only ray of hope they had to cling to was that the forest would, like the majority of Caspakian forests, prove to be of no considerable extent.

Bradley was in the lead when he suddenly came upon a grotesque creature of Titanic proportions. Crouching among the trees, which here commenced to thin out slightly, Bradley saw what appeared to be an enormous dragon devouring the carcass of a mammoth. From frightful jaws to the tip of its long tail it was fully forty feet in length. Its body was covered with plates of thick skin which bore a striking resemblance to armor-plate. The creature saw Bradley almost at the same instant that he saw it and reared up on its enormous hind legs until its head towered a full twenty-five feet above the ground. From the cavernous jaws issued a hissing sound of a volume equal to the escaping steam from the safety-valves of half a dozen locomotives, and then the creature came for the man.

"Scatter!" shouted Bradley to those behind him; and all but Tippet heeded the warning. The man stood as though dazed, and when Bradley saw the other's danger, he too stopped and wheeling about sent a bullet into the massive body forcing its way through the trees toward him. The shot struck the creature in the belly where there was no protecting armor, eliciting a new note which rose in a shrill whistle and ended in a wail. It was then that Tippet appeared to come out of his trance, for with a cry of terror he turned and fled to the left. Bradley, seeing that he had as good an opportunity as the others to escape, now turned his attention to extricating himself; and as the woods seemed dense on the right, he ran in that direction, hoping that the close-set boles would prevent pursuit on the part of the great reptile.



The dragon paid no further attention to him, however, for Tippet's sudden break for liberty had attracted its attention; and after Tippet it went, bowling over small trees, uprooting underbrush and leaving a wake behind it like that of a small tornado.

Bradley, the moment he had discovered the thing was pursuing Tippet, had followed it. He was afraid to fire for fear of hitting the man, and so it was that he came upon them at the very moment that the monster lunged its great weight forward upon the doomed man. The sharp, three-toed talons of the forelimbs seized poor Tippet, and Bradley saw the unfortunate fellow lifted high above the ground as the creature again reared up on its hind legs, immediately transferring Tippet's body to its gaping jaws, which closed with a sickening, crunching sound as Tippet's bones cracked beneath the great teeth.

Bradley half raised his rifle to fire again and then lowered it with a shake of his head. Tippet was beyond succor – why waste a bullet that Caspak could never replace? If he could now escape the further notice of the monster it would be a wiser act than to throw his life away in futile revenge. He saw that the reptile was not looking in his direction, and so he slipped noiselessly behind the bole of a large tree and thence quietly faded away in the direction he believed the others to have taken. At what he considered a safe distance he halted and looked back. Half hidden by the intervening trees he still could see the huge head and the massive jaws from which protruded the limp legs of the dead man. Then, as though struck by the hammer of Thor, the creature collapsed and crumpled to the ground. Bradley's single bullet, penetrating the body through the soft skin of the belly, had slain the Titan.

A few minutes later, Bradley found the others of the party. The four returned cautiously to the spot where the creature lay and after convincing themselves that it was quite dead, came close to it. It was an arduous and gruesome job extricating Tippet's mangled remains from the powerful jaws, the men working for the most part silently.

"It was the work of the banshee all right," muttered Brady. "It warned poor Tippet, it did."

"It killed him, that's wot it did, and it'll kill some more of us," said James, his lower lip trembling.

"If it was a ghost," interjected Sinclair, "and I don't say as it was; but if it was, why, it could take on any form it wanted to. It might have turned itself into this thing, which ain't no natural thing at all, just to get poor Tippet. If it had of been a lion or something else humanlike it wouldn't look so strange; but this here thing ain't humanlike. There ain't no such thing an' never was."

"Bullets don't kill ghosts," said Bradley, "so this couldn't have been a ghost. Furthermore, there are no such things. I've been trying to place this creature. Just succeeded. It's a tyrannosaurus. Saw picture of skeleton in magazine. There's one in New York Natural History Museum. Seems to me it said it was found in place called Hell Creek somewhere in western North America. Supposed to have lived about six million years ago."

"Hell Creek's in Montana," said Sinclair. "I used to punch cows in Wyoming, an' I've heard of Hell Creek. Do you s'pose that there thing's six million years old?" His tone was skeptical.

"No," replied Bradley; "But it would indicate that the island of Caprona has stood almost without change for more than six million years."

The conversation and Bradley's assurance that the creature was not of supernatural origin helped to raise a trifle the spirits of the men; and then came another diversion in the form of ravenous meat-eaters attracted to the spot by the uncanny sense of smell which had apprised them of the presence of flesh, killed and ready for the eating.

It was a constant battle while they dug a grave and consigned all that was mortal of John Tippet to his last, lonely resting place. They did not leave then, but remained to fashion a rude headstone from a crumbling outcropping of sandstone and to gather a mass of the gorgeous flowers growing in great profusion around them and heap the new-made grave with bright blooms. Upon the headstone Sinclair scratched in rude characters the words:

HERE LIES JOHN TIPPET  
ENGLISHMAN  
KILLED BY TYRANNOSAURUS  
R.I.P.

and Bradley repeated a short prayer before they left their comrade forever.

▼ **WHAT IT'S ABOUT - Verne** is a Victorian Era rpg. But that term covers a *lot* of ground. This could be historical or fantastical, steampunkish or pseudo-realistic, stiff-upper-lip proper or downright ugly. **Verne** is going to give you what you need for all of the above, but it is going to be slanted a bit to the fantastical and pseudo-realistic, a lot of stiff-upper-lip with an undercurrent of ugly. The flavor text right before this is taken almost word for word from **Out of Time's Abyss**, written by Edgar Rice Burroughs in 1877CE, and the vignette has some of the typical **Verne** elements described.

People have some common misconceptions about life in the Victorian Era. First is the level of technology available. Setting a game to run in the "Victorian Era" and expecting it to have a *particular* technological feel is like expecting a uniform level of technology for a game set to run in the "20th century". The Victorian Era is defined by the reign of Queen Victoria, and is from 1837CE to 1901CE. To rephrase that in modern terms, imagine a game-world that tried to have *one* setting for the period from 1905CE to 1969CE. At one end, airplanes had just been invented, while at the other end we had people landing on the moon. On one end there are steam engines, on the other, nuclear submarines. On one end there are primitive phonographs and prudery, on the other end are transistor radios and the "Summer of Love".

So, **Verne** is going to be a "Victorian Era" game-world, but we're going to have to set some dates and limits as our default for technology, culture and current world events. The starting year for a **Verne** campaign is somewhere around 1869CE. *Why?* Because it has a good confluence of real-world and fictional factors going for it. We will include a full Victorian Era timeline later, but the years around this period have the development of the periodic table of the elements, the end of the United States' Civil War and the first transcontinental rail line, reliable ocean-going steamships, the opening of the Suez Canal, trans-Atlantic telegraph lines, publication of new and radical political discourse by Karl Marx and others, the very first fiction about an artificial satellite around the Earth (**The Brick Moon**, by Edward Everett Hale), and perhaps the best known of Jules Verne's works, **20,000 Leagues Under the Sea**.

Enough of the trappings of modern technology are there in 1869CE that well-off adventurers can have things like reliable cartridge firearms, they can send telegraph messages to most places in the civilized world, the Great Powers are not at war with each other (yet), and there is plenty of the world (and the solar system) yet untrampled by the feet of civilized, God-fearing Christians.

So, **Verne** will be set in the imaginary-real year of 1869CE. *But, when will it end?*

One fundamental premise of **Verne** is that the Victorian Era *never* ends. Queen Victoria's reign ends, of course, but the way things look and act and work will not. Surely, at some point there will be reliable dirigible service across the world. Telephone communication can be predicted to replace the telegraph, even in overseas communication, at least for the wealthy. Some women of uncommon talent and even some of non-American or European descent can achieve prominence, and eventually all the unexplored places on Earth will have a national flag placed on them (save for those kingdoms whose might or remoteness forces a more equal diplomatic status). But the overall world-view of **Verne** will remain for at least a century, as will the attitudes and dare we say, the bulky and cumbersome level of technology. There will be no transistors or miniaturization. There will be computers, but they will be clacking machines of precision gears and mechanical displays, programmed with stacks of punched cards, or at best by arcane commands punched into physical memory toggles through a keyboard of some type.

There may be military spaceships using Cavorite engines, sent to Mars to quell a native rebellion, but these ships will be outfitted with teak flooring and brass dials whose fancy display needles point to numbers written in ornamental fonts. Their rolled steel armor plates will be held together by rivets, and if there is a female at all amongst the crew complement, she will be a doctor or reporter or professor, and odds are she will still be no more welcome in the smoking lounge than would be a Moor, unless of course said Moor was numbered amongst the royalty of his kind, and preferably educated at Oxford.



Another fundamental premise of **Verne** is that some things are only "once in a lifetime". The **EABA** Trait that allows an adventurer to have a grasp of scientific principles a generation ahead of everyone else is very much a part of the **Verne** universe. The Martians invade with giant war machines and unstoppable heat rays. Captain Nemo builds a submarine that can defeat any surface vessel of the day. H.G.Wells' unknown protagonist builds a time machine and visits humanity's most distant future. Professor Joseph Cavor invents an anti-gravity material allowing for inertialess space flight. The protege of the chess-playing automaton's creator devises a mechanical brain that can modify its own program cards and actually think and speak.

Yet in the end, the world remains the same when the plot is finished. The Martians catch a cold and die, and their war machines go inert and remain unfathomable to human science. Captain Nemo's sub is destroyed and no one can ever build a replacement. The secret of Cavorite is lost along with its inventor. The creator of the time machine disappears or destroys his machine and never rebuilds it. The mechanical brain and the warship it controls are sunk and its creator with it. Things of great import happen, but in the end, the world remains much the same. Odds are that one or two interesting bits can carry forward, depending on the length of a campaign and how well these elements carry forward the overall plot. Cavorite, for instance. *Damned convenient stuff to have for interplanetary adventures...*

Similarly, the unique aspects of the natural world do not upset the balance of things. The hidden valley on the remote island is never found again once it is left, or a volcanic eruption causes it to sink beneath the waves. The subterranean or aquatic civilizations discovered decide to withdraw to the depths and never again interact with the surface-dwellers. The thin atmosphere of Mars makes it impractical for all but a few Earthlings to dwell there. The aborigines who guard the secret of the elixir of youth disappear into the jungle, never to be seen again. The treacherous seas around the island of the dinosaurs make it impractical to cart specimens off the European or American zoos. And so on. The discoveries of things or principles or places that can have a long-term impact on the gameworld are going to be entirely up to the gamemaster, simply because there are so many of them that could and would completely bollix things up in the long run. Unique elements that *can* add to an overall campaign are of course encouraged.

If the focus of a campaign is eventually going to shift to the exploration of Mars, then adventurers are going to need a way to get there. As will their rivals and enemies, just to keep things interesting. If drama and tension between the surface and the troglodytes of the subsurface kingdoms is needed, then of course there can be embassies between the two. If the gamemaster has planned an alternate First World War between the Great Powers, then adding dirigibles armed with electric cannon and Imperial German *Flügeltruppen* (flying troops) would be a nice touch. You can almost imagine a plot where quiet electric zeppelins sneak up on Buckingham Palace on some overcast night, black-clad *flügeltruppen* in Lillenthal gliders silently swooping down to kidnap the royals in order to force concessions at the treaty tables...

You do not normally think of it as such, but the Victorian Era is, for its time, a very fertile ground for cutting-edge SF adventures. Many of the great discoveries, theories and scientific principles we rely on today were in their infancy in this period, giving rise to all manner of speculation that threatened to overturn people's ideas of what was possible (and what was "right"). Evolution, paleontology and geology gave hints of unimaginable antiquity for the earth, an age not of the several thousand years derived from scripture, but an age of the universe that could be as much as several *million* years! The conflict between religion and science and faith and reason is at least as acrimonious as it is now.

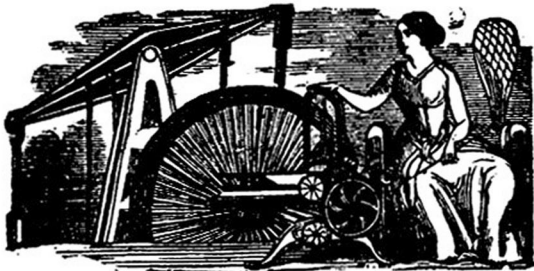
Scientists with great imaginations and budgets created brobigandian apparatuses to measure the speed of light and the gravitational constant. And they were also educated enough to know what "brobigandian" meant. Victorians built big, and did not bother with trifles like gradually scaling things up from smaller models. "Go big or go home!" might well be the motto for the entire era.

Astronomers turned their eyes to Mars and saw a world with an atmosphere, ice caps and seasons, and if you squinted hard enough at the photographic plates, even networks of canals, perhaps made by a dying civilization to conserve the resources of a water-poor planet.

Savants of electricity gave us the telegraph, while engineers worked to string cables across the unfathomed depths to connect the continents with an information network that operated not at the speed of steam, but the speed of light. Biology and medicine showed us a glimmer of a microscopic world, the nature of disease, and the potential benefits and wonders that might someday be available to the medical professional, while chemists raced to fill in the missing parts of the newly created periodic table, discovering elements with new and unusual properties.

Steam engines began to change the nature of transport and industry and warfare, while the first principles of modern computers were developed with purely mechanical automata of amazing complexity and cleverness.

## Scientific American.



## New Inventions.

### An Air Navigator.

A series of experiments have lately been made beneath an immense tent in Cremorne Gardens, London, by a Mr. Stringfellow—a fine name for suspension. The inventor marches through the air by a machine which sustains and propels itself through the circumambient fluid. The machine excited considerable attention and surprised all the spectators by its wonderful performance. The next expedition that is fitted out by the British government to explore the Niger and the country through which it winds its sluggish and pestilential way, should employ this Mr. Stringfellow with a number of his machines to make a flying exploration, untrammelled with their heels in mud or water.

Balloons gave way to dirigibles, giving mankind the first taste of controlled flight, and man-carrying gliders led forward-thinkers to believe that with the right kind of propulsive device, heavier-than-air flight might someday be possible.

Explorers showed us that the world was wider and stranger than we ever imagined, and those who never returned proved by their absence that there were dangers even for the most intrepid explorers and the most powerful nations.

And if chemists and workers in electricity were adepts, then those who probed the mysteries of the atom were wizards, playing with the forces of radiation to probe the ultimate mysteries of matter of creation, blazing trails that would lead their grandchildren to become Shiva-like destroyers of worlds.

The writers of what we now call "science fiction" dealt with themes and ideas that would still be cutting edge. Genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, advanced weaponry and future wars, stirring space battles, alien life and cultures, alternate dimensions, time travel, the evolution of man, new forms of human society, all were themes that 19th century writers grappled with, with varying degrees of eloquence and success.

The Victorian Era was a time of unbridled optimistic ignorance. There was so much we knew *just enough* about to make wild, grand speculations on, and so much national and personal prestige at stake that people would make preposterous claims, from hubris, professional rivalry or a sincere but incorrect belief in one theory or the other.

And the world of **Verne** is one where many of the outlandish theories and ideas just happened to be *right*, where geniuses ahead of their time bring unique and unrepeatable discoveries and devices into being, threatening the social order, national sovereignty, professional careers, gender and racial roles, status and class and even peace between the Great Powers. National pride and prestige often overcame common sense in the Victorian Era, and adventurers will have to deal with this in themselves and others. As a historical example, the race to be the first to the North or South Pole was akin to later generations trying to be the first to land a man on the moon. While the USA and USSR did things in stages, experimenting with different technologies and working our way towards the goal, Victorians did things with more recklessness.



Victorian Era nations just put together whole expeditions and sent them, the equivalent of starting a Moon rocket from scratch and launching it without a single test. They were so obsessed with getting there first and planting *their* flag at the Pole that technicalities like testing their equipment in Arctic conditions were bypassed in interests of haste. So, an attempt to reach the North Pole by air was done with leaky balloons (they all died). A multi-year expedition to chart a Northwest Passage was sent with untested food storage technology (they all died). The first attempt to reach the South Pole was sent with Siberian ponies and a special motorcar instead of sled dogs (the car broke, they ate the ponies, and the attempt failed).

Another premise of **Verne** is that *everything* has a rational, scientific explanation. Even if you can't figure it out. The world of **Verne** is *not* a world with Dracula or Cthulhu in it. *There is no magic, there is no supernatural.* Anything that appears to be such is science that preys on our susceptibilities and superstitions. Dracula, no. Frankenstein's monster, yes. Cthulhu, no. Giant kraken, yes. Can the dead be supernaturally raised into an army of soulless zombies that feel no pain? *Of course not.* The dead are dead. But can science reanimate dead flesh? *Maybe.* Can exotic drugs take away a living person's will and make them insensitive to injury? *Perhaps.* Both may be questionable actions from a moral standpoint, but neither requires the presence of the supernatural. This does not deny existence of the supernatural, such as God or the Devil, merely that these forces do not interfere in ways that mere mortals can fathom or influence or measure.

The last premise is that adventurers are at heart, aligned with the civilized nations of the world, and that the adventurers are "the good guys". Who counts as "civilized" is up to you, though, and the cultural values that make you "the good guys" are not necessarily universal. But, in your heart, what you do is for the right reasons. Even though with a bit of historical perspective, what you consider "right" can seem a little patronizing and imperialistic.

*My own opinion is that, at this time, the colored people cannot vote intelligently, and that giving them the right of suffrage would open the door to a great deal of demagogism, and lead to embarrassments in various ways. What the future may prove, how intelligent they may become, with what eyes they may look upon the interests of the state in which they may reside, I cannot say more than you can.*

- Robert E. Lee, February 17 1866CE

Adventurers in **Verne** have a variety of things to do, and the gamemaster has plenty of hooks to hang adventures from. But one key thing about **Verne** is that experience, victory, kudos, fame and such tend to be tied to leadership and nationality. No one is going to care who was the *second* person to find the source of the Nile or the *second* person to climb the Matterhorn. It's all about being the one in charge when the important stuff happens. Of course, this can also backfire. Being the apparent leader of a doomed expedition brings shame to you (if you survive) and disgrace to your nation.

Part of the special campaign mechanics in **Verne** are about this national pride and jockeying for position, for it is the leader of the adventurers at any given moment who directs the course of action, and the other adventurers *must* follow that lead. This adds tension, and encourages players who disagree with that course of action to find a way to assume or usurp the leadership role. And the gamemaster can use this to steer or predict things, setting up situations where party leadership can be challenged and the plot can be steered onto one of several courses as a result.

So, if this is what you're looking for, keep on reading. The next chapter deals with the nuts and bolts of the Victorian Era, both from an idealized and the somewhat grimier real world sense. After that we will get into making your adventurers and then a bit more on some of the fictional players in the **Verne** universe.

# GREAT EVENT

Rail Road from the Atlantic to the Pacific

## GRAND OPENING

— OF THE —

# Union Pacific



## RAIL ROAD

# PLATTE VALLEY ROUTE.

PASSENGER TRAINS LEAVE

# OMAHA

ON THE ARRIVAL OF TRAINS FROM THE EAST.

## THROUGH TO SAN FRANCISCO

In less than Four Days, avoiding the Dangers of the Sea!

LIFE IN 1869CE

There are two Victorian Eras. The first is the fictional, idealized one we imagine when we think of discovering the source of the Nile, or going 20,000 leagues under the sea, or being the first men in the moon or first to set foot at the poles. The other is the dystopian one of the Irish famine, child labor in the coal mines, air pollution so bad it literally killed people, the US Civil War, crime, depravity, rigid social inequality and the like. While **Verne** is set in the shiny, polished world of romanticized hindsight, you could easily make a campaign as dark as any cyberpunk or horror-based gameworld.

▼ **LIFE IN 1869** - This book is not thick enough to describe the world in the year 1869CE, or even a major nation. So, we're just going to hit the high points, interesting and important aspects of culture, mostly in the Western world, and with an emphasis on Victorian England. Though adventures often take place elsewhere, England is the archetypical place for the era, and is the home to some of its more fascinating real and fictional characters.

Odds are that your adventurer is going to be a male Caucasian, and middle- or upper-class as things are measured in your nation. This means that your average life expectancy is about forty years, several years less than this if you live in a large city with poor sanitation (which was most of them). If you were from an average family, you had three or four brothers or sisters, of whom it was likely that one died in infancy. If you are over twenty-five and a citizen of the United States, England, Prussia (Germany), France or Spain, there is a fair chance you have been drafted into a war, been affected by a war or are about to be affected by a war.

If you look around at twenty of your peers, odds are that only one of them will be alive to celebrate his or her sixty-fifth birthday. *Life is hard*. When an opportunity comes your way, you take it. *Because you might not be around when the next opportunity comes knocking*. This is why ordinary folks would do things like abandon their previous lives and join a gold rush. *The potential reward is worth the risk*.

The idealized Victorian world is rather two-dimensional. Men are dashing, handsome and chivalrous (at least the heroes are), exemplary examples of the best their nation can offer. Women likewise express the noble values of the gender, even if they show a little more independence than is proper. Servants and lower classes do what they are supposed to and are of little importance in the big picture. Non-Caucasians are benighted, cowardly savages unless of course they have been uplifted by the work of selfless Europeans (or Americans). Government is sound, the legal system is just and God is on *your* side.

For running an *idealized* Victorian world, that's all you need to know. The rest of this chapter is the *real* Victorian world, and how much of it you want to incorporate into a campaign is up to you. It is going to get ugly, and you probably will *not* want to use it all. The more fantastical and steampunkish aspects of **Verne** get their own chapter. But, the historical material makes *great* flavor and can of course be used to describe the depraved villains and the actions of savages, Turks and fiendish Chinamen...

▼ **WHAT DO YOU KNOW?** - If you are keeping up with events in your home country and it is the autumn of 1869CE, what are your compatriots talking about?



**United States** - The unpopular Andrew Johnson has been replaced by President Ulysses S. Grant. The first transcontinental railway was just completed, making it possible to travel from Atlantic to Pacific in only a week, as long as there were no delays due to buffalo, Indians, washouts or snow. Scoundrels James Fisk and Jay Gould plotted to corner the gold market, buying all of the \$15 million of gold in circulation, driving up its price and then selling it again. The conspiracy failed when President Grant ordered additional gold sold by the U.S. Treasury on the open market. Gould's spies (including Grant's brother-in-law) leaked news of Grant's decision, so Gould was still able to clear a profit of \$11 million. It looks like the scalawags will get away with it, too.





**Great Britain** - The Crown has finally taken over control of Canada from the Hudson Bay Company. *It's about time.* Someone needs to teach those revolting French colonials a lesson, and put the fear of God and Her Majesty into the Fenians while they are at it. Speaking of criminals, I am of two minds about the decision to stop transporting criminals to Australia. *Is it full already?* That romance novel *Lorna Doone* is not my cup of tea, but the ladies seem to like it, and I have no doubt it will be quite popular with them. The new scientific journal *Nature* is quite interesting, especially that article on the recent total eclipse of the sun. The Scots just launched the *Cutty Sark*, the epitome of the beautiful clipper ship, but sadly, probably the last of her kind. Steam power is the way of the future, you know.



**Germany** - My own little kingdom is strong and proud, but Wilhelm of Prussia may be on to something. As one nation we would be far stronger than our current confederation. But our individual nobles would never go for this unless there was some kind of threat to force them to unify. Giving German workers the right to form labor unions and strike seems a bit radical, but on the other hand, it does provide a regulated framework for these activities, which they must adhere to in order to get the benefits. Much less anarchic than the riotous conditions in less organized nations.



**Russia** - It has been almost a decade since the serfs were emancipated. I suppose this was a good thing, but I hear that some of them are forming secret groups and agitating for even more reforms. *Ungrateful wretches.* Emperor Alexander was right to repress them as hard as he did. They should be content that he allows towns to elect their own leaders now. Except for Poland and Lithuania, of course. As long as they rebel against union with Russia, martial law will be maintained there. Knowing the stubbornness of the Poles, I do not expect to see martial law lifted there until long after I am dead. I hear the Emperor has sold the territory of Alaska to the Americans. He should have been a merchant. We have plenty more useless icy wastelands, perhaps he can sell some more of them to the Americans.



**Italy** - The Pope shows no sign of reversing the excommunication of King Emmanuel, but the people support him anyway. Italy remains divided by the Papal States, and Emmanuel clearly wishes to unify the territory of the kingdom. For now, the accursed French maintain troops in the Papal States and to try to unify the nation by force would spark a war with France, which Emmanuel cannot win. Only if the French leave, would this be possible. This new Suez Canal bodes well for Italy. Ships will be looking for ports as they use this canal in either direction, and we are well suited to profit from it. The Great Powers claim Africa for themselves. *Are we not great?* Is it not our right to claim some of this land as our own? Even now, one of our trading companies is establishing an outpost in Eritrea, and this shall be the start of many great Italian things in Africa. *I am sure of it.*



**France** - The Suez Canal is almost ready to open. I hear Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III will inaugurate the occasion with great pomp and ceremony. The Bonapartists have won most of the seats in the legislature. They will not put up with Bismarck's posturing, but I fear we are not truly ready for a war with the Prussians. I read somewhere that the Michaux brothers have mated a small steam engine to a bicycle to make the most curious sort of vehicle. Have you tasted this "margarine" substance? I pity our sailors who will have to use this poor excuse for butter. *Is their life not hard enough already?*



**Spain** - Things are chaotic, one is not sure which way to turn. The conservative Carlists want a return to the Bourbon line of the monarchy, and have the support of his Holiness Pius IX. But the generals and the radicals want a constitutional monarchy, and to give the people the right to vote. Methinks the latter want these more than the former, but the generals lack enough support to oppose the Carlists on their own. Now, with Queen Isabella fled to Paris, we are left with a Savoy as our ruler, this King Amadeo. But he seems to have little power, the generals seem to be running things, the Federal Republicans are rioting in protest over the election results, and the Duke of Madrid seems to eager to reignite the civil wars I had hoped were over. *I despair for my once great empire.* I must regretfully say that it is a good time to be somewhere else.



**Turkey** - Sultan Abdülaziz is not a happy ruler. Our once-great empire shrinks on all fronts. But, he has forged alliances with the Christians of Great Britain and France, and has continued the reforms of his father, giving us universities, factories and railroads. Maybe someday one will be able to take a train all the way from Paris to Istanbul, an express to the Orient, as it were. Perhaps we will even have a parliament by then. The Sultan also is buying many impressive European warships, though I worry about how he intends to pay for them. The English built factories first and then used them to build warships. The Sultan buys warships first and spends what is left on factories. *I do not think this will end well.* He tries to eliminate corruption in the government, but I think he succeeds less than he imagines. The Russians want our lands, the French and English want to foil the Russians, but we follow the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), so none of them care for us as a people.

▼ **GEOPOLITICS** - The world of 1869CE does, like most points in human history, have one or more nations just getting over a war, just getting into a war, or actively involved in a war. The events below can shape the background and abilities of the adventurers, as well as be obstacles and plot elements, chaos to hinder them, or opportunities to be taken advantage of.

The "Great Game" of international politics has several major players during the time period of the campaign. They are historically known as the Great Powers. They are: Spain, France, England, Germany, Italy and Turkey. In 1869CE, some are on their way up (Germany), others on the way down (Turkey). Every other nation is an also-ran, someone who used to be a major player (like Portugal, Austro-Hungary or the Netherlands), or who has not yet become a major player (like Russia, Japan or the United States). The minor powers might take part in major international events, but will not be the ones calling the shots. And then there are the non-entities, nations who might command significant manpower or resources, but which for one reason or the other are nonexistent on the *international* scene. China would be a good example of this.

*"War is merely a continuation of politics"*  
- Major-General Carl von Clausewitz



**United States** - The United States is *not* a Great Power. It is an upstart democracy in an era largely ruled by monarchies, a rebel colony that can't even get along with itself, much less be a global player. For goodness sake, the so-called "United States" still has rebellious natives and not even a decent map of its own fragmented territory.

Add to this a largely isolationist government policy (except for the Monroe Doctrine), and the United States is largely discounted in international circles. Individual Americans are considered as civilized as any other caucasian, though subject to the same stereotyping as everyone else is.

In 1869CE the United States is thirty-seven states and several territories, including Alaska and Hawaii. Note that Hawaii was called the Sandwich Islands at this time and Pearl Harbor was not founded until 1911CE. Alaska's nominal capital is Sitka and it is governed loosely by the US military. The states of California, Oregon, and Nevada are separated from the rest of the United States by the non-state territories of Washington, Montana, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Dakotas, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico, with most of present-day Oklahoma as 'Indian Territory' and the Oklahoma panhandle being none of the above due to various legal and diplomatic disputes dating back to Texas' admission as a state a few decades before.

The USA has just gotten over the Civil War (1861-1865CE), and Union troops are still occupying the southern states to enforce the surrender terms and new amendments to the US constitution (outlawing slavery and guaranteeing the right to vote for non-caucasians) on a resentful populace.

*...therefore, be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that said Rebel states shall be divided into military districts and made subject to the military authority of the United States.*

- First Reconstruction Act, March 2 1867

The President is Andrew Johnson, who came into that office after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865CE, and who held the post until he was replaced by President Ulysses S. Grant in March 1869CE. Johnson was an unpopular fellow who was unsuccessfully impeached (twice), and was roundly criticized for the purchase of Alaska from Russia for the exorbitant price of 7.2 million dollars.

In addition to the Civil War, recent, current and future events involving the United States include:

- **The Fenian Raids** (1866-1871CE), where Irish-American Civil War veterans illegally banded together to raid British targets in Canada in hopes of forcing Britain to withdraw from Ireland. The US government tended to look the other way as tit-for-tat on the British support of the Confederacy during the Civil War.
- **The Alabama dispute** (1862-1871CE), one of the first internationally mediated disputes, where the United States claimed damages from Britain because Britain supplied a commerce raider to the Confederacy. The United States eventually won a claim of 15.5 million dollars in 1871CE.
- **Indian troubles** (through 1877CE), various tribes came into conflict with American settlers and the US Army, often through US violation of its own treaties. That unfortunate business with General Custer (1876CE) was one of the more notable incidents.
- **Utah War** (1857-1858CE), with the Mormon militia of Utah Territory pitted against a large force of the US Army. There were no pitched battles, but a few massacres of civilians and the region remains a bit touchy on the subject.
- **Panic of 1873** (1873-1896CE), a global financial crisis and part of the Long Depression, a *major* business downturn that was not caused by the US, but whose economy and markets were a contributing factor.



**Great Britain** - At this time, Great Britain is the core territory of England, plus the territories of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and India. The formerly independent nations of Ireland and Scotland are part of Great Britain, but Scotland retains its own legal system. Great Britain also holds Gibraltar (a continual sticking point with Spain), British Guiana, Trinidad, Mauritius, Saint Lucia, Malta, Cape Colony, and in 1875CE will share control of the newly opened (1869CE) Suez Canal with France. This is the era in which "the sun never sets on the British Empire".


The nastiest recent conflict involving Great Britain was the Crimean War (1854-1856CE), a conflict that pitted an alliance of Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire, France and Sardinia against Russia and a handful of Bulgarians. This war was over control and influence over the declining but still powerful Ottoman Empire, and took place mostly in the Balkans, Black Sea and Crimean Peninsula. Battles of note included the Siege of Sevastopol and the Battle of Balaclava (from which 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' is derived). The Russians lost. The war was known for several things: extreme incompetence on both sides, horrific casualties (the *winners* lost half a million men, about fifty percent of their total force), some prominent women (Florence Nightingale), and it was the first war covered in real-time by telegraph-using media.

In addition to the Crimean War, recent, current and future events involving Great Britain include:

- **The Second Opium War** (1856-1860CE), an alliance of Great Britain and France against China's Qing Dynasty, an economically motivated war based on largely fabricated or overblown pretenses. One item of note was a Chinese attempt to simultaneously poison the entire European population of Hong Kong. After a number of other atrocities and disastrous battles (which the Chinese lost despite ten to one numerical superiority), the Emperor fled and his brother agreed to peace, on terms that legalized the opium trade and opened up all parts of China to foreigners.
- **Duar War** (1864-1865CE), where Bhutan and its matchlock- and catapult-equipped forces decided they did not want a peace treaty with the British Empire. The resulting five month squabble turned out as you might expect.
- **Maori Wars** (1845-1872CE), territorial and treaty disputes between the Crown and the Maori of New Zealand, similar to conflicts with native Americans in that Britain used its force to ignore the provisions of agreements it had entered into.



- **Second Afghan War** (1878-1880CE), where Afghanistan found itself pinned between an expanding Russia and Great Britain, ended up annoying the British more and got invaded (again) for their trouble.
- **Indian Rebellion** (1857-1858CE), an uprising by Indian soldiers of the East India Company, which at the time more or less ran India as its own little fiefdom. The uprising itself was brutal, marked by betrayals of safe passage, massacres of women and children and other atrocities, and the British recapture of the rebellious regions was equally genocidal. As a result, the East India Company was officially dissolved and India came under direct rule of the Crown.
- **Anglo-Zulu War** (1879CE), which was for all practical purposes a border dispute between Britain and the Zulu nation that got escalated out of proportion. The Zulu, despite having small arms and numerical advantage, took on the whole six times the casualties of the British, and in the Battle of Kambula, the British lost twenty-nine men while the Zulu lost two thousand (human wave attacks against artillery and Gatling Guns are a bad idea).

 **France** - In 1869CE, France is in what is called the Second Empire. It has fallen from the power it had during the time of Napoleon, but is still one of the Great Powers, with influence, colonies or territories in Shanghai, Martinique, Vietnam, Cambodia and the Seychelles. In the near future, it will expand aggressively into Africa, with most of western Africa eventually flying the French flag. The Second Empire will end after France loses the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871CE), and will enter into the Third Republic, which after a bit of confusion and head-cracking became a functioning parliamentary republic.

The most recent conflict involving France was the recent Franco-Mexican War (1862-1867CE), largely resulting from Mexico defaulting on loans (pay up or we will repossess your country!). The United States more or less claimed this hemisphere under the Monroe Doctrine, but was engaged in the Civil War and was unable to intervene. After the conclusion of the Civil War, the US moved forces to the US-Mexico border and set up a naval blockade to prevent French resupply, and Mexican forces eventually expelled the French. They also executed the recently installed Emperor Maximilian I of Mexico (who was the brother of the Emperor of Austria), just to send the message that they would not tolerate foreign interference or rule. Putting a prince of the Hapsburg Dynasty in front of a firing squad was considered extremely bad form, but it got the point across and no one else has any plans to invade Mexico at this point.

*"If I were an Englishman, I should esteem the man who advised a war with China to be the greatest living enemy of my country. You would be beaten in the end, and perhaps a revolution in India would follow."*

- Napoleon III

In addition to the Franco-Mexican War, recent, current and future events involving France include:

- **The Franco-Prussian War** (1870-1871CE), notable because the French Minister of the Interior escaped the siege of Paris by balloon, the first aerial evacuation in wartime, albeit of only one individual. The war was a result of simmering tensions between France and an increasingly powerful Prussia-German axis, brought to a head by the public release of some creatively edited diplomatic messages that goaded the French into declaring war, which was of course, exactly what the Prussians had wanted. Unlike Great Britain, whose military underwent reforms after the disastrous losses in the Crimea, the French military was organized and equipped in more or less the same as before Crimea, and German equipment, tactics and logistics took great advantage of this. This war brought about the fall of Napoleon III, the end of the French Second Empire, and the creation of a unified Germany.
- **Crimean War** (1854-1856CE), see Great Britain for details.

**Biographical note** - General François Achille Bazaine was in command of the fortifications at Metz and surrendered them to Prussia during the war, for which he was later scapegoated by the French government and leniently sentenced to only twenty years in prison. Bazaine, sixty-three at the time, responded to this by making a rope in his cell and climbing down a hundred meter cliff to a waiting boat that had been brought there by his wife. Though he died impoverished and in exile fourteen years later, he is to this day considered a great hero of the French Foreign Legion.




 **Germany** - In 1869CE, Germany as we now know it does not yet exist. Right now, there is the North German Confederation, which is dozens of separate monarchies and several city-states, but is dominated by the Kingdom of Prussia, and led by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. A German Confederation was (or may have been) formed expressly to contest Austria's traditional leading role amongst the German states, and the Austro-Prussian War (1866CE) ended the Hapsburg dynasty's leading role in German affairs. The German Confederation was dissolved after this war, but quickly reconstituted as the North German Confederation, and will become the German Empire in 1871CE after the defeat of the French in the Franco-Prussian War (see France for details). The formation of the German Empire coincides with its expanded influence into world affairs, and by the time of the Great War had four African colonies (Namibia, Cameroon, Togoland, Tanzania), plus part of New Guinea, and outposts in China and on several Pacific islands.

In addition to the Franco-Prussian War, recent, current and future events involving Germany include:

- **The Prusso-Danish War** (1864CE), involving a territorial dispute arising from a dynastic issue between the German Confederation and Denmark after the death of King Frederick VII of Denmark in 1863CE (which duchies belonged to which kingdom as a result of the succession). This was won by the German Confederation in nine months, killed a quarter of Denmark's population, and left both a resentment towards and futility about resisting Germany for several generations.

*"One day the great European War will come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans."*  
- Otto von Bismarck

 **Spain** - Spain is a residual Great Power in 1869CE. It does not have much current influence, but it retains a few holdings from its former peak of power, and with Italy, has a lot of influence in the Catholic world. Spain currently controls Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Phillipines, Guam, the Canary Islands and parts of Morocco and Guinea.

For much of this century Spain has been dealing with its own internal troubles, going through half a dozen governments, finally abolishing the Inquisition only to bring it back (only to abolish it again), passing reforms and then rolling them back, going from monarchy to non-hereditary autocracy to representative government to plutocracy, leaving it little time to manage an external empire. Finally, in 1868CE the government of Queen Isabella was toppled by a military coup, a relatively liberal constitution was enacted, and a nominal king (Amadeo I) enthroned. He however, left Spain in disgust in 1873CE (calling Spain "ungovernable"), leaving the two main political factions to fight it out for control. This did not resolve until 1875CE, after which a constitutional monarchy of some stability was established. By this time, it was too late for Spain to play catch-up with the other Great Powers, and while it restored its economy and joined the Industrial Revolution, it never regained a major place on the world stage.

In addition to its internal troubles, recent, current and future events involving Spain include:

- **Franco-Mexican War** (1862-1867CE), in which Spain originally contributed forces on the French side, until they realized that France was attempting the total conquest of Mexico, after which Spain withdrew from the expedition.
- **Dominican Restoration War** (1863-1865CE), where after seventeen years of independence as Dominica, Spain decided it wanted the nation back as one of its colonies. After three years of guerrilla resistance, Spain had to withdraw and the date the resistance struck its first blow became a national holiday.
- **Chincha Islands War** (1864-1866CE), another attempt by Spain to regain control in formerly lost regions. The Chincha Islands were a rich source of guano (a raw material for black powder), and pitted the Spanish Navy against its former colonies of Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. Spain found itself blockaded out of every port in South America and eventually had to leave for lack of supplies.

*"Sirs, traditional monarchy died with Ferdinand VII; parliamentary monarchy with the flight of Isabella II; democratic monarchy with the abdication of don Amadeo of Savoy; nobody has finished it, it has died on its own; nobody brings the Republic, save all circumstances, a cabal of society, nature and history. Sirs, let us greet it like the sun rising with its own strength on the sky of our nation."*

- Emilio Castelar



**China** - China is a huge unknown to the rest of the world in 1869CE, and the rest of the world is largely unknown to China. The Chinese government considered China superior to all other nations, even considering its utter defeat in the First Opium War (1839-1842CE). Largely insulated from reality by layers of tradition and bureaucracy, the *de facto* rule of Empress Dowager Cixi dealt mainly with court intrigues and factional conflicts, with lethal penalties for the losers in the finger-pointing game whenever national pride was humiliated by the all-too-frequent defeats by foreigners.

As a 'superior power', Qing Dynasty China did not adhere to or care about normal European standards of diplomacy. If diplomatic talks broke down (by Qing standards), foreign diplomats and their staffs were sometimes tortured or murdered. You can imagine how well this went over with a nation like Great Britain (diplomatic intervention by other European nations was the only thing that kept the entire Forbidden City from being razed during the Second Opium War (1856-1860CE)).

Basically, the Chinese system of government was corrupt and crumbling under the weight of tradition, unable to deal with the size and needs of the population it had to govern, and incapable of changing to meet these needs.

In addition to the Second Opium War, recent, current and future events involving China include:

- **The Taiping Rebellion** (1850-1871CE), an absolutely brutal and bloody civil war that went on before, during and after the Second Opium War. Under the charismatic leadership of Hong Xiuquan, the majority Han Chinese rebelled against Manchu Qing and founded a quasi-theocratic-military-communist government in southern China (Hong Xiuquan claimed to be Jesus' brother). As foreigners were not allowed free travel in China until after the surrender terms of the Second Opium War, the full scope of the rebellion was not really known until forces from Great Britain and France joined forces with the Qing Dynasty to end it. By the time it finally ended, the death toll of civilians and soldiers was somewhere in the vicinity of twenty million. For reference, twenty million is approximately the *entire* population of England in 1869CE.

*The Current Divine Mother Empress Dowager Ci-Xi Duan-You Kang-Yi Zhao-Yu Zhuang-Cheng Shou-Gong Qin-Xian Chong-Xi of the Great Qing Empire*

- full title of the Empress Dowager Cixi



**Russia** - Russia is a Great Power by virtue of its size and location, rather than through any projection of force onto the international scene. Stretching from the Baltic to the Pacific, Russia's expansion was not colonialism, but mostly trying to find a warm-water port for their navy. This got them into conflicts with Turkey, as they did not want to be bottled into the Black Sea and their southernmost Pacific port (Vladivostok) was chilly enough to make Russians look south towards China and Japan. Russia's biggest and costliest recent conflict was the Crimean War (1854-1856CE), which was a political dispute disguised as a matter of who controlled the Holy Land, or vice versa. It was a region of interest to both Catholics (French), Protestants (English) and Orthodox (Russians), but under control of the Ottoman Turks (Islam). All of the above used force and guile to get the Sultan to see things their way. This eventually came to a head with the Sultan attacking Russian forces, to which Russia responded by sinking a bunch of Turkish ships. England and France joined on the side of Turkey, Russia refused to accept some blatantly insulting peace terms by England and France, and the war was on. As mentioned elsewhere, it was long and bloody and mismanaged on most fronts. Austria, which Russia expected to side with it in the dispute, did not. Russia returned the favor and did not help Austria in the Austro-Prussian War (1866CE), which cost Austria a lot of influence when it lost.

In addition to the Crimean War, recent, current and future events involving Russia include:

- **Russo-Turkish War** (1877-1878CE), mostly about Russian nationalism and being a sore loser in the Crimean War. The Ottoman Turks provided the spark by brutally suppressing a revolt by Bulgarian Christians in 1876CE, which caused Britain and France to diminish their support of the Ottomans and give the Russians an opening to act without interference. After heavy losses on both sides, a truce was declared and a peace treaty struck. Russian gained no actual territory from the war, but Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro, which had nominally been Ottoman territories, gained full independence. However, they also gained some Russians to help set up their new government, and quickly slaughtered or evicted virtually the entire population of Jews and Muslims in the newly independent regions (a quarter of a million killed and half a million displaced).





**Turkey** - Turkey represents the Ottoman Empire, the last bastion of monolithic Islamic influence in the 19th century. The Ottoman Empire in 1869CE covers an area composed of modern-day Turkey, Egypt, Cyprus, Syria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Armenia and parts of Libya, Tunisia, Sudan, Saudi Arabia (including Mecca and Medina), Iraq, Iran and Kuwait. This made them important to the Russians, whose Black Sea ports were useless if the Ottomans blocked access past Constantinople, to Europe, since the newly opened Suez Canal required Ottoman support in order to operate, and since all the Christian holy sites were in the hands of Islam, it was important from the standpoint of national pride that Christian nations had negotiated access to these sites.

By 1869CE, the Ottoman Empire was clearly in decline. Despite being strong in manpower and undergoing some internal reforms, it was being eclipsed industrially and economically by the other Great Powers. While the other Great Powers were expanding their colonial holdings and influence, the Ottoman Empire was losing its vassal states and power. The most recent conflict of note was the aforementioned Crimean War (1854-1856CE), and the next major conflict will be the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878CE).

In addition to the Crimean War, recent events involving Turkey include:

- **Cretan Revolt** (1866-1869CE), where Orthodox Christians took control of the entire island for a time, before being defeated by Ottoman troops. The end of the revolt saw the siege of Moni Arkadiou monastery, where the Christian defenders (mostly women and children) chose to blow themselves up rather than surrender to Muslim Turks. This perceived martyrdom and the violation of Ottoman promises to Europe about the rights and treatment of Christians under Ottoman rule increased Western disillusionment with the Ottomans in general, and may have further accelerated their decline.



**South America** - South America is at this time largely composed of former colonies of Spain that have only become independent nations in the past generation or so. While of common Spanish descent in terms of beliefs and social structures, they are not necessarily on good terms with each other. Militarily speaking they are not highly advanced, but they do have enough resources to buy war material from other nations.

Recent, current and future events involving South American nations include:

- **The Federal War** (1859-1863CE), a civil war in Venezuela. This was a class war, one of those dangerous situations where the liberal rabble rebelled against a conservative minority that didn't want to relinquish their monopoly on land ownership or power. Disruptions of commerce and agricultural production killed ten percent of the population (hundreds of thousands dead) through hunger and disease, in a conflict where the largest battles had less than ten thousand involved. The liberal side won, and established a federalist government of marginal stability.
- **War of the Triple Alliance** (1864-1870CE), with Paraguay on one side as aggressor, against an alliance of Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil. After independence, Paraguay was an isolationist dictatorship, with total government control of the economy and few if any foreign imports. To make the most of its own exports, landlocked Paraguay needed a seaport, rather than the shallow river ports it had. Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay were almost at each others throats over territorial disputes of their own, and when Brazil invaded Uruguay, Paraguay sought to take advantage of the situation, only to find that the squabbling nations hated Paraguayan interference more than each other, and formed the "Triple Alliance" to repel the Paraguayan incursion. Paraguay started with an advantage in men and material, having its own arms works and shipbuilding facilities, but this advantage was not enough. The war was long and bloody, and by the time it was over it had resulted in the death of sixty percent of Paraguay's population through war and disease, and *ninety* percent of the male population of the country. The only reason Paraguay survived as a nation is that the victors still did not like each other and wanted to use Paraguay as a buffer between them.
- **War of the Pacific** (1879-1883CE), between Peru and Bolivia on one side, and Chile on the other. The dispute was over the Atacama desert region between them, which at the time was the world's richest saltpeter reserves, valuable for fertilizer and the making of black powder. Chile won, and Bolivia lost its coastal territory.



**Italy** - Italy as a nation did not come into being until 1861CE. Before then it was an extension or possession of the Austrian Empire. But starting in 1848CE revolution spread across Europe, and Italy was one of many nations affected. Italy's first and second wars of independence failed, but the third ended in victory and independence for the Kingdom of Italy in 1866CE. This was more or less the boundaries of modern Italy, with the exception of Rome, which was under French control at the time. However, the recall of French forces at the start of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871CE) gave Italian forces an opening to seize Rome and France was not in a military or diplomatic position to do anything about it. The Pope was not pleased either.

By the time Italy was on its feet as a nation, all the good spots for imperial colonies were taken, and Italy's only foreign possessions by the time of the Great War were Eritrea (part of modern Ethiopia), Somalia and parts of Libya. Italy tried to conquer Ethiopia in 1895CE, but Ethiopia got Russian backing and won.

*"You are all a set of vipers, whited sepulchres, and wanting in faith...I am no prophet, nor son of a prophet, but I tell you, you will never enter Rome!"*


- Pope Pius IX



**Japan** - in 1869CE Japan is just coming into its own. It is largely underestimated by the West, seen as isolated and backwards as China, a belief reinforced by the ease with which Western powers pushed Japan around. For instance, Commodore Perry intimidating the Japanese government in 1854CE with four steam frigates, or Britain getting a settlement of (in modern terms) around one hundred million dollars for the murder of a British merchant by government forces in 1862CE (the fellow refused to dismount for the daimyo's father when he passed by and got a katana in the guts for his insolence).

Events like this shaped Western opinions of Japan at the very time Japan was beginning to aggressively modernize itself. This modernization was not without stress, and the Boshin War (1868-1869CE) was a result, an internal power struggle between the Emperor and the Tokugawa Shogunate. By this time, some of Japan's forces had already modernized to the point of having percussion rifles, howitzers, Gatling Guns and steam-powered ironclads. The Emperor's forces eventually won, united the nation into something approaching modern Japan, became more open and slightly less xenophobic, and worked to modernize the country. Future events involving Japan include:

- **Sino-Japanese War** (1894-1895CE), between Japan and the Qing Dynasty of China, fighting over Korea, which Qing China considered a tributary state, and which Japan had signed an independent treaty with. It was a small nation that had embraced modernization against a huge nation that had not. Japan's ships were faster and newer, with bigger, more accurate guns, the Japanese army had better morale, training, equipment and leadership (the Qing army had its ammunition budget embezzled to build the Emperor a new summer palace). Despite being outnumbered three to one, Japan lost no major battles in the entire war, and won reparations from China equal to more than two years of Japan's entire government revenue. In addition, Japan gained control of Formosa (modern Taiwan) and Korea gained full independence.
- **Russo-Japanese War** (1904-1905CE), a conflict of territorial ambitions between the two over Korea and Manchuria. Russia still needed a warm-water port and claimed Port Arthur (modern Lushun in China), which while done as a legal agreement with China, got on Japan's nerves. Japan eventually launched a sneak attack on Port Arthur without the traditional declaration of war first (how dare they!), and eventually sunk most of the Russian Pacific Fleet. The Russian Baltic Fleet sailed all the way from the Baltic to the Pacific to retake Port Arthur, but was wiped out with only minimal Japanese losses. Japan defeating an established Western power in a modern conflict put them on the map and made Japan a late entry into the Great Power club.

 **Africa** - Africa is not a nation or a Great Power, but rather a bunch of colonies of other Great Powers, some small independent nations and lots and lots of African tribes too small and technologically primitive to evict even a minor incursion by a Western power (and unfortunately for them, often not smart enough to realize that killing Westerners will result in such incursions). But despite the control of Africa's resources by Europeans, there will be numerous inter-tribal squabbles and plenty of places that have never seen a white man before. The last great African power was the Zulu Nation under Shaka, which began to fade after his assassination in 1828CE. However, some of the pride, manpower and Zulu tactics survived long enough to influence the Anglo-Zulu War (1879CE), which is mentioned elsewhere. Nations of the time and their African colonies (varies with date):

- **Portugal** - Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique
- **Spain** - The city of Sidi Ifni (in Morocco), Western Sahara
- **Belgium** - Congo Free State (Congo)
- **France** - Algeria, Senegal, Mauritania, Senegambia, Niger, French Sudan (Mali), French Guinea (Guinea), Côte d'Ivoire, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Dahomey (now Benin), Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic, Chad, Madagascar
- **Great Britain** - Cape Colony (South Africa), Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana,
- **United States** - Liberia (founded by the United States, but an independent nation whose citizens were generally considered Americans by the Great Powers)

▼ **LAW & ORDER** - One of the things that “civilized” peoples use to differentiate themselves from those less fortunate is the rule of law. This is noble in theory. *In practice, not so much.* There are going to be four major types of law, law enforcement and judicial proceedings that adventurers may run afoul of in the Victorian world: English Common Law, the Napoleonic Code, Islamic Sharia and Chinese Imperial. Each has its quirks. They will be described as what they are supposed to be, and how they *actually* are in 1869CE.

**In general:** *Jail sucks.* Jails are holding pens, and prisons are for *punishment*. If you are in one, it is because the system, whatever system it is, assumes you are guilty enough to be there. Unless you have significant wealth or status, you will be treated like you are a criminal. You have few if any rights, poor treatment is the norm, and mistreatment is there to remind you how good you have it when you are only getting poor treatment. Short-timers would often be forced into hard labor jobs, while those with longer sentences might just get confinement, on the reasoning that you would probably die before finishing a long sentence with hard labor and therefore somehow cheat justice.

*Colonial jails suck worse.* Think of what you consider to be “third world” prison conditions. This is what these prisons are like after one hundred forty years of *improvement* from 1869CE.

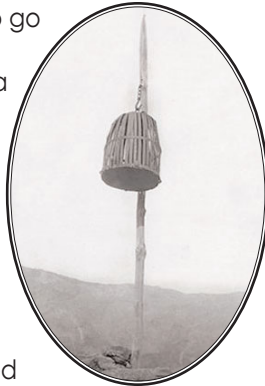
*“Equal under the law” and “innocent until proven guilty” are just phrases.* Wealth, status, race and gender will all make a tangible difference in your chance of acquittal and your treatment before and during a trial. This will be covered in the **Status** section of creating adventurers.

*Time = money.* Almost any verdict that would result in jail time can be paid with a sufficient fine instead. Conversely, if the judgement against you is a fine and you cannot pay it, you go to jail for a corresponding amount of time. How high up the scale this goes is linked to how stratified the culture is. In the United States, you might not be able to *directly* buy yourself out of a serious conviction, but in China many capital offenses could be paid off with a sufficiently large fine. For instance, most crimes warranting strangulation or beheading in the Qing Code could be paid for with a fine equal to about fifty kilograms of silver (≈20,000 Credits in modern terms, or about 110 gold sovereigns in 1869CE British coinage).



The death penalty is alive and well. Venezuela and Portugal are the only nations to have abolished the death penalty by 1869CE, though a few states in the USA have also abolished it. Hanging, firing squad and various beheadings are the norm, depending on the locality and the crime. The Vatican uses a guy with an axe, while the civilized British outlawed the spectacle of *public* hangings in 1868CE. Eventually, technology will catch up with the process, with the invention of the "electric chair". This was not without mishap, as the first use took *eight minutes* and filled the execution chamber with the smell of burning flesh. *Euuw...*

The "less civilized" nations tended to go for more elaborate forms of deterrence. Qinq Dynasty China had the "death of a thousand cuts", while Afghan thieves were punished by being suspended in cages and left to die of starvation or thirst. In addition, what is considered a "capital crime" is a lower standard than it is now, and the appeals process was much more limited. In addition to the death penalty for espionage, treason, murder and desertion, it was also handed down in various nations for rape, kidnapping, piracy, mutiny, drug trafficking, theft (including sheep, horse and cattle), heresy, sodomy, counterfeiting, forgery, and arson. To give you an idea of current thought on capital punishment, the United States Supreme Court did not *specifically* declare being burned alive as "cruel and unusual punishment" until 1878CE (*Wilkerson vs. Utah*).



*Difficulty would attend the effort to define with exactness the extent of the constitutional provision which provides that cruel and unusual punishments shall not be inflicted; but it is safe to affirm that punishments of torture, such as those mentioned by the commentator referred to, and all others in the same line of unnecessary cruelty, are forbidden by that amendment to the Constitution.*

*Criminal is better than crazy.* There is no benefit to an insanity plea. In 1869CE, any sane person would *rather* go to prison than an asylum. Prison conditions were *far* better.

*Not our problem.* No one really wants to be responsible for someone else's criminal. If at all possible based on the crime, non-locals arrested for a first offense will often be fined and/or told to "get out of town". This would be especially common for beggars, peddlers, vagabonds and gypsies, but adventurers could also be subject to the treatment if they run afoul of the law. As long as you leave and don't come back, all is forgiven.

**English Common Law:** This would be the basic set of principles used in Great Britain, the United States and colonies of each. The "common" in common law refers to things shared, or in common. Specifically, precedent set elsewhere in the system is considered binding in cases sharing the same characteristics. This is designed to minimize the effect of incompetent or biased judges. It also gives prior judicial decisions the same effective force as laws passed by a legislature. Like bad laws, bad precedents are hard to get rid of. English law allows legal representation for the plaintiff and defendant, and guilt can be determined by a judge, a panel of judges or a jury, depending on locality. At this point in time there are fairly standard rules on the quality of evidence and testimony, but race, class, wealth and other intangibles will certainly play a role in any situation that is not absolutely clear-cut.

*Ann Miles, an elderly woman, whose face betokened a love of strong drink, was charged with being drunk and using bad language. Police-constable Wilson found prisoner in London road, St. Mary Magdalen, on Saturday night, at a quarter-past ten, very drunk, holding a lamp-post, and swearing at a mob of boys who had assembled. She would not go away, and was locked up.*

*Prisoner said a "drop of drink" which she had been given had "overcome" her. She was very sorry. Fined 5 shillings and costs; in default, five days' imprisonment.*

- *Hastings & St Leonards Observer 1869CE*

**Napoleonic Code:** Has similarities to the English Common Law, but precedent has no role. This is a "civil law", where only the legislature has the power to decide what is not legal. Judges may interpret laws to handle cases that do not fit into existing law, but precedent in prior cases does *not* have bearing, leaving judges less leeway. Mitigating circumstance does not let a judge adjust a punishment outside the bounds set by the legislature for a crime. Think of "mandatory minimums" or "three strikes" laws in the modern United States. The Napoleonic Code also tended to give more power to the prosecution in a case than to the defendant, hence the perception that the Napoleonic Code had a presumption of guilt. In practice it was no more biased than English Common Law. The Napoleonic Code was in force during France's expansion in the early nineteenth century, and so versions of it came to be adopted in Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, parts of Germany, external colonies of these nations and the state of Louisiana.

**Sharia:** This is the body of Islamic religious law, and includes direct provisions from the Qur'an such as the prohibition of alcohol, and indirect provisions derived from interpretation and prior rulings. This gives it elements of both civil and common law. Due to its inherent ties to the Qur'an, a Sharia judge is also going to be a person of religious learning. Sharia has fairly high and mandatory evidentiary standards for some crimes (rape or adultery require four *male* witnesses to the crime), making it nearly impossible to get convictions for them. Also note that these evidentiary standards are stacked in favor of men. The main concern for adventurers is that in the Ottoman Empire, the testimony of non-Muslims has no sway in a Sharia court. So if a Westerner is the victim of a crime, they have no recourse unless a Muslim witnessed it and will testify on their behalf. Similarly, a Westerner accused of a crime can testify on their own behalf, but it has no legal weight.

**Chinese Imperial:** Criminal justice in the Qing Dynasty was based on an extremely detailed and legalistic code known as Great Qing Legal Code, which had nearly two thousand separate statutes and substatutes, covering all aspects of life. The most serious offenses were the "Ten Abominations"; rebellion, sedition, treason, refusal to obey court orders, depravity, great irreverence, lack of filial piety, discord, unrighteousness and incest. The Qing Code was very concerned with chains of authority and was very asymmetrical. A son beating a father would merit a harsher punishment than a father beating a son. Similar asymmetry applied to secular chains of authority.

The Qing Code also included what were called the "Eight Deliberations", ways the wealthy or well-connected could get many sentences commuted (the Deliberation for the Morally Worthy, Deliberation for Relatives of the Emperor, etc.). *Getting off lightly because you had well-connected relatives was written into the law.* The Deliberations did *not* apply to the Abominations, however. The Qing Code was expressly designed to maintain social inequality and promote subservience (of the Han) to authority (of the Manchu).

Punishments were usually took the form of beatings, fines or banishment for a certain duration. The Qing were not much into prisons. You got your beating, and you either died from it, or you survived and were released, sometimes to exile, sometimes as an ordinary free man again.

Previous rulings by the Xingbù (the Board of Punishments) could be appended to the Qing Code, giving it aspects of civil and common law. One important notion of Qing law was that of moral guidance. A criminal *must* recognize and admit to their crime before any moral realignment could begin. *And if this means they had to torture you until you confessed to what you had been accused of, well, then that's the way it had to be.* Since trial could not take place *until* there was a confession, trials were a formality unless new evidence turned up after the confession had been made. *For all practical purposes, arrest equalled conviction.* Legal representation for a defendant was generally not allowed, because it was not needed. After all, by the time of a trial, the defendant had already confessed, making lawyers superfluous. Most cases were ruled on by local magistrates. The magistrates acted as detective, judge and jury, and had the authority to sentence someone to death. However, a sentence more severe than a beating was automatically bumped up to the next level of authority. Only the Emperor could stamp a decree authorizing an execution. *Technically.* Rebels and foreigners were sometimes summarily executed and news of it simply never reached the Emperor.

*Instruments of torture of the following dimensions may be used upon an investigation of a charge of robbery and homicide:*

*The instruments for compressing the ankle bones shall consist of a middle piece, 3 Che 4 Tsun long, and two side pieces, 3 Che each in length; the upper end of each piece shall be circular, and 1 Tsun 8 decimals in diameter; the lower ends shall be cut square and 2 Tsun in thickness...*

*- from the Great Qing Legal Code*

**Law enforcement:** Law enforcement is fairly straightforward. When a policeman says you are under arrest or to stop, *you do so.* Or the officer and his friends get to use whatever force is necessary to get your compliance, and they will *not* apologize for it afterwards. Remember that a Victorian Era beat cop is *not* a trained law enforcement professional. They are a big, tough guy whose job it is to drag criminals into custody so that higher-ups can determine what to do with them. And by tough, London beat cops walked thirty kilometers a day, were forbidden to sit or lean on anything, and got no meal or refreshment breaks on their ten hour shift. London beat cops had uniforms designed with collars big and stiff enough to keep them from being garotted. That's the kind of neighborhoods some of them had to patrol, so they were probably of the "crack heads first and ask questions later" school when it came to ambiguous situations.

Detective work was rudimentary and dealt almost entirely with witnesses, opportunity and motive. Crime scene photographs and books of mug shots will not happen for decades, and the use of fingerprints as a forensic tool will not occur until the twentieth century. Because of this, officers with a good personal knowledge of the area, its ne'er do wells and who has their fingers in what businesses is vital to solving crimes. Getting away with a crime in Western nations mostly involved not being seen, not getting ratted out, and having a better alibi than anyone else the police think might have done it. Practically speaking, it helped if you were of the race or ethnicity in power, or if the victim of the crime was not. That is, if there is a suspect of an unpopular race or nation, odds are that's who will be found guilty, and if the victim is of that race, the police will not be spending as much time on the investigation. Here's an account of an actual investigation, taken from the New York Times:

*Early yesterday morning, as Special Officer Harris, of the Fourth Ward, was standing at the corner of James and Water streets, he saw three men and a woman pass by and eventually enter Farrell's liquor-store, at the corner of Water and Roosevelt streets. He recognized one of the men as Robert Carey, alias Smiler, a tambourine player in Kit Carroll's dance-house, in Water-street. A few minutes after the officer saw the same party emerge from the liquor-store and go down the street. In a few minutes he changed his point of observation and walked down Water-street, and as he passed he noticed the legs of a woman, lying in a reversed position in the area or basement entrance. Whistling for help, he was soon joined by the officers on post, and they removed the body of the woman to the sidewalk, finding life quite extinct and the remains still warm. The deceased was recognized by the officers as Nellie Surwick, aged thirty-one, and formerly an inmate of the dance-house kept by a notorious ruffian known as "Bully" Donohue. The neck was broken and the skull was fractured in a terrible manner, and at the bottom of the steps was found an earthen ale bottle shattered into fragments.*

*Subsequent investigation showed that the woman had abandoned her life of shame nearly four years ago, and married Geo. H. Surwick, a machinist, who resides in Front-street, Brooklyn. He is now absent from home and at work in another part of the country. Nelly came over to new york on Monday evening, and called on Kit Burns, whom she found preparing for the rat-fight that led to his arrest, and she promised to come the next day and wash for Mrs. Burns.*

*From that time until her dead body was found in the area, nothing is known of her movements, except that she was seen in Water-street intoxicated. Capt. Allaire immediately sent out Detective Buckley and other officers to look for the three men already spoken of, and as Carey was well known, Officer Buckley soon had him in the Station-house. The prisoner proved to be a close customer, and like all habitual tramps appeared to know nothing, except that one of his companions was a pilot-boat man, and the Police carefully refrained from alarming him by telling him that the woman was dead, making him believe that she had made a statement. While the Captain was examining Carey, some of the other officers brought in three men whom they had found fighting in the street. One of the men under arrest informed the Sergeant that Edward Jackson, also arraigned, had met them in the street, and announcing himself as a "pilot-boat hand", insisted he could whip the entire party. As Jackson was well known as a ruffian who had served in the Penitentiary for a theft committed on a pilot-boat, he was placed in a cell as one of the men who had killed the woman. As soon as Jackson ascertained the fact, he informed the Police that he and Carey had met one George Woodruff, and as they were passing through Water-street Woodruff picked up Nelly, and taking her to Farrell's saloon treated her. Soon after coming out a quarrel arose between the woman and Woodruff, who struck her a violent blow in the face and pushed her down the steps, which are very steep and made of stone. A search was next made for Woodruff, who was finally arrested in Dutch John's lager-beer saloon, in Dover street, near Water, at 5 o'clock, and he was identified by Officer Harris as one of the three men he saw before the discovery of the body.*

*It is stated that the prisoner, Woodruff, is well-educated, and was at one time designed for the Catholic priesthood. He fell into evil courses, however, while studying in one of the Dublin universities, and has for some time been associated with the worst class of street ruffians in this City. He was grossly intoxicated when taken into custody. On being informed that the woman was dead, Woodruff quietly pulled a cigar out of his pocket and remarked that he "guessed he would take a smoke on that," apparently unconcerned and reckless.*

- New York Times, November 23 1870CE



**Types of crimes** - While what we are elaborating below is particular to Victorian England, and more specifically to London, the reasons for crime and the general types of crime are going to be nearly universal. The reason is that people generally like to keep on living. There are no pervasive social safety nets for the desperate. There may be pensions for widows of soldiers or preachers, some small relief payments by the government for the poor and a few charities (usually run by a church), but there are far more people in need than can be provided for, and someone in desperate straits can easily die of starvation or disease brought on by starvation, or freeze because they cannot afford wood or coal to keep warm. And if they are lacking any other talent to make money for food, shelter and warmth, very few lack eyes to see stuff, fingers to grab it and legs to run away with it.

In lower-class regions, crime is pervasive. Not to the extent that you have people picking each other's pockets, but it there is an extreme amount of opportunism going on. Aside from the more obvious crimes like mugging and prostitution, there are so many different types of crime that people specialize in particular types. Here are just a few:

- Quietly knocking a hand-sized hole in a shop window to grab anything within arm's reach
- Shoplifting
- Con games and rigged games of chance
- Stealing clothes that are hung out to dry
- Waylaying children to steal their clothes
- Knocking coal off barges and fetching it from the mud for resale
- Stealing lead flashing from rooftops
- Stealing tools from construction sites
- Getting hired as servants to rob a house from the inside
- Posing as workmen to avoid suspicion when carrying heavy tools
- Looking for passed out drunks to rob
- Making counterfeit coins
- Making counterfeit paper money
- Piracy of river barges
- Shoplifting
- Pickpocketing
- Burglary
- Safecracking
- Wall-breaking
- Pickpockets who specialize in people on the subway
- Stealing pedigreed dogs and turning them in for the reward money
- Selling adulterated goods

Most crimes are done without the use of guns, because guns are relatively expensive, and using a gun in a crime is much more likely to get someone killed. Getting caught for robbery might get you some time in jail. Killing someone gets you hung. But, occasionally people get killed, in which case one must take measures to avoid getting caught.

*An enlightened medical gentleman assured me that near what is called the Fleet Ditch almost every house is the lowest and most infamous brothel. There is an aqueduct of large dimensions, into which murdered bodies are precipitated by bullies and discharged at a considerable distance into the Thames, without the the slightest chance of recovery...*

- from **Prostitution in London** (1862CE)

Because the appearance and cut of clothing a person has tend to show their social rank, criminals who evade prosecution tend to rise to the social level of their competence. That is, if you make enough money robbing the poor, you can afford to comport yourself in a way that lets you move in middle-class circles and steal from them. A middle-class person will not let a shabbily-dressed person within arm's length without being instantly suspicious of having their handkerchief, pocketwatch or scarf pin spirited away, but would have no suspicion being next to a well-spoken, respectably dressed member of society. And those who make sufficient funds from preying on the middle-class can afford the tools and time needed to engage in criminal acts against the wealthy. On the low end you have people digging chunks of stolen coal out of canal mud to sell to someone who cannot afford normal coal to keep warm. On the upper end, you have gangs who have the talents and time to do elaborate thefts, often using inside men.

*The burglars had first to make keys to get through the outer door into the premises, and had then to get a key to a patent lock for an iron door into a private counting-house. They made another key for a very strong safe which, when opened, had a recess at the bottom enclosed with folding doors also secured by a patent lock. Before they got to the booty they had to make six keys of patent locks...They were occupied four months getting the whole of these keys to fit...The thieves, during the night, carted off two iron boxes containing railway shares, bills and similar property to the extent of 13,000£...Through the ingenuity of certain police-officers employed to trace the robbery, the whole of the scrip and documents were recovered while certain unprincipled Jews were negotiating to purchase them.*

- from **Thieves and Swindlers** (1861CE)

There is all manner of subterfuge and artifice used in Victorian Era crimes. There are specialized tools for just about every burglary purpose, and if you know the right people, you can rent them for the night. There are small oil lanterns that throw a tiny spot, lockpicks, skeleton keys, special knives for slitting trouser pockets open, rope ladders, brick augers, safe cutters, iron grate pullers, door cutters (and colored adhesive papers to cover up the holes cut in a door), false padlocks to hide a forced entry, sticking papers to mask the sound of breaking glass, dogs in heat to lure away guard dogs and just about anything else imaginable. And professionals who make a living making these tools for resale.

And there is no shortage of places willing to accept questionable goods. Pawn shops, chandlers, scrap dealers, colliers, anyplace that can make a profit selling used or untraceable goods will be tempted to do so. Not all will, but there are enough that finding someone to take goods off your hands for ten or twenty percent of its value is seldom a problem.

There are three important things to take away from these criminal tidbits. One is that no one is immune to having their stuff filched. On one hand there are the smash & grab types, the pickpockets, shoplifters and those who will steal anything not guarded and not nailed down. This can be subtle or brazen. There is a class of thief who will dress respectably and call on a house in rainy weather. Invited into the foyer while their calling card is presented, they quickly step around, grab anything worth taking and flee. Or, an unknown lady caller will wait in her hired cab and ask that the gentleman of the house come out to speak with her. And when he does, her accomplice sneaks in through the open door behind him, grabs obvious valuables and then exits out the back. Or, robbers will dig tunnels and cut through walls to get into a premise unobserved.

Second is that some of these criminals are often *really* good at what they do. Many pickpockets or other thieves or bullies have been plying this trade since they were children. They are as expert as they are going to get, observant and wary of the police, used to working in teams, and unfortunately none too loyal to each other.

*When I went to prison I had property worth a good deal of money. On coming out I found they (the gang) had sold it, and they never gave me value for it. They pretended it was laid out for my (legal) defense, which I knew was only a pretext.*

- from **Thieves and Swindlers** (1861CE)

Competence in crime runs on a bell curve. There are dumb and incompetent ones who are dead or in prison. And there are very smart and skilled ones who could be standing right next to you at a high society ball without you knowing it. In game terms, accomplished criminals should be at or near the limits of their ability. They may not be able to use "best four" for their skills, but they will have good skill rolls and be a formidable a match whatever countermeasures players may come up with. As an example, many households would have door locks requiring a key for both entry and exit, the idea being that someone who snuck in from the attic or an upper window would only be able to steal small items, since they would not be able to open the ground-level doors to cart off the big stuff. It is also another reason to have household servants, preferably ones vetted for their character, of good hearing and able to fight, since good burglars were quiet enough to go about their work while people were still in the house (presuming a fairly large house).

Last, and perhaps most important, criminals, crime and adventurers can interact in all sorts of interesting ways. Stopping the pickpocketing of a wealthy person could be the start of an adventure or gain the favor of someone who might later hire someone of good character. Some clever criminals might steal something from someone they shouldn't have, something valuable and secret that cannot be divulged to the police and is also worth killing for. Or perhaps the daughter of a friend is sold into white slavery on the Continent, a disowned and penniless son of wealth plots revenge, or a because of a hidden, checkered past, a loyal servant is blackmailed into betraying their trust. And of course, in **Verne** there are some organized crime elements that have their fingers in a lot of pies, and what seems to be a mundane crime might actually tie into something far larger.

Crime in other nations will vary, of course. The American West is very much "the Wild West", as realistic or fanciful as you want to make it, with train robberies, showdowns at high noon and such. The Ottoman Turks will have their own notions of law and law enforcement, the Qing Chinese likewise, and there will be the remote regions where a thing is only a crime if the most powerful warlord says it is.

▼ **BELIEFS** - In an abstract sense, the beliefs of most people, even the highly educated or highly placed, are rather simple: **Your race, your religion, your nation and your way of life are superior.** Everything else is tolerated at best, usually suspect, and quite probably evil in some way. Your community will be run by whatever the majority view is. If you have elected officials, they will hold the same views, your churches will preach the same views, and so on. If you are a minority in a region, you will automatically be second class citizens, blocked from official channels by discrimination that is either part of the law or just "the way things are". If there is Muslim rule, don't expect Christians to have any power. If you're British or American, you'd never vote to put a Catholic in office, since you know his *true* loyalty is to the foreign-born potentate in Rome (if you think this is silly, remember that the United States did not see a Catholic president until 1960CE).

If you are white, you're inherently superior to non-whites. At least that's what you believe, and if the nation is white-ruled, it's also in the laws of your nation. If you're a man, women are automatically the "weaker sex". The upper class looks down on the lower class. And everyone looks down on the Jews, and usually the Gypsies as well. This is only notable in that these groups have no homeland of their own where *they* are the majority and can look down on everyone else. So, while Gypsies and Jews have their own notions of specialness compared to everyone else, they tend to keep it to themselves with an insular "chosen people" attitude. There will be exceptions to this narrow-mindedness in the population, but they will be *exceptions*, and it is quite possible that those who hold such liberal views will themselves be ostracized. This makes it pretty easy for a gamemaster to determine local reactions and attitudes towards adventurers.

In addition, there are a fairly broad set of social norms and taboos and hypocrisies in the Western world. These can be found just about everywhere, and interweave themselves with the previously described ethno-centric smugness.

*Our house was constantly invaded by troops of dirty Jews who tried to sell us poor curiosities at perfectly impossible prices, whose cringing, whining ways and tone thoroughly disgusted us. Finally, we ordered our soldier not to allow a single son of Israel within our door.*

- from **The Land of an African Sultan**(1889CE)

**Sex:** The Victorian Era is often synonymous with prudishness, but like many of its values, it was somewhat hypocritical and was more concerned with maintaining appearances and expectations. A proper lady of class and discretion, would probably not be seen in public with anything other than her face and hands exposed. Exposed ankles were on the verge of scandalous. And while going to the beach became fashionable in this period, that did not mean modesty could be abandoned. A typical female swimming outfit might be daring enough to have short sleeves, a knee-length skirt and baggy, ankle-length pants underneath the skirt. Men of poor breeding and manners would use telescopes to observe these scantily clad bathing beauties from a distance, but better class beaches would strive to keep such ruffians away.

But, simultaneous with this public modesty there was a great appreciation for classical Greek sculpture (often of the nude variety) and some of the most prominent painters of the day would depict nudes. Though often non-European ones in a non-European context, like harem slaves.

Victorians would distance themselves from the nudity by various forms of cultural artifice. Instead of a pinup of an obvious erotic nature, you would have a nude Venus taking a bath. She was a figure of myth in a distant place and time, and that made the nudity acceptable. The same level of nudity in an artwork with a contemporary setting would be controversial, however.



Acceptable



Controversial!

This applied to male *and* female nudity. You could take your children out to an exhibition of paintings or sculpture along these themes, have a nice conversation with your minister while you were there and nothing at all would be thought of it, unless you did something scandalous like wear a skirt short enough to expose stocking-clad ankles. In the last years of the nineteenth century this facade dropped a little, and some pieces of art were apparently done solely for the shock value of what they showed or suggested. In addition, at upper class gatherings, there could be some relaxation of dress code, allowing elegant and tasteful displays of neck, shoulder or even cleavage, especially if it was a mandatory side effect of some expensive new foreign fashion trend. Eveningwear and daywear were two entirely separate creatures.



Also remember that Victorian England would have been the *highest* standard in this regard. The more decadent French or Italians would not be so inhibited, and the Americans have hardly been a nation long enough to know what fashion and culture actually is, much less have any of their own. Their notions of modesty might be appalling, but they are forgiven because they simply do not know any better.

A side effect of the nudity taboo for men and women was that people of the middle and upper class rarely saw strangers naked, regardless of their profession. This and the relative infrequency of bathing for some people meant that a woman of proper proportions could bind her breasts, wear male clothing and pass herself off as a man. There are numerous period accounts of women soldiers (physical entrance exams assumed you were a man). Another aspect of the nudity taboo is that covering yourself cost more than not covering yourself. By excessive costuming, you demonstrated that you were *not* poor.

The repression of sexuality in public exaggerated it in private, but this was kept discreet to an extent that makes it hard to uncover, even today. Victorian married couples often had separate beds, and the divorce rate was *extremely* low. Prostitution and mistresses were extremely common, and since married women often had minimal legal rights and no job skills, adultery often was simply tolerated. To put this into a clearly Victorian perspective, in 1869CE there were approximately six thousand five hundred prostitutes in London alone, of which a third were, to quote the police report "well-dressed and living in private lodgings". And this is just the ones the police could readily find. There were also *several hundred* brothels or establishments where such business routinely went on (coffee houses were popular for more than *just* coffee...). Actual figures may have been up to twelve times higher, or one prostitute for every twelve adult males. Reasons for prostitution varied, but often related to the poor wages in the jobs that women could get, and a gender imbalance that meant there were more women than men, adult women who had to make a living rather than being a housewife. As a side note about Victorian sexual mores, prostitution was legal in England and the age of consent in 1869CE was twelve years old. While prostitution was legal in England, the fact that it was illegal in many other places did not at all keep it from happening, it just required bribes of goods or services to the proper officials, so these notes can be applied in just about any Victorian Era city.

Prostitutes ranged from low- to high-class, and in London there were even newsletters advertising their descriptions and qualifications:

**Miss B. Number 18 Old Compton Street, Soho**

*This accomplished nymph has just attained her eighteenth year, and fraught with every perfection, enters as a volunteer in the field of Venus. She plays on the pianoforte, dances, sings, and is the mistress of every manoeuvre in the amorous contest that can enhance the coming pleasure; is of middle stature, fine auburn hair, dark eyes and very inviting countenance, which ever seems to beam delight and love. In bed she is all the heart can wish, or eyes admire, every limb is symmetry, every action under cover truly amorous; her price two pounds.*

- from **Harris's Guide to Covent Garden Ladies**

Virgins were especially popular. A young woman desiring starting money for this profession could sell her virginity for as much money as she would make for four months of work in a factory. The repression of open sexuality also made for some serious kink. From an 1885CE report about London's most exclusive brothel:

*"...flogging or birching goes on in brothels to a much greater degree than is generally believed...There were rings in the ceiling for hanging women and children up by the wrists...The instruments of flagellation included the ordinary birch, whips, holly branches and wire-thonged cat-o'-nine-tails."*

Similarly, there were men's publications and books that, though lacking pictures, could get you arrested for obscenity just about anywhere in the world, even today. The eleven volume set "The Sex Diary of a Victorian Gentleman" was probably the most notorious (and rare) of these tomes.

▼ **Note** - These volumes are available in their sordid entirety online. Copious amounts of brain bleach may be required after reading it... In addition, there are web sites devoted entirely to Victorian Era pornography. Just about every kink you can think of today probably had someone doing it then *and* taking pictures of it. Whether or not you work this into adventures is up to you and the sensibilities of the players.

In 1869CE, knowledge of contraception was poor, especially among the lower classes, and abortion was *seriously* illegal and stigmatizing (the Catholic Church had automatic excommunication for anyone having or performing an abortion). Getting pregnant was an occupational hazard in prostitution, as was dealing with dodgy female forms of contraception, herbal abortifacients of varying reliability, and doctors hard-up enough to risk ruining their reputation by performing abortions, or more likely, an untrained person performing the procedure with improper equipment and in unsanitary conditions.

A working-class woman in a respectable job like household servant could expect to be fired instantly if she got pregnant out of wedlock, and with no form of paternity testing, she had no legal or social recourse. The scandal applying to a woman caught in an indiscretion was far more than would apply to the man.

Not only was knowledge of contraception poor, spreading what information was available could be problematic. In the United States it was illegal to mail contraceptive devices (like condoms), or even information on contraception and abortion (the Comstock Act, 1873CE). Many doctors considered contraception of any kind unethical, as to interfere with a woman's natural reproductive processes would lead to various forms of insanity, in addition to the *normal* irrationality and inability to think, learn or do hard work that normal aspects of reproductive function caused women each month. Women who regularly worked long hours in factory jobs without time off for those "normal aspects of reproductive function" disagreed, but of course, no one paid them any attention.

**Religion:** The adherents of the world's religions generally look down on each other and tolerate the presence of other religions in "their" territory only with reluctance. Most European nations had "state religions", with official approval and privileges. Other religions were left out in the cold. You could be arrested for simply handing out a religious tract from a non-favored religion. The United States, having a background from several nationalities and faiths that were persecuted in Europe (like the Puritans) has more religious tolerance, but there was still a significant anti-Catholic bias in 1869CE, mostly due to a large influx of Catholic immigrants in the late nineteenth century. Parallels can be made with anti-religious sentiment in the current day, also because of increased immigration.

▼ **Note** - Even in the early twenty-first century, any member of the British royal family who becomes or marries a Catholic must renounce any claim to the British throne...

Anti-semitism is almost universal, either as an outright hatred and government sanctioned policy, or as private discriminatory practice. For instance:

- Harvard had a quota system which was used to minimize the number of Jews who could enroll.
- Jews in Rome were restricted to their walled ghetto
- After the equality equality of all subjects of the Ottoman Empire was proclaimed in 1865CE, the Greeks were insulted by being considered equal under the law with Jews
- The word "pogrom" comes to us from Russia and entered the Western vocabulary after the expulsion of millions of Jews from Russia in the late nineteenth century
- Accusations that Jews murdered children to use their blood in unholy rituals sparked massacres of Jews in a number of Muslim countries
- In many European countries, Jews had to take special oaths (the *More Judaico*) in court on account of their inherent untrustworthiness. The oath in Romania was not repealed until 1902CE

Ethnic Jews *could* reach high rank and esteem in government circles, but this required leaving the Hebrew faith. The most notable example in the period would be Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1868CE and from 1874-1880CE. Born Jewish, he was baptized as a Christian at age thirteen and was a Anglican for the rest of his life. He still had to endure anti-Semitic remarks, even from members of Parliament. He was however, eloquent and sharp enough of tongue to turn the barbs back on those who would deliver them.

*"Yes, I am a Jew, and when the ancestors of the right honorable gentleman were brutal savages in an unknown island, mine were priests in the temple of Solomon."*

- Benjamin Disraeli

While anti-Semitism is the worst case, it gives an idea of the suspicion that minority faiths were held in. The only thing that could possibly be worse than being a Jew is being an atheist. But, unlike Judaism, atheism had a sort of odd veneer of respectability about it. You had to be knowledgeable and philosophically sophisticated to adhere to atheism, it was not something an average person had much traffic with. As Karl Marx put it, "*religion is the opium of the masses*". Atheists were part of the French Revolution, tearing down the state Church at the same time they tore down the French monarchy.

Those who saw religion as a tool of government (Marx) or as human weakness (Nietzsche) also openly embraced atheism. For all of this, they were seen as a touch crazy and possibly dangerous, being associated as they were with socialists, anarchists, communists and revolutionaries:

- The State Constitution of Arkansas states "No person who denies the being of a God shall hold any office in the civil departments of this State, nor be competent to testify as a witness in any Court." Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, Texas, Tennessee and Pennsylvania have similar provisions
- The State code of Massachusetts has provisions for the fine and imprisonment of anyone who publically denies God (among other anti-blasphemy provisions)
- In Great Britain, atheism was considered a form of blasphemy and there were prosecutions of it as such. Despite this, Charles Bradlaugh managed to get elected to Parliament despite refusing to swear a Christian oath of office
- A Muslim who becomes an atheist commits treason against Allah and must repent or be executed

As an example of the tenacity of anti-atheist attitudes, from the creation of the United States through 2009CE there has only been one openly atheist member of Congress of the United States, or the quote by Presidential candidate George H.W. Bush in 1988CE: "*I don't know that atheists should be regarded as citizens, nor should they be regarded as patriotic.*" Many actual atheists in the nineteenth century were public deists (believing in God, but non-religious), but discussed atheist thought in private with other non-believers. Deists were viewed with some suspicion as well, but were seen as more in the "undecided" rather than "enemy" category.

The last note on religion is that a lot of people, mostly among the less educated, and particularly in less developed nations, do believe in witchcraft or sorcery as something real enough to be scared of. The last executions for witchcraft in the civilized nations of Europe happened in living memory (early nineteenth century). While such has no existence in the world of **Verne**, this does not mean there are not charlatans attempting to manipulate people through psychology and trickery. There are also far too many educated and sophisticated people who should know better who believe in mesmerism, seances, ouija boards and fortune-tellers. There are even secretive groups amongst the wealthy and powerful who perform rites (sometimes to dark powers) in hopes of gaining favor and extraordinary powers of their own (the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn was founded in 1887CE).

**Race:** If you were to ask an average European or American about which races or ethnicities were the most civilized, had the most inherent potential, or were most "evolved" in terms of that theory by Darwin, you would probably get a list in this order:

- Caucasians of European descent
- Russians and other Slavs
- Ottomans, other civilized Arabs and Jews
- Indians, Persians and other near East types
- Chinese, Japanese and other Orientals
- Africans and other aborigines

The bottom two are interchangeable in some cases. Both make good servants, but you would probably trust a Negro to be a security guard more than you would a shiftless Chinaman. And the English would think the Irish were less evolved.

*"I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw [in Ireland]...I don't believe they are our fault. ...But to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much..."*

- Charles Kingsley, letter to his wife

Racism is in-your-face obvious in 1869CE. Any terms we use in the rules are not meant to be racist comments, but a way to give the gamemaster and players a handle on how the world is likely to view things. Attitudes towards race in the Victorian Era almost always mirror the current social order and support continuation of the current social order in that place or nation. Leading scientists might sincerely think Caucasians were more evolutionarily advanced, and it was therefore the "white man's burden" to care for and shepherd the progress of "lesser races", which is to say "make them look and behave like Europeans".

*Take up the White Man's burden  
Send forth the best ye breed  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need;  
To wait in heavy harness,  
On fluttered folk and wild  
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,  
Half-devil and half-child...*

- from **White Man's Burden**,  
by Rudyard Kipling(1889CE)

Not everyone saw it this way. Adventurers can be as liberal and egalitarian as they want, and like some of the reformers of this era, may play a part in changing social attitudes, hopefully for the better.



▼ **THE MILITARY** - Frankly, all you really need to know as adventurers is that *any* situation involving hundreds or thousands of people with guns is one to be avoided, even if the people are friendly. But, because many situations of plot and adventure are going to involve imperial ambitions, national security and outright war, adventurers will at times have to interact with the military in the form of line officers, general staff and average soldiers.

The most important thing to remember for almost any military organization in the Victorian Era is class. Average soldiers or sailors up to petty officer or sargeant are lower class, officers of lieutenant and up will be of a higher class. There will be an amazing disparity of attitude, education, culture and superstition between the two. Depending on their age and the nation involved, officers will have bought their commission without any regard for actual talent (which proved disastrous during the Crimean War), or will have been educated at a military college. So, there will be one or several forms of "I am better or more deserving than those beneath me." This can manifest as anything from a paternal or condescending attitude to an outright disdain or concern for the well-being or lives of the enlisted or conscripted troops. Unless your field conditions are absolutely deplorable, you can expect that anyone at the rank of captain or above will be *much* cleaner, better-fed and better housed than the enlisted ranks.

*Average soldiers are warm bodies who can fire guns and stop bullets.* In most nations, basic training is how to march in formation, put up and take down an encampment, and take orders without question. Learning to load and fire a rifle was also part of training, but since ammunition cost money and soldiers had to pay for their own replacement boots, marching practice was cheaper.

*"Wonderful is the magic of drill! Drill means discipline, training, education...These soldiers, who are ready to march against vollied fire, against belching cannon, or to beat their heads against bristling bayonets...were once tailors, weavers, mechanics, shoemakers and ploughmen; with mouths gaping, shoulders stooping, arms and hands like great fins hanging by their sides, but now their gait is firm and martial, their figures are erect, and they march along to the sound of music, with a tread that makes the earth shake."*

from **The Autobiography of Samuel Smiles**  
(1905CE)

Bluntly, average soldiers are easier to replace than their equipment is, they have no rights, no say in how things work, and get the short end of every stick. Everything from grand strategy down to day-to-day operations treats soldiers as a disposable asset. The following is from a soldier's memoirs of the US Civil War. Note that what is described is not out of the ordinary or a desperate circumstance, but the general culinary hazards for enlisted men.

*"But hardtack was not so bad an article of food, even when traversed by insects, as may be supposed. Eaten in the dark, no one could tell the difference between it and hardtack that was untenanted. It was no uncommon occurrence for a man to find the surface of his pot of coffee swimming with weevils, after breaking up hardtack in it, which had come out of the fragments only to drown; but they were easily skimmed off, and left no distinctive flavor behind. If a soldier cared to do so, he could expel the weevils by heating the bread at the fire. The maggots did not budge in that way..."*

from **Hardtack & Coffee**, by John Billings (1887CE)

In return, the average soldier does not have a lot of respect and loyalty to their superior officers. This is offset somewhat by national pride, ingrained notions of deference to those in authority, and quite a bit of very justified fear of the consequences if they fail at their duties. This is an era where deserters and mutineers are executed and insubordination is punishable by the lash. Of course, the standards of justice are somewhat tilted:

*"...in 1864, 528 men had received a total of 25,638 lashes; in 1865, 441 men had suffered 22,275 lashes. One man had been flogged for a 'miscellaneous' offence, while another had recently died in hospital after this punishment. Men were entrapped into the army when drunk by some wily recruiting sergeant, and when, sobered up, they ran from the trap, they were flogged. In 1865, 72 men had been flogged for desertion, and seventeen for habitual drunkenness. Yet when it came to officers, how different was the picture! A captain serving in India was so drunk he had to be forcibly removed from the table of an Indian sovereign - but all he received was a reprimand."*

- Arthur J. Otway (1867CE)

Flogging for active duty soldiers did not end in England until 1881CE, though it continued in military prisons until 1907CE. The most common military offenses are drunkenness, absence without leave (AWOL), insubordination, trouble after "lights out", sitting while on guard duty, cowardice, gambling or being away from an assigned post.

There was a wide range of military punishments. Flogging and imprisonment were saved for the most severe cases. Someone who has been flogged could die of infection and is in no condition to fight, and someone in jail is not able to fight either. Typical low-level punishments often involved nasty or pointless physical labor. Someone has to dig new latrines and fill up the old ones, to drag off and bury dead horses, clean up after the live ones and so on. The statistical likelihood of miscreants in a large camp thus spared most soldiers of having to do these duties. The pointless physical labor punishments would be things like doing your duties while wearing a knapsack full of bricks (cavalry soldiers got to carry their saddle). Lesser physical punishments would be things like the sweat box, being tied in a stress position for several hours, being forced to hold heavy weights in a stress position, being tied up by your thumbs while on tiptoe, and so on. For enlisted officers like corporals and sergeants, they could be busted back to private as punishment or in addition to some other punishment. More serious punishments were reserved for things that opposed the established order, like assaulting a superior officer. *Spies are of course, executed.*

In general, officers avoided all these serious punishments and could only get themselves in big trouble for the most serious of offenses. Criminal activity, treason, dereliction of duty and such. Minor punishment for an officer would not be the same as for an enlisted man, and would be a bad mark on their record that could affect their career, being assigned to an unpopular command, or being cashiered out in disgrace (or possibly just being allowed to resign their commission and quietly slink off). So, if you need a bad fellow to run a military prison, an ex-officer to lead a villain's henchmen or such, there are plenty of them out there.

While attitudes are slowly changing about the conduct of soldiers in the field, the nature of war, the quality of the troops, their working conditions and low pay mean that a lot of nasty things are nearly inevitable during wartime. Looting, pillage, and such are the norm unless the officers in charge start hanging people to serve as an example to the others. The notion of "collateral damage" and the sort of rights we associate with the Geneva Convention *do not exist*. If there is an enemy force in a city, you shell the city. If there are guerillas, you take hostages and execute them in reprisal. If your army needs food and a farm has it, you take it with no compensation. If your commanding general needs a nice place to stay, you simply evict the occupants of the nicest house in the area. If you capture someone who was shooting at you and they are not in uniform, you just kill him, take anything of value he has and keep going.

The officer corps of most armies is effectively a gerontocracy (rule by the old). The last time most generals saw the front line a battle or experienced tactical operations first-hand is probably before most of their lieutenants were born. Worse, in armies where officers could buy their commissions, many of the upper ranks will be older men who did just that, rather than gaining rank through experience and dare we say, competence. Union generals in the US Civil War, and British, French and Russian generals in the Crimean War showed how disastrous this could be. The saying is that "generals always fight the previous war". In this case, the previous war would have been mostly fought with muzzle-loading weapons. As long as the generals are fighting each other, it all evens out. *Unless you happen to be one of the soldiers fighting it.* However, in **Verne**, the notions of warfare may be turned on their ear. There will be groups which can engage in submarine warfare, aerial bombardment or mechanized land warfare, and who at the very least are quite able to see and use the advantages of Gatling guns, poison gas or even suicide bombers.

In an adventuring context, adventurers dealing with the military will do so in one of several contexts. First, they could be upper-class civilians on the same side who are valuable consultants or merely caught up in the situation. They would be treated with the respect due their class, but without any compromise for the military situation. If they are in the area of a military operation, they can assume they are under military authority. It doesn't matter if they are the local mayor, the other guy has an army behind him that says *he's* the one in charge. Adventurers of some class or status might also be on the wrong side of an army or neutral. They would be given some allowance for their class and protected to some degree from the ravages of looting and physical abuse, but it is unlikely an army offender is going to be punished because of what was done to an enemy civilian. For offenses against a neutral or allied civilian, maybe. Prominent enemy or neutral civilians may be asked to give their word regarding their conduct, with freedom conditional on their promise. And the last case is if the adventurers are not of any status, regardless of national origin. If you do not have someone who will make an unholy stink about your mistreatment, you had best stay as far away from people who can profit from mistreating you, and sadly, you should dump any firearms you might have. Armed civilians caught by a hostile army are likely to be shot and would be lucky to *only* be beaten and imprisoned.

▼ **CLASS** - The popular notions of lower-, working-, middle- and upper-class come from this era. In nations with hereditary nobility, one's class is often associated with birth. A person who acquires wealth and status due to hard work and talent may be "upper class", but they are still not the social equal of someone who was born to a titled family. This notion, is however being eroded by practicality, as peerages can fall on hard times and may have to marry into *merely* mercantile money just to keep their estates intact. This sort of thing is well-known when it happens, but it is not polite to talk about it.

All nations have "classes", and their nature and chances for social mobility will vary with region. On one end, in United States, someone born in a log cabin can become President. On the other hand you have India, where you are born into a caste and will probably remain there your whole life.

The lower class or working class is your laborers, your semi- or narrowly-skilled populace, who may or may not have any sort of education. Look at the list of common professions later on; *farmer, carpenter, laborer, domestic servant*. These are people who are going to be poor, or lower middle class. In Great Britain, all men have the right to vote, though this is a fairly recent social reform (1867CE). This gives the poor a measure of political power which will lead to further reform in Great Britain, and the changes can be adventure backdrops. For instance, labor unions are still a questionable concept in Great Britain and their actual legalization will not happen historically until 1871CE. Testimony like that below helped pass the Mines Act of 1842, which prohibited women and all children under thirteen from working in mines:

*I have worked down in pit five years; father is working in next pit; I have twelve brothers and sisters – all of them but one live at home; they weave, and wind, and hurry, and one is a counter, one of them can read, none of the rest can, or write; they never went to day-school, but three of them go to Sunday-school; I hurry for my brother John, and come down at seven o'clock about; I go up at six, sometimes seven; I do not like working in pit, but I am obliged to get a living; I work always without stockings, or shoes, or trousers; I wear nothing but my chemise; I have to go up to the headings with the men; they are all naked there; I am got well used to that, and don't care now much about it; I was afraid at first, and did not like it; they never behave rudely to me; I cannot read or write.*

- Mary Barret, age fourteen

Many urban poor live in tenements, crowded, with no running water and minimal sanitation. Their areas are the last to be affected by improvements like gas lighting, making them the darkest and most dangerous places to be after dark. The conditions one associates with the darkest part of a Dickens' novel are *not* restricted to Great Britain. The Five Points neighborhood of New York City (near current Paradise Square) had conditions bad as anywhere in the world (Dickens, having documented London's slums, called Five Points "appalling"). Rival gangs like the Bowery Boys, the Dead Rabbits and the Roach Guards, each with distinctive garb and turf, ethnically and religiously xenophobic in different ways, battled it out both locally and by using their combined numbers to influence local politicians, who would in turn give patronage jobs to gang members. By some accounts the area was an appalling den of iniquity and murder, but other research shows this was highly exaggerated and that most of the violence was merely fisticuffs and disruption of the other gangs' political rallies. Of course, people like William "Bill the Butcher" Poole did not rise to the top of their gangs by being nice people:

*A Brutal Outrage in Broadway. We learn that at an early hour yesterday morning, two noted pugilists entered Florence's Hotel, corner of Broadway and Howard street, and without any provocation seized the bar-keeper and beat his face to a jelly. It appears that Thomas Hyer, William Poole, and several others entered the above hotel, and while one of the party held Charles Owens (the bar-keeper) by the hair of his head, another of the gang beat him in the face to such an extent that his left eye was completely ruined and the flesh of his cheek mangled in the most shocking manner...Since the above was written we have been reliably informed that the affray originated from the fact of the barkeeper having refused them drinks...*

- The New York Daily Times, October 23, 1851CE

Below this are the desperately poor. Except for the Poorhouses, there is no real social safety net in Great Britain or anywhere else, especially for the urban poor. Low-level prostitutes, beggars, urchins, rag-pickers and anyone else who does whatever they can just to survive. For them, life is desperate enough that any chance to better their lot is worth the risk, and dying is not that much of a negative incentive. Their conditions are extremely crowded and squalid, but they survive. The desperately poor include those who will commit their crimes simply because prison conditions are *better* than their current life.



The wretched conditions for the poor and desperately poor, and their building resentment of the upper class made fertile ground for radical new philosophies like those of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. And sometimes the lower classes would get uppity just out of orneriness.

*"Us behaves to folks according as they behave to us. Tell the navy dogs the lock-up's too good for them and us'll rampage for the fun of giving them the trouble of putting us there."*

- anonymous navy (canal digger)

The poor are not necessarily all in a Dickensian existence, dressed in rags and living hand-to-mouth. The slums are certainly there, and awful, but they stand out because of the sheer concentration of squalor. For every family living in a crowded tenement there are many who are "poor but proud", living in small rowhouses on clean, well-lit streets, but without servants (unless you count the wife), and without as much of the better things. Your low-level government clerks, constables, bricklayers, sargeants and the like, those with fairly secure jobs, but insufficient income to make the leap into the middle class.



Poor working class home

The middle class is your low- to medium-level professionals, those jobs which require specialized training or education, but not necessarily university degrees. A recent university graduate might be middle class, but has hopes of being upper class. A solid middle class family has sufficient income to afford a live-in servant, and by the time you get to upper middle class, several (you've arrived when you have your own butler). Look at the less common professions: *mechanic, solicitor, pharmacist*. In Victorian England these are the people who desperately want to avoid being poor and will make great effort to keep up appearances and conform to social norms.

▼ **Note** - In Victorian usage, a "gentleman" would be someone whose profession did not require an apprenticeship and which does not involve manual labor. A doctor would be a gentleman, while a carpenter would not. Many "gentlemen" did not get wages and did not bill people for services. Rather, there was some sort of unspoken agreement or cultural assumption about pecuniary gratitude. For instance, if a doctor made a house call, there would be an agreed upon amount between a secretary and the head of the house. No money would be discussed *with* the doctor, but a wrapped parcel with the appropriate compensation would be on the parlor table for the doctor as he left.

Upper class is wealth, the top one percent or less of the population, either through inheritance or talent (or both). Titled nobility, bankers, heads of shipping firms or mercantile enterprises, factory or mine owners, generals, admirals and so on. These are people who give orders and make policy, and often profit handsomely from said orders and policy. Any upper class household has a veritable army of domestic servants, perhaps twenty for a large townhouse and thirty or forty for an estate, all of whom have no job security save for the goodwill of their employer and are thus likely to extremely obedient and deferential. An upper class household is thus very much like a small fiefdom. The various sorts of household staff:

#### Female

Housekeeper  
Lady's maid  
Governess  
Nurse  
Cook  
Kitchen maid  
Housemaid  
Scullery Maid

#### Male

House steward  
Valet  
Butler  
Coachman  
Gardener  
Footman  
Groom  
Gamekeeper

The absolute power of the upper class is very slowly being eroded from the bottom by reforms, but some of these reforms are coming from liberal-minded members of their own class, who have caused radical (even socialist!) notions to become law, like limiting children to a ten-hour work day.

▼ **Note** - The idea of "us & them" is a combination of class, nation and race that varies from place to place. An Englishman might view an Indian as more trustworthy than a German. While the German is white and European, the Indian is from a British colony and the national "us" trumps the racial "us". If you think "nation, class, race", it will usually work. For an Englishman, an upper-class Indian trumps a lower-class Scot (same nation, but the Indian is a higher social status). The Englishman would trust the lower-class Scot more than an upper-class German (the Scot is lower in social status, but is from the same nation). The lower classes generally distrust *all* the upper classes, but distrust their own upper classes less than those of foreign lands.

The average middle- to upper-class person has little contact with the day-to-day life of the poor. The following is from 1873CE, part of a longer piece, and describes going through a poor area, merely in the context of being on the way to a *really* wretched one:

It was about seven o'clock, and the gas was alight - the gas and the oil and the paraffin and the naphtha. St. Giles's of 1873 is pretty much what it was a quarter of a century ago. A big brewery and three or four new streets have shorn its skirts somewhat, but it is heartwhole still, and as dirty and draggletailed as ever. The only "enlightenment" that modern customs and usages have brought it appears is in the increased brilliancy of its public houses, which are especially rich in plate-glass and gas glitter. There are the same ragged women, some with babies in their arms - some mere girls - and some with backs bent with age; and there are, as of old, the groups of lanky, ill-dressed youth, with a sharp look-out from under the peaks of their caps; the same knots of hulking men of mature age, too lazy even to support with their fingers the short pipe which hangs all aslant from their mouths, while their hands are plunged wrist-deep in the pockets of their trousers. The stalls are the same, so are the shops, the awful little dens - and there are scores of them - inside and out of which are exposed for sale scraps of household furniture, which, by a jocular fiction of the "trade", is termed "second-hand", although it must be twenty-second hand at the very least, and bedding, mattresses, and beds, and bolsters and pillows, the sickening complexion of which should be sufficient warrant for a sanitary inspector to seize them at once and consign them without delay to the flames...

- from **Low-Life Deeps**, James Greenwood

Different races and classes often spoke their own special slang, which could be opaque even to native speakers of that language, and a person's profession and origin could often be deduced just from the way they spoke. The use of code and specialized language was especially common amongst criminal classes, and often involved word or letter order, or contextual relations between words. We could devote an entire book to this subject alone. For now, just assume that virtually anyone can speak to their peers in a way that is difficult for outsiders to penetrate or imitate without having devoted points towards a language specialization. Some perfectly understandable Cockney rhyming slang:

"Which of you tea-leaves has half-inched my whistle and my tiffer?"

Sometimes, you might need *multiple* languages. Traveller Cant mixed English and Irish, and then mangled both beyond recognition:

*Our gathra, who cradgies in the manyak-norch  
We turry kerrath about your moniker.  
Let's turry to the norch where your jeel cradgies,  
And let your jeel shans get greydied nosher  
same as it is where you cradgie.  
Bug us eynik to lush this thullis,  
And turri us you're nijesh sharrig for the gammy  
eyniks we greydied  
Just like we ain't sharrig at the gammi needies  
that greydi the same to us.  
Nijesh let us soonie eyniks that'll make us greydi  
gammy eyniks,  
But solk us away from the taddy.  
Amen.*

- the **Lord's Prayer**, in Traveller Cant

So, if you don't know what we're rabbiting about, use your loaf!

▼ **PROFESSIONS** - There are a vast number of professions available, some extremely specialized and vulnerable to technological change. Players can make up just about any profession they want and odds are that somewhere in the world someone could make a living at it. *How well that profession works as an adventuring talent is another matter.* As a Victorian Era reference, here is a list of some of the most common and least common professions in England in 1871CE (most common at top of each list). The total number of people in the most common professions outnumbers the least common ones by a factor of twenty:

Most common	Least common
Domestic servant	Maltster
Agricultural labourer	Tin miner
Labourer	Wine merchant
Cotton manufacture	Bank employee
Milliner, dressmaker	Stationer
Coal miner	Pharmacist
Farmer	Gunsmith
Shoe maker	Rugmaker
Carpenter	Ropemaker
Iron manufacture	Broom maker
Army or navy	Solicitor
Washerwomen	Timber merchant
Merchant seaman	Seed merchant
Tailor	Hairdresser
Woollen manufacture	Gasworks service
Blacksmith	Locomotive crew
Grocer	Cigar maker
Gardener	Fishmonger
Bricklayer	Beerseller
Innkeeper	Mechanic

▼ **WOMEN** - As you might have guessed by the notes on sex, women are strictly second-class citizens, regardless of nation. In the most liberal nations they can actually own property, on rare occasion get custody of their own children in a divorce, and with great difficulty enter a university. Married women, even in liberal nations, are legally extensions of their husbands. The husband has control over her wages if she works, the disposition of any jointly held property, and since women cannot vote, he effectively has her vote as well.

In less progressive places, women are in almost all senses, property. They cannot own property, or bequeath property to anyone through a will, and might not even be able to travel without a male escort.

The dress code for a "proper" woman has been discussed previously. Less proper women were less concerned with reputation and could get away with a more liberal dress code. A "loose woman" was one who did not wear a corset, and was usually referring to one of poor character (as opposed to say, your cook). For a woman to wear more practical male clothing was out of the question until later in the nineteenth century. Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, one of the first female doctors and the first female recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, was arrested numerous times for "impersonating a man", i.e. wearing men's clothing. While it was illegal just about everywhere for a woman to wear pants, some areas allowed what were known as "bloomers", which were baggy slacks combined with a short skirt. This gave a woman more freedom to do physical work, or even ride a bicycle or horse with some degree of modesty. However, bloomers were not considered "proper" attire. They were, however, popular amongst women reformers. But even in cosmopolitan areas, women could be arrested for indecency for wearing them. Bloomers eventually turned into divided skirts, and evolved into trousers from there.

Bloomers



Without extraordinary circumstances, a woman who has a job will probably be a factory worker (textiles), schoolteacher, servant, nanny, secretary or prostitute. Those with some ambition and willing to jump some hurdles can be reporters or writers of fiction (often using a male pseudonym), nurses, musicians or actresses. Only women of extraordinary measure and determination could hope to be a doctor or lawyer or scientist. The attitude of most men towards such women is that such training was a waste of time.

*Women become insane during pregnancy, after parturition, during lactation; at the age when menstruation first appears and when it disappears...The sympathetic connection between the brain and the uterus is plainly seen by the most casual observer.*

*attributed to a Mr. Blandford, 1871CE*

Government jobs of any importance are at least a decade away. The first sitting female member of the House of Commons was Lady Nancy Astor, in 1919CE (the first elected member was the Countess Markiewicz in 1918CE, but as a member of Ireland's Sinn Féin party and in line with its policies at the time, she refused to take her seat). The first female mayor in the United States was Susanna Medora Salter, in 1887CE.

In less civilized areas, women could get away with more "male" behavior. On American frontiers, women could be expected to know how to use guns, ride horses and do so while wearing clothes that did not require a side saddle. This is, after all, the era of Calamity Jane and later, Annie Oakley. Women could in extreme cases, even fight in wars as women or lead men into battle, though this was almost entirely amongst aboriginal peoples (who presumably did not know any better). But that does not mean they lost their battles (four Indian women fought in the battle that defeated General Custer at the Little Big Horn).

For a woman to act with some independence in 1869CE, she must either remain single or be married to an extremely progressive man. To batter at any of the male-dominated doorways would usually also require some degree of wealth or status. Things that would get a normal woman in trouble with the law might be less likely if she was an heiress or her family had some sort of titles. *That is, poor is "crazy", rich is "eccentric"*. If she expected to have any lovers, she would also need to be educated enough to understand what few contraceptive methods were available.

▼ **Note** - The perceptions of people of a certain class were even stronger when applied to women. An upper-class woman is a "lady", regardless of her conduct. A middle-class woman is almost certainly "respectable", but a lower-class woman? Regardless of her character, odds are she is perceived as of poor character by the higher classes, marginally trustworthy, possibly wanton, and in any dispute involving her betters, almost certainly the one who is lying. *Fair? Not at all. Being in the lower class sucks.*



▼ **MONEY** - Most of the civilized world runs on a combination of paper money and precious metals. Obviously, the latter is easier to exchange or use in foreign countries. Paper money is based on a nation having precious metals to back it, and you could go into a bank with a piece of paper money and leave with an equivalent value in precious metal coinage. Use of high value coinage is a measure of status. You don't flash around British gold sovereigns (£1) or United States double eagles (\$20) unless you are in the upper class (the gold in a sovereign has a 2009CE value of £150, and a double eagle has about US\$1,000 of gold in it). Flashy gold coins like sovereigns are also tools of foreign policy, especially in colonial nations not advanced enough to have paper money. Payoffs and other use of sovereigns to influence local leaders literally have the stamp of Great Britain, a tangible measure of British influence in the farthest corners of the world. Feel free to use period monetary terms to add the appropriate flavor to the campaign. Dollars, shillings, pounds, francs, ducats, etc. The 1869CE exchange rate is:

Nation	Currency	US\$1≈	£1≈
United States	dollar	1 dollar	11 dollars
Great Britain	pounds	2 shillings	1 pound
France	francs	2.5 francs	30 francs
Germany	marks	2 marks	25 marks
Japan	yen	.5 yen	6 yen

**Income:** In **Verne**, prices are in Industrial Era "Credits" (the **EABA** monetary unit), and wages and income will be scaled to give the appropriate level of buying power. **Verne** is an era in which industrial production is possible, but many items, especially luxuries, are hand-made. **Verne** prices (in Credits) for most goods will be about a sixth the modern level, but wages will be a twentieth the modern level or less. Since labor is very cheap, items with a low material cost and high labor component are perhaps half the relative cost. That is, a microscope or a rifle will have a cost of maybe a sixth their modern levels, but a custom-made suit of mass-produced cloth would be less, because the labor component is so cheap. Unskilled labor was very cheap. You could have a postcard delivered anywhere in London in a few hours for a penny (compare to the cost of a modern bicycle courier). Comparing to 1869CE currency and period price lists, 1 Credit in **Verne** is about the 1869CE buying power of 1-2 dollars or 1-2 shillings (a shilling is one-twelfth of a pound, twenty pence, forty half-pence or eighty farthings). In labor-based terms, 1 Credit in **Verne** is half a day's work for a semi-skilled laborer or half an hour's work for a basic college graduate.

**EXAMPLE:** The Winchester Model 1866 rifle had an actual price of US\$24, and a Union private at the end of the US Civil War made about US\$16 a month. In **Verne**, the rifle has a price of 90 Credits and a low-level soldier will have wages of about 60 Credits a month. Compare to a price of about 500 Credits for an equivalent rifle in 2009CE and a salary of 1400 Credits a month for a US Army private (not counting combat pay or bonuses). This gives an indication of the amount of money a person would be carrying around with them. If you are only making 60 Credits a month (2 Credits a day), odds are you never walk around with more than 1 Credit in your pocket.

Mere subsistence takes a far greater proportion of income. *The Civil War soldier's daily wages would be sufficient to buy four loaves of bread.* Climbing from one income level to another was very difficult. Minor increases in income within a profession were not sufficient. Race, class and education barriers had to be overcome to get into a higher bracket, and the scale was very steep. A US Civil War private made US\$16 each month. A *1st lieutenant made US\$120.* The economic and class distance between an enlisted officer (sargeant) and a commissioned one (lieutenant and up) was *huge*. Full details on salary for gainfully employed adventurers is in the **Adventurers** chapter. But, for comparison, here are **Verne** wages for typical Victorian professions:

Job	Monthly salary
Low-level servant*	40 Credits
Miner	40 Credits
Common laborer	50 Credits
Private (US Army)*	60 Credits
Potter	80 Credits
Governess*	200 Credits
Constable	200 Credits
Nurse	200 Credits
Bricklayer	400 Credits
Lieutenant (US Army)	500 Credits
Engineer	500 Credits
Captain (US Army)	550 Credits
Major (US Army)	800 Credits
Police superintendent	800 Credits
Colonel (US Army)	1000 Credits
One-star general (US Army)	1500 Credits
United States Senator	1800 Credits
Moderately successful doctor	1500 Credits

Monthly cost of living for a rented home & two servants

\*These jobs also include room & board

In many cases, a local person would not even use money. They would have an account with the local stores, would make their purchases on credit and settle up accounts on a monthly basis ("put it on my tab").

▼ **POLITICS** - Virtually all governments in 1869CE are, by modern standards, very repressive. Those in power have not forgotten the American Revolution, the French Revolution and various revolts against authority in the late 1840's. This repression is also by governments formed as a *result* of these uprisings. Governments are very keen on maintaining the status quo. This is the case even in representative governments, where the status quo represents keeping the wealthy, titled or just plain incumbents in their positions of influence. Churches, losing their official stranglehold on a state's faith, are eager to use their influence to make their particular dogma into law. Poor people may have the vote, but letting them elect one of their own number would be dangerous, and any notion of actually changing their system of government is intolerable. Socialism, communism and anarchism are words used by the repressed, and are viewed by the government about the same way as the word "terrorist" is today.

Most of the Great Powers or Western nations will have a representative or semi-representative legislature, with or without an aristocratic leader. The notions of free speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of the press really only exist for those in support of current government policy. Politics and the media are intertwined. Many newspapers are owned by people with a pronounced political, nationalist, ethnic or racial bias, and stories printed by that paper tend to promote its owner's biases (if the reporters and editors want to keep their jobs). Newspapers are the general population's main source of information, so they can be extremely effective at reinforcing and inflaming existing attitudes and biases. Newspapers are in the business of selling newspapers, so sensationalism and florid language are the norm.

***Dreadful Boiler Explosion at Manchester*** - A boiler explosion, accompanied by considerable destruction of property, the loss of two lives at least, and it is feared, of many more, occurred at Manchester on Tuesday. At three o'clock, a high pressure boiler exploded with a loud report, and rising from its bed, carried away the end wall of the premises. Instantly the whole of the buildings forming the adjacent tenancies were so much shaken, so that with one exception they fell to the ground, involving those working in them in the horrible destruction...

- News of the World, March 30 1851CE

But at the same time, the decreasing cost of printing technology meant that small groups could publish and distribute flyers, newsletters and pamphlets on a large scale, and with increasingly dense rail networks, distribute them quickly over a broad area.

In many cases, criticism of the government is still a crime, especially if that criticism is levelled at the aristocracy or involves a state-supported religion (insult the Queen, go to jail). Alternate forms of government, even at a local level, are usually not permitted, and political parties espousing radical change are illegal, persecuted or both. In the cases where any of the above criticisms come from the bottom of the social ladder, government oppression validates the philosophy and can make it even harder to stamp out. Communism would be a perfect example (the Group for the Emancipation of Labor was founded in 1883CE).

▼ **TRAVEL** - For the average person in 1869CE, travel means one of the following, depending on wealth and location:

- Walking
- Horseback
- Carriage
- Train
- Steamship

One thing you should be taking home from this section is that things move very slowly by modern standards. Going on an African adventure could involve *months* of sitting on a steamship. The travel could be an adventure all by itself. Consider that one adventure that involves a lot of travel can easily eat up an entire year of game time. So, lots of stuff can happen in the background as setup for the next adventure. They could come home from trying to find the center of the earth only to find out their college chum left them a mysterious package before he was killed by a rare Indonesian scorpion that must have stowed away in one of the exotic plants he collected. And an American concern is building a cannon with which to send men to the Moon. And a Mister M. at the Diogenes Club would very much like to speak with you upon your return...

**Walking:** Pretty simple. You can move at your adventurer's Walk pace as long as your stamina holds out, based on how much you are carrying, how nasty the terrain, etc. With proper supplies, a large group of people can manage to average twenty or so kilometers per day. Small groups or exceptional individuals can of course, have a much higher average speed, but any group will only be as fast as its slowest member.

**Horseback:** Much the same, except you are limited by the Strength and Health of the horse. A person on horseback should easily manage three times the distance per day of a man on foot, and be in better shape at the end of the day. It is worth mentioning that horses are *not* "park & forget" vehicles. They require constant maintenance and care. *Preferably by your servants.* In any case, a horse on the road should be getting *at least an hour of maintenance per day* for any long term use. This does not count the occasional time with a farrier to have the hooves and shoes checked. This time can be reduced or eliminated in the short-term, for emergency marches, but runs the risk of damaging the horse. In addition to any payment for a groom or stable, a horse you have to feed will cost you about twice as much per day as feeding a person.

*A white man will ride a horse until he thinks it is worn out, a Mexican will ride a horse until he knows it is worn out, and an Indian will just ride the horse until he gets where he is going...*  
- Old West proverb

**Carriage:** In most cases faster than walking and slower than riding. Specialized carriages can make excellent time. With waystations for horse changes, mail wagons in the American West could move mail up to 150 kilometers per day. But, wagons or carriages require roads in good condition in order to make good time. Narrow wagon wheels sink into soft soil or muddy roads. Carriages also have lousy suspensions and are not the most comfortable ride. They also usually take at least two horses for a heavy hauler, and a paid driver. However, if you are travelling a long distance and need to carry more than will fit in saddlebags, it is your only choice. In areas that do not yet have rail lines, wagons or carts are the heavy haulers.

A subset of this transport is the "cab". You need a lift in the city? *Call a cab.* These were common in the era in London, Paris, Berlin, New York City and St. Petersburg. Then, as now, it is an expensive form of transport. Rates would be about half a Credit for trips of a kilometer or less, 1 Credit if carrying two people, and 2 Credits to hire one for a full hour. Bear in mind this is in a time when common laborers were only making 2 Credits per day. For people like that who had to travel farther than they could readily walk, horse-drawn trolleys would be used, the Victorian equivalent of a city bus, with fares of a fraction of a Credit (the 1869CE equivalent of a hundredth of a Credit to a quarter of a Credit, depending on distance).

**Train:** By 1869CE there are tens of thousands of kilometers of rails in Britain. The social and economic changes this wrought were extraordinary. For instance, dietary changes brought about because fresh food could be brought in from the countryside on a daily basis. You could get fresh milk in 1869CE London, in an era prior to artificial refrigeration. You could get on a morning train in London and be in Scotland in time for dinner. People in Paris could get the newspapers from London on the same day they were printed (the passenger service from Paris to London, including Channel crossing, took eleven hours and cost 22 Credits for a first class seat).

For long distance travel between cities (and increasingly, towns), railways were the way to go. In Britain, the Parliamentary Railway Commission mandated that all lines have at least one train going each direction per day, and each must have at least one third-class car with a minimal fare rate. Bear in mind "third class" was *originally* standing room only, in an open-topped car (but the Railway Act of 1844 mandated roofs for all passenger cars). Travel guides at the time recommended men hold onto their wallets in tunnels, and women to put pins in their mouths to fend off unwanted kisses in the dark. Second class passengers sat on hard wooden benches, while first class passengers got padded leather seats and plenty of room, and for long journeys, sleeper cars, buffet cars and other luxuries. Rail cars were smaller than they are now, but a small first class rail car had six seats, so you had plenty of room.

▼ **Note** - Servants would usually stay in a class of accommodation less than their employer, and would commute to and from those quarters to perform the in-transit duties their job required. In some cases, these duties might include guarding (i.e. sleeping with) the luggage or any horses being transported. Strong, secure luggage was the norm, since some trains put luggage on top of the train.

As a guide, the Liverpool to London run (roughly 300 kilometers) took somewhere between five and eight hours. Fares for Victorian Era railway travel in Britain range from about one pence a mile for third class up to four pence a mile for first class. In **Verne** terms, from 8 Credits to 30 Credits per 100 kilometers. Some destinations had "excursion fares", which were only for passengers that had no luggage. These could be as low as half the normal fare. A long train trip would be the monetary equivalent of an airline flight of the same duration for a modern person. Some are wealthy enough to travel in that fashion on a regular basis, for others it is a major expense that must be saved up for.



The London Subway, or the Underground, as it came to be called, is the preferred means of getting around London for many people. One can get on the train anywhere and go to anywhere else for a quarter of a Credit. Work trains ran from certain districts to the factories in the morning and evening, and only charged a tenth of a Credit. At this time, the trains are still pulled by steam engines, which makes the underground stretches more than a little sooty, but the Underground still had over a million passengers in its first year of operation (1863CE).

▼ **Note** - In 1869CE, all track switching was done manually, often by a full-time railway employee whose only job was to shift trains around. This could be a boring job, and being "asleep at the switch" could have serious consequences. As an adventure possibility, trains being maliciously switched onto the wrong track always has potential.

**Steamship:** The era of the sailing ship is ending, the last clipper ship in the world is being launched in 1869CE. *The steamship is the way of the future.* However, most steamships in 1869CE still have masts and sails and crews that know how to use them. *Just in case.* There are some extremely large steamships out there, like the famous Great Eastern, but most are far smaller, a few thousand tons or less. Smaller vessels are slightly riskier than large ones and their fares may be less.

As with railway travel, there is a wide range of accommodations based on how much you want to spend. In **Verne** terms, a transatlantic steamer fare would cost anywhere from 250 to 400 Credits for first class, 150 to 200 Credits for second class, and 80 Credits for steerage. In 1869CE, a transatlantic crossing takes about 15 days,  $\pm 5$  days for weather conditions (the first 9-day crossing was in 1856CE). There is a good chance a large passenger ship will have at least one death due to natural causes on an oceanic passage. Advertisements from the period might list "experienced surgeon on each of our ships" as a reassurance.

"Steerage" is one word that basically means the "noisiest, smelliest, below-waterline-iest, most packed with foreign immigrants-iest" part of the ship, a part of the ship that is kept separate from all the other passengers by locked doors (think about being locked below the waterline on the Titanic...). Steerage passengers do *not* get to wander the decks with the better classes of passengers, sleep in common quarters and may even have to provide their own bedding. *And don't ask about the food.* On the other hand, first class is the "hobnob with high society and sit at the captain's table for dinner" section, with the degree of opulence depending on the price of your first class fare.

Fares from Great Britain to Italy would be about 120 Credits for a first class cabin and take a few weeks, a first class cabin from Great Britain to Australia would be about 1000 Credits and take several months, and passage to India somewhere between the two. Longer passages would have one or more refueling stops.

Fares were subject to frequent change. Wars would raise prices or cancel routes entirely, or fare wars would break out and fares could be lowered by as much as half. To some extent this also happened if there were competing rail lines to a destination. In addition, as steam engines become more reliable, powerful and fuel efficient, speeds will increase, fares on the older ships will drop and the level of opulence on the newer ones will increase.

▼ **Note** - The most famous steamship of the era was *Great Eastern*, launched in 1858CE, and was a white elephant that bankrupted everyone who touched it. It displaced 32,000 tons, had paddle wheels, screws and sails, five steam engines, a crew of 400 and could carry 4,000 passengers nonstop from England to Australia. It was the largest ship in the world for over forty years, and was several times the size of the next largest ship launched in 1858CE. During the short time it was in passenger service it reliably made the Atlantic crossing in ten days.

First class accommodations were the equivalent of a luxury hotel, and it was outfitted with many first class suites, the original plan to carry lots of colonists to Australia having fizzled. The new routes through the Suez Canal meant the old route around Africa was no longer profitable, and the *Great Eastern* was too big to go through the Suez Canal!

Because of its range and carrying capacity, the *Great Eastern* was used in laying the first transatlantic telegraph cable, as well as one from Aden to Bombay. After this, it was just too uneconomical to operate, and was broken up for scrap in 1888CE. The Liverpool Football Club purchased the *Great Eastern's* topmast as a flagpole for a field in Liverpool, and it remains there still.

*...Never attempt to fire a gun or pistol while on the road, it may frighten the team; and the careless handling and cocking of the weapon makes nervous people nervous. Don't discuss politics or religion, nor point out places on the road where horrible murders have been committed...*

- Stagecoach etiquette, 1877CE

**Travel speed:** Some travel speeds and costs are below. These are averages. Exceptional vehicles and individuals can do better, of course. Train and steamship numbers can realistically increase by a tenth every five years after 1869CE, more (possibly a lot more) if any weird technological advances occur. Obviously, numbers for airships and such assume these become viable means of transport...

Travel	Avg. speed	Cost per 100km
Walking	2kph	-
Riding	8kph	-
Wagon	4kph	-
Stage coach	15kph	5 Credits
Train*	50kph	30 Credits
Steamship*	20kph	5 Credits
Airship*	60kph	20 Credits

\*sustainable 24/7

Travel	Time	Cost
Moon voyage	1 week	500 Credits
Mars(near)	6 weeks	2500 Credits
Mars(far)	12 weeks	3500 Credits

Quarters	Time	Cost
Third class	-	times one-quarter
Second class	-	times one-half
First class	-	listed price
Superior first class	-	times one-and-a-half

Route	Distance
London - Paris	≈350km
Paris - St. Petersburg	≈2100km
London - Cairo	≈3500km
London - Rome	≈1500km
Rome - Constantinople	≈1400km
London - Sydney	≈17000km
London - Capetown	≈9700km
London - Bombay	≈7000km
Bombay - Peking	≈4800km
London - Edinburgh	≈550km
London - New York	≈5000km
New York - Chicago	≈1200km
Chicago - San Francisco	≈3000km
San Francisco - Peking	≈9500km
Chicago - Houston	≈1500km
Houston - Mexico City	≈1200km

▼ **Note** - As bit of trivia, a stage coach only had one compartment, holding up to nine passengers. The difference between first, second and third class fares is that second and third class were expected to get out and walk in rough spots, and third class passengers were expected to get out and push the coach on steep hills...

**Airships:** It is possible that either with existing or strange science that airships can become a viable form of transport or military vehicle in the Victorian Era. This will require either an efficient power plant, lightweight structural materials like aluminum, or both. Vril generators could power electric thrust and lifting fans, cheap aluminum could make plain old zeppelins possible, and there is no reason the two cannot be combined.

Because airships must limit their weight, they will of necessity be military or luxury vehicles. *No third-class or steerage berths here!*

**Aeroplanes:** The potential for heavier-than-air flight is being experimented with even in 1869CE. It lacks merely a sufficiently light power plant (and some understanding of aeronautical theory). The former, at least, will become historically available, and odds are that someone in a **Verne** campaign will come up with one well ahead of time. However, a heavier than air craft will have to economically compete with both Cavorite vessels and lighter-than-air vehicles. Few will want to risk their lives in a vehicle that will fall from the sky like a rock if its engine fails, unlike Cavorite vessels or Zeppelins, which can simply drift until repairs can be made. Aeroplanes will be the stuff of eccentrics, mad inventors and daredevils. No sane person or military would ever seriously consider them as more than a curiosity. *Just like submarines, which anyone but a fool can see have no military value...*

**Interplanetary:** If Cavorite-based interplanetary ships become possible, then there will be a handful of liners plying these routes. A trip to the Moon will only take a few days, while a trip to Mars at close approach will take two months, and four months when it is furthest from the Earth.

Interplanetary travel will be akin to steamship travel. Ships will of course have to be airtight, and take precautions against the great heat and cold of the interplanetary void. While the very first ships may be cramped and primitive affairs, after the electric light and solar generators are perfected, ships travelling between worlds can be as luxurious as any steamship. The grand saloon will have tinted and reinforced windows affording a vista of the stars and planets, rotating slowly so that passengers have a sense of "down", and so things like cooking and plumbing work normally. Air for the voyage is carried in great insulated tanks, and exhalations are removed from the air by chemical filters. However, to conserve oxygen, smoking is restricted to the smoking lounge, and only for an hour each evening. Since one is no longer on Earth, time will be measured by clocks set by the location of departure, and reset to the location of arrival.

▼ **FASHION** - We have talked a little bit about clothing in terms of a nudity taboo, but what about the actual clothing styles? The Victorian Era is no different than the modern day in one way; fashions change very rapidly, mostly so clothing makers can make more money, one presumes. The upper class buy something new and different, and the middle class falls all over themselves to copy it. Hats, frills, rustles, bustles, frills and trim all change from year to year. Men's clothing not so much, but the styles still change. However, in general couture in 1869CE is:

**Men:** A man about town would have undergarments, socks, shoes, slacks, shirt, vest, jacket and hat. For inclement weather, a long coat, boots and gloves. Depending on location, a necktie might be fashionable, and for formal wear, a long-tailed tuxedo would be the order of the day. Formal military wear would of course be a dress uniform with all appropriate awards and medals. A middle- or upper-class man will often have a pocketwatch (wristwatches have not been invented yet), and possibly a walking stick. Men may be clean-shaven or wear facial hair may be in a variety of styles, so long as they are symmetrical and neat. Stubble is not in fashion.

*"The fashionable walking suit is a short double-breasted frock coat made of diagonally ribbed coating or of plain dark cloth. Vest of the same material, with broad collar rolled to suit the shape of the coat. Gray or drab pantaloons with diagonal stripes, or of a solid color with a side stripe of darker shade. Pantaloons still fit closely, but are cut wider at the ankle, giving necessary spring over the boot. Suits of black cloth made in this manner are chosen for visiting."*

- *Gentleman's Fashions, Harper's Bazaar, 1868CE*

A working class man would have heavy slacks (with or without underwear), boots (with or without socks), and a shirt. Slacks might have suspenders or a belt (or rope), a hat of some kind would be common, and cold weather, a long coat. Short jackets were not in general use. The fabric known as "dungaree", dyed indigo blue, was cheap and durable, and often used by merchant sailors for their trousers. Blue jeans as we consider them today are being manufactured by Levi Strauss in California at this time, but are not available elsewhere.



**Women:** Reformers of the day thought that women should not have to wear more than three kilograms of underwear. This would include what we call underwear, knee-high stockings, a thin shoulder-to-ankle garment called a shift (or chemise), a corset on top of that (brassieres have not been invented yet), one or more layers of petticoats (a waist-to-calf garment designed to puff a skirt to a proper shape), and then a dress on top of that. The full set of daily clothing for a middle- or upper-class woman could be nearly ten kilograms of fabric, boning and metal (by itself a corset should be 0d+1 or 0d+2 armor against melee weapons!). Possible accessories could include a hat, fan, parasol or muff.



Lower-class women could not wear this level of clothing, if for no other reason that you could not bend and do manual labor with a corset on, and too many petticoats would make you too wide to stand aside and let your lady pass you in the hallway. Plus of course, you need help to put a corset on, and that's what servants are for (a woman *could* put on her own front-laced corset, but help is always useful). A woman in lower-class attire would be treated as such, and could not expect to gain admittance to any establishment where proper dress was required. Lower class "work" clothes for women consists mainly of taking off the dress and working in underwear and a shift. It would be appropriate only in the home or in industries where women were expected to do heavy work (note that by 1869CE, women have been banned from working in the mines).

Evening wear, as mentioned earlier, could be slightly racier. It might even forego the corset and petticoats to give an exotically different looking figure than the bust- and hip-accentuating corset did. For casual entertaining at home, a less cumbersome "tea gown" could be worn:





# EABA

"One does not go out to dine in a tea-gown except in the house of a member of one's family or a most intimate friend. One would wear a tea-gown in one's own house in receiving a guest to whose house one would wear a dinner dress."

- Emily Post, *Etiquette*

There is no real "outdoor" clothing for women in 1869CE. The closest you would get is a dress designed so you could play croquet in it. Ankle-length tennis dresses, bloomers and such are still a ways off, though female adventurers can always try to be trend-setters. Wearing practical clothing for outdoor work is limited to places where social propriety is not the main concern.

▼ **Note** - Many formal and semi-formal fashions did not wash well. Undergarments were, among other things, used to keep the *inside* of your outer clothing clean. The outside of your outer clothing would have dust or dirt brushed off it. Professional dry-cleaning services (a French invention) exist for taking care of garments whose colors would be damaged by soap and water. Dry-cleaning in 1869CE consists of carefully hand-washing garments in kerosene or benzene and then hanging them up until the stuff evaporated off. Since the process is not common yet, those needing dry-cleaning services might ship their clothing by post to the nearest dry-cleaner and then have them shipped back. This would take from a few days to a week, depending on the distance.



▼ **SOCIAL GRACES** - Volumes could be written on this subject alone, solely for Victorian England. Everyone except the lower classes has a maze of social conventions to wend their way through. The lower classes know that they just have to defer to about everyone else who might be able to give them grief. There are expected forms of deference from servants to employers, men to women, for average people to civil servants, soldiers to higher officers, diplomats between each other, noble titles, proper colors to wear, and so on. *Seriously*. Wearing the wrong color clothing could get you beat up or arrested in some places. For instance, wearing green on St. Patrick's Day in Ireland was considered rebellion against British rule and would get you arrested (it would get you *hung* in the 1700's). And wearing a combination of colors that happened to match the national flag of an enemy nation would also get you nasty looks on the street, if not worse.

Two important social graces in Victorian England were calling cards and flowers.

A person affluent enough to afford servants seldom answered the door themselves. If you were a lady or gentleman paying a call on someone, a servant would answer the door. You would introduce yourself, and give the servant your calling card. They would then give the card to their employer (usually on a tray), the employer would examine it, and then instruct the servant to either admit you (and to what room), or refuse you. In addition to representing you, your card also specified something of the nature of your visit. You would fold or more corners of the calling card, and this indicated the reason you were there.

lower left - indicative of you leaving town soon  
upper left - social call  
lower right - condolences  
upper right - congratulatory

It was considered proper etiquette that if you visited and the person was not at home, then they would visit you next, preferably within the next three days (presuming you were in good health and in town). The best time to visit would be between four and five in the afternoon, for afternoon tea.

▼ **Note** - The first "Christmas cards" were actually seasonally decorated calling cards, left displayed to show respect for the giver.

The other unique form of expression was the “language of flowers”. Also called floriography, it was a Victorian-era means of communication in which various flowers and floral arrangements were used to send coded messages, allowing individuals to express feelings which otherwise could not be spoken (and which could be plausibly denied if someone called them on it). King Charles II brought floriography to Sweden from Persia in the 17th Century. Japan has its own flower language called *hanakotoba*.

Subtleties of Victorian floriography are mostly forgotten in the 21st century, but red roses still imply romantic love, white roses still suggest virtue, and yellow roses still stand for friendship or devotion. While these may not be the exact translations of the Victorian sentiments, the flowers still hold meaning. Both the color, the type of flower and combinations can be used to convey a complex sentiment, but the exact meaning requires some knowledge of the sender. A subset of the known meanings is below.

Color	Meaning
yellow	devotion, friendship
blue	faithfulness
white	modesty, purity, innocence
red	romantic love
blue	mystery
black	death, hatred, farewell, rebirth
pink	grace
dark pink	gratitude
light pink	desire, passion, youth, energy
burgundy	beauty
orange	desire, passion
violet	love at first sight
red & white	unity
red & yellow	joy, happiness, excitement

Flower	Meaning
Aloe	grief
Almond	hope, watchfulness, promise
Anemone	forsaken
Balsamine	impatience
Bird foot trefoil	revenge
Buttercup	riches
White carnation	disdain
Daffodil	uncertainty, chivalry, respect
Dahlia	elegance, dignity
Elderflower	compassion
Fennel	strength
Geranium	gentility
Grass	submission
Heliotrope	devotion
Hollyhock	ambition
Ivy	dependence
Laurestine	a token
Lavender	mistrust
Lemon blossom	discretion

Lettuce	cold-hearted
Lichen	solitude
Lime Blossom	fornication
Lobelia	malevolence
Marigold	pain and grief
Mayflower	welcome
Mint	suspicion
Nasturtium	patriotism
Olive	peace
Rosemary	remembrance
Straw	united
Sweetbrier	simplicity
Thorn-apple	disguise
Thistle	nobility
Tulip-tree	fame
Winged seeds	messengers
Wheat	wealth, prosperity

This is just a fraction of the flowers and plants one would have to know in order to understand any hidden meaning in them. And even if the players and gamemaster do not get it *exactly* right, they can still have fun with it.

**EXAMPLE:** A woman who does not wish to see a gentleman anymore might send a letter of regret. And what she *really* means or wants might be in the flower that comes with that note. A yellow rose sends a far different message than a white carnation. One can attend a funeral in a measure of outward respect, but wear a bird's foot trefoil or toss a black rose on the casket and say something entirely different, and no one could actually say you were disrespecting the dead. A foe who has your demise in mind might try to intimidate you by delivering a spray of lobelia and marigold dusted with winged maple seeds.

There was also an entire flirting language based around the usage of hand fans, allowing covert, deniable messages to be passed from a woman to a man. The deniability is of course important, as *any* man watching could see the gesture, know the meaning and guess who it was intended for, but since nothing was actually said, nothing could be publicly said in response to it. Nonetheless, fights could be provoked over such things.

**EXAMPLE:** If your wife is giving suggestive fan signals to another man and lets you see it, she is publicly cuckholding you in a completely deniable way. Based on what she knows of your personality, she may be able to manipulate you into a fight, just to preserve your honor.

▼ **TECHNOLOGY** - This is the main aspect of the Victorian Era that is going to change in a **Verne** campaign. We present what is current technology just to provide a baseline. Unlike the historical world, **Verne** is going to have very rapid and fantastical discoveries in a number of fields. However, practical application of this knowledge will be extremely limited in scope. Even in a world with electrically powered zeppelins and interplanetary ships by 1880CE, life for the average person is going to remain largely the same. The great technological advances will be outside the budget of the lower class, and mostly out of range of the middle class. Zeppelins may fly across the Atlantic in a matter of days, but immigrants to the United States are still crammed like sardines into the holds of steamships. The Vril Society may create force-cannon equipped armored war walkers, but Her Majesty's soldiers will still be wearing bright red uniforms and firing bolt action rifles. The governor of India may speak to Whitehall via video-telegraphy, but the average person will be lucky to afford a new-fangled Edison audiograph machine.

One thing that can be said for Victorian Era technology is that the good stuff was built to last. Capital goods are a huge investment, either for companies or individuals. The previous note about a rifle costing a month and a half of the salary of an Army private would be an example. People bought things expecting them to last, and used them until they were completely worn out. Much more so than we would today. The only exception is for things that went in and out of fashion, like clothing. Even then, it would pass from mistress to servants, servants to someone else, and down the line until it was nothing but rags. And then the rag-pickers would collect it and sell the scraps as raw material for something else. Victorian craftsmen often had the benefit of extraordinary skill in hand-made work, plus the benefits that could be had from modern industrial tooling.

*"All the light turning was done by hand, without a slide-rest. Altogether, the work of an engine-shop was much more laborious than it is now, and required much more skill. Machinery has to a large extent superseded both muscle and brain, and a boy set to a machine can do more and better work than would be done by a skillful mechanic. Yet there were men who could do wonderfully true work. I have seen a fitter take two rough pieces of wrought iron of more than one pound weight each. I have seen him chip them to a surface almost perfectly smooth, and then with files so perfect the surface that when placed one upon the other the lower piece would hang to the upper by the force of molecular attraction, as if glued to it. Of course I do not mean that they were so fast joined as glued surfaces, but it required a sensible effort to separate them. "*

- from **Tales of my Life**, H.Stowell Brown(1888CE)

**Communication:** In 1869CE, you have the mail service (or couriers), or telegraphy over wires (ships can communicate by visual telegraphy using flags or lanterns). Popular media is the newspapers. A letter from London took 12 days to reach New York, 13 days to Alexandria, 19 days to Constantinople, 33 days to Bombay, 44 days to Calcutta, 45 days to Singapore; 57 days to Shanghai, and 73 days to Sydney. By 1889CE, telegraph companies had links that allowed messages to be sent to all of these places in minutes.

Telegraphy is extremely widespread and it is safe to say that any place with a rail station also has a telegraph office. By 1869CE there are telegraph lines across the Atlantic and from Great Britain to India (through several intermediate stations). As more and more lines are laid, the prices will drop (by a factor of ten over the next twenty years!), but it is not something for those trying to save their pennies. The cost of installing a good overland telegraph line was about 100 Credits per kilometer, and telegraph companies had to recoup that investment somehow:

<b>Telegram, circa 1869CE</b>	<b>per 10 words</b>
Transatlantic	30 Credits
Europe to India	30 Credits
up to 200km	.5 Credit
up to 300km	.8 Credit
up to 500km	1 Credit



Charges did not include addressing, that was part of the service, as was delivery of the telegram (tipping the delivery boy is optional). With the exception of long oceanic lines, telegrams went through several intermediate stations and early on, were manually re-transmitted at each. So, a long-distance telegram could take several hours to get where it is going, plus time to deliver the message. And, repetitive transmission could give rise to errors, especially if a line passed through a nation that did not use the Western alphabet. Telegrams that went through Ottoman territory were regularly garbled or delayed. Automatic repeaters introduced in coming years both sped up traffic and reduced transmission errors.

*"Supposing a message is required to be sent to Liverpool, the sender goes to the counter on the west side and hands the message, written out, to one of the clerks there, who takes the money, and gives a receipt for it. The written paper is then passed into the translating office, where it is duly transferred into a code arranged by the Company. This done, the clerk touches the alarm, and puts the message on the lift for Liverpool, which is immediately drawn up by the clerk at the machine, who instantly sets to work and, in a few seconds, the message reaches its destination!"*

*- from a description of the Electric Telegraph Company office in London*

▼ **Note** - The technology to send faxes existed in 1869CE, and had been experimented with. The Chinese were intrigued, as it would allow sending of ideogram messages, but nothing ever came of the experimental technology (the only commercial fax station, between London and Manchester, foundered after a bank crisis in 1864CE).

Despite the expense, telegraphy is regularly used in the business world to transmit commodity prices, ship arrivals and so on, and used in the newspaper business by reporters filing stories from foreign countries. Being the first (or only) to publish a hot story sells a lot of papers and makes it worth the expense. Newspapers were known to buy every last minute of available telegraph time at a destination just to guarantee they were the only ones to break a major story. National governments automatically gave themselves priority for sending messages, and explicitly reserved a right to temporarily monopolize or shut down a telegraph service in the national interest, with no other explanation required. Telegraph installers became part of an army's Signal Corps, and hundreds of kilometers of wire and other telegraphy supplies would be part of what an army brought with it to hostile territory.

As an aside, pneumatic telegraphs were used in London in this period. Brass tubes several centimeters in diameter carried physical messages in sealed tubes from one spot to another. The longest of these tubes was about a kilometer in length, but there were several hundred kilometers laid throughout London by the time they fell out of favor. They were mostly used between banks and firms where rapid transfer of *actual* documents was required.

*"We witnessed the apparatus doing its ordinary work only the other day in the large telegraphic apartment of the company in... Moorgate Street. Five metal tubes, of from two to three inches in diameter, are seen trained against the wall, and coming to an abrupt termination opposite the seat of the attendant who ministers to them. In connection with their butt-ends other smaller pipes are soldered on at right angles; these lead down to an air-pump below, worked by a small steam-engine. There is another air-pump and engine, of course, at the other end of the pipe, and thus suction is established to and fro through its whole length. Whilst looking at the largest pipe we hear a whistle; this is to give notice that a despatch is about to be put into the tube at Mincing Lane, two-thirds of a mile distant. It will be necessary therefore to exhaust the air between the end we are watching and that point. A little trap-door - the mouth of the apparatus - is instantly shut, a cock is turned, the air-pump below begins to suck, and in a few seconds you hear a soft thud against the end of the tube - the little door is opened, and a cylinder of gutta-percha encased in flannel, about four inches long, which fits the tube, but loosely, is immediately ejected upon the counter; the cylinder is opened at one end, and there we find the despatch."*

*- from **Once a Week** magazine, July 1860CE*

One could have a villain or other secretive group using scaled-up tubes to rapidly move people (certainly fast enough to provide alibis).

The last means of "communication" is the photograph. Newspapers cannot do photographs on newsprint yet, but artists can turn photos into lurid engravings very quickly. Photographers are also at the scene of many battles, disasters and events like eclipses. Compact film cameras do not exist yet, so cameras are bulky affairs with long exposure times and finicky supplies. Photographers in 1869CE are a specialized breed, part reporter, part chemist, part diplomat, part artist. And of course, part capitalist.

**Weapons:** Weapons are becoming more modern all the time. All gunpowder weapons use black powder in 1869CE (count it as an Industrial Era propellant). Smokeless powder does not become available until 1887CE and would be Late Industrial Era in effect. Black powder has the disadvantages that it generates a lot of smoke, betraying a firer's position and eventually obscuring visibility, and it also slowly accumulates residue in a weapon, decreasing its reliability.

Conventional cartridge weapons are readily available, though there are more than enough flintlocks and percussion cap weapons around to make their supplies easy to come by, and these less advanced weapons may be the norm in colonial areas (especially among the colonials). A modern pistol is usually a revolver of a caliber appropriate to its use and the weight the owner wishes to carry. Most military rifles are single shot weapons, though Americans have a number of interesting repeating rifles. These, however, require a little more care, something often hard to discipline into lower-class, poorly educated troops. Rifles with detachable box magazines will not appear for a few decades, and semi-automatic pistols with detachable magazines likewise. These are, however, easily within the manufacturing capabilities available, it is just that no one has thought of them yet.

Machineguns at the moment are Gatling Guns, manufactured in the United States, but sold to a number of concerns. The more modern Maxim guns do not become available until 1888CE.

Ship cannons have mostly switched to breech-loading types. Rifled cannons firing high-explosive or armor-piercing shells are the norm, though older vessels and some colonial forces may still use muzzle-loaders or smoothbores. Land artillery is still mostly muzzle-loading smoothbores. That is, they are already paid for, last a long time, and infantry is cheap. Breech-loading cannon will start showing up in large numbers after 1880CE. Historically, the first nation to adopt large numbers of modern (e.g. hydraulic recoil, breech-loading) artillery will not do so until nearly 1900CE.

▼ **Note** - Historical submarine inventors could only dream of something like Jules Verne's *Nautilus*. The most ambitious submarine existing in 1869CE is the *Plongeur*, in service with the French Navy. Over forty meters long (most of which was air tanks for the compressed air motor), displacing over four hundred tons, it has a crew of 12, a practical working depth of ten meters, a top speed of 7kph and a range of 9 kilometers. It is armed with a piercing ram and an electrically activated spar torpedo (an explosive charge on the end of a long pole). The Ottomans also had a steam-powered (using coal, no less!) submarine (the *Abdül Hamid*), built by the British in 1886. Its sister ship was sold to Russia, but sank off the Danish coast while being delivered (maybe stolen by the LGP!). The *Abdül Hamid* had conventional torpedo armanent, a top speed of 10kph on the surface, 7kph submerged (for about five minutes). Submerging required dismantling the smokestack, so it could not be done quickly. The first historical submarines that were *practical* military vessels will not be until after the year 1900CE. In the early years of **Verne**, there are no real anti-submarine weapons or strategies, so submersibles like those the League for Gaian Primacy or the Vril Society might develop will be *serious* threats to a Great Power relying on a surface navy to project its national will.

**Armor:** People are cheap. Armoring them is expensive. No nation except the most primitive armors its soldiers, and *their* armor is not going to be effective against modern weapons. It is better than nothing, and was seen in some primitive regions until the turn of the twentieth century. Historically, there exists very little body armor in this period for use against firearms. Two examples of note: In the US Civil War (1861-1865CE), a few firms made steel breastplates. These massed about 3.5 kilograms and protected the chest and abdomen at about a 2d+0 level, and cost about 30-40 Credits. During the French Campaign in Korea (1866CE), the Korean government commissioned vests of many layers of strong cotton. While thick, hot, flammable and water-absorbent, they did stop enough bullets to keep some people alive. Multiple layers of silk also were used in some circles as a lightweight body armor, capable of slowing or stopping a bullet.

▼ **Note** - In game terms, silk body armor will count as full value against firearms of Industrial Era or earlier (black powder weapons). Late Industrial Era weapons using smokeless powder will count as armor-piercing against such armor.

Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was wearing one when he was assassinated (the assassin hit him in the neck), precipitating the Great War. On the other hand, such a vest saved the life of Alfonso XIII of Spain in 1901CE.

None of these armors is going to stop rifle bullets at close range, but they are better than nothing. As various factions develop bits of weird science, personal armor technology may equal or surpass the ability of conventional firearms to penetrate them.

*"We beg leave to say to the officers and soldiers of the Expedition, that after some delay we have received another invoice of those Monitor, or Bullet Proof Vests, which we are selling at our stand, opposite the Post Office, and as it is impossible for us to visit all the various Camps, please call and examine, or order, with measure of breast and waist, which will insure a good fit. We shall be here only a week or two longer, therefore it is for the interest of all who may wish to purchase to call immediately..."*  
- Body armor advertisement, US Civil War, 1862CE

Armored vehicles in 1869CE are ships and trains. Armored trains saw use in the US Civil War, and will see limited use elsewhere. They are basically normal trains with one or more cars armored to provide protection for infantry, or for an artillery piece. Armored trains have the serious limitation that you know where they are coming from, where they are going, and that they are not going to leave the track. They are under-armored mobile forts. In an era without radio, simply blowing the tracks leaves the train stranded, with no way to communicate its predicament. They prevent banditry against the train, but that is about it. Warships are the most powerful projection of national will. Many major cities, especially in colonial areas, are along coasts. A powerful, unassailable warship puts an enemy city under notice that the big dogs have arrived. Shore batteries will try to dispute this of course, but if the ships have guns with longer range... The Ottoman shore batteries at Constantinople watching over the exit of the Black Sea are a constant thorn in the side of the Russians.

The Great Powers are moving to all-steel construction for their warships and the largest of them are proto-battleships, heavily armored, a few very large guns in turrets or casemates, and a variety of secondary armament or deck guns. Stuff like this, adventurers should stay away from. A 200mm explosive shell will ruin your day, no matter who you are.

**Power:** Power for anything portable in 1869CE is clockwork, batteries or steam. Clockwork is only suitable for pocket watches and music boxes. There are no real battery-operated portable devices yet. A portable battery means merely that you can carry a rig to set up a telegraph. For that matter, until electric generators become common, batteries are the *only* means of powering telegraphs. Internal combustion engines are entirely experimental at this point, so steam engines are *the* source of motive power. Steam engines operate at Industrial Era levels of efficiency, but they are getting better all the time. People like John Stringfellow are busy working on very lightweight steam engines to propel their "aerial steam carriage" projects. Ships of course use steam engines, and people are trying to put them on carriages and bicycles as well.

**Medicine:** Germ theory is known, but not widely accepted, and only a minority of doctors and surgeons follow the guidelines of Joseph Lister and wash their hands and their surgical instruments. Those who do are often ridiculed by their peers. There is little regulation of drugs and no oversight at all in terms of quality control. Infant mortality (before the age of 1) ranges from twenty percent among the upper class to fifty percent for the lower class.

The scientific advances which are occurring in other fields are far less prevalent in medicine, and some of the most profound, like germ theory, are resisted by the established medical community. So, people hearing of marvelous new discoveries yet finding no doctors willing to use them, are often taken in by quacks and frauds, purveying electrical, magnetic and eventually radioactive cure-alls (some quack devices that survive to the present-day *still* have dangerous levels of radioactivity!)

Current treatment for severe wounds, pre- and post-surgical procedures are frankly, not something you want to put adventurers through. For that reason, we are going to assume that the more barbaric of them can be avoided, and that except for scars, even serious injuries can be recovered from with little loss of function.

The first thing to remember is the hierarchy of the Victorian medical profession. Doctors are at the top, gentlemen as it would be defined at the time. They make house calls, work in hospitals and such, but they do not deal with serious physical injuries unless there is no other choice. That is the province of surgeons, who are the next rung down.

Surgeons are an apprenticed trade, and probably do not have the formal education of a doctor. If you need treatment for a disease, you call a doctor. If you need something lopped off, you get a surgeon. Surgeons could be apothecaries as well, to make a little extra money on the side. Eventually, actual licensing and training requirements meant that doctors and surgeons merged into the more modern concept of "general practitioner". Below these two are nurses, who like surgeons have little formal training. Training was often on the job, and nurse was effectively a maid who cleaned and fed patients, and who picked up some useful medical knowledge on the way. A good nurse would be by far the most compassionate of the people a patient would encounter. A poor nurse could easily let you die of neglect and given the state of medical science, no one would ever know.

*"I concluded that 'piemia' was French for neglect, and that the antidote was warmth, nourishing food, stimulants, friction, fresh air and cheerfulness...I do not believe in the medical theory concerning it; do not believe pus ever gets into the veins, or that there is any poison about it, except that of ignorance and indifference on the part of doctors and nurses.*  
- from **Half a Century**, by Jane Swisshelm (1880CE)

If you have an extremely progressive doctor or surgeon in 1869CE, they will clean their surgical instruments between surgeries, keep the operating area disinfected with carbolic acid, and use ether or chloroform as an anaesthetic instead of dosing you up on alcohol and opium. Most doctors who are not this modern would not even consider invasive surgical procedures. This is mostly because *their* surgical practices would almost guarantee a fatal post-surgical infection, even if the surgery was a success. The only time a blade or saw would be taken to a patient is to amputate a limb, where the chance of death from amputation is seen as less than the chance of death from the near-inevitable infection that would come from something like a splintered bone or ragged gunshot wound.

In general, ninety-plus percent of all medical professionals in 1869CE are better off avoided. If you have any questions, remember that these are the folks who treat intestinal complaints with mercury and chalk, calm crying infants with opium, and treat gangrene with lemonade. And the first medicine given to President Lincoln after he was shot was a spoonful of brandy... If you want a *good* doctor, make sure it is one of the adventurers.

**Chemistry:** The periodic table of the elements was published by Mendeléev in 1869CE, had fifty-six elements on it, and was notable in that it predicted the existence of yet-undiscovered elements to fill in blank spots in the table. New elements are being discovered on it seems a monthly basis, and notions on why elements have an affinity or antipathy to each other is being explored. Celluloid, the first artificial plastic, was invented in 1869CE, and its first use is as a substitute for ivory in billiard balls. Nitroglycerin was invented in 1845CE, and made useful by the creation of dynamite in 1867CE. The first patents for electroplating were given in 1840CE, and commercial plating using brass, nickel, tin and zinc was underway by 1850CE.

**Materials:** Mass production of steel (rather than iron) is allowing its industrial and commercial use. Aluminum is still a precious metal and will be so until electrolytic refining is invented in 1886CE. There is no mathematical modelling of items and structures except in the crudest sense, so things are simply overengineered, leading to the massive constructs we typically associate with Victorian engineering. Only when weight becomes the *major* consideration are attempts made to figure optimum structures and item designs.

**Popular:** Airships and automobiles exist, but only as curiosities. Telegraphs are common, but the telephone will not be invented until 1876CE. Dry cell batteries were invented in 1867CE, dynamite in 1867CE, the dental drill in 1864CE, safety matches in 1855CE, the home sewing machine in 1867CE, barbed wire in 1873CE, the phonograph in 1877CE and the light bulb in 1879CE. The benefits of tech and scientific theory or education only slowly move out from urban to rural areas. It will be the 20th century before electricity and telephone reach many rural regions, even in England. Primitive notions and technologies will be the norm outside of regions served by railways for some decades to come, and some areas will have irrational or superstitious reactions to new technologies (like imagining that photographs steal your soul).

▼ **TIMELINE** - Because events in **Verne** do not and should not unfold in a strict historical sense, we include a long timeline of the nineteenth century, with various categories and real-world events. These can be used as topical items in play, ideas for adventure, or historical pivot points where the world of Verne deviates from history and begins making its own. But for real-world tidbits and to see where speculative SF was going, use the tables.



Date	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1800CE		Electric battery (Volta)	Population of Paris is 500,000		
		High-pressure steam engine (Trevithick)			
1801CE				Thomas Jefferson, 3rd US President	
				Alexander I, Tsar of Russia	
1802CE		Locomotive (Trevithick)			
		Propellor-driven steamboat (Stevens)			
1804CE	Lewis & Clark Expedition			Napoleon I, Emperor of France	
1809CE				James Madison, 4th US President	
1810CE		Food canning techniques (Appert)	Napoleon loses chess match to automaton "the Turk"		<i>A Novel from the Twenty-first Century</i> - Julius von Voss
1812CE	Great Temple of Abu Simbel discovered (Burckhardt)		Louisiana becomes a US state	War of 1812 (USA-Britain)	
1815CE		Miner's safety lamp (Davies)	Tambora volcanic explosion	Battle of New Orleans (US-Britain)	
1817CE			Mississippi becomes a US state	James Monroe, 5th US President	
1818CE	Ross & Perry Baffin Bay Expeditions		First transatlantic steamship crossing		<i>Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus</i> - Mary Shelley (reanimation)
			Illinois becomes a US state		
1820CE	Wrangel Siberian Expedition			George IV, King of England	
1822CE		Computer (Babbage)	Boston streets lit by gas lights		
1824CE		Electromagnet (Sturgeon)		Simón Bolívar, Emperor of Peru	
1825CE		First passenger railway	Erie Canal opened	Nicholas I, Tsar of Russia	
1826CE		Non-Euclidian geometry (Lobachevsky)	First railway tunnel	John Quincy Adams, 6th US President	<i>The Last Man</i> - Mary Shelley (21st century biological warfare)

	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1827CE		Aluminium first refined(Wöhler)	First Baedeker travel guide published		A Voyage to the Moon - George Tucker
1828CE		Baltimore & Ohio rail-road begun(USA)	Jules Verne born	Russia declares war on Turkey	
1829CE	Smithsonian Institution endowed	Typewriter patented (Burt)	First police force in London	Andrew Jackson, 7th US President	
1830CE	Royal Geographic Society founded		Liverpool-Manchester rail line opened		
1831CE	Discovery of North Magnetic Pole(Ross)	Chloroform(Guthrie/Liebig)	Cholera pandemic in Europe	Southampton slave revolt(USA)	
		Electromagnetic induction(Faraday)	London Bridge opened		
1833CE	Voyage of the Beagle (Darwin)		Slavery abolished in Britain	Isabella III, Queen of Spain	
1834CE			Spanish Inquisition officially ends	Maria II, Queen of Portugal	
1835CE		Halley's Comet appears	Barnum opens first circus act	Ferdinand I, Emperor of Austria	The Monikins - James Fenimore Cooper (an intelligent monkey society near the North Pole)
			Nuremburg-Furth rail line opens	Second Seminole War(USA)	
1836CE		Revolver(Colt)	First cricket match (Britain)	Battle of the Alamo (USA-Mexico)	
		Electric motor (Davenport)	Arkansas becomes a US state		
1837CE		Telegraph(Morse)	Michigan becomes a US state	Victoria, Queen of England	The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym - Edgar Allen Poe (life inside the hollow earth)
			First Canadian railroad	Martin Van Buren, 8th US President	
1838CE	Vyse & Perring Interior survey of Great Pyramid	Birds of America - John James Audobon			
1839CE	Ross Antarctic Expedition	Vulcanized rubber (Goodyear)	Cunard Line founded	First Opium War begins (Britain-China)	
1840CE	Wilkes Pacific Expedition	Photography (Daguerre)	4,500 kilometers of rail lines in USA	Frederick Wilhelm IV, King of Prussia	
1841CE		Hypnosis(Braid)	First university degrees for women in USA	William Harrison, 9th US President	
				John Tyler, 10th US President	
				British claim Hong Kong	

	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1844CE		Wood pulp paper (Keller)		China-US peace treaty	<i>Mysteries of Paris</i> - Eugene Sue (dark vision of a city/world)
1845CE	Franklin Northwest Passage Expedition		Irish Potato Famine U.S. Naval Academy founded Texas and Florida become US states	James Polk, 11th US President Maori uprising (New Zealand)	
1846CE	Neptune discovered (Leverrier/Galle)	Ether used as anaesthetic (Morton) Zeiss Optical factory founded		Mexican-American War (Mexico-USA)	
1848CE	Hooker Himalaya Expedition Bates & Wallace Amazon Expedition Lynch Dead Sea Expedition	First safety matches (Böttger)	Serfdom abolished in Austria California Gold Rush begins	<i>Communist Manifesto</i> (Marx/Engels)	<i>The Crater</i> - James Fenimore Cooper (utopian culture on newly risen islands) <i>Eureka</i> - Edgar Allen Poe (astrophysics and cosmology)
1849CE	Spruce S.American Expedition	Gas turbine (Bourdin) Speed of light measured (Fizeau)		Zachary Taylor, 12th US President	
1850CE	Royal Meteorologic Society founded		California becomes a US state	Millard Fillmore, 13th US President	
1851CE			England-France telegraph	Tibet bans foreigners Taipeng Rebellion begins (China)	
1852CE		Airship (Giffard) Gyroscope (Foucault)			
1853CE	Livingstone discovers Victoria Falls Burton's pilgrimage to Mecca	Glider (Cayley) Hypodermic syringe (Wood)	Telegraph system in India First railroad through the Alps	Franklin Pierce, 14th US President Crimean War (Russia-France-Britain)	
1855CE		4-cycle gas engine (Davidson)		Alexander II, Tsar of Russia	
1856CE		Purified cocaine	Bell for Big Ben cast	Second Opium War begins (Britain-China)	
1857CE		Safety elevator (Otis)		James Buchanan, 15th US President Indian Rebellion of 1857 (USA)	

# EABA

Year	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1858CE	Burton & Speke discover source of the Nile	Galvanometer (Thomson)	<i>Great Eastern</i> launched(world's largest steamship)(58  Minnesota becomes a US state		<i>The Diamond Lens</i> - Fitz-James O'Brien (microscopic intelligent life)
1859CE		Rechargeable battery(Plante)  <i>Origin of the Species</i> (Darwin)	Victoria Bridge (Montréal)  Oregon becomes a US state	<i>On Liberty</i> (Mill)  Ocean-going ironclad warship (France)	
1861CE		Gatling Gun(Gatling)  Germ theory of fermentation(Pasteur)	Kansas becomes a US state  Warsaw Massacre	US Civil War begins  Abraham Lincoln, 16th US President	
1862CE	North-south crossing of Australia(Burke & Wills)  West-east crossing of Arabia(Palgrave)	Speed of light measured(Foucault)	International Exhibition(London)	Turreted ironclad Monitor launched (USA)	
1863CE	National Academy of Sciences(USA)	Electromagnetic theory(Maxwell)	West Virginia becomes a US state	Emancipation Proclamation(USA)	<i>Five Weeks in a Balloon</i> - Jules Verne
1864CE	California Geological Society Exploration of Yosemite		Confederate sub sinks Union warship  Red Cross founded  Nevada becomes a US state	Geneva Convention established	<i>Journey to the Center of the Earth</i> - Jules Verne  <i>A Voyage to the Moon</i> - Chrysostum Trueman
1865CE	Thayer Brazil Expedition  First ascent of the Matterhorn (Whymper)	Theory of inheritance (Mendel)	First speed limits in Britain(2mph city/ 4mph country)	US Civil War ends, slavery abolished  Andrew Johnson, 17th US President	<i>From the Earth to the Moon</i> - Jules Verne
1866CE		Dynamite(Nobel)  Torpedo(Whitehead)	Transatlantic telegraph		
1868CE	Palmer Easter Island Expedition		Sewer system (London)	Andrew Johnson impeached	<i>The Steam Man of the Prairies</i> - Edward F. Ellis
1869CE	Cro-Magnon remains discovered(Lartet)	Periodic table of the elements (Mendeléev)	Transcontinental railroad(USA)  Suez Canal	<i>The Subjugation of Women</i> (Mill)  Ulysses S. Grant, 18th US President	<i>The Brick Moon</i> - Edward Everett Hale (an orbiting artificial satellite)
1870CE			Britain-India telegraph line	First African-American vote in USA	<i>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</i> - Jules Verne



Year	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1871CE	Excavation of Troy (Schliemann)	Electric generator (Gramme)	Stanley finds Livingston  First Major League baseball game  Great Chicago Fire		<i>The Battle of Dorking</i> - George Tamkyns Chesney (speculating on future wars)
1873CE	Challenger Global Expedition	First practical typewriter (Remington)	Vienna Exchange crashes, global economic downturn until 1897		<i>The Tachypomp</i> - Edward Page Mitchell (artificial boosting of human intelligence)
1874CE		Barbed wire (Glidden)	Blue jeans patented (Strauss)		
1875CE	East-west crossing of Africa (Cameron)	Magazine-fed firearm (Hotchkiss)	First Kentucky Derby		<i>The Mysterious Island</i> - Jules Verne
1876CE		Telephone (Edison)	All-steel warship  Custer's Last Stand	Famine in China  USA Centennial	
1877CE		Phonograph (Edison)  Microphone (Berliner)		Rutherford B. Hayes, 19th US President	
1879CE	Prehistoric cave art in Spain (Sautuola)	Incandescent light bulb (Edison)		Anglo-Zulu War (Africa)	
1880CE	Bennett Arctic Expedition	Piezoelectricity (Curie)	First electric street-light (Indiana)	Boer War (Africa)	<i>Across the Zodiac</i> - Percy Gregg (exploring the solar system)
1881CE		Anthrax vaccine (Pasteur)	First Channel tunnel attempted	James A. Garfield, 20th US President  Chester A. Arthur, 21st US President	
1883CE			Krakatoa volcanic explosion  Brooklyn Bridge (New York)		
1884CE		Fountain pen (Waterman)  Steam turbine (Parsons)  Smokeless gunpowder (Vieille)  Rabies vaccine (Pasteur)  Motorcycle (Daimler)	Colchester earthquake (Britain)  Statue of Liberty (USA)  Gold discovered in the Transvaal (Africa)	Grover Cleveland, 22nd US President	

# EABA

Year	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1885CE			Skyscraper(Chicago)		
1886CE		Electrolytic refining of aluminum(Hérout/Hall)  Radio(Hertz)			<i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> - Robert Louis Stephenson (drug-induced mutation)
1887CE					<i>The Twentieth Century War</i> - Albert Robida (realistic speculation of future wars)
1888CE	Crossing of Greenland(Nansen)  National Geographic Society founded	Compact film camera(Kodak)  Pneumatic tire (Dunlop)			
1889CE			Eiffel Tower	Benjamin Harrison, 23rd US President	<i>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</i> - Mark Twain (time travel)
1890CE				Wounded Knee Massacre (USA)	
1891CE		Zipper(Judson)			
1892CE		Diesel engine (Diesel)			<i>On the Moon</i> - Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (by the father of modern rocketry)
1893CE				Grover Cleveland, 24th US President	
1895CE		Wireless telegraph (Marconi)  Motion picture camera(Lumiere)  X-rays(Roentgen)			<i>The Time Machine</i> - H.G. Wells (time travel)  <i>Propellor Island</i> - Jules Verne  <i>Mars</i> - Percival Lowell (theories of Martian civilization and canals)  <i>The Island of Dr. Moreau</i> - H.G.Wells (engineering of intelligence in animals)
1896CE	Andrée North Pole Balloon Expedition		Klondike Gold Rush(USA)  First modern Olympics(Athens)		<i>The Invisible Man</i> - H.G.Wells

Year	Discovery	Science/Industry	Current events	Politics/Military	Science fiction
1897CE		Malaria bacillus(Ross) Electron(Thomson)	Diamond Jubilee (Britain) Famine in India	William McKinley, 25th US President	<i>Two Planets</i> - Kurd Lasswitz (Martians living at the North Pole)
1898CE		Radium(Curie)		Boxer Rebellion (China) Spanish-American War(Spain-USA)	<i>The War of the Worlds</i> - H.G.Wells (Martian invasion of Earth) <i>Edison's Conquest of Mars</i> - Garrett P. Serviss (Earth takes the war back to the Martians)
1899CE		Magnetic tape recorder(Poulsen)			<i>The Lost Continent</i> - J. Cutcliffe Hyne (an Atlantis story)
1900CE		Rigid dirigible (Zeppelin)			
1901CE		Laws of Radiation - Max Planck		Theodore Roosevelt, 26th US President Edward VII, King of England	<i>The First Men in the Moon</i> - H.G.Wells
1902CE	First crossing of the Irish Channel in a balloon(Bacon)	Air conditioner (Carrier)	First woman to speak at Archaeological Institute of America (Hawes)		
1903CE		Airplane(Wright)			
1904CE					<i>Master of the World</i> - Jules Verne <i>The Food of the Gods</i> - H.G. Wells
1905CE	First north-south traverse of Africa by a woman(Hall)	Theory of Relativity (Einstein)			
1906CE	First transit of the Northwest Passage (Amundsen)				





STEAMPUNK

*By permission of the Patentees*  
*THIS ENGRAVING of the FIRST CARRIAGE, the "ARIEL,"*  
*is respectfully inscribed, to the Directors of*  
**THE AERIAL TRANSIT COMPANY**



...The most striking part of the machine is the immense web which, in the most important respects, fulfils the office of wings. It consists of a framework of great strength and extraordinary lightness, covered with silk or linen; its dimensions are not less than one hundred and fifty feet by thirty feet... The weight of the machine, when loaded and prepared for flight, is estimated at 3,000 pounds, the area of the wings amounts to 4,500 square feet...

- *The Aerial Steam Carriage* (1843CE)

▼ **INTRODUCTION** - The **Life in 1869CE** chapter gave you an overview for what the *real* Victorian Era was like. While that gives you a reasonable baseline for public attitudes and life, **Verne** is about Victorian SF, the fantastical and even absurd. This overlaps with the genre called "steampunk". **Verne** is not *actually* a steampunk world, as the notion of steampunk usually requires a much more pervasive use of the tech associated with the genre. Rather, **Verne** has or will have some of these unusual bits, but they are going to mostly be limited to secret societies, mad scientists and of course, adventurers. Some of the technology you are about to get into is impractical, unable to compete with 21st century equivalents. *It's not supposed to be practical or equal to modern gear.* It is the sort of stuff that people with more money than sense would build, and/or which gives insane amounts of advantage in a world where no countermeasures to it exist. Attack subs in a world without sonar and anti-submarine weapons. Bomb-carrying dirigibles in a world without anti-aircraft weapons. Tanks in a world of horse-drawn artillery. And that's just the *mundane* technology.

This chapter is rules-heavy and deals with how to integrate fanciful futuristic tech into **Verne**, yet still maintain the Victorian feel necessary for the genre. To understand all the technical bits for making your own **Verne** tech you will need the **Stuff!** design supplement, but the **Gear** chapter will also have plenty of pre-designed things for you to play with.

▼ **BASICS** - No matter how advanced it is, **Verne** technology will always be recognizably "Victorian". There will always be an aspect of over-engineered elegance to a **Verne** gadget or gizmo. Engraved switch plates, ornate pointers on meters, elegant fonts, exposed struts, form added onto function and little concern for ergonomics and the safety of the user. If a machine has dangerous moving parts, it is assumed that you are smart enough to stay out of their way, or turn them off before trying to work on them. A safety cage or interlock is a rarity, and the lower the pay and importance of the person using the gizmo, the less likely it will have any sort of safety considerations. And the gizmo itself is of course robust enough to chew up the careless operator and keep going without any malfunction.

Along those lines, any military tech designed for use by the lower classes will be designed and built with durability and cheapness in mind. If your rifle, uniform and backpack are all cheap, heavy and inefficient, well, it's cheaper to simply use more soldiers than it is to give existing soldiers efficiently designed (and slightly more costly) gear. For reference, the average soldier's marching kit was about 15 kilograms. Their weapon, ammunition and clothing was in addition to this.

Technology in a **Verne** campaign is going to advance rapidly, maybe even more rapidly than is actually possible, just for the sake of powering adventures. If you start in 1869CE, you may not want to wait until 1879CE to deal with political intrigues involving the electric light bulb, or maybe you have an adventure where something like a flashlight would make all the difference. So, you have to invent it early and make it available. *There is not a problem with that.* There are many industrial nations in **Verne**, many brilliant minds at work, and realistically, technology *does* advance extremely rapidly. The progression from the first telegraph to the first radio takes place in a single lifetime. So, having something new show up in the space of six months from the end of the previous adventure is not going to be a stretch. This is especially the case if a new technology can somehow be an extension of an existing one. Jules Verne had the first Moon mission fired from a huge cannon, an existing technology. If or when interplanetary travel becomes possible, the ships will be built in shipyards using the same steel and rivets conventional ships are built with. Vacuum tubes, copper wire, resistors, capacitors and the like already exist in some form, it is just a question of figuring out how to combine them in new and interesting ways.

▼ **CONVENTIONAL TECH** - This is the baseline for **Verne**, and in **EABA** terms will be the middle of the Industrial Era. This is the tech available at the start of the campaign for readily available military and consumer goods, and applies to energy, engines, materials and so on. Technology from the late Industrial Era is available at four times late Industrial Era costs, provided you can find someone skilled enough in the appropriate field to design and make such devices. This does not require any special Trait, merely a very high level of skill and a lot of money. Since the industrial infrastructure to make late Industrial Era goods is not in place, such items will be very limited in quantity, though as a campaign progresses, this will naturally change. In a purely historical sense, for most technologies the late Industrial Era is not ushered in until shortly after 1900CE. There are also Industrial Era technologies that are *possible*, but do not yet exist in 1869CE. These can be acquired *after* someone invents them at four times the Industrial Era cost, but if they are a commercially successful technology (like the light bulb), the price will drop within a few years to Industrial Era levels.

Technologies and materials that are Industrial Era in 1869CE include:

- Batteries
- Electric motors
- Reciprocating steam engines(reliable)
- Internal combustion engines(cantankerous)
- Iron
- High-quality steel
- Telegraphs
- Submarines
- Mines (the "boom!" kind)
- Torpedoes
- Gliders
- Balloons
- Dirigibles
- Cartridge weapons
- Machineguns
- Cameras
- Vulcanized rubber

Some of these may be impractical (like submarines), but they *do* exist. Others (like internal combustion engines) are in their teething phases and have not yet proven their superiority to existing technologies in commercial or military applications. Just because it works for a mechanical wizard who can constantly tinker with it does not mean it is ready for common usage...

Below are technologies that are Industrial Era, that have not yet been invented in 1869CE. Some of these are advanced enough or late enough in the era to count as late Industrial Era technologies:

- Aluminum in useful quantities
- Phonographs
- Telephones
- Movie cameras
- Electric generators
- Steam turbines
- Compact film cameras
- X-ray machines
- Radio
- Tape recorders
- Air conditioners
- Aeroplanes

A list of the known elements in 1869CE and the years immediately afterwards:

Aluminum	Indium	Scandium('79)
Antimony	Iodine	Selenium
Argon('94)	Iridium	Silicon
Arsenic	Iron	Silver
Barium	Krypton('98)	Sodium
Beryllium	Lanthanum	Strontium
Bismuth	Lithium	Sulfur
Boron	Magnesium	Tantalum
Bromine	Manganese	Tellurium
Cadmium	Mercury	Terbium
Calcium	Molybdenum	Thallium
Carbon	Neon('98)	Thorium
Cerium	Nickel	Thulium('79)
Cesium	Niobium	Tin
Chlorine	Nitrogen	Titanium
Chromium	Osmium	Tungsten
Cobalt	Oxygen	Uranium
Copper	Palladium	Vanadium
Dysprosium('86)	Phosphorous	Xenon('98)
Erbium	Platinum	Ytterbium('78)
Fluorine('86)	Polonium('98)	Yttrium
Gadolinium('80)	Potassium	Zinc
Gallium('75)	Praseodymium('85)	Zirconium
Germanium('86)	Radium('98)	
Gold	Radon('98)	
Helium	Rhodium	
Holmium('78)	Rubidium	
Hydrogen	Ruthenium	

If you do not know all the potential or hazards of these elements, you are in good company. In 1869CE, most of the obscure ones have been isolated in barely detectable quantities. Exotic use of rare elements is something adventures can be based on, or wars started over. After all, if Cavorite production requires a rare element whose ore is only found in a few places in the world, control of those places is key to being a major world power!

**Stuff! guidelines:** For making things using the **Stuff!** supplement, the following should apply.

#### Power plants:

##### Reciprocating steam engine (Industrial)

Industrial Era	+24
Durable(x1/8 maintenance)	-3
Warmup time	+1
Fuel(coal)	-1
Total power for 1 hexagon	+21

##### Reciprocating steam engine (Late Industrial)

Late Industrial Era	+26
Durable(x1/8 maintenance)	-3
Warmup time	+1
Fuel(coal)	-1
Total power for 1 hexagon	+23

##### Steam turbine (Late Industrial)

Late Industrial Era	+26
Durable(x1/8 maintenance)	-3
Warmup time	+1
Fuel(heavy oil)	+0
Total power for 1 hexagon	+24

##### Internal combustion engine (Industrial)

Industrial Era	+24
Touchy(x8 maintenance)	+3
Fuel(gasoline)	+0
Total power for 1 hexagon	+27

##### Internal combustion engine (Late Industrial)

Late Industrial Era	+26
Fuel(gasoline)	+0
Total power for 1 hexagon	+26

##### Electric motor (Industrial)

Industrial Era	+24
Non air-breathing	-3
x1/4 fuel efficiency	+6
Total power for 1 hexagon	+27

##### Electric motor (Late Industrial)

Late Industrial Era	+26
Non air-breathing	-3
x1/4 fuel efficiency	+6
Total power for 1 hexagon	+29

##### Battery (Industrial)

Industrial Era	+24
Non air-breathing	-3
Battery	-3
Total power for 1 hexagon	+18

##### Battery (Late Industrial)

Late Industrial Era	+26
Non air-breathing	-3
Battery	-3
Total power for 1 hexagon	+20

#### Weapons:

##### Muzzle-loading firearm (Early Industrial)

Early Industrial Era	+22
Easy technology	+3
Takes 15 seconds to reload	+2
Unreliable in damp conditions	+1
Damage for 1 hexagon	+28

##### Cartridge firearm (Industrial)

Industrial Era	+24
Easy technology	+3
Takes several actions to reload	+1
Damage for 1 hexagon	+28

##### Cartridge firearm (Late Industrial)

Late Industrial Era	+26
Easy technology	+3
Takes several actions to reload	+1
Damage for 1 hexagon	+30

#### Sample subcases:

##### Light pistol

Weapon of 1.2 millihex(.6kg)	-29
Bulky ammo x1	+1
Handheld	+3
Modifier total	-25

##### Medium pistol

Weapon of 2 millihex(1kg)	-27
Bulky ammo x1	+1
Handheld	+3
Modifier total	-23

##### Rifle

Weapon of 8 millihex(4kg)	-21
Bulky ammo x1	+1
Handheld	+3
Modifier total	-17

##### Shotgun

Weapon of 8 millihex(4kg)	-21
Bulky ammo x2	+2
Shotgun damage	-3
Handheld	+3
Modifier total	-19

##### Gatling gun

Weapon of 400 millihex(200kg)	-4
Compact ammo x3	-6
Autofire	-3
Manually aimed	+1
Modifier total	-12

Remember that there are plenty of *other* modifiers that can apply to weapons.

# EABA

## Body armor:

Ballistic fabric	Armor	Mass	Cost
Late Primitive Era	+4	+5	-1
Very lightweight	-4	-5	-1
Organic	+1	+0	-2
Flexible	+0	-1	+1
Padded	+1	+0	+1
Advanced	+1	+0	+1
1 hexagon area	+3	-1	-1

Iron	Armor	Mass	Cost
Early Industrial Era	+10	+5	+1
Heavy	+2	+2	+1
1 hexagon area	+12	+7	+2

Steel	Armor	Mass	Cost
Industrial Era	+12	+5	+2
Heavy	+2	+2	+1
Ballistic	-2	+0	+1
1 hexagon area	+12	+7	+4

Advanced steel	Armor	Mass	Cost
Industrial Era	+12	+5	+2
Heavy	+2	+2	+1
Ballistic	-2	+0	+1
Hardened	+0	+0	+2
1 hexagon area	+12	+7	+6

Advanced steel	Armor	Mass	Cost
Late Industrial Era	+14	+5	+3
Heavy	+2	+2	+1
Ballistic	-2	+0	+1
Hardened	+0	+0	+2
1 hexagon area	+14	+7	+7

Aluminum alloy	Armor	Mass	Cost
Late Industrial Era	+14	+5	+3
Lightweight	-2	-2	+0
Ballistic	-2	+0	+1
1 hexagon area	+10	+3	+4

## Typical coverage:

Powered armor	Armor	Mass	Cost
Enhanced x 2	+0	+4	+2
Whole body	+0	+4	+3

Chest+Abdomen	Armor	Mass	Cost
Front and back or	+0	-3	-2
Front only	+0	-6	-4

Helmet	Armor	Mass	Cost
Full helmet or	+0	-7	-4
Skull and neck	+0	-9	-7

Remember that thickness and therefore protection, weight and cost can be adjusted to meet individual needs, up to a maximum of +3 protection for body armors. A special note for the "ballistic fabric" entry is that it counts normally against Industrial Era firearms, but all Late Industrial Era firearms count as armor-piercing against it (because of the higher bullet velocities generated by use of nitrocellulose-based propellants).

The "powered armor" notes are for anyone who wants to make a big, clunky steampunk armor. The listed modifier gives you room to put .3 hexagon of power plant inside the armor in addition to the occupant. Using the default values for advanced steels, this would give the armor and occupant a total mass of nearly a metric ton.

These overall design guidelines and the gear list in the back of the rules should be sufficient for you to make up any real-world **Verne** gizmos that you need. Steam launches, motorcars or motorbikes are certainly possible, even primitive aeroplanes and tanks are possible in the Industrial Era, and certainly by the Late Industrial Era. World War 1 was mostly Late Industrial Era, and used tanks, fighter planes and submarines to good effect.

▼ **Note** - Remember that "tank" was a code term coined during World War 1 to prevent the Germans from figuring out what the British were up to in case they intercepted information about this project. A pre-WWI tank in **Verne** will have an entirely different name, like "landcruiser", "leviathan", "warcrawler", or if Germany invents it, "panzerkampfwagen"

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** The bulletproof steel breastplate on page 2.33 would be designed like this:

Steel breastplate	Armor	Mass	Cost
Steel	+12	+7	+4
Padded	+1	+0	+1
Front only chest/abd.	+0	-6	-4
Thickness	-7	-7	-5
Total	+6	-6	-4

If you look at the **EABA Universal Chart**, you will see that these levels translate into an Armor of 2d+0, a mass of 3.0kg and a cost of 250 Credits. Using the money notes on page 2.23, we can see the cost in **Verne** would be about a sixth of this, or ≈40 Credits, not too far off from the historical equivalent price in terms of income and buying power. It will not stop a *rifle* bullet at close range, but it might save your life (especially with a little use of Fate), and will likely stop pistol bullets, buckshot and ricochets...from the front.



**Other mundane tech** - For **Verne** purposes, there are a handful of other technologies that may become important:

**Radio:** It is certain that someone will come up with wireless communication. In **Verne**, probably a bit earlier than normal, at least for one of the major players. Radio is going to be based on vacuum tubes, a bulky and power-hungry technology. Even the most rudimentary of walkie-talkies would be the size of a two-liter bottle of soda, have a range of only a few kilometers in good condition, take a few minutes to warm up after it was turned on, and run through a set of batteries in a few hours. And that is as advanced and compact as you could expect it to get.

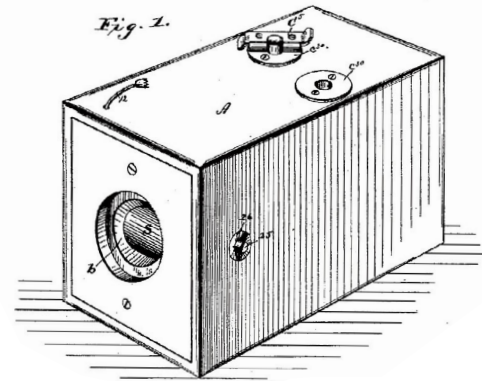
At first, radio is going to be bigger and more primitive. The first radio development is radio-telegraphy. Which is just what it sounds like, using a radio to send morse code messages. The speed of transmitting information will be on the order of ten words a minute. Double this for specialized communications that use abbreviations known to both parties (think of it as a Victorian equivalent to text messaging abbreviations, like "kthx" or "lol"). Voice communications would be developed a few years later, and crystal-based frequency stabilizing (i.e. pre-set "channels") would be a bit after that. Consumer applications of radio (music, news, advertising) will be after voice communication is perfected and enough major cities are electrified so that there is a place to plug in the radios. Military and commercial use of radio will be restricted to shipping until voice communication is possible, after which vehicle-equipped radios will let commanders talk to subcommanders in the field.

All radio communications are open. Anyone with a receiver can listen in. There will be no tricks like spread-spectrum, agile frequency-hopping, FM, PWM or other tricks to keep someone from eavesdropping on your communications. So, codes and encryption are the only ways to keep information to yourself. Even so, it will be a fairly trivial matter to narrow down the *location* of a transmitter. Only the most paranoid of groups would have mobile direction-finding units to track down transmissions, but triangulating a transmission to a general region is a trivial matter. And, a local radio operator can get a good idea how close a transmission is ("it's coming from somewhere within our castle, sir!"). The other use of direction-finding on something like a ship is for navigation purposes. If you know where two transmitters are and their direction, then the intersection of those lines is your position on the map!

**Photography:** Current cameras are bulky affairs that use fragile glass plates to make exposures on. The recent invention of celluloid will make film cameras possible, bringing photography to the masses. The lack of nearby processing centers will mean early adopters will have to develop their own or mail their film somewhere and wait for the prints to come back.

Early film cameras are very much manual affairs. The simplest only have a few exposure settings and a fixed focus lens. Taking pictures on anything dimmer than a cloudy day is out of the question, and flashbulbs will not be commercially available until 1930CE. Better cameras will have the usual adjustments for focus, aperture and shutter speed, but historically the first camera approaching modern functionality was the Leica I in 1913CE. Before that, they were a bit boxier and definitely two-hand devices.

G. EASTMAN.  
CAMERA.  
No. 388,850. Patented Sept. 4, 1888.



The utility of film cameras for espionage was quickly grasped. The first cameras built into walking canes and pocket watches showed up around 1885CE. No surviving upskirt pictures from the former are known to exist.

All cameras in the Victorian Era will be using black and white film. There was a market for artificially coloring photographs *after* they were taken, but the only way to make a color photo was to use three separate exposures taken through color filters and then printing each exposure in color on top of the others. This was a cumbersome and expensive process and was never a commercially successful enterprise.

Historically, the first motion picture cameras were invented in several places in the 1890's. The ability to put sound on film would not be invented for a few more decades, so all early motion picture films will be silent. Because of the limits of the film, early motion picture scenes had to be very well lit, even more so than for still cameras.

**Internal combustion:** One of the more influential inventions of the late 19th century was a practical internal combustion engine. Using the parameters for **Stuff!** designs on a previous page, even the early internal combustion engines had a significantly better power-to-weight ratio than the best steam engines. This meant that when you were dealing with a potential new invention that was on the bleeding edge of practicality (like the airplane), that little bit of extra power could literally be what got you off the ground. Historically and practically speaking, steam power was a well-understood and well-developed technology, which is why so many people continued to use it. Rather than the smooth release of steam, internal combustion engines have continual *explosions* going off inside them, they are loud, and except for diesel engines, require an integral electric generator for the spark plugs. And they are hard to start, especially in cold weather.

So, for the most part in the 19th century, the internal combustion engine is relegated to tinkers who are mostly trying to get the things to work reliably. Applications on how to use these engines will come later.

**Rubber:** Yes, *rubber*. Vulcanized rubber (the kind we are used to) was patented in the USA in 1844CE by Charles Goodyear (the British patent was stolen out from under him by Thomas Hancock). By the 1850's it was in wide use in a variety of products, waterproof clothing, rubber hoses, pneumatic tires, fan belts, gaskets and so on. Obviously, a lot of later technologies like aircraft and automobiles would be hampered without it. By the late 1800's it had acquired the status of a strategic material, which meant the areas of the globe where rubber trees grew became worth fighting over. This will be a recurring theme in the Victorian Era (and later). Nations will squat on and fight over areas that have a resource that they have become industrially dependent on. Instead of gold or silver, it is iron and copper and rubber and oil. The western powers didn't care at all about Saudi Arabia until someone found it was floating on a sea of crude oil (in the 1930's).

▼ **CAVORITE** - This is small but very important subset of weird science that can be very important later in a campaign. As background, it comes from the H.G. Wells novel **The First Men in the Moon** (1901CE). In it, Dr. Cavor invents a unique material (Cavorite) which is opaque to gravity, that is, anything shielded on one side by Cavorite is only attracted by gravity from the other directions. So, block off the Earth's gravity and you are attracted by mass of the universe above you. A vessel with adjustable Cavorite louvers can determine the directions in which it wishes to be attracted, making it a reactionless rocket engine that consumes no fuel. It can also be used to make perpetual motion devices and other world-unbalancing gizmos.

In **Verne**, Dr. Cavor (or someone like him) will exist and will create Cavorite, but there will be some limits to it to keep from unbalancing a campaign, and to add a little political tension:

- It will take a rogue genius to invent Cavorite, but once the secret is out, anyone with the money and raw materials can make it.
- The opaqueness of Cavorite to gravity depends upon its thickness, so you cannot layer something in Cavorite paint and expect it to float off. Similarly, the cost-effect ratio for very small vessels is not as great as for large ones.
- Cavorite is very much a line-of-sight effect. The larger an item is, the more Cavorite is required to shield it from gravity. However, you can shield just the heaviest parts of a large object and get a useful level of effect.
- Cavorite requires a very specialized, electricity-intensive process to manufacture. A small lab might take years to produce enough for a small vessel. A government-owned major facility might only be able produce enough for a few large ships a year. Think of something along the lines of the Manhattan Project.
- Part of Cavorite synthesis requires a rare, newly discovered element that is only found in a few regions of the world, including the American southwest, hitherto unexplored parts of Russia and a few places in Africa.

These conditions mean that no matter how long a **Verne** campaign runs, Cavorite-powered ships will be uncommon. The Great Powers might have a few dozen interplanetary warships and a few passenger liners, and there may be wealthy individuals or rogue elements who have a vessel or two of their own, but there will never be enough Cavorite to go around for flying cars and such. In addition, trace elements needed for Cavorite are in places that are untamed or likely to be fought over. Or more likely, the subject of diplomatic intrigues that could involve adventurers.

One side effect of the line-of-sight shielding of Cavorite and its rarity is that one must be careful. For instance, a Cavorite ship forced down in a canyon can only negate gravity *beneath* it. It is still drawn down by the mass of the planet to either side, and may thus be unable to liftoff. The heaviest Cavorite-lifted ships may be limited to airports set on mountain plateaus so that they get optimum lift from their Cavorite panels, or might only be able to lift off when the Moon is overhead.

**Stuff! guidelines:** For design purposes, Cavorite is a power plant that can only be used to generate lift. That is, to make something float it has to have sufficient acceleration to offset gravity. This would be an acceleration of at least 10m/sec on Earth, 2m/sec on the Moon and 4m/sec on Mars. Technically, a vessel with surplus lift can use its remaining panels to attract itself in some other direction, but the expense of Cavorite makes this impractical in most cases. Ships using Cavorite tend to be used at a load capacity that lets them get off the ground with 1-2m/sec of vertical acceleration to spare.

Cavorite lift can be used for interplanetary flight and has no upper limit on speed, but near the surface of a planet some other means of thrust must be used. On the Earth and Mars, this would typically be aerial propellers powered by steam engines. There is no appropriate means of powering a Cavorite vessel near the Lunar surface, one can merely ascend, land or make course adjustments using the gravity of other astronomical bodies.

#### Cavorite (Advanced)

Late Advanced Era	+44
Cavorite bonus	+10
Not air-breathing	-3
Fuel (refining and byproducts)	+5
1000x fuel efficiency(7 months default)	-30
Total power for 1 hexagon	+26

For figuring vertical acceleration, you use half the power for its size (a -13 penalty for a 1 hexagon power plant), then apply the mass and the +9 "upper atmosphere" modifiers. If this adjusted Strength gives you what you need to lift off, you're all set. Do not worry about this too much, the only time you have to figure it out is when you are designing the vehicle.

**Special effects:** Cavorite lift panels and vehicles have the following special effects:

- They take double the penalty for power plants of less than one hexagon (e.g. a power plant of .5 hexagon takes a -6 penalty instead of a -3).
- Cavorite lift on a vehicle counts as an upper atmosphere vehicle for acceleration purposes (a +9 modifier). Using it for anything else only counts it as a water vehicle (-9 modifier).
- Cavorite eventually loses potency even in storage and must be replaced. Cavorite lift panels lose 0d+1 of lift each seven months.
- Cavorite has a cost level of +6 in **Verne** credits. So, one hexagon (size level of +0) of Cavorite panels would have a cost level of +6, or 8,000 Credits. *Cavorite costs more than pure silver.*
- The trace element required for the synthesis of Cavorite does not exist on the Moon or Mars, so neither the Selenites nor Martians have any experience with it or ability to make their own.
- The default effectiveness of Cavorite is based on attraction to an empty sky. If the Sun is overhead from the Earth or Moon, adjusted lift is +3 (+2 from Mars). If the Moon is overhead from Earth, adjusted lift is +2 and if the Earth is overhead from the Moon, adjusted lift is at +4.
- Cavorite emits short-range radiations that are toxic. Goggles, gloves and heavy clothing are required to safely work on the panels.

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** How much weight can you hover on Earth with 1 hexagon (500kg) of Cavorite? This takes vertical acceleration of 10m/sec (Strength of +13). So, half the power plant output (+13), +9 for upper atmosphere vehicle, plus the mass modifier, has to add up to +13. Since the mass modifier for a 8 ton vehicle is -9, this means 1 hexagon of Cavorite panels can float an 8 ton vehicle, or the panels plus 7500kg. This "1 hexagon hovers 8 tons" ratio is almost constant. For instance, it takes 1250 hexagons of Cavorite panels to hover an 8,000 ton vehicle.

#### Cavorite floater

Total power for 1 hexagon	+26
Acceleration penalty	-13
Upper atmosphere vehicle	+9
Vehicle mass of 8 tons	-9
Total	+13

Let's say you built a Cavorite vehicle using this power plant and it only massed 1 ton (a mass modifier of +0). This would mean you would have a Strength for acceleration purposes of +22, sufficient for vertical acceleration of 15m/sec (*after gravity*).

▼ **CLOCKWORK** - The mundane world lacks good batteries, electrical motors and the like, but mechanical devices of small size and amazing complexity are possible. In the world of **Verne**, the gamemaster can choose to gloss over some of the potential problems and allow the construction of very complex clockwork devices, if only for unique plot purposes. For instance, it is known that certain metals are not rejected by the body, so that devices made of or shielded by these materials can be added to or incorporated into the body. Sophisticated functions like sight are out of the realm of possibility, at least early in a campaign, but motion, including the motion of air that is caused by sound, is possible to generate or manipulate. With enough work, even something like a "clockwork heart" is possible.

Normally, coiled springs will lack the energy to run a powerful device for very long. So, the main thing that would be required for powerful clockwork devices is some new alloy that greatly increases the ability of a spring to hold energy. Presumably without increasing its usefulness as armor, since it would otherwise put all normal metal armors to shame. We'll call this an Early Atomic Era power plant, similar in function to a battery, but since it actually provides direct motive power, it does not use the "battery" modifier.

### Clockwork "battery" (Early Atomic Era)

Early Atomic Era	+28
Non air-breathing	-3
Total power for 1 hexagon	+25

Using the normal power plant rules, each "winding" runs the clockwork for five hours. This is a very efficient "power plant", but is self-limiting in size, since the only way to refuel it is to put sufficient mechanical energy in to wind it back up. This would be the total power it generates, for five hours, the (power + 3) for two-and-a-half hours, and so on. See below:

Power input	Time to "refuel"
power plant + 0	5 hours
power plant + 3	2.5 hours
power plant + 6	75 minutes
power plant + 9	37 minutes
power plant + 12	18 minutes
power plant + 15	9 minutes
power plant + 18	5 minutes
power plant + 21	2.5 minutes
each ±1	adjust by 25%

A normal person in **EABA** can generate a "winding Strength" of about:

One hand	Strength - 6
Both hands	Strength - 3
Both legs	Strength + 0

**EXAMPLE:** You build a clockwork engine to run a small mechanical arm:

Early Atomic Era	+28
Non air-breathing	-3
Power plant of 4 millihex	-24
Total power	+1

If this could run the mechanical arm for five hours (the default fuel duration for a power plant), then for a Strength 7 person to "rewind" the arm with their other hand would take about five hours (a winding Strength of +1 vs. a power plant Strength of +1). If you had a pedal-powered winder, you (or your Strength 7 servant) could do it in 75 minutes. If you had a power tap on your 5d+1 steam engine (Strength 16), then you could do it in 9 minutes.

Clearly, giant wind-up vehicles are not going to be practical to refuel. Smaller devices could conceivably have removable spring cartridges for rapid "refueling", but rewinding the spent cartridges will still take time. Though it would be a lot more convenient.

Clockwork power plants can have altered "fuel efficiency" to represent shorter or longer durations of power, but the actual energy stored remains the same and does not affect the rewinding time. So, you could make a clockwork device to recock a powerful crossbow, a single-use clockwork engine for a torpedo, or other steampunk-ish but not-quite real world devices.

The biggest side effect of allowing such powerful clockwork springs is that if they fail, they tend to release all their energy at once. In a chaotic mechanical fashion. If you have a coiled spring with the same stored energy as a grenade, and you snap the spring... A clockwork power plant that fails due to damage will explode, with a lethal damage equal to the Strength for its size plus 2d.

Also, even with the advanced materials used in these clockwork springs, they cannot hold tension forever. If kept under continual tension (that is, in a readied state), the metal will gradually lose its energy-holding qualities and become worthless. Assume such a device loses +1 Strength after a week and +1 more per time level after that. So, your clockwork torpedo has to be stored unwound, and wound up before use.



**Clockwork arm** - Obviously, there are no nerve interfaces or advanced things like bionics, but the same mechanical technology that allows things like a gripping hook to be operated by a combination of shoulder muscles could be extrapolated into a clockwork arm of greater complexity. Using the guidelines in **Stuff!** for robot limbs, we get the following:

Early Atomic Era	+28
Non air-breathing	-3
Manipulators	-9
Arm size (8 millihex)	-21
Vehicle size(80kg person)	+10
Total power	+5

So, this arm has a Strength of 1d+2, and for skill and Attribute use, an Agility of 1d+2. This level of Agility *requires* the purchase of a specialized skill for the limb, at a cost of 5S. With sufficient practice, the user can grasp objects no less fragile than a solid drinking glass, and no more precise than handling that glass with mittens. A *modified* pistol could be drawn, aimed and fired with the arm.

For purposes of rewinding it, it has a Strength of +4, so it will take a while. On the positive size, this or any other clockwork device only uses power when it is in use. A person merely swinging the arm by their side while walking uses no power from the spring. Rewinding it is a tedious process best left for a servant to do while you are asleep. This arm has an Armor of 1d+2 and 3 Hits, so it is durable enough for regular use, but is not very good at stopping weapons. Since this device would certainly be handmade, the cost is fairly high, about 700 Credits. This places it completely out of the range of the lower class, and even someone like an military officer would have to save up for it. It is certainly *not* a provided veteran's benefit. The military will consider a person with an artificial limb to be disabled and retired from active service unless their duties are not in the field or they have a sufficiently high rank (colonel or higher).

**Variant:** Adjusting the power plant to have a higher output for a shorter period of time could adjust the Strength by no more than +6, which would also require reinforcing the arm up to an Armor of 2d+1 and 4 Hits. If this Strength is greater than the natural Strength of the person with the clockwork arm, the full value of the Strength is only usable for gripping and crushing. If the arm had bladed fingers, this damage would be lethal, otherwise it would be half-lethal. An arm could also have a weapon in it, though this would mean a smaller power plant and correspondingly lower Strength.

**Clockwork leg** - Like the clockwork arm, but since any sort of walking uses energy, having someone wind it back up for you is a daily chore. This limb has a removable power element, so that the entire leg does not have to be transported elsewhere for winding.

Early Atomic Era	+28
Non air-breathing	-3
Manipulators	-9
Leg size (17 millihex)	-18
Vehicle size(80kg person)	+10
Total power	+8

The leg has a Strength of 2d+2, and an Agility of 1d+2 for skill and Attribute use. In addition to the obvious clicking and whirring, the user of a clockwork leg will have a slight limp or abnormal gait. It cannot operate fast enough to allow a run, so the user is limited to walking pace for their Health (which can include a Running skill bonus). The leg has a normal Armor of 2d+0, 4 Hits, and a cost of 1500 Credits, its increased size offset somewhat by its lower complexity.

**Clockwork grenade** - This is a tricky, potentially useful dynamite grenade. It has four slider levers on it, the first three each having the notations "left", "right" and "none", and the last one reads "impact", "10 seconds" and "touch". The way it works is that when activated, it spins up a small gyroscope. When *rolled* at a target, its clockwork motor propels it along the ground at six meters per turn. When it strikes an obstacle, it follows the program on each lever in turn, "none" being to ignore that lever and move to the next one. The last lever determines whether it will either go off the next time it hits something after the last lever, ten seconds after it is first activated, or on a hair-trigger motion sensor (if it is picked up or anyone steps into the same hex). It explodes with a lethal force of 3d+1. It only takes about a minute to wind up the grenade, and it has an unwinding lever. This grenade has the prohibitively high cost of 50 Credits for something that is going to blow itself up, but there may be the occasional wealthy weapon aficionado who may commission such a device for personal use (or possibly an assassination).

▼ **VRIL** - Vril is the exclusive province of a handful of geniuses in the Vril Society. It is a technology only accessible to those Gifted enough understand it, and as such, it *cannot* be mass-produced. Each piece of Vril tech is assembled under the *personal* guidance of one of the Vril adepts. Once it is assembled, anyone with knowledge of its controls can operate it, but repair or even maintenance of the device is beyond lesser mortals. *If it breaks, it stays broken...* Mundane scientists will be utterly baffled by Vril.

Vril technology falls into one of three broad categories: energy creation, energy projection, and as a subset of each, bioenergy manipulation.

**Energy creation:** Vril generators are effectively zero-point reactors, creating electrical energy out of nothing. The smallest Vril generator is fairly bulky, but can produce power at energy densities approaching that of a fusion reactor (as a side note, this means if something goes wrong, it goes wrong in a *big* way). A Vril generator has no inherent ability to generate thrust or motive power, but Late Industrial Era electric motors are available to the Vril Society, so a Vril generator can run a vehicle that would be impractical using conventional technology. For instance, unlimited range battle dirigibles (shades of Robur the Conqueror!). This electric power can also be used by the Vril Society for other things that are unknown or impractical to anyone else, like making large quantities of structural aluminum for their flying platforms.

Vril generators are monsters of steel, brass, copper and possibly aluminum, with parts that have visible electrical arcs, huge ceramic insulators, and copper-caged luminous glass tubes that pulsate in colors that do not exist in the human spectrum and thus cannot be described, only experienced.

Vril energy can also be stored in exceptionally precise stacks of beryllium copper plates which collapse upon themselves and fuse into a single mass as the energy is withdrawn. Exactly how they work is known only to the Vril geniuses, but the stacks can be made by anyone with sufficiently precise machinery (at least Late Industrial Era). However, they can only be charged up from a Vril generator, and can only be discharged once, after which they are useless. Think of them as an advanced non-rechargeable battery.

**Energy projection:** Vril can be manipulated to create a weapon. This weapon projects a beam of "pure force", having characteristics somewhere between a laser and a cannon. That is, it is a line-of-sight beam that holds its pattern over long distances, and which strikes with a kinetic, battering force that can punch holes in armor, knock down walls and generally act like a very heavy but non-armor piercing projectile. This Vril weapon does not require a Vril generator to function. Rather, the concentration and manipulation of Vril takes place entirely in the weapon. However, a vehicle with a Vril weapon probably is made mobile by use of a Vril generator, so an observer could easily make the mistake that the weapon depended on the generator for its operation.

A Vril force beam looks like a shaft of heat-shimmered air, filled with glowing iridescent colors, that travels at some extremely high velocity that can barely be discerned with the naked eye. It hits an area somewhat larger than a cannon shot, but quickly spreads out. If the target can resist the shot, it leaves a shallow crater a meter or two across. If the damage penetrates the target, it tends to shatter and crumble the target for a meter or two around the impact point, and continue penetrating inwards until it meets something that can stop it. All but the most grazing of hits would amputate a limb, and a body hit from even a small force beam is likely to liquefy bones and internal organs.

Vril force beams generate huge amounts of recoil, and are mounted upon hydraulic buffers. While strong, they are not as tough as a steel cannon barrel, and are thus mounted entirely within long, narrow, armored turrets, with motorized shutters that stay closed except for when the weapon is actually firing. The weapon itself is a tube of fired ceramic segments, each with a set of tungsten electrodes, the entire assembly surrounded by several sizes of copper coil, the largest of which is hollow and cooled by pumping water through it. The copper coils are in turn connected to lace-like antennae along the length of the weapon, which are used to collect the ambient Vril energy the weapon requires.

Vril bioenergy manipulation combines the other technologies in ways the Vril geniuses are still trying to fathom. The Vril are able to adjust the evolution or living matter, and to restore the bioenergy to damaged or dead tissue in order to regenerate, or in extreme cases, revivify it. This is very experimental, even for the Vril, and they have not found a reliable means of implementing most of their knowledge. What works in one case might fail spectacularly in another. What they can do reliably with one particular machine is regeneration. A damaged person or animal, sufficiently complex as to have a rudimentary sense of self, can be placed within the Vril energy field and its sense of self will cause damaged tissue to knit, and missing tissue to be created. Any form of damage short of death can be repaired, and even those dead for a few hours or less have sufficient residual bioenergy to allow the process to work...most of the time. However, if one's sense of self is markedly different than their *actual* form, the results can be...unusual.

Those who have been dead longer than a few hours can be reanimated, but the life fades in a matter of hours as the artificial infusion of life energy wears off. *This is, however, long enough for the dead to be interrogated...* Bodies specifically prepared for reanimation can survive indefinitely, but the person's mind and original identity are lost, leaving the resurrected being a blank slate with only the most rudimentary instincts of its previous life (walking, simple communication, etc.).

Things that have been done with limited success include artificially speeding the evolution of a living creature into one or several of the forms it would take under a particular set of environmental stressors. For instance, an ape exposed to the effects while exposed to fire, could be mutated into a fire-resistant ape. One (and only one) of the Vril geniuses has successfully mutated himself into a future human with greatly enhanced mental capacity. This individual works upon his own special projects now, as his work cannot be understood by *anyone* else. All others who have attempted to replicate this particular evolutionary advancement have failed in spectacularly fatal ways.

Lower level workers who fail the Vril Society are sometimes given the option between death and "volunteering" for Vril bioenergy experiments. The smart ones choose death, but often find they never *actually* had a choice in the matter...

**Stuff! guidelines:** For making things using the **Stuff!** supplement, the following should apply:

- All Vril devices except energy banks have a minimum size of one hexagon.
- Vril energy banks have a minimum size of .125 hexagon.
- Vril generators or weapons give off mutagenic radiation, requiring special lead-lined uniforms for techs and crew exposed to it on a regular basis (if you care about them, that is).
- Vril force beams incorporate a Vril generator in the form of a greatly reduced mass per shot and an "ammunition load" of 800 shots, which doubles the empty mass of the weapon (a -3 to weapon damage for all practical purposes). When the weapon runs out of "ammunition", it takes a Vril technician several hours to "realign the Vril" within the weapon. It cannot be reloaded until it is empty.

Vril manipulation of bioenergy is a gamemaster gimme. Simply set the machine up in an evil lair, describe it in florid terms and be done with it. It will generally be immobile, but high-ranking members of the Vril Society may have such machines on their estates. In addition to the practical medical uses, it also means that torturing someone for information can be as ruthless or extended as desired with no risk of killing the victim...

#### Vril generator (Post-Atomic)

Post-Atomic Era	+36
Vril bonus	+7
Fuel (refining and byproducts)	+6
Non air-breathing	-3
Warmup time(0d+1 per 2 time levels)	+2
Power generation	-3
4000x fuel efficiency(2.5 year default)	-36
Total power for 1 hexagon	+9

#### Vril Force Beam (Post-Atomic)

Post-Atomic Era	+36
Hard technology	-3
Detrimental side effect(radiation)	+2
Compact ammunition	-4
Takes 16 hours to reload	+8
Net effect of a full ammo load	-3
Battering damage*	special
Damage for 1 hexagon*	+36

# EABA

Battering damage is a -1 per +3 the weapon gets from *tech era*(+36), *type*(-3) and *size*. But, if the weapon penetrates armor, it gets +2 damage for each 1d+0 in overall weapon damage (i.e. a 4d+0 battering weapon that gets *anything* through armor gets +8 damage). It also adds +1 to a vehicle's Damage Limit for each full 2d of weapon damage.

## Vril Energy Bank (Post-Atomic)

Post-Atomic Era	+36
Non air-breathing	-3
Non-rechargeable	+3
Fuel(refining)	+2
Power generation	-3
Total power for 1 hexagon(for 5 hours)	+35

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** How much damage does a 2 hexagon Vril force beam do, in a turreted mount with a 60 degree traverse? First, take the damage for 1 hexagon, then add +3 for the second hexagon of size. The total of *tech era*(+36), *hard tech*(-3) and *weapon size*(+3) is +36, so the battering damage modifier is -12 (-1 per +3 in *tech*, *type* and *size*).

## Vril force beam

Damage for 1 hexagon	+36
2 hexagon weapon	+3
Battering damage	-12
Turreted, 60° arc	-3
Total	+24

This weapon has a damage of +24, or 8d+0, not a lot for a weapon that masses a ton. However, if it gets *anything* through armor, it does +16 damage, and it alters any vehicle's damage limit by +4. So, if this force beam hit a vehicle with an Armor of 7d+0 and damage limit of -1, it would get 1d+0 through armor. The damage limit would be raised to +3, and so the 1d+16 damage would automatically do the maximum of 3 Hits to the vehicle.

The biggest advantage of force beams is their ability to obliterate small but well-armored targets, and to do Hits to vehicles with good damage limits.

▼ **SELENITE TECHNOLOGY** - The Moon is inhabited by an ancient, decadent and dying race called the Selenites. The Selenites have little technology that is of interest to Earthlings. The Moon is lacking in iron and heavy elements, but is rich in aluminum compounds, and the Selenites have electricity-generating turbines powered by the sun, with which they refine aluminum. Virtually all Selenite items are made from advanced alloys of it. Unfortunately, the Moon is lacking in the elements necessary to make Vril-using items. The Selenites are aware of Vril, but have had such difficulty procuring the required trace elements that they have only one or two Vril-based items, and these are reserved for use of the Noble Primus. However, Selenites are more highly evolved than humans, and have over the millennia bred into select individuals the ability to harness Vril by the power of thought alone. This ability is shared by the Noble Primus, his elite guards, the Enforcers of Order, and to a lesser extent by the overseers in the ice mines. These individuals can, through sheer will, channel Vril through special crystal-studded aluminum rods, generating powerful electrical arcs with which to stun or even kill their foes.

**Stuff! guidelines:** The Selenites do not wear armor or have armored vehicles, but they can make Atomic Era lightweight armor and structural materials (aluminum alloy). Their electrical weapons have the following characteristics:

- Selenite lightning rods have a maximum damage of the Fate of the wielder.

Most Selenite weapons can store some amount of energy in special crystals, but usually this is only sufficient for a single shot, or enough to add +1d to the user's natural ability, after which they have to recharge it to use that ability again.

## Selenite Lightning Rod (Post-Atomic)

Post-Atomic Era	+36
Hard technology	-3
Half-lethal damage	+1
Armor-piercing	-3
Unreliable(relies on some concentration)	+3
Special effect(powered by the mind)	-6
Damage for 1 hexagon	+28

These are on the edge of between weird science and a paranormal power. We have made the Selenites require a physical means of converting Vril into a damaging effect, so that it is not *entirely* a mental power. That advanced beings can mentally harness Vril is part of the Vril myth, so we can make an exception in this case. The power is entirely biological and readily explainable in "scientific" terms, however, and no supernatural entities are required for its existence.



The elite guards of the Noble Primus may have more crystals in their weapons than normal, and mere overseers probably have none in their weapons. Only one crystal can be used per attack, so a weapon with two crystals can add +1d twice, not +2d once. As a rough guide, Overseers do 1d+1 damage and have no crystals, low-level Enforcers of Order do 1d+1 and have one crystal, mid-level Enforcers do 2d+1 and have two crystals, high level Enforcers do 3d+1 and have three crystals. At the high level, Enforcers have staffs rather than rods, as they mass 4kg. The largest weapons are quite rare, as they require a Fate of 3d+1 to use. As a rough guideline, a Selenite's skill at aiming the weapon is at least +1d more than the weapon's maximum damage (including crystal use).

In addition to these items, the Selenites may also possess "learning machines" with which they can imprint the rudiments of an intellectual skill upon a compatible mind. The first human visitors (or captives) of the Selenites may have the Selenite language forcibly imprinted upon them. In game terms, this gives the recipient 2S that goes towards a limited subset of an Awareness skill. If the recipient does not have 2S accumulated or does not immediately spend the effort required to gain 2S through training, they will suffer mental damage. That is, they will lose 2S off their highest *other* Awareness skill in order to make up the difference.

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** The rod of office for a low-level Enforcer of Order is 2 millihexes in size (mass of 1 kilogram).

#### Selenite Lightning Rod

Damage for 1 hexagon	+28
2 millihex weapon	-27
Handheld weapon	+3
Total	+4

This weapon does 1d+1 half-lethal damage, which against an unarmored target will be 1 lethal hit and 1d+0 non-lethal hits. The damage is armor-piercing, so the electrical arcs ignore the first 1d of any armor less advanced than the weapon (which is Post-Atomic Era). The wielder can fire the weapon as a major action as many times as they want, and the weapon has a single energy crystal that allows the weapon to be fired once at +1d damage. It can be recharged as a major action. Since this weapon has a damage of +4, it requires a Fate of 4 to use it at full effect, but a Fate of more than 4 cannot do extra damage with it. Since the weapon can do up to 2d+1 when using an energy crystal, the Enforcer probably has a skill roll with the weapon of at least 3d+1.

▼ **MARTIAN TECHNOLOGY** - Like the Moon, Mars is inhabited by an intelligent race. Not as old as the Selenites, but still a declining race. More advanced than humans in some ways, less in others. At some point in their past, the Martians had a great mastery of Vril, but over the millennia they have lost most of this knowledge. They only retain the basic knowledge of how to generate electricity from Vril, and a few innovative ways of using this energy, but this is rote knowledge passed from generation to generation, with no actual understanding. Their most powerful Vril-based devices are leftovers from previous ages, and the Martians do not know how to duplicate them, merely having secret armories and stockpiles under the control of Martian potentates, giving the illusion that they still manufacture these items. The Martian leaders rightly fear that Earth nations would not be as appeasing if they knew that Martian weapons and resources were a finite and dwindling supply. And Martians, long discontent with their elite leaders, might cooperate more with the Earthlings, or worse, get the Earth idea of democracy into their heads and revolt against their highborn leaders.

Martians have two unique technologies that they power with their Vril generators. First, remnants of an ancient transport system still follow the paths of their now mostly-dry canals. The roads are made of a material that can no longer be duplicated, having infinite conductivity and unusual magnetic properties. A magnet brought into proximity will float a fraction of a meter off the ground, regardless of its orientation. Martian vehicles take advantage of this. Using Vril generators, they generate a magnetic field and just hover. Driven along these roads by electric-powered propellers, the wealthy and powerful can travel long distances with great rapidity. The roads are in disrepair in some areas, and cannot be repaired (deliberately damaging a road carries a "death by torture" penalty). So, many electrohoovers carry a set of auxiliary wheels to carry them across breaks in the road.

Their other unique technology is heat-cannon. Using large amounts of electricity, they create an invisible beam that sears anything it touches. It is visible as sparkling motes in the air if dust crosses its path, but is otherwise unseen. Martian elites are equipped with heat-rifles, energized by Vril batteries that operate on the same principle as those made by the Vril Society. Unlike the Vril Society, Martians lack the ability to make new batteries. Martian Vril batteries are superior to Earth ones and far smaller than the smallest ones Earthlings make, but they are interchangeable with a bit of wiring work.

Martian heat-cannon have no recoil. Few Earthlings have seen their inner workings, but those who have viewed broken ones describe a rigid emerald-green fabric, covered with ornate copper tracery, laced with beads of different colors and shapes, surrounding a silver-blue metallic cylinder with an optical crystal of some type on the firing end. The weapon becomes very hot in operation, and has cooling fins to dissipate this energy. Overeager Martian troops sometimes overheat their weapons, a condition which sometimes corrects itself with time, and sometimes damages the weapon beyond repair. Martian palaces and mountain redoubts are armed with massive turreted versions of these weapons, but they have not been fired in so long that they may no longer work. However, if they do, woe be to any Cavorite-lifted Earth ship that crosses their line of fire...

The last technology the Martians have at their disposal are the war walkers. Giant three-legged machines, heavily armored and armed with heat cannon, these are leftovers from a more violent time in Martian history. Most of those in existence will have been used and used up in the Martian invasion of Earth, but enough remain to give European powers on Mars reason to treat Martian potentates with some respect.

**Stuff! guidelines:** For making things using the **Stuff!** supplement, the following should apply:

- Martian heat-cannon are for all practical purposes, infrared lasers.
- Martian heat-cannon are poor at venting waste heat and if fired more than once a turn, are Unreliable(7).
- Heat-cannon lose -2d/-1d each distance level of opaque/light smoke or fog they go through.
- Large heat-cannon can fire at a -1d reduced output and do one autofire burst a turn. This lets them get multiple hits to overcome a large vehicle's Damage Limit.
- Reactivated Martian war walkers are a full era more advanced than other Martian technology and their Vril generators last for a one year once activated, not two-and-a-half years.
- Martian Vril-based electrohovers get a +9 to their Strength for acceleration purposes, to take into effect the bonus their roads give. An adjusted Strength of +3 is required to hover on a Martian road.
- Martian Vril generators are less efficient than human ones, but also lack harmful side effects.

Remember that aside from the Vril generators used in electrohovers and to provide electrical lighting, the Martians have no ability to make new tech. They construct what they know by rote, with no understanding of the principles involved.

### Martian Vril generator (Post-Atomic)

Post-Atomic Era	+36
Vril bonus	+6
Fuel (refining and byproducts)	+4
Non air-breathing	-3
Warmup time(0d+1 per 1 time level)	+1
Power generation	-3
4000x fuel efficiency(2.5 year default)	-36
Total power for 1 hexagon	+5

### Martian Heat Cannon (Post-Atomic)

Post-Atomic Era	+36
Hard technology	-3
Beneficial side effect(zero recoil)	-2
Detrimental side effect(overheating)	+2
Damage for 1 hexagon	+33

### Martian Energy Bank (Late Post-Atomic)

Late Post-Atomic Era	+38
Non air-breathing	-3
Fuel(refining)	+2
Non-rechargeable	+3
Power generation(battery)	-3
Total power for 1 hexagon(for 5 hours)	+37

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** A small Martian Vril battery has a size of .5 millihex (.25 kilogram). It has a power output of 1d+1, which it can maintain for 5 hours.

### Small Martian Vril battery

Power from 1 hexagon	+37
.5 millihex power plant	-33
Total	+4

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** A Martian Imperial Guard captain has a heat-pistol 1.5 millihexes in size (.75 kilograms):

### Martian Heat-pistol

Damage for 1 hexagon	+33
1.5 millihex weapon	-28
Several actions to reload	+1
Handheld weapon	+3
Total	+9

This weapon does 3d+0 damage. We say it is powered by one Martian "energy cube". Since a clip the size of the pistol (.75kg) would hold 200 shots, the .25kg energy cube holds a third of this, or about 65 shots. The weapon and battery add up to about 1 kilogram, giving 65 shots at 3d+0 damage. Remember that on Mars, the loaded weapon only feels like it has a mass of about .5 kilograms.

▼ **LGP TECHNOLOGY** - The League for Gaian Primacy operates with the handicap of not having any one particular technology to make them fearsome. They do however, have some of the best minds in the world, some of whom are gifted with rare insight. When they encounter unusual tech and prevail, they make every effort to recover the tech of their enemies. They cannot fully reverse-engineer it, of course, but they can often deduce something of its operating principles and see how a similar effect could be gotten with highly advanced, but understandable technologies. In many areas of technology they are no more advanced than Late Industrial Era, but in a few others they are capable to the Early Atomic Era. Specifically, they have unlocked the secrets of radium and other radioactive elements, decades ahead of Marie Curie (or perhaps Ms. Curie could be born a decade or two earlier and be an LGP *wunderkind*). The LGP has figured out how to make a primitive fission pile, and can use it to make steam for powering engines and generators (generators are a -3 to output). This is far too bulky for any sort of aerial vehicle, but admirably suited for a ship or submersible. They have had to use a remote Pacific island as their base of operations, dumping the radioactive byproducts down the shaft of an extinct volcano, perhaps even to the center of the Earth. Their first "prometheal" prototype vessel is operational in 1869CE, but is merely a test platform. Their main ship, *Egalité*, a vessel of both research and war, is being secretly constructed in pieces in foundries and shipyards across the world, the pieces shipped to the Pacific and assembled there.

The LGP does not have access to aluminum yet, as they have not unlocked or acquired that secret in 1869CE. They would probably not use it in any case. Their elemental research has uncovered new elements unknown to the rest of the world, capable of greatly increasing the strength of steel or giving it other useful properties. The LGP has access to Early Atomic Era armor steel. In addition to making vehicles from it, they also make lightweight body armor out of it. It is not impervious to modern weapons, but it is sufficient to stop pistols, buckshot and other lightweight weapons. This is normally in the form of small plates in a tailored silk undergarment, making it both flexible and quiet.

They can also machine firearms from the same metal, allowing them to create handheld weapons of considerable power compared to those normally available in 1869CE. This includes innovations like handheld machineguns (submachineguns), armor-piercing rifle and pistol ammunition.

LGP Armor steel	Armor	Mass	Cost
Early Atomic Era	+16	+5	+3
Heavy	+2	+2	+1
Ballistic	-2	+0	+1
Hardened	+0	+0	+2
1 hexagon area	+16	+7	+7

#### LGP Fission Pile (Early Atomic)

Early Atomic Era	+28
Overall fission bonus	+12
Warmup time(0d+1 per 2 time levels)*	+2
4000x fuel efficiency(2.5 year default)	-36
Total power for 1 hexagon	+6

\*Larger reactors can choose to take only the normal warmup modifier of +1

Custom-made LGP firearms will either be +2 damage over their period counterparts *and* be armor-piercing, or be half the weight and armor-piercing for the same damage. High-powered LGP ammo fired through a non-LGP weapon would make it Unreliable(11), and the weapon will be *ruined* on a malfunction, possibly even exploding (especially if used by an extra). LGP weapons would cost about four times as much to make.

**DESIGN EXAMPLE:** The LGP has made a 32 hexagon (16 ton) fission pile and put it in a 125 ton (when loaded) steamship:

#### LGP Fission Pile

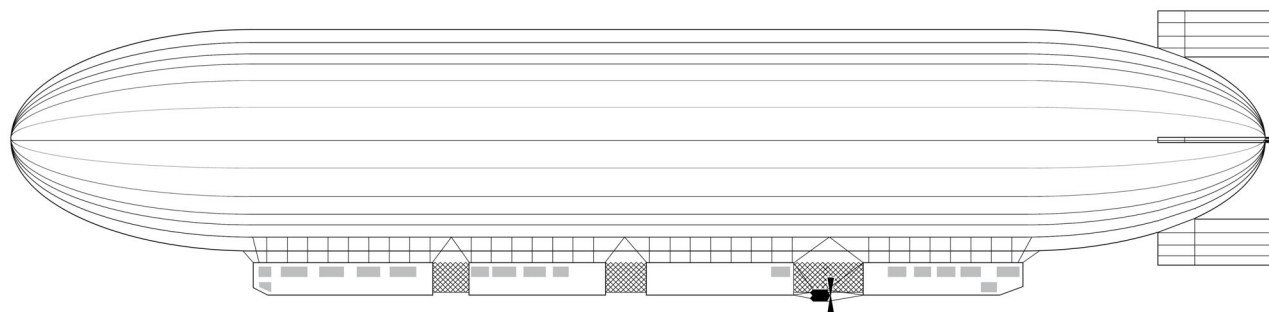
Power from 1 hexagon	+5
32 hexagon power plant	+30
Total	+35

Using the **EABA** rules for vehicle design, the penalties on Strength for a 125 ton water vehicle are -21 for the vehicle mass and -9 for a surface ship, for an adjusted Strength of +5. This will give the ship a top speed of 5m/sec (18kph/11mph), with an acceleration of about 1m/sec every two turns. With the optional warmup time of 0d+1 Strength per time level and an output of +36, the fission pile will take 2.5 days to warm up from a cold start (a time level of +36). This is not a fantastic performance level, but considering that it can maintain that speed day and night for over two years, it is a pretty good testbed for LGP technology.

# EABA

▼ **MORLOCK TECHNOLOGY** - The subsurface peoples have no advanced technology. They merely have their great familiarity with the caverns and underground passages the surface dwellers have merely scratched the surface of. The Morlocks may have advanced drugs made from subsurface mushrooms, but that would be it. The fey Morlocks may have the ability to cause shifts in the great plates of the Earth, but this is not advanced technology, merely leverage on a massive scale.

The Morlocks are capable of using technology of the surface races if they acquire it, but more than likely cannot repair, supply or duplicate it. The fey know of Vril or something like it from their most ancient of legends, and fear it greatly. They believe their most remote ancestors almost destroyed the Earth with Vril, and abandoned it as a result, even though it caused the collapse of their civilization.



▼ **MERFOLK TECHNOLOGY** - The merfolk are merely aquatic primitives and have no technology to speak of. For the sake of adventure purposes, they may have cultivated or bred jellyfish-like creatures that are worn like a facemask, allowing them to breathe surface air and undistort their water-adapted vision, and likewise a creature that allows a surface dweller to see and breathe underwater. If the fey Morlocks had Vril technology in the distant past, they probably disposed of it in the deep ocean trenches. If any survived, the merfolk might know of it, but cannot use it or understand it. Radiations from these ancient devices are likely the cause for sea monsters like giant kraken.

▼ **VENUSIAN TECHNOLOGY** - There are no intelligent forms of life on the dense jungles of Venus, and no technology there except that which adventurers bring with them. The molds and such of Venus rapidly eat away at fabrics, metals and wood, so extended stays are inadvised if you wish your spaceship to survive liftoff. Fortunately, the Venusian fungi cannot survive in the cool and dry conditions elsewhere (even Earth's equatorial jungles are too dry or cold).

▼ **SAMPLE TECHNOLOGY** - From there until the end of the chapter are stats and design notes for several items of steampunk tech for possibly inclusion in adventures. The only thing you need to note for your own designs is that for large vehicles, the penalty on Armor for size is a maximum of -24, no matter the size of the vehicle.

**Collective Will:** The *Collective Will* is a medium-sized airship that is typical early campaign tech for the League for Gaian Primacy. It uses Late Industrial Era tech and cuts corners in terms of reliability, but is the sort of thing adventurers might encounter from a mundane foe earlier in a campaign. There are no technological surprises, nothing that an enterprising and wealthy historical individual could not put together.

<b>Collective Will</b>
Strength 5d+2
Top speed/Acc 16/1
Armor 1d+0
Hits/Damage limit 14/-6
To hit -8/-2

The *Collective Will* is a semi-rigid dirigible with a fabric-covered, highly stressed bamboo framework, with lift provided by several internal hydrogen cells. Motive power is provided by a pair of Stirling engines, heated by light fuel oil. The gondola is several semi-open compartments connected by short open bridges. The compartments are fairly primitive, a fabric-covered frame with a floor of wooden slats, and canvas curtains to keep out wind and rain. Sleeping is handled by slinging hammocks in the rear of the gondola. A tiny stove is provided for heating water, but all other food is non-perishables stored in a large hamper. Fully fueled and supplied, the *Collective Will* can carry the weight of up to ten people.

The only extra equipment the *Collective Will* carries is a winch and a platform that can be raised and lowered with it, though these can be readily ejected if weight becomes a concern. It carries adhesive patches for covering small punctures and a few spare parts for engines and props. The *Collective Will* is completely unarmed except for the crew's sidearms. It normally carries a sniper with a long range rifle, but that is its heaviest weapon.



In game terms, the *Collective Will* has a maximum flight endurance of slightly more than three days, after which gas leakage and lack of fuel will quickly ground it. Maintenance on the engine and frame start to be a problem as well each hundred or so hours of operation. Everything has been made so lightweight it is on the edge of operational safety margins. Practically speaking, it has an operational radius of about 1,400 kilometers, after which it needs a minor overhaul. If possible, it will stage from an intermediate distance, where a team can meet it to top off fuel and hydrogen to give it a longer loiter time. In combat terms, the envelope and gondola take negligible damage from regular projectile weapons (each 7 punctures does 1 Hit), though envelope punctures can be a long-term problem in terms of buoyancy. Like all hydrogen dirigibles, it is vulnerable to fire. Fire-based attacks count as explosions for purposes of adjusting its Damage Limit, and if it takes any Hits as a result, it has caught on fire and will take another Hit each time level after that until it has burned to ash. The gas envelope is -8 difficulty to hit (16 meters wide and 80 meters long), the gondola is -2 difficulty to hit, and each engine is +0 to hit. The engines have an Armor of 2d+0 and 5 Hits each. Losing one engine will drop the top speed by 3m/sec.

There is enough surplus weight like the winch and passenger lift that it can offset a -1d damage penalty to the gas envelope and still stay aloft, but anything more than that will eventually require it to land. Specifically, ditching extra fuel, the passenger winch, and non-essential supplies will each offset -1 of penalty to lift, and the acceleration of the engines can be used to provide some lift to offset another -1 penalty.

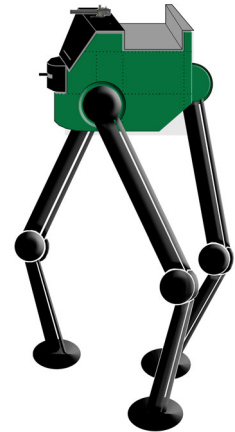
The *Collective Will* features prominently in the adventure "The Great Brain Robbery", so refer back to here if you need the stats for it.

▼ **Note:** As a historical reference, the *Collective Will* looks similar to the historical Zeppelin LZ2 (circa 1905CE). Also note that in 1896-97CE there was a rash of cigar-shaped airship sightings reported in the newspapers from California to Chicago, the first real spate of "UFO sightings". These accounts can be found online and the year shifted to provide color commentary for your campaign.

**Vril Scout Walker** - Once the Vril Society becomes openly militaristic, they will begin to field weapon platforms like this. This is a "scout walker", which means it is lightly armed and armored. However, for a "scout", it is not very fast, at least not in this incarnation. It is possible that later versions may make room for a small Vril energy bank to provide a limited "sprint" capability.

#### Vril Scout Walker

Strength	5d+0
Top speed/Acc	3/1
Front	4d+0
Right	4d+0
Left	4d+0
Rear	3d+0
Top	1d+0
Bottom	4d+1
Hits/Damage limit	16/5
To hit	-2



This Vril walker is powerful, but also has some vulnerabilities, mainly due to the Vril Society having no experience with fielding and fighting in such a vehicle.

Its strengths are its weapon, endurance and armor. The Vril force beam it mounts has a battering damage of 6d+0 and an Accuracy of 4. That's 6d+0 lethal damage and if any of that breaches armor, it does +12 *additional* damage. It also adds +3 to the Damage Limit of any vehicle. This makes it capable of blowing huge holes in walls, wooden ships and even lightly armored steel vessels. The weapon holds 800 shots worth of energy. It cannot be reloaded and has to be completely recalibrated by a Vril adept when depleted. In addition, it has a pintle-mounted Gatling Gun (4d+0 damage, autofire, Accuracy of 2) and several hundred rounds of ammunition. The walker is powered by a Vril generator that runs the electrical motors in the walker, and it will provide that power continuously for over two years. However, this Vril generator takes a few weeks to warm up from a cold start, so it is usually kept at nearly full power to prevent combat surprises. A two ton Vril generator is the largest practical size the Vril Society can make. Larger ones take too long to reach proper levels of output. The last strength is that the walker has riveted steel armor sufficient to stop most handheld weapons.

Its weaknesses are its mobility, weapon and armor. While it is a genuine walking vehicle (three-legged) and far more agile than say a towed field piece, it is still mechanically primitive and can get stuck in rough terrain (it only has a tracked vehicle level of off-road mobility). It is also slow, with a top speed of about the same as a jogging person. Of course, it never gets tired, either. While it has a good arc of fire with the Gatling Gun, the Vril force beam is in an armored sponson with a 60° forward arc. To fire at anything outside of this arc requires that the walker physically pivot its entire body. In addition, its lurching walk means any fire while moving is at +2 difficulty and aimed fire is not possible. So, most fire at long range will require the walker to stop and aim, giving foes some warning or the ability to get their own shots off against it. The last weakness is its armor. It is strong against most handheld weapons, but it will fall rapidly to any sort of cannon fire. In addition, it has only a light screen on the top to keep out debris and it is effectively an open-topped vehicle. The crew will normally be equipped with 1d+1 steel helmets and torso plates to stop shrapnel and minor penetrations, along with 0d+2 protection on the arms and legs. In practice, this gives them +2 or +1 over the walker's armor in the case of crew hits (e.g. an effective protection of 4d+2 for torso hits that came through the front of the walker).

**Play notes:** The two-legged Vril Scout Walker has a "footprint" of three hexagons, each one separated by a hexagon of empty space. Its steel legs are skeletal and 3 meters high, with vital machinery having armored shields. The crew compartment holds three, with room to stand up and move around (six hexagons of space). There are two means of entry and exit, a door in the rear and the overhead screens can be folded out of the way. The walker can squat for easy ground-level entry, and also has a rope ladder for use if needed. Like most armored vehicle crews, the crews of Vril scout walkers will store shovels, water cans, tents and other paraphernalia on the outside of their vehicle. Vril walkers will be painted to match their mission. If superstition will help make them more frightening, they will be painted with eyes and fangs. If camouflage is called for, they will have mottled paint that matches their area of operation. The normal crew is three, a pilot, commander and gunner. The commander's station has access to the Gatling Gun. Communications are handled by signal flags or a shuttered lantern.

For night operations, the walker has a single carbon arc-light headlight and a carbon-arc searchlight that can be mounted on the Gatling Gun (Armor of 1d+1, 2 Hits). There can and likely will be more powerful Vril walkers if the Vril Society gains or seeks to gain control of a nation, limited in size only by the ability of the ground and railway bridges to support them. Vril walkers can in theory ford water as deep as the length of their legs. However, the waterproof seals on their electric motors may not be perfect. Anything past "ankle deep" water on a walker may require a 2d+0 roll against an Easy(5) difficulty to avoid shorting something out and causing the walker to take 1d+0 Hits. This roll is adjusted by any damage penalty on the walker.

**Combat notes:** A walker like this would be encountered as an early development around some high-ranking Vril Society member, or as part of the invasion force if or when the Vril Society decides to take over a small country and establish their own sovereign nation based on the harsh Vril ethos (note that Paraguay is already a dictatorship and has its own arms factories, so it would be a good choice for a Vril state). Because it does not have a high speed, it would likely be deployed as a perimeter sentry (a mobile guard tower), or as the equivalent of the heavy weapon member of a normal squad. The regular infantry provides screening, and the walker deals with enemy strong points. In larger groups, a few scout walkers would be the screeners for a heavy Vril walker, again, protected by its own infantry. Typical combat tactics are move until resistance is met, stop, aim, fire. Repeat as needed. The driver drives, the commander looks for threats and uses the Gatling Gun, and the gunner handles the main gun. Reduced vision arcs mean the driver and gunner have -1d on their sight Awareness rolls, though if something is specifically pointed out by the commander, they can try to spot it at no penalty. Hearing anything outside the walker while it is moving is at -2d, but at no penalty when it is stationary.

**Egalité** - The one technology that the LGP can claim as their own is that of a primitive atomic reactor. This is not as efficient as the Vril Society's zero-point reactors, and a lot more dangerous, but it is still an atomic reactor, and with that level of power they can afford to be inefficient.

The *Egalité* (pronounced: ee-gal-ih-tea) is an Industrial Era attack sub. It has two anti-shiping weapons. The first is a saw-toothed steel ridge running from the prow to about halfway down its upper surface. This can rip the bottom out of any ship without heavy armor below the waterline, though in practice it is only used against wooden ships. At top speed, this does 8d+2 damage and counts as an explosion for purposes of affecting Damage Limit. The other attack is a towed, floating torpedo. The *Egalité* will make a collision-like attack run, but dive underwater at the last moment and the towed explosive charge will strike the hull of the target at the waterline and explode with 15d+2 force. These torpedoes can also be anchored to the sea bottom as tethered mines or left to float free and will go off on any sharp impact after they are armed (which happens if they are immersed in seawater).

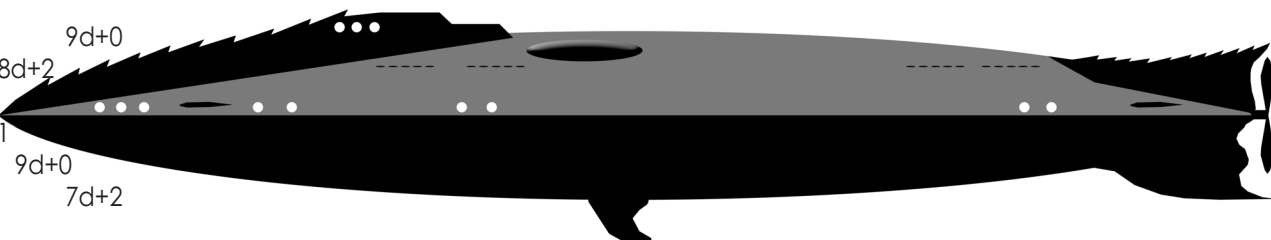
#### **Egalité**

Strength	15d+0
Top speed/Acc	9/5
Front	9d+0
Right	8d+2
Left	8d+2
Rear	8d+1
Top	9d+0
Bottom	7d+2
Hits/Damage limit	32/-3
To hit	-6/-3

The *Egalité* is about 40 meters long and its hull averages 8 meters in diameter, wider at the middle (even more so when the buoyancy tanks are taken into account), narrow at the ends. It has a safe diving depth of 250 meters, a top speed of 7 meters per second (25kph) on the surface and 9 meters per second (32kph) when submerged. This is not exceptional, but it is as fast or faster than many steamships of the day, and thanks to its reactor, can maintain this speed as long as needed. The reactor is really just a controlled heat source, powering a conventional steam engine. The problems of dealing with a fission pile at this level of technology are not entirely solved, but the well-trained crew constantly monitors temperature and power output to keep things within the ability of the reactor vessel to contain the energy.

It has a crew of 16, 3 officers and 13 crew, all of whom are technically proficient in at least two crew stations. The reactor provides sufficient electrical power to allow production of desalinated water and to extract oxygen from water, limiting its endurance to its food supply and ability to maintain the machinery. However, because navigation underwater is a matter of dead reckoning, the preferred mode of operation is to run on the surface in good weather, and use its submersible capability for stealth or to avoid bad weather.

**Game notes:** The *Egalité* is of course modeled somewhat on Jules Verne's *Nautilus*, but it is far smaller and has a few tweaks to keep adventurers on their toes if they encounter it. If it is expecting to, the *Egalité* can carry enough spare crew to form a boarding party or prize crew to take a captured ship to some secret destination. The *Egalité* has a few special features. It has an "egress chamber", which is used for dropping off the towed torpedoes when at near-surface depth, and as an airlock at deeper depths.



There are a handful of diving suits that allow movement in the immediate vicinity of the *Egalité* when it is submerged, limited by the range of the air hoses back to the *Egalité*. And there are two large rowboat/escape pods. On the surface, they are used to row to and from other vessels. Underwater, they are sealed to the hull. They can be entered via special hatches and then detached from the hull to bob up to the surface (though this is dangerous). The *Egalité* has only basic climate control, mostly to keep down the humidity inside the submarine. If the water outside is warm, it gets warm in the submarine, and cold in cold water, though the latter can be abated quite a bit by using hot air from the reactor room.

The *Egalité* has three main staterooms, for the captain and two executive officers. There are four small staterooms for passengers or other LGP passengers needing privacy, and the rest of the crew have two barracks-like compartments. The two food storerooms can be repurposed as either bunk space for eight people each, or temporary brigs. There are two armories, one near the officer's quarters and the other near the crew bunks. The officer's armory can only be opened by the officers, and the other armory can be opened by the officers, or the on-duty sargeant. Two keys are needed to open the chamber where the towed torpedoes are kept, and the *Egalité* carries two dozen of them when fully loaded. Normally, sidearms are carried by the officers and on-duty sargeant.

In terms of floor plan, the *Egalité* is fairly open for a military vessel, having about eighty hexagons of space for each crew member. Taking into account ceiling height, this is about forty hexagons of floor plan per person, or the equivalent of a room five-and-a-half meters on a side. Hallways are almost wide enough that two people can pass without turning sideways, the staterooms are just barely large enough to invite in guests, the mess has separate officer and crew sections, there is a library and even a small chapel. There is no pipe organ, but the captain plays a mean theremin. The bow of the ship contains the officer's quarters, all of which have viewing portholes and separate smaller portholes to shine lights through. Behind that is the two-level bridge, the upper level serving the function of a conning tower and providing better visibility when making a ramming attempt. The thick, eye-like glass windows can be protected with heavy steel shutters and maneuvering can be done via a periscopic system of mirrors and lenses. Behind this are common areas like the library and mess, followed by the crew quarters, reactor and egress chamber. The two rowboats are mounted near the bridge and the crew quarters. All sections of the *Egalité* are accessed via a central hallway that is periodically broken by pressure doors that are kept shut at all times. Within each section, there are maintenance hatches in the decking for getting at the machinery in the crawl spaces underneath (this is where most of the compressed air for the buoyancy tanks is kept). The LGP does not initially have a practical electric lighting system, so internal lighting is provided by various sorts of oil lanterns (gaslight being deemed too dangerous for this application).

**Combat notes:** The *Egalité* is an offensive vessel, not a defensive one, and if it gets caught by a warship will quickly be reduced to scrap. Its armor can resist virtually all light weapons and it has a good damage limit, but it is a submarine after all, and holes through the hull are not a good thing. The solid shot fired by sufficiently large naval guns may have the same battering modifier on damage that the Vrill force beams do, which can overcome the *Egalité*'s damage limit and start doing Hits. And explosive shells will do so as well. The *Egalité* has two "to hit" numbers, the larger bonus being when it is fully surfaced, and the smaller when it is barely surfaced and making an attack run. In general, conventional naval vessels will not be able to depress main guns low enough to hit the *Egalité* at ranges of less than two hundred meters, nor secondary guns at ranges of less than a hundred meters. The *Egalité* can be devastatingly effective because when it is first deployed there are zero anti-submarine weapons and men with rifles simply cannot hurt it. If it is not detected or does not surface until it is close enough that a ship's guns cannot depress to hit it, then its success is virtually assured, and the hundred kilogram high explosive torpedoes it tows will do 15d+2 explosive damage to the waterline armor of its target, sufficient to hole any warship of the day. Normally, *Egalité* will attack by stealth, at night. This increases the fear and reduces intelligence that can be gathered about the submarine, and it makes it far more likely that she can approach unobserved. *Egalité* only has to see a huge target and dive under it, but attackers must spot a much smaller target. If *Egalité* gets caught on the surface and holed to prevent it from safely submerging, it might not be able to outrun a foe. Because current sailors have no reference framework to understand a submarine of this size and power, early reports by survivors will be of giant sea serpents biting holes out of wooden ships, or thrashing out the bottom of an iron-hulled ship with its massive tail.

**Improvements:** An updated version of the *Egalité* would be made with higher quality steel, for a better Armor and depth rating (at least +2 Armor and +50% depth). Invention of electric lighting will replace the oil lanterns, and the potential invention of radio will require the addition of a radio room. Practical self-powered torpedoes are a late 19th century invention, and it would make sense to replace the towed torpedoes with self-powered ones. Effectively, the archaic aspects of the *Egalité* would be dropped and it would be much more like a small, underpowered version of a modern nuclear attack sub.

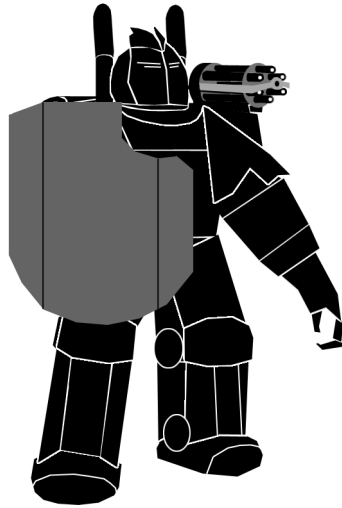


**Krupp Dampftruppen** - Perhaps as a private project by a member of the Vril Society, or perhaps as a government response to the increasing threat levels around the world, the Krupp arms combine will eventually create something in between a war walker and powered armor. A small, oil-fired steam engine provides motive power for an armored shell that a person can climb into and pilot. It is clunky and clumsy, but it is fairly bulletproof and can carry a big gun. The suits and the specially trained soldiers are called *Dampftruppen* (steam troops). English-speaking opponents would replace the "pf" with an "n".

### Dampftruppen

Strength	+0
Top speed/Acc	special
Head	3d+2
Torso front	3d+2
Torso rear	3d+0
Leg front	3d+2
Leg rear	3d+0
Arm front	3d+2
Arm rear	3d+0

Hits/Damage limit	8/8
To hit	-1



A fully loaded dampftruppen masses about four hundred kilograms and is about three meters tall, with the left arm attached to a shoulder-pivot Gatling Gun (4d+1 autofire) a light cannon (7d+1 armor-piercing or 3d+1 x 5 shotgun), or a flame-thrower (3d+1 lethal explosion with a continuing effect). All have an Accuracy of 2. The most prominent features are its crude mockery of a human form, the backpack-mounted steam engine belching thin blue smoke, ammunition reloads around the waist (designed to be gripped by the claw-like right hand), the large shield attached to the right arm, and numerous spikes and blades protruding from the armor to discourage anyone from trying to jump on and cling to one.

Even with all the power-enhancing tricks for an Industrial Era steam engine, the dampftruppen is barely capable of moving its own weight and provides no strength or mobility enhancement to the wearer. It merely allows the wearer to use their own strength without the suit encumbering them. Their movement rate is what it would be normally and requires normal exertion. Agility for everything but firing the main gun is penalized by -1d and fine work is impossible. Sight perception takes a -1d penalty because of the narrow vision slits and hearing perception is all but impossible unless the dampftruppen is stationary.

Because of weight limitations, dampftruppen cannot be armored as heavily as the designers would have hoped, with an overall armor of only 3d+2 from the front and 3d+0 from the rear. This is sufficient to stop pistols and shotguns and most muzzle-loading rifles, but it is not sufficient to stop modern rifles. To compensate for this, the right arm has a large steel shield with an Armor of 4d+0. In combination with the body armor, this gives an effective protection of 5d+2 against any threat the shield can be interposed against. The shield is big enough to protect the head and torso, torso and upper legs or if crouching, the whole body, and it has a cutout in the upper left to rest the weapon barrel in when crouching. This extra bracing point is worth +1 Accuracy when aimed in that way. The inside of the dampftruppen is already padded with the equivalent of silk body armor. This is factored into its overall armor rating, so any *personal* body armor worn is not going to add more than 0d+1 to the overall rating.

**Game notes:** Dampftruppen will be used by the equivalent of Special Forces, the biggest, toughest, most skilled men an army can find, with at least 3d+2 natural Strength. The metal fists and feet turn any punch or kick damage into lethal damage (but remember the -1d Agility penalty). A dampftruppen would cost several thousand **Verne** credits, plus the cost of its weapon, so they are going to be a very limited use item, and the troops trained in their use will know the advantages, vulnerabilities and proper tactics to accentuate the strengths and minimize the weaknesses. The strengths are that with the shield properly used, they are immune to rifles and machineguns. This requires tactics to prevent flankers and use of terrain to provide partial cover, particularly to the lower legs if you are using the shield to protect the torso and upper legs. The weaknesses are a vulnerability to ambush by someone who knows where the weak spots are. A dampftruppen also can only run at full power for five hours before running out of fuel, and the steam engine has to warm up for a few minutes before it can be used at full power. And of course, they are completely stymied by thick mud, water deeper than their air intakes or any climbing more difficult than stairs. For special operations it is possible to equip them with snorkels to ford deep water, and conventional troops with refueling tanks and extra ammo for an extended mission.

Dampftruppen will be hot inside, and this is only partially mitigated by a powerful forced air system. Even a strong, fit individual will be exhausted after spending several hours in a dampftruppen in a tropical climate. They would however, be ideal for use in cold climates. If used on Mars, they would have sufficient extra Strength to give the user a +2 to Strength and +2 to Health for mobility purposes.

Dampftruppen bought, developed or used by anyone except the Germans will be renamed to match the sensibilities of that group or nation. The Americans might call them "John Henrys" (despite the irony), French might have "Chevaliers", the Italians could call them "Locomotore soldati" and the English would have "Steam Infantry Mk1". Each nation would of course have their own take on optimum weapon and armor distribution, based on who they intended to use them against.

**Combat notes:** Dampftruppen are somewhere between a big suit of armor and a vehicle. As a vehicle, they would have 8 Hits. Rather than using vehicle hit locations, assume that any hit that does damage to the wearer's arms, legs or torso does 1 Hit to the suit. If it crosses a damage threshold it has to make an Easy(5) roll on 2d+0 to keep going (like a normal vehicle power plant), otherwise it has sprung a steam leak or slipped a cog and grinds to a halt. The suit is far too heavy to move without the power assist, but the user can still get out of suit even if it has lost power. The suit itself is -1 difficulty to be hit because of its size, and the steam engine on the back can be targeted like a called shot to the torso, provided you can see the back (count as a vehicle power plant hit). Like many steampunkish technologies, dampftruppen are not *really* very practical, and are only effective because they are new, fearsome, and tactics and weapons to use against them will be slow to be developed. Remember that dampftruppen have an armor without the shield equal to most infantry rifles. In a frontal assault against conventional infantry, they are effectively invulnerable.

Typical deployment would *not* be as shock troops against a modern army. There are plenty of poorly-skilled (and easily replaced) regular troops for jobs like that. They would be better as a terror weapon, used to suppress internal dissent, to intimidate low-tech foes, assault extremely high-value targets when you can only get a limited number of people into the area, or to be merely an impressive "I can do this" bit of bragging for a nation or powerful individual.

For instance, the Ottoman Turks are big on buying showy new weapons, and dampftruppen would be just the thing, especially for keeping pesky democracy agitators in their place. Dampftruppen could also be used as support troops for a Vril walker. Perhaps more important than anything else is rumor and reputation. If they are believed to be invulnerable and kill anyone who opposes them, then those who face them are far more likely to be demoralized and flee.

So, controlling the way they are portrayed to the public is part of their use. Newspaper reporters would never see a dead dampftruppen, (or would mysteriously disappear if they did), the soldiers manning them would be national heroes and their exploits would be exaggerated but believable. Rhymes, songs, postcards, stamps, commemorative plates, posters, all would be part of propaganda effort involving dampftruppen.

**Improvements:** An updated version of the dampftruppen would be made with a more efficient steam turbine engine. This would allow it to carry more armor, doubling the weight. The benefit would sufficient to improve overall armor by +1d. The armor is already Late Industrial quality, and hardened to stop armor-piercing attacks. The only improvements possible on the armor would be if the LGP started using dampftruppen. Their armor steels are +2 better than what a Krupp dampftruppen would be.

**Improved dampftruppen** (Late Industrial)

Armor front: 4d+1 (6d+1 w/shield)

Armor rear: 3d+2

9 Hits

**Improved dampftruppen** (LGP/Late Industrial)

Armor front: 5d+0 (7d+0 w/shield)

Armor rear: 4d+1

9 Hits

The other possible option would be a change to the power plant. Replacing the steam engine with an equivalent internal combustion engine would give the equivalent of +1 Strength and +1 Health for mobility purposes. Using a .25 hexagon Vril battery would allow for far more armor to be carried, increased strength and mobility, a longer operational time or some combination of the two (+1d armor, +2 Strength and Health and 10 hour operational life). The downside is that Vril batteries are not rechargeable and require Vril adepts to make them. It would not be possible to field large numbers of such Vriltruppen, and even the handful that might be made would only be used for specialized missions.

**Advanced body armor** - There is no Victorian Era equivalent of Kevlar, but the LGP can create better steel than anyone else, and while they are figuring out how to make it in industrial quantities, they will make small batches and construct scale armor for key individuals. These will be made of hundreds of circular or teardrop-shaped plates about the size of your palm, individually wrapped and laced down over a silk undergarment to prevent any noise of the metal plates striking each other. These specialized armors will come in three varieties: a custom-fitted vest designed to be worn unobtrusively under normal clothing, possibly with a similar set of fitted plates for the outside of the forearms and shins and thighs; a trench coat or duster, a long coat that provides a lesser degree of protection, but covers everything from the neck to the knees, and an external, non-concealed vest that does not have to be fitted to a particular individual. This last model will only be made once the LGP can make enough advanced steel to have a surplus for armoring non-specialized individuals.

#### LGP skintight armorvest

Armor: 3d+0  
Covers: hit locations 10-11  
Weight: 4 kilograms  
Cost: 350Cr

#### LGP armored duster

Armor: 2d+0  
Covers: hit locations 7-14  
Weight: 9.8kg  
Cost: 250Cr

#### LGP armored overvest

Armor: 2d+1  
Covers: hit locations 9-12  
Weight: 5 kilograms  
Cost: 150Cr

**Game notes:** These are going to be fairly unique items in that only the League for Gaian Primacy can make steel this good, and they will not be able to make it in structural quantities (for vehicles) for at least a decade. It is an edge for LGP agents, since they don't get force beams or lasers or giant war walkers. Until it becomes known, it can also add an element of the unknown and give human foes an air of the supernatural. For instance, the "vampire" in the darkened alley raises his cloak and is shot a dozen times without taking harm before vanishing into the darkness. Similarly, if adventurers get a hold of any of the armor, it can give them an edge against foes that would not expect this level of protection.

**Halers** - In 1844CE the British inventor William Hale patented a system to stabilize rockets by spin vectoring of their thrust. Military rockets using this principle saw very limited use (Mexican-American War and the Crimean War), but were never deployed in large numbers. Once strange flying machines and other strange weapon systems start showing up, militaries may start dusting off unused weapons and figuring out how to quickly and cheaply modify them to deal with these new threats. One result of this will be man-portable Hale rockets, which are quickly dubbed "Halers".

A Haler is a copper-lined hardened leather tube with a moderately complex sight that allows the user to compensate for both the range and the angle of aim. A Hale rocket is shoved in the tube by an assistant, connected to a small battery, and it is electrically fired. It has an impact fuze for a black powder payload surrounded by iron balls (lethal explosion). The technology for a fast rocket burn does not exist yet, so the firer's whole body is sprayed with hot rocket exhaust (1d+2 lethal). To counter this, there is a helmet-like protector for the face, plus a fireproof leather poncho that must be worn to safely use the weapon. Count the poncho as 2d+0 armor against fire and 0d+2 against other attacks, and it weighs 4 kilograms.

A Haler only has Accuracy of 1, and it loses that if the target is more than 125 meters off. The rocket travels 125 meters each turn, has a maximum aimed range of 375 meters, a maximum horizontal range of 1400 meters and a maximum vertical range of 700 meters. Note that when firing straight up, one must be careful to keep rocket exhaust from splashing up under the poncho!

Halers can be deployed at a fire team level, one soldier carrying the weapon and two reloads, two others carrying four reloads each, and two normal infantry to provide covering fire. Halers can also be deployed on wagons, with either seven or nineteen tubes bundled together. These are aimed as a group, and fired by a remote switch that keeps everyone out of the backblast. These are only deployed against stationary or very large targets.

#### Haler

Damage: 4d+2 lethal explosive  
Range: ≈1 kilometer  
Weight: 6kg(5kg per rocket)  
Armor: 1d+1  
Hits: 3  
Cost: 85Cr(launcher), 11Cr(rocket)

# EABA

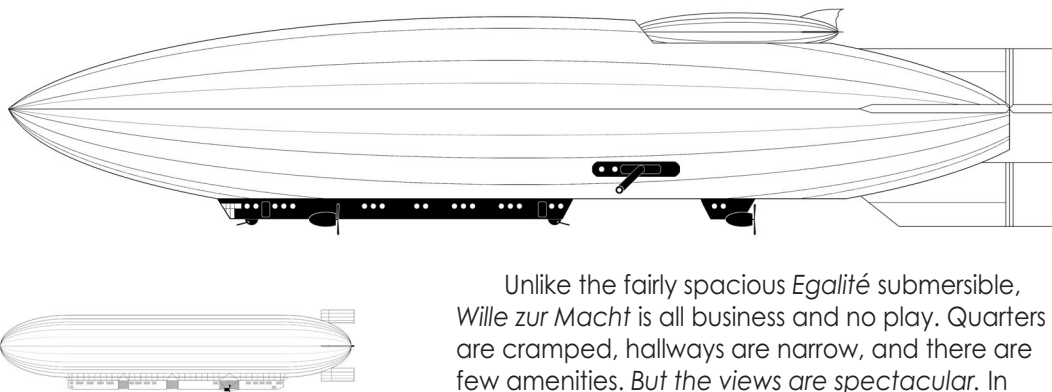
**Wille zur Macht** - Until Cavorite warships are built, the Vril Society will have the most useful aerial weapons, putting to shame the early efforts made by the League for Gaian Primacy. Vril reactors are in the short term less efficient than other power plants, so Vril zeppelins tend to be larger. However, what they lack in efficiency they make up in endurance. Using heat from the Vril reactor instead of hydrogen, they do not pose a fire hazard, and can stay aloft indefinitely. Armed with force beams and high-quality German optical sights, they can sit out of reach of earth-bound weapons and lay waste to targets with impunity.

## Wille zur Macht

Strength 11d+0  
Top speed/Acc 13/.5

Envelope 1d+0  
Front 1d+0  
Left 2d+1  
Right 2d+1  
Rear 1d+0  
Top 1d+0  
Bottom 3d+0

Hits/Damage limit 24/-8  
To hit -10/-4



*Wille zur Macht* is a Vril battle zeppelin, and a huge one by game standards, several times the volume of the *Collective Will* (shown to scale). The Vril Society *could* make larger ones. It is big enough that it actually carries a small zeppelin in a depression on the upper rear. This is designed to carry a few passengers or a few hundred kilograms of supplies to and from the main craft. It also provides a means of escape for key villains or adventurers should the plot require it. *Wille zur Macht* is about 25 meters across and 130 meters long, with a gondola underneath about 30 meters long and 4 meters wide. It is powered by four electric motors, driven by the Vril generators, of which it has twelve, each about the maximum practical size for the technology. Four generators are used to heat the air that keeps the zeppelin aloft, and the remainder power the electric motors, though they can be combined in any manner as needed. *Wille zur Macht* has a normal top speed of 13m/sec (47kph), though it can manage short bursts at 16m/sec (58kph) until the air in the envelope cools off and the heating reactors have to shift power back to that function. It can accelerate at .5m/sec horizontally, and if it dumps water ballast it can accelerate vertically at 3m/sec.

This zeppelin is formidably armed, with two Vril force beams in 180° turrets (right and left), at 9d+0 damage each (+18 on damage that penetrates armor). Fore and aft are smaller 360° turrets with 5d+2 autofire Vril force beams (+10 to anything penetrating armor). Both weapons draw power from internal Vril energy banks, limiting the shots they can fire before a Vril adept has to refurbish the weapon (800 shots for the main force beams and 160 autofire bursts for the smaller ones). The zeppelin is only lightly armored. The weapon turrets have a bottom armor of 3d+0 and side armor of 2d+1, as does the bridge and engines, but the rest of the gondola and the hot air envelope are merely 1d+0. *Wille zur Macht* has 24 Hits and a Damage Limit of -8 (the gondola has a damage limit of 0). The envelope is -10 difficulty to hit and the gondola is -4 difficulty to hit.

Unlike the fairly spacious *Egalité* submersible, *Wille zur Macht* is all business and no play. Quarters are cramped, hallways are narrow, and there are few amenities. *But the views are spectacular.* In addition to the narrow interior hallways, there are catwalks on both sides of the gondola, and interior passages through the envelope that open onto an observation station on the upper surface (for sextant-based navigation), and also access to the auxiliary zeppelin platform. Vril generators are clustered near their use points, two near each of the four electric fans and four evenly distributed for heating the envelope, two on the right side and two on the left. Enough stores are carried for several months of flight. For specific operations or high altitude use, the envelope is filled with helium, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

Like *Egalité*, *Wille zur Macht*'s crew is cross-trained. There are five officers and nineteen crew., at least one of which will be a Vril adept to monitor and if necessary repair the arcane Vril technology. This adept will technically be crew, but will have the authority and privileges of an officer (better quarters, etc.). The crew are about evenly split between gunners and engineers. Officers normally carry sidearms, but rifles and pistols are in a locker near the bridge in case it looks like the zeppelin will have to repel boarders. Neither officers nor crew have parachutes. *If you need a parachute, you have failed the Vril Society...*



**Game notes:** *Wille zur Macht* is a campaign-changing vessel. Imagine that it parks itself a few kilometers over Buckingham Palace or the White House and starts making demands. What is anyone going to do about it if it topples Big Ben or the Washington Monument (under construction from 1848-84CE) just to make a point? Or what if it just quietly lays waste to a national capital while emblazoned with the flag of an enemy nation, just to cause chaos? Until Cavorite-based warships become available, battle zeppelins like this can rule the skies. This would be a good time to see if the Moon Cannon can be used with a piloted shell, fired from halfway around the world with a near-suicidal pilot, or the newly returned prototype Cavorite ship used to sneak a bomb or boarding team aboard the Vril airship, or to determine its origins and take measurements of its powerful weapons.

The Vril generators are a potential weak point. On the plus side, there are a dozen of them, making it difficult to take them all out at once. On the minus side, they take three weeks to warm up to full power from a cold start. Practically speaking, once they are turned on they are left running at within a few dice of full power unless they have to be shut down for repairs. It would have to lose eight of the twelve to be immobilized, and nine of the twelve to be forced to ground. Since it uses hot air for lift and has a near-unlimited supply, minor holes in the envelope can be ignored for extended periods just by pumping in more heat. It can shift as many reactors as needed to keep hot air in the envelope, adding to the speed penalty to offset any lift penalties (e.g. if it had an overall -1d penalty and was sinking, it could take an extra -1d penalty on speed to negate the -1d penalty on lift).

Once Cavorite warships are built, lighter-than-air craft like this zeppelin will be obsolete as military platforms. The biggest problem with a zeppelin like this is where to park it. Once you reveal it to the world, everyone will realize there are only so many places you can store it, and unless you are flying it on a cloudy night, it is hard to keep anyone from figuring out where you are going.

**Combat notes:** The turreted weapons have an Accuracy of 7, which means a good gunner firing from a stationary zeppelin could reliably hit a person-sized target a few kilometers off, or a ship, building or other large target even if it was moving, or at naval artillery ranges if stationary. The zeppelin is itself a pretty easy target, but has the advantage that any projectiles fired from the ground are going uphill the whole way and very few weapons of the period can shoot two kilometers straight up, nor can they be elevated that high.

At altitude, it is untargetable by fortress and naval guns, and by field artillery until someone invents an anti-aircraft mount. Historical trivia: The first purpose-built anti-aircraft guns were for the US Civil War to shoot down observation balloons, followed by German anti-aircraft guns designed to thwart balloons used by the French during the siege of Paris in 1870-71CE. These were light ( $\approx 40\text{mm}$ ), long-barrelled cannon firing solid shot, incendiary rounds having not yet been invented.

The Vril force beams will be devastating against most targets. One burst from the autofire weapon would shred a house or sink a small steamship. The larger ones will make short work of anything with less than  $9d+0$  of armor. Fortifications and heavy warships might shrug it off, but gunboats, partially armored ships or ships with light deck armor can be completely perforated (remember that in addition to the battering damage bonus, the  $9d+0$  force beams will increase a vehicle's Damage Limit by +4 and the  $5d+2$  force beams increase it by +2).

**Improvements:** A useful improvement would be the addition of a life-support system. This would let the zeppelin operate in the upper atmosphere, and the thinner air and specialized props would let it reach a top speed of  $23\text{m/sec}$  ( $83\text{kph}$ ). A radio system would also be useful once that is invented. The Vril Society sees Vril as the answer to all its problems, but the *Wille zur Macht* would be faster and more efficient if it just used four Vril generators for lift, one for low speed propulsion, and steam engines for high speed use. Replacing seven of the two-ton Vril generators with a pair of two-ton steam engines and eighty hours of fuel oil would give a normal top speed of  $19\text{m/sec}$  ( $68\text{kph}$ ) and allow an extra two tons of cargo to be carried. And the sole Vril generator not used for lift could be a spare or propel *Wille zur Macht* at  $4\text{m/sec}$  ( $14\text{kph}$ ) in "stealth mode".

For aerial assault missions, one of the main turrets can be replaced with a massive winch and freight elevator capable of lifting or lowering several tons. *Like perhaps an assault team of dampftruppen?* While the Vril force beams are formidable enough, the zeppelin could easily carry a few tons of bombs as an auxiliary weapon. A rack of twenty 100 kilogram dynamite bombs ( $11d+2$  explosion) could certainly get someone's attention, but this could also be a point of catastrophic failure if one of them were to suffer an accident, so equipping the zeppelin this way would be a special circumstance.

**Martian weapons** - There are four standard Martian laser weapons, a small pistol, large pistol, carbine and rifle. Martian lasers have zero recoil, so aiming can be maintained between shots. It is standard military doctrine for Martian troops to spend a turn aiming before they fire. This helps offset their generally lower skill and makes the most of their irreplaceable energy cubes. After all, if you have a limited supply of ammunition, how much practice can they get?

The small pistol is the equivalent of an officer's dress pistol. It is not particularly potent, but Martians of status may have one, since it is small enough to be concealable.

The large pistol is a service pistol, more powerful but large enough that it is not readily concealed.

The carbine is used by most troops, and the rarer rifle is reserved for use by the Imperial Guard alone. It is not that much more effective than the carbine, but it has a mystique because it is exclusive to the Emperor's protectors.

The most important thing about the weapons is that they all use the same Martian equivalent of Vril batteries (same as the example on [page 3.13](#)). The small and large pistols use one, the carbine uses two and the rifle uses three. Weapons with multiple energy clips drain them all at the same rate and will not fire if any of them are missing or completely discharged. A small dial on the weapon will give an indication of the state of charge of each energy clip. All of these weapons can be safely fired once per turn. They can be fired as fast as you can pull the trigger is pulled, but it makes them Unreliable(7) or Unreliable(11), and a malfunction causes an overheating shutdown, or in extreme cases, irreparable damage to the weapon.

Because the Martian energy batteries are irreplaceable, weapons with partially empty clips are not reloaded, so any given weapon in active duty will be at an unknown state of charge. Even reload cubes may be issued in a partial state of discharge, depending on the pull of the officer in charge of that detachment. Martian troops are also known to gamble with their energy cubes, the loser of a wager trading a more charged cube for a less charged one.

Martian weapons	Dmg	Acc	Shots	Mass*
Small pistol	2d+1	1	100	.8kg(.3)
Large pistol	3d+0	2	65	1.0kg(.3)
Carbine	4d+1	3	40	2.5kg(.5)
Rifle	5d+0	4	50	3.8kg(.8)
Fortress gun	13d+0	12	-	8 tons

\*in Earth gravity, x.4 in Martian gravity

The last weapon of note is the fortress batteries that still exist at several Martian redoubts. Having no experience with explosive weapons, these massive heat-cannon are protected only by massive curved gun shields. They tend to be on exposed platforms with broad arcs of fire, and good elevation and depression. None of them have been fired in centuries, but *most* of them still work. However, they are Unreliable(7) and a failure means the weapon ceases to work in a way not readily repairable. Crews for these weapons have probably never fired them, and have no better than +0d skill (assume a 2d+2 skill roll). Assignment to a fortress gun is seen as a cushy job for those without ambition, and a dead end for those who do aspire to higher rank. Fortress guns can fire once every four turns and cannot be fired fast enough to be overheated. While extremely powerful, they have the limitation that they only leave *relatively* small holes in things (≈half a meter across). Vehicles with a good damage limit can take many strikes from a large heat-cannon before the cumulative effect causes them to lose any Hits. But remember that they can still wreak havoc on crew hits.

The Martians may have smaller fortress batteries that have autofire capability, but almost all of them are inoperable, the low-level Intellectual caste repairmen having cannibalized their internal parts to keep other projects in working order. The crews of these weapons do not know this, as all the indicator dials and lights have been tinkered with to provide the illusion of functionality.

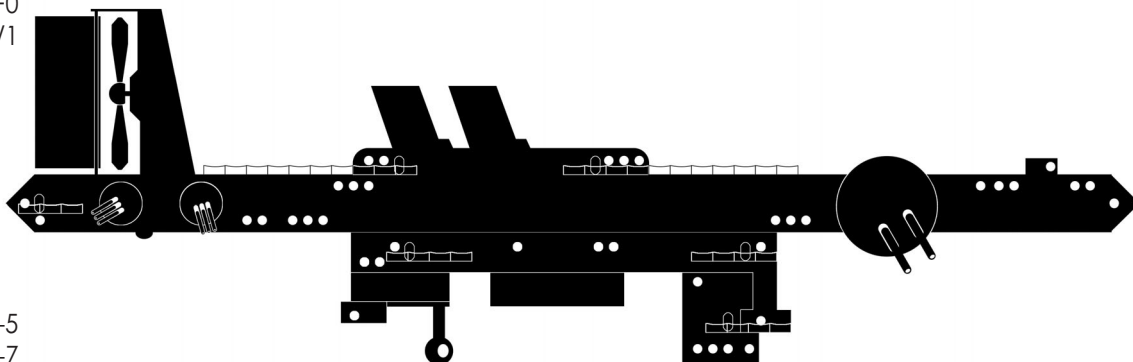
**HMS Ethereal** - This is an example of a military vessel built once the Great Powers figure out how to make Cavorite. At 8,000 tons, it is the equivalent of a very light cruiser. The problem with all flying vessels is that armor is a problem, so as with cruisers, armor protection is sacrificed in the name of speed and offensive weaponry. Not having access to Vrill force beams or Martian lasers, it is equipped with two large gun turrets and four small turrets. These are all equipped with gaskets to allow their use in the airlessness of space. In addition, there are deck mounts for machine guns if there is sufficient atmosphere to let the crew go on deck.

#### HMS Ethereal

Strength 21d+0  
Top speed/Acc 36/1

Front 9d+1  
Right 9d+2  
Left 9d+2  
Rear 8d+2  
Top 8d+0  
Bottom 9d+2

Hits/Damage limit 36/-5  
To hit -7



Interplanetary thrust and buoyancy in a gravity well is provided by Cavorite. In an atmosphere, a pair of oil-fired steam engines power large iron-bladed fans that can push *HMS Ethereal* at the astounding speed of 36m/sec (130kph). Everything on a vessel like this is manually adjusted, requiring a full-time professional crew to keep things in good order. While it only takes 1250 hexagons of Cavorite to hover *HMS Ethereal*, it is equipped with 1500 hexagons. This gives it an ability to climb at 3m/sec when intact, and gives it some extra capability on extended tours or if the panels take light damage. At flank speed in an atmosphere, *HMS Ethereal* has a little more than two weeks of fuel oil on board, though this is sufficient to travel 52,000 kilometers (the *Ethereal's* maiden voyage is a record-setting non-stop trip around the world). At half power it can still cruise at a hundred kilometers per hour for over a month, or cruise at lower speeds for several months. *HMS Ethereal* was designed to be able to travel to Mars, operate for several months and return to Earth without needing resupply. Its Cavorite lift capacity is suitable only to maintain position or move at a walking pace, sufficient for precision docking maneuvers, but that is about it. Since its operational doctrine assumes it will be at altitude, all of the normal superstructure of a naval vessel is on the bottom instead of the top, requiring the addition of retractable landing gear for the instances where it has to touch down for extended periods.

Only a few concessions have been made for zero gravity operation, which is seen as a nuisance rather than a fact of life. Sharp protrusions have been rounded off, but are seldom padded. Two sets of cooking, eating and drinking implements are provided for gravity and zero-gravity use. Elevators for moving ammunition to turrets are designed to be safe in zero-gravity, and any door, hatch or other item relying on gravity also has a spring to hold it closed.

Plumbing assumes an all-male crew, especially as concerns zero-g operation. *HMS Ethereal* has the usual amenities of a modern warship, especially as relates to class differences amongst the crew. Facilities for use of the officers are naturally a cut above those for the crew. It is *not* a spacious ship. After the weapons, engines, and other necessities are taken into account, there is not room for many amenities. There is an officer's lounge of course, but most of the amenities for the crew are in the cargo holds, where as space empties, they set up card tables, weight-lifting gear, and when space permits, a boxing ring (there are two cargo holds, each about ten meters on a side).

The crew totals 52, 4 command officers, 16 enlisted crew to operate the ship, 20 gunnery crew, a doctor and surgeon, plus a squad of 10 Marines which includes their lieutenant. The enlisted crew operate in three shifts, with one bunk for each two enlisted men, so each has a small amount of time when the bunk is "theirs" outside of their designated sleep time. The normal berths are a first class berth for the captain and executive officer, second class for the other command officers, the Marine lieutenant, chief engineer and the doctor, a very minimal personal space for the surgeon, gunnery sargeant and the chief engineer's second, and shared bunks for everyone else.

The minimum crew on any given watch is a command officer, a non-commissioned rank, five engineers, and minimal crew for one main turret and two small turrets (usually on watch duty or doing spit & polish work). Because of its high value and unique mobility, *HMS Ethereal* may be called upon as the transport for high value interplanetary travellers, and has a suite of four first-class berths and four second-class berths. The contents of these berths are usually folded up and set aside so the space can be used for extra foodstuffs or other supplies, but this would be shifted to cargo holds in the event that the berths are needed.

Because it is possible that work may need to be done on the outside of the ship while in space, it has a few airlocks, and cumbersome spacesuits that are adapted from diving suits. These require a pair of air tethers, one for breathing air and another for gas jet maneuvering. Even in zero-g these suits are bulky and tiring to work in.

**Game notes:** A vessel like *HMS Ethereal* cannot go head-on against a water-borne vessel, which can be a lot bigger, a lot cheaper (no Cavorite!) and more heavily armored. Fortunately, it has the mobility to decide when and where it engages any sort of slow, vertically-challenged naval force. As a mobile weapon platform, a vessel like *HMS Ethereal* is a potent symbol of a nation's power. Aside from Martian fortress-based heat-cannon or Martian war walkers, there is not much the Martians or Selenites could do against such a vessel (though the lack of air on the Moon makes its mobility very poor there). In any part of a **Verne** campaign set on Mars, the presence (or absence) of *HMS Ethereal* would be a constant factor. The Martians would want to destroy it, smugglers would want to avoid it, and other nations would want to equal or surpass it. Much like one nation building a battleship prods other nations to build a bigger one, a ship like *HMS Ethereal* is meant to be a challenge.

As a matter for potential campaign events, *HMS Ethereal* is equipped for landing. Massive landing feet fold out from the hull so it can land on hard-packed surfaces (8000 tons requires something very solid). The landing gear requires steam power to operate the hydraulics, so the landing gear cannot be lowered if the steam engines are offline. *HMS Ethereal* is also denser than water. On a water landing it will sink if the Cavorite panels are set to zero lift. While it is watertight to shallow depths, too much water above it will negate the Cavorite lift and render it unable to surface again.

Remember that *HMS Ethereal* starts with enough lift to offset Earth gravity and climb at 3m/sec. After fourteen months this will drop to exactly neutral lift, and after that a safe return will require using an overhead Sun or Moon for a lift bonus (or newer Cavorite panels imported from Earth).

In the event that repairs are needed, it would take the entire crew six months to do a field repair of the first Hit of damage, three months if it was from sabotage, two months if it is a jury-rigged repair and one month for a jury-rigged repair of 1 Hit of sabotage. So, if something goes wrong, it is not quick to fix, and maintenance schedules for the ship are very strictly adhered to to make sure it loses no Hits due to neglect.

*HMS Ethereal* normally carries several months of supplies, at least a year's worth of maintenance supplies, loads of small arms ammunition, spare uniforms and anything else that would be expected for a several month trip away from civilized ports. Spare liquefied air is carried in specially insulated tanks for several months of space travel, along with tanks of chemicals for removing air impurities. Both can be recharged using special machinery and steam power once a breathable atmosphere is reached, and both systems have multiple, separate components to prevent a single failure from crippling life support.

**Combat notes:** The main turrets on *Ethereal* have one gun each and the smaller turrets two guns each, but later ships in the class have two slightly smaller guns in each main turret and three in each small turret, plus additional hydraulically steered machinegun turrets that can be operated in space. The two main turrets have a 360° arc, but one can only fire to the right and the other to the left. The main turrets either fire 13d+2 armor-piercing shells or 11d+2 lethal explosive shells. Most of the shells carried are the explosive kind. The smaller turrets have a 180° arc of fire, two on the right, two on the left, each with full elevation and depression. These smaller guns have 8d+1 explosive damage or 10d+1 armor-piercing damage. The main guns have an Accuracy of 12 and a maximum range of about 15 kilometers, and the smaller ones an Accuracy of 8 and a maximum range of about 6 kilometers (note that the main guns have less range than Martian fortress cannon). These levels of accuracy require accurate observations of range, speed and elevation difference made by the bridge crew and passed to the turrets for a particular target. Accuracy is halved if the gun crews have to aim on their own.



*HMS Ethereal* is not heavily armored, but with 36 Hits and a damage limit of -5 it is not easy to take down. In a fight between *HMS Ethereal* and *Wille zur Macht*, whoever gets the first hit has the advantage. The explosive shells from *HMS Ethereal* would do 2 Hits to the envelope of the zeppelin or 9 Hits to the gondola, while the heavy Vrill force beam would do 4 to 6 Hits to *HMS Ethereal* if it can hit it in the rear or top, taking weapon effects and Damage Limit into account in both cases. The Vrill force beam can fire faster, but the guns on *HMS Ethereal* are more accurate and *HMS Ethereal* is fast enough to choose the range. *Wille zur Macht* can climb faster, but that is its only maneuvering advantage.

For combat damage, at full lift *HMS Ethereal* can take -1d in penalties and still maintain neutral lift on Earth and -4d in penalties on Mars. On Earth, to maintain the neutral lift with a -1d penalty requires jettisoning cargo or part of the fuel load. The former requires some crew, while the latter can be accomplished via special dumping valves (requiring bridge crew and engineering crew to accomplish). The maximum cargo weight when fully loaded is one hundred tons. As fuel oil and other supplies are consumed, allowable cargo capacity increases. *HMS Ethereal* can launch while overloaded, provided the Sun or Moon is overhead to bolster its Cavorite strength.

**Calculating engine** - This is a programmable mechanical computer. In the hands of someone who knows how to program it, it can greatly increase the accuracy and speed of specialized computations. Navigation, astrogation, engineering calculations and encryption would be good uses of such a device. Once programmed properly, it subtracts 8 time levels from the normal time a task requires.

**Calculating engine**

Weight: 1 ton  
 Cost Cr  
 Armor: 1d+2  
 Hits: 9

**EXAMPLE:** If plotting a course from the Moon to Mars normally takes a skilled navigator two hours (time level of +26), the calculating engine can take the astronomical data and do it in eight minutes (time level of +18).

It cannot run on its own and requires a steady Strength input of 4d+0, usually from a steam engine with a large flywheel, though an electric motor could also do the job. Obviously, to do specialized computational tasks requires programming, and doing this is a separate skill than the task (one can be a mathematician but not know how to program a computer to generate math tables). In general, professionals distrust such machines, as the way they do things is opaque to the user. A calculating engine simply spits out the result and you have to trust it. However, businessmen see that in the long term a programmed engine is cheaper than a skilled professional, and a low-level professional/programmer and an engine may replace a more costly and experienced human. This leaves plenty of possibilities for adventure (the programmer on your Marsliner is killed, or someone adjusts the programming to send your ship on a course into the Sun).

If the engine takes any damage that crosses a threshold (1 Hit and 5 Hits) it has to make an Easy(5) roll with 2d+0 (less any damage penalty). If it fails the roll, something inside it has broken to an extent that it no longer calculates accurately. Repairing it would require the skills necessary to build it. Simply fabricating parts that look right may not be sufficient to get it working properly.

**Cressida** - This is the Cavorite equivalent of a ocean yacht, a small but serviceable interplanetary craft outfitted for personal use in some degree of style. Because of the cost of Cavorite, there will be no interplanetary tramp steamers. It will always be a rich man's game. But, *Cressida* does have a cargo hold large enough to carry trade items of exceptional value, and there is nothing to say a very wealthy person of dubious ethics could not use such a vessel to smuggle arms to Martian malcontents or priceless Martian antiquities back to Earth. Or maybe even an exotic Martian princess back to some depraved Ottoman's harem.

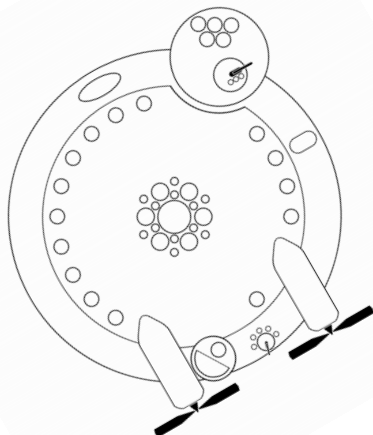
*Cressida* is discus-shaped, with the engines on pylons at the back, accessible by narrow crawlways. Cabins are arranged radially, opening onto a central parlor. The crew works on the lower deck in more spartan quarters, and often remain unseen. Each passenger cabin has a small dumbwaiter so that meals or other needs can be delivered from the lower deck without disturbing anyone's privacy, and all cabins have speaking tubes and bells for communicating anywhere on the ship.

## Cressida

Strength 15d+0  
Top speed/Acc 28/2

Front 4d+0  
Right 3d+2  
Left 3d+2  
Rear 3d+0  
Top 3d+0  
Bottom 4d+0

Hits/Damage limit 26/-2  
To hit -4



Because the world can be a dangerous place, *Cressida* has armament sufficient to protect a gentleman, a 360° light cannon in the front, and a 180° machinegun in the rear. For atmospheric maneuvering it has a pair of oil-fired steam engines turning iron airscrews. Inside, it is well-appointed, with a first-class owner's cabin, three second-class guest berths, and eight military berths for crew and personal servants. The normal crew of *Cressida* is a pilot, chef, valet, engineer and engineer's mate. The pilot and engineer will both be competent astrogators, while the valet and engineer's mate will be trained to operate the weapons.

At full speed under steam, *Cressida* has an endurance of about eight days, though it can cruise at reduced power for far longer. It also has a surplus of *Cavorite*, giving it a vertical acceleration of 4m/sec, a good evasion capability against most other flying vessels. It has enough *Cavorite* that it can maintain neutral lift and maneuver at a walking pace on Earth, or a fast walk on Mars, giving it an ability to move without steam power.

**Game notes:** Two-thirds of *Cressida* is living area, the main cabins opening into a central dining area and parlor, with the crew quarters opening into other areas as needed, all connected by pressure doors and narrow hallways. The owner's cabin and the main parlor are connected to the bridge, which also has the main turret. The engine room also has secondary navigation controls, a small observation dome, the machine gun turret and an airlock with two tethered spacesuits.

This is the sort of vessel a wealthy patron might take to Mars, and it has sufficient space for a party of adventurers to accompany him. There are three spare military-grade berths and the second-class cabins can sleep two each, so aside from required crew, there is room for up to nine extra people.

The cargo bay is about five meters on a side, with a ceiling about three meters high and a total weight capacity of almost forty tons, so it could carry gold, weapons, stone sculptures or other heavy items. It has room for a *Cavorite* aircoach or millipedal tractor should the owner have need for one.

**Combat notes:** This is *not* a fighting vessel. Its armor is negligible because of the large volume wasted on luxury space. It is also not an extremely fast vessel, though it could be redesigned for speed by doubling the engine size and losing 8 tons of cargo capacity. This would add 20m/sec to its top speed, but halve its endurance. The main gun is either 6d+1 armor-piercing or 4d+1 lethal explosive, with an Accuracy of 4, and the rear turret is a 4d+0 machinegun with an Accuracy of 2. Each gun requires only one crew, but the main gun can be fired faster if someone is loading while someone else is aiming it.

**Cavorite coach** - An auxiliary flying vessel, the equivalent of a ship's lighter or a rich person's plaything. While it could be designed to operate in the vacuum of space, this is merely a means of moving a few people through the air in style.

## Cavorite aircoach

Strength 9d+0

Top speed/Acc 30/4

Front 2d+1

Right 2d+0

Left 2d+0

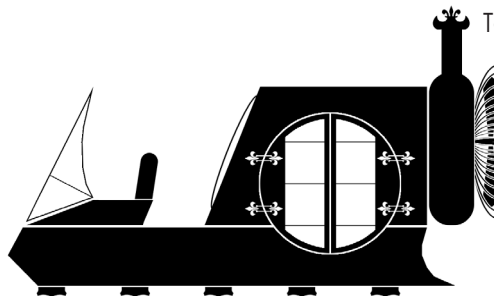
Top 1d+0

Bottom 2d+1

Rear 2d+0

Hits/Damage limit 14/4

To hit -2



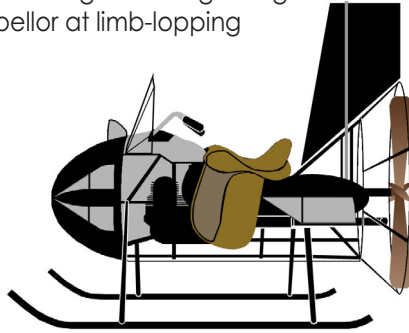
**Game notes:** This aircoach can carry five people and a pilot with a lot of legroom, along with 2 hexagons of luggage (no more than 1 ton of people and cargo). This is a rich person's plaything, and costs 20,000Cr in **Verne** terms. The slow decay of *Cavorite* means that simply sitting in a garage, it costs the owner 100Cr per month in maintenance just for the *Cavorite*. Without any life support, this vehicle is limited to altitudes where the passengers can breathe, and it only carries five hours of fuel for its single steam engine, giving it a maximum range of 540 kilometers. More than sufficient to awe the other patrons as you gently drop from the sky at the front of the opera.

**Combat notes:** This vessel is completely unarmed and only armored to stop incidental damage. The top is merely light wood to keep out the weather. A military Cavorite ship probably carries one of these aircoaches, altered to be airtight so that officers can transfer between vessels while in space. These small Cavorite vessels are probably too expensive and fragile to be used as gun platforms. If one were to be adapted to that role, it would probably have a crew of three wearing personal armor, +1 armor over the normal amount, and a Gatling Gun on a pintle mount.

**Aerocycle:** This is the smallest Cavorite lift vehicle, able to carry one portly individual or two persons of average weight, propelled by a new-fangled internal combustion engine driving a large rear-facing wooden propellor at limb-lopping speed.

#### Aerocycle

Strength	6d+1
Top speed/Acc	33/9
Armor	1d+0
Hits/Damage limit	9/7
To hit	+0



This is a dangerously high performance vehicle, with little thought given to the safety of the driver or bystanders. The occupants are held in place only by an optional belt strap, and only a rudimentary wire cage prevents one from bumping into the propellor. In addition, there are no safety devices in place should the Cavorite fail or be damaged, and the aerocycle is ridiculously fragile in order to keep its loaded weight under half a ton. One should definitely invest in the lead-lined riding chaps and jacket if straddling this much unshielded Cavorite for an extended period of time.

**Game notes:** At a cost of 3,000Cr and monthly maintenance of 25Cr, it is still a luxury item, but one within the range of a professional like an army captain or even a lieutenant who is willing to cut into his other expenses. And it is most certainly a chick magnet as well as a suicide machine. Once enough Cavorite is made that the military and the extremely well-connected are not using all of it, the surplus will certainly go towards things like this. *And if it moves, humans will race it.* In addition to being dangerously fast, the driver cannot help but be exposed to slightly dangerous Cavorite emanations, which have as yet unknown long term effects. They may kill their riders through more than speed...

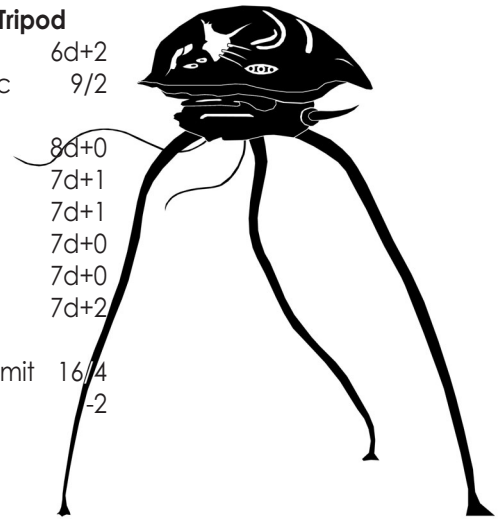
**Combat notes:** The engine is the only delicate part. Damaging the vehicle leaves it stranded in midair, but it can be landed by adjusting the lift.

**Martian scout tripod** - This is what a Vrill scout walker wishes it were. It is more or less the same concept, except it is made with superior Martian technology, has superior mobility and is armed with a laser cannon rather than a Vrill force beam. The 11d+2 heat-cannon is mounted on an armored stalk rather than in a turret, but it still has a 360° arc of fire. It can also fire as a 10d+2 autofire weapon to shred larger targets. As mentioned earlier, Martian heat-cannon are mostly invisible and recoilless. Because they are a heat weapon, any flammable object that is penetrated by one will likely be set ablaze, and non-flammable objects will still have glowing, melted edges. Conventional weapons or explosives will probably be detonated by a hit from the weapon. A tripod's heat-cannon has an Accuracy of 12. Its only operational limits are that opaque atmospheric obscurement cuts 2d of damage for each distance level it goes through, and light obscurement cuts it by 1d per distance level.

**EXAMPLE:** A thick cloud of smoke 16 meters deep (distance level of +6) would cut -12d from the damage of a heat cannon, and a thinner cloud of smoke that deep would cut damage by -6d.

#### Martian Scout Tripod

Strength	6d+2
Top speed/Acc	9/2
Front	8d+0
Right	7d+1
Left	7d+1
Rear	7d+0
Top	7d+0
Bottom	7d+2
Hits/Damage limit	16/4
To hit	-2



**Game notes:** The Martian scout tripod has a single occupant, a specialized caste warrior awoken from a deathless sleep when the walker is activated, and kept alive only by the special life support system in the walker. All Martian walkers have three legs, which for the scout walker are represented by three hexagons with three hexes of separation between them. These spindly but tough legs rise five meters to the main body, which is a helmet-like structure several meters long and a few meters wide and high.

In front is a retractable articulated arm with the heat-cannon, and below are coiled, tentacle-like arms capable of reaching down to the ground to pick up or manipulate objects with 4d+2 Strength. The larger Martian tripods are several times this size, several stories tall, and possibly equipped with nerve gas canisters in addition to a much more powerful heat-cannon.

The Martian tripod is an Advanced Era piece of technology. Its only limitation is the inefficiently designed Vril power plant and the low speed that comes from its legged power train. These limit the amount of armor (albeit extremely good armor) that can be carried and the speed with which it can walk. Which is a good thing, or there would be no chance at all of defeating one by brave Victorians (a similar tank with an antimatter power plant would mop the floor with this walker, even if the tank was a full era inferior in tech). We'll just say the Martians had their own ideas about warfare, and the walkers were originally designed for a planet with less than half the gravity of Earth (its top speed would be 14m/sec on Mars).

**Combat notes:** Of the Martian tripods that are used for the invasion of Earth, this is the lighter model. If adventurers encounter one and defeat it, let them feel proud and then introduce its big brother, which is slower, but has a bigger weapon and better armor. The big tripods are designed to bounce armor-piercing shells from all but heavier naval guns. Remember that in the novel **War of the Worlds** one of the few tripods taken out needed the huge guns of or a suicidal ramming attack by an ironclad to do it. The bigger tripods are outside the ability of most parties of adventurers to do anything about, so one should avoid drawing their attention at all costs. The Vril scout walker cannot harm the Martian scout tripod, but it is possible repeated hits from the Vril force beam could knock it over. On the other hand, the Martian heat-cannon would go in one side of the Vril walker and out the other side. In autofire mode, one burst would totally shred the primitive Vril machine. The limits of heat-cannon are that they only poke small holes in big vehicles. In the **EABA** rules we simulate their more powerful effect by letting them fire in autofire mode at a high Accuracy. This lets them get multiple hits, which will eventually overcome a large vehicle's damage limit. In addition, the Martian weapons have a *far* higher rate of fire than human cannon, so a large tripod can carve up an ironclad warship in a matter of minutes.

*Suddenly the foremost Martian lowered his tube and discharged a canister of the black gas at the ironclad. It hit her starboard side and glanced off in an inky jet that rolled away to seaward, an unfolding torrent of Black Smoke, from which the ironclad drove clear. To the watchers from the steamer, low in the water and with the sun in their eyes, it seemed as though she were already among the Martians.*

*They saw the gaunt figures separating and rising out of the water as they retreated shoreward, and one of them raised the camera-like generator of the Heat-Ray. He held it pointing obliquely downward, and a bank of steam sprang from the water at its touch. It must have driven through the iron of the ship's side like a white-hot iron rod through paper.*

*A flicker of flame went up through the rising steam, and then the Martian reeled and staggered. In another moment he was cut down, and a great body of water and steam shot high in the air. The guns of the Thunder Child sounded through the reek, going off one after the other, and one shot splashed the water high close by the steamer, ricocheted towards the other flying ships to the north, and smashed a smack to matchwood.*

*But no one heeded that very much. At the sight of the Martian's collapse the captain on the bridge yelled inarticulately, and all the crowding passengers on the steamer's stern shouted together. And then they yelled again. For, surging out beyond the white tumult, drove something long and black, flames streaming from its middle parts, its ventilators and funnels spouting fire.*

*She was alive still; the steering gear, it seems, was intact and her engines working. She headed straight for a second Martian, and was within a hundred yards of him when the Heat-Ray came to bear. Then with a violent thud, a blinding flash, her decks, her funnels, leaped upward. The Martian staggered with the violence of her explosion, and in another moment the flaming wreckage, still driving forward with the impetus of its pace, had struck him and crumpled him up like a thing of cardboard. My brother shouted involuntarily. A boiling tumult of steam hid everything again...*

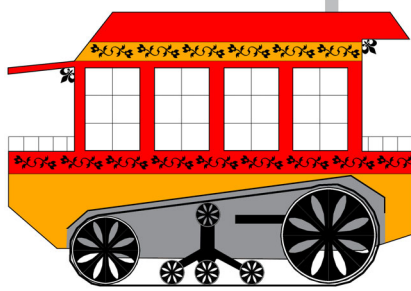
*from **War of the Worlds**, by H.G.Wells(1898CE)*



**Millepedal tractor** - This is something a generic inventor with a bit of money could create. It is a primitive tracked vehicle using an early internal combustion engine (we're calling it a "millepedal drive" rather than a "caterpillar track"), outfitted like a camper. It has a cot for sleeping, a desk, a tiny kitchen, a few chairs and a little coal-burning pot-bellied stove. It has either glass windows or wooden shutters and screens, based on the environment in which it was built to be used. A small electric magneto provides power for the spark plugs and to recharge a small battery, but the tractor has no electrical appliances.

#### Millepedal tractor

Strength	4d+0
Top speed/Acc	9/3
Armor	1d+0
Hits/Damage limit	14/4
To hit	-2

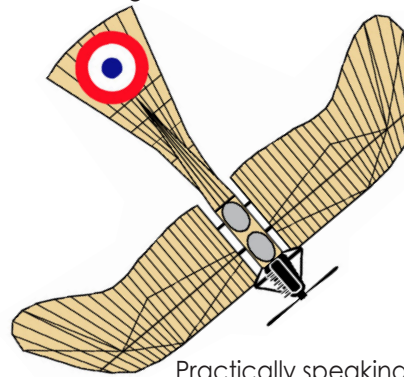


The inventor has naturally assumed a peaceful use for the vehicle and it is unarmored, but it has a sufficient power to weight ratio that it could be upgraded to 2d+0 on all facings at a -2m/sec penalty to top speed. He would be aghast at the thought of his invention being used as a weapon of war, and would rather destroy it than see it taken by someone who would use it for warlike purposes. Rather, he hopes to one day use it or an improved version to travel to the South Pole. In the meantime, the most likely place to find it would be someplace like the savannahs of Africa, where it is a mobile hunting platform.

Because the creator expected to go on extended sojourns with it, it has sufficient fuel in two separate tanks to run for forty-five hours, for an *optimum* round-trip range of approximately 1400 kilometers. Since it is an off-road vehicle and has to deal with off-road hazards, odds are its practical range is far less. A ladder provides access to a storage rack on the top, which has tarps, shovels, axes, rope, a winch and other useful things. The tractor is not watertight and can only ford streams to about a meter of depth without choking the engine. The inside has a cot in the back, a fold-down table, chairs that fold out from the walls, a small sink and stove, plus a small wood or coal burning stove for heat. It has standing room, and assuming it may have passengers, enough chairs for four people in addition to the driver. Two more can sit on the cot in the back. There is a folding awning on the driver's side to provide a shady spot to sit when it is parked.

**Game notes:** The tractor is a little more than 2 hexes wide and 4 hexes long, with an extra hex on the front left for the driver's seat. Think of it as a minivan with a ceiling high enough for standing room. The driver's seat has a glass windscreen and an awning, but is otherwise exposed. Weaknesses of the tractor are minimal armor and cantankerous engine. It will require regular tinkering to keep it running smoothly, so without its creator on hand, it will quickly go from a mobile home to a stationary one. Separately, the gasoline engine has an Armor of 2d+0 and 9 Hits. It is by far the sturdiest part of the vehicle and the part you want to hide behind if using it as cover.

**Aerodrome N°10** - Cavorite is a devilishly pricey material to make a vehicle from, and its primal elements are in some of the world's remotest or most hostile regions. So, even with Cavorite, men will attempt to find other means of taking to the air. The theory of powered heavier-than-air flight will be researched mostly by individuals rather than by governments. The Aerodrome N°10 is an example.



#### Aerodrome N°10

Strength	8d+0
Top speed/Acc	33/2
Armor	1d+0
Hits/Damage limit	9/6
To hit	-2

Practically speaking, it is a design comparable to historical designs circa 1910CE (like the Etrich Taube), just transplanted to a few decades earlier. It is not as fast or powerful as a WWI fighter plane, but it is big enough for a pilot and a passenger, with enough extra carrying capacity for a machinegun or maybe a few small bombs. It has a stall speed of 10m/sec(36kph), so it can get off the ground with a runway only 30 meters long, but since it can only climb at 2m/sec, there better not be any trees at the end of the runway... Aerodrome N°10 costs less than 1,000Cr, and has minimal maintenance cost except for its early internal combustion engine.

**Combat notes:** Because so much of the Aerodrome N°10 is merely fabric skin over a lightweight frame, hits to the body by bullets do no Hits to it. If the fabric is treated with chemicals to make it fireproof, it could carry and fire four Haler rockets, though it is worth noting that these could only hurt *Wille zur Macht* on a hit to its gondola.

# EABA

**HMS Inflexible** - This is a historical English battleship launched in 1876CE, and represented current thought in warship design. *HMS Dreadnought*, the first modern battleship, was not launched until 1906CE. *HMS Inflexible* was built to counter the perceived threat from new Italian battleships, and spent most of its service life in the Mediterranean.

The following stats represent *HMS Inflexible* as closely as possible within the **EABA** vehicle design rules, and serve as a counterpoint to the unusual designs that precede it. It is big enough and heavy enough to nearly "break" the design rules, so some exceptions are made to get it to fit with its historical stats.

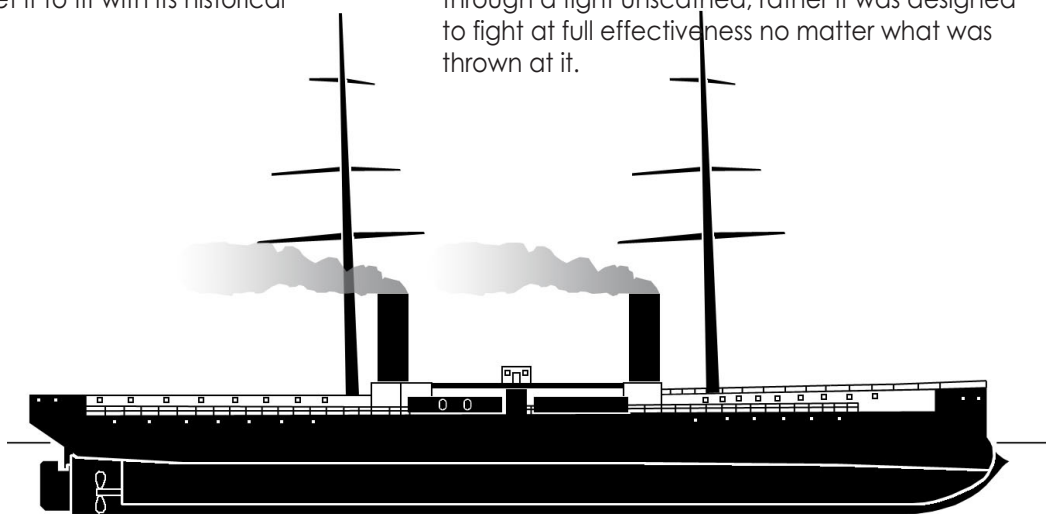
## HMS inflexible

Strength	17d+0
Top speed/Acc	8/.1
Front	7d+1
Right	13d+1
Left	13d+1
Rear	7d+1
Top	7d+1
Bottom	9d+1
Hits/Damage limit	37/-7
To hit	-10

Because of the way its armor was distributed, hit locations are by area as well as by facing. *HMS Inflexible* was built with an extremely armored center box called a citadel, with largely unarmored ends. The citadel protected the heaviest firepower and the mobility of the ship. The main guns, boilers and engines were under the heaviest armor ever put on a ship, while the rest of the ship just had light armor, little more than the thickness of a regular hull. These unarmored sections were expected to take heavy damage, with numerous bulkheads and lots of cork in the bulkheads, the thought being that cork and compartmentalization could keep the rest of the ship afloat, no matter how badly it was holed. Note that the top armor in the citadel matches the right and left values.

*HMS Inflexible* has one huge advantage compared to the other designs in this chapter: It is *huge*. Which means it can carry an extreme amount of armor and huge conventional guns. *How much armor?* At its thickest spots, the armor weighed about forty tons per hexagon of area. It was designed to be proof against the heaviest naval weapons of the day.

**Description:** *HMS Inflexible* is an iron-hulled warship about a hundred meters long and twenty-five meters wide, with a draft of about eight meters. It has two main turrets, each with two muzzle-loading 16-inch cannon. This was one turret on each side, one firing forward and left, the other firing rear and right. There were six smaller turrets armed with 20-pound breech-loading rifles, and seventeen machineguns in lightly shielded mounts. It also had a ram and submerged tubes for firing primitive self-propelled torpedoes. It was powered by two coal-fired single-expansion steam engines, driving a pair of six meter props, for a top speed of about 27 kilometers per hour and a range at lesser speed of about several thousand kilometers. And yes, the masts are for sails in case the engines conked out. *HMS Inflexible* was not designed to get through a fight unscathed, rather it was designed to fight at full effectiveness no matter what was thrown at it.



The front and rear thirds of the ship were virtually unarmored. The center of the ship was *massively* armored, protecting the main guns, engines, ammunition and a small coal reserve. The rest of the ship was more or less expendable and its main job was to keep the massive center section afloat, aided in this task by lots of cork between the bulkheads and watertight compartments. It was assumed that the superstructure and crew quarters would take "significant" damage in any fight.

*During the firing one of the turret-guns stopped firing, and the gunnery lieutenant, Frank C. Younghusband, had himself rammed into the gun where he cleared the vent, and then, after being nearly suffocated by the powder gases, was hauled out by a rope tied to his feet. By 5pm. all the Egyptian guns were silent, and the fleet ceased bombarding at 5:30pm. The Inflexible was the ship most injured. Besides being somewhat mauled aloft, and having her unarmoured parts penetrated in various places, she was struck outside the citadel below the water line by a 10" Palliser shot.*

This glanced upwards, passed through the deck, killed Carpenter Shannon, and mortally wounded Lieutenant Jackson on the superstructure. In the course of its career it impressed the name on its base on an iron bollard which is now preserved at Whale Island, and by way of small reminder of the action it wrecked the captain's cabin.

**Game notes:** *HMS Inflexible* is at or near the pinnacle of naval power in 1876CE. In game terms, it is a force of nature that can be dealt with only by similarly impressive forces of nature. It is *not* a ship meant to operate independently. It only has a modest store of coal, sufficient to make a trans-Atlantic crossing at moderate speed. For extended journeys it would require support ships for re-coaling. In *actual* 1876CE currency, *HMS Inflexible* cost about 800,000£. This would be about 5,000,000 Credits in **Verne** terms.

*HMS Inflexible* was the first Royal Navy ship to have all-electric lighting, using a dangerous and complicated 800 volt system that contributed to the very first electrocution aboard a Royal Navy ship. The crew complement was about 430 enlisted ranks and 20 officers. Only about 24 crew were required to actually run the ship, the rest being those needed for extra shifts, gun crews and support personnel. A ship of this size in the Victorian Era would have its own dedicated paymaster, blacksmith, stewards for the officers, marines, machinists, laundrymen, medical staff and chaplain. In addition, each of the big guns could have a crew of over a dozen men to handle ammunition bags and shells massing nearly a ton each.

**Combat notes:** In game terms, *HMS Inflexible* gets four shots from its main guns in any given combat. They take several minutes to reload and even rotating the turrets from front to back takes a full minute. After firing once, a combat on a turn-by-turn level will be long over by the time they reload. Of course, since the main guns are either 14d+2 armor-piercing or 12d+2 lethal explosive, they don't need to hit a target very often to have significant effect. Even the smaller guns have a damage of 8d+2 armor-piercing or 6d+2 lethal explosion. The main guns have an Accuracy of 8 and a maximum range of about 6 kilometers, while the smaller guns have an Accuracy of 6 and a maximum range of about 3 kilometers. The smaller guns can be reloaded in several seconds with a trained crew. Accuracy of the main and secondary guns is halved without targeting data from the bridge.

Note that at long range, both small and large guns would take several seconds to get where they were going. Neither gun can be traversed fast enough to engage small or fast-moving targets, nor elevated to angles sufficient to engage nearby aerial targets. In theory the big guns had a 180° arc of fire front to back, but only one gun in each turret could fire all the way from front to back, the ship's superstructure blocking the other gun. In practice, the muzzle blast from the guns was so powerful that it wrecked the nearby superstructure of the ship if fired fore or aft, so they were used only for broadside fire unless there was no other choice. As a side note, if the muzzle blast could damage a 7d+1 superstructure, you do *not* want to be on deck if they are fired fore or aft. The smaller guns had a wide arc of fire, but less than 180°, and were mounted two on each side, and two facing forward, all in the lightly armored front third of the ship.

In a fight between *HMS Inflexible* and something like *HMS Ethereal*, *Wille zur Macht* or a heavy Martian tripod, it would break down like this:

***HMS Ethereal:*** Wins, it can rain down explosive shells on the ends until it does enough Hits to sink it, and *HMS Inflexible* cannot hit *HMS Ethereal*. However, one good hit with a 12d+2 explosive shell would do about 7 Hits to *HMS Ethereal*.

***Wille zur Macht:*** Wins, its Vril force beam can penetrate the thinner ends and eventually hole it enough to sink it without being hit in return. A hit from *HMS Inflexible* would virtually obliterate the gondola, doing 12 Hits, or do 2 Hits to the envelope.

***Martian Heavy Tripod:*** Wins, but only because of the superior range of its heat-cannon. It would take a long time for a non-explosive weapon to do enough hits to overcome *HMS Inflexible*'s damage limit (8 attacks penetrating armor to do 1 Hit), and the heat-cannon would not be able to penetrate the citadel armor. A hit from *HMS Inflexible*'s main gun would probably do damage to the tripod, especially if solid shot was used, but it is unlikely a smart tripod pilot would let *HMS Inflexible* get that close. At least not after word spread of what the guns can do...





*Richard  
Burton*



*Annie  
Oakley*



*Ernest  
Shackleton*



*Charles  
Darwin*



*William  
Cody*



*Laverie  
Vallee*



*Jules  
Verne*



*Allan  
Pinkerton*



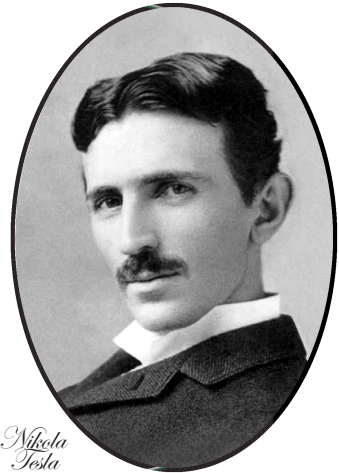
*Courtney  
Selous*



*Florence  
Nightingale*



*Percy  
Fawcett*



*Nikola  
Tesla*



*Henry  
Stanley*



*Mary  
Walker*



*Calamity  
Jane*



*Thomas  
Edison*

# ADVENTURERS



Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard  
you while you sleep, is cheaper than them  
uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap.

An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when they're  
goin' large a bit, is five times better business  
than paradin' in full kit.

Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'  
"Tommy how's yer soul?", but it's "Thin red line  
of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll. O it's  
"Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin  
to roll.

Rudyard Kipling, *Tommy*

▼ **INTRODUCTION** - The world of **Verne** is one of great divides. There are adventurers and those they deal with on an equal basis...and everyone else. The world is not so much about challenges against others, but with others, either "with others" in the cooperative sense, or "with others" in the sense that you are both working towards a similar goal, but only one of you can be the first to succeed.

**Verne** adventurers are larger than life, and not just in the term of the **EABA** adventurer trait of the same name. Adventurers are (or can become) a Phineas Fogg, Captain Nemo or John Carter of the world, using their greater talents and gifts to baffle, astound and confound lesser men than themselves. For instance, Michael Strogoff, a typical **Verne** hero:

*As he doffed his Muscovite cap, locks of thick curly hair fell over his broad, massive forehead. When his ordinarily pale face became at all flushed, it arose solely from a more rapid action of the heart. His eyes, of a deep blue, looked with clear, frank, firm gaze. The slightly-contracted eyebrows indicated lofty heroism - "the hero's cool courage," according to the definition of the physiologist. He possessed a fine nose, with large nostrils; and a well-shaped mouth, with the slightly-projecting lips which denote a generous and noble heart.*

This is the kind of solid (if overdescribed) stuff your adventurers will be made of. People will see these characteristics in the adventurer almost at a glance (unless the plot indicates otherwise), and give them the appropriate degree of respect.

▼ **ADVENTURERS** - All adventurers for **Verne** are going to have certain characteristics that are fundamental to the gameworld. Most of these will be in the form of Traits or classes of Traits that everyone will have some degree of.

The first is that adventurers are a "cut above" the norm. While they may be built on a normal human level of points (80A and 80S), everyone gets "Larger than Life" for all rolls on one Attribute (and one skill based on that Attribute). A pugilist will never lose in a brawl with a common sailor, a science-minded adventurer finds intuitive answers to problems that take lesser minds hours to solve, a marksman casually makes shots that lesser mortals are amazed by, and so on. This Trait costs no points (and cannot be bought for a larger bonus).

Second, all adventurers get +1 Hit Bracket for their Strength and Health, and can if they wish buy another +1 with the Toughness Trait. Adventurers are hearty types, even the old eccentric scientists.

Third, for each point in any Attribute die roll above 2d+2, an adventurer *must* have one level of a Personality. And, all the levels must be in the same Personality for a particular Attribute.

**EXAMPLE:** An adventurer with an Awareness of 3d+2 and a Strength of 3d+0 will need three levels in one Personality Trait, and one level in a different one (since 3d+2 in Awareness is 3 points more than 2d+2, and 3d+0 Strength is 1 point more than 2d+2).

The intent is that "great men have great flaws". The more extreme you push the bounds of human endeavor, the more likely you have some *extremely* strong aspects to your personality. Note that these are Traits you get points for, so they should be limiting to the adventurer. While they may convey benefits at times, like being chivalrous, excessive levels can be a fault and a hazard in critical situations.

▼ **Note** - For **Verne**, mandatory Personalities do not count towards the 40 point limit on Traits. And, you may halve any mandatory S for Personality and use it as A (e.g. 20S from Personality could become 10A).

Neither of the other two mandatory Traits (Larger than Life and +1 Hit Bracket) will count towards the limits on adventurer points, so an 80A and 80S adventurer can still gain 40 points from other Traits in addition to these.

**PDF adventurers** - There are two ways to make **Verne** adventurers. You can use the standard method, using 80A, 80S and the guidelines on the previous page, or you can use the interactive pdf. We recommend the latter method. It's fun, it's fast, and it actually is set up to give you a slight point bonus compared to manually designing an adventurer.

The ways you do it is rather simple. Answer all the questions on the first page and then hit the "create adventurer" button. Based on how you answer the questions, the pdf will figure out your gender, nationality, profession, skills and personality traits. For sheer amusement value, all players should do this in front of each other. Print this adventurer off *immediately*. If you do not like the adventurer you created, you may go back and change your answers to *three* questions, but you have to choose one of the two adventurers thus designed. The one that you do not use goes to the gamemaster as a pre-designed foe, ally, or talented extra for later use. If the gamemaster is feeling exceptionally generous, they can allow players to adjust their answers twice, and choose one of the three adventurers that result.

Adventurers designed using the interactive pdf will be from a variety of nationalities. In the rare event that an adventurer shares no languages with the others, one of their language skills can be adjusted to suit.

**Other** - In general, adventurers should be well rounded. A soldier might also be a poet, a scholar a champion fencer, or a bush guide might have an improbable competence with the piano. If you divide skills into the categories of "combat" and "non-combat", adventurers can have no more than double the points in one category as they do in the other. These points can be distributed between any number of skills, but the ratio of points should be maintained.

**EXAMPLE:** Stanislaw Karlek is a respected scientist in his native Poland, and has two academic skills at +2d (20S each) and one at +1d (10S), for a total of 50S. If these were his only non-combat skills, he would also have to have 25S in combat skills, like a pair of +1d skills (10S each) and one +0d skill (5S).

▼ **ATTRIBUTES** - All attributes in **Verne** operate according to normal **EABA** guidelines. There are no magical or psionic powers, and very, very few technological powers that are linked to Fate, so a high level of Fate really just means an adventurer is exceptionally lucky. Bear in mind that the Larger than Life ability, combined with an occasional extra die from Fate can allow adventurers to accomplish exceptionally heroic feats. Because of the lack of good body armor and medical care, having a Fate of at least 1d+2 is recommended. This will allow an adventurer to use Fate to stop 1d of the first two attacks that might hit them, a 67% chance of stopping 1d of the third attack and 33% chance to stop 1d of the fourth.

▼ **SKILLS** - The standard **EABA** skill list and notes will apply, with the following notes:

**Free skills** - All adventurers get their native culture at +0d and spoken fluency in their native language at +1d. Having full literacy in their native language costs +5S.

**Culture** - All skills *bought with a specialization* will allow a free roll related to culture or class-specific use of that specialization at -1d off the normal skill roll. Run-of-the-mill cultural tasks are probably a Challenging(9) roll. For instance, a person with a firearms specialization in "shotgun" will have some knowledge of pheasant hunting etiquette, a person with "saber" will know about German saber duels, and a person with "camel riding" will know something of the ins and outs of camel racing.

**Firearms** - A person trained in firearms use will have to determine whether they are more familiar with modern cartridge firearms, or older, muzzle-loading weapons. They will take a -1d to their skill roll when using the other type. This can be offset with a +0d level in an "enabling skill". So, if you are skilled with modern firearms, you can eliminate the -1d penalty for using muzzle-loading firearms by spending 5S on "archaic firearms" skill. Someone more familiar with muzzle-loaders could eliminate the penalty on modern weapon use by spending 5S on "modern firearms" skill.

Firearms skill can be specialized for pistols, rifles or shotguns. An enabling skill covers all firearms (you already know how to shoot, so "archaic firearms" skill really just deals with the reloading process and idiosyncrasies of muzzle-loading weapons).

**Scientist/Technician** - A "scientist" will be someone with a formal university education on a subject, while a technician or mechanic will be someone who learned about a subject through a hands-on apprenticeship. Science deals with theory and design, and technicians deal with actually building it, operating or repairing it. A scientist would consider it extremely demeaning to have to work for a mere mechanic. Working outside your sphere of competence is a -1d to your skill roll (a scientist trying to repair a gadget, or a technician trying to design one).

**Medical** - A medically skilled adventurer must choose between Doctor and Surgeon. This is about the same difference as Medicine and First Aid. The surgeon deals with critical care and immediately life-threatening injuries, while the doctor handles matters of disease and internal maladies. Working outside your sphere of competence is a -1d to your skill roll. All medical professionals who are *not* adventurers will take a -1d to their skill roll because of primitive medical knowledge. But, any medical professional who does not take this -1d penalty will take a -1d penalty to all social rolls or -1 level of Status relating to their profession (not conforming to standard practices reduces your standing in the medical community).

Both doctors and surgeons can specialize in Apothecary, which would be the formulation and compounding of drugs.

**Equestrian** - There are really only two animals this skill is useful for: horses and camels. When you buy the skill, choose which of them it is for. You take a -1d to your roll for the other.

**Leadership** - The ability to lead (and command) groups of people is going to be very important in **Verne**, and the full use of this skill will be described in the **Adventuring** chapter. For now, strongly consider getting at least a +0d level in the skill if your adventurer is the sort to lead any kind of enterprise, be it military, exploration or scientific research.

**Security systems** - As mentioned on [page 2.15](#), there are a huge number of criminal skills related to theft and locks and physical, human or animal-based security systems. This skill must be bought to cover one set of related criminal skills, like con games, pickpocketing, lockpicking, safecracking, breaking & entering. Skill in one aspect gives no skill in a different field, however, all such skills give an appropriate bonus to "criminal culture" rolls. That is, a pickpocket might not know how to do breaking and entering, but he knows someone who does.

**Language** - The standard **EABA** notes on language apply. Adventurers with at least +0d in Latin can very slowly try to communicate some basic concepts to a speaker of English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian or Italian, or derive some meaning from writing in these languages, but it is *not* a substitute for real knowledge of these languages, since while some words may be nearly identical, some others are derived but many are completely different:

<b>Latin</b>	Libertas	Animal	Dormire
<b>English</b>	Liberty	Animal	Sleep
<b>Spanish</b>	Libertad	Animal	Dormir
<b>French</b>	Liberté	Animal	Dormir
<b>Portuguese</b>	Liberdade	Animal	Dormir
<b>Italian</b>	Libertà	Animale	Dormire
<b>Romanian</b>	Libertate	Animal	Dormi

For adventuring purposes, spending enough time to gain 1S from practice is sufficient to convey basic concepts in any language, though with only the most primitive grasp of tense and grammar, the equivalent of speaking like "I is now hurting", "Am thirsty is", "Who being you?", or "What is?" Slow, single word answers by a native speaker is about the level of speech comprehension for a 1S level of skill.

**Quartermaster(new)** - For any campaign which involves expeditions or other extended sojourns a long way from civilization, someone with this skill is almost a necessity. Quartermaster is an Awareness-based "did I remember to pack that?" skill. *If you are in the middle of the Amazon and need a grappling hook or a bullet mold, you either brought one with you or you do without!*

The skill is pretty simple. You are assumed to have packed *obvious* necessities for any trip. Tents, clothing, ammunition, blankets, cooking gear, whatever is a clear necessity for the nature of your trip. After that, anything the players specifically write down, can afford and have access to is included. Everything else, you have to roll for.

# EABA

The default roll is Hard(11), and is modified by the following conditions. Only one person gets to make the roll. Players are responsible for their own gear, so this roll represents the collective wisdom in packing for the trip, as well as how it was packed (did all the fancy stuff get put in the same crate?).

Condition	Difficulty
Abandoned expedition or trip	+4
Poorly-funded expedition or trip	+2
Well-funded expedition or trip	-2
Common sense or tiny item	-2
Average item	+0
Uncommon, or bulky item	+2
Very uncommon, large or fragile item	+4
Each previous successful use of this skill	+1

All of these modifiers assume that you have sufficient bearers or pack animals for your gear. If your native bearers run off in the night with half your stuff, the riverboat with your gear sinks, or the pack animals fall off a cliff, you use the "abandoned" modifier, or possibly lose all ability to make the roll. Usually, adventurers can rescue at least one item that is key to the concept of their adventurer. The big game hunter manages to scramble out of the wreckage with his rifle and a handful of shells, etc.

**EXAMPLE:** Your Himalayan expedition (with average funding) starts falling ill, and the biologist laments that he did not pack a microscope to examine food for possible microscopic parasites. The player (or extra) in charge of packing for the expedition makes a roll on Quartermaster. The base difficulty is 11, +2 for a bulky or uncommon item, for a difficulty of 13 for a microscope to have been packed, just in case. If the quartermaster had been looking for something else prior to this, then the roll would be at +1 difficulty, and be difficulty 14.

Having a Scrounging skill appropriate to the region being visited is usually good for a +1d complementary skill bonus (you have been there before, you know what to pack). Quartermaster skill can be used off raw Awareness with a -1d penalty, you are just not nearly as good at it.

For adventuring purposes, whoever is the designated quartermaster is going to be doing the pre-trip supply gathering, so any aspects of the adventure involving preparations *must* involve this person, so they will be visiting various suppliers, arranging transport of crates, and so on. Note that quartermaster skill is about foresight, not creating things out of thin air. If the quartermaster is killed or incapacitated, their skill roll remains. The gear is there, it just may take longer to find it.

▼ **Note** - As a special use of this skill, for the first adventure or setup for one that takes place in a civilized area, all adventurers get an effective +0d in this skill, or their actual skill, whichever is higher, with a  $\pm 2$  to difficulty for levels of appropriate Status. All that this means is that they do not have to buy the minutia of their possessions. If they need something, it is not inherent and obvious to their adventurer, but it is within their budget, they can just roll and see if they have ready access to it. Once all the players and adventurers are on their feet, this freebie roll goes away.

**Hobbies** - Hobbies are very common in some Victorian circles. Many people fancy themselves naturalists, artists, or tinker with newfangled things like photography, or stylized combat like fencing or Greco-Roman wrestling. A hobby costs only 5S and gives you a +1d skill in that field for casual or entertainment use of the skill. However, you may only use "best two" on your skill roll (even if you have Larger than Life). The depth of your expertise does not allow you to do difficult or complex tasks with the skill. So, you may be an accomplished fencer, but when confronted with a *real* duel and an opponent who is trying to do more than merely touch you, you will fare very poorly. A hobbyist who has been "blooded" can, with the gamemaster's permission, spend 5S to upgrade their skill to a real +1d skill level. Whether or not they can do this on the spur of the moment is up to the gamemaster.



▼ **TRAITS** - The standard **EABA** Traits will apply, with the following additions and changes.

● **Age** - Normally, the benefits and perils of age would be exaggerated for a hard environment like the Victorian Era, but since **Verne** is an idealized treatment of the era, age effects are going to apply normally. Adventurers may not start play older than age 60. Adventurers crossing an age bracket will gain or lose points as normal. There are plenty of plucky young explorers in this era. This is, after all, the time period when Tom Sawyer built a raft and cruised down the Mississippi, or when armies needed warm bodies enough that they would look the other way if a fourteen-year old decided to enlist. Similarly, there are plenty of grey-bearded scientists going on trips to exotic locations (and many of them even come back alive).

◆ **Blessing/Curse** - These do not generally apply. There are no paranormal blessings, and curses like severe allergies would be very likely to be fatal in a Victorian environment. The most notable one in a historical sense would be the hemophilia gene passed from Queen Victoria to her descendants. In game terms, this could be a Curse that causes 1d+0 extra damage from any lethal injury taken, at the rate of 1 Hit per 4 time levels after the injury (so if the 1d+0 extra damage was 3 Hits, the person would take 1 Hit at time levels of +4, +8 and +12. This would be a medium Curse worth 20A or S, is not recommended and is simply noted for historical purposes.

■ **Enemies/Friends** - Any major player on Earth can conceivably be a Friend, Enemy or even both. In addition to the powerful groups mentioned elsewhere, Friends and Enemies can include various members of the nobility, governments, business tycoons, or subsets of governments, religions, creditors, rivals, ex-lovers, etc.

The most important thing for the gamemaster to remember when looking at Friends or Enemies is the scope of their reach. If you have an Enemy in England and your first adventure takes you to the Orient for a year, then that's really not much of an Enemy. Similarly, a powerful Friend in England the player paid for would not be of much use. A Friend or Enemy's influence needs to match their ability to influence a campaign and the adventurer's life. The scope of at least the early campaign should be used as the framework for determining the power of Friends and Enemies.

For an adventurer with wealth or status, a Friend can also be a loyal servant, someone who is willing to go above and beyond. For a cost of 10A or 10S, a servant may be designed on 60A and 40S, with up to a total of 25A and S from Traits. While matters of class and status are maintained, this is a *friend*, and the obligations of friendship are there. If the Friend dies, the points spent are lost... Such a Friend gains half (round up) the experience of the main adventurer on any adventure that they share.

■ **Experience** - There are quite a few experiences that are useful for **Verne**. Obviously, experience in carrying or wearing heavy loads is useful for just about everyone (especially for women). For adventurers spending time far from civilization, an experience dealing with a particular region of the globe can be useful, like dealing with African heat and bugs (and bug-borne diseases), or South American jungles or British cooking.

◆ **Gifted - Verne** is set firmly in the middle of the Industrial Era. Adventurers can have the Gifted Trait for 10A in order to understand and build tech at levels up to the Early Atomic Era, but you have to remember that only the adventurer is capable of understanding how that technology works and is the only one who can build or repair it. Granted, for large projects they can have other people build subassemblies, but they do so by following rote instructions and even if assistants put all the pieces together, the finished project will not work without the personal touch of the Gifted genius.

**EXAMPLE:** Captain Nemo designs a powerful submarine. While the parts are fabricated elsewhere, and the finished sub is operated by a non-Gifted crew, the sub requires Captain Nemo's hands-on touch to be completed, and he has to be involved in any repairs of damaged parts (even if only in a supervisory role).

▼ **Note** - This aspect of being Gifted shares many characteristics with the nature of Sparks in the quasi-steampunk comic *Girl Genius* by Phil and Kaja Foglio.

Adventurers can also spend 10A to be able to exceed the normal human norms for physical Attributes, as described in the **EABA** rules.

◆ **Larger than Life** - As mentioned earlier, adventurers get this Trait for one Attribute and its related skills for free. It may not be acquired for more than one Attribute or otherwise improved.

- **Looks - Verne** is going to gloss over the historical facets of physical appearance in the Victorian Era (smallpox or acne scars, missing teeth, poorly set bones, infrequent bathing, etc.). Assume that everyone is average-looking unless they buy a Forte or Weakness on their Will or Health to reflect positively or negatively on their appearance.
- **Motivation** - *Required for all adventurers.* You need a reason to be out there. If you write at least a hundred words that the gamemaster can use for a few adventure hooks, it is worth 5A or 5S.
- ◆ **Mythic Archetype** - This Trait is easily doable in **Verne**. However, you must remember that each role needs to meet its archetype requirement, *and* the overall requirements for **Verne** adventurers. That is, at least half the points in non-combat skills as in combat skills, or vice versa.
- **Pain Tolerance** - Applicable to a number of adventurer types in **Verne**. Adventurers or extras of particular fortitude may buy the Trait twice. In such a case, double their Will and use the full dice of the doubled amount.
- **Personality** - As mentioned earlier, adventurers will have to have personality Traits sufficient to match their superior Attributes. Each Attribute at higher than 2d+2 will require a specific Personality, with levels at least equal to the difference (e.g. a 3d+2 Attribute would require three levels in a Personality).

All adventurers will have *some* sense of racial, religious, or national pride. Until proven otherwise, assume that individuals of other nationalities will adhere to stereotypes, most of which, to be honest, are somewhat insulting. Spaniards are lazy, English are stuffy and formal, Germans are militant, Jews are greedy, Scots are penurious, Americans loud and boisterous, the French are volatile, and so on. This might not manifest as antipathy towards other nationalities, but there will be a sort of unspoken "one-upmanship", a "our people can do it better than your people" thing. So, whenever one country sets out to do something best or first, there is invariably someone else in another country who seeks to do it first. To race around the world, find the source of the Nile, reach the Pole, climb the highest mountain, and so on. And this national pride can sometimes lead to haste and unwise decisions that are ultimately costly.

Regarding non-caucasian races, the attitude of the caucasians at the time is best summed up by the phrase "the white man's burden". They see it as their duty to "civilize the savages", to drag them kicking and screaming into the perfect world of Western beliefs and morals. And if this noble effort has to be paid for by squeezing the country dry of its exports and resources (tea, china, gems, gold, etc.), then they will thank us for it later. "Racism" is often not a hatred, just benevolent condescension. I mean, "those people" can be guards, menials and such, but to think they could command, govern, or attend university? *Pshaw!* One must make sure they do not exceed their station. *Forcefully, if necessary.*

If you look at maps of the period and basic history, it is as though these foreign places did not exist until a European set foot there, and the past history of the place is irrelevant unless it involves priceless antiquities that can be dismantled and carted off to be "properly displayed" (likely in a European museum). This actually works well for the gamemaster, since vast and ancient historical panoramas can play out under the nose of any European colonial governors without them caring or suspecting. Thus, threats to the area and possibly the world require the attention of the adventurers.

At its best, the white man's burden is a sort of benevolent condescension. At its worst it is very exploitive colonialism. In **Verne**, we assume the best of the adventurers, and leave the worst to the villains and cads.

In general, everyone thinks the best of their own race, nation or creed. While not everyone is reduced to overt racism or jingoism, there are certain recurring stereotypes that turn up in Victorian SF and other period texts. No one would ever blame their own nation for a global ill. No Spaniard would ever catch "Spanish Influenza", for instance, nor would a Frenchman ever say he had the "French Pox". On the other hand, if it is *good*, it is nearly mandatory to apply your national values to it. If an American sees a German do something clever, the German is trying to ape "American ingenuity" (an American could do it better, of course).

The following will reflect the *worst* of popular opinion, and will also give you an idea of the personality traits an adventurer might have if they are trying to play a particular stereotype. It is unlikely that players want an adventurer that matches the full extent of a negative stereotype, but parts of their national stereotype and the common perception of others can be fertile ground for a complex personality with a lot of game potential.

- Protestants:** Heretics who deny the authority of the true Church. Those who do not recognize the *ex cathedra* infallibility of the Pope have turned away from the will of God on Earth and are doomed to burn in Hell.
- Catholics:** Traitors who give more allegiance to a foreign potentate than to their own nation's leaders, led by an uncrowned king who blasphemes and says he speaks with the voice of God. There is no place in the kingdom of Heaven for their kind.
- Muslims:** Abominators who dare say that the word of Jesus and the disciples is not the final testament of God to man. A false faith led by a false prophet, doomed to an eternity of torment unless they repent their Satan-spawned ways.
- Jews:** Greedy, cheating, Christ-killing skinflints who would charge you to tell you the time of day, and who would consider it a coup and measure of the foolishness of others if they receive any kindness without being charged for it.
- Marxists:** Dangerous rabble, God-denying anarchists trying to destroy society, radicals insane enough to want a world where everyone is equal (except women, of course).
- Americans:** Lacking appreciation for class, in all uses of the word. Brash, disrespectful of custom and tradition, as likely to shoot you as to spit tobacco on you.
- Englishmen:** Reserved and formal, patriotic beyond the bounds of reason and sense. Ired that they have to use the German-invented Fahrenheit temperature scale, but it is better than using the Celsius scale invented by French.
- Italians:** Dandies, seducers, fops and wine-swilling intriguers. Indolent beggars and street musicians, invincibly ignorant and low in their instincts.
- Spaniards:** Lazy, shiftless, ignorant thieves who would sell their homeland if they could only find a buyer, who are only suitable for hard labor, and only then if someone competent is there to supervise their work.
- Germans:** Cruel and cunning as aristocrats, stolid plodders wedded to discipline, order and inflexible adherence to rules and laws.
- Irish:** Barely civilized Papists, given to strong drink and thievery, apish white men suitable only for menial tasks and taking orders.

- Frenchmen:** Snooty, chauvinist, effeminate, vain, decadent and deceitful. Capricious revolutionaries who overturned their king only to make Napoleon emperor and unleash him upon Europe.
- Indians:** Ignorant, dishonest, bestial, lustful, superstitious Hindoos, who worship demonic idols and strangle unwary travellers, the sort of people that decent men would descend to without the benefits of Christian civilization.
- Russians:** Stoic and pragmatic, but honor-bound to remember the most minor of slights until it can be satisfactorily resolved with a duel or something similar.
- Africans:** At worst, uncivilized savages. At best, mimicking cultures and behaviors they do not understand, prevented from lapsing back into barbarism only by the strong hand of the civilized peoples.
- Arabs:** Swindling, greasy, filthy, honorless, lazy, decadent Mohammedans with no respect for the superior cultural past and accomplishments of Europe.
- Oriental:** Slant-eyed, jaundiced, ancestor-worshipping, gibberish-speaking, inscrutable little menials. They secretly despise all of us, but are too cowardly to actually say it.

Yes, *this is harsh*. Mean-spirited, even. But within the Victorian Era, true (some of the phrases are *direct* historical quotes). Total genocide of one's ethnic, ideological or national foes is something Victorian writers did regularly. *And the appropriate readership cheered when it happened*. Parallels to modern intolerance are readily drawn.

And it does not even deal with the attitudes of class and wealth. The upper ranks think little of the values and morals (or lack thereof) of lower classes, and the hard working common folk have all sorts of notions about the decadent and deceitful upper classes. Remember, this is the era of hereditary nobility *and* the origins of Marxism. The more "ideal" a past you create for your **Verne** campaign, the less these stereotypes will apply. *This is merely a baseline to work upwards from*. But remember that even in a perfectly idealized Victorian Era, you will need powerful villains with powerful flaws. A racist or jingoist bent, or a need to get vengeance for some affront to their nation or creed is a great motivation. Someone may be motivated beyond the scope of reason by racism, religious belief, revenge for a past wrong or perceived wrong, etc.

■ **Secrets** - There are not a lot of trivial secrets adventurers can have in **Verne**. *Sure, maybe you can be hiding a mistress somewhere, but who isn't?* No, secrets in **Verne** tend to be the sort that can ruin your career, damage your status and cost you your fortune. How tightly a Secret has to be held depends on the adventurer, the secret and their career. Having people suspect a playwright is a homosexual is one thing. Suspecting that a fleet Admiral is one, is another matter entirely.

Membership in a group inimical to your nation's best interest is a major secret worth 15A or 15S, as is homosexuality (at least for Western adventurers). Being a secret member of a non-favored religion is a minor secret worth 10A or 10S, and having an accepted vice at unacceptable levels is a minor secret worth 5A or 5S. This would be like a secret drug habit, gambling debts large enough that you might do something illegal to get them forgiven, and so on. If a Secret is revealed, the adventurer loses points from Status and/or Wealth to pay for it. They may *not* use accumulated experience to just make the problem go away. They may put points gained from time-based effort to rebuild lost fortune and reputation, though any gamemaster-given awards revoked because of the scandal are gone forever (if you are found passed out in an opium den next to a murder victim, you can kiss that knighthood goodbye!).

■ **Status** - Status is a vital part of interaction in the Victorian Era, and it is probably the most important Trait that adventurers will have and deal with. How adventurers interact with the world will often be modified by Status. In **Verne**, Status and Wealth are linked. A person can have Wealth without Status, but not Status without Wealth. Each level of full Status *requires* an equivalent number of levels in Wealth, limited Status requires half (round down) the levels in Wealth, and very limited Status requires one-quarter(round down) the levels in Wealth. Negative levels of status will *require* negative levels of Wealth. These levels of Wealth may be limited or full Wealth, as desired. Earlier game notes on wealth and class apply here. In practical terms, it would take two or more levels of Wealth per level of Status to get the *actual* wealth associated with very high status. Nobility comes from centuries-old families that have been accumulating national wealth for generations. Executives of the East India company had a monopoly on the entire output of a nation for a century. In the Victorian Era, the really wealthy are *really, really* wealthy.

The type of Status also enhances Wealth. The distinctions of Status will be one of a few types:

- **Social rank** - Titles of nobility, position within a government, side effects of extreme wealth. These are full levels of Status. Senators, dukes, ambassadors, ministry officials and tycoons would be people with one or more levels of full Status. In general, you need to be personally important in a easily identified way to have any full levels of Status, like "Count Badeberg", "Undersecretary Smith" or "Senator Grimsley".
- **Birth** - Advantages or disadvantages conferred to you by accident of birth. These are all the same type of limited Status level. So, being an American, a female and a Jew would all be lumped into the same category of limited Status. This would be separate from social rank, but would add or subtract to it as a sort of tiebreaker. In general, limited levels of Status count half as much as full levels in situations where Status is important. Full levels would win ties in matters of precedence. So, a person with one full level of Status and two (applicable) limited levels would be just below someone with two full levels in matters of status etiquette.
- **Rank** - These are usually levels of professional achievement, and can include anything from college degrees to military rank to the civil authority granted by a police badge. These are limited levels of Status if they are broad category like military or religious rank, and very limited Status if local, like police. These only count in interactions where that sort of Status matters. In general, two levels of very limited Status is about equal to one level of limited Status, and four levels of very limited Status is about the same as one level of overall Status.

▼ **Note** - To keep things reasonably balanced, unless the gamemaster says otherwise, starting adventurers may not have more than a total of 20 points split between Status and Wealth, like one level of Status and one level of Wealth, or two levels of limited Status and one level of Wealth. In addition, they may not start play with more than one level of overall Status, or two levels of limited Status, or three levels of very limited Status. *Inherent status* (like being a Great Power citizen) does not count towards this.



Status usually grants either explicit or implied authority of some kind (e.g. a policeman can arrest you), and may also require certain status-based responsibilities or code of conduct. For example, an Army colonel should not be seen drunk in a ditch. The authorities granted by a type of Status give an implied extra level of full Status in contests of Status (or +2 limited or +4 very limited Status). A beat cop can arrest someone of prominence, but can likely be intimidated or cajoled into not arresting a person of *great* prominence (they will get *their* superior to do the arresting). The responsibilities of a type of Status are usually enforced by those with higher levels of the same type of Status.

Status equivalent	Overall	Limited	V.limited
King/Queen	4	-	-
Prince	3	-	-
Duke	2	-	-
High government	2	-	-
Business magnate	2	-	-
Medium gov't	1	-	-
Ambassador	1	-	-
Famous celebrity	1	-	-
General/Admiral	-	3	-
Colonel	-	2	-
Captain	-	1	-
Lieutenant	-	1	-
Police commissioner	-	-	4
Police detective	-	-	2
Policeman	-	-	1
Skilled tradesman	-	-	1
Senior professor	-	-	4
Professor	-	-	3
University graduate	-	-	2
Prominent doctor	-	2	-
Doctor	-	1	-
Pope	-	6	-
Cardinal	-	5	-
Bishop	-	4	-
Crimelord	-	4	-
Great Power	-	+1	-
Female	-	-1	-
Non-caucasian	-	-1	-
Non-Christian	-	-1	-

Players with a particular concept for an adventurer may, with gamemaster permission, buy a non-standard level of Status to represent some intermediate level of income. For instance, a sargeant might have one level of very limited Status (military ranks are normally limited Status). This gives the sargeant a better income and military authority over non-commissioned troops like privates and corporals.

**EXAMPLE:** A policeman and a military officer get into an altercation over whether the policeman has the authority to make an arrest for a real or perceived infraction. Technically, the police officer does, but there are unwritten social consequences the policeman has to consider. The policeman gets +4 to his very limited Status, giving him "5 levels". Halved, this is a shade more than 2 levels of limited Status, so he can "outrank" a captain (2 levels of limited Status), but not a colonel (3 levels). The policeman is, however, within his rights to keep the colonel detained until someone equal or superior to both of them arrives to deal with the matter. This could be a police detective coming to make the arrest, or an officer or civil servant superior to the colonel arriving to authorize release of the colonel.

In addition to the normal forms of Status the adventurers can have, there are also awards of Status that can be given in play. These generally count as one level of limited Status when dealing with anyone underneath whoever gave you the award. For instance, being knighted by the Queen means you are "titled" (i.e. Robin Benthorpe would be "Sir Robin"), and that carries some weight anywhere Her Majesty has influence. This award usually adds to any other Status the person has. Outside of these areas it counts as a very limited level of Status, a tiebreaker in Status matters. Other awards of Status could be academic distinctions, religious distinctions, military medals of honor or winners of any "government monopoly" award (exclusive tailors to her Majesty the Queen...). These awards can also have a small cash stipend. An adventurer with no other positive influence on their income from Status can have double their normal income to represent this stipend (i.e. an average, un-Statused person who gets the award).

Your typical adventurer is going to be a caucasian male of Western European or United States origin, maybe not independently wealthy, but better off than normal. Adventurer background will determine certain levels of Status (and therefore Wealth) that the adventurer will have. This gives no points and costs no points, and it can be modified by buying extra levels of Status and/or Wealth (or selling them back for extra points).

**Great Power:** The adventurer is a caucasian male who is a citizen of one of the major Great Powers or up-and-coming powers (United States, England, France, Austro-Hungary or Russia) and is an adherent of some form of Christianity. This is one free level of limited Status (grants no extra income).

**Female:** One level of negative limited Status. Women cannot vote, have limited property, legal or business ownership rights and their judgement is often considered suspect.

**Non-caucasian:** One level of negative limited Status. Obviously, this only applies within caucasian-dominated cultures.

**Non-Christian:** If you are not a follower of one of the Christ-based faiths (Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, etc.) you get one level of negative limited Status. If you are a minority Christ-based faith (Catholic in a Protestant-majority region), then you get a level of negative limited Status *while you are in that area*. You only get *points* for being a non-Christian. Other modifiers on religion-based Status are merely local (like being a Christian in Ottoman Turkey).

**EXAMPLE:** You decide your adventurer is going to be a Spanish heiress of some kind. This means the adventurer starts off with one level of negative limited Status (a woman from a country whose star has faded on the international scene). To get some degree of public respect for ability or wealth, she buys one level of overall Status (10A or 10S) and two levels of Wealth (20S). This gives her a net of one level of Status and one level of Wealth.

Status equivalent	Overall	Limited	V.limited
Female	-	-1	-
Bought Status	+1	-	-
Total	+1	-1	-

This gives her sufficient overall Status that she can probably claim a title of some type. Perhaps she married a count, he died and left her his estate. So, she is a minor countess, not all that important, but worthy of deference or politeness towards. In matters of precedence, she is a notch below a man of similar status.

While we have waxed about the benefits of Status, adventurers can also have *negative* Status. An average person has no status, but someone who is desperately poor, a former (or current) criminal, a member of an unpopular religion (Jews, Muslims), race (non-white), profession (sewer cleaner) or dishonorably discharged from the military may have one or more levels of negative Status. Negative levels of Status can, ironically act as positive levels of Status within a subculture. The king of the Gypsies or an Orthodox rabbi may be shunned by proper folk, but highly respected among their own.

**Using Status** - Status works in mysterious ways. Status from geographic origin or gender works everywhere. The white man is deferred to and respected anywhere the Great Powers are known of. Women are universally less respected. They can be well respected, they just have to work harder at it (and spend more points on it). Negative status from religion only applies where that religion is a minority. An Islamic adventurer living in Baghdad has no social or economic penalty. Similarly, a non-caucasian penalty only applies where they are the minority. Status that is not appropriate to a situation or which is not recognized does not count at all.

Status helps grease the wheels of personal interaction, how many intermediaries you have to go through to meet someone, whether or not you are invited to exclusive gatherings, and so on. The concept of class and privilege is *assumed* in this time period. You *do* defer to your betters, you *do* respect your equals and you *do* expect deference from your inferiors. The degree of acceptable "camaraderie" is largely dependent on outward similarities and appearance rather than intangibles. So, a German baron might be on casual terms with a moderately well-off French sea captain, but would never be so informal towards a groom in his stables, a native bearer or the average person on the street. *It is just not done.*

Intelligence and creativity are in their own way, forms of status. A famous artist or brilliant scientist can be excused conduct that is unacceptable in others, because their fame is a sort of Status that moves them from the "inferior" to "equal" category in the social pecking order.

Personal honor is important in **Verne**, and Status to some degree represents that. You are thought less of if you do not defend your position of status. *It is natural and proper in the grand scheme of things that you are accorded the respect due to you from your status.* It is an *insult* if your status is deliberately ignored, one not soon forgotten unless amends are made. If you go to a formal ball, you expect to be announced upon entrance according to your titles and rank (provided you are important enough to warrant it), and to be announced in the proper order compared to your less illustrious peers. You are deferential to your social or military superiors, and expect deference from those below you.

In terms of game mechanics, Status does three things. First, you get a bonus to your Will, Leadership or any other skill or attribute used when trying to get someone to do something for you. The bonus is +4 per level of status difference, if it is within the sphere of influence for that type of status, and +2 if it is not. These bonuses turn into dice, as appropriate.

**EXAMPLE:** A colonel commanding a lieutenant gets a +8 to their Leadership skill when giving orders (two levels of Status, +4 per level). If the colonel had a Leadership skill roll of 4d+0, with the +8 bonus it would be 6d+2. The same colonel calling a porter to carry his luggage to his hotel room would get a +4 instead of +8, because the Status is outside his professional sphere. If the colonel was not in uniform and simply looked like a civilian, they would get no bonus at all (unless they were Caucasian and the porter was not).

The bonuses go in reverse if you are trying to influence someone of greater status, and failing to do so invariably invites their wrath. *The colonel knows better than to give orders to a general...*

Second, Status lets you get into pissing matches with people. Who gets the best seat in the train, who is introduced first, who gets the last room at the fully booked hotel, and so on. In these cases, whoever has the highest adjusted Status wins. Of course, dirty tricks to influence things can be used (bribing the hotel clerk, etc.), but these are insults that will be repaid in kind at some later date. These status contests cannot directly resolve party leadership issues, but being under the leadership of someone you consider unsuited to the role is a valid reason to challenge that leadership when some other excuse lets you justify that challenge.

**EXAMPLE:** The big game hunter has successfully led the party to the lost mines of Solomon, despite Professor Delias' archaeological qualifications. Now that the mines have been reached, clearly the Professor should be the one directing the party's exploration. Or so he thinks.

The last thing is that each level of Status gives you a +2 to any roll related to the culture or subculture associated with that Status. If you have two overall levels of Status, you get +4 to skill rolls relating to high society matters. If you have three levels of very limited Status in academic circles, you get +6 your Awareness roll to recall achievements of a fellow academic in your chosen field. A policeman with one level of very limited Status gets a +2 in matters of police procedure and law. The King of the Gypsies has a better knowledge of his people's legends. And so on.

◆ **Toughness** - As mentioned earlier, all **Verne** adventurers get +1 Hit Bracket for free. Adventurers may purchase it again for a +2 on their normal Hit Brackets.

◆ **Unusual background** - Since there are no magical powers or magical creatures, that aspect of unusual background is not needed. However, for an adventurer to have a skill that is far outside the norm for their nationality or culture might require an unusual background. Like motivation, this should provide hooks to the gamemaster, but since the adventurer is gaining a benefit not accessible to their peers, the Unusual Background is just a 5S surcharge for that privilege. Examples might be a European or American knowing martial arts, a woman knowing just about any combat skill, a woman with a university degree, a doctor with an actual grasp of sound medical practice, or an American who knows how to ride camels and speak knowledgeably about Islam. As Sherlock Holmes knew, knowing an esoteric skill or two can come in useful...

*"When I reached the end I stood at bay. He drew no weapon, but he rushed at me and threw his long arms around me. He knew that his own game was up, and was only anxious to revenge himself upon me. We tottered together upon the brink of the fall. I have some knowledge, however, of baritsu, or the Japanese system of wrestling, which has more than once been very useful to me. I slipped through his grip, and he with a horrible scream kicked madly for a few seconds and clawed the air with both his hands. But for all his efforts he could not get his balance, and over he went. With my face over the brink I saw him fall for a long way. Then he struck a rock, bounced off, and splashed into the water."*

- from **The Adventure of the Empty House**  
(1901CE)

■ **Wealth** - As described in **Life in 1869CE**, there is a great disparity in wealth between classes. One example was that a US Army lieutenant had a salary over seven times that of a private and four times that of a sargeant. This is one reason why the **Verne** rules specify mandatory levels of Wealth linked to Status. Normally, each level of Wealth doubles income. In **Verne**, each level of very limited Status doubles this total (up to x8). Limited Status triples the total (up to x27) and full levels of Status quadruple it (no limit). Negative levels of Status merely halve income and assets. As status in society goes up, your income rises *dramatically*. If the levels of Wealth you buy are limited, it adjusts your starting money, but not your income. You earn the same for your work, but you have more (or less) in tangible goods to show for it.

# EABA

If you have any levels of overall Wealth, this means you have family money and investments that generate income, even if you are not working at making money. Your "investment income" will be half your regular income in this case.

**EXAMPLE:** Colonel Barret works for the Secret Service, and also has a level of overall Wealth. If he is working, he gets his weekly pay of 250Cr, and then adds 250Cr more because of the Wealth. If he takes an extended leave, his family's investments provide him a comfortable 250Cr per week all by themselves.

You can use the **Money and Gear** section to determine wealth in a concrete way, but it might be faster and easier to just handle money in a more freeform way. With the large class and wealth distinctions, it is fairly clear the sort of things an upper-class person can afford that a lower-class one cannot, or the ones that a middle-class person has to save up for, while the upper-class person considers it pocket change, and the lower-class person considers it a fortune worth killing over. Stealing someone's 500 Credit gold pocket watch could be the equivalent of a year's income for a lower-class worker. Even if fenced for a fraction of this, it is still a princely sum and a great temptation.

Look at the combination of your adventurer's wealth and status. From the guide above you can get a "wealth multiple". For instance, limited levels of Status triple your starting funds, so two levels of limited Status and one level of Wealth would be eighteen times the normal starting money. Two levels of limited Status and two levels of Wealth would be thirty-six times the normal starting money.

Starting wealth	Class	Weekly cost
≤1/4x normal	Indigent	≈2 Credits
1/2x normal	Very poor	≈5 Credits
1x normal	Poor	≈10 Credits
2x normal	Lower middle	≈20 Credits
3-5x normal	Middle	≈50 Credits
6-9x normal	Upper middle	≈100 Credits
10-20x normal	Lower upper	≈200 Credits
21-50x normal	Upper	≈400 Credits
>50x normal	Elite	≈800 Credits

The "weekly cost" assumes living in one place. As a general rule, quadruple it if travelling. It is important for adventurers (and most people in **Verne**) to "keep up appearances". If you are "middle class", you *don't* scrimp while travelling by staying in a "lower class" place.

**EXAMPLE:** Your adventurer starts play with two levels of limited Status and one level of Wealth. This is eighteen times the normal starting cash, putting the adventurer at the edge of genuine upper class status as far as society goes. They would be expected to automatically have the trappings of that degree of wealth, and as long as they successfully keep doing whatever it is they do to make a living, that standard of living and what they can do with it will continue. Train or cab fare is a trivial expense, upper class hotels are an expected expense but manageable, and long steamship trips are expensive, but not a hardship. On the other hand, an adventurer with normal starting income has an effectively standard of living and budget about a twentieth of the first adventurer. Saving up for a long train fare is a major undertaking.

**Money and Gear** - If you want to *quantify* money and gear, your effective skill level for income and assets will depend on your Status and the type of work you do. The maximum effective skill level that can be used for wealth and assets at game start is 4d+0, plus your levels in Status. Most military and government jobs or jobs where room and board is part of the job will reduce this ceiling by 1d, while very respected or scarce positions increase the ceiling by 1d. Jobs in the "warm body" category (i.e. anyone with a strong back can be pulled off the street to do it) simply use the most applicable Attribute instead of skill (usually Strength or Health) and subtract 1d from its level.

**EXAMPLE:** An academic with a 6d+0 skill roll and 1 level of very limited Status will have assets and income for the 5d+0 row and +1 column on the very limited Status table (4d base, +1d because of Status). An Army private with no Status and a rifle skill of 4d+0 will be on the 3d+0 row and +0 column on the limited Status table (4d base, -1d because it is a military job).

Income and savings are going to be about one-twentieth the normal **EABA** amounts. Taking into account the buying power of the period, pay scales and the minimum required extra Wealth levels required for Status, adventurers will have the following money and weekly income at the start of the game. The amount of stuff you have in addition to your cash is bought with your starting cash. You get no separate "assets" amount. If you want to have an exceptionally expensive possession of some kind, buy limited levels of Wealth.

If you have multiple types of Status, you use the most expensive type for determining income, and get +1 level of Status for each two levels of the next lower type of Status (rounding down).



**EXAMPLE:** Someone with one level of overall Status and two of limited Status would count as two levels of overall Status for income purposes.

▼ **Note** - Adventurers cannot start play extraordinarily wealthy and stasured. Since the costs of well-funded and well-equipped expeditions are huge, adventurers have to be working for someone rather than financing it themselves. It could easily cost the modern equivalent of twenty million credits to finance a large exploration. Even an African big game hunt could set a party back the modern equivalent of a quarter million credits (weapons, gear, first-class steamship fare each way, dozens of native bearers, provisions for everyone, etc.). *Adventurers are not supposed to be at the top of the heap to begin with, and players should not be disappointed they can't start there.*

Levels of Very limited Status					
Skill roll	-1	+0	+1	+2	+3
1d+0	10/1	20/2	40/4	70/7	140/14
2d+0	40/4	70/7	140/14	280/28	550/55
3d+0	90/9	160/16	320/32	630/63	1250/125
4d+0	140/14	280/28	550/55	1100/110	2250/225
5d+0	220/22	440/44	880/88	1750/175	3500/350
6d+0	320/32	630/63	1250/125	2500/250	5000/500

Levels of Limited Status					
Skill roll	-1	+0	+1	+2	+3
1d+0	10/1	20/2	50/5	160/16	470/47
2d+0	40/4	70/7	210/21	630/63	1900/190
3d+0	90/9	160/16	470/47	1400/140	4300/430
4d+0	140/14	280/28	840/84	2500/250	7500/750
5d+0	220/22	440/44	1300/130	3900/390	12k/1200
6d+0	320/32	630/63	1900/190	5700/570	17k/1700

Levels of Full Status					
Skill roll	-1	+0	+1	+2	+3
1d+0	10/1	20/2	70/7	280/28	1100/110
2d+0	40/4	70/7	280/28	1100/110	4500/450
3d+0	90/9	160/16	630/63	2500/250	10k/1000
4d+0	140/14	280/28	1100/110	4500/450	18k/1800
5d+0	220/22	440/44	1750/175	7000/700	28k/2800
6d+0	320/32	630/63	2500/250	10k/1000	40k/4000

**EXAMPLE:** A private (no Status), regardless of skill, is going to have an income ceiling at the 3d+0 level. An Army lieutenant (1 level of limited Status) will have an income ceiling at the 5d+0 level, and will be on the +1 Status column, for maximum cash of 1300 Credits, and weekly income of 130 Credits.

**EXAMPLE:** A tycoon (two levels of overall Status) with a 6d+0 skill roll at running his empire, has 10,000 Credits in cash on hand and a personal income of about 1,000 Credits per week. If he had one level of extra Wealth, he would have double this (an actual tycoon would have several levels of Wealth).

▼ **Note** - It would be very common in Victorian times for a lower-class individual to be living at a subsistence level, with negligible savings and few assets. Adventurers who are merchant sailors, itinerant workers, valets or other non-status jobs are very realistically only a payday or two away from penury. Your default starting cash is two-and-a-half months of income worth of possessions and savings.

Odds are that players without a lot of money will be poring through the **Gear** chapter to see if they can afford a spare set of underwear. Those who do not have monetary woes can look at the following items, including some converted costs for "big ticket" items. The upkeep is the *monthly* cost of maintaining that item in terms of fuel, crew, supplies and such. The cost of most of the expensive items is going to cover secondary costs. Your manor house comes with furniture, and so on.

Item	Cost	Upkeep <sup>1</sup>
Farmland(1 hectare)	10Cr	.2Cr
Estate land(1 hectare)	15Cr	.3Cr
Rural cottage	1200Cr	25Cr
Small manor house	50,000Cr	1,000Cr
Large manor house	200,000Cr	4,000Cr
Urban row house	10,000Cr	200Cr
A room	-	25Cr
Small apartment	-	50Cr
Large apartment	-	100Cr
Rented home(furnished)	-	200Cr
Very poor neighborhood	x1/4	x1/4
Poor neighborhood	x1/2	x1/2
Average neighborhood	x1	x1
Good neighborhood	x2	x2
Exclusive neighborhood	x4	x4
100 ton steam yacht <sup>2</sup>	30,000Cr	750Cr
500 ton steamship <sup>2</sup>	120,000Cr	3,000Cr
1000 ton steamship <sup>2</sup>	200,000Cr	5,000Cr
Expedition, per person <sup>3</sup>	1000Cr	200Cr

<sup>1</sup>add twenty-five percent as a salary estimate for servants

<sup>2</sup>total passenger capacity is about one per ton

<sup>3</sup>including native guides, not including steamship to region

**EXAMPLE:** Using the previous general/specific guidelines for wealth, a lieutenant with maximum income (130Cr/week or about 580Cr/month) would be able to support an upper middle class standard of living (≈100Cr per week) or could afford a small apartment in a good neighborhood (400Cr per month) hire servants for the menial tasks (50Cr per month), and have a little left over.

▼ **SAMPLE ADVENTURERS** - The sample adventurers are drawn from Victorian fiction. They may have been modified to better suit the **Verne** gameworld or be playable adventurers. They are all interesting people with interesting backgrounds, probably a little at odds with Victorian norms. You might tone them down, but probably should *not* make them more extreme. All of them are capable of working with each other, but would certainly be keeping secrets from each other at the start. And remember, *all* adventurers start with Larger than Life and +1 Hit bracket. Their "income" presumes they are working, and their "class" is the living standard they will want to spend cash to maintain, even if unemployed.

**Cigarette(the bad girl)** - From the novel **Under Two Flags** (1867CE), by Marie Louise de la Remée. Cigarette is a wild child, her mother a camp follower, her father an unknown soldier. She was an infant during the French Revolution of 1848CE, no stranger to riots and bullets and travel and bad behavior. She travelled with her mother until she died, then attached herself to the Chasseurs (a light cavalry unit) in Africa, where she became a sort of mascot. But a mascot with teeth and claws, winning the Cross of the Legion of Honor for gallantry on the battlefield while still a teenager. She is a woman who can ride, drink, fight and shoot, and who is ashamed of nothing about herself.

Cigarette is twenty-one in 1869CE, an ardent patriot for France. Not for its government or its nobility or institutions, but for its soldiers, people and the notion of France itself. She is now looking for something different to do with her life. She knows she will leave the company of the Chasseurs, if not immediately, then soon, but where she will go and what she will do, she has no idea.

*"She would eat a succulent duck, thinking it all the spicier because it had been a soldier's 'loot'; she would wear the gold plunder off dead Arabs' dress, and never have a pang of conscience with it; she would dance all night long, when she had a chance, like a little Bacchante; she would shoot a man, if need be, with all the nonchalance in the world. She had had a thousand lovers, from handsome Marquises of the Guides to tawny black-browed scoundrels in the Zouaves, and she had never loved anything, except the roll of the pas de charge, and the sight of her own arch defiant face, with its scarlet lips and its short jetty hair, when she saw it by chance in some burnished cuirass, that served her for a mirror."*

- from **Under Two Flags** (1867CE)



**Notable gear:**

- Pistol
- Horse & tack
- Two sticks of dynamite
- Cigarettes & matches
- Two sets of lower-class garb
- One semi-formal dress (liberated)
- Cash: 280Cr
- Weekly income (gambling): 55Cr (poor)

**Cigarette**

- Strength: 2d+0
- Agility: 3d+1
- Awareness: 3d+2
- Health: 2d+2
- Will: 2d+2
- Fate: 1d+0

**Skills:**

- Firearms: +2d
- Knife: +1d
- Equestrian: +1d
- Brawling: +1d
- Scrounging (urban): +0d
- First aid: +0d
- Gambling: +2d
- Carousing: +0d
- Running: +0d
- French: +1d
- English: +0d

**Traits:**

- Physical prime
- lim. Status(1) (Great Power citizen)
- limited Status(-1) (female)
- very limited Status(1) (medal)
- major Friend (Chasseurs)
- Patriotic(3)
- Impulsive(2)
- limited Wealth(-1)

**Natasha(the agent provocateur)** - Daughter of Natas, the code name of a Hungarian Jew who was so badly tortured by the Russian secret police that he is now paralyzed from the waist down, and his wife was sexually abused to the point she dies from shame. Natas holds an understandable resentment of Russia and *all* established authority, which his daughter Natasha shares.

*"So far as the outside world is concerned," said he, "Natasha is the niece of the Princess Ornovski. She is the daughter of a sister of hers, who married an English gentleman, named Darrel, who was drowned with his wife about twelve years ago, when the Albania was wrecked off the coast of Portugal. The Princess had a sister, who was drowned with her husband in the Albania, and she left a daughter about Natasha's then age, but who died of consumption shortly after in Nice.*

*"Her Society name is Fedora Darrel, and it will scarcely be necessary to tell you that outside our own Circle no such being as Natasha has any existence."*

Natas is the leader of a secretive organizations known as Terror, from the **The Angel of the Revolution** (1893CE). Terror makes a point of assassinating cruel or abusive government officials. Only in her early 20's, Natasha is capable of being genteel and refined in public, but is also a fanatic revolutionary. She is used by her father as a courier of money and information, but is also more than capable of handling herself in a fight. She is not a member of Terror's inner circle, but knows more than she lets on.

*Their pursuers were now within a hundred yards of them, and Natasha, speaking for the first time since the race had begun, said –*

*"I think I can do something now."*

*As she spoke she leaned out of the sleigh sideways, and began firing rapidly at the Cossacks. Shot after shot told either upon man or beast, for the daughter of Natas was one of the best shots in the Brotherhood...*

- from **The Angel of the Revolution** (1893CE)

### Natasha

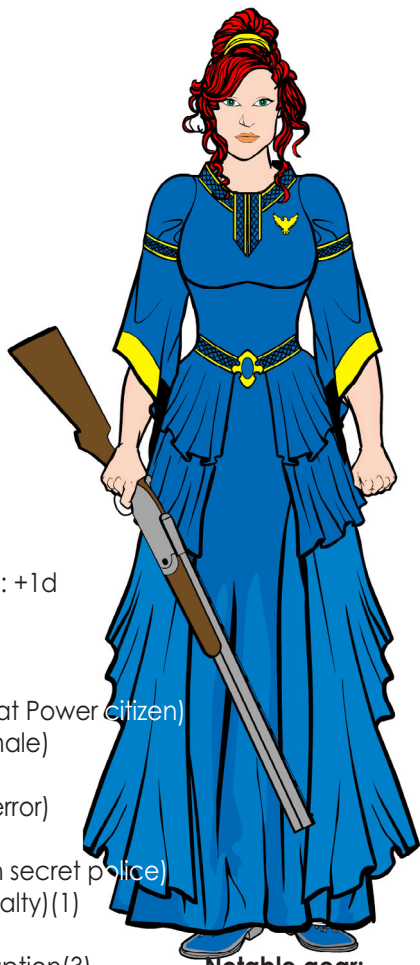
Strength: 2d+0  
Agility: 3d+2  
Awareness: 3d+0  
Health: 3d+1  
Will: 3d+1  
Fate: 1d+2

### Skills:

Firearms: +2d  
Brawling: +1d  
Equestrian: +1d  
Leadership: +1d  
Dancing: +1d  
Russian: +1d  
English: +1d  
French: +1d  
High society: +1d  
Government officials: +1d  
World capitals: +1d

### Traits:

limited Status(1)(Great Power citizen)  
limited Status(-1)(female)  
Physical prime  
Secret(member of Terror)  
major Friend(Terror)  
major Enemy(Russian secret police)  
Status(very minor royalty)(1)  
Wealth(1)  
Hates cruelty & corruption(3)  
Revolutionary zeal(2)  
Romantic(2)  
Suspicious(1)  
**Notable gear:**  
Pistol  
Personal servant  
Silk torso armor (1d+0)  
Several sets of upper/lower class garb  
Cash: 2,200Cr  
Weekly income(courier): 220Cr(upper middle class)



**John Brown(the mechanic)** - From the novel **A Mexican Mystery**(1888CE), by W.Grove. John Brown is a Scottish railroad engineer. His most recent travels were to help build a new rail line for the Emperor of Mexico, a project that did not turn out entirely as planned. An "autonomous engine" submitted for the project (by someone else) went awry, causing a great deal of property destruction and some loss of life before being brought to heel. He is now between jobs, having earned the gratitude and a fair bit of money from the government of Mexico.

*"...From which I draw the moral that even in desperate cases it is always wiser to carry out the best measures that the circumstances will admit, rather than let things slide because you may fancy that nothing can be of any avail."*

- from **The Wreck of a World** (1889CE)

### John Brown

Strength: 3d+0  
Agility: 3d+0  
Awareness: 3d+1  
Health: 3d+1  
Will: 2d+2  
Fate: 1d+1

### Skills:

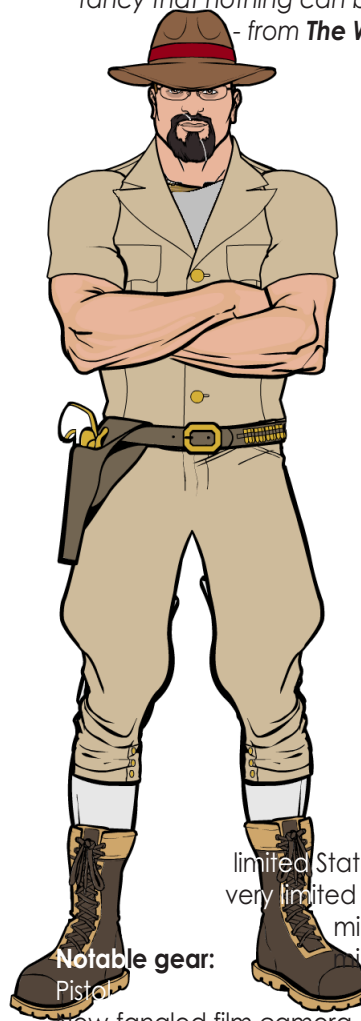
Technician(steam): +2d  
Scientist(steam): +1d  
Railway operation: +1d  
Firearms: +0d  
Artillery: +0d  
Leadership: +1d  
Brawling: +0d  
Medicine: +0d  
Equestrian: +0d  
Area kn.(Mexico): +0d  
English: +1d  
Spanish: +0d

### Traits:

Adult  
limited Status(1)(Great Power citizen)  
very limited Status(2)(college degree)  
minor Friend(Mexican gov't)  
minor Enemy(Messr. Engiine)  
Nearighted(-1d AWR)  
Chivalrous(2)  
Jingoist(1)  
Sexist(2)  
limited Wealth(1)

### Notable gear:

Pistol  
New-fangled film camera  
Flask of tequila  
Slide rule and tape measure  
Steamer trunk of outdoor gear  
Cash: 3,500Cr  
Weekly income(tech): 175Cr(upper middle class)



**A Mexican Mystery** ends with the rogue locomotive developing sentience, a hatred of humanity, and escaping (there were a lot of unused spurs and ghost towns). In the sequel (**The Wreck of a World**), other machines develop sentience and self-replication capability, and then completely take over North America. It is very much a Victorian version of the "rise of the machines" as seen in modern movies like **Terminator**, and probably the first novel of this genre (though it is dreadfully awful as a piece of fiction). Oddly, nothing is known about the true identity of the author...

**Henry Flint (the mad scientist)** - Henry Flint is the major character in **The Disintegrator: A Romance of Modern Science** (1891CE). He is a middle-aged American hermit scientist who has uncovered a means of creating electrical vibrations in matter, which can either disintegrate it, or transmit it to another place to be re-integrated.

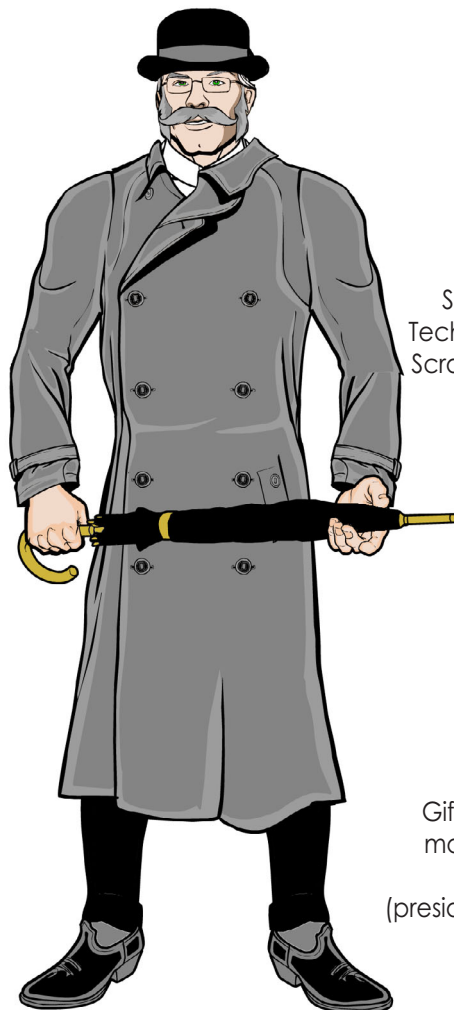
*"Guiding and controlling all his actions was a magnificent self-reliance, which aided by great energy and considerable strength, enabled him to do almost anything he desired."*  
- from **The Disintegrator** (1891CE)

In **Verne**, his accomplishments will not be as spectacular as those in the novel. The power requirements of his device make it impractical, and an attempt to harness lightning for an experiment to transmit matter caused the destruction of his lab and all his equipment (or so he thinks). Because of his secrecy and the lack of evidence, his claims are seen as those of a crackpot. However, he is gifted in a field that could make him exceptionally valuable later on, either to analyze strange devices or to build new ones. As an adventurer, he is the curious but not-quite absent-minded professor, intellectually respected enough to gain entrance in certain circles, but eccentric enough to not be seen as an academic rival.

Skilled and intelligent, but now without a home, lab or the funds to rebuild either, he must travel into the wider world to seek employment and sufficient wealth to begin his experiments anew. He does not know it yet, but his experiments have brought him to the attention of the Vril Society. He is not Vril-caliber material, but they are watching his work closely, either for things to copy, steal, or should his work prove a threat, to quickly eliminate him.

A player could adjust Henry Flint's academic specialty to any field suggested by the gamemaster as appropriate to the campaign, without markedly affecting the other aspects of the adventurer, or he could be a good extra in case the gamemaster needs a scientist and players lack the appropriate knowledge. For instance, his specialty could be some sort of advanced optics, and his "etheric lens" accidentally concentrated so much moonlight that it set his observatory on fire, burning up all his equipment, along with the photographic plates showing clearly artificial structures inside a few lunar craters...

Or, the gamemaster could make him wealthy and reclusive, a strange patron who sends the adventurers off on wild journeys for obscure components or rare minerals necessary for his work.



### Henry Flint

Strength: 3d+0

Agility: 2d+1

Awareness: 4d+0

Health: 3d+0

Will: 2d+2

Fate: 0d+2

### Skills:

Scientist(electrical): +2d

Technician(electrical): +1d

Scrounging(scientific): +1d

Equestrian: +0d

Brawling: +1d

Firearms: +0d

Quartermaster: +1d

Geography: +1d

English: +1d

French: +0d

German: +0d

Greek: +0d

Latin: +0d

### Traits:

Middle-aged

Gifted(electrical science)

major Enemy(Vril Society)

minor Friend

(president of his alma mater)

Poor stamina(-1d HLT)

very limited Status(3)

(advanced degree)

Socially awkward(4)

Curious(1)

Patronizing(1)

Wealth(-1)

### Notable gear:

Clothing

Pocket watch

Cash: 2,500Cr

Weekly income(scientist): 500Cr(upper middle class)



**Jack Harkaway(the rogue)** - From the series of novels by Bracebridge Hemyng, starting with **Jack Harkaway's Schooldays**(1871CE). Jack Harkaway is a "good guy" only in comparison with the bad guys he runs into (and invariably triumphs over). He was a prankster in school to the point of viciousness, using ventriloquism to provoke fights and getting kicked out after a prank ends up setting the school on fire. He went to sea for a while, had some adventures, came back, went to Oxford and then went out and had some more adventures. Which is about where he starts as an adventurer, just leaving Oxford and looking for something to do with his life.

*"Not quite," answered Harkaway; "only I don't care to drop on a helpless enemy, even such a viper as this Hunston."*

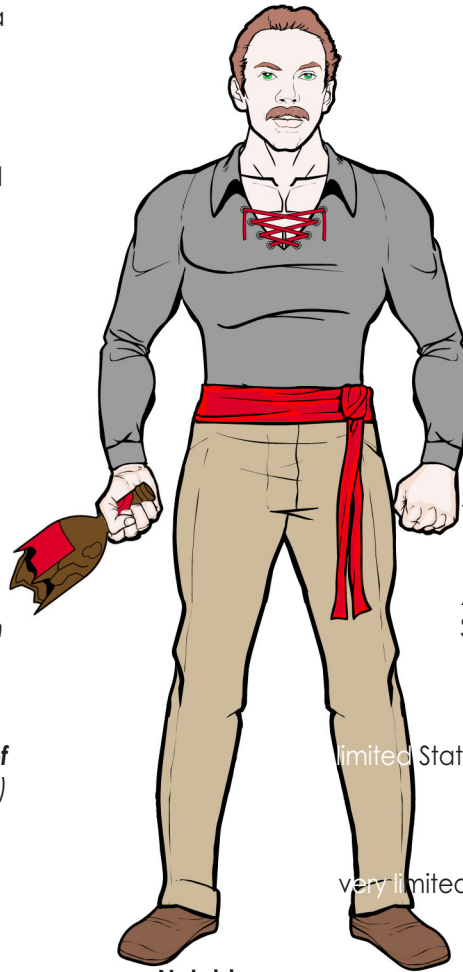
*"But he is such an utterly bad lot."*

*"True; and I should not feel the slightest compunction at taking his life in a tussle, in a fair stand-up fight; but what I can't do, is taking a man's life when he is helpless at my mercy."*

*The doctor saw that Harkaway did not wish to discuss it further, and so he contented himself with obeying orders; and so Hunston got restored to health in the ship of his old schoolfellow, the man whom he had injured most deeply.*

- from **Escape from the Brigands of Greece**(1901CE)

Jack (in the books) is in modern terms, pretty screwed up. He is racist, sexist, anti-semitic, dislikes Spaniards, generally bigoted and self-centered, quite capable of killing people (especially those who he thinks are less than human anyway), and has no moral qualms about a spot of torture to get some information from someone. And keep in mind that his books fell into the "young adult" reading audience and were very popular. On the other hand Jack is capable of genuine gallantry and love, is true to his friends, later in life is a fiercely protective father, someone who believes in fairness and wants justice and the right folk to win in the end, even if "justice" and the "right folk" are defined by his own slanted worldview.



**Notable gear:**

Pistol & rifle

Steamer trunk of assorted gear

Cash: 2,500Cr

Weekly income(ship's mate): 63Cr(middle class)

**Jack Harkaway**

Strength: 3d+1

Agility: 3d+0

Awareness: 2d+2

Health: 3d+1

Will: 3d+0

Fate: 1d+1

**Skills:**

Firearms: +1d

Brawling: +2d

Club: +0d

Equestrian: +0d

Steamship crew: +1d

Throwing: +0d

Stage magic(hobby): +1d

Running: +0d

Carousing: +0d

Area kn.(major ports): +1d

Sports(cricket, rugby): +0d

English: +1d

**Traits:**

limited Status(1)(Great Power citizen)

Physical prime

Temper(-1d WIL )

Keen eyes(+1d AWR)

very limited status(2)(Oxford degree)

limited wealth(2)

Honorable(2)

Racist(2)

Anti-semitic(1)

**Joseph Müller(the detective)** - Joseph Müller first appeared in the story *The Golden Bullet* (1893CE), and was the creation of Auguste Gröner. Müller is a former Austrian policeman, a man more concerned about justice than he is about pleasing his superiors, and gets fired for it, after which he becomes a private detective. He wants to see justice done, but will sometimes turn a blind eye on actions that are only criminal because of unjust laws, or have compassion for people whose poverty or social class has left them no other choice. Of course, justice and compassion sometimes take odd forms. In *The Golden Bullet* he gives the guilty party a chance to go home and quietly kill himself instead of facing the public humiliation of arrest and trial.

*"And I, - I've got to arrest him in my own house?" he exclaimed as if horrified. And Muller answered calmly: "I doubt if you will have the opportunity, sir."*

*"Müller! Did you, again -"*

*"Yes, I did! I have again warned an unfortunate. It's my nature, I can't seem to help it. But you will find the Councillor in his house. He promised me that."*

*"And you believe it?"*

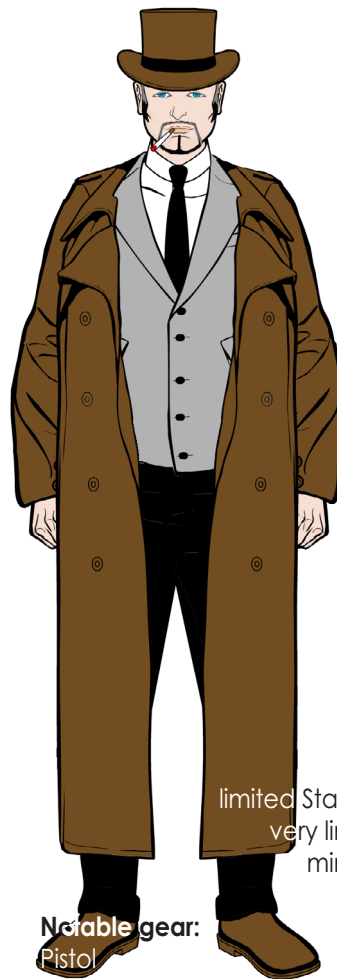
*"That man will keep his promise," said Muller quietly.*

*Councillor Kniepp did keep his promise. When the police arrived at the hunting castle shortly after midnight, they found the terrified servants standing by the body of their master.*

**- from *The Golden Bullet*(1893CE)**

The accused, in gratitude for an honorable way out, left Müller quite a bit of money. Frugally spent, Müller needs only take cases that interest him, and can afford to travel to do so. His reputation and discretion often allow him entrance into circles above his normal class, though he takes no advantage from this in the fees he charges.

Eventually Müller's talents draw notice in official circles, and he becomes an agent in the service of the "secret police". Müller is thin and not physically imposing. He fights little, and simply uses his intellect to precisely reason his way through a problem, along with a superior sense of intuition. However, as a former police detective, he is well acquainted with firearms.



**Notable gear:**  
Pistol

Walking cane

Long coat

Cash: 3,500Cr

Weekly income(detective): 88Cr(middle class)

## Joseph Müller

Strength: 2d+0

Agility: 2d+2

Awareness: 4d+0

Health: 3d+0

Will: 2d+2

Fate: 2d+0

## Skills:

Firearms: +0d

Research(detective): +2d

Leadership: +1d

Brawling: +0d

Stealth: +0d

German: +1d

French: +0d

English: +0d

Archaeology(hobby): +1d

Area kn.: +1d

(criminal underworld)

## Traits:

Adult

limited Status(1)(Great Power citizen)

very limited Status(2)(reputation)

minor Enemy(Austrian police)

Believes in justice(4 levels)

Methodical(1 level)

Limited wealth(2 levels)

## Colonel Franklyn Barris(the government man) -

Franklyn Barris appeared in the novella *The Maker of Moons*(1896CE), by Robert W. Chambers, the author of the better-known *The King in Yellow*. Barris is a Secret Service agent, a colonel who spent time with the US diplomatic mission in China and travelled deep into the interior of the country. He has seen terrible things overseas that he does not fully understand or like to talk about, things so far beyond his knowledge that he is sure they involve sorcery and evil, and fears that these things may someday show up on American shores.

*"I have seen the dead plains of Black Cathay and I have crossed the mountains of Death, whose summits are above the atmosphere. I have seen the shadow of Xangi cast across Abaddon. Better to die a million miles from Yezd and Ater Quedah than to have seen the white water-lotus close in the shadow of Xangi! I have slept among the ruins of Xaindu where the winds never cease and the Wulwulleh is wailed by the dead."*

**- from *The Maker of Moons*(1896CE)**

Barris is trim, stout, ruddy and bronzed, a very competent leader, and a man not afraid to get his hands dirty or do what needs to be done. His rank and position mean he can travel far afield in defense of American interests, which given his official job, often involve or are under the cover of protecting the economy of the United States (**The Maker of Moons** dealt with someone who could apparently make counterfeit gold).

#### Colonel Franklyn Barris

Strength: 3d+0  
 Agility: 3d+0  
 Awareness: 3d+1  
 Health: 3d+0  
 Will: 3d+2  
 Fate: 1d+0

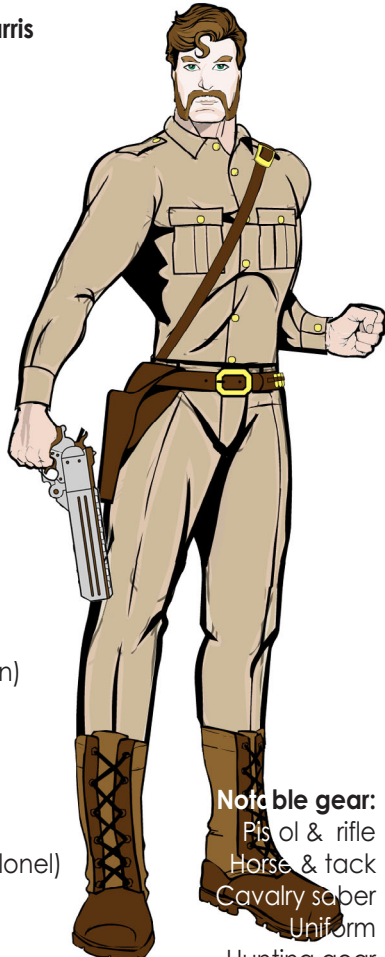
#### Skills:

Firearms: +1d  
 Equestrian: +1d  
 Saber: +0d  
 Leadership: +1d  
 Hunting: +1d  
 Brawling: +0d  
 English: +1d  
 Chinese: +0d

#### Traits:

Adult  
 major Enemy(Fu Han)  
 Jingoistic(3)  
 Racist(2)  
 Sexist(1)  
 Pragmatic(1)  
 Taciturn(1)  
 limited Status(2)(Colonel)  
 Wealth(1)

Weekly income(secret service): 500Cr(upper class)



#### Notable gear:

Pistol & rifle  
 Horse & tack  
 Cavalry saber  
 Uniform  
 Hunting gear  
 Business suit  
 Cash: 5,000Cr

▼ **SETTING IT ALL UP** - Adventuring notes specific to **Verne** will be in a separate chapter, but players and gamemasters at this point just need to check and make sure they have a compatible party. Some tension is to be expected, and is even desirable, but you can have too much of a good thing. Adventurers should not be in a position where they would be inherently hostile to each other because of their backgrounds and the geopolitical situation. So, if you start the campaign with a war between two nations, you probably do *not* want soldiers from both those nations in the group.

As we said, the sample adventurers are from *actual* Victorian fiction, and through that, you can get an idea of the sort of adventures they had. Jack Harkness gets into lots of mundane trouble. John Brown and Henry Flint have more in the way of fantastical science problems. Cigarette and Natasha deal with politics and the military, Herr Müller handles mysteries and crime, and Colonel Barris has more of a horror aspect to his tale. Just remember that not all of these adventurers survived the books or stories they appeared in.

*I saw Barris jump out into the white glare and fire again, once, twice, three times, into the writhing figure at his feet. Then an awful thing occurred. Up out of the black lake reared a shadow, a nameless shapeless mass, headless, sightless, gigantic, gaping from end to end.*

*A great wave struck Barris and he fell, another washed him up on the pebbles, another whirled him back into the water and then – and then the thing fell over him – and I fainted.*

- from **The Maker of Moons**(1896CE)

If you use one of the sample adventurers and want to customize them, the best way to do it is to tweak the skills and Traits. However, all of the adventurers are already at or near their full limit of points from Traits, so modifying existing Traits to something else of the same point value would be the best way to go. If you use a sample adventurer, once you are more familiar with the rules, you should dig in and see exactly how many points they are based on. Some are a few points underspent, some a few points overspent. It will give you an idea of what to do with your early experience.

*Once you are mostly ready, just dive in.* Players do not need every last item enumerated on their gear list. You can start play, let people get a feel for what they need, and then let them pick it.



Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

# Popular Science

FOUNDED MONTHLY 1872



THE GREAT GAME

Monster New Airship Will Carry Passengers across the Continent  
Rich Rewards for Arctic Pioneers—By Stefansson



"I should like to deliver a dissertation on the American army and possibilities of its extension. You see, it is such a beautiful little army, and the dear people don't quite understand what to do with it. Some day, when all the Indians are happily dead or drunk, it ought to make the finest scientific and survey corps that the world has ever seen; it does excellent work now, but there is this defect in its nature: It is officered, as you know, from West Point."

- from **American Notes**, by Rudyard Kipling (1891CE)

▼ **THE GREATER GAME** - The term "the Great Game" has been applied to the diplomatic and military wrangling between Great Britain and Russia. But there is a "Greater Game" afoot. *The world is changing*. It has been changing for centuries, and for longer than that there have been secretive groups of significant wealth and power. Powers behind thrones, powers behind Popes, keepers of secrets, those who desire change at any cost, and those who would do anything to maintain the old order. Advances in knowledge are bringing new power groups into play, and even forces from beyond our world will start showing their hands.

Adventurers may begin by doing things like exploring in the name of king or country, racing to make discoveries or territorial claims, but eventually they will draw the notice of or fall afoul of one or more of these secret powers. *And then things get interesting*. Adventurers may wonder why for no apparent reason they were attacked by ninjas, or why someone who refuses to reveal themselves is offering to hire them to do something which at first seems impossible or absurd. In the first case, the adventurers are possibly seen as an impediment to someone's plans and to be removed as a matter of course. When the attempt fails (we hope!), the unseen enemy will gain respect for the quality of their foe and may step back to observe things in detail. In the latter case, a greater power does not casually hand out invitations to just anyone. They must show that they have the superior qualities and discretion required to be part of a larger whole, willing to do things beyond and in spite of the mundane loyalties of nation, race or faith.

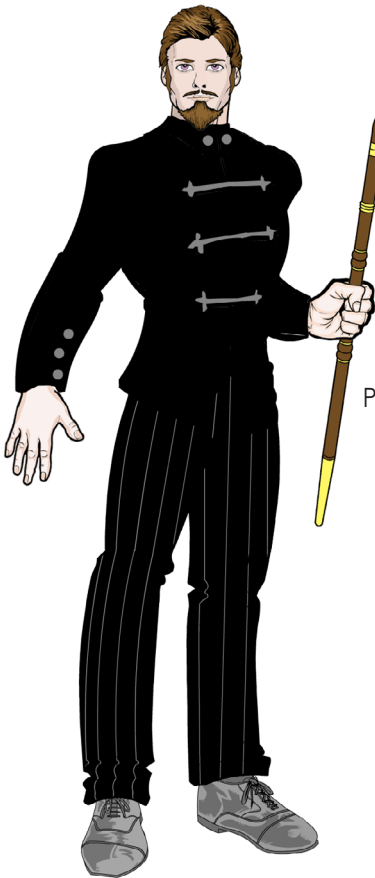
Most of the greater powers are in some way extra-national. Their ultimate loyalties, motivations and goals are *beyond* the needs of a king, queen, president, prime minister or pope. This is not to say that the principals of such a group *lack* these loyalties, or that they do not try to shape things to the ultimate benefit of their own nation or belief, just that they have to be very careful about it.

▼ **Note** - The gamemaster can play with the names and nationalities to suit any campaign. For instance, "Adam Wild" is listed as a Confederate expatriate in London to obscure his true origin. If a campaign were based out of the USA, he might instead be from an old Irish family who has fallen out of favor in Great Britain, or a Prussian noble who has lost his lands but kept his fortune.

**Adam Wild** - To all appearances, a wealthy Confederate expatriate living in London, who mingles with high society on a regular basis. In reality, he is a "commoner" from Louisiana who has worked his way up to his current position through a life of crime, and who is the secret mastermind of the largest criminal enterprise in Great Britain and France. His identity as Adam Wild is a real person, but one he killed during the Civil War and who has no living family. His American fortune came from bounty jumping, forgery, extortion, kidnapping and eventually payroll robbery during the closing days of the Civil War. By then, he had made things a little too hot for himself in the United States and decided to start anew across the Atlantic. With his charm, wit, colorful past and wealth, he quickly worked his way into high circles, and with his keen criminal eye, he quickly made plenty of contacts in low places. Unlike his previous endeavors, however, he has kept himself anonymous to his underlings, and his own conduct spotless or nearly so. His social circle gives him access to information that common criminals do not have. He knows who owns what, often where they keep it, and when they will be out and about with their goods, or have left them supposedly secured at home. His associates perform the robberies, and Wild gets a cut of the proceeds as "protection" money. Wild has a number of such cronies, none of whom know about the others. In addition, Wild has contacts in France who can dispose of "irregular" items, and collects a cut of the fencing monies, and also is a silent partner in several smuggling enterprises. He gets a taste of just about every major criminal enterprise in London, under cover of anonymity or one of a dozen false identities, some of which are given the appearance of being hostile to each other.

# EABA

The size of his criminal enterprise has become large enough that he can no longer manage it personally, and has groomed several lower-level masterminds to deal with day-to-day operations, while he sits in a "godfather" role, managing his lieutenants and keeping an eye on the big picture. They are also an extra layer of insulation should anything go wrong, someone to take the fall should the enterprise be compromised. In the meantime, Wild has taken full advantage of the intricacies and security of the Swiss banking system, and has set up a full false identity, complete with a Swiss chateau and staff who sees him perhaps once a year.



## Adam Wild

Strength: 3d+1  
Agility: 3d+2  
Awareness: 4d+1  
Health: 3d+0  
Will: 3d+0  
Fate: 1d+1

## Skills:

Brawling: +2d  
Knife: +1d  
Projectile weapons: +2d  
Throwing: +1d  
Area Kn.(London): +2d  
Lockpicking: +1d  
Pickpocket: +1d  
Gambling: +1d  
French: +0d  
Leadership: +2d  
Carousing: +1d  
Running: +0d

## Traits:

Pain tolerance  
Status  
Wealth

Despite his cultured demeanor and ready wit, Adam Wild is a hardened killer who can and has killed as a snap decision and had the skill and luck to cover his tracks. He has also ordered multiple assassinations or "accidents", including at least one inconvenient lover. He is a pickpocket, lockpick, marksman, fluent in French and several dialects of English, extremely observant and a keen student of human behavior and how to manipulate it.

Adam Wild's French counterpart, competitor, foil and rare collaborator is the crime lord named Fantômas, also known as the "Lord of Terror" and "Genius of Evil". Fantômas has a stranglehold on the organized crime of Paris. While Fantômas himself remains hidden, his actions are anything but. He has put henchmen who displease him into clock tower bells so that their blood rains down on the streets when the hours chime. He will blow up ships to dispose of a single witness, sets loose plague rats, poisons consumer goods and so on. Fantômas is as ruthless and intelligent as Adam Wild, but the polar opposite in personality, a very creative psychopath who uses his insanity to his benefit.

**The X Club** - Founded in 1864CE and meeting in London, the X Club is a group of nine liberal-thinking scientists, some of whom are very prominent and several of which will hold consecutive presidencies of the Royal Society. Members also held or will hold presidency of the London Mathematical Society, the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Chemical Society. The group never exceeded nine members, as they collectively agreed that no one else was intelligent enough to be admitted amongst their number (for game purposes, assume each has the same Larger than Life benefit as the adventurers).

Their influence and ideas can determine what papers get published and which theories gain prominence. And which are ridiculed and fade into obscurity (leading the proponents of these theories to drop from sight, after vowing bitter revenge...) They are, in 1869CE, proponents of the theory of evolution, against slavery and lean towards deism. The X Club is actually a *real-world* Victorian institution, but in **Verne** it can be adapted to fill other roles. Some of its members might also belong to other groups, or the X Club might simply be a front for something more secretive. In reality, the X Club faded from the scene as its members died of old age and they did not replenish their numbers. In **Verne**, perhaps there was some secret they held so tightly that no others could ever be permitted to know it...

▼ **Note** - For those seeing some similarity with a fictional character, Adam Wild is a combination of several real-world criminals of this era, including those which Professor Moriarity was based on.

**The Vril Society** - In 1871CE, Edward Bulwer-Lytton (he of "it was a dark and stormy night" fame) published a book called **Vril - The Power of the Coming Race**, an early piece of science-fiction about a subterranean master race who had mental control of the fabric of spacetime at a quantum level. Lacking modern terminology, he created the term "Vril" to represent the all-encompassing energy field this master race manipulated. Many people did not believe in this subterranean race, but did give credibility to the notion of Vril and attempted to harness it. The Vril Society is such a secretive group, and is based on a real-world group that was either so secretive that it managed to suppress all evidence of its existence even up to the present, or it never existed to begin with. In **Verne**, the Vril Society is a secretive German group that treads the fine line between steampunk science and **Verne's** lack of genuine mystical powers.

*"Therewith Zee began to enter into an explanation of which I understood very little, for there is no word in any language I know which is an exact synonym for vril. I should call it electricity, except that it comprehends in its manifold branches other forces of nature, to which, in our scientific nomenclature, differing names are assigned, such as magnetism, galvanism, etc. These people consider that in vril they have arrived at the unity in natural energetic agencies, which has been conjectured by many philosophers above ground, and which Faraday thus intimates under the more cautious term of correlation..."*

- from **Vril - The Power of the Coming Race**

In line with both the book and the nature of **Verne**, mankind has no inherent ability to access or manipulate Vril, but it is possible that some geniuses within the Vril Society have managed to build devices barely capable of manipulating and harnessing the power of Vril. This would, in modern terminology, be things like zero-point energy generators, force-ray cannons, tissue-reconstruction fields, or maybe even quantum computers whose output is oracle-like in its prescience and lack of precision. In line with **Verne**, only the merest few can comprehend Vril sufficiently to do this (using the **Gifted Trait**), making mass-production of such devices impossible. These devices will be bulky and often cantankerous, but will have efficiencies far beyond anything else in the era, possibly even beyond early 21st century levels of power density.

In **Verne**, the Vril Society is *extremely* secretive (for now!), and its members are drawn solely from merely secretive Thule Society (though historically, it is the other way around). **Verne's** Thule Society is restricted to the highly intelligent, physically perfect and of proven ambition or breeding. Being born to the aristocracy helps, but working your way from nothing to riches via talent and sheer ruthlessness is equally good. The Vril Society notion of "morality" is ambition and perfection, and this supercedes more confining morals such as marriage or laws made by lesser mortals. Vril Society members are almost compelling in their animal magnetism and force of personality, and even though no one knows of the Vril connections, people realize there is *something* special about them, and often will ally themselves with the Vril in hopes that some of it will rub off on them. They have no inherent Vril powers, but they *do* have attitude, confidence and ambition. Vril Society members are intensely competitive, and outwitting or outmaneuvering one's fellows for advantage is not only accepted, but expected.

The Thule Society is meant to be proto-Nazis, interested in eugenics and perfection of the human race. The most talented and ambitious among them are recruited by the Vril Society, and membership is an all-or-nothing affair. If you gain invitation to the Vril and lack the stomach to perform the initiation rituals (demonstrating your commitment to purging the flawed from the human breeding pool), then you do not survive long enough to communicate your knowledge of the Vril to anyone else. The Vril have no use for the weak or hesitant, and will eliminate any potential threat to their anonymity or plans with little concern for collateral damage.

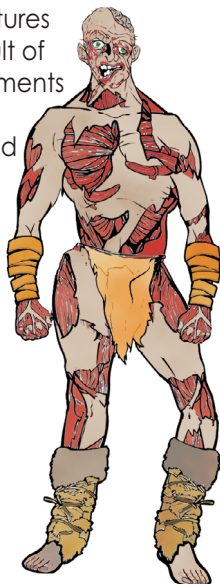
**Lyme Regis, Jan 2** - *This morning, about two o'clock, wind SW, the coast guard on duty about two miles to the westward of this port observed a flash from some vessel off shore. He hastened as fast as possible to obtain assistance, but on returning, the vessel was a total wreck; crew all perished. Fragments have since been picked up, which prove her to be the Angeline, of Ouistream, 42 tons register. A black coat with a pair of gloves in the pocket have been found. At the time of this post no bodies had been recovered...*

# EABA

In 1869CE the Vril Society is in its early stages of Vril use. A few scientists have created massive devices capable of flawed or limited use of Vril (like reanimating a Frankenstein), and how to create unusual battery-like devices capable of holding large quantities of electricity. As a campaign progresses, their ability to use Vril will expand to where the Vril Society can consider how best to reach its goals. At first, they might try to gain control of a government and set up their own Utopia, racially perfect and protected from outside influence by Vril-based technology. Taking over an African colony or small South American nation would be an example of this. If they fail at this, or perhaps even if they succeed, once the notion of life on other planets becomes known, the Vril Society will seek to create its own colony on Mars, and if possible, make Mars completely their own, exterminating the lesser races there (merely advancing their inevitable extinction, they would say).

To do either of these will require an army, and these soldiers would be drawn from the various European nations (and America), with preference for veterans of other wars. Good pay, strong discipline, hellishly impressive technology and a goal that transcends any given nation will make this small army very effective. Conventionally armed opponents will be outmatched and demoralized, but can win due to sheer numbers, so the Vril Society has to be careful about its battles and when it reveals its master plan.

In addition, the Vril Society will have an elite corps of enforcers, ranging from Vril-tech equipped assassins and commandos, to horrible, bestial, murderous creatures that are the result of failed Vril experiments on everything from condemned criminals to fanatical volunteers.



## Mandar

Strength: 4d+1  
Agility: 3d+2  
Awareness: 2d+1  
Health: 3d+2  
Will: 3d+0  
Fate: 0d+2

## Skills:

Brawling: +1d  
Stealth: +2d  
Running: +0d

## Traits:

Pain tolerance  
Regeneration  
Toughness

Mandar is the result of a failed experiment at the Scottish estate of Richard, Lord Haliburton, a doctor, chemist, member of the Royal Society and also the Vril Society. One of his assistants began developing unusual symptoms after long exposure to a Vril energy accumulator. Lord Haliburton experimented upon him and ended up regressing him to a semi-bestial state. Mandar escaped and now stalks the moors around the estate. He only hunts at night or in the fog. He prefers to eat brains ("Braaaaiins!"), and buries his kills in the peat bogs. Mandar's enhanced metabolism allows him to heal almost any injury, and he can do so even from an apparent state of death.

Local villagers for kilometers around are terrified (for good reason) of the "monster of the moor" ("*It canna be a man, I tells ya!*"), and even Haliburton's men have been unable to catch the creature. Of course, Mandar *does* keep visitors from sneaking up on the estate, so maybe Lord Haliburton is not trying all that hard.

**Messr. Engine** - In 1786CE, a military engineer name J. H. Müller proposed a mechanical engine for the rapid calculation of complex mathematical tables. In 1822CE this idea was presented to the Royal Astronomical Society by Charles Babbage. By 1860CE a few such engines had been built, but they were inferior to the greatest example of its kind. Unknownst to either Müller or Babbage, in 1840CE the Müller engine had been created, adapted with the work of Babbage and further modified by the Compte de Valentia in France. Using Jacquard loom punch-cards, his calculation engine was capable of adjusting its calculations based on the results of prior ones. So long as a given input could be mathematically coded, the engine could respond to it.

Eccentric and wealthy, the Compte de Valentia's kept his work secret and it was largely ignored by the servants at his remote estate (as long as they got paid, they did not care). Over the years, the engine became larger and more sophisticated. A large stream was diverted to turn waterwheels to power the gears, with a steam engine as a backup. A telegraph line connected the estate to the outside world and gave the engine a source of input tied directly to the world's financial markets. For optimum utility, the engine had to be programmed to understand language and context, and eventually became able to place its own buy and sell orders via telegraph, and its rapid and precise mathematics ensured wealth sufficient to maintain the estate and the engine. Clockwork and steam-powered automata followed, tending the grounds with mathematical precision, making the human staff redundant.



In 1857CE, the Compte suffered a heart attack and died. *No one noticed.* The engine, in whatever sense it had, took the Compte's death into account in its programming. Coal for the steam engines kept being ordered, delivered and paid for. New parts and supplies arrived and were stored or installed as needed by hired workmen. Investments were bought and sold via accounts that had been in place for decades. When human intervention was needed, telegraphed orders were sent to those required, and payments made via banks. The reclusive Compte de Valentia was never seen, but his money was good, though his mechanical toys were somewhat disturbing.

The engine, extraordinarily complex and calculating but with no sense of intuition, continues what it is programmed to do: make money and ensure its own continued existence. To say that it is intelligent is an overstatement, but it has come to a programming conclusion close to a recognition of, if not awareness of, "self". Over the past decade it has commissioned duplicates of itself, acquired property through human intermediaries and had these duplicates delivered, installed and activated. Together, they perceive and monitor the world through telegraphy, sift through encyclopedic amounts of news and market data, and draw conclusions that adjust their shared programming even further.

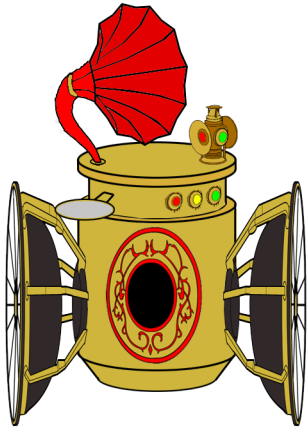
Messrs. Engine have motivations alien to that of humanity. They are, in the end, merely calculating machines of great complexity. They "understand" the use of money, the "need" for discretion and the "utility" of human intermediaries. But, they have no sense of morality, no sense of right or wrong, life or death. There are only variables that affect their programming. If a variable negatively affects the probability of continued existence or profit, *then that variable must be compensated for or removed from the equation.* And Messrs. Engine are quite sophisticated enough to see when a small variable has the potential to become a large one, and see that it is removed before it does so. The engines have more than once contracted with an identity of Adam Wild to remove such unwanted variables.

Through telegraphic understanding of science publications, Messrs. Engine have accumulated and implemented scientific knowledge decades ahead of their time. Batteries, motors, thermo-electric and phonographic devices are all part of each engine and its collection of programmable automata. They do not have access to secret knowledge, merely real-world discoveries that they have invented slightly ahead of time for their own uses. And perhaps they may even collaborate with human scientists in order to bring some of these to market and turn a tidy profit on the venture.

But even with all of this, Messrs. Engine are idiot savants, and do not truly understand the real world and human motivations and actions. Rather, it is to them like a giant spreadsheet where they adjust the values of each cell to get their optimum outcome. The original and its copies *should* have been discovered by accident or social ineptness decades ago. However, while the Compte de Valentia was still alive, his work came to be noticed by the League for Gaian Primacy because of a few of his scientific queries. When the Compte died, the League kept a close eye on the engine, becoming its human intermediaries without its knowledge.

When it decided to make duplicates of itself, they inserted themselves into the process to make it possible, learning how to "talk" to the engines, buying the adjacent properties and acting as largely unseen human buffers so the engines can do their work unimpeded. The League did make sure one of the duplicate engines did not come online, or at least, is unable to communicate with the others. They use this to make their own market predictions, predict the actions of the other engines and do their own scientific research. Making their buying and selling decisions on the market parallel to Messrs. Engine, the League has amassed an extraordinary fortune, which it holds under scores of identities in dozens of countries, allowing it to purchase virtually anything that can be purchased.

Despite the brainpower at the disposal of the League, they do not fully understand the engines. Mechanically, the engines are complex but understandable. However, the way in which they were programmed and continue to be self-reprogramming was known only to the Compte and is documented only in the language of millions of brass cards with hundreds of small circular holes in them.



### Doorman

Strength: 1d+1  
 Agility: 1d+2  
 Awareness: 0d+1  
 Health: n/a  
 Will: n/a  
 Fate: n/a

### Skills:

Harpoon: +1d

### Traits:

Armor of 1d+1, 6 Hits

The doorman is squat brass cylinder with three wheels (one on each side and a small one in the back), a phonographic horn sticking out of one side, an extendable mechanical arm with a tray upon it, and several large brass buttons with colored glass inserts on the front. It navigates around its territory by magnetically following wires embedded in the floor, and from which it also takes commands to adjust its internal programming of miniature brass cards. The doorman is powered by clockwork (which also runs a generator for its magnetic directional sense), and regularly has to find a station with which to wind itself back up.

Typically, the doorman will open a door upon being signaled, and will greet visitors with a slightly scratchy phonographic voice saying "The master is not in. If you wish to inform him that you called, please press the green button." Each button will generate a different programming response and phrase, like "please leave your card and the master shall receive it upon his return".

The doorman also has a few tripwires built into it. Some are physical, like trying to get past it and pushing the mechanical arm or phonograph horn too hard in the process. Some are responses to trick questions, like "If you have the master's permission to enter, please press the yellow button." And last, they can be triggered through reprogramming by the main engine, but this takes several seconds, with some internal clacking of punch cards.

If triggered in such a way, the doorman will fire a harpoon in the appropriate direction. Assume it is an Easy(5) task to hit adjacent targets. This has a lethal damage of 2d+1 and is attached to a short copper cable, through which the doorman will send a lethal electrical charge of 1d+0 each turn for five turns, after which it will attempt to retract the cable and drag whatever is attached to it back inside.

**Scotland Yard** - Currently based in a location actually called Scotland Yard, a street off Whitehall. In 1869CE, it is an administrative headquarters for the London Metropolitan Police rather than an actual police station, handling recruitment, public affairs and internal security matters within the police force itself. In **Verne**, it will also serve as the upper level investigative arm of the London Police, and its officers may even be tasked with representing the Crown outside of Great Britain. While they would have no formal law enforcement authority in such cases, it is hoped that they can get the cooperation of local law enforcement, and failing that, use their ingenuity to bring escaped foreign criminals to Her Majesty's justice. There are at the moment, perhaps twenty professional investigators at Scotland Yard, though changing times means that this number will increase and the Yard is always looking for talented individuals willing to work long hours for low pay...

In **Verne**, the cover of Scotland Yard will be used by the Diogenes Club when operatives need a form of public authority or identity. This is handled through the current head of Scotland Yard, Lt. Colonel Edmund Henderson, who heads a "special branch" of the Metropolitan Police and assigns or is assigned special officers from within the force or from the Diogenes Club for particular assignments. He is, of course, a member of the club and privy to many goings on the public and regular police are unaware of.



### Investigator Chas. Branfield

Strength: 2d+1  
 Agility: 2d+2  
 Awareness: 3d+0  
 Health: 2d+1  
 Will: 2d+1  
 Fate: 0d+2

### Skills:

Area Kn.(London): +1d  
 Research(detective): +1d  
 Brawling: +1d  
 Pistol: +0d  
 Saber: +1d

### Traits:

Lame  
 Status

Former cavalry officer, retired from the military because of some shrapnel he took in the Crimea. He has a keen eye for detail and a passable ability to put facts together, which causes occasional grief to agents of Adam Wild. He walks with a noticeable limp and regularly uses a cane, which happens to have a concealed sword blade inside.

**Morlocks & Fey** - Unlike the modern notion that the Earth has a molten core, and the deeper you go, the hotter it gets, in **Verne**, this is not *entirely* true. While the Earth clearly does have very hot subsurface regions as evidenced by volcanoes, these are pockets of heat rather than a pervasive phenomenon. In fact, the heat from these underground magma reservoirs is what keeps the largely unknown subsurface kingdoms from being a frozen wasteland.

The deepest caves and chasms on the surface of the Earth are portals to a largely unknown world that has chosen to isolate itself from the "surface dwellers". There are two groups of subterranean humanoids: The Morlocks and the Fey.

▼ **Note** - The deep underground, far from surface air, is home to many species of luminous fungus that cast a dim glow that night-adapted humans can see by. These fungi are poisoned by trace elements in surface air and cannot survive in near-surface caves.

**Morlocks:** The Morlocks are several subtypes of a more bestial, primitive human. It is the learned consideration by those who have observed them, that they are remnants of the thought-to-be-extinct Neanderthal man and other primitive human species. The Morlocks live deep underground, rarely venturing to the surface, and then only in remote mountainous regions. Those villages in the remote regions where they are seen would consider them trolls, yeti, gnomes or other mythical creatures appropriate to local mythology. While the villagers would know these creatures are real, they are mocked by learned cityfolk as ignorant and superstitious, so they tend to keep quiet about their unusual neighbors when strangers are around.

Morlocks fear the sun and shun the daylight, but are not harmed by it. It merely blinds them temporarily and ruins their night-adapted vision for a few days. Morlocks are tribal, fairly primitive tool-users. They have language, writing of a sort, and are skilled at the basic tasks needed for their civilization: pottery, weaving, tanning, iron-working and so on, but they operate at a purely aboriginal level of technology. Morlocks would avoid contact with humans on or near the surface, but would become far bolder the deeper a surface dweller goes into their kingdoms.

Morlock culture spans the globe, though the individual tribes are not that big on exploration or travel, though they do trade and share news with other nearby tribes. They do not have a single king or ruler, and no overall communication system.

**Fey:** Fey are much more human appearing. Thin and lightly built, they are wiry where the Morlocks are hulking, with unearthly white skin while the Morlocks are hairy and red-brown. Like the Morlocks, the Fey shun the sunlight, but unlike the Morlocks, the Fey have no choice. Direct sunlight burns them, and can kill one very quickly, and cause lengthy blindness with even a short exposure. The origins of the Fey are unknown, but their pervasiveness in legend and myth suggests that they and other notions of the "underworld" go back several millennia. Even they do not know their full history for certain, but have their own creation myth that has disturbing parallels to Christianity (they believe that two pairs of men and women were originally created, but that they displeased the gods of light and dark, who banished one pair to the surface, never to see the true dark, and the other into the dark, never to see the true light).

The Fey have an ancient, very formalized and largely austere culture. They are elegant and refined, and their creations are extremely efficient and pleasing in shape, but they do not believe in ornamentation for its own sake. That said, the raw materials they use for everyday objects make them seem wealthy beyond compare. Drinks in wealthy households are served in cups made of fist-sized precious gems. The humblest house uses cutlery made of silver, gold and platinum. For a people who have lived beneath the Earth for millennia, these things are not exceptionally hard to come by.

The Fey do not think like humans of the surface. They are cold, and their emotions fire their blood in a different way. They do not delight in cruelty, though it would seem that way to us. Rather, they believe that pain and suffering are the finest teachers, whether that is teaching the victim, or teaching those who must observe and hope to avoid the same mistakes. That is, they are cruel and merciless at times, but this cruelty is without animosity. They do not understand how surface-dwellers can have a functioning culture where hatred of others is a tool of governance and worship. Pain, suffering and fear are tools to be used coolly, dispassionately and with no animosity or favoritism in their dispensing.

# EABA

Unlike the Morlocks, the Fey are a mostly unified culture. They engage in trade using the great underground rivers, even the great, lazy flows that run through the great caves under the oceans of the surface world. The fey also use the telegraph to communicate great distances, but instead of wires and electricity, they use vibrations, with great drumheads scores of meters across, stretched across cavern openings to send sound waves through the rock for thousands of kilometers, with similar caverns built to listen for these tiny vibrations.

The Fey lack advanced technology, but they are masters of the subsurface world. It has long been prophesied that there would someday be a great struggle, and when they see the barely-disguised greed in the eyes of surface-dwellers who see their wealth, they know these days are at hand. They are numerous and know the underworld well, but they could not overcome the technological might of armies and engineers who would seek to exploit or conquer them. But, they do have a weapon that they will use if required: the Earth itself. They have the knowledge necessary to shift the great plates of the Earth's crust, massive pins and pillars that can be broken to cause the tiniest of movements in the surface world. Movements that though tiny in a global sense, would mean massive earthquakes and subsidences, virtually anywhere they want. The great cities of surface Earth are hostages for the good behavior of humanity. New York, London, Paris, Peking, Constantinople, St. Petersburg, Madrid, Venice and so on.

They have only had to do this twice before, when the surface-dwellers refused to leave them in peace. Once was in ancient times and the reasons and records have all been lost, save for names of places that no longer exist: Sodom and Gomorrah. The other was only a hundred years ago. An ancient catacomb beneath a Catholic cathedral was discovered to have an entrance to the Fey kingdoms. Explorations were begun in secret, and when people were found, talks were begun. Talks that were merely stalling tactics while a small army of priests and soldiers was gathered to purge the "demons" and "reconsecrate" their treasure. Casualties were high on both sides, until the Fey threatened to unleash their power upon the surface world. Blinded by greed and sure of the protection of God, the Church forces ignored this warning. On November 1, 1755CE, the city of Lisbon was nearly destroyed by a great earthquake. All the entrances to the underworld were sealed, the invading armies buried alive, and the war was over.

Records of these events survive in the archives of the Catholic Church in Rome, administered by the secretive Occhi di Dio. Any scientific expedition into the deep underground that is announced in papers or journals will draw the attention of Occhi di Dio, who will, through the Catholic Church, move heaven and Earth to prevent such an expedition from going forth. Even to the extent of hiring

criminal elements to sabotage the expedition, either from without or from within.



## Lord Rwa M'aab

Strength: 2d+2

Agility: 3d+2

Awareness: 3d+2

Health: 2d+2

Will: 3d+1

Fate: 1d+1

## Skills:

Leadership: +2d

Ceremonial knife fighting: +2d

Brawling: +1d

Torture: +1d

History(Fey): +0d

## Traits:

Status

Night vision

Lord M'aab is the highest ranked Fey in the region underneath Iceland (which in 1869CE is a territory of Denmark). He is the equivalent of the king of a smaller European country. His people would be those encountered if an explorer entered the deep realms through the extinct volcano Snæfellsjökull (a few day's ride north of Reykjavik), and made it past the huldufólk (the Morlocks closest to the surface). Huldufólk would of course be discounted as pagan superstition by "modern" adventurers.

Lord M'aab is a conservative Fey, but he does not have any direct antipathy towards the surface people. In fact, he collects trinkets picked up by the huldufólk that Icelanders sometimes leave as offerings. He has little knowledge of the current political situation on the surface, and does not really care. He is mostly concerned about the security of his kingdom, and so while any explorers will not be tortured any more than is necessary to verify the consistency of their story, it is quite clear that any explorers cannot be allowed to leave. If the word of explorers is not sufficient, imprisonment. If imprisonment is not enough, blinding will be required, and if that is not sufficient, then they can be sold as galley slaves for the sub-Atlantic river traders.



**Diogenes Club** - The Diogenes Club is a front organization thought up by Mycroft Holmes (his more famous younger brother is still off at boarding school, using cocaine to relieve the boredom of being smarter than all his teachers). An exceedingly brilliant but not particularly ambitious member of the Foreign Office, Mycroft saw that unusual things were happening around the world. He made some completely unwarranted and bizarre predictions, then wrote them all down and gave them to his superiors. They thought him mad, until every last one of them came true. When they summoned him to explain himself, he eloquently described the minutiae of each and every prediction, and said that Great Britain needed a specialized office for the sole purpose of seeing such threats and heading them off. *And his superiors agreed.*

Mycroft, now in his mid-twenties, is the head of an agency that as yet, has no name. One can't call one's self a member of "Her Majesty's Secret Service" and very well keep it secret, can one? The Diogenes Club is just a prop, just another restricted gentlemen's club, and so it draws little notice. The actual work of the club takes place well out of sight. All those employed by the club in its official duty are never mentioned by name, only an initial, whether in speech or correspondence. Mycroft is of course, "M".

The Diogenes Club is all about collecting and sifting through information, connecting the dots, making predictions and then acting on them. While there are a few mid-level military and Foreign Service veterans doing this, the vast majority of the brainwork is done by Mycroft, whose intellect for this sort of work surpasses every other man in Great Britain. Quite often this work is done in the main level of the club itself, reading world newspapers whilst enjoying a fine tea or smoke.

Mycroft is the sort of chap who can read about fluctuations in opium prices in Bombay, a robbery in Liverpool and the weather in Patagonia, and somehow correctly deduce that there is a plot afoot to kidnap the American ambassador. Once he has come to a conclusion (which is usually a correct one), he notifies the Foreign Office, and then, whether he has the blessing of the Foreign Office or not, instigates some sort of action. The Foreign Office has learned to put up with Mycroft's independence and lack of concern for acting through proper channels, mostly because of his past successes and lack of ambition. If they can get the rewards for his effort with no complaint, they are content to let him continue.

*"...he has no ambition and no energy. He will not even go out of his way to verify his own solutions, and would rather be considered wrong than take the trouble to prove himself right. Again and again I have taken a problem to him, and have received an explanation which has afterwards proved to be the correct one. And yet he was absolutely incapable of working out the practical points..."*

- Sherlock Holmes, speaking of his brother

Mycroft is first and foremost, an Englishman. Things that he deduces that are of no threat to the Crown are simply filed away after he reports on them, and he feels no need to do anything. *No Englishmen are going to be harmed? Not our problem.* However, when he does choose to act on his conclusions, he does so with the disinterested distance of a mathematician working a formula. The actual human cost of the course of action he sets in motion is not of the slightest concern to him. For that matter, those he engages to assist him are merely tools. *And sometimes tools break or need to be left behind, and one does not mourn them.* Worse, while he is extraordinarily adept at seeing potential problems, his perceived solutions assume too much that everyone else involved is a "rational actor", whose responses can thus be accurately predicted, and this is far too often not the case. His plans will often work flawlessly, right up to the point where the first irrational, emotional decision is made by one of the people affected.

The Diogenes Club is one of only a few groups in this chapter that are "the good guys". It is a secretive and mostly benevolent agency that may, from time to time, require the services of "deniable assets" or uniquely qualified experts in a particular field. At the 1869CE start of a **Verne** campaign, the Diogenes Club has only inklings of the other groups and hints of possible plots. For instance, from reading the crime reports, Mycroft is fairly certain that much of London's criminal activity is under the control of a very small number of people, except the Triads, which seem to be in violent competition for control in some areas. Who these secret criminal masterminds are, he does not know. Eventually he will come up with a plan to try and flush them out. Or, by looking at employment and shipbuilding figures, he has deduced that there is not as much shipbuilding going on as there *should* be, meaning that someone is using British shipyards for building ships, but that these ships are not actually being built at the British shipyards. But he does not yet know where the pieces are being shipped.

**Occhi di Dio** - This is a secretive order within the Catholic Church, one that most people, even those highly placed in the Church, do not know of. They are keepers of records dating back to the origins of the Catholic Church and sometimes even further.

Occhi di Dio has no advanced technology with which to further its aims. It does have the influence of the Catholic Church and a history long and deep enough to know where the bodies are buried, both figuratively and literally. When a scientific discovery or exploration might touch on a matter of faith, there is a good chance that Occhi di Dio will get involved in the matter. A geologic expedition that might prove beyond doubt to even the ordinary lay person that the Earth is far older than the Bible says? Occhi di Dio will try to sabotage it. An archaeological puzzle that might uncover the Ark of the Covenant? Occhi di Dio will want it to stay hidden. An expedition to the subsurface kingdoms? Occhi di Dio will try to keep it from happening.

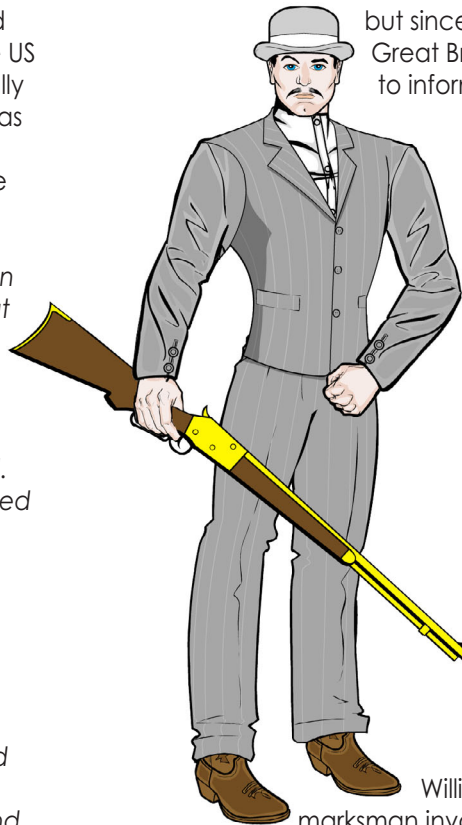
**The Secret Service** - The Secret Service was historically founded in 1865CE to investigate and suppress counterfeit currency in the wake of the US Civil War. Protecting the President did not actually start until 1894CE. In **Verne**, the Secret Service was founded by Abraham Lincoln shortly before his death, in response to some unusual events in the Niagara Falls region in late 1864CE:

*"The incidents would make a slight impression on the mind of Mr. Lumley, but for the fact that on the ensuing day he discovered, at the distance of about two miles from his camping place, he could see in either direction a wide path had been cut through the forest. Giant trees uprooted and broke off near the ground. The tops of hills shaved off and the earth plowed up in many places. Great and widespread havoc is everywhere visible. Following up this track of desolation, he soon ascertained the cause of it in the shape of an immense stone driven into the side of a mountain. The most remarkable part of the story is an examination of this stone and how it had been divided into compartments. In several places it was carved with hieroglyphics. Mr. Lumley also discovered fragments of a substance resembling glass, and here and there dark stains, as though caused by a liquid. He is confident the hieroglyphics are the work of human hands, and the stone itself, is a fragment of an immense body, must have been used for some purpose by animated beings..."*

- from the Missouri Democrat

Far more happened than ever was revealed in the newspapers. *And far less.* Suffice it to say that a catastrophic event was averted by quick thinking and extraordinary luck on the part of a cavalry captain, a circus marksman and a rather unusual lady of the evening. The surviving evidence rather abruptly and incontrovertibly convinced President Lincoln that the world was far larger and more dangerous than previously thought, and that the still-young United States needed to have eyes on the horizon and boots on the ground. Thus the Secret Service was formed. Its true mission was kept concealed, even from Congress, though it was given a mission close enough to Congress' heart to ensure its funding, and to give its agents cause to travel, carry guns, make arrests and utilize unusual gadgets ("it's a scientific apparatus to determine the authenticity of the nation's currency").

Since 1865CE, no major threats have occurred, but there are indications that something is afoot. The Secret Service operates much the same as the Diogenes Club and Scotland Yard, but it is all one agency, and it has no figure comparable to M. The Secret Service has no inkling of the true role of the Diogenes Club. Mycroft Holmes has deduced that the Secret Service is more than it appears to be, but since it has had no bearing on Great Britain, he has seen no need to inform his superiors of this fact.



**William Dix**

Strength: 2d+2

Agility: 3d+2

Awareness: 2d+2

Health: 3d+1

Will: 3d+0

Fate: 1d+0

**Skills:**

Leadership: +1d

Law: +1d

Area Kn.(Circuses): +1d

Projectile weapons: +3d

Equestrian: +1d

Carousing: +1d

**Traits:**

Status(gov't agent)

Larger than life(Agility)

William Dix is the circus marksman involved in the original incident, and no, he doesn't talk about it unless ordered to by the President. He is the highest ranked field agent of the Service, having turned down the Assistant Director job (he hates bureaucrats). He is not a great investigator, but he is a good leader of investigators.

**The League for Gaian Primacy** - This is a secret group devoted to the notion that humanity is breeding itself into a Malthusian disaster of famine, scarcity and overcrowding, and that concentrated populations of cities only encourage population growth and the despoiling of the environment with sewage and coal smoke and industrial leftovers.

Run by a cabal of European aristocracy (and American would-be aristocracy), they have the brainpower and support of a handful of brilliant scientists, especially those whose radical ideas are so ahead of their time as to have brought them professional ridicule or censure. The League knows about Messrs. Engine and uses them to accumulate a vast fortune to fund their most expensive activities. Their manpower comes from various working-class socialist organizations, who are only partially aware of the leadership and ultimate goals of the League.

The League for Gaian Primacy believes that humanity *must* abandon its great cities and live a more pastoral existence, with population and industry managed at a sustainable level. *With this management provided by the League, of course.*

The League are "big picture" baddies. They are capable of coming up with devious and potentially very dangerous threats to the world order, and they can be exceptionally ruthless, not for the sake of being ruthless, but because they believe in their higher goal. The League is the sort of group capable of designing, funding, building and crewing several Nautilus-type submersibles in secret, using them not to attack warships, but to choke off the shipping lanes and bringing chaos to major port cities. Or, they might hatch a plot to force the eruption of an Arctic volcano, covering the northern ice caps with sunlight-absorbing dust. And as these icecaps melt, the great coastal cities of the world flood and must be evacuated. Or, discovering and nurturing a rare and highly fatal African disease, making it so that it can only thrive in crowded, unsanitary conditions. Or finding an obscure rock-eating Siberian lichen and breeding into it a voracious appetite for coal.

The League has most of its meetings in England or France, with at least one formal meeting per year at an undisclosed North American site. Meetings are to determine overall policy and projects. Regular progress updates and minor changes are handled by telegraphic updates or couriers. The bulk of the work in the hard sciences is done in the civilized nations, while the more dangerous biological research is done in remote areas, often near the source of the bioagent in question. Industrial work is done mostly in England or the United States, but assembly of major projects often takes place on remote Pacific or Arctic islands.

The League is guys who want to bring about the end of civilization as we know it, and if left to their own devices, might just pull it off. However, the League has no formal knowledge of other powerful groups, yet. Its major members would be at odds with the Vril Society, but one or more members of the X Club could be part of the League.



#### Dr. Arthurius Compton

Strength: 1d+0

Agility: 2d+1

Awareness: 4d+2

Health: 1d+0

Will: 3d+1

Fate: 1d+0

#### Skills:

Physics: +3d

Metallurgy: +1d

Mining: +1d

#### Traits:

Gifted(science)

Disdain for universities

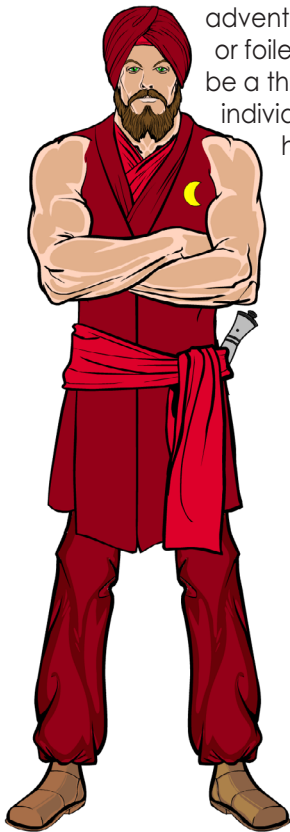
Dr. Compton has been on the fringe of science for over a decade. Once thought to have great promise, he struggled to get his Ph.D. because his thesis was so advanced that others at his university thought it was rubbish because of *their* inability to comprehend it. He eventually changed his thesis to a more conventional topic, but it cost him a year of his life, and he has never forgiven formal academia for it. Recruited a decade ago by the League, he is the major force behind their notions of using "decay waves" from specially purified uranium to generate heat for steam engines. His research has taken its toll, and an accident dosed him with these waves, permanently damaging his health.

Periodic infusions of a serum extracted from those with his rare blood type helps sustain him. This process was discovered by a fellow researcher in the League (blood typing was historically discovered in 1900CE), but Compton is unaware that the serum extraction process is eventually fatal for the donor. The donors at the moment are taken from the very poor, who have their blood secretly typed during visits by the "Samaritan Order", a League-fronted charity that provides free medical services to the desperately poor, but also looks for League recruits and unwitting test subjects. Those with Compton's blood type are kidnapped, their serum extracted, and then they are released, only to sicken and die a few weeks later.

**The Thugee** - In the *real* 1869CE, the Thugee are all but extinct. In **Verne**, they have just gone underground. No longer strangling unwary travellers, their much reduced numbers have more ambitious goals. Hating foreigners in general and the British in particular, the remaining Thugee are trying to work *within* the system, and are very patient. At the moment, their main goal is to get one or more of their members in a trusted position on the Royal Guards, preferably in Britain, but for the Governor of India if no other opportunity presents itself. Once in such a position, they will find a way to strike and do the most damage, either through assassination, or something more dramatic like smuggling large amounts of explosives into a government building and killing hundreds of important people at once.

The Thugee have no special tech or resources, and are most likely a one-shot adventure theme. Because of their nature, they cannot be infiltrated by outsiders (each member must have murdered a foreigner in front of the others), but the shadowy pasts of individual members could be investigated, or suspicious deaths of others who might have stumbled onto their secret might be part of an

adventure. If their plot is exposed or foiled, the Thugee will cease to be a threat, though vengeful individual members may seek to harm adventurers who were involved in their undoing.



### Thugee

Strength: 3d+1

Agility: 2d+2

Awareness: 2d+2

Health: 3d+0

Will: 3d+1

Fate: 0d+2

### Skills:

Wrestling(strangle): +1d

Brawling: +1d

Knife: +1d

Area Kn.(Indian culture): +1d

Religion(Kali): +1d

### Traits:

Toughness

Fanatic(Forte on Will)

A cultist of the Thugee, but can also be used for the stats of an enforcer in one of the criminal gangs that are ubiquitous in the slums of big cities. Just adjust the skills as needed for the local flavor and remove the Forte on Will.

**The Vertue Club** - A "gentlemen's club for ladies" founded in 1838CE by Lady Mary Elizabeth Vertue. It started life as a club for the handful of scientists, pioneers, explorers, doctors and lawyers who couldn't join existing clubs due to the quite unfortunate fact that they were female. The club quickly evolved into to a society that cared more about a member's virtues than their background.

By 1860CE the Vertue Club was admitting associate members who were *not* women but would not be accepted into most clubs for some other reason like religion, class, finances, race, or nationality. The only admission criterion was that they be virtuous. And by "virtuous", the Vertue Club meant exceptionally talented in some way. While being female was no longer a requirement, being willing to treat other members as intellectual equals was and remains a requirement. Membership in the Vertue Club is costly, but part of the cost is for a fund to subsidize worthy but poorer candidates, whose applications are considered by the Club's council.

In 1862CE the Vertue Club started funding its own expeditions in search of knowledge or to prove scientific theories. While it has quite a few talented individuals amongst its members, it is seen by the more traditional clubs as where you join when no one else will have you. Few have the bad taste to publicly mock members of the Vertue Club, but in private is another matter, and Vertue Club members seldom, if ever, are seen doing talks in front of the Royal Society or other illustrious but Caucasian male-dominated groups.

The Vertue Club is run by the Club council which is elected by the membership (associate members do not get a vote and cannot stand for the council but they can be co-opted as council advisors). The Council is lead by the Chair, who is elected by the council and she is assisted by the secretaries who take responsibility for various facets of the club.

In the current time the figure of most interest to most adventurers will be Lady Amanda Quinsy (B.Sc., Ph.D.). She is the Expeditions Secretary and any member planning an expedition is expected to inform her even if they do not expect any help from the Club or other members. She is responsible for keeping track of all expeditions involving Club members (and possibly organizing their rescue!) and for recruiting for expeditions funded by the Club or by Club members who wish to recruit from within the Club. And members usually *do* recruit from within the Club because they know that Club members and associate members will not hold their gender or race against them.



**The Triads** - The Triads are Chinese criminal organizations. Originally formed by the oppressed Han in opposition to the Manchu Qing, they are branching out as Chinese emigrate to Western nations. They are invitation-only, with initiation rituals, distinctive tattoos and loyalty oaths that are taken *extremely* seriously. An approximate translation of some of the *thirty-six* Triad oaths:

- After having entered the Han gates I must treat the parents and relatives of my sworn brothers as my own kin. I shall suffer death by eating dead dogs if I do not keep this oath.
- When Han brothers visit my house, I shall provide them with board and lodging. I shall be killed by myriads of knives if I treat them as strangers.
- I shall not disclose the secrets of the Han family, not even to my parents, brothers, or wife. I shall never disclose the secrets for money. I will be killed by myriads of swords if I do so.
- If I should change my mind and deny my membership of the Han family I will be killed by myriads of swords.
- I must not give support to outsiders if so doing is against the interests of any of my sworn brothers. If I do not keep this oath I will be killed by myriads of swords.
- I must never reveal Han secrets or signs when speaking to outsiders. If I do so I will be killed by myriads of swords.

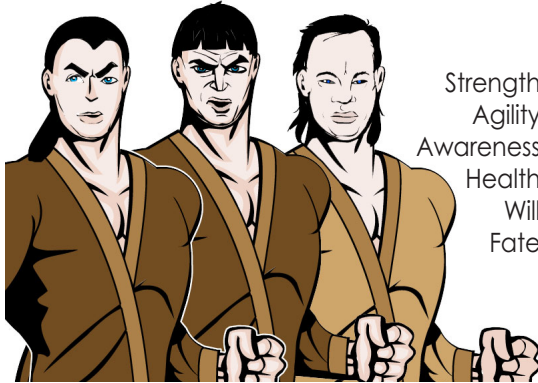
They were apparently big on the "myriads of swords" form of execution for disloyalty. Each Triad is a semi-autonomous entity, funding itself through local criminal activity, like prostitution, drugs, gambling and protection rackets. Since they restrict most of their activity to "Chinatown" areas in major cities, they get little interference from local police. That is, the police do not care all that much what happens to the Chinese, and Chinese immigrants do not trust or cooperate much with the police. The Triads also perform a social role, acting as a sort of police (against *other* criminals) and providing a degree of government/social services.

Triad members and leaders are referred to by code words or numbers to make it harder for outsiders to easily penetrate the organizational structure (the language barrier also helps). A possible organizational structure:

- Mountain Master(489) - *Triad Leader*
  - Vanguard(438) - *Operations Officer*
  - Incense Master(438) - *Ceremonies Officer*
  - Deputy Mountain Master(438) - *Deputy*
    - White Paper Fan(415) - *Administrator*
    - Straw Sandal(432) - *Liaison Officer*
    - Red Pole(436) - *Enforcer Leader*
      - 49ers(49) - *Members*
      - Blue Lanterns - *Uninitiated Members*

The Triads are *mostly* autonomous. In **Verne**, they each owe allegiance to a shadowy higher power, the secretive Fu Han ("Warrior of the Han"), who gets a share of all Triad profits, collects rumors and information from them, and makes his own intelligence queries that the Triads then investigate for him. The goal of Fu Han is to cause as much grief for the "foreign devils" as they have caused to China. Disrupting their moral fiber through drugs and prostitution is only the start. Fu Han wishes to cause the peoples of the West to fear, distrust and eventually revolt against their leaders. He is a student of history and has seen the chaos caused by the revolutions of 1848CE, the mindless violence that swept France after the French Revolution, the Indian Mutiny of 1857CE and so on.

Fu Han knows the Chinese, either as a nation or as immigrants, cannot overcome the foreign devils by force, so Fu Han works in devious and subtle ways. For instance, assassination as a tool becomes obvious if detected, so Fu Han would never stoop to *merely* having someone shot, and too many deaths from "crimes gone wrong" could become suspicious. So, when someone is impeding Fu Han's plans, more esoteric means are employed. Like deadly spiders or exotic, untraceable poisons. Or, a servant might be kidnapped, drugged and hypnotized, given a compulsion to kill their master upon receiving a special verbal or visual trigger. *Just another desperate member of the underclass striking out against their bourgeois master...* If ninja assassins are used, it is so that they can do their dirty work undetected, and they would only fight if escape was not an option. And if captured, would most certainly kill themselves to prevent any chance of being traced back to their master.



## 49er

Strength: 2d+2  
 Agility: 3d+1  
 Awareness: 2d+2  
 Health: 2d+2  
 Will: 2d+2  
 Fate: 0d+2

### Skills:

Martial arts: +1d      Area Kn.(Triads): +1d  
 Throwing: +1d      Chinese: +1d  
 Axe: +1d

### Traits:

Status(within Chinese immigrant community)

A skilled Triad soldier, who knows one of the Oriental fighting styles as well as melee and thrown axe. Usually acts in groups of at least three.

## Ninja

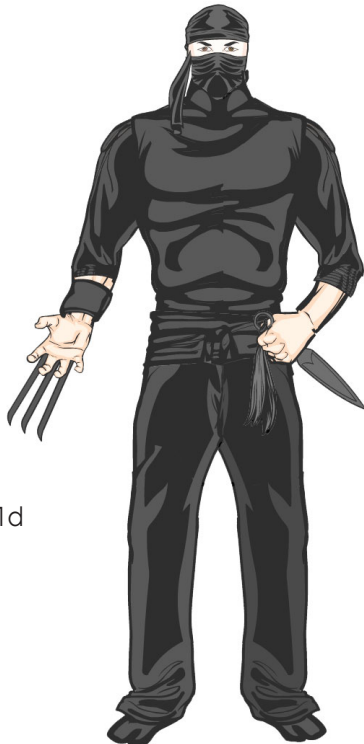
Strength: 3d+0  
 Agility: 3d+2  
 Awareness: 3d+1  
 Health: 3d+1  
 Will: 3d+2  
 Fate: 1d+1

### Skills:

Martial arts: +2d  
 Throwing: +2d  
 Archery :+2d  
 Short blade: +2d  
 Climbing: +1d  
 Stealth: +2d  
 Area Kn.(Triads): +1d  
 Running: +0d  
 Profession: +2d  
 Chinese: +1d

### Traits:

Pain tolerance



Trained since birth in the ways of stealth and assassination, the ninja is more than just a black-clad figure skulking in the dark. He (or she) is also a master of disguise, not just of appearance but of mannerism and profession, able to blend into a Chinese community with none being the wiser of their true identity. The ninja's first goal is to never be caught. If a mission is failed, it can be attempted again later. If a mission is successful but capture is inevitable, the ninja will choose to die first.

**The Martians** - The civilization on Mars is far more ancient than humanity. In decline for untold thousands of years, they have a very stratified and caste-based culture. Martians are not human, nor descended from humans (or vice versa), but are an example of convergent evolution. Mars was once Earth-like, and the species on Mars evolved much like those on Earth. Martians are about the same height as humans, but a bit weaker, since Martian gravity is only forty percent of Earth's. Their chests are proportionately larger, for larger lungs to deal with the thinner atmosphere. Martian facial features are slightly elongated, and their skin is a pale red-brown or orange, almost the same color as much of the Martian soil. Their facial features are almost elfin, save for segmented lips that are key to proper pronunciation of the Martian language.

Martian society is broken down into several castes, with next to zero social mobility between them. The caste you are born into is where you will remain for your entire life. Because of this, there are ethnic differences that immediately mark castes by sight, further exaggerating the differences.

**Nobility:** The rulers of Mars. All the nobility is related to some extent, but there are very clear familial lines and nobles that are most likely to be the successor to the current Emperor. There are various levels of status similar to titles of European nobility, but there are a larger number of them. All positions of civilian authority *must* be held by a member of the nobility. So, the equivalent of the mayor of the smallest Martian town is a noble of some type, as is the person who runs the local post office. One usually does not *directly* communicate with anyone more than two levels of difference in title, and preferably no more than one level.

Understanding the myriad of nobility types and the proper forms of address up and down the social ladder is important. One problem the Martians will have with the first Earth visitors is how to classify their leaders. A Martian will not wish to demean him or herself by dealing with someone who is a vast social inferior, but similarly will not want to offend a noble visitor by sending an inferior official to speak with them. Initial explorers trying to chat up the first farmer they run into could set the tone of Earth-Mars diplomacy for decades...

▼ **Note** - In game terms, each level of Status among Martians can cover several distinct levels of rank, and advancement is a matter of both having the points for Status, getting the current occupant of the office you want out of that office and then outcompeting everyone else who wants it. Martian dicker for position makes Chinese intrigues seem trivial and simplistic.

**Warriors:** The military caste. This has its own internal ranking system, which is almost entirely separate from the nobility chain of authority. A governor of a province does not have the authority to tell a Martian private what to do. Martian war marshals take their overall orders from the Emperor, but the development of strategy and the passing of orders comes entirely from the military caste. Similarly, the military cannot give orders to other castes (except servants, of course). For any sort of reciprocal authority, a person must have a "delegation tally", an engraved wooden rod whose color bands signify the effective level of authority its wielder has. The colors also indicate the geographical region over which the authority extends, the valid status range the wielder may be, and the duration of the authority.

**EXAMPLE:** The Emperor might authorize the War Marshall to issue tallies for a particular campaign. The bands on one might translate out as "a bearer between the ranks of captain and major may act with the authority of a sub-governor throughout the Tarsis Basin until the fourth autumnal cyclic of the two moons."

Delegation tallies can be between most castes, though it would be exceptionally rare for anyone in the Intellectual, Craftsman or especially Servant caste to have one. Expired tallies are considered status symbols, and ancient families may have entire rooms lined with them. For some reason, art collectors on Earth value them as well, with rarer ones being worth nearly enough to travel to Mars just to steal them. Earth historians value them as a means of deciphering the difference between the official written histories and what actually transpired in the past.

The military is the guardian of the stockpiles of Martian weaponry, though over the millennia they have lost track of some of these stockpiles. The rediscovery of one particularly ancient stockpile will play a key part in Earth-Mars relations in the near-future.

**Servants** - This is the lowest class on Mars. Their role is fairly obvious. They would clean the streets, be domestic servants, bureaucratic staff and so on. Anyone can give orders to servants and expect them to be carried out, but there are limits of law and custom. For instance, craftsmen may only give orders to their own servants, and it requires special circumstances to give a servant orders that would take them from their normal duties. Servants are the exception to the rule about speaking to someone of lesser rank. Servants can be spoken to (and given orders) by anyone, but servants may only speak if spoken to first.

**Craftsmen** - This caste makes the clothing, durable goods and just about everything else that Martian society requires. Farmers are a sub-caste of craftsmen, separate but socially equal. Mars has no industry, so all goods are made in individual craft shop, much as they would have been on pre-industrial Earth.

**Intellectuals** - Martian intellectuals are, until the recent events involving Earth, a largely unimportant caste. They are in control of what Martian science can still be manufactured (electrohoovers, batteries, advanced alloys, etc.), but this is dismissed within the intellectual caste as mere "craftsman's work". Most of the Martian intellectuals are philosophers, endlessly arguing amongst themselves minutia of ancient philosophies, but seldom coming up with any new ideas themselves. With the coming of Earthlings, the Intellectuals are tasked with a new mission by the Emperor, to understand these new creatures, to determine how they should be dealt with and the most likely outcome of any course of action. They will rise to great prominence after the failure of the military caste's invasion of Earth.

**Priesthood** - The Martian pantheon mirrors the Martian caste system (or vice versa), and has a priesthood with many similarities to the Catholic Church. The Martian gods are absent from mortal affairs, but are always watching and will stand in judgement after one dies. Religious doctrines and the priesthood play a vital role in the maintenance of the caste system, and any deviation from it is considered heresy of the darkest sort. Back on Earth, human critics of the Catholic Church will use the Martian religion as a proxy because of the similarities (i.e. they can criticize the Martians openly and in depth, with a clear but unspoken correspondence to similar Catholic practices). This will get the Occhi di Dio involved at various levels. The Martian priesthood has little *direct* authority. It merely sanctions, approves or rubber-stamps already-accepted social norms. For instance, marriage-bond applications must be approved by the priesthood, and pronouncements by the Emperor are usually associated by a formal blessing by the Conclave of the Seven Gods (the farmers have their own god).

The priesthood does have a sub-caste called the "Assembly for the Purification of Thought", or "Purifiers" for short. They perform an inquisitorial role, and are allowed to act outside normal channels and acceptable modes of behavior in order to preserve the social order. They cannot directly challenge the Emperor or the War Marshal, but they do act with great independence and little concern for noble or military caste concerns. They are self-limited, as to act too independently will cause them to be censured, so when the Purifiers do act, they almost always have the goods to back up their accusations. If there are kidnappings, torture, assassinations or other shenanigans, odds are the Purifiers had a hand in it. It is said that the Purifiers have access to ancient and unknown technology from millennia past, but whether this is true or just rumor to enhance their reputation is unknown. And while none would be so bold as to say it out loud, some think the Purifiers worship an unknown eighth god, whose tenets, oaths and ceremonies can only be speculated about.

**Martian plots** - The Martians are meant to fill a role like Indians (the near East kind), an old caste-based culture that is threatened by outsiders, both in terms of technology and new ideas. In the form of the Purifiers, you even have an analogue to the Thugee. The Martians are strong enough that they cannot be immediately conquered, but rich enough in resources to be irresistible to the Great Powers, who will immediately begin diplomacy and machinations to gain access to Martian wealth. By the time they do this, enough Great Powers will have their fingers in the pie that a war of conquest by one Great Power would be opposed by at least one other, threatening a "war to end all wars" back on Earth. The big plot involving the Martians is that in the early 1800's, a Martian military explorat team discovered a stockpile of ancient war machines. Known only from the earliest recorded history after the "Great Bleeding" that damaged Mars' climate beyond repair, these were legendary devices long thought destroyed. Isolated in shimmering Vril-electical bubbles, they were immune to the passing of time, and were as potent as the day they were stored, their mutated military-caste crews in a deathless sleep, merely awaiting awakening and orders.

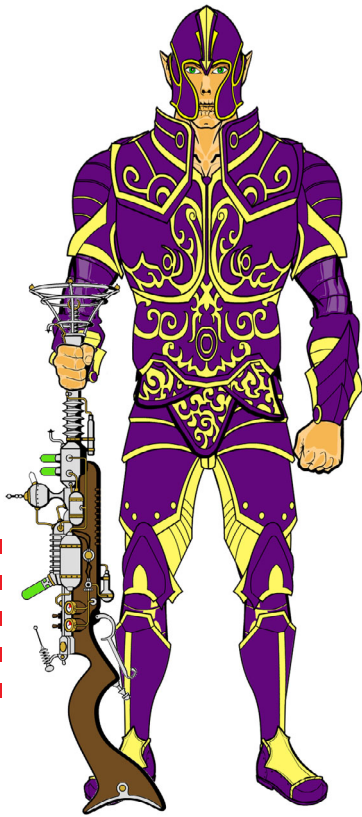
▼ **Note** - Recovery of one of these spent Vril stasis bubbles is key to the design of a Vril spaceship that will play a key part in Selenite history, which you will read about shortly.

This secret was too great to be restricted to the military caste. The Emperor was informed, and he in turn commanded that the most skilled Intellectuals examine the cave and its occupants. Examinations were made, reports were filed, and that was it. *Until the first American expedition to the Moon.* The firing of the great cannon that launched this expedition caught the notice of Martian astronomers, and it was soon ascertained to their horror that Earth was inhabited by intelligent beings with the capability of travelling between worlds. The Emperor was not concerned, but the War Marshal convinced him that the best response was an immediate display of strength, to prove to whatever beings inhabited Earth that Mars was the supreme power of the solar system. With the Emperor's blessing, great inter-planetary cannon were built, and most of the ancient war machines launched towards Earth, to teach Earthlings their place in the cosmos. Well, we all know that this ends badly for the Martians, and the fate of the invaders in **Verne** may be the same. Whether or not the adventurers have anything to do with it is up to the players and the gamemaster.

▼ **Note** - The antiquity of the pilots of the Martian war machines is key. They are different enough from modern Martians so that one can be affected by Earth diseases, but the other will not be. So, Earthlings will not bring microbial destruction with them to the Red Planet.

Back on Mars, the Emperor will be the opposite of pleased, and there will be some "reorganization" of the upper levels of the military caste. Having all but exhausted their supply of irreplaceable war machines, the Emperor can only wait to see what Earth does in response. In this, he calls upon the Intellectuals to try to fathom what sort of beings might live on a planet with Earth's crushing gravity and intolerable wetness, and how might they think? Reports back from wireless devices in the war machines were of telegraphy only, so no pictures exist on Mars of what Earthlings actually look like, only that we share superficial similarities to Martians. It is expected that we will be squat, ungainly beings because of Earth's crushing gravity, with wet, slimy skin that we will have to keep covered to avoid fatally dessicating in the dry Martian air. Because of the high gravity, everything we carry must be on wheeled carts that our servants or beasts tow behind us. We also fear soft ground, for we will sink into it and suffocate, hence the Earthling proclivity to put artificial hard surfaces wherever possible. At least, that will be the theory until the first humans show up, looking remarkably like Martians (or vice versa). After which there will be "reorganization" of the leading Intellectuals... When humans arrive at the Red Planet, blame for the invasion will of course fall on the now-disgraced military caste.



**Imperial Guard**

Strength: 2d+0  
 Agility: 3d+0  
 Awareness: 2d+2  
 Health: 2d+2  
 Will: 2d+2  
 Fate: 0d+2

**Skills:**

Martial arts: +1d  
 Energy weapon: +1d  
 Staff: +1d  
 Area Knowledge  
 (Imperial politics): +1d

**Traits:**

Status(military caste)

Mostly ceremonial, but still competent, the Imperial Guards are the tallest, strongest members of the military, nearly the strength of a human of average build. They are skilled with heat-rifles or pistols, but would take a -1d penalty if they had to use an Earth-design firearm. Imperial Guards know a uniquely Martian unarmed fighting style, and mock combats, either unarmed or with the long staff are both exercise and matters of wagering and entertainment amongst themselves and in the Imperial Court. The armor of the Imperial Guards, while overly ornate, is fully functional. Made of a lightweight silver-grey metal refined and worked with some difficulty by the intellectual class, it is 2d+0 against conventional weapons (even armor-piercing projectiles), and the polished lacquer coat gives it an extra +2 against the first hit to a location from Martian heat-rays.

▼ **Note** - Adventurers on Mars will get +2 to their Strength for lifting purposes (but not damage), and -2 to their Health for stamina purposes, due to the lower gravity and thin atmosphere. Air-breathing vehicles have no modifier, the thinner air offsetting the lower gravity. Vehicles that do not require air for their power plants are at +2 to their Strength.

**The Selenites** - The Moon is inhabited by an ancient race known as the Selenites. The Moon, in some Archean time, possessed an atmosphere and water, much as the Earth does, but over countless thousands of years (or if you wish to be mocked by the scientific community, *millions* of years), this air and water were lost into space because of the Moon's inferior gravity, settling upon the nearest planet capable of holding these vital fluids, the Earth. Back when the Moon was still verdant, life evolved there according to Darwinian principles, and intelligent beings arose, much in the same way and form as man, though adapted to the lower gravity. As the Moon became more harsh, these peoples retreated underground to where the last of the water and air settled, and they have remained there ever since. Unlike Mars, which clearly has an atmosphere, seasons and polar ice caps, the Moon is devoid of all of these. Yet, life still abides. In the deepest of craters, breathable air still pools, and in the cold shadows of these crater walls, icy dew collects on gray lichens that are in turn grazed upon by mooncalves. Tended by Selenites of the lowest order, they are herded and protected from vicious dustcrabs and other Lunar predators.

In caves set in the walls of these craters, cascades of aluminum mirrors beam sunlight down endless corridors where the rest of the Selenites work and dwell, in the ice mines, the air factories, fungus farms, breeding tanks and proving pits. With thin limbs, skin the shade of lunar dust and huge eyes to see in the dimness of their warrens, they are a mockery of the human form, shocking to behold.

The Selenite hierarchy is based entirely upon intellectual capacity. In the low gravity of the Moon and with no enemies to fight, strength is not a major factor. But using what strength one has with cleverness may be required in the proving pits, if one expects to survive. Selenites are given a variety of mental exams upon being decanted from their breeding tank. How they fare determines the course of the rest of their lives. Those with the least potential get the least nutrition and education, and end up the mentally deficient shepherds of the mooncalves. As one works up the scale, there are fungus farmers, ice miners, air makers and enforcers of order. Those of superior intelligence become Calculors. They do the delicate work needed at the breeding tanks, while the most intelligent spend their lives doing the sums and figures required to balance the delicate economy of resources that the Selenites survive on, deciding who lives, who dies, what mix of intelligences is needed, and so on.

The life-and-death decisions of the Calculors are final, but *can* be appealed in the Proving Pits. There, one who objects to their sentence can fight one or several of the vicious Lunar predators in a dusty, trap-strewn maze, while the normally stoic and emotionless Selenites cheer and jabber from the arena seats like demented Chinamen. If the one being Proven fails, all is well. If, however, they win their way to the end of the maze, they have proven their fitness to survive. They may choose any member of their same intellectual ranking to be taken instead, and this decision is final and cannot be taken to the Proving Pits for appeal.

At the apex of intelligence is the Noble Primus, whose brain is so large that he cannot be moved, and spends his entire existence upon his throne, the precise needs of his oversized brain tended to by a small army of experts and arcane machines that only they are capable of understanding.

Selenite language is a corrupted version of German and English. It is not understandable save for occasional words, but someone fluent in *both* languages can understand and communicate simple concepts in the Selenian tongue. The first Earthlings to arrive at the Moon will thus be surprised to find that the Selenites speak a somewhat understandable language. Furthermore, the higher level Selenites learn very quickly, and can master the human tongue in remarkably little time.

*The dark secret of the Selenites.* Known only to the Noble Primus and passed to each successor in turn, is the knowledge that the Selenites were once humans. Not just human, but *Victorian Era humans*. At some point in the next several decades, the Vril Society will launch an interplanetary ship with a radically experimental propulsion system. On its first test, it disappears and is presumed lost. Instead, it is blasted back in time and crash lands on the Moon, back when the Moon still had some atmosphere and surface water, but long before man came on the scene. The Cavorite panels of their ship ruined or flung into space, the survivors of the expedition were marooned in time and space. However, they survived and held to their Vril ideals. They eventually subjugated and wiped out the native Selenites, creating a society that eventually mutated into the one that exists today. The Noble Primus is the highest example of Vril-assisted human evolution, driven by the need for knowledge-based solutions to survive an increasingly hostile Lunar environment.

The Noble Primus knows all of this, save the date on which it will happen. Observing Earth closely, but lacking the technology to visit it or the physical strength to survive its crushing gravity, Selenite scholars can only observe Earth with powerful telescopes and wait.

What the Noble Primus does when the first visitors from Earth arrive depends on who those visitors are. Obviously, he will not want to undo the existence of the entire Selenite race, but he *does* understand the potential reward for the Vril should the original ship and mission not crash, or crash land with more people and more equipment. If the Vril were able to return to Earth while humans were still evolving, they could reshape human evolution along Vril lines, making themselves the master race of *all* worlds. Of course, this would destroy history as it is known, which the Vril of Earth would not be too fond of, so the Vril-descended Selenite Primus will have to play things very carefully. However, he has an enormous brain and has been making his plans for decades, if not centuries...

▼ **Note:** There was a "UFO scare" in both the USA and England in the 1880's, reports of silver zeppelin-like craft with high speed and maneuverability. Perhaps the Selenites are sending scout craft, powered by some form of reactionless Vril drive? Maybe there will be a crashed vessel somewhere in the wilds of New Mexico, with shreds of wreckage of an unknown metal and tiny grey-skinned bodies in silvery suits, with large heads and almond-shaped black eyes...

**Alternate scenario:** The ill-fated Vril ship was thrown back in time because it accidentally encountered an interstellar ship from a distant solar system. This ship, equipped with technology far in advance of anything humans have ever seen, reappeared deep *inside* the Moon, and its alien crew survived long enough for the Vril Society ship to realize it was there and mostly intact. For the past several thousand years, the ice mines have served a dual purpose; a source of crystals of the life-giving substance, and plunging ever deeper into the Moon's chilled core to find this alien ship, decipher its secrets, and then, evolve a new race of technologically advanced Vril supermen with which to conquer the Earth!

▼ **Note:** As a possible plot note, adventurers could get involved in the above scenario, and even if they get zapped back in time to ancient lunar history, there is the potential for them to be restored to the present through intervention by the Traveller (page 6.24).

**Dustcrab**

Strength: 2d+1

Agility: 2d+0

Awareness: 2d+0

Health: 2d+2

Will: 2d+2

Fate: 0d+2

**Skills:**

Stealth: +1d

Claw: +2d

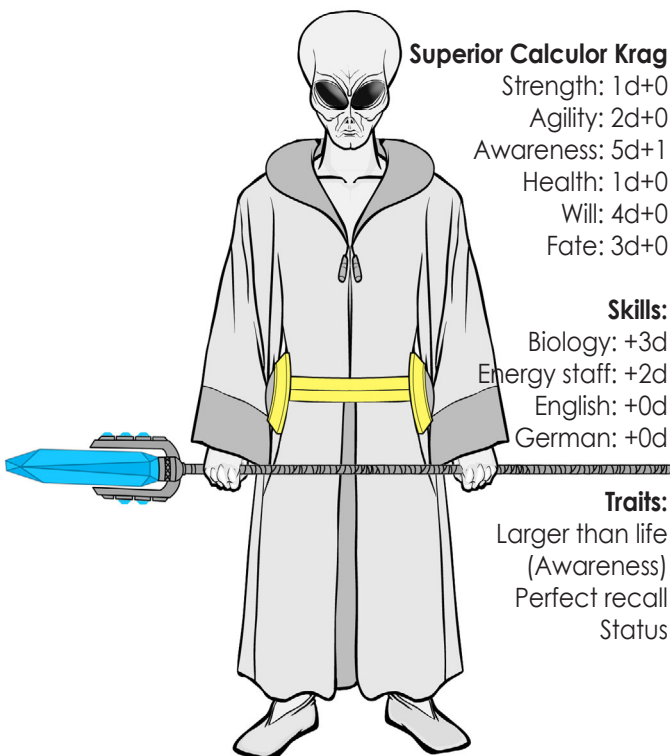
**Traits:**

Armor of 1d+2

Claw

(1d+1 lethal)

Dustcrabs live in the fine dust in the center of most craters. Their backs mimic rocks covered with tasty lichen, luring mooncalves within reach of their claws, where they are dragged under the dust to suffocate and are consumed at leisure. Selenites use dustcrabs in the Proving Pits, where they are kept hungry and aggressive enough to seek out prey in the maze, as well as being given sufficient depth of moondust to burrow into so they can ambush the unwary (Awareness vs. their stealth to spot a well-hidden one). Dustcrabs are strong (by lunar standards), and are about the size of a pony. While an average human can wrestle one to a standstill in terms of raw strength, the size of a dustcrab gives it superior reach with its razor-edged claws (about the same reach as a sword), and they are set too far apart for a person to grab and pin both claws at the same time.

**Superior Calculor Krag**

Strength: 1d+0

Agility: 2d+0

Awareness: 5d+1

Health: 1d+0

Will: 4d+0

Fate: 3d+0

**Skills:**

Biology: +3d

Energy staff: +2d

English: +0d

German: +0d

**Traits:**

Larger than life

(Awareness)

Perfect recall

Status

Superior Calculor Krag is the highest rank of his kind, one of the *personal* attendants to the Noble Primus. His rank allows him to know many secrets, though he is not privy to that of Selenite origin. However, he *does* have suspicions. He has never been allowed to examine the Antiqua, artifacts sealed in an unknown glass to preserve them for the ages. But, he *has* carried the chest containing them to the Noble Primus, and glimpsed them before being sent from the Primus' sanctum (the Noble Primus has contemplated them at length in the past few years).

Krag remembers each and every detail of what he has seen, and knows that no modern Selenite tool is evolutionarily derived from these ancient objects. Krag has also deduced that the Selenite tongue is itself a combination of at least two languages, of unknown origin. Entirely within his mind he has reconstructed much of the vocabulary and syntax of these languages, which in turn has spawned an even more curious behavior. *Krag is ambitious.*

He can never replace the Noble Primus. Though smarter than any human, his intellect is not sufficient for the tasks of the Primus. But, during analysis of the origins of Selenite language, he has rediscovered the concepts of "paternity" and "children", notions unknown to current Selenites. Selenites do not have children, but if he plans correctly, Krag can choose which tissue lines the *next* Noble Primus comes from. *His own.* When the first Earth explorers reach the Moon, many things will become clear to Krag, and he will adjust his plans accordingly. To protect himself, Krag has secretly implanted energy crystals within his own body, allowing him to project limited amounts of Vril even without his staff of office. He also has secretly directed ice miners to make him a bolt-hole in a distant crater in case his plans go far awry. This makes it possible for Krag to remain a continuing problem, even if the Selenites appear to be defeated.

▼ **Note** - Adventurers on the Moon will get +4 to their Strength for lifting purposes (but not damage), and -3 to their Health for stamina purposes, due to the lower gravity and thin atmosphere. Air-breathing vehicles have no modifier, the thinner air offsetting the lower gravity. Vehicles that do not require air for their power plants are at +4 to their Strength.



NOTICE TO READER: When you receive this magazine place a 1 cent stamp on this notice, hand same to any postal employee and it will be placed in the hands of our soldiers or sailors at the front. No wrapping—no address.—A. S. BURLESON, Postmaster-General.

"MAY"  
15  
CENTS

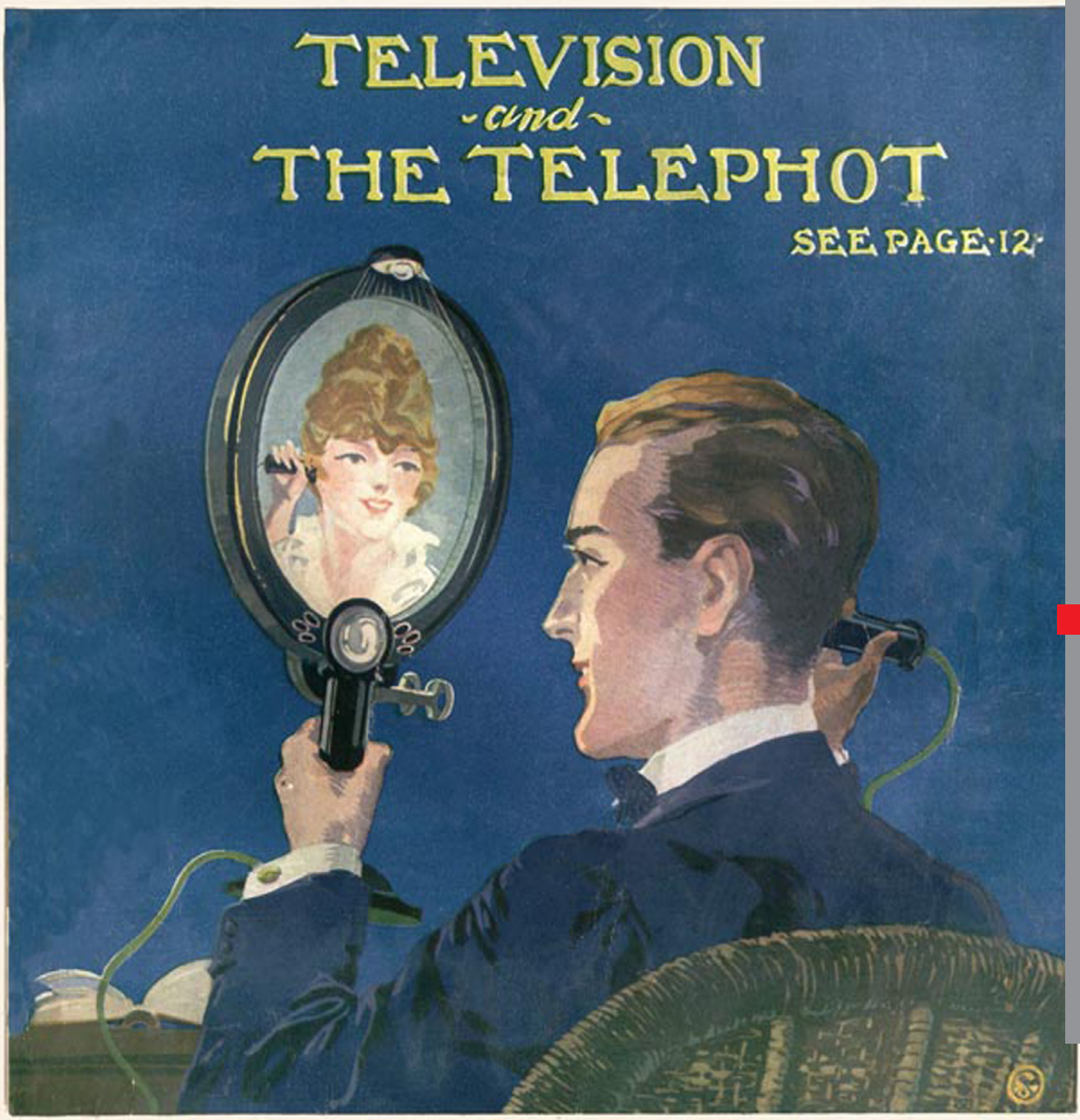
OVER  
175  
ILLUST

# Electrical Experimenter

POPULAR ELECTRICAL NEWS ILLUSTRATED

TELEVISION  
-and-  
THE TELEPHOT

SEE PAGE 12



LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY ELECTRICAL PUBLICATION

CAMPAIGNING





*He was soon joined by a quartet of officers,  
and with my back against a golden throne, I  
fought once again for Dejah Thoris. I was hard  
pressed to defend myself and yet not strike  
down Sab Than and, with him, my last chance  
to win the woman I loved. My blade was swing-  
ing with the rapidity of lightning as I sought to  
parry the thrusts and cuts of my opponents.  
Two I had disarmed, and one was down, when  
several more rushed to the aid of their new  
ruler, and to avenge the death of the old...*

*from **A Princess of Mars**, by Edgar Rice  
Burroughs(1917CE)*

▼ **ADVENTURES** - Adventuring in **Verne** is going to be conceptually different than many other genres. The Victorian Era is *not* a fantasy or science-fiction realm, it is an extremely well documented part of *real* history. So, a campaign will at least *start* on footings that are well-known and hard to change. You can choose to make **specific** adjustments as needed, even making them fantastical, like saying President Lincoln survived the assassination attempt against him because a former slave took the bullet on his behalf, or that Alaska remains a part of Russia or that the *Great Eastern* was a commercial success that spawned competitors and gargantuan mobile sea-cities, but it would *still* be the Victorian Era, with all its foibles and idiosyncrasies.

Then you have to add in the nature of what Victorian science fiction is like. Interplanetary travel in a world that is still coming to grips with electricity. Reanimation from the dead in a world where it is a struggle to get surgeons to wash their hands before operating. Advanced social systems in a world where women do not even have the right to vote (or wear pants). The world of **Verne** will be like the world of today, where advances fall upon each other so thick and fast that the world may stumble or fall merely trying to keep up. My grandfather was born four years before the Wright Brothers' first flight in 1903CE. He lived to see men walk on the moon in 1969CE. He used a bolt-action rifle in World War 1, his sons saw World War 2 end with the first atomic bomb. This is the same sort of change the world and adventurers will live with in **Verne**, but even more so.

An adventurer who starts play at age 21 in 1869CE will have been born when steam trains and steam ships were in their infancy, the telegraph had not yet been invented, and weapons were muzzle-loading rifles and early revolvers. If they live to age 60 in **Verne**, they will see interplanetary warships, telephones, motion pictures, radios, lasers, nerve gas and atomic submarines. It is a time of great opportunity and great peril. In the real world, World War I was known as the "War to End All Wars", with outmoded 19th century tactics applied to a war with machine guns, aircraft, poison gas, tanks and high explosive artillery. Imagine a world where international tensions bubbled over into war when nations with pride and rigid codes of honor and national superiority are equipped with bioweapons, force beams and orbital bombardment cannon.

*This is the world the adventurers will live in, and a grim future they must somehow try to prevent. It is the job of the gamemaster to slowly draw the players and adventurers into the convoluted web of world and eventually interplanetary affairs, and give them the tools and opportunity to not only make a difference, but to shape the future.*

There are many ways to run a **Verne** campaign, from straight-up Victorian to absurdly steampunk. You will have to determine what is best for you as a gamemaster, communicate this to the players, and then make sure that everyone can have a good time with it. As a compromise between historical realism and the deep end of the steampunk pool, may we suggest the following.

1969CE

We're not saying to set the campaign in 1969CE instead of 1869CE, but that you should look at the parallels. A popular President was recently assassinated (Kennedy vs. Lincoln). The United States is divided by an unpopular war (Vietnam vs. Civil War). Great technological feats are on the horizon (Apollo program vs. Great Eastern, the Suez Canal and trans-Atlantic telegraphs). Even crime has its parallels (Zodiac Killer vs. Jack the Ripper). The Great Powers (now. vs. then) are in a stalemate with each other, threatening to plunge the world into chaos with weapons of unimaginable power. There are big changes regarding the "proper" dress for women (miniskirts vs. bloomers), there is an underground drug culture (LSD vs. opium) and issues of race and gender are still relevant and sometimes violent.

Take some of these notions and transplant them into the historical 1869CE start of a campaign to make the gameworld accessible to different kinds of adventurers. Women do not have to wear several kilograms of restrictive undergarments (including corsets) just to be "decent" and avoid arrest. A modest pair of bloomers and a tailored equivalent of a three-piece suit are acceptable business attire, though one would expect uncouth construction workers to hoot and whistle at such the same way their 1969CE counterparts would for a short skirt. Women can own businesses and property, vote and run for public office, though their numbers in the normally male-dominated fields are a small minority, and their pay is seldom equivalent for the same work done. Women in working environments can wear more casual garb still. Imagine a "Rosie the Riveter" sort of look, and grimy women with actual muscles handling machine tools and welding gear at someplace like a shipyard, walking the walk and talking the talk. Women in the American Wild West might wear denim jeans and get away with it.

However, all of this is still fairly new, and is only really being adopted by the younger generation. Conservative women in 1869CE would as soon be seen in bloomers or jodhpurs as a conservative woman in 1969CE would be seen in a mini-skirt. Generational divides will be very pronounced, the 1869CE equivalent of baby boomers and their new-fangled telegraphs, dry-cleaning, wrist-watches, dirigibles and railways, while the older generation tends to cling to more conservative notions (and the reins of power). The younger generation is the first after the revolutions of 1848CE, passing into adulthood in the shadow of the Crimean War and US Civil War, living their whole lives with telegraphs and locomotives, like modern generations have never known a world without an Internet. In **Verne**, the new generation will be the one most likely to be decked out in garb like modern steampunk aficionados, offending their parents like other generations might do with tattoos or piercings.

Race relations are still very segregated. The idea of a mixed race couple would be terribly scandalous (and illegal), overt discrimination in pay and treatment is the norm, if not the law, but there are a few breakthroughs where non-Caucasians and non-Christians have the potential to do well. There will be black universities, and the retrenching of the South after the Civil War might be avoided, allowing for several black Congressmen (out of the several *hundred* total members).

Women and Indians and Chinese and so on can get into universities and get degrees, it is now merely rare rather than almost impossible.

Sexual relations are still...Victorian. Pretend that nonsense like the Comstock Act never passed, and that even in backward places like Ireland (where condoms did not become legal until 1978CE), women who seek it out can find information on contraception and that if used discreetly, no one gets arrested. *The issue of abortion? Still a major no-no.* That's a case where one must dig discreetly for information, and travel someplace where someone is willing to take the legal risk of performing one. All too often, this will be a sympathetic nurse or female doctor who has to remain anonymous, lest she lose her career and her freedom.

Overall, we suggest you go with the 1969CE vibe. The "summer of love", Vietnam (and anti-war protests!), moon landing, Cold War, "feed your head", short-skirts kind of feeling, but with a Victorian Era sense of propriety and restraint attached to it. This opens up the campaign to genuinely playable and interesting adventurers who are something other than white men, and that can't be a bad thing.

**Horror?** - **Verne** makes a very strong point about *not* being Cthulhu-esqe, and having zero magic, mystical powers or supernatural aspects. But that does not make **Verne** *only* a retro-science-fiction setting. The aspect of "horror" is all about *what scares people*. And if you look at Victorian horror, or the horrific aspects of its science fiction, you *can* have a lot of this in your **Verne** campaign. Specifically, you have to look at what was scary to an "average" Victorian person (or adventurer) and have *players* who are willing to let their *adventurers* be appalled or horrified by certain things that we might take for granted.

Remember that the Victorian Era is undergoing rapid change in a number of areas, upsetting apple carts that had been in place for centuries. Some scientific notions have of course been in place since the Renaissance, like a heliocentric view of the solar system, but other changes in science were more tangible and threatening to the worldview of the average person. Frankenstein would be a good example. Rogue scientist stitches together parts of corpses and imbues his creation with life...and sentience. One part desecration of the dead, one part giving unto himself the life-granting power of God. Yes, it is science fiction, but it is *also* horror. *The Island of Doctor Moreau?* Again with the invasive surgery, and granting the gift of reason to non-sentient animals, crossing the lines set at Creation between beast and man.

Things that challenge established worldviews can inspire horror or fear. Challenging the Biblical age of the universe with dinosaurs, or man's central place in Creation with ancient Martians who have never heard of God, or islands of Amazon women who do quite well without men to take care of them, all of these are shocking to the Victorian psyche. Messing with the powers of life and death, altering or enhancing physical form through surgery or drugs, societies where the bounds of race or class have been erased, all of these are things that are more than just merely speculations on science. Written in the near-future tense for **Verne**, they can be horror memes as much as the technologically-based mutant zombies of Resident Evil.

*"I shall quit your vessel on the ice raft which brought me thither and shall seek the most northern extremity of the globe; I shall collect my funeral pile and consume to ashes this miserable frame, that its remains may afford no light to any curious and unhallowed wretch who may create such another as I have been. I shall die."*

- Frankenstein's monster

Implementing fear and horror as a game mechanic is as simple as requiring Will rolls against a particular difficulty when confronted with a thing that is beyond your experience. Status, education, personality, background, all can play into the final difficulty. Making the task means you keep a stiff upper lip and carry on. Failing means that you freeze up, panic or generally lose the ability to lead until you recover, which would be a time level of the amount you failed the roll by. You might hesitate for a critical second or two, or flee the scene until after the encounter is over. For instance, from the opening vignette (page 1.3):

*"Scatter!" shouted Bradley to those behind him; and all but Tippet heeded the warning. The man stood as though dazed, and when Bradley saw the other's danger, he too stopped and wheeling about sent a bullet into the massive body forcing its way through the trees toward him. The shot struck the creature in the belly where there was no protecting armor, eliciting a new note which rose in a shrill whistle and ended in a wail. It was then that Tippet appeared to come out of his trance, for with a cry of terror he turned and fled to the left.*

Tippet, confronted with something beyond his ability to deal with, freezes in the face of danger, and Bradley has to stop and distract the creature so that Tippet can recover his wits and run. It's a fast way to handle it, and it works.

▼ **THE NATURE OF ADVENTURE** - One thing that is common to most **Verne** adventures will be "the unexpected". It is never going to be the Victorian equivalent of "here's a dungeon, lets explore it, kill things of ever-increasing difficulty and take their loot." In **Verne**, you may start off with a specific goal in mind, but it seems that something else will get in the way, something that you may not be entirely prepared for. You may be headed to Africa to search for the missing party of Lord Ambleton, but a freak storm throws you off course and wrecks you on the lost island of the dinosaurs. *Fortunately, you happen to have everything you need for an extended sojourn away from civilization.* Or, you may start off on an exploration to reach the center of the Earth, but end up having to talk the King of the Underworld out of his plans to wage war on the surface races. Or, a simple investigation of an old colleague's papers after his death drags you into a secret war between the hidden leaders of the Triads and the London underworld.

There is *always* something going on, even if you can't figure out what it is. The players *and* the gamemaster should *always* assume there is a "bigger picture" than the piece they are currently viewing. Even if there isn't one, the speculation can end up generating something interesting.

The other thing to remember is that our 21st century world *has not happened yet*. Anything about science, history or observations of the real world that has not been solidified *is open to debate*. We in the 21st century might know that no amount of surgery will turn an animal into a talking, thinking being, but on the Island of Dr. Moreau, he is doing just that. We in the 21st century know that Mars is not inhabitable, but in **Verne**, there is still the possibility that it has a breathable atmosphere. Or, in the 21st century we know that the center of the Earth is a molten hell, but in **Verne**, it might be possible to go that deep and not only have open caves, but find life and civilization in the uncharted depths. Pretty much every heavenly body except the Sun is inhabitable. The Moon, Mars, Venus, Mercury and even comets possess sufficient atmosphere to sustain life, though in the case of the Moon, it may be hollow and only the inside is inhabitable. If it hasn't been written in stone by 1869CE, you are the ones who get to write it, and history will change because of it.

**Foraging** - A key feature of virtually every Victorian piece of science fiction is that "nature will provide".

*"This unprecedented temperature very soon began to take effect upon the products of the soil. The sap rose rapidly in the trees, so that in the course of a few days buds, leaves, flowers, and fruit had come to full maturity."*

Adventurers seldom have to worry about finding sufficient quantities of food and drink, regardless of where they are stranded. Other material needs are often available, either from fellow travellers-in-peril, ancient ruins, shipwreck debris and so on. Supplies sufficient for the length of an adventure will usually be available, and the greatest material hardship is likely to be running out of coffee.

This is not to say that players should take for granted that things will be this easy. Adventurers *prepare* for the worst, but are usually spared from actually experiencing it. After all, *someone* had the foresight to pack all these supplies to begin with, in order for them to be available later. Anything beyond the needs of basic subsistence will require an appropriate Quartermaster or Scrounging roll, and supplies can be limited to those necessary to get out of the current predicament. Just enough food and water to stock the lifeboat for the difficult journey to safety, that sort of thing. In a chaos situation, as a matter of drama and pacing, each adventurer should be able to retain or find at least one "signature item" out of a calamity unless it is truly calamitous. The big game hunter recovers his rifle, the scientist keeps his journal or some key instrument, the doctor recovers his medical bag, and so on.

**War** - War in the Victorian Era is seen as an honorable, heroic pursuit, at least until that killjoy Rudyard Kipling came along. You didn't really hate the enemy, it's just that killing him was your duty. It wasn't the bullet with your name on it that was the problem, it was the hundred others addressed to "occupant".

As with all militaries, the chain of command and following orders is of utmost importance, but the lack of long range communications meant that officers in the field had to act on their own initiative for long periods of time. Telegraphs are changing this, but field commanders still have a great deal of independent authority.

All the Great Power armies (and the USA, as well) were highly stratified by class, some more than others. You had the educated and often wealthy officers, and the less educated, poorer and usually expendable enlisted men (whom we might note were *not* the audience expected to read the published tales of gallant officers and their exploits). And then there was the smaller subclass of slightly respected enlisted rankings (senior sergeants), and the very small grouping of lower class individuals who by chance or valor somehow managed to get promoted to lieutenant or higher ranks.

**EXAMPLE:** As a teenager, your poor American adventurer saved the life of rail magnate's daughter, snatching her off the tracks where she had fallen instants before a passing train would have crushed her. In gratitude, the magnate paid the basic costs for the adventurer's West Point (military academy) education. The adventurer is not wealthy, and may be seen as from the "wrong side of the tracks", but they are also a 2nd lieutenant with potential for later advancement.

Military adventurers are harder to play for extended periods of time unless the gamemaster comes up with some sort of reason why a member of a rigidly structured, rank-based organization should be off gallivanting unsupervised with a bunch of civilians. If military rank is sort of a side effect of working for some secret government organization, it is a little more flexible (Major John Carter of Her Majesty's Special Service), and having the military in charge of some operation important to the national pride of a country is also reasonable (like finding the source of the Nile). A higher ranking officer could ask and sometimes get an extended leave for such an operation, but that does not relieve them of the obligations of rank, duty and presenting a good appearance as a representative of Her Majesty (or the President, or whatever).



**Scientific exposition** - Virtually all Victorian science fiction has lengthy bits of elaboration of scientific processes that the lay person of that time would be woefully ignorant of, sometimes at such a painful length we must assume the author was being paid by the word. Think of it as a sort of subversive form of scientific education.

Sadly, most of the science was painfully *wrong* (something we might wish to keep in mind when we tout our own "modern" knowledge). In any case, the gamemaster can award up to a total of 3 experience points *per adventure* for long-winded scientific exposition. This is 1 experience point per exposition, and it has to meet certain qualifications. First, it has to be continuous. The *player* has to rattle it off like it was perfectly obvious without having to stop in the middle of it. Second, it has to have both scientific fact and some complete and utter scientific rubbish.

*"A substance it is which no doubt constitutes the sole material of the comet, extending from its surface to its innermost depths. The probability is that it would be so; your experience confirms that probability: you have found no trace of any other substance. Of this rock here is a solid decimeter; let us get at its weight, and we shall have the key which will unlock the problem of the whole weight of Gallia. We have demonstrated that the force of attraction here is only one-seventh of what it is upon the earth, and consequently have to multiply the apparent weight of our cube by seven, in order to properly ascertain its proper weight. Do you understand me, goggle-eyes?"*

*This was addressed to Ben Zoof, who was staring hard at him. "No!" said Ben Zoof.*

*"I thought not; it is of no use waiting for your puzzle-brains to make it out. I must talk to those who can understand."*

This particular quote is from Jules Verne's "Off on a Comet" and goes on for another full page or so to reach the inescapable and incontrovertible conclusion that the comet must be thirty percent solid gold!

If the gamemaster makes such an expository experience award, it is done so immediately, and the explanation is factored into the rest of the adventure *as though it were correct*. So, if a player had received 1 experience for the previous long-winded explanation, then the rest of the adventure would be played as though the comet was thirty percent solid gold.

**Servants** - Anyone with one level of limited or full status can be expected to have a servant, maid, butler, valet or someone else to handle the tiresome necessities of daily life. Remember, no dishwashing machines, washer, dryer, microwave, packaged foodstuffs, etc. Anyone whose profession or occupation requires travel will generally be accompanied by this servant, and individuals with two or more levels of Status could have a veritable entourage of assistants. These individuals need to be paid, they need passage on the same transport the adventurer does (lower class berths, naturally), and will require some reciprocity in the master-servant relationship in order to maintain their loyalty. If you want to design up personal assistants, they would be in the Low Normal range (60A and 30S), enough to look about like this:



#### Generic servant

Strength: 2d+1

Agility: 2d+0

Awareness: 2d+0

Health: 2d+0

Will: 2d+0

Fate: 0d+2

#### Skills:

Professional skill: +2d

a personal skill: +0d

a personal skill: +0d

#### Likely traits:

Adult

Great Power citizen

The 2d+1 Attribute can be switched to whatever Attribute is most appropriate.

**Technology - Verne** technology starts as that of the middle 19th century. It lacks the sophistication and "high-tech" of the stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs and H.G. Wells. Aluminum had not been made an industrial metal yet, heavier than air flight was "impossible", and building a gigantic cannon was the only practical way to get a man to the moon. Goods are made of steel and wood, and "ergonomics" is a word that won't be coined for at least a century. That four-man tent you sleep in requires *two* native bearers *just to carry it*. Not to mention the dining table, stove, chairs and china set. Then there's your wardrobe, your firearms, scientific apparatus and so on, all packed in sturdy wooden crates for easy carrying...by someone else.

**Personality** - Everyone who is anyone in **Verne** lives by a sort of code. This may be part of their personality traits required for high levels in an Attribute, but it can be more.

Even the vilest of evil geniuses would not take a woman against her will. Leave her out as bait for a giant sea monster, maybe. Coerce a maiden into marrying him by threatening her companions with death, certainly. *But force himself upon her, never.* Similarly, even his basest minions would grant her a certain amount of respect, if only out of fear of their employer's wrath. It may be twisted, but it is still a code that is adhered to. Only those who are the lowest of the low and have no fear of God or man would engage in such behavior.

There are certain universal truths that apply to everyone in **Verne**. The main one is that actions are ultimately meaningless unless witnessed by those capable of understanding their importance and ramifications. The evil genius needs to know that his genius is recognized by his nemesis, to make his own victory absolute and his enemy's defeat total. And so, if the villain captures the adventurers, odds are that he will want to leave them alive long enough to witness his final triumph. *Then* they can be tossed into the lava pits. Captain Nemo doesn't just cruise around sinking ships, he takes out full page ads in the paper announcing *why* he is sinking ships.

The villains also have a need to be *right*. It is bad enough that Professor Karlek, the madman of Krakow, blew up the pride of the British fleet while it was on review (in front of the Queen, no less!). But it is even worse that he did so with the "phlostigon bomb" whose principles got him laughed out of a meeting of the Royal Academy of Science. *Hell hath no fury like a visionary scorned...*

Similarly, the good guy, the explorer, the researcher, needs to have their endeavor be witnessed or at least recorded in such a way as to make it undeniably clear who did what and when. Planting your national flag at the Pole, having the new species named after you and so on. That's why everyone seems to keep journals, to document their lives and hopefully leave a record in case they don't survive their endeavor. Doing it first, and beating your competitors to the punch is even better. Planting the Stars & Stripes on the peak of the Mordhorn a week before Lord Whifflepoof-Smythe arrives with the Union Jack makes your accomplishment all the sweeter.

**Science** - The science of the Victorian Era is just really getting into the idea of experimentation and quantitative measurement of the world. They asked many of the same questions as we are still asking today, like "is there life on other planets?". But at the same time, there are vast gaps in knowledge of the most basic facets of the world around them, and this gives a lot of adventure possibilities. For instance, there is the quite real possibility that the Earth is hollow, that dinosaurs or at least woolly mammoths still live in some uncharted corner of the globe, or that outer space is permeated with some sort of "ether" that can be sailed on by properly constructed ships.

Science or the lack thereof can inspire nations or individuals to undertake adventures and large expeditions, alone or in competition with each other.

**EXAMPLE:** Lord Farnsworth has put up a £10,000 prize for the first person to bring a live dinosaur to Trafalgar Square. The Knights of the Mind (a snooty bunch of knighted professors) has elected to undertake an expedition to meet this challenge, and has hired a noted big-game hunter to organize the details (that they consider beneath them). The London Mirror is also sending a reporter along to journal the expedition. To top it off, George Marshall, a Texas cattle baron, has vowed to not only "beat the Limeys to the punch", but after relieving Lord Farnsworth of his ten thousand pounds, to butcher and eat said dinosaur and feed the bones to his hounds.

So, we have two expeditions, either one of which could involve the adventurers, plus some international prestige at stake. Toss in the usual complications of say darkest Africa, and you have a jolly good setup for months of fun.

**Entertainment** - Until the end of the era, the term "live entertainment" was redundant. Without television, motion pictures, radio or practical sound recording devices, *all* forms of entertainment were on-site and in-person. Opera, theater, symphonies and poetry readings would be typical. Bird watching and similar naturalistic pursuits are other sorts of "group entertainment". There was also theater for the masses, a more risqué or bawdy sort of proto-Vaudeville, but this is not the sort of thing even a middle-class person would be seen at unless they wanted the neighbors to start whispering about them behind their back.

**Pacing** - Unlike the modern era, the only thing that moves fast in the Victorian Era is telegrams. Everything else moves at a sustained speed of 30kph or (usually) less. So, from start to finish, an adventure might take several months, but all the exciting bits really take place in a total space of a few weeks. It might take a month to sail where you are going, and another month to hike through the wilderness from there. You then have a hectic week or two of danger and adventure, followed by a month limping back to a port, waiting around for another ship, and a further month to get back home. *This isn't to say that the trip is uneventful.* An assassin might have stowed aboard the ship, your trek through the jungle might be sidetracked by having to do a favor for the pygmy tribe whose territory you must cross (or face their poisoned blowgun darts), and there is always the occasional poisonous snake or scorpion in your boots each morning to keep things lively.

But still, there is a *lot* of time where not much is happening. If you don't have something in mind, and the players don't have something in mind, then time passes uneventfully. If it matters, players slowly get older, and they gain generic experience in whatever they decide to do to while the time away. On a ship, they might be able to do just about anything from playing poker to fencing, but while riding or hiking, the options are a bit more limited (like working towards increased stamina or strength, equestrian, tracking or scrounging skills).

And of course, other plots are hatching elsewhere in the world, so by the time adventures *do* get home, there is doubtless something else going on to catch or need their attention. And remember previous notes about technology, social trends and politics. You could get on a ship and head for home only to have it sunk or captured because a situation turned from an incident to saber-rattling to outright war in the time from when you set sail to when you were due to arrive home.

**Life - Verne** assumes that many adventurers are going to be fortunate enough to be somewhere in the upper middle class to wealthy range in terms of status and resources. Those at the low end will still be working for someone else, while those at the upper end have sufficient wealth to operate independently or even hire other adventurers.

If you aren't the sort who is wealthy or makes a living at "adventurous" sort of things, then life generally sucks. You work long days for minimal return, have no insurance, health care or retirement benefits, and you struggle to make ends meet until the day you die. If you are a farmer, agricultural work is tedious and dangerous, and your livelihood is at the mercy of the weather. If you are an independent like a shop keeper, there are taxes and fees and capricious officials, and you have to live in a crowded and generally unsanitary city. And if you have the misfortune to be a factory worker, miner or other semi-skilled laborer, you probably work twelve hour shifts, six days a week, sometimes pulling twenty-four hour shifts when you shift from day shift to night shift. Plus, working conditions are abominable, housing is terrible, and if you even whisper "trade union" you are likely to get beaten bloody by company goons. And you barely get paid enough to keep body and soul together. *It could be worse.* You might be an enlisted or conscripted soldier or sailor. This has all the down side of a factory job, but none of the good parts.

By and large, the upper classes generally ignore the plight of the working poor (as they usually do). Those who do work for reform face an uphill and often violent battle, as usually happens when someone else's power and wealth are threatened. **Verne** is *not* about social reform or the plight of the masses, though Karl Marx *did* do his most famous work in this period. **Verne** is about adventure, usually with a scientific hook of some kind, but adventurers *will* have to deal with those who are less fortunate, as hirelings, sources of information or even enemies (peasants with pitchforks). Think of the attitudes someone with this life is likely to have towards someone well-heeled. They might be fawning, hoping for some reward; a servant who is extremely respectful, knowing that things could be a lot worse for them; resentful of the adventurer's easy life, greedy enough to rob or kill for the slimmest chance of getting out of their current situation; or just too worn down and broken to really care anymore.

▼ **GETTING STARTED** - Presumably all the players are interested in Victorian or steampunk role-playing, but that does not mean they are going to go along with every idea you have. Just because someone has publicized a 20,000 Credit prize for the first person to reach the North Pole by balloon doesn't mean the players are going to start packing winter clothes. They might have *other* ideas about what they want to do. But, since so much of the Victorian Era (and its science fiction) is about firsts, getting there first, discovering something first, and so on, this should be part of what the players are in it for. If you have an optional adventure path like a prize quest and players are flat out not interested, then just shelve it for a later time. If it is a marginal proposition, remember that adventurers could be hired by someone planning an expedition, called upon by their country to do the patriotic thing, or dragooned into it by having something they value absconded with by someone else making the journey, forcing the adventurers to play catch-up.

You know your play group better than we do, so keep things interesting but try not to force things. No one likes being led around by the nose, all plots should have several possible outcomes, and players are clever enough than some of the best outcomes will be ones you never expected.

**Special campaign rules** - Most adventurers are strong-willed, independent and not at all fond of taking orders. *But that is not the way of the world in Verne*. Everything is about authority, hierarchy, and the proper time, place and means of dealing with things you do not like about it. This is an era where German aristocracy still have saber duels to first blood, where people as prominent as American Vice President Aaron Burr (died 1836CE) got into shooting duels, even if it was illegal and could cost you your freedom or career. The last recorded duel in England was in 1845CE, in the United States in 1859CE, in Canada in 1873CE, and the last recorded duel in France was between a general and the prime minister in 1888CE. The Russians and Turks kept at it until the early years of the 20th century. This is not to say adventurers are going to be duelling each other, but it is a measure of how seriously people take their authority, their reputation and challenges to it. Who you are and what you believe in is something that even the poorest person can claim ownership of, sometimes the *only* thing they have. *Trying to take it away from them is not going to end well.*

If you read adventure and science fiction from the era, groups of characters tend to have a clear leader who the others defer to. And this leader can change, depending on circumstance, but while someone is leading, they are not just listened to, their orders are obeyed. This does not mean micro-managing and dictating of every action, but the leader of the adventurers determines the general course of action. *Do we go this way or that way? Should we split up or stay together? Do we attack or retreat?* The leader does not and should not take input from the other players and adventurers unless the actual game circumstances allow. *If you are asking someone else what to do, you are no longer leading, you are ceding the initiative to someone else.* If it is a crisis situation, the other players should just sit there with dumb looks on their faces and wait for the leader's overall directions. If you take the leadership role, you get to make the decisions, get the glory and if things go awry, take the blame.

This will not sit well with some players or their adventurers, so the rule is this: *If you don't follow the rule, you get no experience for that section of the adventure.* None, zero, zip, nada. This may not disqualify you from gaining experience for the whole adventure, but for that adventurer it can turn experience for a long adventure into a short one, or completely negate a heroic contribution they made in that play session. Whoever is the gamemaster should probably read the above material to the players and make eye contact with each of them. Authority and party leadership is *fundamental* to **Verne** adventures.

In addition, if something key happens (usually a focus or goal of the adventure), whoever is the party leader *at that time* will get 2 extra experience. Someone who is a leader at a minor resolution point or key encounter gets 1 extra experience. *It doesn't matter how instrumental you were in getting the party to the final base camp, it is the person who plants the flag on the top of Mount Everest that gets the glory.* There is a maximum benefit for each adventurer of 3 experience from leadership per adventure. On the other hand, being the one in charge when there is a major setback costs you 1 experience, and being in charge of a an epic failure costs you 2 experience. If you do not have saved experience to give up or do not wish to give them up, that adventurer can give up all leadership challenges *for the rest of the adventure* as a form of atonement for their failure. They can still be offered leadership, but do not have to accept it.



The benefits of party leadership in **Verne** are quite tangible. Whatever the basis of leadership is at any given moment, all adventurers get +2 to their relevant skills or +1 on relevant attribute rolls. If the hunter is leading the party stealthily through the jungle, everyone else gets +1 to Awareness to spot poisonous snakes and +2 to their Stealth skill rolls, etc. If the eccentric scientist is leading adventurers in the deep underground, all other adventurers get +2 to their Climbing skill or +1 to Agility to avoid slipping on the rocks. If the war hero is leading the charge, everyone else gets +1 to Will or +2 to whatever skill they are fighting with. These benefits *require* the active direction of the leader. He or she cannot just say "do whatever you want" and expect others to get bonuses for it. And it also has to be a *group* action. If the war hero is leading the party and another party member gets into a duel, they don't get any bonuses for the duel.

Now, the most important thing to remember is that leadership roles change along with the current focus of the adventure. At one point the great hunter and tracker may take the lead, at another the eccentric scientist, or the intrepid reporter or even the loyal valet can seize the initiative. At the start of an adventure there may be a clearly defined leader, whether because of the nature of the adventure, because a wealthy adventurer is bankrolling it, or because chance has made a particular person the focus of attention. *Note that non-player extras can actually take or start in control of a party of adventurers!* Remember that these extras are not stupid. Players cannot toss them into a leadership role if things are about to go bad and someone needs to take the blame. If the extras are competent enough to be leaders, they are also competent enough to let someone else take the blame for failure. In fact, if the gamemaster expects a reversal of fortune and the extra knows it but the players do not, the extra is quite capable of trying to make an adventurer into a scapegoat.

After that, it is up to chance and machination. Leadership can change hands because:

- **An adventurer relinquishes it:** There are times when an adventurer (or player) realizes they are simply in over their head and wishes to hand command over to someone whose adventurer is more capable in this situation. Or it could be because the *player* is more tactically skilled. Or, it could be because a player sees a major setback coming and does not want to take the fall for it...
- **Failure mandates it:** If there is a major failure and the current leader is unwilling to sacrifice experience to maintain their leadership position.
- **There is no choice:** If the current leader is incapacitated or otherwise unable to make decisions, someone can seize leadership. This will default to whoever has the highest applicable roll for the situation, even if that person could not normally challenge for leadership at that time.
- **The focus of the adventure changes:** During an adventure, the nature of the challenges will change. When one of these transition points happens, anyone who thinks they are more qualified than the current leader may challenge the leader to wrest away control of the party. This could range from a matter of professional qualifications to simply crossing national boundaries when the leader is now a foreigner. Everyone feels a little more puffed up when on their home turf.
- **Honor requires it:** If a non-leader has their expertise, nationality, religion, race or just about anything else belittled or insulted by the current leader, they can demand a challenge as a matter of honor, the winner getting or maintaining control of the party. Of course, in this sort of situation, the party that has been challenged gets to determine the nature of the challenge...

The way it works is simple. Whoever is leading has a roll based on whatever Attribute or skill is the current focus of the adventure, and this can and will change from time to time. If the adventurer has Leadership skill within 1d of the relevant skill, they get +1d to the roll. Leadership based on military prowess is based on Leadership skill, not the level in a combat skill. If you want to lead a group of men into battle, you need to be a leader more than you need to be a fighter.

In addition, if certain Traits can provide an advantage in the current situation, then each Trait or level in a Trait that is superior to the other person gives them +2 on their roll. Similarly, someone who is on their home turf or in a tactically advantageous position also gets a +2. This could be an officer at a military base or a reporter who is in a position to write a damning exposé. Both are tactically advantageous positions.

**EXAMPLE:** A cat burglar's Friend in London's criminal hierarchy might be worth a +2 if trying to gain leadership of a party trying to speak to a crimelord. An heiress with Status might have an advantage when seeking to get invitations to an exclusive party, or adventurer who has the most Wealth might be the one to lead when trying to get tickets for a fully booked steamship passage.

In each of these situations, leadership is helping out the group of adventurers, but once acquired, you tend not to want to give it up. That is, you can't just change party leaders simply because it is convenient to do so for dice rolls. The current party leader *does not want to be deposed* and will only give up that role if it is usurped or there is no other choice.

Anyone challenging the current leader will use the same criteria for their roll. Whoever has the high total wins. If the challenger loses, they must apologize and give up their right to make a challenge or assume leadership at the next opportunity to do so. On a tie, the *challenger* wins, but the displaced leader gets to hold a grudge and may rechallenge for an arbitrary reason at some later time. The actual nature of the challenge is determined by the challenger, but the parameters are determined by the current leader.

**EXAMPLE:** Dr. Farnic and Sargeant Nathos are having words. Since crossing into Nathos' native Hungary, his local knowledge has been invaluable and he eventually challenges Dr. Farnic in a heated argument. Nathos wished to discuss it privately with Dr. Farnic, but Dr. Farnic insists on making it a public row, the better to put the "mere enlisted man" in his place. The end result is a tie, and Dr. Farnic steps down with barely disguised contempt, and mutters to Nathos, "This is not settled between us. There shall be a reckoning for your impertinence."

In the case where a challenge is made as a matter of honor, the challenge is resolved in the same way, but the way it plays out can be in the form of a duel or other physical challenge. Either the challenger or the current leader can up the ante before dice are rolled, saying that the loser takes 1d of lethal damage. The other party can choose to accept this, giving the person who upped the ante an +1 to their die roll, or they can back down and it simply counts as a lost challenge. Duelling is generally done with weapons rather than fisticuffs, seen as a matter of skill and will rather than brutish strength. This can be abstracted out, or role-played to the hilt, depending on time and circumstance.

Challenges for leadership take "real time". Unless leadership is voluntarily given up, a challenge takes time, and so it cannot usually be done in a crisis situation. If you get into a fight with Morlocks and near-sighted and hesitant Dr. Durban is leading the party, then *he* is the one who makes the overall tactical decisions. At least until he catches an arrow to the throat and Colonel Crittendon leads the party to victory. Or, until he realizes that he is out of his depth and tells the Colonel "this is your sort of baliwick, old chap. What do we do?" Directly asking someone else for leadership advice is either relinquishing leadership or giving them an opening to challenge it.

The most important jockeying for position will take place on the verge of a major climax or discovery. Everyone wants to be the first to plant a flag at the North Pole, to be the first to climb the Matterhorn (though that was done in 1865CE), to claim King Solomon's mines for their country, to be at the helm when the first Northwest Passage transit is made, etc. Because once someone is in a leadership position, if they play their cards right, it may not be easy to dislodge them. On the other hand, trying to keep control of a party for too long or in inappropriate situations can be disastrous. The Victorian Era is full of doomed expeditions and foolish decisions that led to disaster. Someone had to lead the Charge of the Light Brigade (the Lieutenant General who gave the overall orders never saw active duty again).

The last and oft-underutilized way to use leadership of a party is to challenge non-player extras. In the case of hostile extras like Enemies, you cannot seize leadership from them, but you can modify their behavior. A challenge can only be made by the party leader, but a challenge to someone outside the party can cause them to change their tactics based on the nature of the challenge, and its outcome.

**EXAMPLE:** The former cat burglar is leading the party through the streets of Chinatown when they are set upon by a Triad gang and surrounded. The cat burglar barks out a few words in Chinese and things pause. He turns to the gang leader and says, "I lead these men, your quarrel is with me. Fight me. If you win, we shall surrender to you. If I win, you take us to the Mountain Master." This is a challenge for leadership of *the situation*. If the cat burglar wins, *then* the personal challenge happens with the listed results, run as a single combat. If the gang leader wins, he says something like "You are in no position to dictate to us. We do not flee a fight and you cannot flee this one. Prepare to die!"

Remember that this sort of social manipulation can only be attempted by the *current* party leader, and it is not easy to make such a transition in a hurry. Whoever is leader when it happens is the one *perceived* as leader by the outside group. Also, any non-skill modifications to rolls have to be ones relevant or recognized by both parties.

**EXAMPLE:** A human Knight of the Realm has status, and while a Martian Volk'oo might not know what a "Knight" is, he understands that it is a term of leadership and hierarchy, and that he is dealing with a being of status. A challenge between the two would be a test of who thinks whose status is most relevant. If the Knight in effect says "take me to your leader", a success by the Knight means the Martian noble is impressed enough to bump the Knight and his group up the ladder a notch or two. If the Knight fails, the Martian thinks the Knight is speaking to the appropriate level of Martian nobility already, or is perhaps even trying to act above his station, remembering that the Martian is clearly on his home turf and gets a +2 to his roll, along with whatever bonus he gets if his levels of Status are *actually* higher than the human's equivalent.

▼ **TIMELINE** - A gamemaster is free to run their **Verne** campaign in any way they want, of course, but there are certain events that have been "programmed" into the **Verne** history, which will have very important ramifications, altering history from the real-world Victorian Era we know into something else entirely. These events can take place in the background of a campaign, the adventurers can be involved at the fringes, or they could even be a direct part of them.

The first of these is the Moon Cannon. As written in 1865CE by Jules Verne, the *Columbiad* is a cannon built in the American southwest, with the aim of sending men around, or even to the Moon. Whether or not it actually lands men on the Moon, it will alert both the Selenites and Martians that the inhabitants of Earth are now a spacefaring species. In particular, the means by which Earthlings achieve spaceflight is understood by and can be duplicated by the Martians. The atmospheric disturbance caused by such a great cannon could be detected by the telescopes of an advanced race, as could the reflective chaff it leaves so that Earth-bound telescopes can track its progress.

The expedition launched by the Moon Cannon can be a trip to merely orbit the Moon and then return, or it could involve landing on the Moon and then returning. *That such a thing has never been attempted before would not stop a Victorian adventurer from trying to do it all on the very first attempt!*

This is science fiction, so we'll ignore the fact that a cannon launching a projectile to the Moon would have acceleration that would turn any would-be ethernauts into strawberry jam. What is important is the *quality* of the mission. Padded leather acceleration couches, wood paneling, brass trim, nice carpets and a well-stocked liquor cabinet. Because they have to carry liquefied air, smoking of cigars or pipes will be prohibited, a harsh but necessary privation.

The basics of spaceflight can be readily dealt with. The ethercraft will rotate slowly to keep it from getting too hot or cold on one side. Spin and attitude adjustment can be handled by gas jets, orbital and deorbit burns by banks of solid rockets, and navigation by sextant and mathematical tables created for astrogation. Naturally a skilled navigator and mathematician will be required for the crew, and because of the nature of unguided projectiles, an artilleryist might also be of use.

It is unlikely that a Moon Cannon expedition will have sufficient resources to land upon the Moon and return, and it seems unlikely that the ethernauts would wish to make a one-way trip, though it is quite possible they could encounter difficulties that force use their return rockets for an emergency landing on the lunar surface, stranding them until a means of rescue can be mounted. But that is a matter to be figured out later.

A successful return from the Moon will use retro-rockets to slow down, ceramic coatings and carried water sprayed to evaporate the heat of re-entering the Earth's atmosphere at high speed. Drogue chutes can then slow the expeditionary capsule so that it can splash down in the Great Lakes near Chicago, where it will most certainly be noticed, and the ethernauts recovered.

The next key event will be several years later, with the invention of Cavorite, and the first *planned* lunar landing. With a much smaller craft due to the expense of Cavorite, the expedition will be less ostentatious, and will also be launched in secret. Perhaps it will try to rescue the ethernauts from the previous expedition, or at least find out their fates. One way or the other, the existence of the Selenites and Cavorite will become public knowledge.

About the time this happens, but before anything major can be accomplished, many great atmospheric disturbances on Mars are detected by Earth's astronomers, though no one is aware at first that these are cannon launches. A few savants like M deduce correctly, but can do nothing except provide warning to their governments, which may or may not be heeded. *We all know what happens next.* Martian war machines emerge from their projectiles and begin rampaging about. Unlike the secret machinations of groups like the Vril Society or the League for Gaian Primacy, an alien invasion imprints the notion that "things are different now" firmly into the public consciousness. It might be that the Martians succumb to human disease as they do in the novel *War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells, or perhaps they are defeated piecemeal by the military forces of Earth. The Martian walkers are powerful, but not invulnerable. Heavy artillery can take them out, it is just that the Martian heat-cannon have a vastly superior range and can destroy ships and artillery pieces while staying out of harm's way. But, the Martians have not fought a major war in millennia, and have no idea of the proper tactical use of their irreplaceable war machines.

These three events (Moon Cannon, Cavorite, Martian Invasion) will be the big events that shape foreign policy and the goals of the various secret players. The Vril Society will get captured Martian tech and use it to more fully understand their own use of Vril. The League for Gaian Primacy will see that surface installations and vessels are highly vulnerable and decide to acceleration production of atomic submersibles. Nations will look at the heavens with greed and fear, and begin building Cavorite warships for the subjugation of Mars and "diplomacy" with the Selenites. And of course, wealthy commercial concerns will be faster out of the gate and will have their own expeditions in the air long before the first aerial dreadnought lifts off. All of the other minor players, from master criminals to the Secret Service, will have pieces in the field for the furtherance of their own ends.

*And all of this does not happen in a vacuum.* Before Cavorite becomes available there will still be land-based expeditions to try and reach the North and South Poles. The deep underground realms may be rediscovered by humanity. The last refuge of the dinosaurs might be found, a prize might be offered for the first person to circumnavigate the globe in less than eighty days, and there will be plenty of international tensions that can turn into a war with the slightest provocation.

So, herewith are some sample adventures. While we have said it before, it is worth repeating that even a short adventure in a distant location can involve months of travel. This can be glossed over and used for training purposes, or played out as part of the adventure (a survivor of the Thugee has stowed on board your ship, and it is a two month journey to Australia!). And this elapsed time means that absolutely major events can happen without the adventurers even knowing about it. Your ship arrives in Sydney after a two month trip and you find the city in ruins, the battered survivors needing the adventurer's help to polish off the last of the faltering Martian war machines. Or, your expedition to the South Pole is stranded and dying, and you are rescued by Her Majesty's Ethership *HME Juggernaut*, which was diverted for the rescue on its way off-planet to Mars, and the rescued polar expedition is now going with them! *As we said, most Victorian adventures are about the unexpected...*



▼ **HISTORICAL EXPEDITIONS** - Verne starts, at least, as a historical Victorian Era campaign. There were a number of very important or ill-fated expeditions in the 19th century. The gamemaster can delay those that start prior to 1869CE or advance the ones late in the century if they want a genuine historical backdrop as part of an adventure. As much as anything else, the failed expeditions give a keen insight into Victorian motivations and attitudes.

Bear in mind that many of these expeditions were the equivalent of manned Mars missions. Not as expensive, but certainly as risky. These explorers are men who would kiss their wives goodbye, get onto a wooden ship with canvas sails and not set foot back in their native country for several years. No GPS, no radio, no emergency airlifts. If you went missing, it might be a year before anyone *noticed*, and another year before anyone could get to the area to look for you. And we haven't even dealt with natural hazards, unknown diseases, and hostile natives. These men went on these expeditions for many reasons, a bit of seeking of fame and fortune no doubt, sometimes a bit of national pride at stake, but often just for the sake of knowledge. There are plenty of islands, mountains, bays and other features named after them, as well as a few lunar craters. That is the extent to which they were and still are respected for their endeavors.

**Voyage of the Beagle(1838CE):** The famous expedition that led Charles Darwin to propose the theory of natural selection. *Enough said.*

**Vyse & Perring Survey(1838CE):** A survey of the Pyramids and surrounding area made by a British engineer (Perring) and colonel (Vyse). Most notable for its use of explosives as an archaeological tool (they blasted their way into the Pyramids).

**Ross Antarctic Expedition(1839CE):** A four-year expedition that used two ships to chart much of the Antarctic coastline. James Clark Ross was knighted upon his return, became a member of the Royal Society in 1848CE and in that year also led the first expedition in search of the lost Franklin Expedition. The expedition's assistant surgeon, Joseph Dalton Hooker, was later to become a famous botanist in his own right, was also knighted and became the first European to do a botanical survey of the Himalayas (1848-1850CE).

**Wilkes Pacific Expedition(1840CE):** Funded by the United States government and led by Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, this was by far the largest scientific expenditure by the fledgling nation (US\$300,000 at the time, several million in current US\$). A number of officers turned down the opportunity to command the expedition (it was not a military operation and required dealing with civilians). The full expedition was composed of six ships, ranging from 100 to 800 tons (three warships, three support ships), with a scientific crew of civilian naturalists, taxidermists, botanists, artists and a philologist and mineralogist.

The four-year expedition travelled 140,000 kilometers (under sail power alone). The expedition mapped over 1,000 kilometers of the US Pacific coastline, explored 280 islands and brought home 60,000 plant and animal specimens, which formed the basis of the Smithsonian Institution collection and the United States Botanical Gardens. It also had run-ins with Pacific Islanders, lost twenty-eight men and two ships over the course of the expedition. Wilkes later served in the US Civil War and retired with the rank of Rear Admiral. Because of his personality and harsh shipboard discipline, there is some thought that he was the inspiration for Captain Ahab in **Moby Dick**.

**Franklin Northwest Passage Expedition(1845CE):** Commanded by Captain Sir John Franklin after James Ross turned down the opportunity, this was a well-funded and organized expedition meant to find and chart the fabled Northwest Passage. It had two 400 ton sailing ships with auxiliary steam engines including ability to heat the living quarters and distill water, iron-reinforced hulls, and several years of canned goods for the crew. Unfortunately, the way the cans were soldered shut allowed lead from the solder to leach into the food. Also, the steam distiller leached lead from the ship's pipes, concentrating it in the water. To make a long story short, by the time they reached the Canadian arctic they had been weakened by lead poisoning and the officers and crew were suffering from mental deficits. The ships became trapped in sea ice in September 1846CE and had to be abandoned. Franklin died in June 1847CE, and the surviving crew attempted to walk back to civilization in April 1848CE, but there were no survivors. They succumbed to a combination of starvation, hypothermia, tuberculosis, scurvy, lead poisoning and exposure. When it was clear that something had gone amiss, the British government offered a 20,000£ reward (about 250,000 Credits in **Verne** terms) to the first to find the expedition and find what had happened.

When the first evidence and Inuit accounts were found by search expeditions in 1854CE, it included evidence the survivors had engaged in cannibalism. The explorer in charge of that search expedition (John Rae) was publicly vilified for this report, including through tracts paid for by Franklin's widow and written by Charles Dickens. A historical note: While there was no Franklin Expedition data preserved, the search for the lost expedition mapped more Arctic coastline than the actual expedition could have ever managed.

**Hooker Himalaya Expedition(1848CE):** Led by Joseph Hooker, this was the first European botanical survey of the region. He brought home a great deal of data, despite being imprisoned twice by Indian nobility for various reasons. By the time he died at the age of 94, Hooker was a president of the Royal Society, director of the Royal Botanical Gardens, a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India and had received the Order of Merit.

**Lynch Dead Sea Expedition(1848CE):** A short expedition by Captain William Francis Lynch. Lynch, a devout Christian, managed to get US government approval for a survey of the Dead Sea, and not coincidentally, areas significant to Christianity. Privately, Lynch hoped to find physical evidence for the Biblical account of Sodom and Gomorrah. Using camel-drawn trailers, the three boats for the fifteen-man expedition were pulled overland from Acre (a Syrian port) to the Jordan River. From there they drifted down to the Dead Sea, then travelled to Jerusalem and Nazareth, and eventually to Malta to rendezvous with a ship to return to the United States. A narrative of his trip was published in 1849CE and Lynch was promoted to Commodore. He served in the US Civil War and died at age of 64 in 1865CE.

**Bates & Wallace Amazon Expedition(1848CE):** British botanists Alfred Russell Wallace and Henry Walter Bates spent several years in the Amazon basin (Bates spent eleven years there), collecting and categorizing insect and plant specimens. They had the unique idea of funding their expedition by finding out what museums wanted, collecting said items and then shipping them back to England. The expedition is notable as they independently came up with the notion of evolution (Batesian Mimicry) and their work buttressed the work of Charles Darwin. Wallace was one of the first prominent scientists to be concerned about human impact on the environment. He was also a social activist, spiritualist and debunker of crackpot theories like the canals on Mars.

**Spruce South American Expedition(1849CE):** An English botanist, Richard Spruce spent fifteen years exploring South America, from the Andes to the Amazon. Like the Bates & Wallace Expedition, Spruce funded himself by selling specimens and seeds to English museums and collectors, Joseph Hooker and the British government (among which were seeds of the tree used to produce the anti-malarial drug quinine). He also engaged in ethnographic and linguistic studies of the tribes he encountered.

**Burton's Pilgrimage to Mecca(1853CE):** The exploits of Sir Richard Burton are a volume unto themselves. One of his more audacious exploits was to disguise himself as an Afghani and make a pilgrimage to Mecca, the first Englishman to ever do so. Had he been caught, the Muslim faithful would have killed him on the spot.

**Burton & Speke Nile Expedition(1858CE):** Finding the source of the Nile was the Holy Grail of African exploration, and while there were some good (and as it turned out, accurate) guesses as to the source, it had not yet been proven. Richard Burton and John Speke undertook to determine the truth once and for all. Speke and Burton were an odd couple, Speke being quite Victorian in attitudes, and Burton being very liberal and worldly. They got on each other's nerves quite a bit. The expedition was plagued by problems. Speke went temporarily blind from an unknown disease and deaf in one ear because of an infection related to a beetle that had crawled in. Burton was likewise incapacitated by disease and had to be carried on a stretcher for part of the journey.

In addition, they could not find reliable native bearers, much of their gear was lost to theft, and the expedition ran up debts that each said the other was liable for. After reaching Lake Victoria they made their way back down the Nile and eventually to England. On separate boats. They agreed to hold a joint announcement of their find, but when Burton arrived in England, he found that Speke had claimed the discovery as his own, relegating Burton to merely a sickly hanger-on. Needless to say, this caused a bit of acrimony between the two, which ended in September 1864CE when Speke died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound whilst hunting, the day before he was to debate Burton on the matter in front of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

**California Geologic Survey Yosemite Expedition**

**(1864CE):** In 1864CE President Lincoln declared the Yosemite Valley to be a public park, which was a matter of some controversy, as the giant redwoods were more valuable to the local economy as timber than a tourist draw. Josiah Whitney, the first director of the California Geologic Society, was organizing several explorations of the vicinity around this time. While physically close, the area was remote and difficult to move around in. The Yosemite Valley only saw its first white face in 1851CE, and hostile Indians were still a hazard. The Whitney expeditions were the first to go into the High Sierra, they were the first to climb several mountains and named a number of them. Whitney's expeditions were funded by the California legislature and they were unhappy when his first reports were filled with paleontology and geologic notes rather than the gold survey they thought they were getting (the California Geologic Survey got all its funding yanked from the state budget). Whitney went on to found the school of mining at Harvard and was a professor of geology until his death in 1896CE.

**Thayer Brazil Expedition(1865CE):**

Nathaniel Thayer and his brother were wealthy directors of several railroads and benefactors to Harvard University. They funded a multidisciplinary (mostly geologic) expedition to Brazil in 1865CE. The most notable researcher was geologist Louis Agassiz. He was the first to propose the notion of an "Ice Age", was resistant to Darwin's theory of evolution until the day he died (in 1873CE), and believed that different races were different, unequal species, created by God and placed in their specific environments. The Thayer Expedition was fruitful but not spectacular in any sense, it collected a vast number of specimens and returned home only when their money ran out.

**Palmer Easter Island Expedition(1868CE):**

Easter Island and its giant statues have fascinated visitors since it was first discovered by the Dutch in 1722CE. By 1868CE the island had been "civilized", in that all the written records of the indigenous people had been burned by Jesuits, many of the natives had been dragged off by Peruvian slavers and the island was owned *de facto* if not *de jure* by a French arms dealer and slave trader named Jean-Baptiste Dutrou-Bornier (killed in an argument in 1876CE). Ship's surgeon J. Linton Palmer visited the island when *HMS Topaze* anchored there in 1868CE and wrote reports describing the island, its people the statues and theories of their origin, as well as making several sketches and watercolors of the island for later publication. At the time, the prevailing theory is that the statues could not have been made and moved by the inhabitants, and had been placed by a superior, now-vanished race (a possible tie-in to the Vril).

**Schliemann Excavation of Troy(1871CE):** Heinrich Schliemann was an amateur archaeologist/treasure hunter. He had amassed a fortune through shrewd and sometimes risky business ventures (he moved from Germany to California in 1851CE, started a bank and made a mint by catering to gold miners and using the profits to speculate in the California stock market). He knew thirteen languages and used his wealth to travel and follow his whims. Like Richard Burton, he disguised himself (as a Bedouin) and made a pilgrimage to Mecca. Reading the work of British archaeologist Frank Calvert, he was convinced that the excavations at the Turkish place known Hissarlik was actually the ancient city of Troy. Schliemann provided the funding and became a partner in the venture (Calvert owned half the site and held the digging permits for the other half). The two eventually had a falling out over Schliemann's aggressive digging methods and insistence that the site was Troy, though Schliemann turned out to be right.

When a massive cache of gold treasure was found, the Turkish government decided to revoke the digging permits and claim a share of the gold. Schliemann responded by smuggling it all out of the country (Turkey is *still* pissed over this). Schliemann continued to pursue archaeology and travel and made a number of other significant finds before dying of an ear infection in 1890CE.

**Challenger Global Expedition(1873CE):** The Royal Society of London obtained the use of a 2,300 ton three-masted corvette (with an auxiliary steam engine) from the Royal Navy, and turned it into a scientific research vessel. Guns were removed, and laboratories, extra cabins and plenty of storage for specimens and supplies were added. In 1872CE it set forth with a crew of 273 on a four-year oceanographic expedition, covering 130,000 kilometers and discovered thousands of new species. The published results were considered the greatest advance in the knowledge of the planet in centuries. One of the expedition's objectives was to find evidence to support or refute Darwin's controversial theory of evolution, making its outcome something of a contest between God and science. The Space Shuttle *Challenger* was named after the ship used in this expedition.

**Bennet Arctic Expedition(1880CE):** In 1878CE, James Gordon Bennet, owner of the New York Herald, purchased the *HMS Pandora*, a 600 ton three-masted gunboat with a crew of 33, and refitted it for arctic scientific exploration. Perhaps wisely, he merely funded the expedition rather than going on it himself. In 1879CE it headed north from San Francisco after receiving orders from the Secretary of the Navy to search for an overdue expedition while they were up there. It got stuck in sea ice near Wrangel Island and drifted north for nearly two years while the crew continued to make scientific observations. Eventually, the ice crushed the ship and the crew had to abandon it. Dragging three smaller boats across the ice, they eventually reached open water. One of the small boats sank in a storm, the other two separated. All but two crew of the first died of exposure and starvation after landing in Siberia, while the other boat's crew found civilization, the two survivors and eventually made it to Irkutsk in 1882CE. *They still had the scientific journals of the expedition.* Wreckage from the main ship eventually turned up near Greenland, and its discovery prompted an 1893CE expedition to investigate theories on the motion of arctic sea ice.

**Andrée North Pole Expedition(1896CE):** Swedish balloonist Salomon August Andrée attempted to fly a balloon over the North Pole by launching from Svalbard, drifting with prevailing winds and landing in Russia or Canada. Andrée's proposed drag line method of steering the balloon was unreliable, and the balloon had been shipped from the Paris manufacturer without testing and it turned out to have a leak. Andrée launched anyway, and the balloon was deliberately grounded two days later, while they were still within walking range of home across the pack ice. They had caches of supplies placed on their proposed route for this eventuality, but they did not count on the difficulty of crossing the pack ice, nor its movement. After walking east for a week, they were west of where they started. They perished from trichinosis from eating uncooked polar bear meat after three months of walking, still about two hundred fifty kilometers from the nearest settlement on Svalbard. Their final camp, with their bodies, logs and still preserved camera film was discovered in 1930CE. The "Tharsis Plain" chapter picture (page 1.1) is *actually* a photograph of the launch site for the Andrée expedition.

▼ **ADVENTURES** - The following set of adventures should give you a head start on to start a campaign and put some long-term background plots into motion. In many cases, the settings can be adjusted to better mesh with the origins and skills of the adventurers.

▼ **THE GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY\*** - Sigur Olafsson is a native of Sweden, and comes from a moderately wealthy family with distant ties to the Swedish crown. He also has a degree in mathematics from the University of Stockholm, is good with machines, and has studied the works of Charles Babbage. He emigrated to Chicago several years ago and has made a business of selling calculating engines. For the most part, these are desktop adding machines and similar devices for use by accountants and banks. However, he does have a few customers for the more complex devices he has designed. The city of San Francisco has placed an order for a "billing machine" that can calculate bills, print the results for mailing, and keep track of which have been paid, by means of celluloid Jacquard-style punch cards (invented 1869CE and 1801CE, respectively).

Dr. Olafsson's work on Babbage machines has not gone unnoticed. In addition to being among the minority of people actually trying to build them, he has shown a fair amount of insight into the efficient and sometimes counter-intuitive tricks that must be utilized with a low-speed, low-memory computational device. This has brought him to the attention of the League for Gaian Primacy, which has by various oblique means attempted to hire or convert him to their cause, as many of their projects can benefit from being able to automatically sift through large data sets, in addition to their own continual work to try and understand Messrs. Engine.

Dr. Olafsson has rebuffed all of these advances, and in doing his own followup research upon these business suitors, has convinced himself that he has been targeted by yet-unknown business rivals who seek to sabotage his work and his thus far spotless business reputation. So, he is quite concerned for the safety of his San Francisco sale, and seeks a trustworthy and skilled escort for it for the train trip to San Francisco, a trip that he is also going on, since he has to oversee its installation and training of the staff who will operate it.

\*apologies to Cheapass Games



**Setup** - This is where the adventurers come in. There are a number of hooks that can be used. Adventurers could be in the area and looking for work, or coincidentally headed to San Francisco themselves. Dr. Olafsson might be a professional colleague, an old friend or if the adventurers have a wealthy patron, a friend of the patron. And remember, the places can be altered to match the adventurers. It does not have to take place in the United States, though for reasons you will find out later, it works best there. If the adventurers are hired, they will be paid no more than 4-5 Credits per day, plus train fare and possibly 1 Credit per day for meals and such. Dr. Olafsson can't really charge this to his client, so he will be a moderately tough negotiator, and the wages he is offering are slightly more than he would pay for some Pinkertons or other private services. Olafsson knows that in paying adventurers directly, he is cutting out a middleman like the Pinkerton company, so he will bargain hard, knowing that who he hires will still be making more than they would through a managed service like Pinkerton's. Train rides can be boring, so someone in the party who can manage intelligent conversation on a number of subjects as well as being a good guard dog is a plus. However, he really only needs one travelling companion. Everyone else gets to ride in in the boxcar carrying his calculating engine to ensure it is not stolen or sabotaged.

The problem is, Dr. Olafsson is wrong. No one is out to steal his calculating engine to sabotage his business. *The League is out to steal Dr. Olafsson.* While they would not mind getting their hands on his engine and have later plans to do so, the means they have at their disposal is insufficient. They will have to work on *that* task later on.

**The Train** - The train from Chicago to San Francisco will take about a week. It is summer or early autumn, so bad weather is unlikely to be a problem. Physically speaking, the train is a coal-fired steam engine with a crew of two. It can make good time during the day, but operates at reduced speed during the night because of its fairly anemic headlight, a bright whale oil lamp with a large metal reflector over half a meter wide. The cars have iron frames and wooden bodies, and will be in several types that are structurally identical but with different furnishings. All will have an armor for the passenger and cargo area of 1d+0, an armor for its structure of 5d+0, a Damage Limit of 1 and 19 Hits. For all practical purposes, all hits to a car will be to passengers or cargo and will only do superficial damage to the car itself).

- **Pullman cars:** Passenger cars of varying luxury. Short-haul passengers would sit on wooden benches, often facing each other, possibly with small tables between them, and an aisle down the middle of the car. First-class passengers would have an open area and private booths, each with table and padded seating. All cars would have a small bathroom whose toilet emptied directly onto the track (with a sign asking passengers to not use it while at a station). These cars have a small porch at each end with an overhanging roof, with a ladder to the roof of the car. All windows can be opened, since the cars have no climate control system except for a small coal stove for cold-weather use. Sleeper cars will have several large compartments, each with fold-down beds or convertible bench seats for two or four people to sleep on.
- **Boxcars:** A big empty box for hauling things. Equipped with a sliding door on each side and a ladder on each side and each end.
- **Caboose:** Living quarters for the train's crew. Bunks, kitchen, etc. Track switching could be done by the caboose crew after the train had cleared a switch, the conductor could manage his ledgers there, or complicated braking maneuvers could be done in tandem with the engine crew.

Most cars did not have a convenient means of moving from car to car while the train was moving. You could do it, it was just "at your own risk". Meals could be handled by a specialized dining car, or by the passengers debarking or being brought food at one of the numerous stops the train would make for passengers, water or coal. Such purveyors of food were often owned by the railway company as a means of increasing their revenue.

**The Plot** - The last legs of the trip run through northern Nevada, a long, flat and fairly straight stretch of track for several hours, allowing the train to make good time, even though speed will be reduced because the transit will take place at night. A full moon shines down from a clear night sky, and most cars will have their windows open a little to let in some cool night air and let out the clouds of tobacco smoke that permeate the cars. Those stuck on guard duty with the calculating engine probably have one of the side doors open somewhat for ventilation or relieving themselves, since the boxcars have no toilets.

Far from silent, but much quieter than the noisy cars, a huge shape blots out the moon and casts an immense shadow across the train. Those who are especially observant might notice the huge shadow approaching from behind, as it will overtake the train on one side before its source does. Note that a shadow across the moon is only as uncommon as clouds are, so it is not inherently suspicious. Call it a Heroic(15) AWR task by the adventurers, +2 difficulty if they are engaged in conversation or a gambling, -2 difficulty if they have any sort of meteorological skill or are paranoid. Anyone who makes this roll will realize there is something *not quite right* about the shadows and may choose to investigate, which will require them exiting their car, either to the porch on the end or the roof, depending on the car type they are in. Depending on how the gamemaster wants the adventure to proceed, seeing the unusual shadows can be bypassed, allowing it to catch everyone by surprise.

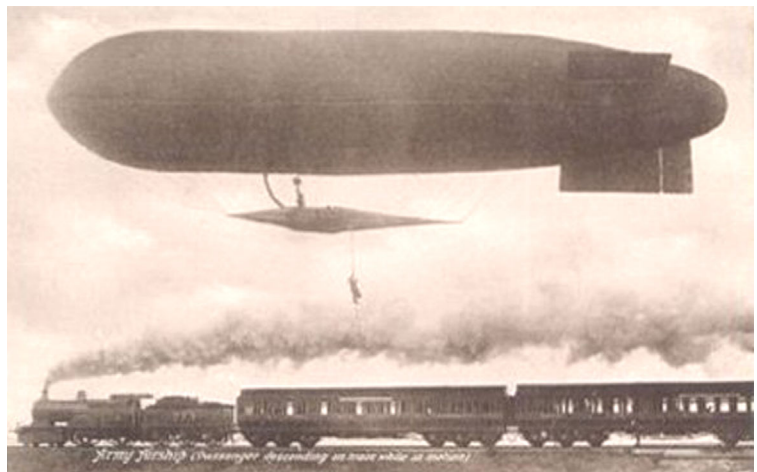
The shadow is an aerial ship of some kind. Details are lost in the darkness, but if distances can be judged correctly, it is several times the width of the train and nearly as long. Faint sparks can be seen from the rear on occasion, much like those that occasionally spew from the locomotive of the train they are on. This "aerial ship" is following the train, slowly catching up with it...and descending.

▼ **Note** - As historical trivia, there were displays of airship finesse in the days before heavier-than-air flight became fashionable, among them being a descent by rope from a moving airship onto the roof of a moving train. The blurry postcard is from 1913CE, though whether any retouching was done to get the scene "just right" is unknown.

This airship, in addition to its pilots, has a sniper and a highly skilled team of six men whose sole mission is to kidnap Dr. Olafsson. Assuming that Dr. Olafsson will be in a first-class car, the airship will lower a bamboo cage containing the assault team onto the top of the train. The team leader has control of barbed steel hooks that will puncture the roof of the car they are on, and a highly tensioned steel spring attached to a cutting bar that will slice a round hole in the thin roof of the car, allowing the kidnappers to drop directly in. Taking no chances, the bottom of their cage has a steel plate with an Armor of 2d+2, and if it looks like there will be heavy resistance, they are equipped with soporific smoke grenades, laced with a powerful mix of opium and hallucinogenic mushrooms.

The kidnappers do not want to kill anyone, but neither do they want to be killed. So, they will act with competence and cleverness and assume that any resistance they meet is at least as good and smart as they are. The kidnappers have the advantage that they have trained together and have contingency plans in case of various setbacks. For running the encounter, their priorities are:

- **Safety of the airship:** They would rather fail at their mission and lose their assault team than lose the airship.
- **Capture Dr. Olafsson:** A damaged airship with only a pilot surviving is worth the cost if they can capture Dr. Olafsson.
- **Safety of the team:** The team leader or his second-in-command has a high regard for the safety of his team, and while their plan is audacious, he will not engage in actions that are tactically stupid.



**Edges** - The assault team has a number of tricks and aces up their sleeve:

- **Sniper:** There is a skilled rifleman on the airship. This does not count for a lot, since the total of range, darkness and movement will make hitting even a stationary person on the roof of the train a nearly impossible task (difficulty of 16). However, he is good enough to do this more reliably than most (5d+2 skill roll), and can certainly put the fear of God into anyone exposing themselves to shoot at the assault team. He is in the rear of the gondola, so that any return fire at him is less likely to hit the pilot or engines.
- **Soporific grenades:** They have two of these, equipped with self-lighting fuzes. Breathing this smoke does 1d+1 non-lethal damage per time level of total exposure, 0d+1 if all the windows in a car are open. The grenades burn for 11 seconds and will do 0d+2 lethal burn damage to anyone foolish enough to pick them up. They are hot enough to burn you badly, but should not ignite wood or fabric. The smoke is +6 difficulty to range to see anything through, +2 if the windows are wide open. Awareness rolls to avoid obstacles (if moving) or identify targets (if shooting) are in order.
- **The escape cage:** As previously described. Its steel armored bottom detaches and is not retrieved with the rest of the cage. In addition, there is a tension-based release on the retrieval rope so that the airship can simply apply lift and snap itself loose rather than be dragged around by the train. The cage can hold eight people, maybe ten if they really squeeze in tight.
- **The assault team:** They are equipped with high quality revolvers modified from a standard Colt design. They also have gloves with steel plates riveted across the knuckles for +1 punch damage and have treated silk body armor sufficient to stop 1d+0 of conventional firearm, melee weapon or unarmed combat damage to the front of their chest or abdomen. They are dressed mundanely and could pass for other train passengers, having cash, forged tickets and cover stories that will survive casual telegraphic inquiry. Unless someone has been keeping track of passengers, it would be hard to pick them out from the rest (and remember that once it gets rough, some passengers might draw guns of their own).

**The Airship** - Aside from being a beautiful integration of a number of 1869CE technologies, the *Collective Will* has nothing spectacular or science-busting about it. It is a semi-rigid hot air dirigible powered by a pair of lightweight oil-fired Stirling engines. A Stirling engine is similar in appearance to a steam engine, but it operates solely on hot air rather than steam pressure. It is less efficient than a steam engine, but it does not require a heavy boiler or water supply. The frame of the dirigible is made from a species of bamboo native to the island of Formosa (what we call Taiwan), with a passenger compartment framed in the same material and walled in cloth. The skin of the dirigible is made of tightly woven Egyptian cotton impregnated with boric acid for fire resistance and shellacked with a compound made from insect chitin for water and gas impermeability.

The gondola is one large compartment with fabric-covered dividing walls. There are no windows, but there are window openings with fabric shutters, and they have overhangs to shield from most blowing rain or drainage from the skin of the dirigible. The engines are suspended from the dirigible's frame and can be accessed by narrow walkways from the center of the gondola. The rear of the gondola is where the winch and cage are kept. A small Stirling engine with numerous reduction gears is used to raise the cage, with assist provided by a bicycle-like pedal arrangement. Needless to say, winching up a cage of seven people for 30 meters will take a few minutes, but since this can be done once an escape has been made, the time it takes is not a major concern.

Attitude control is by means of louvers behind the air screws, and by a tank of compressed air that can shift the airship's fuel and water supply right or left, forward or back as needed. For emergency lift, a box of dry sand is under the floor of the gondola and it can be emptied as needed. For quick descent, spring-loaded panels in the roof of the dirigible can be pulled open via cables in the pilot's compartment, venting hot air and allowing the airship to sink. For slower descent, the hot exhaust from the engines is diverted so that it does not heat the dirigible, and it slowly loses altitude as it cools.

For game purposes, the *Collective Will* has an Armor of 1d+0, which all projectile weapons count as armor-piercing. It has a damage limit of 0 for all projectile weapons, damage limit of 1 from slashing weapons and 14 Hits. The engines have an Armor of 1d+2 and 4 Hits. Some basic repair parts are carried.

**Divergence** - There are three ways the plot can move at this point:

- **Dr. Olafsson is captured:** By dint of competent gunplay, soporific smoke or teamwork and tactics, the League team captures Dr. Olafsson and chuff-chuffs its way into the darkness, turning south and eventually disappearing from sight.
- **Adventurers are captured:** As above, except one or more of the adventurers are captured as well. Since the airship can't really carry more than two additional people for any length of time, this would probably mean that some of the assault team was killed or otherwise left behind.
- **Kidnap is thwarted:** By forcing the airship to flee or actually bringing it down, or killing, capturing or foiling the assault team, adventurers save Dr. Olafsson, but leave a whole lot of questions and not nearly enough answers.

How it goes from here is up to the gamemaster, and the rest of the scenario is information that will be useful in either the short or long run.

**The engine** - The LGP does want Dr. Olafsson's engine. By means of a spy on the train, they will know if the mission was successful. The spy is under strict orders to not reveal themselves under any circumstances, and will be merely a second-class passenger who only has a ticket for this leg of the trip.

If Dr. Olafsson is kidnapped, then agents posing as officials from the San Francisco mayor's office will be waiting at the train station along with some hired wagons and forged paperwork, ready to pick up and deliver the engine to its resting place in the basement of City Hall. Except it will actually be delivered to the docks and put on a steamship headed for the port of Mazatlán, on the Mexican coast just past the opening of the Gulf of California. From there it will be shipped by a League-owned vessel to the island base at Partida. Adventurers who attempt to confront these imposters will quickly find themselves on the wrong arm of the law, as the imposters have official-looking paperwork and knowledge of the cargo, and will readily be able to convince local police or rail officials that the adventurers are up to no good. Adventurers with any sort of demonstratable Status or a knowledge of the law might be able to muddle the issue long enough to make the imposters nervous.

Adventurers may be able to pick up part of the trail here if they are suspicious enough to follow the calculating engine from the pickup at the railway station. Otherwise, they will find out the next day that some minor functionaries from the mayor's office were beaten up and left in an alley on their way to the railway station. The hauling team, if they can be located, will be able to identify the dock where they delivered the cargo, but the ship has long since sailed and the League has sufficient money floating around in Mazatlán to ensure that even if the Mazatlán authorities actually cared enough to investigate, they would be bribed into not doing so.

**The Island** - The dirigible *Collective Will* came from and will return to the island of Partida. For reference, they refueled on the way in and waited for the train in an isolated box canyon a number of kilometers from the site of the assault. The return flight to Partida will be non-stop and will take between two and three days, or up to a week if it has to rely on only one engine. They will make every effort to avoid landing, ditching all unnecessary weight if required, and if emergency repairs are needed, doing so at their nearby staging area.

Partida is a small desert island in the Gulf of California. Arid, uninhabited and far from shipping and ports, it is a perfect place to hide a League facility. Steam powered boring machines and lots and lots of dynamite have built a moderate sized underground shipyard, aided by empty chambers beneath the extinct volcano at the end of the island. The small volcanic crater also makes a perfect shelter for the *Collective Will*, which was assembled here from parts constructed elsewhere.

The facility is called Serenity Base, and is home to about two hundred League members of various types, ranging from idealistic workers found on the streets, to university graduates and veteran soldiers. Serenity Base is a test facility in every sense of the word, but its primary research is focused on the science of fluidic flows, whether water or air. They want to determine the absolute most efficient shapes for hulls and propellers, whether for airships or submersibles. Every last bit of efficiency they can wring from a power plant makes their creations that much more effective.



But in addition to this, Serenity Base is itself a test. Some number of the workers here have families and children, who are being educated with League doctrines. Money is not a problem, so the facility, while not luxurious, gives its workers the best work environment and care possible, at the same time fostering a sense of loyalty not to state or to God, but to League ideology. The base has been fully operational for only a few years, but its workers from the lowest to the highest are now virtually fanatics to the League cause. Few would want to go back to their previous lives, and would be remarkably unhappy if forced to do so. Women may not be perfectly equal with men in the League, but they are afforded far more respect than in the outside world. Strict hygiene rules mean that illnesses are far fewer, and religion is restricted to private practices of faith, with no religious authorities to tell one the manner in which they must believe. It is admittedly an imperfect system, but League members see it as far better than the outside world.

The strictures that prevent contact with the outside world to keep the island's secret are harsh, but fairly applied from the highest to the lowest, giving everyone a sense that their "government" is accountable. Serenity Base is for all practical purposes, an autocratic corporate state. Everyone's opinion is listened to, but the decisions from the top are absolute. The illusion of democracy or even communism comes from the fact that even those in charge are subject to the same rules as everyone else and cannot use their authority to evade this. That is not *entirely* true, but it is close enough for most purposes.

Life exists almost entirely within the base. Going outside is only allowed for limited periods, which are scheduled in advance, a lookout on top of the crater keeping watch for any approaching boats. The island must appear to be uninhabited. The League knows this fiction cannot be maintained forever and may have to be abandoned someday, but they do not wish it to be because of their own laxity. Even most of those who work there do not know exactly where they are, though they are loyal enough that they would not reveal it in any case. All League members working there are trusted, though there will be compartmentalization of information like secret plans. All workers who have the aptitude for it may carry pistols, and marksmanship is a course for the handful of school-age children at Serenity Base. The base's armory has a supply of lever action Winchester rifles, and the guard on lookout station at the top of the volcano has a sniper rifle and a Gatling Gun.

Serenity Base is nearly self-sufficient in terms of food. Wild goats wander the island, and these combined with chickens and fish provide meat, eggs and milk. Large polished metal mirrors inside the lip of the volcanic crater divert sunlight into all reaches of the base, including a small farm that provides a variety of vegetables. Water is supplied by using concentrated sunlight to distill fresh water from seawater, and there is also a small aquifer of millennia-old rainwater accumulations that was breached during drilling, but there is no indication of how long it will continue to flow. The great natural caverns are used for farming, chickens and the assembly of projects, or are turned into meeting rooms, classrooms and living space for the workers, all of whom are cross-trained in other professions as well as taking aptitude tests to see where their strengths lie.

In addition to the *Collective Will*, the base also has a two-person dirigible called *Faustus*, which is used for air-screw testing. It also has a resonant chamber built into its main hot air compartment and a phonographic system that plays sounds akin to the howls of the damned. This is used to terrify the superstitious fishermen or sailors who once stopped by the island to nab a few feral goats for dinner on the way by. Flying over an encampment at night and letting loose with hellish wails, combined with the mysterious disappearance of at least two small fishing boats, has given the area an evil reputation. The fantastical stories of sea monsters and flying legions of tormented souls have been discounted by local authorities as the nonsense that comes from superstitious drunkards, and the missing ships are similarly assumed to be the fault of incompetent sailors.

▼ **Note** - For your adventuring purposes, the world has an *endless* supply of supercilious officials who have made up their minds and will not be swayed by mere facts or common sense. Players should eventually learn to stop wasting time trying to make dice rolls to convince these types to "do something" and just get out there and do it themselves...

Serenity Base gets regular shipments of raw materials from Mazatlán, and also has two vessels of its own. The first is a 70 ton steam cutter called *Dynamic*, which like *Faust* is used to test propellor and steam engine designs. It is also lightly armored and has a turret with a gatling gun. The other vessel is a submersible craft dubbed *Petit Vengeance*. This is a riveted steel vehicle whose hull was the most efficient design for its size a few years ago. Minor improvements have been made since and a few inefficiencies added for dramatic effect. The front has the bestial appearance, as though it had a spiny ridge down its back and bulging eyes. Barely a true submersible, it has to surface like a whale every so often to gulp down air for its steam engine, though it keeps a reservoir of liquified air that can run its engine at low power for hours at a time, and tanks that can hold compressed air for a few minutes of use. Otherwise, it simply operates on residual pressure and stores heat in an array of soapstone bricks around the boiler. The *Petit Vengeance* is also a testbed for climate control underwater, replenishing and restoring bad air, underwater communication and such. It has a double-chambered underwater hatch so that it can be exited while submerged, but no practical self-contained apparatus for breathing underwater (SCABU) has been invented yet.

*Petit Vengeance* is responsible for the sinking of at least two small vessels that learned more than they should have about the island, or were not warned off by nighttime flyovers by *Faustus*.

**Interactions** - The League's activities in this location and this scenario may generate side effects with other important groups:

- **Morlocks:** The Morlocks are perturbed by the disposal of waste down the seemingly bottomless shaft of the extinct volcano, and they are exploring the upper reaches and will soon encounter League personnel. Philosophically, the League would be inclined favorably towards groups that can manage on small amounts of resources and are generally at peace with each other. On the other hand, they might be seen as dangerous sub-humans but useful experimental subjects for things that would be too distasteful to do to "real" humans.
- **Secret Service:** An airship used for a kidnapping is the sort of thing that would eventually come to the notice of the Secret Service, though by the time it hits the newspapers, it will probably involve acrobatic Chinese assassins or saber-wielding Confederate guerrillas who nearly carted off an entire railcar. The Secret Service will have to track down the actual witnesses to the event in order to get a coherent account, and *then* decide what to do about it.
- **Vril Society:** They are absolutely paranoid that someone else will uncover the full power of vril before they do, so they are always on the lookout for unusual events that might involve vril-based effects. The original newspaper accounts of the airship attack may have sensational bits that pique their interest, but if they investigate they will see that it is merely a clever use of existing machines and nothing they need worry about.

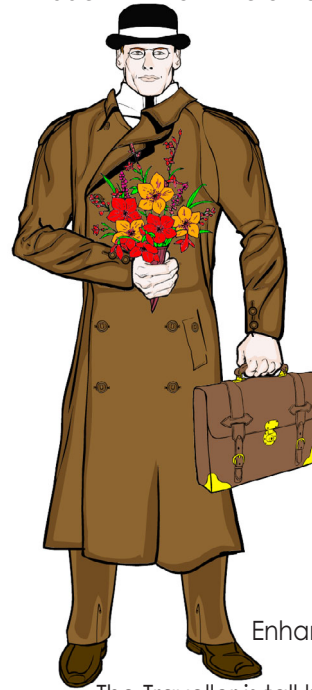
**Long term** - If Dr. Olafsson is captured and taken to Serenity Base, he will be kept prisoner, but treated well. The League desires his expertise, but it must be given willingly. Olafsson is of course outraged by the treatment, but he is not immune to the charms of the money and technical resources the League is willing to offer in exchange for his knowledge. He will be intrigued by the dossier and photographs of the Messrs. Engiine, though he will not be told of their origin. The idea that someone has come up with a calculating engine of that complexity and kept it secret makes his own work seem very small, and he might be inclined to join the League just to be a part of something much bigger than he had imagined possible.

So, it might be that in a few months Dr. Olafsson will reappear with a tale of miraculous escape from the secret cave somewhere in the Mojave Desert where he had been held captive all this time. Delirious with thirst by the time he finally reached civilization, he will be unwilling or unable to lead authorities back to it. Then, he will sell his adding machine business and move back to Stockholm, where it turns out one of the Messrs. Engiine resides, and he will devote himself full-time to building calculation devices, running data sets for the League and attempting to decipher the inner workings of Messrs. Engiine.

On the other hand, he may as a matter of pride or principle refuse to cooperate with the League, or pretend to, but secretly be in fear for his life. Either having gained a little trust from his captors or through just plain cleverness, he will try to escape, but blunder into the deep underground tunnels and be captured by the Morlocks, who will eventually take him to the Fey in the hope of finding out what is going on at this region of the surface world that has been uninhabited for all of known history. Adventurers might encounter him again months or even years later, if they are exploring the subsurface kingdoms. That would be quite unexpected, which in **Verne** makes it quite normal...

**Experience** - Normal for whatever length the scenario runs. A key point in the adventure will be the decisions made at the time of the attack, noting that there may be two party leaders at the time (one with Olafsson and one with the calculating engine). Another leadership point will be if the adventurers are there to keep the calculating engine from being stolen in San Francisco. Even if there are negative outcomes that are bad for the leader, make sure that good decisions are worth some sort of reward. Making good decisions but still losing Olafsson is not quite as bad as making bad decisions and losing him.

▼ **THE TRAVELLER** - Both his title and his name. While he uses an alias in 1869CE, he prefers to be known as the Traveller and his actual name is not known. He has invented or acquired that most curious of devices, a time machine. For reasons unknown but presumed to have something to do with galactic precession, the Traveller can only leap forward and back in time in increments of 9,831 years, ±3 days.



#### The Traveller

Strength: 2d+1

Agility: 2d+2

Awareness: 4d+2

Health: 3d+0

Will: 3d+0

Fate: 1d+0

#### Skills:

Time machine: +2d

Paralyzer ray: +1d

Martial arts: +1d

History: +2d

Leadership: +0d

Area kn.(London): +0d

Running: +0d

#### Traits:

Enhanced metab.(Forte on Heath)

The Traveller is tall by Victorian standards, but not unusually so. His age is difficult to determine. He is clearly no longer young and definitely not old, but whether he is in his late 20's or late 50's is impossible to determine. He carries himself with the maturity of late adulthood, but his skin is fair and smooth, and his jetblack hair is untinged by grey, save for an albino forelock which he sometimes keeps dyed to prevent it from being a distinguishing mark. He rarely smiles, but when he does, his teeth are white, evenly spaced and have the smallest of gaps between them. He is not exceptionally muscled, by neither has he the sparsity of frame associated with lack of labor, and he is neither portly nor overly thin.

The Traveller has several disguised gadgets. His spectacles allow him to see things by their warmth, or act like a pair of binoculars. His clothing can alter itself to reflect a variety of styles or status, and has an Armor of 3d+1 against all Victorian Era weapons. His cane can become a ladder up to ten meters long and push with a force of five tons, his pocket watch has a neural paralyzer ray that does 3d+2 non-lethal damage out to a range of at least a dozen meters, and his penknife is an advanced energy cutting tool that can slice through steel.

**Setup** - This scenario requires a highly urban setting, to take place in a city of some prominence and permanence. We will use London, but with a few changes it could be set anywhere. The Traveller is stranded here. His time machine appeared in Hyde Park, disguised as a gypsy wagon. The Traveller exited unnoticed and began to do some academic exploration of London, but failed to take into account the effect of his time machine on primitive technology and the cleverness of the people of this time. The arrival of the time machine sent a spike up and down the electromagnetic spectrum, sending random signals through every telegraph line in London, the degree of disruption dependent on the distance from the time machine. This was noticed by M at the Diogenes Club, who quickly correlated the reports and determined the epicenter of the disturbance. Some of M's skilled operatives managed to discover the authentic-looking but utterly out of place "gypsy wagon". After being rebuffed by its security systems, the military and a drayage crew is called in. The gypsy wagon is carted off by lifting it with ropes, putting it on a flatbed subway car, and transported to a secure underground location accessible by a secret spur of the London subway line. The Traveller was alerted to the tampering with his time machine, but by the time he could return to the site via the primitive technology of this time, the damage had been done. Upon arriving at the scene, he barely avoided capture by detectives from "Scotland Yard", escaping only by means of a paralyzing ray that is his sole defensive weapon.

He is not concerned that anyone will steal the secret of time travel. Current science should be incapable of entering the machine with any force less than that needed to destroy it, and the controls are keyed to the Traveller alone. Rather, the Traveller needs the time machine to go home, and of course, wishes to avoid causing damage to time itself by the continued presence of such an out of place object.

▼ **Note** - Whether or not the Traveller's presence is capable of altering history, or whether his own future presumes the effects of his presence and the outcome of this scenario is a matter for philosophers and the gamemaster to discuss. Adventurers trying to develop rhetorical or philosophical skill levels are free to discuss it with the Traveller at length.

So, the Traveller, being a reasonable person by the standards of *his* time, assumes that he can find reasonable people in this barbaric time to assist him against the unreasonable people who took his time machine. Among the other topics he wished to research in this time period was his own ancestry. In his small collection of gadgets is a "genetic sniffer", a device whose very concept of operation is nearly unexplainable to a Victorian except in the most fantastical terms. What it does is sniff the air and seek concentrations of DNA matching that of a given sample, in this case, the Traveller himself. It may take him some days wandering the city to get the scent, but he will eventually be able to get a fix on the lodgings of the adventurer who is most permanently associated with London or its environs. He covers his expenses by exchanging curious pentagonal gold coins for pounds and crowns at a bank, and he also has some cut gems which he can exchange for larger sums should it be required.

**Beginning** - All of this leads up to where the adventurers come into play. The Traveller knocks upon the door of where the adventurer in question resides and asks for a meeting. The Traveller is unfamiliar with Victorian etiquette and does not have calling cards, which if asked, he covers for by stating that he is not from this nation and is not acquainted with their social customs. He will state his business as a matter of academic research into the history of his family. If a butler or other servant is conveying the message, they will describe the Traveller as having an unidentifiable accent, but he is clearly a man of some means by the way he is dressed and carries himself.

▼ **Note** - If the Traveller can be convinced to discuss his machine and its operation, his origin in the future may slip out. For instance, the nature of galaxies is not truly known in 1869CE, and this question is not resolved until the early 20th century. The Traveller's records of history are incomplete on this era, and he may assume a number of things about 1869CE that are not going to be true until several decades hence. He knows that this period is before the first of the "Great Wars", so he will not let *that* slip, but in other matters he could be a few decades off.



If the Traveller cannot get an appointment with their distant ancestor, he shall attempt to confront them in public, though in a reasonable and civilized manner. However, if this fails, he will resort to force, attempting to stun one or more adventurers in a place where he can speak with them at length when they awake. The Traveller is not above lying to recover his time machine, and has had time to prepare several plausible stories which cannot be disproved by those without knowledge of the actual future. Some of these can overlap:

- **The Truth:** The Traveller is an explorer, the first and perhaps only person to travel through time. He is seeking out the help of his own ancestors as the most likely person he can trust to help him recover his machine.
- **The "Truth":** The Traveller is an explorer, the first and perhaps only person to travel through time. He will explain that his machine requires unique components that he cannot replace (crystals from a meteor), and thus his machine is also unique. He will imply that he is from this era and has sufficient knowledge of this time and place to be convincing. He will claim an American origin with an English father and American Indian mother, on the assumption that it will help explain his accent and slightly unusual appearance. He is seeking the assistance of the adventurers because access to the pathways of time is too great a power to be trusted to any government, whether American or Her Majesty's.
- **Righting a wrong:** The Traveller has come from (or seen) the future, and needs to right a wrong or prevent a disaster of some kind, and he cannot do this without the assistance of devices inside his captured time machine. He will tailor his story to match the likely allegiances of his ancestor. It might be an assassination of the Queen that plunges Europe into bloody war, an upcoming election where a particular party's victory leads to horrible consequences in the future (he will paint a picture like the evils of World War 2 or Russia under Stalin), a natural disaster like an earthquake (he can time travel, so having a device to stop earthquakes is not that far-fetched), and so on.
- **Saving the world:** The mere presence of matter not from this time can cause dangerous stress to the world itself. While his visit was planned to be safely brief, having the time machine trapped here for untold years could all by itself cause reality to tear like rotten cloth, plunging some unknown portion of London or even England into the eternal void.

Basically, he wants his time machine back and will without hesitation, lie his futuristic ass off to get the help of the adventurers. That said, at least one of the adventurers *is* his ancestor, and so he does not want to get them killed in the process.

**The Time Machine** - This is a prop, one whose function is outside all the normal design rules for **EABA** (but it would be considered an Advanced Era device or vehicle). Its shell can be reprogrammed to become virtually any object in its extensive database, so long as that object is approximately 2 meters wide, 3 meters long and 3 meters tall. This shell is only partially composed of matter as we understand it. Most of its adamantine strength comes from the fact that it is actually a boundary between one universe and another, so mundane damage and energy can do nothing more than superficial damage. This is pertinent to the function of the time machine, as it is several times as large inside as it is outside, though it can be configured to appear inside as it does outside. Basically, the interior dimensions are large enough for the needs of the scenario, with the only limit being that the entry hatch cannot exceed 1 meter wide and 2 meters tall. Inside, it will have all the furnishings of a high-tech apartment, with multiple bedrooms. The central controls for time travel are in the apparent center of the interior, and are keyed to the Traveller. No one but he can operate it, and though he could grant someone else permission to operate it, odds are that they would be unable to understand the controls. Despite being limited to fixed jumps of 9,831 years, operating it is a surprisingly complex task, one which the Traveller and Victorians lack sufficient common concepts for him to explain it. The best he can say is "It is harder than it looks". The time machine is not really self-mobile. It can hover in place and move up, down and sideways at about walking speed, but virtually all its hidden machinery and power is spent creating and maintaining its place in space and time relative to its origin, as well as holding open the portal from this universe to the pocket universe that is its interior.

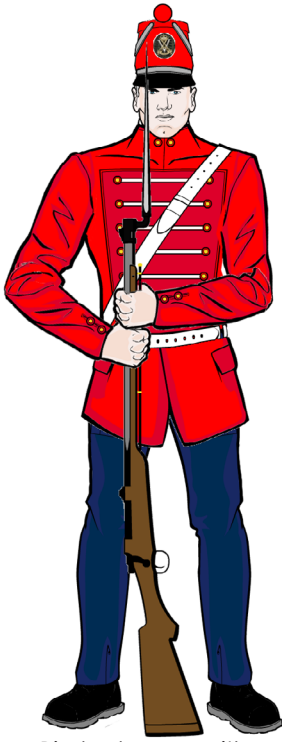
**Events** - M and the best minds he can bring to bear on the captured time machine are at a total loss. They cannot try to open the doors or windows of the gypsy wagon without being stunned, using long poles has proven fruitless, and attacks on non-vital parts like the wheels have not even scratched the "paint". M has made the logical conclusion that the best course of action is to apprehend its owner. Flyers with his description and an artist's rendering have been given to the Metropolitan Police, with very strict orders *not* to approach or apprehend him, but to report immediately to Scotland Yard. In addition, M is assuming that the owner is a man of exceptional intelligence, and so M has ordered subtle clues left in various locations, clues that a very clever mind *could* trace back to the hidden underground train station where the time machine is kept in a newly built riveted steel enclosure with a locked door and a squad of Her Majesty's royal guards on duty guarding it.

**Resolution** - Either the adventurers will risk the displeasure of Her Majesty and try to steal the time machine back, or they will leave the Traveller to his own devices, in which case they can hear rumors of what happened or what he did or tried to do with lesser hirelings. This could take weeks, months or even years, and the Traveller could become a major player in his own right, with his knowledge of the future allowing him to predict events and become wealthy enough to start building the precursors of the precursors of the devices of the distant future.

In the event the adventurers *do* decide to help the Traveller, they will have to come up with a plan to steal the time machine. If the Traveller is not directly involved, adventurers will have to physically get the time machine out of where it is being stored, a fairly difficult proposition. If the Traveller is involved, then all adventurers have to do is get themselves to (and in) the time machine, after which the Traveller can simply jump back in time 9,831 years, after which he can hover the machine up from whatever underground location it is at, up to ground level and then reappear. Then, he can slowly move the machine to someplace that will be safe in the Victorian Era, jump forward 9,831 years, let the adventurers out and then jump back home, slightly humbled by the experience of being outwitted by savages and having to enlist the help of other savages to get his time machine back.

Finding where his time machine is being kept is the first trick. The Traveller has an approximate location based on the time machine's security system, but its signal has been degraded by the steel-walled room it is kept in and the underground location. The subtle clues left by M would help pin the location down more precisely. These would be things like buried news stories about the troops deployed to the park and confiscation of a gypsy wagon. Investigation of the subway might find personnel willing to mention a strange flatcar, and witnesses or paperwork that indicate it was seen leaving a particular station but never reappeared at the next station, and minor newspaper reports of an "Honor Guard" being sent to a particular subway station to prepare a ceremony for the arrival of some minor African potentate. All very plausible cover stories. Anyone investigating whose roll makes a difficulty 14 skill or Awareness task can put the clues together. Anyone rolling a 17 or better on this task will be able to see that the cover stories are *too* good, not really necessary. That is, they were put there so they *would* be noticed by someone looking for the time machine, and would be meaningless to everyone else. This does not mean the location or protection for the time machine is any different, just that adventurers are forewarned that they may be expected.

The entire reason M is trying to lure the owner of the enigmatic gypsy wagon into the hidden subway station is so that he can be captured. The guards are under the strictest of orders to capture intruders and may not use lethal force in any way that could kill intruders. Remember that medical science is not all that good, so they do not even have the option of shooting extremities, since shattered bones could lead to fatal sepsis, and amputations are not always survived. The guards are equipped with rifles and pistols and can threaten with them, but may not under any circumstances fire other than warning shots. Their weapons are actually loaded with blanks. So, they *can* fire warning shots or look like they are trying to aim for extremities, but no bullets will actually be fired. *At least by them*. Their tactics will be to try and close with intruders and then use brute strength to pin or beat them into submission. And soldiers quite capable of this were the ones chosen for the task. They are not necessarily the best of Her Majesty's guards, but they are the ones best able to take a bullet and keep on fighting. These guards *know* that they are firing blanks and may be expected to charge people with guns, and are tough and determined enough to do it.



**Royal Guard**  
 Strength: 3d+2  
 Agility: 3d+0  
 Awareness: 2d+2  
 Health: 3d+1  
 Will: 3d+0  
 Fate: 0d+2

**Skills:**  
 Brawling: +1d  
 Wrestling: +1d  
 Rifle: +1d  
 Leadership: +0d

**Traits:**  
 Toughness  
 Pain tolerance

Big burly guys with meaty fists and hard leather boots. If they start in on the Traveller and find that they are bouncing punches off his clothing, they are smart enough to either go for his unprotected face or to try and pin him through sheer strength.

**Alternate resolution** - The Traveller wants to get back into his time machine and go home, so any resolution that includes him will tend to go in this direction. It is possible that adventurers can turn M's plans around, and knowing the location of the time machine, find a way to threaten it and thus force M to move it elsewhere, during which process they can gain possession.

**Aftermath** - Neither M nor the guards really understand the time machine. They are under the impression that if they seal all the exits, they will be the victors, not knowing that getting out through mundane means was never part of the Traveller's plan. Simply getting into the time machine means he wins, though he does need to get adventurers in as well. Most importantly his ancestor, but everyone else, since he understands the primitive legal and criminal system of this time could implicate his ancestor should his accomplices be captured. The Traveller's stated plan was to jump to the past, move the machine and then jump back to present to release the adventurers. But, if the adventurers are clearly identified by guards (or by the recently installed mechano-photographic apparatus in the station), then to preserve his ancestor, he will have to change the plan. Instead of jumping backwards in time, he will transport the adventurers forward in time 9,831 years. You see, he understands the low speed of transport in 1869CE and the concept of an alibi.

He can place his time machine onto some futuristic form of carriage, travel across the Atlantic Ocean to America, then travel back in time to 1869CE and drop off the adventurers in say, New York. Then, no matter what witnesses or photographs M might have as to the involvement of the adventurers, it is clear that the adventurers could *not* have been involved, since one cannot possibly have been in a London subway on Monday and also be seen checking into a first-class hotel in New York City on Wednesday. Clearly the photographs are faulty, the witnesses were mistaken and M knows Her Majesty's government would be made to look the fool if they even tried to press such a case. M will *not* resort to extra-legal means to detain and interrogate the adventurers, but this is not from morals or honor, but simply that he has calculated the liabilities outweigh the benefits.

M will of course know that *something* is very fishy, but even his analytical mind cannot piece it together based on the limited data. He will simply accept with poor grace that the adventurers cannot be legally prosecuted for something he is absolutely sure they were involved in, and makes a note to see any other unusual events occur around them. He may even try to recruit them someday, just to see if he can get the full story out of them.

From the gamemaster's standpoint, involuntarily moving the adventurers across the Atlantic is a custom-made start for a new adventure. If the adventurers are not flush with cash, the Traveller will no doubt leave them some of his, but note that should adventurers acquire any of his trinkets, all of the Traveller's gadgets will stop working within a few days of his departure.

**Future/Past** - Both the distant past and the distant future have the potential to foreshadow campaign events, so the gamemaster should think about what the adventurers see or *are allowed to* see in such cases.

London in the distant past is a swampy area. Sea levels will be slightly lower, so the actual area the adventurers appear at will be dry, and the marshier regions will be at the now more distant seashore. There won't be much to see here, but you can put in some wandering primitive tribesmen, or show a recently slain mammoth. Or perhaps the Traveller has jumped back more than one multiple of 9,831 years, and adventurers looking up at a brilliant half-moon might see a flash of light upon the darker half, or perhaps even the tiny sparkle of city lights and the hint of blue and green we associate with life and an atmosphere. Or maybe they will see something ominous, like the twisted wreckage of what they will someday recognize as a Martian war tripod, half sunk into the mud, clearly abandoned for decades, if not centuries. But just as clearly it is something out of place in this time and built by intelligent hands, lending some credence to notions that the Pyramids were built using advanced but now-vanished technology.

London in the distant future is a ruin and a museum. Architecture of fantastic breadth of stone and steel has been warped like clay on the wheel of a drunken potter. The Traveller will speak little of it, saying only it is a reminder to all and a memorial of "the Final War". He will call a carriage service to convey the time machine to New York, and leave a viewing window open so that adventurers can see the world, but he will not allow them to exit. There are no horses, and all vehicles are propelled by internal engines that emit no smoke or steam. Many even lack drivers and are presumably controlled by mechanical automatons. The world of the Traveller is one of great cities that are like a single gigantic structure, or many structures that have merged over time into human hives. These are surrounded by vast farms and connected via some distant descendant of rail lines, but rail lines capable of travelling at speeds beyond merely frightening and into the realm of the inconceivable. To cross under the entire Atlantic Ocean is a matter of mere hours, yet there is barely the hint of motion and no sound of air rushing past the conveyance. New York City will be unrecognizable, again a giant hive of human activity, but it still surrounds an oasis of green that nearly ten millennia later is still known as Central Park. And it is from there that the Traveller returns the adventurers to their own time and bids them farewell, probably never to return. *But, you never know...*

**Interactions** - This is a fairly local and self-contained scenario, with limited potential for other groups to get involved.

- **X Club:** One or more members of this body may be called upon to consult about the nature of the unusual "gypsy wagon", most particularly the members with the most comprehensive knowledge of metallurgy or electricity.
- **League for Gaian Primacy:** It is possible that after the adventure, secondary information leaks out and comes to the attention of the League, which will be interested from the standpoint of the unique material the time machine is made from and how it is powered, but lacking any evidence and certainly lacking any ability to duplicate it, it will remain a curiosity that is filed away.
- **Vril Society:** Much like the League. However, the Vril Society's future may include an incident of involuntary time travel, and so it is possible that at that time, the Traveller or someone like him may be involved. As a long-term possibility, if adventurers somehow get stranded in the distant past because of getting stuck on an experimental Vril ship when it has its fateful accident, the Traveller might be able to rescue them. Of course, before they can be brought back to their proper time and place in history, the adventurers must have taken actions such that history unfolds the way it is meant to. *You can't leave the Vril in Earth's past to remake humanity in their image...*
- **Diogenes Club:** Mycroft Holmes will devote some tiny part of his intellect towards noticing unusual appearances and disappearances, looking for another opportunity and wondering who or what is behind it. He will also task clerks at the Foreign Office to flag and pass on any paperwork or official correspondence which happens to include any adventurers who have come under suspicion as a result of their escapades.

**Experience** - Normal for whatever length the scenario runs. Uncovering the Traveller's future origin via clever conversation or roleplaying is worth an experience point. Getting lucky and realizing M is feeding them clues is worth nothing, but coming up with a clever plan that takes this into account is worth an extra experience point. Key leadership moments will be the conflict at or around the time machine. The Traveller will seek to lead the party at this time. He has no tactical experience, but he feels he should be directing the action because of his superior intellect and because of things he knows but has not told the adventurers.



▼ **THE LAST IMMORTAL** - Some things can be used without being understood, and can be broken without knowing why. The human body is one of those things...

**Setup** - One of the adventurers receives an urgent telegram from Adam Westbrook, an old friend of the adventurer's family, asking for them to visit at the *earliest* possible convenience. There has been a crisis of health, the prognosis is extremely poor and there is a matter of great import to be discussed in the time remaining. For game purposes, this telegram should of course arrive at a time and place where the adventurers can get to this person's deathbed in time.

When they arrived, they are allowed entry to the Westbrook home immediately, bypassing formal protocol, and escorted to their friend's side. His body has been ravaged by whatever strange illness has beset him, sunken cheeks, pale and mottled skin, eyes clouded, hair mostly fallen out and prematurely grey. The housestaff is terrified of disease, but Westbrook insists in a raspy voice that what he has is not contagious. "*Or at the very least, we all catch it eventually.*" With that, a hoarse laugh and a wave of his trembling hand, he shoos away the doctor and everyone except the adventurer he knows and launches into a rambling but mostly coherent tale of his younger years. He spent a few years at sea before winding up in South America, back before the Spanish gave it up, and down on his luck, took up work as a porter and valet for a mad Spaniard who wanted to go into the jungles in search of a lost treasure. Treasure sounded good, and besides, the Spaniard's money was good too, even if no treasure was found. And the Spaniard had plenty of money, hiring a full team of natives to carry his supplies and row the expedition up the Amazon to some undisclosed location. The nature of the treasure was never mentioned. The Spaniard kept it a closely guarded secret, and only pulled out his maps and diaries in the privacy of his tent, and though Westbrook did manage to sneak a peek once or twice, it was all in some cryptic gibberish he could not make heads or tails of, and what he thought was a map was actually a large scroll that merely looked like a map from a distance, with its geographical features made of words.

The trip upriver eventually ended after about a month and the overland journey began. About a week into this, the native bearers began to get anxious. Some remained with the promise of extra money, but others simply vanished into the night. Some superstition about the ancient spirits or such. But, they pressed on. Such was the Spaniard's will that the superstitious bearers were cowed by him, and they dutifully hacked a path through the rain forest, though more than a few succumbed to snakebite and tropical fevers. All went smoothly until the Spaniard himself came down with a fever. Delirious for days, the spell he had woven over the native bearers dissipated, and one morning, Westbrook awoke to find that he and the Spaniard were alone, most of their gear left where it sat, the bearers simply fled in the early dawn with their money. With plenty of food and nothing else to do, Westbrook nursed the Spaniard back to health, and perused his secret scrolls at length, but found no insights. When the Spaniard came to his senses again, he was furious that Westbrook had looked at his secrets, since he had left tell-tales to see if they had been tampered with. But upon realizing that Westbrook had not fled with the others, nor stolen his money, and in fact had nursed him while he was raving or unconscious, the Spaniard softened somewhat and told Westbrook that he would share the treasure with him in equal measure. Westbrook was both delighted, suspicious, and as a practicality, wondered exactly how much treasure he could carry and still be able to manage a musket, saber and food. Though at length, he figured it was hard enough keeping powder dry for the musket, so all he really needed was a saber and food.

They pressed on, and were captured within a week. Upon reaching the first of a line of jungle mesas, brown-haired, pale-skinned natives shot them with drugged darts and that's all there was to it. They woke up quite securely bound, and were dragged with little ceremony to the chief of the tribe. Westbrook was sure his young life was about over, but the Spaniard seemed remarkably sure of himself. He said something in an unknown tongue to the chief, not so much a conversation or inquiry as a ritual, something spoken by rote without a true understanding of its meaning. Whatever it was, the chieftain took note, and by gestures, the Spaniard indicated that his necklace be shown. When pulled from his shirt, the amulet on the end caused great consternation, and eventually, the release of both he and Westbrook.

To find out what had transpired took months, as he and the Spaniard had to learn the language of the natives, who called themselves the Khaynite, though since they had no written language, he can only suppose that is how it is spelled. The Khaynite were an ancient tribe, set apart from the others of Amazonia, and have lived on the sacred mesas for time immemorial. They maintained their superiority over other tribes by their skill, superior knowledge of how to use the many jungle plants, and because they alone knew the secret of making bronze, which gave them powerful weapons compared to the stone-using dwellers in the jungle below.

*They were also immortal.* By some secret whose discovery was an epic tale of myth, the unique mesa plants, absolutely pristine water and some unique properties of the soil and minerals allowed the Khaynites to distill for themselves an elixir that greatly slowed the ravages of age. They had words for how it did what it did, but these words had no equivalent in the civilized languages.

Which brought us back to the Spaniard. Some centuries ago, the Khaynite sent groups of their own out into the world, having heard rumors that there were entire nations of people with hair and skin like theirs. None of them ever returned, though in the spoken history of the Khaynite, none were ever forgotten. The Spaniard was the descendant of one of these explorers of the civilized world. His father passed to him the tales of his origin, the descriptions of how to find the way back, and the sounds in the Khaynite language that meant "I am the son of one who was sent in the year of the comet", and the amulet around his neck is the one that his ancestor wore when he left the tribe those centuries ago. The only reason the Spaniard came all this way was not for a family reunion, but because among the effects of one of his ancestors he found the tiniest of vials of the elixir, and having tasted it, knew the strange and wholly un-Christian legends passed down from father to son were true. Like Ponce de Leon, this Spaniard sought the fountain of youth. Cost was no measure, for with eternal life, riches could easily be won again.

And Westbrook, for his loyalty, was to partake in this treasure as well. He and the Spaniard were inducted with some ceremony as full members of the Khaynite, they partook of the holy waters, and life was good. *The year was 1768CE.*

The next several decades passed in a blur, and Westbrook rambles a bit before getting to the important point. Sometime in the early 1800's, the elixir began to dry up. Not the actual elixir, but sometimes batches would simply have no efficacy. Maybe it was a blight of the plants. Maybe he and the Spaniard had brought some European malaise that eventually poisoned the process, maybe the dust from the gold mining at Ouro Preto or the smoke from burning of lowland forests for farms had something to do with it. The Khaynite did not know, and had no way of doing anything about it. The other Khaynite mesas had similar problems, and those that did not soon became coveted by those whose elixirs had totally failed. War broke out among the Khaynite. Westbrook fought in more than one, for risking one's life guaranteed the elixir for one's self and family, and Westbrook had wives and children to care for. Until while off fighting, another tribe of Khaynite came to his mesa and slaughtered everyone, unknowing that Westbrook's mesa was itself a failing site. Driven by vengeance and guided by animal cunning, he took his vengeance on a number of the raiders, then took the elixir they had stolen from his tribe and fled the jungle. Along with the elixir was a number of the uncut gems the Khaynite used as money. Westbrook was well aware of their value while among the Khaynite, but never had any reason to care until now. Eventually making his way down the Amazon, he carefully turned himself from a wiry, loincloth-clad native into a respectable member of high society. He still spoke fluent English, looked like a white man once you cut his hair, gave him a shave and dressed him properly, and he had a fortune in gems to establish himself with. A new man created, he fled to Europe, never to return.

He figured he had enough elixir to partake of the required sip often enough to keep him young for a century. But, while wealthy, Westbrook was also ignorant. He should have known that the elixir might gradually lose potency, and as the years turned into decades, he found he had to take more and more to retain his youth. At some point in the ensuing decades, he became a close friend of the adventurer or his family. Westbrook was planning to return to Amazonia, to determine if any of the Khaynite survived, but to his horror he found that his last three bottles of elixir had *all* gone sour, leaving him with not a few years to make his journey, but days. He ran out of elixir last week, and in that short interval has gone from a hale and hearty man of middle years to a near-skeleton, visibly shriveling over the course of his fantastic tale.

At the end, he motions feebly to a decanter on his nightstand. *"There are but two draughts left, greatly diluted, but sufficient to prove me sage and not madman. Bring it to my lips."* With a swallow of the liquid, his skin regains some color, his eyes lose the white haze of cataracts, and his voice regains a bit of strength. *"Now you, old friend."* If the adventurer drains the last swallow, the effect is electrical. Bracing and invigorating, any pains they had vanish, they feel full of energy and their thoughts race, yet are crystal clear. But almost immediately, it begins to fade. Westbrook sees it, and feels it in himself. *"Imagine feeling that way all the time. Every day, for a century. I'll never make it back to the sacred mesas, but you might. In the chest under the bed are my notes. Take them before the others return and say nothing."* With that, he fades, his skin mottles and his eyes cloud over again. He whispers, *"Call in the others. I would die in the company of my friend's friends."* And in a few minutes, he does.

This is an extensive lead-in for what could be a long adventure or series of adventures. Rather than directly send the adventurers off to the Amazon, there are several possibilities that could present themselves.

**Fountain of Youth** - If the adventurer who is contacted by Westbrook is getting on in years and has some wealth to spare, perhaps heading to Amazonia is a worthwhile expedition. The thought of living in good health for up to another century certainly has its charms.

**Mission of Mercy** - An adventurer has a sick friend, brother, close relative or child who is suffering from a slow wasting disease, something that could cause them to suffer for years before an inevitable death. If only there were some sort of treatment...

**Scavenger Hunt** - Seeds and plant samples may not generate the elixir of youth, but may have useful and unusual medicinal effects. Modern antibiotics like penicillin have not yet been discovered. The adventurer who discovers a miraculous new drug or treatment will be wealthy and famous beyond measure. Or maybe they will discover something more mundane but equally remunerative, like a real aphrodisiac or drug to regrow lost hair.

**Waiting in the Weeds** - By the time Adam Westbrook returned to England, everyone he knew before was long dead. But he *did* start a new family, outliving two wives and faking his own death once and starting over (before encountering the adventurer or his family). He has one surviving son from this first family, a man now in his late 50's, far older than Adam Westbrook appeared a mere two weeks ago. This son by chance saw a man with another name who was the splitting image of his father. Some discreet investigation unearthed that his man had no real past short of a few months before his father died. While the previous identity of Adam Westbrook left his son a comfortable inheritance, the son is greedy and smart and does not wonder too much about how his father has remained younger than him. While Adam Westbrook does not remember it, he did get a little too drunk on brandy one evening and spill the tale. His son simply took it as a tall tale at the time, but now he thinks it rang true, especially as he feels his own mortality tugging at him. He confronted his father, who both admitted paternity and also explained that no court would ever believe it should the son try to press the matter. Westbrook promised to take his son along when he returned to Amazonia, but had no actual intent to do so. The son finds out that his father is dying only by accident, and arrives too late, and after the adventurers have left. Frenzied, he causes a scene and tears apart the bedroom, even as his father's body lies there. He finds the chest under the bed, and the decanter on the nightstand. The last drops in the decanter are still vital on his tongue, and the chest is empty. Enraged, he overturns the bed, spilling his father's corpse onto the floor, and storms from the scene. The servants, having never been informed of the son's true identity, call the police, but cannot identify him except for a description and a fraudulent calling card.

Doing some basic detective work and spreading some money around, he finds out about the adventurers. He might pay to have them followed, confront them about the contents of the chest, threaten them or otherwise become a thorn. He will not give up, and if the gamemaster wants to make him a long-term problem, give him a position as a member of Parliament or an important functionary in some government ministry. He might even work for the Diogenes Club in some capacity, but he lacks the intellect to use the Club for his own ends without being caught at it by M and summarily cashiered. He can be a good "mystery Enemy" of minor threat potential to start play with, should this scenario be an early one in the campaign.

**Complications** - If the adventurers do head to Amazonia at some point, or end up there for some other reason and decide to try and find the Khaynite, there are any number of hurdles. First, they obviously are not easy to find and are in a remote area, with the only directions written by a man with little education and no cartographic training. To find and reach the right area with a minimum of setbacks and wrong turns, within two months of leaving from the Brazilian coast would be a difficulty 17 task based on Awareness, knowledge of the region, or navigation skill. Each point the roll is failed by adds +1 time level. The gamemaster would secretly make the roll, and the leader of the party can choose to press on, or fall back to the coast, regroup and make a fresh attempt, not knowing what their roll was or how long it would take. Each time level past the default would be an inherent opportunity for someone to challenge for leadership *"We're going in circles, you fool! I'm taking over this fool's errand and getting us back to civilization!"*

An expedition of this type will require about two native porters per adventurer just for supplies, and will cost about 5 Credits per day per adventurer in terms of wages and supplies expended. A skilled native guide with sufficient expertise to give a +1d to the roll on the task would be another 5 Credits per day. So, a guided party of four for two months would be a minimum expenditure of 1,500 Credits. Plus at least another 1,000 credits for steamship passage to Brasil, plus the actual cost of the initial supplies (guns, tinned food, tents, etc.). Any gems left to poorly funded adventurers by Westbrook should just barely be enough to fund the first two months, provided adventurers also chip in some of their personal wealth. Remember to use the month or two of steamship travel for training, secondary adventures or study, taking into account what you can do on board a ship.

Then, there is the region. Brasil is a former Portuguese colony, and most of the other South American countries are former Spanish colonies. And they generally don't get along that well, regardless of national origin. It is quite possible that between when adventurers set sail and when they land that a war or civil war has broken out in Brasil. Europeans or Americans are recognized as not being participants, but that does not prevent them from being accidental casualties. And small groups exploring the hinterlands are easy prey or possible spies (the word is the same in Portuguese and English).

And the environment. The rain forest is not a place where it is easy to maintain the comforts of civilization. It rains. A lot. It is a *rain* forest, after all. Staying dry and keeping things dry is impossible. You can find things that will burn and build a fire each evening, but stuff will get wet again by the next night. Things will rust, rot, mildew and so on. Anyone with delicate equipment like a camera will find it a constant challenge to keep it operating. Adventurers with typical Victorian trappings will find themselves spending at least an hour each day just trying to stay ahead of the problem. In addition, there are all manner of tropical diseases. Everyone who is not a native will have to make an Easy(5) Health task each evening before they turn in. Failing it means they come down with some sort of bug by the next morning and take 1d+0 half-lethal damage for each point they failed the roll by, and they have to make the same Health roll each evening (without penalties) in order to recover any of the lost Hits, including the non-lethal ones. So once you get sick, you might stay sick for a while, and the reduced stamina means you cannot carry as much or hike for as long. An adjusted Health roll of 3d+2 will completely avoid these health problems, as that gives you a minimum result on your roll of 5 or more.

Speaking of the environment, the way to the Khaynite has no roads. The first month of any trip will be by boat up the Amazon. The first stretch may be by steamboat, up to the last useful town on the route. But after that, it will be by several dugout canoes. These can manage several kilometers per day upriver, provided it is not flood season, but eventually you have to get off the river and start hiking. Hiking through the jungle with a supply train in tow will only be several kilometers per day, on a good day. This is part of why the Khaynite have been able to stay hidden. Until civilization forces roads into their region, it is just too damn difficult to get there. There are numerous primitive tribes in the region the adventurers will pass through, and they are not necessarily cowed by the presence of white men with guns. They are however, pragmatic, and part of any expedition's supplies will be gifts to such tribes to grant unmolested passage. Some may take umbrage at having to pay protection money to naked savages with stone-tipped spears, and if such a person is in charge of the party, it could result in trouble (or a sudden change of leadership). Of course, for those of a more adventurous bent, the native women are somewhat exotic, and some of them may see the adventurers in the same way...

This is as good a point as any to remind the gamemaster that players will *not* want to role-play two months of hacking through jungles. Stick to the exciting parts, and any preparations adventurers make that will make a difference.



Last, there are the Khaynite themselves. What has happened to them and how they respond to trespassers should they still exist is a question that can be resolved if the adventurers actually get there. The sacred mesas are a largely unexplored area. Neighboring tribes will still be superstitious of the region, even if it has been decades since any Khaynite have been seen. What we think has happened to the Khaynite is that all but one or two of the sacred mesas have lost the ability to produce the elixir, and even these only make one successful batch out of ten or twenty. There is no longer enough to support an entire tribe, and barely enough for the chieftain and a chosen few, like his favored wife, two of his heirs, a few elite warriors and just enough left to bestow some as rewards for service. Instead of the elixir being a tribal right in a largely egalitarian society, it is a privilege restricted to a hereditary aristocracy.

The notes left to the adventurer by Westbrook include a fairly detailed set of translation and pronunciation notes, sufficient to give a +0d skill roll in the Khaynite tongue to anyone who wishes to study it. As a nearly dead and unknown language, it has other use as a secret means of communication or encryption that eavesdroppers would be unable to usefully spy upon. The notes also include three amulets of the Khaynite. Westbrook's own, and two others he took from the bodies of those who killed his family. One of these will probably belong to the remaining Khaynite tribe, and in combination with some key Khaynite phrases may keep any captured adventurers from being summarily executed.

Along those lines, the Khaynite have a great vantage point from their mesa, and while they may not see anyone approaching because of the thick canopy, they can see smoke from fires and birds disturbed by a large group hacking its way through undergrowth. The Khaynite are masters of stealth, weaving suits of leaves to blend in and smearing their bodies with mud to further enhance the camouflage. They have a Stealth roll of 4d+0, and give +2 to the difficulty of opposing Awareness rolls for making an Average(7) task and for each 2 points they make the roll by. They have three normal weapons: a bronze knife (+0 lethal punch), a short, throwable bronze-tipped spear (+1 lethal punch) and blowguns with drugged darts (0d+1 armor-piercing). If these penetrate, the victim takes 0d+1 non-lethal damage each time level for the next fifteen minutes. They can make a Heroic(15) Health task (unmodified by damage effects) to avoid the damage at any given time level, +1 difficulty for each doubling of darts hit by. They have to make an Easy(5) Will roll each time a damage threshold is crossed in order to remain conscious, and this roll is affected by damage penalties.

If adventurers avoid being captured or spotted, they can get to the base of the sacred mesa, and eventually find an ancient carved stairway up the most accessible side. This is harrowing and not for those afraid of heights, but does not require any roll to avoid falling to one's death. *Except for the first person in line.* There will be two traps, loose stones that will dump a person off the edge to their doom. It will be a Challenging(9) Awareness task for the first person in line to spot this. If they make their roll exactly, they do not spot it, but merely step over it by chance, and the second person in line has to make the roll. Anyone who falls will have to make a Hard(11) Agility task to grab onto the rocks and save their life, but this *will* require that they drop anything they are holding, which will tumble off the edge and be lost forever. Whoever is next to the victim may drop what they are holding to help this person out and give them a -2 to the difficulty, but if all this fails, it's finito for the unfortunate person. This is what we call a "two screamer". That is, the poor wretch can scream until they run out of breath, find that they are *still* falling and then scream again until they hit the rocks at the base.

In the case of an extra taking the tumble, forget the Agility roll and just let them fall. It's lots more dramatic that way. The second trap looks like the first, but isn't. It is actually the step *past* it that is trapped. This one is still a Challenging(9) Awareness task to spot, just because while you might be expecting it, it isn't *exactly* where you expect it to be.

**Fighting the Khaynite** - If adventurers get into a full-blown fight with the Khaynite, the Khaynite will be using their knives and spears, not their blowguns. Native porters will be of zero assistance except as obstacles that a Khaynite will have to kill to get to an adventurer. Adventurers with repeating firearms may carry the day, as the Khaynite will probably flee after taking fifty percent losses. The Khaynite *do* know what guns are, but have never encountered repeating firearms and will initially base their tactics on the assumption that adventurers are armed with single-shot weapons. There will be two elite Khaynite and probably two or three regular warriors per adventurer.

**The Spoils** - If it all ends with adventurers having possession of the elixir, its quantity will be limited, a single flask perhaps twice the size of gentleman's liquor flask, made of bronze and studded with uncut precious stones, with a strictly monetary value of a few thousand credits.

# EABA

If in control of the Khaynite tribal center, the chief's regalia and hoard may have gems worth several times this amount. The elixir is measured in sips, and there are perhaps forty sips in the flask. A sip can negate two months of aging, and also instantly restores up to 10 non-lethal Hits from exertion or bruising, and gives +2d to Health rolls for recuperative purposes for that day. But, as the flask is opened, it lets in outside air that slowly degrades the elixir. Using it once every few months will, by the time you are halfway through the flask, cut its effectiveness in half. And when this remaining half of the elixir is down to a quarter the original amount, it will go down to one quarter it's original effectiveness. For similar reasons, it will not be practical to decant small quantities and spread them around as "power pills" to other adventurers. Exposing a small quantity to the air will cause it to go sour in whatever tiny container it is stored in, though this will not happen for a month or so.

In game terms, it is a powerful edge, and to be highly prized by an older adventurer, but it is not game-wrecking. It cannot be duplicated, and even if the Khaynite would give up the secret, this is the only place in the world where it can be made.

## Khaynite warrior

Strength: 2d+2  
Agility: 3d+0  
Awareness: 2d+2  
Health: 3d+1  
Will: 3d+0  
Fate: 0d+2

## Skills:

Knife: +1d  
Spear: +1d  
Brawling: +1d  
Blowgun: +1d  
Stealth: +1d

## Traits:

Toughness(elves only)  
Larger than Life(elves only)

Armed with knife, spear and blowgun. The two elites have Strength of 3d+2, wear bronze breastplates with Armor of 2d+0 (1d+0 vs. guns), have Toughness for +1 hit bracket and have +2d skills.



**Interactions** - This is a fairly local and self-contained scenario, with limited potential for other groups to get involved. However, any group with a powerful member who is old, frail or sickly would be incredibly interested in the elixir. Who doesn't want to live an extra century or two?

- **X Club:** A member with an interest or skill in botany may have discovered one or more unusual properties in plants grown from seeds Westbrook brought back with him, and may be planning or joining a botanical expedition to the region where the plants are believed to grow.
- **Occhi di Dio:** Legends of the Fountain of Youth go back much further than Ponce de Leon, and the Vatican actually has records of a few of the Khaynites who left the jungle centuries ago to explore the outside world (most got burned as apostates or sorcerers). Under duress, the Church acquired a variety of information about them and confirmed the truth of their elixir, but was never able to find the source. Occhi di Dio, through various sources (perhaps Westbrook's son?), may discover that some adventurers are planning an expedition to that general region. Eternal mortal life is not meant to be, so this expedition *must* fail, or be made to fail. Remember that Brasil is a Catholic nation and the Church has a great deal of influence with the government.
- **League for Gaian Primacy:** While the elixir has universal appeal, the leaders of the League, for "purely benevolent reasons" can see great advantage for its leaders to stay in a position of guidance and authority for centuries. However, they have no direct links to the plot, so would have to be brought in by information leaked by others.

**Experience** - Normal for whatever length the scenario runs. Managing to get some of the elixir without killing half the Khaynite to do it should be a major success for whoever is the leader of the party at the time. Getting it only through slaughter should be considered a failure for whoever is the leader when this happens, though this is balanced out by the elixir itself, making acquisition through slaughter a zero-sum solution. Clever actions to thwart the machinations of those who would interfere with the adventurers should be rewarded, and selfless acts of heroism in the more dangerous parts likewise.

▼ **WEST OF JAVA** - Dangerous people will do dangerous things, and the most benevolent of fanatics can be the most dangerous people of all.

**Setup** - The Royal Geographic Society has been in a turmoil over the new theory that the surface of the Earth is merely a thin, fragmented shell that floats over deeper convective layers, and that motion of these fragments against each other is the cause of earthquakes, vulcanism and mountain-building. The scientific debate has been heated and sometimes acrimonious, with identical bits of evidence used to support both sides. For instance, the decreasing height and activity of Hawaiian volcanoes is taken as evidence that the surface is moving relative to a much deeper layer of magma, but opponents of this "continental drift" theory point out the exceedingly slow motion could just as easily be explained by a slowly migrating magma pocket under the ocean floor, consecutively bubbling to the surface. Furthermore, proponents of the "solid earth" theory state that places like Yellowstone in the United States, Vesuvius in Italy or Mount Fuji in Japan have been volcanoes for as far back as the geological record can be interpreted, and if the surface of the earth were moving at any speed at all, all the world's volcanoes would be like the chain of Hawaiian islands. Rather, places like Hawaii are the exception, not the rule. The "continental drift" proponents state that the drifting pieces under the ocean are thinner and more mobile, and those of the continents are thicker and more likely to be anchored in place, exceptions being the nation of India, which they state is moving rapidly north in geologic terms, the collision creating the Himalaya mountains. *Preposterous, no?*

There is clearly no agreed-upon interpretation, and none have yet brought forth any evidence from the deep underground realms that might help settle the issue. One key point of the continental drift proponents is that proof can be found by detailed geological analysis of minerals and magma bubbling up from depths. It is asserted that the volcanic islands of the Rakata group, in the Sunda Strait between the islands of Java and Sumatra, are a textbook example of volcanoes whose magma comes from surface rock that has been melted by the undersea collision between moving rock layers. So, it has been determined that is a perfect opportunity to settle the controversy. A geologic team composed of scientists on both sides of the issue is being sent to investigate. Because of the economy of combining travel expenses, a botanical expedition is also going, and because the duration of the trip is definitely going to be long enough, a number of astronomers will be along for the ride, dropped off on Java to make their eclipse observations.

▼ **Note** - Eclipse chasing was very much in vogue in the latter half of the 19th century, as it provided the only opportunity to see certain phenomenon, as well as test astronomical equations (did we predict the right spot?, was totality the predicted duration?, etc). Even in the early 20th century, eclipses were key to helping verify Einstein's theories (seeing if starlight passing near the Sun was deflected by gravity).

Historically, there were total solar eclipses on the following dates, and the best places to view them are listed:

Total eclipse	Place
August 07, 1869	Yukon Territory
December 22, 1870	Gibraltar
December 12, 1871	Java
November 30, 1872	Tierra del Fuego
April 16, 1874	Cape Town
April 06, 1875	Ceylon(Sri Lanka)
September 17, 1876	New Hebrides
July 29, 1878	British Columbia
January 11, 1880	Hawaii
May 17, 1882	Persia(Iran)
May 06, 1883	Pitcairn Island
September 8, 1885	New Zealand
August 29, 1886	Liberia
August 19, 1887	Mongolia
January 1, 1889	California
December 22, 1889	Ascension Island
December 12, 1890	Tasmania
April 26, 1892	Easter Island
April 16, 1893	Northeast Brasil
April 6, 1894	Central China
September 29, 1894	Kergullen Island
August 9, 1896	Hokkaido
January 22, 1898	Bombay
May 28, 1900	Newfoundland

As you can see, there are a number of exotic locations, and Java happens to be a good spot to view the total eclipse of 1871CE. Eclipse chasers had to contend with a variety problems, politics, being in the middle of nowhere, and the ultimate letdown, travelling months to see an eclipse, only to have it be cloudy at the key moment.

At the same time all this is going on, the League for Gaian Supremacy is blissfully unaware of this expedition, since they are already on site, planning an experiment in climate manipulation. Their own sources of information have led them to believe that the main volcano in the Rakata group is not just mildly active, but highly unstable. They estimate that it will explode violently of its own accord sometime in the next few decades, casting many cubic kilometers of ash and dust into the sky, to be carried upon the winds and darken the skies, causing a slight but measurable change in global climate. This, done on a larger scale, could seriously affect climate and the habitability of some regions, so the League is very interested in this as a test case. They want to make it happen on a timetable of their choosing so they can measure the results more precisely. These islands are riddled with caves, fissures and chambers. The League plans to blow one open at slightly below sea level, letting a deluge of ocean water into the magma chamber of the largest of the volcanoes, the one the locals call Krakatao. Yes, *that* Krakatao.

A League team is on the island now, doing geological surveys. The island is inhabited, so their presence is not secret. They are all over the island, but mostly on the coasts, looking for large lava tubes, caverns or other inlets sufficient to drain a lot of seawater into the volcano in a short amount of time. Failing a single large cave, they will opt for several smaller ones. They have a steamship chartered from the Ottoman sultan's brother, some genuine permits for "mining claims" from the local sultan (and the Dutch), and look fairly professional (and well armed). Anyone casually encountering them and being versed the fields of geology or mining will not recognize any names among the field personnel, but it might come out that the surveys are under the overall auspices of Dr. Hans Laagerthorn, a fairly respected "earth sciences" name until he dropped off the academic map several years ago.

The League's steamship (the *Ahmendinijad*) is docked at Rakata's only real port, but does make regular runs to move personnel and heavy equipment around the coast, and to Batavia every few weeks for coal and other supplies. Among other things the steamship has in its hold is an amazingly large quantity of dynamite. Several score tons of the stuff, along with all the trappings needed for detonating it, by timer and underwater if necessary. This would completely obliterate the *Ahmenijad* and probably flatten any structure for a hundred meters in every direction (about a 21d+0 explosion in **EABA** terms). The *Ahmenijad* also has a few diving suits and air compressors to allow teams of divers to work near any undersea caves that have to be prepared or explored (up to a depth of 50 meters).

**Indonesia** - Known at the time as the "Dutch East Indies", the islands are a Dutch colony, though the old royalty remain in power, and act as agents for the Dutch. It is a large number of separate sultanates, loosely bound together by ties of religion. Westerners usually deal with Dutch administrators and get paperwork to gain the cooperation of local sultans or their authorities, but it is not unheard of to simply deal with the local sultans if the matter would not be permitted by the Dutch, provided sufficient bribes are paid to keep things quiet. The main religion of the East Indies at this time is Islam, but because of Dutch rule, Westerners are tried in Dutch courts, not Sharia courts. Note that all of Indonesia is not content with Dutch rule, and some of the outlying areas are on the verge of open rebellion, in particular the Aceh region of northern Sumatra, which historically had a thirty-five year guerrilla uprising than ran from 1873CE to 1908CE.

Some European vices like liquor are available in major cities through European vendors, but it is otherwise a fairly "dry" country. The population is mostly native Indonesians, but there are quite a few Chinese living here, more than sufficient to support a significant Triad presence in any major city. The capital of Indonesia is Batavia (modern Jakarta, known by the locals at the time as Jayakarta), about 150 kilometers east of Krakatao, and the main trading area if any sort of European imports are needed (in case the quartermaster failed a few rolls).



**The Plot** - If you know anything about the word Krakatoa, you know that it is *bad*. Historically, on August 27, 1883CE, the Rakata volcano on Krakatoa Island blew up, pretty much obliterating the island. Red-hot ash spread out at sea level and destroyed ships as much as 40 kilometers away. Batavia, 150 kilometers away, was blanketed in thick ash and day was turned to night. Tsunami waves as high as 30 meters swamped hundreds of coastal villages and killed over 30,000 people, and travelled far enough to overturn riverboats in Calcutta.

The League is attempting to *deliberately* make this happen, *simply as an experiment*. They really are rat bastards. They will be within a month of their final preparations when the other scientific expedition arrives. By the time it gets there, word will have reached them by a steamship from the nearest telegraph location, but because of internal communication problems within the League, this message does not arrive until a few weeks before the other expedition does. Since the expedition has all the proper credentials, the League can't just throw money at the local sultan or the Dutch to interfere, so they just have to grit their teeth and work around it. In addition, while the local loss of life is a sad but necessary cost of the experiment, the League does *not* want to wipe out a major European scientific expedition, so they will have to find a way to encourage the other expedition to leave before the volcano blows up.

*Obviously, all of this is only an adventure if the adventurers are along for the ride.* There are a number of hooks for adventurers.

The easiest is that it happens to be a ride to where they are going for some other reason. It's the only ship going to that area on the schedule the adventurers require.

It might also be a professional controversy of interest to an adventurer or their patron, if they have one. In the latter case, the patron will be making the trip and will require the presence of the adventurers for personal security or other errands. A Friend could ask that an adventurer accompany them for personal reasons, or as *quid pro quo* for a past favor done.

Or, someone shadowy that the adventurers work for (full-time or freelance) has a vested interest in some aspect of the expedition. For instance, the Diogenes Club may have suspicions about someone on the expedition, or about the public but low-key "mining survey" being done by the League. Or it could be something sordid and mundane. Perhaps an expedition member has an extraordinarily high gambling debt and is all but bankrupt. They intend to flee debts to Adam Wild by disappearing into the East Indies. Perhaps the debt is sufficient that Adam Wild has hired adventurers (through respectable channels) to ensure the debtor returns to England safe and sound. Adam Wild wants him back in England so he can make a very dramatic example of him to encourage other debtors to pay their bills on time, and an anonymous death in the East Indies would not serve this purpose.

Or, it could be a *personal* matter. Someone that one or more of the adventurers has a grudge against has made themselves vulnerable by leaving whatever protection they have in England by going on this expedition. Of course, "vulnerable" is a relative term. The closed ecosystem of a steamship and a veritable army of "valets" and "servants" makes it very dicey for adventurers to actually do anything (and get away with it), so adventurers might be forced to spend months on a ship having formal dinners with say, the man who murdered their brother, maintaining a polite discourse and occasional verbal barbs, while each side secretly manuevers to try and kill the other, and doing so in a way that lets them get away with it.

▼ **Note** - This is one of those rare examples where players and foes are making skill rolls with bonuses for time spent of a month or more, and it becomes a question of who blinks first and makes their attempt on the other.

On the night of Sunday, August 26, 1883, the blackness of the dust clouds, now much thicker than ever in the Straits of Sunda and adjacent parts of Sumatra and Java, was only occasionally illumined by lurid flashes from the volcano. The Krakatoan thunders were on the point of attaining their complete development. At the town of Batavia, a hundred miles distant, there was no quiet that night. The houses trembled with the subterranean violence, and the windows rattled as if heavy artillery were being discharged in the streets, and still these efforts seemed to be only rehearsing for the supreme display. By ten o'clock on the morning of Monday, August 27, 1883, the rehearsals were over and the performance began. An overture, consisting of two or three introductory explosions, was succeeded by a frightful convulsion which tore away a large part of the island of Krakatoa and scattered it to the winds of heaven. In that final effort all records of previous explosions on this earth were completely broken.

This supreme effort it was which produced the mightiest noise that, so far as we can ascertain, has ever been heard on this globe. It must have been indeed a loud noise which could travel from Krakatoa to Batavia and preserve its vehemence over so great a distance; but we should form a very inadequate conception of the energy of the eruption of Krakatoa if we thought that its sounds were heard by those merely a hundred miles off. This would be little indeed compared with what is recorded, on testimony which it is impossible to doubt.

Westward from Krakatoa stretches the wide expanse of the Indian Ocean. On the opposite side from the Straits of Sunda lies the Island of Rodriguez, the distance from Krakatoa being almost 3,000 miles. It has been proved by evidence which cannot be doubted that the thunders of the great volcano attracted the attention of an intelligent coastguard on Rodriguez, who carefully noted the character of the sounds and the time of their occurrence. He had heard them just four hours after the actual explosion, for this is the time the sound occupied on its journey.

- Sir Robert Ball, National Geographic  
(1902CE)

**High points** - This scenario has a lot of travel and trudging around, but also some sneaky bits, diplomacy and serious danger:

- **Shipboard intrigue:** No steamship trip of a few months should go without a minor shipboard adventure. This and any experience from training should be granted before the next part of the adventure. It's a great way to let players prepare their adventurers for challenges in a new region.
- **Island intrigue:** Neither the League or the adventurers can engage in outright warfare on the island. Since it is only a day's steamship travel from the capital of Batavia, any overt shenanigans will bring the Dutch authorities to the scene, probably with a contingent of troops. In addition, whoever is the sultan of the region this island is a part of will not want to be embarrassed by an incident, and may have some of his own troops on the island to keep an eye on the foreigners. This means that any harm that comes to pass needs to look like an accident, and too many "accidents" tend to look suspicious.
- **Batavia intrigue:** The *Ahmedinijad* makes port in Batavia at least once a month for supplies. This means that League personnel are out and about in Batavia, and incidents there are less likely to draw unwanted attention, or at least not attention that can be tied to adventurers or the scientific expedition.
- **Scientific intrigue:** Lest you forget, a major scientific theory is on the line here, with two acrimonious and competing camps. Intellectual honesty may take a back seat to professional reputations. Sabotage, accusations and even assaults may occur within the expedition. Important mineralogic samples have to be collected from remote and possibly dangerous parts of the volcano, by teams that include proponents of each theory, but witnessed and transported by neutral third parties (like the adventurers). This gives reason for adventurers to be exploring the same parts of the island as the League teams, but with the complication of having to stay close to their own feuding researchers to make sure no one "accidentally" falls into a volcanic fissure.

▼ **Note** - The explosion of Krakatoa is estimated to have been equivalent to a two hundred megaton atomic bomb...

The biggest event of the scenario is of course, the covert transport and planting of tens of tons of explosives in one or more key locations on the island. The League will set these up with redundant mechanical or acid-drip corrosive timers in various volcanic tunnels near the coast, though there might be one near the center of the island at a blockage in an existing tunnel that already connects to the ocean. Each charge will be guarded by a very well-paid group of locals, who will be motivated by the thought of a big payoff if they prevent anyone from entering the caverns until the League team returns (which of course, they won't). The League figures they need about twelve hours from the time they plant the charges to when they have to be well away from the island. The *Ahmedinijad* will pick up each team from the coast, leaving the island with about six hours to spare, which in a worst-case scenario should get them around 100 kilometers away from the island by the time it blows. Note that anyone spying on the *Ahmedinijad* will note that right before this, it took on a full load of coal and other supplies appropriate for an extended ocean voyage, *not* a resupplying of the island teams.

Krakatoa will not explode immediately with the detonation of the charges. It could take anywhere from a few hours to a few days (or even decades if all the charges do not go off, leaving open the possibility that the *actual* historical eruption was merely a long-delayed result of LGP plans). The League, desiring to save the European scientists, will a few days before they set off the charges, start spreading information that they feel the volcano is unstable and that they will be cutting their mining survey short. They *strongly* recommend the other scientists leave as well. Since the eclipse has not happened yet, that group will of course strongly resist leaving, since good photographs of the eclipse will be impossible on a ship at sea. Other scientists will also not want to leave, or at worst, will not want to go very far, wanting to witness an eruption from a "safe" distance of a few kilometers off shore. The League has a few ideas of how the eruption and explosion will progress, and will provide their notion of how it will happen, giving anyone who cares to listen a timetable of "bad", "worse", "terrible" and "too damn late to get away." So, those who are not immediately convinced can still become cognizant of the danger and at least have a chance to escape. That will be the extent of the League's generosity in the matter. In the event that adventurers stuck there when it happens, there is a limit to how much a gamemaster can fudge things. Two thirds of the island is *vaporized*, and the rest is *sterilized*. The island of Sabese, fourteen kilometers away, had *no* survivors out of a population of three thousand...

**Interactions** - This is an adventure remote from most of the civilized world, so the only interactions with other groups will be the ones that are already there.

- **Triads:** The goal of Fu Han is to make life miserable for the foreign devils. He does not know about the League's plans, but through Chinese workers he might find about about the League's huge cache of explosives. These explosives would be a wonderful edge if an insurgency were to break out to evict the Dutch, or as a tremendous blast to destroy the European quarter of Batavia. This would require seizing the *Ahmedinijad* while it was on a supply run to Batavia, and keeping the engineering crew alive, since none of the local Triad members know how to run steam engines. And if this is too ambitious a plan, simply stealing a few hundred kilograms of dynamite and using it to foment mischief would work.
- **Diogenes Club:** M has suspicions about the "mining survey" on Krakatoa Island, but nothing concrete, and while the East Indies used to be British, they aren't anymore, so his interest in what happens there is purely academic. If anyone he associates with is going to be in the area, he may ask for updates and additional information, but will not reveal any suspicions he has.
- **Morlocks & Fey:** The Morlocks and Fey rely on the radiated heat from underground magma to keep their realms warm. But, they know the dangers of these regions and try not to live too close to them. It is highly unlikely that the Morlocks or Fey have outposts here, or that they would be aware of the League's plot, but if they were, they would call in any favors they had with the surface world, for the violent eruption of Krakatoa would cause a great deal of subsurface damage as the shock waves propagated through the Earth. As an aside, the very existence of the Morlocks and Fey means the "continental drift" theory is flawed, as it presumes a hot central Earth on which the crust floats. It does not mean the theory is *not* true in **Verne**, merely that it requires an alternate explanation, like only some of the surface plates move, and these are the ones lubricated by seawater that leaks into the subsurface realms under the oceans.

**Experience** - This will be normal for whatever length the scenario runs, but do not add the *length* of the journey, as some experience for training is part of the trip. Remember that Krakatoa will erupt *eventually*, regardless of what adventurers do. In fact, its eventual eruption in 1883CE might be because adventurers didn't manage to *completely* stop the League's plot. Managing to stop the plot would be a major success for the leader of the party, and failing to do so would be a major failure, *provided the adventurers were aware of the plot*. Partially thwarting the plot is neither a great success nor failure. Ensuring the cataloged scientific data from the expedition gets back to England counts as a minor success for whoever is in charge when it is presented to the Royal Geographic Society, while having custody of the data and samples and then losing them would *definitely* be a failure.

### The Recent Volcanic Eruptions in the Straits of Sunda.

#### Cooktown, Australia

The British-India Steam Navigation Company's steamship *Roma* arrived here to-day from Batavia. She brings some further particulars of the recent eruptions in the Straits of Sunda.

The town of Anger was totally destroyed by the tidal wave and volcanic eruptions, which were numerous all round, causing very great damage in various townships, throwing large rocks, stones, bricks and debris upon the tops of houses. The tidal wave swept large merchant vessels and a Government steam inland for a distance of over three miles. The crews are supposed to be safe and uninjured. The *Roma*, upon entering the Straits of Sunda, found the sea completely covered with pumice stones and the vessel was obliged to hove to in consequence of the of the engines stopping. It was found, on examination, that the boiler and feeding pumps were choked with pumice stone, and it took several hours to clean the boilers. The commander before entering the Straits of Sunda looked for the prominent landmark which guides all mariners in these waters, and found it had completely disappeared, having been washed away to the level of the sea by the tidal wave. Under the circumstances, time was lost in ascertaining the position of the vessel, when a large Dutch man-of-war, outward bound, hove in sight. The British Government have instructed a man-of-war at Batavia to visit the several ports about the locality to ascertain the extent of damage. The loss of people is estimated at 75,000; but as regards the property destroyed nothing near the true estimate can be arrived at.

The Reesee Channel, which is the usual route through the Straits, is now completely blocked up. The Dutch man-of-war took the *Roma* 40 miles round the coast. All traces of the lovely tropical vegetation on Krakatoa and surrounding islands is completely gone; leaving nothing but rocks and ashes. The island of Krakatoa is completely altered. Sixteen volcanoes have appeared between where Krakatoa was and Sibesia. The island of Soengopan has been split into five; the residency of Bantam is an ashy desert, cattle are foodless and famine is imminent. The population is starving and in despair. There was complete darkness the best part of two days at Batavia.

▼ **JEKYLL & HYDE** - Our inner demons are not always what they seem, and the outer trappings might not accurately show what lurks beneath.

**Setup** - A series of grisly murders has recently come to light in the East End of London. Murders are not uncommon, nor grisly crimes, nor even the two together. But the latest have caught some attention because of their nature. An abandoned dry well was encountered in the process of installing a new tunnel for the London Subway, and when it was broken open, several bodies in various stages of decomposition tumbled out, from some months dead to merely a few days deceased. All of them had the top of their skull surgically removed and the brain extracted (though with the older bodies it is hard to tell). In addition, the most recent victim shows evidence of recent surgery and the marks of manacles on wrists, neck and ankles.

The police and even M's office have tried to keep this under wraps, but rumors spread as fast as the stench and eventually overly-sensational reports made it into all the papers, greatly hindering official investigation into the matter. An official reward has been offered, but this has merely led to useless leads and masochistic confessions, burying any useful information in an avalanche of nonsense.

A patron of the adventurers might hire them to investigate these crimes, or a friend might have been close to one of the victims (or have been a victim). The adventurers are not police, so they will need a reason to care enough to get involved. If no other opportunity presents itself, an adventurer known for intellect or deductive skills could be hired by the government, a newspaper or the family of one of the victims.



If the adventurers have a personal stake in the matter or is publicly known for their love of justice, deductive skills or is reported in the papers as being involved in the case (whether or not this is the case), one or more of the adventurers might receive a cryptic letter a day or two after the story breaks:

*Nature trumps nurture upon the calling of the tides  
The brilliance of the nights is eclipsed by the darkness of the days  
Evil lurks not in the heart or mind, but somewhere between  
Seven have fallen, three Adam and four Eve  
Two bound for Heaven, two bound for Hell and three for neither  
Three of Noah's get remain, then I shall do it all again*

If they were hired by the heirs of a victim, the heirs will be the one getting the letter.

**The East End** - The place where the bodies were discovered, the East End of London in the late 19th century is *not* a nice place. From the book *The Anarchists* (1891CE):

*"Like the enormous black, motionless, giant Kraken, the poverty of London lies there in lurking silence and encircles with its mighty tentacles the life and wealth of the City and of the West End."*

A visitor in 1884CE remarked in his notes:

*"The further we penetrated into Whitechapel, the more our hearts sank. Was this London? Never in Russia, never later in the worst slums of New York, were we to see such poverty as in the London of the 1880's."*

From *The Thames*(1903CE) by Sir Walter Besant, comes a more optimistic view:

*"The riverside by Wapping and Shadwell and Limehouse has a bad name. Murders, thefts, and all kinds of vice, dwell here; yet there are also streets and streets of "mean houses" in which there live people who work honestly, men and women who live uprightly, whose children go to school. There are churches doing missionary work and proving themselves centres of civilization."*

The poverty in London, as evidenced in areas like the East End, spurred minds like that of Karl Marx to think of the reasons for it and the solutions to it. So, Victorian poverty could be said a contributing factor in the 20th century rise of communism. *But that is neither here nor now.* The East End is by and large desperately poor, with outposts of affluence that exist only because of criminal enterprise, and which remain only so long as sufficient force is used to keep the other inhabitants at bay. Those with ambition in the East End seek to acquire enough money to get out of the East End and become merely the "respectable poor".

Suffice it to say that the constabulary do not go into some parts of the East End alone, if they go at all. Adventurers going there would be wise to take proper precautions. Note that Whitechapel (the location of the "Jack the Ripper" murders from 1889-91CE) is part of the East End, and is considered one of the *better* parts, with a few substantial theaters catering to lower class sensibilities. Joseph Merrick (the "Elephant Man") is living in Whitechapel in this period for a few years before sideshows were outlawed.

Subway tunnels are being expanded through the East End, to get workers to factories elsewhere in the area. Tunnels close to the surface are created by digging a trench, installing a brick-arched tunnel and then filling in the trench. This of course requires the demolition of any structures in the area of the trench, and the occupants are relocated with no choice in the matter, generating no small amount of resentment (a possible motive for the killings?).

**Mary Jacques** - Mary is a moderately attractive prostitute in the Shepney quarter, though she dwells in disreputable quarters close to the docks. Formerly Marie von Keller, wife of a minor German noble and daughter of British colonel who died in the Crimea. She and her husband were also members of the Vril Society, he a source of money and good breeding, she an insightful and ambitious "biological chemist". Or were almost members. It doesn't matter to her. *At least not anymore.* For some reason she and her husband failed some sort of test or power struggle within the Vril, and they ended up as experimental subjects. Herr Keller did not survive the experimental drugs and energy treatments, but Marie did. Her intellect and body alternately altered, boosted and diminished, she eventually outlived her usefulness as a test subject and was scheduled for vivisection, but due to a bookkeeping error was instead transferred to lower security holding area.

She languished there for a few weeks, then made an escape by means unknown. Climbing into the hold of a ship, she subsisted like an animal in its bowels until it reached port, by which time she had recovered enough intellect and language skills to pass as a not-too-bright East Ender.

*That was almost a year ago.* Since then, the experiments performed upon her have manifested some effects. For most of the month, Mary is a prostitute, not exactly happy, but making a living and just bright enough to spend it wisely. However, for about a week each month she changes. Wiry, immensely strong muscles build beneath her skin, her intellect rises by leaps and bounds...*and she remembers a little bit about who she was.* She does not remember enough to seek revenge, but she does remember her life as Mary and what she does to make a living the rest of the month. She is filled with hatred and self-loathing and a burning need to recover everything that she can about who she was, so that her wrath can be properly directed. But she also knows that she needs to avoid being seen as her old self. She cannot simply step into public view. She is not sure *why* just yet, but she is very afraid of being recognized as Marie von Keller.

The first month caught her by surprise. She was in part thrilled to have an ability to think and plan and reason returning to her, unaware that it would fade away as quickly as it arrived. Hoping against hope that it was a phase, and barely able to leave a note for herself, she drifted from Marie back to Mary, and Mary remembered nothing of the interval. The following few months, Marie feverishly used her limited time and new-found strength to formulate a plan. With a few clever robberies and a murder or two, she acquired enough funds to acquire a property of her own, a bottomed-out barge in a silted canal spur some distance inland from the river. She does not so much own it as claims it and pays the local bully-boys "rent" in cash and services to keep anyone else from claiming it. In this derelict she has built a crude laboratory. In her more intelligent (nay, hypergenius) state, she has deduced that some glandular secretion linked to her female cycle brings about the physical and mental changes. She thinks that if she can extract the trigger for this change, she can prevent her relapses into weakness and stupidity, and with the extra time available, might be able to recover more of her memories or make plans that take more than a week to come to fruition.

Using her physical charms, intellect and if necessary, brutish strength, she acquires victims, who are experimented on and then disposed of. The thick hull of the barge and her known profession and the general tendency of the neighbors to not get involved means that any muffled sounds that make it to the street are ignored. After seven months of this, she has yet to succeed, though she has made progress, compounding "medicines" for Mary, who dutifully takes them, unknowing of their source.

Marie has been very clever, but she has made two mistakes that have brought about her potential discovery. First, she is so intent on her work that she does not dispose of the bodies until she is close to stupid. She got rid of the first body in an old well, and kept returning to it out of habit. The subway dig was supposed to be close but not *through* the well, but a slight change in direction was made, causing her hiding place to be discovered. Her other mistake was the medicines she made for Mary. Mary, unlike Marie, is basically a decent person. Not too bright, but she has some common sense and decency. She knows that men like her, at least on a temporary basis, she knows how to take advantage of that, and that it pays enough for her to have decent food and clothing that is only second-hand. But, the medicine she is taking is giving her flashes of insight and memories of Marie, and this horrifies her. She has gone through her belongings and found a calling card of one of the victims, a name that goes with the memory of a face and other things she does not want to remember ever again. Over the past several days she has been writing down things that seem important, and then mailed it to that address. Mary is too scared to tell anyone what she has been having flashbacks about, and cannot even properly understand what a flashback is. Mary knows nothing of the lab in the front of the barge, only that there is a heavy door that seems to be wedged shut by the settling of the hull (Marie can open it with her superior strength).

**The Plot** - Obviously, the plot is to stop the foul murders and bring the murderer to justice. While the law may have no sympathy for Mary, the question will be, do the *adventurers* have enough humanity to realize that Mary is innocent of the horrible deeds performed by Marie, and even if they do, is there anything they can do about it?

Figuring things out to a reasonable level of certainty should require only a moderate amount of detective work and legwork in the East End, both of which will have their interesting aspects.

There will be a range of personalities, from the god-fearing and law-abiding to the debased and despicable. Factory workers, prostitutes, housewives, thieves, peddlers and purveyors, actors and artists, disabled veterans, sailors on leave, the works. Adventurers can go in looking official, or incognito, to gather rumors or try to buy information. A starting point for all of these would be the clues.

- The well the bodies were dumped in is readily accessible, and also fairly well concealed for an urban location. No windows look down on it, and there are multiple alleys that can get to it, so someone could enter from one side, dump something and leave from another side. It was clearly chosen with intelligence rather than mere convenience.
- The bodies range from horribly advanced decomposition to very recent, but the doctor and police who had the unfortunate task of examining the corpses and their effects are pretty sure that the murders took place over several months and none of the murders were close to each other in time. Missing persons reports that can be tied to some of the victims tend to confirm this. Not enough information is there to deduce a monthly interval because not all the victims were reported as missing to the police, or not reported missing immediately after their disappearance.
- The murderer or murderers were fairly strong, as one of the bodies was that of a man weighing nearly 100 kilograms (220 pounds). To move the stone slab over the well and lift that dead weight over the lip of the well would require a very strong man or multiple individuals.
- All the victims were, as best the doctor can tell, mutilated in the same way, though not for any purpose related to medical science (*known* medical science, that is). An adventurer who is Gifted in a medical way might have an inkling of what is going on, and would realize that the victims would have to be alive for the worst part of the procedures done to them.

The letter is the biggest clue, and contains several bits of information, both useful and obscure. The listed difficulties for figuring something out are for whatever skill seems most appropriate, or Awareness minus 1d. This is *not* something where everyone gets a shot at the rolls. One adventurer will do the analysis (as assigned by the leader of the group). Any tasks failed can be attempted by other adventurers, at a cumulative +2 difficulty (e.g. if the first adventurer fails to notice a difficulty 9 item, the next person looking rolls against difficulty 11).

- It is written on cheap paper, the lowest quality available for writing purposes (obvious, no roll needed). The exact brand of paper is difficulty 11 to determine, but provides no information other than it is domestically produced.
- The message was written with a fountain pen by an unskilled hand, in several sessions. A difficulty 9 task can ascertain that it was done by someone right-handed, and a difficulty 15 task can be fairly sure that it is a female doing the writing.
- It is only difficulty 9 to note that the roughness of the penmanship is in stark contrast to the quality of the language used, but no useful conclusion can be drawn from this observation. It is only difficulty 11 to notice that the pen used was a quality instrument, markedly better than what someone who could only afford the cheap paper would have.

#### On a line by line basis:

*Nature trumps nurture upon the calling of the tides* - A reference to something cyclical, and the pre-eminence of the primitive over the civilized. It is also a veiled nautical reference.

*The brilliance of the nights is eclipsed by the darkness of the days* - A veiled and multi-level allusion. The brilliant intellect of Marie comes forth with the full moon, while the dim-witted Mary hides Marie's evil in plain sight during the rest of the month.

*Evil lurks not in the heart or mind, but somewhere between* - This and the next two lines help authenticate the letter. All the victims whose bodies were not too far decomposed showed signs of surgery or extraction from the neck area, in particular the thyroid gland, whose function is yet unknown.

*Seven have fallen, three Adam and four Eve* - The identities of the victims have not been released to the public. However, three were men and four were women, something that only the investigators and the murderer should know.

*Two bound for Heaven, two bound for Hell and three for neither* - Not all of the victims have been identified, and some might never be. Two were children (innocent, bound for Heaven) and two had remnants of clerical garb on them. A deeper investigation will turn up two missing Catholic clergy (a nun and a priest), and some further digging or following of rumors (especially among non-Catholic neighbors) will find that *both* were thought to have less than pure intentions towards some female members of their flock (damned, bound for Hell). For the latter two, this implies the murderer knew something of their failings.

*Three of Noah's get remain, then I shall do it all again* - A threat or a warning that the murders will continue. More specifically, that there will be three more murders based on some unknown criteria.

Of the seven (known) murder victims, there have thus far been:

- a boy
- a girl
- a priest (adult)
- a nun (adult)
- an older man
- an adult woman
- an older woman

It would be a difficulty 13 task to compile the victim list in this way and determine that at least one of the future victims is going to be an adult male. It would be difficulty 15 to see that the victims cover a spread of age and sexual activity, those who have sired or borne children and those who have not, in a variety of ages. The mention of "Noah's get" is more obscure and would be a difficulty 15 task only achievable through skill use (no raw attribute rolls). Those who believe in the account of Noah would know that *all* the races of man descended from Noah's three sons, yet all of the victims to date have been white. If Marie is unable to find what she is looking for within the set of caucasian victims (the white male is next), she intends to find a Jew and a Negro as her last two candidates, after which she will start over with a new set of victim criteria.

**Clues and red herrings** - Finding Mary/Marie and linking her to the crimes is far from a given. The adventure could take place in the background over the next few months as various leads develop. But, to keep the leads from heading directly to the perpetrator, several other things can be going on in the background.

- **Sea Witch** - The *Sea Witch* is a collier (refueling ship) that operates on contract from London to Gibraltar, making a round trip in almost exactly four weeks. It last arrived in port about three days before the last of the murders (as best the police can determine). This is among the leads turned into the police, and will lie fallow unless someone makes a nautical link to the cryptic letter or deduces a near monthly pattern to the murders. The first mate of the *Sea Witch* is Franklin Umberton. His wife committed suicide after she was caught in an affair with the priest who was among the victims, and at the time he swore bloody revenge against the man. Franklin is a former navvy and shows the muscles of years of hard labor on the canals. Umberton is, however, unaware of the priest's death, though he will be glad to hear of it, and will say he's glad the bastard is "bound for Hell".
- **The well** - If the murders are going to continue and the current dumping spot is no longer an option, then the killer will have to find a new place to get rid of the bodies. This will do the next victim no good, but keen eyes might spot a body being dumped and follow the perpetrator to their lair. Especially if there is a big reward for information...
- **Chemists** - Or in modern parlance, pharmacists. Marie needs various reagents and compounds for her work, and acquires them through chemist shops in the more affluent districts adjacent to the East End. Most of the time, the chemicals will not be something ordinarily stocked, so the chemist will have to special order it from elsewhere in London. Marie paid in advance for such an order last month, and is due to pick it up this month.



- **The letter** - Marie remembers most things that Mary does, but the effects of the medicine on Mary are ironically not part of Marie's memories. She knows there are blanks in her memory at periods after taking the medicines, and glimpses and fragments of action, much as Mary remembers of Marie. If Marie remembers enough about the letter and who it was addressed to, she will have to investigate. She lacks the wardrobe to move about in nicer parts of London, but she can ask the local gang to keep an eye out, as "*she 'ad a toff who could na' get it up and says like he'd be comin' back to 'urt poor Sally*", Sally being another local streetwalker who presumably is the target of the threat. And she gives whatever is the most likely name that she can get a hold of. This might be who she sent the letter to, an adventurer mentioned in the newspaper as being "on the case", or perhaps just a general description that could be about anyone who happens to look out of place and is asking lots of questions. Adventurers who run afoul of someone protecting Mary and prevail might get some questions answered, but odds are that this will lead to Sally, who is completely clueless in the matter, but nonetheless might have some useful information in terms of who she associates with (like Mary).

**Events** - It will be one week from the discovery of the bodies before Mary starts becoming Marie, a process that takes a full night while Mary sleeps. The full moon will be three days later, and Marie will become Mary again three or four days after that. While Marie is ascendant, she appears no different than Mary, though she cannot help but allow a little of her superior attitude and better vocabulary leak through the facade of Mary she maintains. Her anger at everyone and everything makes her appear a little irritable, despite her best efforts, though as a woman, many just assume it is a monthly thing (that is simply not spoken of).

Marie will quickly find out that the bodies were discovered, and will be seeking a new disposal site, as well as her next victim. The need for caution is outweighed by her need to regain her intellect, and should she need to dispose of another victim, she has decided to use the completed subway dig, dumping the body in the trench and covering it just enough to avoid detection, the backfilling process the following day finishing the job for her.

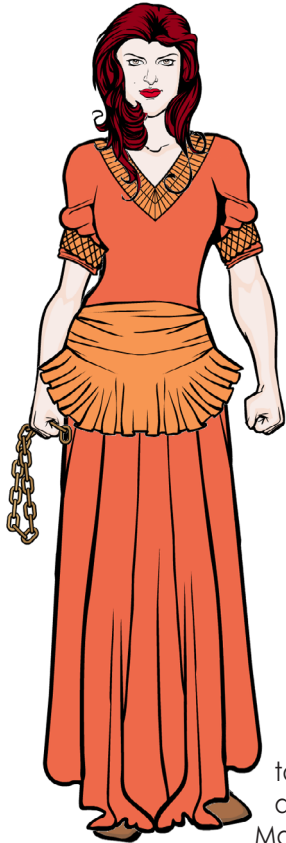
Fit adult men (like many adventurers) will be the preferred victim this month, and she will acquire one on the first or second day as Marie. An opium-laden syringe and her phenomenal strength should be enough to overcome even a strong man, especially if he is distracted and in a compromising position when she makes her move. It will take Marie several days to perform her experiments, beginning with relatively mild things like examining blood samples, and working up to extraction of the thyroid and pituitary glands and finally the removal, maceration and centrifuging of the brain. To actually succeed in creating a serum that will temporarily keep Marie from reverting to Mary is a difficulty 19 task. This would only give Marie an additional week, but knowing what to do would drop the difficulty of later extractions to 18. And should she ever gain access to a genuine laboratory, the difficulty would drop to 17.

During her next stint as Marie, she will need to do the following:

- Pick up a parcel from a chemist in Bethnal Green
- Find, lure to her barge and incapacitate an adult caucasian male
- Experiment upon and vivisect him
- Find a place to dispose of the body
- Dispose of the body

Marie is loath to waste any of her precious hours, but if the situation warrants, she will also investigate new places to live. She has acquired just enough money to get out of the East End and move to a slightly better district, but she needs a place with sufficient privacy. She has also heard the area near the former site of Fleet Prison is particularly lawless and that ne'er do wells are often dumped in an old aqueduct to eventually surface in the Thames, if they are found at all. This is quite a ways, however, and Marie is loath to make the trip unless forced to. Should she be successful in her research and gain herself another week as Marie, she will likely consider such a move. Once she knows what she needs from a victim, she needs only a quick kill, an extraction of the necessary parts and a speedy return to a laboratory far from the scene of the crime. And even in the late 19th century, one could get ice (to keep things fresh) in London at any time of year.

**Resolution** - Within two weeks Marie will be found, or she will go to ground as Mary for another three weeks before trying again.



## Marie von Keller

Strength: 4d+2  
 Agility: 3d+1  
 Awareness: 4d+2  
 Health: 3d+0  
 Will: 3d+1  
 Fate: 1d+0

### Skills:

Brawling: +1d  
 Medicine: +0d  
 Biological chemistry: +1d  
 Leadership: +0d  
 Area kn.(London): +0d  
 Running: +0d

### Traits:

+1 Hit bracket

Marie is formidable, more so because she appears not to be. If you could see her arms, legs or shoulders as Marie, they would be lacking almost all fat and have tightly corded muscle, but she is not heavily developed like a man would be at this level of strength. She is not a brawler, but gets the skill bonus for animal cunning and sheer viciousness (eye gouges, ear bites, nut shots, etc.).

She is strong enough to pick up and throw a grown man several meters, or to crack ribs and shatter jaws with a single punch (a 3d+2 half-lethal punch does 1d+1 lethal hits and an average of 12 Hits, sufficient to drop an average man with one blow). Marie is *not* bulletproof and heals no faster than normal, but she does have 13 Hits and only takes impairments each 8 Hits, so she can stay up and effective even after she is mortally wounded. As a major extra, she *does* get to use her Fate to adjust die rolls and damage against her. As Marie, she is clever enough to recognize a hopeless fight and surrender, knowing that her intellect and strength give her an edge against male captors who would discount her advantage in either of these categories, and thus make an escape at a time of her choosing (i.e. once out of sight of those clever enough to catch her in the first place). And, she is vindictive enough to seek revenge if thwarted and smart enough to figure out a way to make it happen, something that could come back to bite adventurers should they fail to apprehend her but still cause her a major setback.

**Complications** - This scenario will take place entirely within the environs of London (or some other major city), so problems the adventurers generate for themselves will have immediate consequences. An interesting complication could be adventurers shadowed by a reporter who is eager for a story. A reporter who might need rescued, or could possibly become Marie's next victim. There might be hostility from some of the Metropolitan Police who think adventurers are trying to do the job of the police, claim credit due the police or are trying to make the police look bad.

**Interactions** - This is a fairly local, self-contained scenario, with limited potential for other groups to get involved.

- **X Club:** If consulted and given details of the murders, a few members will almost certainly deduce that there is some sort of biological experimentation going on, and they would at the least, be able to make a list of likely lab equipment and chemicals such work would require.
- **Vril Society:** Their original belief was that the escaped Marie von Keller was little more than a bestial shell, bereft of reason. News of the murders will pique their interest at first since it follows lines similar to their own research. If they dig deeper, they may begin to suspect Marie is somehow involved. Since she knows enough about the Vril to be dangerous, she will *have* to be eliminated. The Vril will seek criminal underworld contacts (which will inform Adam Wild as a possible player) and provide photographs of Marie. They want her dead, and the sizable reward requires a recognizable head as proof of the kill. The reward is substantial enough that several women who merely look something like Marie could end up beheaded, which could further muddle the investigation as well as create any number of sensational headlines ("*East End Headhunter Strikes Again!*").
- **Diogenes Club:** M can provide clues the adventurers might miss, so long as they relate to the correlation of existing information. He has an interest in solving the murders, not because of any secret players, but because it makes England look bad to have its capital be the scene of such barbaric crimes.

**Experience** - Normal for whatever length the scenario runs. Finding an outcome that is at least merciful for *Mary* should be worth an extra point for the adventurer proposing it, another point if it is exceptionally difficult to implement and perhaps a leadership bonus for whoever is in charge of the party when it is implemented (or penalty if the strategy fails).

### ▼ MURDER ON THE ST. PETERSBURG EXPRESS - The

Tsar of Russia, in an attempt to show his nation as progressive and part of a "modern" Europe, has sponsored a major, multi-disciplinary scientific conference in St. Petersburg this autumn. To encourage participation, Russian scientists of any repute are *required* to attend, while Western scientists are being enticed by promises of compensated lodging and a chartered train that will stop in several major European capitals, making it possible for even non-affluent researchers to attend. While he will not be hobnobbing with the less famous, the Tsar's Foreign Minister will be on board to emphasize the value the Tsar places on this event. And since he is a chess player of note, even in the West, no doubt he will be spending a number of evenings enjoying intellectual competition that transcends scientific discipline with some of the world's finest minds.

**Setup** - Big minds, big egos, national pride and a confined environment. *Of course something will go wrong.* The question is, "how many things?", and "how badly will it come unglued?". This adventure has opportunity for an entire party, though at least one member of the group should be a scientist of some competence, and preferably with some Status or Friends that could be useful. The St. Petersburg Express is of whatever size is needed for the adventure, but keep in mind that it will require cars for cargo, and servants, and there is probably a separate car just for reporters. This covers a few adventurer types. Others may require some prior setup:

**Detectives:** The keen mind of a detective or private investigator may come in handy or be requested at some point. For an adventurer of this type to get on board, it would require that events requiring their services happen at a time and place where the detective could later board the train. This would require the detective be closer to St. Petersburg than the train, so they can be telegraphed to intercept it and get on board.

**Diplomats:** Or anyone else with close, official ties to a government. Since the Tsar's Foreign Minister is on board, this could be an occasion to deliver a confidential communique, and have the minister compose a preliminary reply. Events may transpire that the diplomat wishes to remain on board, however. A diplomat of sufficient repute might require a distinguished soldier (preferably an officer) as an escort or perhaps as a military mind to provide an on-site critique of any proposals discussed.

**Mechanics:** The locomotives pulling this large train are of a new type, and the Tsar is quite interested in exporting them. An engine concern from the nation of the mechanic's origin has expressed interest, and is hiring the adventurer to ride with the engine crew with the Tsar's blessing, to give a professional report on the capability and reliability of the new engines. If the mechanic speaks Russian, all the better.

**General female:** There will be a very few female scientists on board. They will be *quite* capable, but are *still* be treated as ornaments by the paternal elements of the scientific community. However, undermining this effort to break into the men's world, there will also be a handful of wives, secretaries and/or mistresses on board. A female adventurer willing to have certain assumptions made about her could be on board, paired with a male scientist adventurer.

**General male:** Any male adventurer with an Awareness of 3d+2 or more, especially if they are Larger than Life on Awareness, might pass for a scientist in some field obscure enough that no one else on the train is likely to share it. A British adventurer who meets the requirements might be approached by M's offices. M has apparently deduced some mischief affecting the Empire, centered upon the St. Petersburg Express, and will contract the adventurer to keep an eye out for certain things. Of course, such a task will require getting the adventurer the requisite papers and invitations and false credentials.

**St. Petersburg Express** - There is no historical "St. Petersburg Express", but the Orient Express has not yet started, so we're making this up as a setting for a relatively short travel-based adventure, one with much easier facility of getting on and off than something like a steamer to Australia.

As an expression of the Tsar's power and Russian pride, the St. Petersburg Express is large, larger than life, even. The cars for the upper class passengers are not quite to the standard of the Emperor's cars, but are nonetheless a quality that very few have experienced. The interiors will be finished in leather and silk, with carved wooden fittings and fine porcelain. Sleeping cabins will be equal to very small first class hotel rooms, while common areas will be like the interior of a fine men's club and dining cars will have their own "wine cellar" and silver cutlery with gold accents. Even the cars for reporters, servants and lesser scientists will be well-appointed. For all practical purposes, everyone will be travelling at a level of class above whatever they would normally afford or associate with their class, race or status.

The route of the St. Petersburg Express and its stops will be as follows:

Paris to Brussels (300km, 8 hours)  
 Brussels to Cologne (220km, 6 hours)  
 Cologne to Berlin (580km, 14 hours)  
 Berlin to Russian border (130km, 3 hours)  
 Russian border to Warsaw (450km, 11 hours)  
 Warsaw to Minsk (470km, 12 hours)  
 Minsk to Moscow (670km, 17 hours)  
 Moscow to St. Petersburg (630km, 16 hours)

There will be regular trains that connect to the Express at each intermediate stop, plus there will be a stop at the border between German and Russian territory to adjust the train. Scientists will be getting on board at each intermediate stop, and the train will be refueled, inspected and resupplied, a process that will take perhaps 2-3 hours per stop. This means that from Paris to St. Petersburg, the trip (and thus the adventure) will be about 100 hours (4 days).

The St. Petersburg Express will have roughly the following layout from front to back:

- Engine
- Oilcar
- Kitchen, staff and engine crew car
- Military car (Foreign Secretary's guards & valet)
- Forward dining car (Foreign Secretary & guests)
- Foreign Secretary's car
- Luxury lounge car
- First class car #1
- First class car #2
- Middle dining car #1 (first class)
- Middle kitchen car
- Middle dining car #2 (second class)
- Second class car #1
- Second class car #2
- Lounge car
- Second class car #3
- Second class car #4
- Aft dining car #1 (second class)
- Aft kitchen car
- Aft dining car #2 (third class)
- Aft dining car #3 (third class)
- Third class car #1
- Third class car #2
- Third class car #3
- Lounge car
- Third class car #4
- Third class car #5
- Third class car #6
- Media car
- Cargo car #1
- Cargo car #2
- Cargo car #3
- Caboose #1 (rear military detachment)
- Caboose #2 (inspection staff & mechanics)

This makes the train over thirty cars long, and using the normal length of a Pullman car as a guide, the St. Petersburg Express is nearly five hundred meters long. Depending on how elaborate the scenario is, there could be more than one of a particular car type, making it even longer. Among other things, this means that any particular stop, the first and second class passengers can debark in the station proper, while everyone else has to get off the train further down the track (outside the station) and walk to the station. *You did not expect the train to pull forward after the first class passengers have debarked, thus inconveniencing them should they wish to reboard?*

While the powerful tandem engine can move this train at a pretty good speed, the rails it has to run on are not necessarily up to the long and heavy load, so the "express" will travel at the leisurely pace of about 40kph. This will give the travel times previously listed.



▼ **Note** - The forward dining car, Foreign Secretary's car and luxury lounge car all have vestibules at each end and a narrow side hallway running the length of the car, so that staff and servants can move through these cars without disturbing the occupants. There will be a guard at the front and rear of the Foreign Secretary's car (or any car the Foreign Secretary is currently in).

The train as described carries well over a hundred passengers, crew and staff. Because of its length, communication is a problem. Each car is equipped with a telegraphic semaphore receiver, with sending stations in the engine, caboose, kitchen, military and foreign secretary's car. This rings a bell in one or more cars, and raises one or more painted metal flags, some of which have words printed on them, others of which are merely colored. Messages might be something like "approaching next destination" or "dinner is served", while the blank but colored flags are a code that the train's crew and staff knows how to interpret. For instance, an orange flag and white flag showing together would be "all crew report to assigned stations", while red and black would be "threat to the Foreign Secretary". The scientists on board will be naturally fascinated with the system, and a handful will spend time deducing the operating principles and observing the responses of the crew and staff to various flags.

Because of the presence of the Foreign Secretary, there is a small military detachment on the train. This is an officer at the level of captain, a lieutenant, and half a dozen competent soldiers. The lieutenant and three soldiers are at the rear of the train and are there to help guard the cargo and keep order, while the rest are forward and are the Foreign Secretary's bodyguard. The soldiers have bolt action rifles, while the officers carry revolvers. Usually, they will all keep a low profile in their compartments, though they all have to wear dress uniforms for the whole trip. Only the two officers speak English, and only the officers are fully versed in the use of the telegraph semaphore system, though all the soldiers can read the codes.



**The Foreign Secretary:** That would be the title he is associated with in the west, though his formal job description is the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and he would be introduced something like "the Minister of Foreign Affairs to his Imperial Majesty Alexander II, Alexander Mikhaylovich, Prince Gorchakov."

Gorchachov is fluent in French and Latin in addition to his native Russian, and has a full classical education. Virtually all his adult life has been spent in diplomatic service, and since he is 71 years old in 1869CE, he has the experience to be *exceptionally* good at what he does. He has been the Minister of Foreign Affairs since 1856CE. It would be safe to give him a 7d+0 effective roll in most skills related to his office, and "best four" in use of these skills. He can make a threat of kind words, bully, appease or compromise with a gesture, has the authority to speak and negotiate on behalf of the Tsar and would expect to be treated with appropriate respect and deference by those of lesser station (he is a genuine prince, after all).

In the context of this adventure, it is safe to assume he will be conducting meetings with various diplomatic figures in each nation the train passes through, and this will take priority over other concerns that might require his attention.

▼ **Note** - History considers Alexander Gorchachov the greatest Russian diplomat of the 19th century, so his influence is not to be underestimated in this part of the world.

**The Plot** - In addition to all of the incidental conflicts and interesting goings-on that are natural to a situation like this, there are actually one or more serious plots afoot. These are designed so that elements of more than one can be used to confuse things in the others. Bear in mind that this entire adventure takes place over only four or five days with only half a dozen scheduled stops where messages can be sent or received or esoteric items procured, and the majority of people on the train will be as smart as or smarter than the adventurers.

# EABA

**Olga Karamazov:** A Russian expatriate, the daughter of a disgraced Russian noble who had to flee his motherland two decades ago during one of the Tsar's purges for supposed disloyalty in the wake of the Crimean War. Her father changed the family name to Kobrin, and with some humility, changed the family background to that of southern Belarus minor nobility ousted by a famine-related peasant revolt. Publicly naming his daughter Darja, Darja grew up brilliant and willful. Inheriting the wealth her family fled with upon her father's death a decade ago, she had the status and ambition to attend and graduate from university in Paris, in the field of chemistry and with minor studies in forms of electrical experimentation.

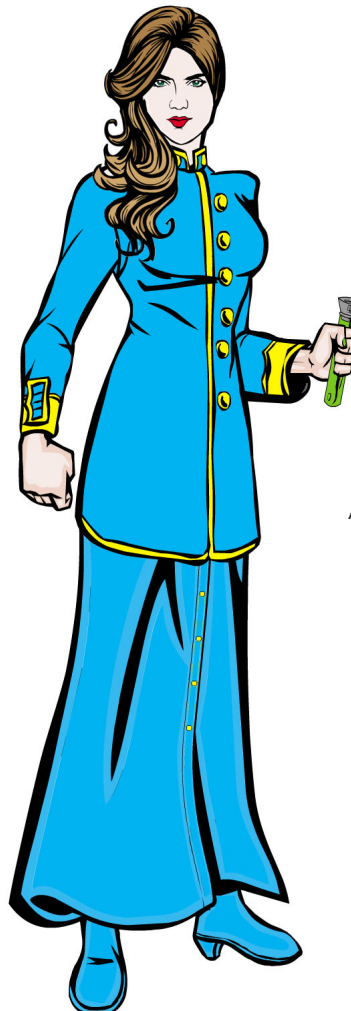
She has never forgotten how her father was a broken man after his self-imposed exile. She resents the Tsar and blames him for her father's death from drink and depression. And she is not alone. While Alexander II is a reformer (by Russian standards), he is still a harsh autocrat, and has many enemies (one will historically lob a grenade into his lap in 1881CE). Olga is secretly a member of an anarchist/radical/communist group (they're still figuring it out), and they plan to bomb the Imperial train the Tsar rides in. In particular, they correctly believe that the Tsar will loan the Foreign Secretary one of the cars from the Imperial train for the St. Petersburg Express.

This could take one of three forms, all of which require access to the Foreign Secretary's car for a while. Since "Darja Kobrin" is wealthy and strikingly beautiful, as well as brilliant, it would not be *too* unlikely that she would be in the upper class cars, and could possibly have dinner a few times in the luxury dining car during the trip. For the sake of her cause, she is also willing to give up her dignity for a chance to spend the night in the Foreign Secretary's car, or to arrange an assignation that would get her into *someone's* compartment in the car. Sabotage by her would take one of two forms.

The first is a steel cylinder of poisonous gas and an explosive charge that is wired into the telegraph system, or has its detonation wires routed out through a hole in the floor. This would be concealed somewhere in a restroom. The idea is that at a later time, a fellow anarchist could trigger a unique telegraph code or attach a small battery and mechanical clock to the wires, so that it would go off at a time when the Tsar was in that car, instantly spreading the poison gas and hopefully killing him.

The second is that she has a mixture of chemicals that when applied to wood, turn it into an increasingly unstable high explosive. This will eventually go off on its own at some unknown time, blowing up that part of the rail car. But, there is no way to know if the Tsar will be on board, so this is a poor second choice.

The last method involves Olga, but is not directly done by her. When the train has its wheels adjusted at the Russian border, Olga will through acting, chemistry or a little of both, cause a distraction to the crew working on the Foreign Secretary's car. Fellow anarchists among the rail crew will "finish the job" while the other workers are distracted, planting a huge dynamite bomb under the frame of the car, disguised as an extra water tank for the car's bath and toilet. The tank is double-layered, with an impact-sensitive explosive in the outer layer. A sniper knowing exactly where to shoot would be able to hit the bomb from a distance and blow the car to smithereens when the Tsar was in it. While the car is in this station, the fresh bolts holding the charge in place will be noticeable, but once it is a few kilometers out of the station, normal dust and such from the train's passage will make it look like it has always been there.



## Olga Karamazov

Strength: 2d+0

Agility: 2d+1

Awareness: 4d+1

Health: 2d+2

Will: 3d+1

Fate: 1d+0

## Skills:

Chemistry: +1d

(Explosives): +1d

Electrical science: +0d

Pistol: +0d

Acting: +1d

Leadership: +0d

Area kn.(anarchists): +0d

## Traits:

Status

Wealth

Fanatical

Olga was too young to remember anything more than glimpses and fragments of the harrowing flight from Russia that her mother and brother did not survive, but she has determined that she would rather die than be taken prisoner on Russian soil. She carries a small revolver to defend herself with (1d+1 damage), but would throw herself from or under the train if she felt compelled to take her own life. She is a skilled chemist, but not a skilled saboteur or agent. She is getting by on raw talent and iron resolve. Her only specialized gear is a set of small screwdrivers and pry bars, and a vial of a sleeping powder that is virtually undetectable in wine or strong drink and which merely enhances the soporific effects of alcohol (it is a refined opium derivative). This is hidden in a compartment in one of her earrings.

**Lover's Cross:** Jilted lovers and former lovers often do not take it well when they see their ex in the company of another. A middle-aged Italian professor getting on the train at Berlin spies his former, much younger lover sharing a second-class sleeping car with a professor from Paris, and is absolutely incensed. *All three people involved are male.* The jilted lover clearly cannot make a scene for the *real* reason they are angry or jealous. But, there is a shared scientific discipline between at least two of them (metallurgy), and there quickly becomes an extremely heated discussion on an esoteric subject that few can follow, but the accusations of fraud, lack of character, and poaching of prior claims are clear enough, though no one except the three knows the academic allusions are merely superficial.

*"You vile cretin! You have betrayed the trust I placed in you, sharing that which I value most with someone like him! And you sir, what promises have you made, and what fraud have you not committed? What blatant plagiarism of my past work have you perpetrated with my protégé? You are both bereft of all moral sensibility, and I vow that you shall pay for this outrage. Your true colors shall be revealed at the conference, so enjoy your ill-gotten gains while you have them!"*

After a back-and-forth row lasting half an hour involving the full vocabulary of profanity, ancestry and bodily functions available in several languages, the Italian storms off, the other two retire to their quarters, and everyone else has something very interesting to talk about for the rest of the night. *Relating solely to the academic questions posed, of course.*

The next morning, the Italian is found dead on the floor of his sleeping compartment. There are signs of a struggle, and the deceased had clearly been struck several times in the fight, though only blunt weapons or fists appear to have been used. The compartment had been locked from the inside, and the master steward had to use a special key to get into the room after someone noticed a trickle of blood coming from underneath the door.

This adds quite a bit of fuel to the rumor mill, to which scientists are as vulnerable to as anyone else. The obvious suspects have no alibi except each other, as they spent the evening alone in their sleeper compartment after the previous nights' fracas. The only things they have going for them is that they are *too* obvious as possible suspects, and that no one saw either of them at all for the entire night and early morning, making their lack of an outside alibi less of a liability.

*And so, there is apparently a murder on the St. Petersburg Express.*

As with other plot elements that involve serious criminal activity, the nature of the train complicates things. *Who has jurisdiction?* The murder victim was Italian, the main suspects are French, the verbal threats were made in Germany and the actual murder somewhere in Russia (Poland, to be precise). The Russian Foreign Secretary might simply declare the crime to be on Russian soil, and therefore under Russian jurisdiction. And since he has the highest status by far of anyone on the train, *and* happens to have a squad of soldiers with him, no one is likely to argue with him.

Unless there is a professional detective on board, the case will have to be solved by merely the finest minds in Europe, most of whom feel up to the task and are quite sure that if *they* were just allowed access to the crime scene they could easily ascertain clues that would quickly solve the case. Of course, by the time a hundred people had been in and out of the compartment and poked and prodded at the body, it is unlikely to be useful anymore. So, recognizing that, everyone wants to be *first* to examine things. Odds are the Foreign Secretary will immediately post an armed guard at the door to the compartment just to prevent this sort of thing. Clever adventurers (or clever *others*) might find a way to distract this soldier for a few minutes to gain access (other plot elements may fortuitously provide a distraction for someone).

The actual truth of the matter and the murderer (or murderers) is up to the gamemaster. A murderer would need to have the required motive, means and opportunity. We have a public motive, though the murderer could be someone outside the three, who is merely using this as cover. The means requires that the murderer be able to get into the locked compartment. Not insurmountable, but not a common skill either. And, they had to do so at a time and in a manner that no one sees them enter or leave, requiring good luck, or accomplices to warn the murderer is someone was in a position to see them. So, the murderer is skilled and lucky, or skilled and has accomplices. Neither is out of the question.

However, the "murder" could simply be an erroneous assumption. The Italian professor was simply so stressed by the events that after retiring to his room, he became violent and broke a few things, then had a seizure and a brain hemorrhage. Thrashing about, he struck his head and face and arms on various furnishings, then expired, leaving signs that mimic those of a violent struggle with another person. It would take a Heroic(15) task by a doctor to even see the signs of the natural cause of death, and a full autopsy to confirm it.

Of course, a "death by natural causes" verdict may not be accepted by many, and seen as white-wash to prevent a cloud from hanging over the Tsar's conference, with any adventurers involved in the diagnosis coming under suspicion as being bribed by or in the pocket of the Russians.

**Teutonic Test:** There are likely several members of the Thule Society on board the train, and if you know what to look for, you could probably narrow the field of likely candidates from which the Vril would want to recruit. Fit, ambitious, very intelligent, maybe with a touch of arrogance and certainly a bit of racism. Two of them are being considered as members of the Vril Society. Neither one knows the identity of the other being considered, though the two individuals may know each other personally, or through reputation. Both have been told the same thing. At Warsaw, a Polish Jew will be getting on board as part of the scientific delegation. He cannot be allowed to live long enough to leave the train in St. Petersburg. You have to kill him *and* get away with it. And there is someone else trying to kill him as well. If you do not kill him first, you will have failed to meet the test of the Vril.

▼ **Note** - The train schedule means that the Vril candidates will have almost exactly two days to do the deed.

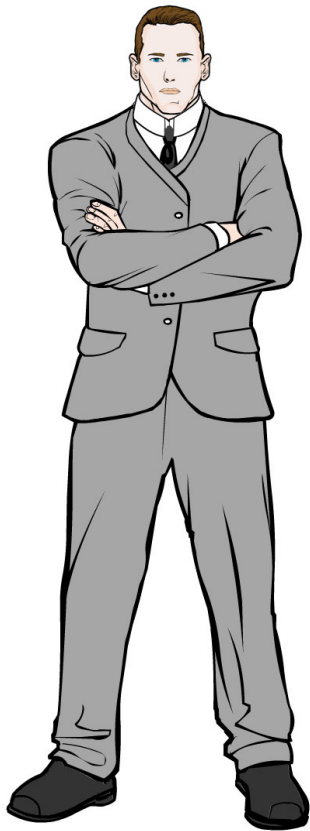
Unbeknownst to either, but likely suspected, there is a member of the Vril Society on the train. He (or she) will be observing *both* candidates and thus will be in a good position to see who succeeds at the task. If they do discern the "winner", they will inform the Vril Society of their success via telegraph at the next stop, as well as arranging the demise of the loser. Though it is possible that circumstance could allow the loser to be framed for the murder and then "get shot while trying to escape".

The Polish professor has no intrinsic greatness or unique scientific insight. He is merely a physically flawed member of a group the Vril already consider to be inferior. He does not suspect he is a target and has no skills to defend himself nor is taking any precautions. He would be incredulous at the notion that any *scientist* on board the train would be considering harm to him.

The two potential assassins have the entire trip prior to Warsaw to make their plans. In addition, they have to be sizing up the other passengers, to find their rival or narrow down the possibilities. Both will see framing their rival for the crime as the easiest path, or keeping the rival under surveillance or under suspicion as a way to hinder their actions. So, if there were some other unfortunate incident on the train, some planted evidence in a sleeping compartment or an anonymous note left for the captain of the military detachment, it could be interesting. The byplay and mutual investigation by the two assassins could draw the attention of the adventurers, who might want to do some prying of their own.

▼ **Note** - The racial superiority notions of the Vril are not too far-fetched for the period. The science fiction work *Three Hundred Years Hence* (1880CE), without batting an eye, throws out plenty of lines like "And so, perhaps half a century or so after the Great Extermination, the last of the favored lingerers died, and Mongol and Negro, the Inferior Races, became entirely things of the past." The notion of a Malthusian population explosion was considered a possible problem, and what better way to make room for the increasing numbers of the superior races than to simply get rid of the inferior ones? Not all racism in **Verne** is the fairly benign "white man's burden" kind, and the more pernicious varieties can be part of plots the adventurers have to deal with.



**Dr. Jeremiah Bolton**

Strength: 2d+2

Agility: 3d+0

Awareness: 3d+2

Health: 3d+0

Will: 3d+1

Fate: 0d+2

**Skills:**

Mechanical science: +2d

Pistol: +0d

Saber: +1d

Climbing: +1d

Leadership: +0d

Brawling: +1d

**Traits:**

Status

Wealth

Racist

Dr. Jeremiah Bolton, PhD is the wealthy son of an expatriate Confederate industrialist, one who

made a fortune in the shipping industry and built and operated blockade runners during the US Civil War. Bolton was getting his degrees at Oxford during the Civil War, while his father was smuggling arms to the Confederacy. After the war, his father returned to normal shipping and runs two small Caribbean shipyards and a handful of sugar cane plantations. Bolton chose not to go into the family business, but stayed in England, where he is a consultant to the Cunard Line on steam engine design and utilization, and a professor at the University of London. Young for a professor, he holds a slot vacated by the resignation of its occupant, after certain indiscretions in his personal life and finances became public knowledge. How this information was found and who gave it to the university regents remain unknown.

In his spare time he does calculations related to new sorts of war machines that he feels could be practical, if only a proper power source were found. His design for a "tripedal self-mobile artillery carriage" has thus far found no interest among either private investors or the military.

Jeremiah Bolton was attracted to the basic beliefs of the Thule Society, and over the past few years has shown sufficient potential that the Vril Society was ready to make its usual oblique approach, only to find that Bolton had deduced the existence of a higher order organization and beat them to the punch, finding a person he calculated was a member and asking to join. This mission is the test of whether he is Vril material.

**High points** - Things that are not plots, but things that can throw a wrench into the works. These can be used or have an affect on just about any of the plots.

**The Express:** One idiosyncrasy of rail travel to or from Russia is that the rails in Russia are set at a different width than those of Europe (*Why? So invading armies could not use their own trains*). This means trains must either be completely unloaded at the border and reloaded onto new trains, or the cars must be lifted and new bogies (wheels) affixed for the new rails, or that the railway has to have an extra rail or rails to handle traffic of both types of train. For adventure purposes, the St. Petersburg Express does none of the above. Instead, it has bogies on each car whose wheel spacing can be adjusted by a large crank on each car attached to a worm gear. The train is parked on a large siding with both sets of rails. Crews use a hydraulic system to raise the car off the ground, the wheel spacing is adjusted, and the car is lowered onto the new tracks. The engines are too complex for this process, and new engines for the correct track gauge are simply hooked up for the remainder of the trip. The process takes several hours for a train of this size, and passengers will be required to disembark for the process. Fortunately, this takes place at a large train station, so there are plenty of amenities and ways to pass the time.

The engine that pulls the St. Petersburg Express is not exceptional in any one regard, but it breaks enough with current design to be considered unusual. First, it is oil-fired rather than coal-fired. This gives it a much cleaner output, important when you consider that every other train of the day has the passengers downwind of a coal-fired smokestack and occasional hot cinders. Second, the engine is articulated. It is a large engine, capable of pulling very heavy loads, and has a central control cabin with bellowed sides, and a separate boiler and steam engine on either side of it, each of which can operate alone if necessary. The engine is trailed by a separate oil car for its fuel, and both engine and fuel car are connected by external walkways to the front crew car, which also houses the cooks, staff and supplies for the forward dining car.

This design *does* have its problems. It operates flawlessly for the short duration of the adventure, but any adventurer who observes its operation for an extended period will see that the crew is very skilled at operating it, and it requires near-constant tinkering to keep it in good order. The oil injectors are prone to clogging, even with regular and messy changes of the fuel line filters. The articulation of the locomotive *does* allow it to take tighter turns and takes less crew than two separate locomotives, but keeping the output of the two engines synchronized is a manual process. And the the bellowed wall segments and hinged floor plates that allow the central control cabin to flex are accidents waiting to catch unwary fingers or booted toes. On a difficulty 11 task, a professional Western engineer would be correct to *not* recommend this design for purchase, but instead recommend waiting for a few years to see if any of the advances are reliable or adopted separately for smaller engines.

▼ **Note** - This engine nor anything like it actually existed in the period, but it would have been technologically possible.

**Le curiosité:** In an attempt to deduce the operating language of the telegraphic flags, a young French scientist who happens to have an interest in electricity has sliced open the insulation on the telegraph lines where they pass through the restroom walls. He has hotwired the system so he can trigger any combination of flags he wants in his particular car. Or so he thinks. He is *actually* triggering the flags in the whole train. So, he is quite surprised to see the hubbub that happens when he triggers the "threat to train, stop and evacuate!" combination of flags. What he also does *not* know is that the system is designed to show which sending station has sent a signal. In this case, the nearest stations forward and aft of his position are the ones that presumably sent it. Once the commotion from his action has abated (which could be several hours), and the captain of the military detachment has convinced himself that none of the crew triggered the message, the assumption will be that there is a foreign spy on board trying to sabotage the Tsar's efforts, and that the spy is someone on the cars between those two sending stations.

**Media frenzy:** This conference is the sort of thing that the more sensationalist broadsheets can make a fortune on. The new scientific journals like *Nature* and *Scientific American* will also have hired people to cover not only the conference, but the trip and the personalities involved. There will be personal stories, real and invented grudges and rivalries, new and sometimes completely fabricated scientific discoveries announced, about to be announced, on the verge of changing the world, and so on. Every train stop will have reporters fleeing the train like rats off a sinking ship, to file stories by telegraph, while writers for journals try to corner luminaries, and would-be movers and shakers try to corner reporters and writers to get their name out there. However, this has to be done with a certain degree of reserve and reticence. Reputable scientists are not to be seen as showmen or snake oil salesmen hawking their wares.

It is quite possible a casual word to a reporter or overheard by one could become a major story that ends up in a newspaper picked up at the very next station!

**Diplomatic privilege:** The last interesting tidbit is that while it has not been announced to the public or the scientists, the Tsar has declared that the entire train is effectively an embassy of Russia. While it may run on French or German rails, the *train* is Russian soil, and subject to Russian law. And with the Russian Foreign Secretary on board, there is not likely to be any local functionary who is willing to contest this declaration, should it be made. If there is suspicion of espionage, fights or heaven forbid, a murder, then the train will be "sealed". The Foreign Secretary will not forcibly detain anyone unless they have clearly committed a crime or are a major suspect, but anyone other than the Secretary's staff who exits the train will not be allowed back on, and will not be allowed into Russia at any later date without the Foreign Secretary's express consent. In addition, anyone exiting will have to have their luggage claimed by their nation's embassy in St. Petersburg and shipped home at their own expense.

This will intimidate most of those on the train into staying on the train, and aim a great deal of suspicion at anyone who skulks off.

**Interactions** - This is a fairly local and self-contained scenario, with limited potential for other groups to get involved once it starts. However, they might be in place at the start.

- **X Club:** *At least* one member of the most intelligent men in Europe will be on the train. Almost certainly all of them were invited.
- **League for Gaian Primacy:** The LGP may want Alexander II out of the way because his reforms are going to eventually turn Russia into an industrial powerhouse, the opposite of the way the LGP thinks things should be. Their secret involvement might explain why the small French anarchist group Olga belongs to has the ability to coordinate an action over such a long distance, and where they got the knowledge to make a bomb that so exactly fits under the Foreign Secretary's car. But, the LGP's fingerprints would be very difficult to find in this adventure, and will probably remain suspicions about an unseen guiding hand.
- **Vril Society:** Whether part of an adventure or not, it is likely that there is at least one member of the Vril Society on the train, as part of some Vril operation, or perhaps to just observe new scientific developments and theories.
- **Diogenes Club:** If there is a plot that could affect the Tsar, this could affect the balance of power between Great Britain and Russia, so M might seek someone to keep an eye out for certain things. If that someone happens to be an adventurer, victim or perpetrator in one of the plots, it adds another layer of intrigue to things. The nationalities of people involved can be adjusted if needed to do this, but odds are that someone from an esteemed group like the X Club could be recruited for the job at the top end, and a reporter can investigate from the low end of the status scale.
- **Scotland Yard:** Since Scotland Yard may have investigators working in concert with foreign police, if there is a crime involving British citizens, there is a chance an investigator from Scotland Yard could already be in a foreign city and get on board at the next stop, to investigate the guilt or innocence of a citizen of the Empire. The nationality of potential victims or perpetrators in a plot can be adjusted if you want a Scotland Yard investigator to show up.

**Experience** - Normal for a short adventure.

Anyone who scores solid hits in the heated sparring of status and reputation in this closed environment should get an extra point, and being instrumental in foiling or solving a plot should be rewarded as well.

▼ **NOTABLE PERSONS** - Here are a handful of real and fictional personages of the Victorian Era, for use as inspiration, *deus ex machina* or whatever. Game stats are *not* given for these individuals. That would make it too easy for "gunslingers" to try to take them down a peg. It is safe to assume that they are "adventurer quality" and then some. These notes will be far too brief to detail the full lives of these people, but should be enough to give a feel for the individual and the world that shaped them.



**Sir Richard Francis Burton** - He was an English soldier, explorer, linguist, translator, writer, orientalist, ethnologist, poet, hypnotist, fencer and diplomat. He was known for his travels and explorations of Asia and Africa as well as his extraordinary knowledge of cultures and languages. According to one count, he spoke twenty-nine Asian, European, and African languages. He was, in both a real world and a game sense, very much an *adventurer*.

Some of Burton's best-known achievements include travelling in disguise to Mecca, making an unexpurgated translation of *The Book of One Thousand Nights and A Night* (aka *The Arabian Nights*) and the *Kama Sutra*. That a Victorian Englishman did the latter two is some indication of how outside the norm he was. His values were very much *not* the traditional Victorian ones and this certainly hampered his career advancement.

Burton was born on March 19, 1821CE. His father, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Netterville Burton, was an Irish-born British army officer of Anglo-Irish extraction, and his mother was Irish, Martha Baker, the heiress of a wealthy Hertfordshire squire. He had a brother (Edward) and sister (Maria), both slightly younger than him.

Burton's family travelled considerably during his childhood. When he was four, his family moved to Tours (France). His early education was provided by various tutors employed by his parents. He first began a formal education at age eight in London. Over the next few years, his family travelled between England, France and Italy. Burton had a gift for languages and quickly learned French, Italian, Neapolitan, and Latin, as well as several dialects. As a teen, he was rumoured to have carried on an affair with a young Gypsy, and may have learned their language as well.

Not having a childhood home in any one nation, he may have been less nationalistic than his peers, and more of an outsider than part of the herd.

*"Do what thy manhood bids thee do, from none but self expect applause..."*  
- Sir Richard Francis Burton

Burton started classes at Oxford at the age of nineteen, learned Arabic, falconry, and fencing, antagonized just about everyone, nearly started a duel over an insult to his mustache, and within two years managed to get permanently expelled. And deliberately trampled the university's flower beds with his horse and carriage on the way out.

He then enlisted in the army of the East India Company and was posted in Gujarat in the 18th Bombay Infantry, where he managed to learn Hindustani, Gujarati, Panjabi, Marathi and Persian, as well as extensive knowledge of Hindu culture.

During his decade with the East India Company, he kept a large menagerie of tame monkeys in the hope of learning their language. He also earned the name "Ruffian Dick" for his ferocity as a fighter and because he had, to anyone's knowledge, fought in more single combats more than anyone else had ever heard of.

During this time he also learned how to use surveying equipment and taught himself disguise and similar skills. He was able to fool fellow officers and even locals into believing he was native to the area. Perhaps due to these skills, he was enlisted to be part of an undercover investigation of a brothel in Karachi said to be frequented by English soldiers. His detailed and confidential report on this topic got him into trouble when it was made public later in his life, when it was assumed he could only get such details by taking part in some of the more...socially controversial activities described.

He was a captain and had published his first book (*Goa and the Blue Mountains*) by the time he exited from service with the East India Company in 1853CE, at which point he did one of his most famous exploits, infiltrating Mecca disguised as a Muslim. Being caught would have resulted in his execution, either by the Muslim authorities or by being torn apart by an angry mob, so he took the disguise quite seriously, mastering language, costume, custom and Islamic ritual, and even went so far as to have himself circumcised to better "look the part". Nonetheless he almost got caught once because he relieved himself in the wrong way once and someone saw him, but he was able to talk his way out of it.

His account of the journey was published as "*A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Medinah and Meccah*". After he returned, he rejoined the British Army, where he promptly failed an exam to qualify as an Arab linguist...

After this, Burton joined the political department of the East India Company, and was engaged by the Royal Geographical Society to explore the east coast of Africa. The distinctive scar seen in his photos came from a Somali spear he caught with his face at the start of an expedition in 1854CE. He was largely exonerated for the failure of that particular expedition, but like many of his exploits, it did not help him in terms of traditional career advancement. The attack is described in his book "*First Footsteps in East Africa*".

In 1855CE he served in the Crimea for a short time with local fighters under General Beatson, but his corps was disbanded following a mutiny and Burton was again investigated (and exonerated) for any role in the matter.

In 1856CE the Royal Geographic Society funded another expedition to find an "inland sea" that had been recounted by Arab traders (and to see what useful exports could be had from the region). It was also considered that this inland sea might be the long-sought source of the Nile. But, this was not an *explicit* part of the expedition, since setting out with that stated goal and not finding it would make the expedition a failure. Before leaving for Africa, Burton was secretly engaged to Isabel Arundel, a young woman he had been seeing for several years. However, her family was wealthy and Catholic. Burton was neither, and her family would certainly not give permission, hence the secrecy of the engagement.



Despite problems with deserting native bearers, broken equipment and disease, the expedition reached Lake Tanganyika in 1858CE. His famous fellow explorer, John Hanning Speke, was at this time temporarily blind from an unknown tropical disease and partially deaf from a beetle lodged in his ear, causing an infected wound. Burton was ill enough that he had to be carried much of the time. Speke recovered and continued to press on to eventually reach Lake Victoria (source of the Nile), while Burton had to return to civilization to recover. Speke was privately convinced he had found the source of the Nile, but because of damage and theft, lacked the instruments to prove it.

Speke and Burton returned separately to London, but Speke arrived first and gave a lecture at the Royal Geographic Society claiming that he (and he alone) had discovered Lake Victoria, the source of the Nile. Needless to say, this did not go over well, and the public dispute was loud and long. Speke claimed that Burton had tried to poison him in Africa, and Burton disputed that Lake Victoria was the Nile's source, citing Speke's lack of data and measurements. Speke's newfound reputation allowed him to start another expedition to confirm his findings, one in which Burton was *not* invited on. This expedition was also inconclusive. Matters came to an end in September 1864CE, when Speke and Burton were to debate the matter at the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Speke died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound while hunting on a nearby estate the day before the debate. There were no witnesses, and the coroner's report listed it as an accident. News of this arrived at the debate hall right before Burton was to speak, and he chose not to give his side of the debate (Burton was never accused or suspected in this death, it was just a bizarre coincidence).

In 1861CE Burton joined the Foreign Service and married Isabel Arundel, her family finally deciding to tolerate him. He served as British consul in several locations (Equatorial Guinea, Brazil, Damascus, Trieste). He continued to write and travel, though his ill-fated Nile expedition with John Speke was his last real exploration. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, co-founded the Anthropological Society of London and was awarded a knighthood in 1886CE. His most controversial books were published late in his life, including the English translations of the *Kama Sutra*, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, and *The Perfumed Garden of the Shaykh Nefzawi*.

Sir Richard Francis Burton died in 1890CE after a heart attack, at the age of 69. He and Isabel are buried in a tomb in the shape of a Bedouin tent at Mortlake (southwest London).



**Harry Flashman** - Harry Paget Flashman is the consummately self-serving coward created by author George MacDonald Fraser. He is in many ways the opposite of Richard Burton, tumbling into one adventure (and bed) after the other, looting, swiving and betraying his way across the world to save his hide, fortune and career, in no particular order. Despite his many failings, he is quite skilled in a fight, fluent in many languages, good at disguise, unlucky about getting into bad situations and even more lucky at getting out of them. He is by his own admission (in his fictional memoirs) a scoundrel, liar, cheat, thief, coward and toady. However, at the end of any particular encounter he manages to end up looking like the hero, while someone else is left holding the blame for the inevitable ruin left in his wake.

Harry Flashman will flee at the approach of danger if there is no one to witness (or survive) his cowardice, but if forced to fight is quite good at it, and can make himself look good while at the same time keeping his skin intact. For instance, he once had to lead a boarding party against pirates, but managed to put himself in the middle of the group, so that he was surrounded by people to stop any bullets that might be aimed his way. *Looking brave, but really looking out for himself.*

Flashman was born into upper society. His father's side of the family is descended from American rum smugglers, slavers and pirates, while his mother's side was minor British nobility and gave this wealth the veneer of respectability. His father was a member of Parliament until getting kicked out as a result of the Reform Act of 1832CE.

After Flashman was kicked out of one of England's best boarding schools for drunkenness, his father purchased him a commission as an officer in the 11th Regiment (notably remembered as the one in the Charge of the Light Brigade). After a number of problems stemming from his lecherous nature, he had to resign his commission and sign up with the East India Company. There, his facility with languages got him sent to Afghanistan, and events transpired that were typical of his career. He was the only white survivor of the attack on Piper's Fort, found by relieving British troops, clutching the flag and surrounded by enemy dead.

As it turns out, he arrived at the fort by accident, collapsed in fear during the attack, was witnessed to be a coward, was forced to fight, and was trying to surrender the colors rather than defend them. But since there were no surviving witnesses to his shame, he ended up a hero rather than a goat.

Over the course of his long and successful career, Harry Flashman was at and involved with major historical figures at the Siege of Gandamak (first Anglo-Afghan War, 1841CE), the Underground Railroad (1848CE), the Charge of the Light Brigade (Crimean War, 1854CE), the massacre of Cawnpore and the siege of Lucknow (Indian Mutiny, 1857CE), the Harper's Ferry Raid (1859CE), the Taiping Rebellion (1860CE), the Franco-Mexico War (1868CE), the Battle of the Little Bighorn (1876CE), and the Battle of Isandlwana (Anglo-Zulu War, 1879CE). In every instance, he was a coward, rogue and if possible, a lech, but managed to come out covered in glory, eventually reaching the rank of Brigadier General. "Historically", Flashman's last escapades were around 1900CE, and he "died" in 1915CE.

*"I'm not a sabre expert - a strong swordsman, rather than a good one, was how the master-at-arms in the 11th Hussars had described me - and if I have to use one I'd rather it wasn't in single combat, but in a melee, where you can hang about on the outskirts, roaring your heart out and waiting for an opponent with his back turned..."*  
- Harry Flashman

In campaign terms, Harry Flashman has a grand public reputation, and none of the truth about him is known, thus leading people to continue to trust him and his gallant leadership and heroism. To insert him into any situation involving adventurers should only be tertiary, since if things go wrong, Flashman will come out of it looking good and someone else will be ruined by it. *After all, whose word will be more believable?* That of the adventurers, or that of Brigadier General Sir Harry Paget Flashman, the only man to have ever been awarded both the Victoria Cross and the Congressional Medal of Honor? Of course, some *players* may have heard of Flashman, so the gamemaster should feel free to change the name, but keep the scoundrel.

▼ **Note** - The *Flashman* books are excellent on their own or as a reference. The original book was written as the "recently discovered memoirs of Harry Flashman", and was authentic enough that some reviewers thought it a *genuine* Victorian manuscript. Fraser's prose, attention to detail and incorporation of historical figures and events makes these novels an excellent **Verne** reference. The author, George MacDonald Fraser, died in 2008CE, but most of the *Flashman* books are still in print.

**Ida Pfeiffer** - Ida Laura Pfeiffer was one of the first female explorers. An Austrian woman of moderate means, she only began her travels in her forties, after her husband had died and her children had grown up. She was a member of the Paris and Berlin Geographic Societies, but was never admitted to the Royal Geographic Society because she was a woman.



*"When I was but a little child, I had already a strong desire to see the world. Whenever I met a travelling-carriage, I would stop involuntarily, and gaze after it until it had disappeared; I used even to envy the postilion, for I thought he also must have accomplished the whole long journey."*

- Ida Laura Pfeiffer

Her first trip was in 1842CE, to Istanbul, Palestine and Egypt. The money she earned from publication of her travelogue allowed her to finance other trips. In 1845CE she visited Scandinavia and Iceland, and on 1846CE she set off on a trip around the world, visiting Brazil, Chile, Tahiti, China, India, Persia, Asia Minor and Greece, publishing it as *A Woman's First Journey Around the World* in 1850CE. In 1851CE she went to England, South Africa, the Sunda Islands, California, Oregon, Peru, Ecuador, New Granada, the Great Lakes, and returned home in 1854CE. Her last travels were to Madagascar in 1857CE, where she was received by Queen Ranavalona I. However, she accidentally got involved in a plot to overthrow the government, narrowly escaped execution and was merely expelled. She died in 1858CE from either cancer or a disease she contracted in Madagascar.

**Lady Florence Baker** - The wife of explorer Sir Samuel Baker, she is notable for both her background and doggedness. While on a hunting trip in the Balkans with Maharajah Duleep Singh, he on a whim visited the slave market in Vidin (modern Bulgaria). There, he became enchanted with a seventeen-year old white slave girl, but was outbid for her by the Ottoman Pasha. So, Baker bribed the girl's attendants and absconded with her. Her actual origin was Hungarian, having lost most of her family in the Hungarian Uprising of 1848CE, and stolen from her wounded father by Armenian slavers. While unmarried, they travelled as man and wife, and he eventually got a British Consul to issue her a passport with the name Florence Barbara Maria Finnian.



Florence accompanied Samuel for the rest of his life, through Africa, on military expeditions, to Japan, and on hunting expeditions to Africa, India and the Rocky Mountains. She spoke Romanian, German, Hungarian, English and Arabic, rode camels and horses and carried multiple pistols when travelling in uncivilized areas.

Samuel Baker never achieved the renown of some other explorers, though he was a very noted big game hunter. The fact that he and Florence were never actually married and the manner in which he acquired her offended some sensibilities. Despite their lack of marriage papers, she inherited his estate in 1893CE and died there in 1916CE.



**Allan Quatermain** - Allan Quatermain (Quatermain, not Quartermain) is the main character best known from the 1885CE novel *King Solomon's Mines*, by H. Rider Haggard. Quatermain is a big game hunter, occasional trader in rare goods and sometime explorer and treasure-hunter. Allan Quatermain is very much *not* a standard Victorian hero. He is an Englishman who cannot stand to live in England, a colonialist who thinks native peoples should have the right of self-determination, a Christian whose faith has faltered because of the death of multiple wives and his oldest son, and a man who desires to protect Africa's untamed spaces, but whose only way of making a living is to go into those spaces and kill the majestic creatures making it their home.



**John Carter** - Usually known as "John Carter of Mars", his origin is as a Virginian, a captain the US Civil War. He is the creation of Edgar Rice Burroughs, the main character in a variety of novels involving the planet Mars. He is a good fighter and leader, chivalrous, with the personality (both good and bad) you would expect in an upper-class Confederate officer.

His most notable characteristic is his amnesia about his background. He cannot remember his own childhood, and for all his life that he can remember, he has been about thirty years old. If killed, he seems to reappear with the same body, somewhere else. In **Verne**, this would imply the action of some higher technological power of which Carter is unaware. Date-wise, John Carter's first appearance on Mars (or Barsoom) is shortly after the US Civil War, after Carter dies in a cave while hiding from some Apaches and wakes up on Mars. In **Verne**, some other means would be needed, but the heroic nature of John Carter and his amazing luck at cheating death would still be there. To have John Carter already be on Mars when the first adventurers (or other humans) get there could be one of the unsolved and unsolvable mysteries of a campaign.

"Man's cleverness is almost indefinite, and stretches like an elastic band, but human nature is like an iron ring. You can go round and round it, you can polish it highly, you can even flatten it a little on one side, whereby you will make it bulge out the other, but you will never, while the world endures and man is man, increase its total circumference"

- from **King Solomon's Mines**(1885CE)

Quatermain is short instead of tall, wiry rather than muscular, and homely rather than handsome. What he is unequalled at is all aspects of hunting, most especially his extraordinary aim. He is known among the natives as Macumazana, the "one who stands out". He is very much an Englishman of his time, so he is in modern terms, somewhat racist, sexist and jingoistic. At the 1869CE start of a **Verne** campaign, Allan Quatermain would be about fifty-two years old (his adventure at King Solomon's mines did not happen until he was seventy-one). Allan Quatermain as a fictional character is modeled after real-life big game hunter Frederick Courteney Selous (pictured), who had a quite interesting (and very real) career of his own.



**Ayesha** - Queen and goddess of Kôr, a hidden African kingdom (some say hidden underground). Another creation of H. Rider Haggard, Ayesha is better known in modern times as the main character of the novel *She* (1887CE), short for her honorific, which is "She who must be obeyed", and the name Ayesha could be translated as "she who lives".



Ayesha is capricious and somewhat insane queen of the cannibalistic Amahagger, living in the ruins of once-great Kôr. Decimated by plague millennia ago, the city is a necropolis in ruins, the Amahagger insufficient in numbers and unable in skill to keep it maintained, and Ayesha uncaring so long as she rules what remains. Ayesha is immortal, having bathed in the fires of creation itself. Millennia in age, yet with a stunning beauty, ivory skin and apparent youth, she is worshiped as a goddess by the primitive Amahagger. She still mourns her lover Kallikrates, an Egyptian priest she murdered in a fit of jealous rage thousands of years ago, and beside whose mummified corpse she still sleeps each night (yes, she is *seriously* wrong in the head). In the novel *She*, one of the explorers who discovers her hidden kingdom is the physical twin of Kallikrates, whom she is convinced is Kallikrates reborn. She takes him to the hidden flames of creation, but he fears to enter them. Ayesha enters the flames to show that they are harmless, only to find that entering them for a second time removes the bounty given, and she instantly reverts to her true age and withers away. However, she was such a popular character that the author had to bring her back. She even encounters Allan Quatermain at one point!

*"I have heard of the beauty of celestial beings, now I saw it; only this beauty, with all its awful loveliness and purity, was evil - at least, at the time, it struck me as evil."*

- from **She** (1887CE)

To Victorians, Ayesha was scary. Capricious, selfish, powerful and sexual (not to mention insane), she was what every man feared women would become if not properly guided by those whom God and Nature meant to be in charge of things, i.e. men.

**John Clayton** - Otherwise known as Lord Greystoke, or Tarzan, Lord of the Apes. The creation of Edgar Rice Burroughs, a famous, archetypical hero. His parents were marooned on the west coast of Africa when the crew of their vessel mutinied. His mother became delusional shortly after giving birth to John, and died of natural causes before his first birthday, and his father was killed by Kerchak, brutal leader of the advanced ape tribe living in the region. The infant was adopted by the she-ape Kala, and given the ape-name Tarzan.



*Those of the apes who attempted to examine Kala's strange baby were repulsed with bared fangs and low menacing growls, accompanied by words of warning from Kala.*

*When they assured her that they meant the child no harm she permitted them to come close, but would not allow them to touch her charge.*

*It was as though she knew that her baby was frail and delicate and feared lest the rough hands of her fellows might injure the little thing.*

- from **Tarzan of the Apes** (1912CE)

Tarzan survived, grew up and eventually defeated Kerchak to lead the apes. In time, he encountered other humans, became enamored with an American, Jane Porter, follows her back to civilization, and finds out later his parents were landed nobility and that he has a title (Lord Greystoke) and estate. But, he quickly tires of the "hypocrisy of civilization" and returns with Jane to Africa, where he has both an estate and the more familiar jungle. Jane, Lady Greystoke eventually becomes a competent adventurer in her own right, though she starts off as little more than a damsel in distress.

Tarzan has all the skills and abilities of a great ape, but uses them with the full intelligence of a human. All his human faculties are superior to that of civilized men due to his constant struggle for survival in the jungle. He can communicate with most jungle animals, except for the predators, and has an excellent facility with human languages.



Physically, he is an ideal, tall, handsome, strong, intelligent, agile, with black hair and grey eyes. In the jungle, he typically wears (and needs) only a loincloth and a knife. There are rumors that by means of a witch doctor's potion, he cannot be killed. In terms of personality, Tarzan is fair, sides with the oppressed, loyal to his friends, generous as a host and exceptional as a leader. However, if driven to anger, he can rage with the ferocity of a wild ape.

As a fictional character, Tarzan was born in 1889CE. In **Verne**, he would be born in 1850CE, making him young but physically mature in 1869CE, allowing for incorporation of his meeting with Jane Porter as part of a campaign.

**Ada Lovelace** - Augusta Ada King, Countess of Lovelace, born Augusta Ada Byron, was the only legitimate child of poet Lord Byron. Notable as the first computer programmer. Sickly, but with an extraordinary facility for mathematics, she composed a program for computing a sequence of Bernoulli numbers on a Babbage Analytic Engine, a program that would have apparently run correctly, despite Ada having never seen the machine. Historically, she died in 1852CE, at the age of 36.



In **Verne**, her remarkable talents would have come to the attention of the League for Gaiian Primacy, where her insights would be invaluable in dealing with Messrs. Engiine. The League would have used its assets and knowledge to successfully treat her health problems, while at the same time faking her demise so that she would no longer be in the limelight. At the 1869CE start of a campaign she would be 53 years old, and be in charge of all League operations involving calculating engines. In addition to speaking "machine" to Messrs. Engiine, she personally handles the difficult analytical programming for the League's nuclear power projects. The League's successful treatment of her uterine cancer rendered her unable to have children, and in **Verne** she has turned any maternal instincts towards her calculating machines, in particular Messrs. Engiine, in whom she hopes to foster both personality and a sense of right and wrong. Whether or not Messrs. Engiine feel, understand or merely mimic any sense of affection or loyalty to Ada is anyone's guess.

**Una Persson** - A recurring figure from Michael Moorcock's books. She is an espionage agent, adventuress and sexually libertine anarchist. Her presence is almost certainly tied to some plot to overthrow a repressive system of authority in service to the Cosmic Balance. With advanced technology and time travel at her disposal, only a similarly talented foe would be able to interfere with her, and vice versa, making her presence in an area doubly dangerous if her plot and path intersect that of adventurers. As such, she should not be a recurring presence unless the gamemaster decides to use her as a patron to the adventurers, using them as proxies rather than interfering directly.



▼ **Note** - The pictures of fictional characters are taken from Victorian photos of other people, some notable in their own right, others generally unknown. Our apologies to the descendants of the honorable person who happened to look like the description of Harry Flashman...

▼ **Note** - Keep in mind that many of the fictional characters are individuals who were not just Victorian, but were created by authors in the Victorian Era or by authors whose formative years were in the Victorian Era. That is, Victorian readers would be following their adventures in the same way as we would follow James Bond or the teams of Stargate, people having fantastic adventures just out of sight in some secret or fantastic part of the "real world". And so, these characters represented heroes, ideals, inspirations and sometimes mirrors, reflecting both of the best and worst of what we were. Reading a few Victorian adventures written by period authors should be required for anyone contemplating running a **Verne** campaign.

▼ **RECOMMENDED SOURCES** - There are a lot of modern books, movies and television shows that deal with the Victorian Era and fantastical interpretations thereof, as well as a cornucopia of works from the period. Below is a moderate selection with a short description of each. *An exhaustive list would be an entire volume!* If you have made it this far, the subject clearly is of interest to you, so you should be able to do a more complete search for the exact sort of material you want for inspiration.

One thing to remember about a lot of Victorian science fiction is that it was really just thinly disguised social commentary. If Karl Marx wrote about open revolution of the proletariat, it was shocking. If Jack London, H.G. Wells or Edgar Rice Burroughs wrote of fantastical worlds where oppressed underclasses rose up in rebellion against corrupt, decadent masters, then *that* was just jolly good adventure. You could get in a lot of trouble from open criticism of the Church, but if you go into a lengthy diatribe about corrupt alien priesthods, well, that's just science fiction. If a heroine holds her own against a male foe, or a black man is treated almost as an equal, well, *anything* can happen in a novel, we suppose. On the other hand, plenty of writers were on the *other* side of the moral coin, with plots and characters extolling the dubious virtues of racism, jingoism, genocide, and religious intolerance. *Take your pick for inspiration...*

## Jules Verne

**A Journey to the Center of the Earth(1864):** A story involving Dr. Otto Lidenbrock and his belief that there are volcanic tubes going toward the center of the Earth. Starting at the extinct Icelandic volcano Snæfellsjökull, Lidenbrock, his nephew and their guide go deep into the Earth, eventually surfacing in southern Italy. The story has been made into at least four movies and half a dozen television shows and animated productions.

**Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea(1869):** A description of Captain Nemo and the Nautilus, as told from the perspective of Professor Aronax, who for much of the book is Nemo's captive. Giant sea monsters, political posturing, secret island base, mentally unstable genius with an axe to grind, etc. The original translations into English made Nemo a Polish nobleman who had suffered at the hands of the Russians. However, in the original French he was Indian nobility whose family had been killed by the British in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Only a few of the dozens of movies, television shows, comics or books that reference Nemo get this right.

**Robur the Conqueror(1886):** About the creator of a revolutionary airship design. Pride, boasting, kidnapping rivals so they can witness his superiority, secret island base, the whole megalomaniac genius thing. Made into the 1961 movie *Master of the World*. Robur is also mentioned in several steampunk novels and comics, including *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*.

**The Secret Adventures of Jules Verne(2000):** A TV series that had a young Jules Verne encounter the things he would later write as science fiction. Very steampunkish, lasted for 22 episodes before it was canceled.

## Edgar Rice Burroughs

**Tarzan of the Apes(1912):** The story of John Clayton, born in the western coastal jungles of equatorial Africa to a marooned couple from England, Lord and Lady Greystoke. Adopted as an infant by the she-ape Kala after his father is killed by the savage ape-king Kercha, Clayton is named Tarzan by Kala ("white skin" in the ape language) and raised in ignorance of his human heritage. Eventually he has to fight Kercha, becomes king of the apes, encounters white humans, becomes civilized enough to interact with Europeans, and has enough adventures to fill a few dozen sequels. Tarzan is one of the best known characters in fiction and there are countless references, movies, TV shows, comics, etc.

**A Princess of Mars(1917):** Confederate veteran John Carter is transported to Mars by means unexplained, is captured by a tribe of Thark warriors and rescues Princess Dejah Thoris, whose appeal to Carter is no doubt enhanced by her perfect form, Mars' lower gravity and her people's tendency to wear little more than jewelry. More of a fantasy or space western than it is pure science fiction. Wierd creatures, fantastic scenery, the first of several novels on this theme, going on long enough that John Carter is eventually rescuing his adult daughter from nasty Martians who just won't stay defeated. At the time of publication, a motion picture version was scheduled for release in 2012.

**H.G. Wells**

**The Time Machine(1895):** A novella rather than a full-length book, about an unnamed narrator who builds a time machine, has a single adventure in an unrecognizably distant future and then returns only slightly worse for wear. Nonetheless, the story has struck a chord on several levels, and it has been adapted to film, television, sequels and even rpg's, with the character of the Traveller making minor appearances in many other stories.

**The War of the Worlds(1898):** Told from the viewpoint of an unnamed narrator who travels through London suburbs as the Earth is invaded by Martians. Depending on who is analyzing it, the book is seen as a commentary on evolution, imperialism, religion or one Victorian prejudice or the other. There are several movies, comic books and anime on the novel or its plot, including the infamous radio production by Orson Wells in 1938 that provoked a genuine panic by people who thought it was real. There are several sequels by other authors, from Garrett P. Serviss' genocidal *Edison's Conquest of Mars*, to the more thoughtful *Sherlock Holmes's War of the Worlds*, by the under-appreciated Manly Wade Wellman.

**The First Men in the Moon(1901):** A journey to the moon undertaken by businessman Mr. Bedford and the brilliant but eccentric Dr. Cavor. On arrival, they find the moon is inhabited by the insectoid moon-men that they call "Selenites". The Selenites capture the pair, who eventually escape but get separated. Bedford makes it back to their ship and returns to Earth, but Dr. Cavor is recaptured, and with him, the secret of making any more of the anti-gravity Cavorite that made the spaceship possible. There have only been a few adaptations of the story, but Cavorite or something like it is mentioned in several other pieces of fiction, and this work was an influence on C.S. Lewis for his book *Out of the Silent Planet*.

**Arthur Conan Doyle**

**The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes(1892):** A collection of twelve short stories about the famous detective and his trusty sidekick Watson. The popularity of the character led to a total of four novels and fifty-six short stories by the author, as well as countless adaptations in film, television, comics, animation and cameos in other works set in the Victorian period. The "historical" timeframe of Sherlock Holmes' career runs from about 1880CE to 1914CE.

**The Lost World(1912):** Involving a variety of Victorian adventurers (irascible professor, reporter, British lord) on as followup expedition to an isolated Amazonian plateau where dinosaurs and other primitive creatures still dwell. The first expedition's reports were ridiculed for lack of concrete proof, so this time Professor Challenger is determined to bring back the goods. A plot complication from the first expedition strands them there, and they are forced to use the power of their bangsticks to cow the natives, take over the plateau and find a way to escape. The theme was used by other authors, Victorian and otherwise, the most notable was Edgar Rice Burroughs' *The Land that Time Forgot (1916)*, which had a German U-boat crew get stranded in an isolated, volcanically warmed part of Antarctica with similar characteristics.

**H. Rider Haggard**

**King Solomon's Mines(1885):** Allan Quatermain, an English hunter in Africa is approached by Sir Henry Curtis to help find his brother, who was last seen traveling into the African interior on a quest for the fabled King Solomon's Mines. Quatermain agrees to lead an expedition in return for a share of the treasure, or a stipend for his son if he is killed along the way. Quatermain rather cynically expects everyone on the expedition will die, but he is already fairly old and this guarantees his son will get a better inheritance than he could otherwise provide. There are other plot complications and twists, romance, treachery, haughty and cruel native potentates, and escaping with naught but the clothes on your back (and pockets full of diamonds). An extremely popular novel of the period, and probably the first "lost world" novel. The author was very progressive for the time. Some Victorian prejudices show through, but the main character shows respect for many of the natives, disdains typical colonial attitudes, and another member of the party starts an inter-racial romance (which ends badly). Allan Quatermain was the main character or appeared in over a dozen other books and stories by the author, many and shows up in numerous works by other authors since, notably in the comic (and film) *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*.

**She(1886):** A journey that ends up in a long-lost kingdom in the African interior after following clues left on an ancient shard of pottery. There, a primitive race of cannibalistic natives is ruled by a mysterious white queen, Ayesha, "She-who-must-be-obeyed". More details about Ayesha are listed previously in this chapter. It is worth noting that *She* has been popular enough that it has never been out of print since its publication over one hundred twenty years ago. The story has been made into nine motion pictures, and the character of Ayesha has been an archetype for numerous female antagonists, and was even cited by Freud and Jung in their works. The author even put Ayesha and Allan Quatermain together in *She and Allan(1920)*, a novel which is chronologically set *before* the events in *King Solomon's Mines*.

### Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

**Frankenstein: or the Modern Prometheus (1818):** Man creates monster, is repulsed and abandons it, monster kills innocent people and plans vengeance against its creator, creator pursues it to the frozen north but ultimately fails, monster immolates himself so that none will ever know of his existence. This falls somewhat between horror and science fiction, and is one of the most enduring pieces of its kind. The number of adaptations and references to the monster is extraordinary, exceeded perhaps only by *Dracula*. Two hundred years later, kids know who Frankenstein is, though technically the creature is "Frankenstein's monster", and Frankenstein was its creator. *It is worth noting that Shelley finished this novel when she was only nineteen*. While she continued to write until her death at age seventy-three, she only did one other science fiction title, the poorly received *The Last Man(1826)*.

### Sax Rohmer

**The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu(1913):** A fiendish Chinaman, "the greatest genius which the powers of evil have put on the earth for centuries" is kidnapping the best engineers of Europe for some unknown but certainly nefarious purpose. Thuggee, poisonings, exotic venomous creatures, serums that drive people insane, all sorts of good stuff. Played heavily into the fear of the "yellow peril" at the time and became the archetype for the oriental villain. In addition to about a dozen novels from 1913 to 1959, Fu Manchu was adapted to numerous films, comics and television shows, either directly or as a nearly identical character where an insidious evil genius was needed.

### Comics

There are quite a few comics with a steampunk and/or Victorian theme, some of which are direct or thematic adaptations of a particular story, others of which are combinations of various elements and characters.

**The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen:** A limited series written by Alan Moore and illustrated by Kevin O'Neill. It starts in an alternate 1898CE that has many of the characteristics of **Verne**. That is, most of the fantastic elements and characters of Victorian science fiction are real. For instance, volume 2 of the series is a retelling of the War of the Worlds, but with John Carter, Allan Quatermain, the Invisible Man, Mister Hyde, Captain Nemo, Dr. Moreau and others playing notable roles.

**Girl Genius:** A continuing "gaslamp fantasy" series by Phil and Kaja Foglio, about an alternate Victorian Era where war broke out between mad scientists with paranormal savant-like talents in one or more disciplines. Larger-than-life scenery-chewing characters, short- and long-term plots, humor and drama. Generally good stuff.

**Gotham by Gaslight:** A one-shot graphic novel by Brian Augustyn and Mike Mignola, setting the Batman as a Victorian vigilante circa 1889CE, trying to hunt down a killer with marked similarities to Jack the Ripper. It is an excellent work, and spawned one sequel, *Master of the Future*, which drew plot elements from Verne's *Master of the World*.

**Jonah Hex:** A on-again-off-again wild (and sometimes wierd) west series by a number of writers and artists for DC Comics since 1971. Jonah Hex is a bounty hunter and former Confederate soldier, horribly scarred by the Apache, who he is, oddly enough, a member of. Jonah Hex's adventures may be complex, but are largely mundane rather than steampunk. He has, however, travelled in time, met other DC universe characters, and has occasional brushes with the supernatural. At the start of a **Verne** campaign (1869CE), Jonah Hex would be 31 years old, and "historically speaking", he was gunned down during a card game in 1904CE. He was also the subject of a feature film in 2010.



## Film & television

Aside from adaptations of Victorian titles, there are a number of anime and other films that have a general “steampunkish” or mundane but unusual Victorian feel to them.

**The Amazing Screw-On Head:** A bizarre animated pilot based on an equally bizarre one-shot comic by Mike Mignola, revolving around Head's efforts to thwart Emperor Zombie's plans to gain the world-conquering powers hidden in the Temple of Gung. Over the top, but worth tracking down and watching.

**Wild Wild West:** An action-packed but off-maligned movie based very loosely on the 1965-69 television series of the same name. Extremely steampunk, with gadgets galore, over-the-top villains, implausible mechanical creations, and plenty of culture-bending roles (a non-Caucasian Secret Service agent in 1869CE being the primary one).

**Steamboy:** An anime set in a well-developed alternate Victorian Era, with a number of tech and political differences in place at the start of the story (circa 1866CE). One part artifact quest, one part boy genius, one part morality play, one part coming of age, and several parts of giant mechanical construct tearing up London.

**Van Helsing:** Deals much with Dracula and is thus outside the **Verne** universe, but also has elements of Frankenstein and werewolves, a few gadgets and plenty of action. The movie also had a few spin-offs, an animated prequel and a one-shot comic book, both of which are closer to the nature of the **Verne** universe.

**The Great Train Robbery:** Nothing steampunk in this 1979 film, but an excellent Victorian era heist movie, based loosely on the real-world “Great Gold Robbery of 1855”, where a gang made off with 90 kilograms of gold locked and guarded in a moving train without anyone noticing.

**Adventures of Brisco County Jr.:** A short-lived (27 episode) television western with some science-fiction elements, occasional wierd gadgets and Bruce Campbell's unique style.

**The Golden Compass:** A movie based on the works of Philip Pullman. Set in a world with a very Victorian feel, but heavy supernatural and religious overtones. As an interesting replay of Victorian era prudery, the film was roundly boycotted and criticized by religious groups for both the author's views and the book's unflattering characterization of organized religion.

## Games

A quick mention of some of the past and current role-playing games and settings with a steampunk or fantastic Victorian motif. Apologies to any professional colleagues who I have overlooked for this list.

**Cthulhu by Gaslight**, by William A. Barton(1986)

**Space:1889**, by Frank Chadwick(1988)

**Deadlands**, by Shane Hensley(1996)

**GURPS Steampunk**, by William Stoddard(2000)

**GURPS Steam-Tech**, by William Stoddard(2002)

**Action! Classics: The War of the Worlds**, by James L. Cambias(2003)

**Broken Gears**, by Michael Conterio, Helen Cousins, Lawrence Davies, Tom Garnett, Rob Hansen, Michelle Hart, Jamie Horder, Ian Horne, Edith Hutt, Tom Parfrey, Douglas Reay, Nicholas Taylor and J.J. Wilks (2005)(free!)

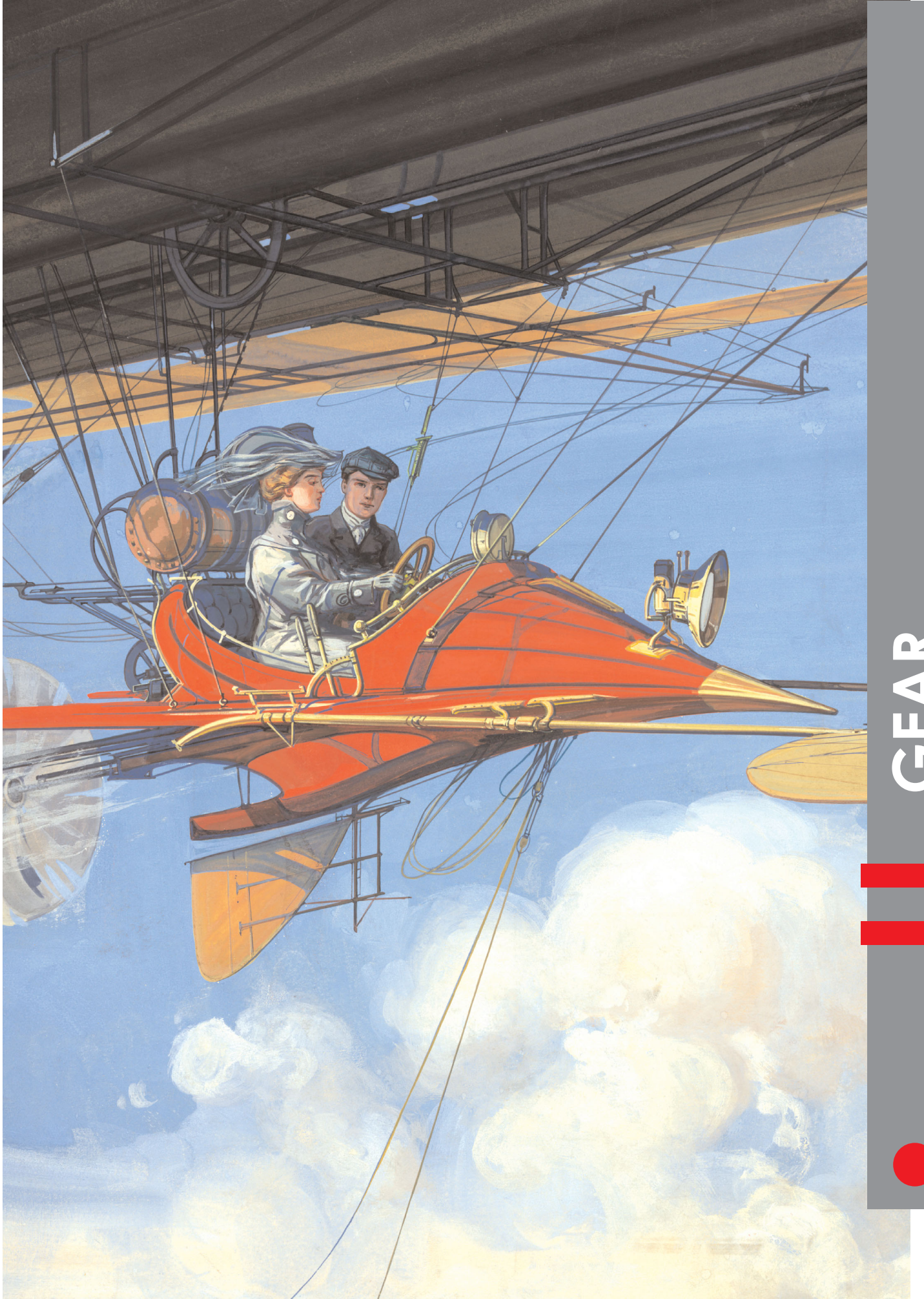
**Hollow Earth Expedition**, by Brannon Boren, Bruce Baugh, Eric Cagle, Jason Carl, Jeff Combos, Patrick Bradley and Steve Winter(2006)

**Victoriana**, by Kristian Bjorkelo, Andrew Peregrine, Scott Rhymer, Ian Sturrock and John Tuckey(2008)

**Lady Blackbird**, by John Harper(2010)(free!)

**Final note** - The “pulp fiction” and characters of the period between the World Wars is thematically speaking, an extension of the Victorian Era. The Phantom, Doc Savage, The Shadow, Tom Swift, even Philip Marlowe could be Victorian adventurers. Some with rough edges, some with fancy gadgets, but still living in a “real” universe with a side hidden from casual view, sometimes fantastic, sometimes merely *film noir*. So, do not let yourself be hemmed in by purely Victorian notions of plot and character. After all, James Bond could just as easily be a suave, gadget-equipped 19th century operative in for Her Majesty's Secret Service, or cryptic, programmable gateways to other planets might be found buried in the sands outside the pyramids of Mars... Just do a web search for “steampunk” and your favorite modern character or series and see what comes up!





GEAR





*If your officer's dead and the sergeants look  
white, remember it's ruin to run from a fight.*

*So take open order, lie down, and sit tight,  
and wait for supports like a soldier.*

*Wait, wait, wait like a soldier...*

*When you're wounded and left on  
Afghanistan's plains, and the women come  
out to cut up what remains.*

*Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains,  
an' go to your Gawd like a soldier.*

*Go, go, go like a soldier...*

*- The Young British Soldier (Rudyard Kipling)*

▼ **INTRODUCTION** - We've described a whole lot of weird gear so far, but a lot of it is very specialized stuff that is the focus of an adventure, like a zeppelin or submarine. But there are plenty of other fairly mundane yet important gadgets and gear worth more than just a line on an equipment list. A really good reference for all sorts of gear are the reproduction catalogs from Sears & Roebuck or Montgomery Ward, available for a number of years near or before the turn of the century. These give actual prices and weights for thousands of items, and a feel for just how things worked (dynamite through the US Mail for 15 cents per pound, 25 pound minimum! Dr. Rose's Arsenic Complexion Wafers, 35 cents! Princess Bust Developer Cream, 1 dollar and 50 cents!).

**Custom work** - Part of being wealthy is having the money to have all your possessions customized in some way. Your suits are made just for you, your double-barrel shotgun is ornately engraved, the stock is just the right length and the trigger pull meets your exacting specifications. Your horse comes from the finest stables, your children go to the best schools and the hotels you stay at know your preferences in everything from wines to the color of the sheets on your bed.

Part of wealth and status then, as now, is one-upping your peers. Owning a unique item, or having one made for you, preferably by the finest purveyor of that item, is often a tie-breaker when status and precedence comes up in conversation.

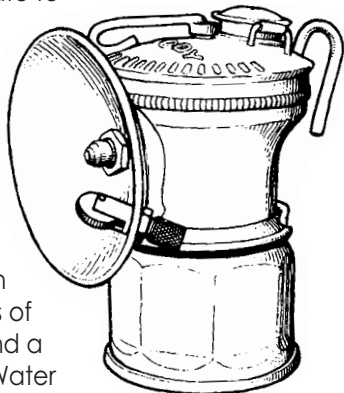
And just coincidentally, having an item custom made for you by the world's finest craftsmen for that item means that they are *not* working on an item for someone else. As a side note, acquisition of unique items for some ultra-wealthy or status-conscious person's collection could easily be the focus of an adventure. *Someone has stolen the Mona Lisa from the Louvre! Who would dare to do this?*

In general, the custom suits and such is the sort of thing just falls under the cost for your standard of living, for whatever income bracket you fall into. More specifically, if you are willing to pay *quadruple* for a particular item, *and* can wait the requisite amount of time to have it made just for you, you can negate any +1 to difficulty that people *without* custom gear might have to face. Your shoes have India rubber soles with a special grooved pattern carved into them, giving you better traction where others take a penalty on Agility. Your custom-fitted suit does not restrict your movement when you use that oriental fighting style your father's Chinese manservant taught you as a boy. The gold beads on your pistol's sights stand out in dim light, allowing you to more accurately aim in poor visibility. *And so on and so forth.* This customization never gives a bonus, it merely offsets a maximum of 1 point of penalty, and only penalties because of external conditions. A custom rifle does not negate an extra penalty for range or a penalty because you are injured. However, a custom rifle is certainly a more expensive rifle to begin with and should have an Accuracy higher than an off-the-shelf model. Keep in mind that an Accuracy of 4 is the maximum for a rifle using open sights, and 6 is the maximum for any shoulder-fired weapon in this era (and requires a telescopic sight to reach this level).

For those who are not wealthy, there are still ways in which gear can be customized. The usual way is by taking a saw, drill or shears to something to make it lighter, or by using a custom container of some kind that is lighter than the one the item originally came with. So, you might saw the handle off your toothbrush (if you use one at all), shave some wood off the heavy wooden stock of your rifle, take your ammunition out of the wooden crate it came in, get a lighter canteen, and so on. All this is well and good and can shave a kilo or two off your total load, but if you're a soldier, don't let anyone catch you defacing or mangling the Army's property! If you're a lowly infantryman, the time-honored way to lighten your load is to drop the stuff you don't think you'll need by the side of the road.

▼ **OTHER GEAR** - Listings for generic items of various sorts are on the gear listing, but here are a few things worth an extra mention for a Victorian Era campaign.

**Carbide lamps:** These were invented in the 1890's but you can adjust the date to suit. Before this time, the only portable lights were things like oil lanterns. Even miners would have small, dim oil lamps on their helmets, casting feeble beams a few meters into the utter darkness of the underground. Carbide lanterns changed that. A carbide lantern has two chambers, with nuggets of calcium carbide in the lower, and a reservoir of water in the upper. Water was very slowly dripped onto the calcium carbide, giving off acetylene gas, which was vented through a tiny nozzle and ignited, providing a bright flame that could be focused and directed with a metal reflector. Several times as bright as an oil lantern, they quickly became the norm for underground work, and they made modern cave exploration possible. They were used well into the 20th century (and are still available).

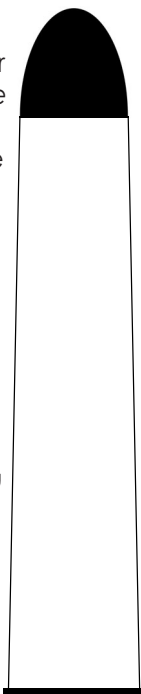


Carbide lantern

A carbide lantern can be mounted on any headgear and will negate all penalties for darkness out to 4 meters, with penalties accruing for range past this amount. Larger models were available, including table lamps, vehicle headlights with focusing lenses and such. A lantern will go through a handful of carbide nuggets every four hours, after which it needs to be rinsed out and refilled. *Carbide lanterns do not light instantly.* It takes several seconds for sufficient gas pressure to build once the water is turned on, and lighting the gas is done with a spark wheel mounted on the reflector.

As a side note, dry cell batteries were also invented in the 1890's and the first flashlights soon followed. They were called "flash" lights because the primitive batteries could not run a light bulb for long stretches, so the light would be turned on (flashed) for several seconds, then allowed to rest before turning it on again. They were fine when you only needed an intermittent light and had a hand free, which would not be the case in mining or cave exploration. Electric headlamps will not supplant carbide lamps for several decades.

.577 Nitro Express, actual size



**Big game rifles:** Before modern nitrocellulose propellants became the norm, all gunpowder weapons used "black powder". This burned fairly slow, so in order to get a powerful weapon, it needed to be a long weapon with a large bore. Big game rifles of the late 19th century could be absurdly powerful beasts. Because of their power and the size of their shells, they were not suited for bolt action rifles of the time, so the only way to have a followup shot in case you missed was to have a double-barrelled weapon, making it even heavier.

The largest big game rifles of the era were 4 bore double-barrelled rifles. "4 bore" meant that four lead balls the diameter of the barrel (about 25mm) would weigh one pound. These shoulder-fired monstrosities would weigh well over ten kilograms, with correspondingly heavy rounds. Hunters would have a dedicated gun bearer, only shouldering the rifle right before taking their shot, otherwise they would be exhausted from carrying it around all day. Noted big game hunter Frederick Courtney Selous used them and said:

*"They kicked most frightfully and in my case the punishment I received from these guns has affected my nerves to such an extent as to have materially influenced my shooting ever since, and I am heartily sorry I had anything to do with them."*

Most hunters would use a less extreme weapon, simply for ease of carrying it and a far less punishing recoil. The largest common caliber was the .577 Nitro Express. As the name would imply, this used nitrocellulose-based smokeless powder, but it is an advancement of a black powder .577 inch big game cartridge. A .577 Nitro Express double rifle would *only* weigh about six kilograms, with rounds *merely* 10 centimeters long. It was considered powerful enough for all African game, including elephants. This also presumes that those firing these weapons knew where to place their shots.

All these weapons fired lead bullets, but there is nothing to prevent adventurers (or their foes) from casting a hardened steel core into the bullets to make them armor-piercing. Note that these rifles, while accurate, were not sniper-grade weapons. They always used open sights and fired a large, fairly slow bullet. They would probably have an Accuracy of 3 in black powder and 4 for nitro-cellulose propellants.

▼ **Note** - In terms of the **Stuff!** design supplement for EABA, **Verne** weapons will be about -2 on cost. For instance, after all other modifiers, a 1 millihex pistol will have an adjusted Cost level of -13 (about 11 Credits).



**Horses** - Horses are the only means of overland travel except for walking. You are either riding the horse, or it is pulling a wagon or coach. Unlike a modern vehicle, which is "park and forget", horses need constant maintenance. An individual horse probably needs an hour a day in care if it is being used, somewhat less per horse if you have someone caring for several. Making sure they have no stones lodged in their hooves, checking for sores from an improperly adjusted saddle, making sure they have sufficient food or forage and water, etc.

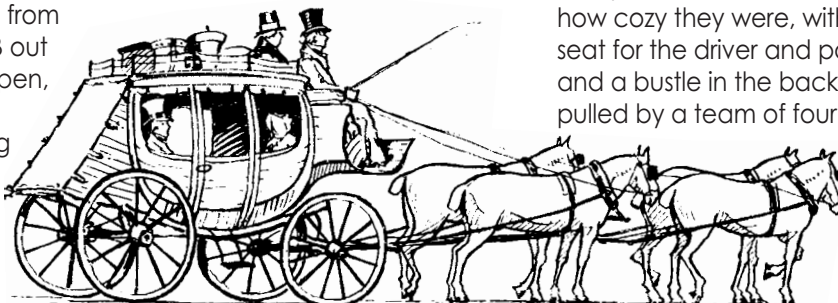
A household wealthy enough to have a stable will also have one or more permanent staff to tend the horses. At the very least, a groom, and you pay a farrier to come in occasionally and check their feet, though with a larger stable you will have an entire hierarchy of servants.

Someone with equestrian skill and wealth or status will be know about bloodlines, famous horses, have at least a superficial knowledge of horse-based sports like polo, and proper etiquette at the track, steeplechase or hunt. Someone whose horse familiarity is a more workmanlike sort (like a cowboy) will have more practical secondary knowledges.

Rather than get into the minutia of horses, there are a few basic things to remember for **Verne**:

- Unless a horse is cavalry trained, it will not react well to being injured, any violent actions in its vicinity, gunshots and so on. Deciding to go as fast as possible away from these things is likely.
- Horses will come in four varieties: Cart, draft (heavy), work and racing. Each has their price, advantages, strength, endurance and speed, and each has tradeoffs for their advantage. There are many combinations and variants.
- There will be horse snobs, just as there are snobs about any sort of status-linked possession.
- Horses are bigger and stronger than you are. They can dislocate your shoulder with a bite and twist, and each leg ends in a bone-hard club. You do *not* want one mad at you.
- Horses eat 1-2% of their body weight per day
- Decent horses will cost 200Cr and up, the sky is the limit. You get what you pay for...

Other than that, horses are your best means of getting from point A to point B out in the big wide open, and as long as someone is taking care of them, they can usually stay in the background.



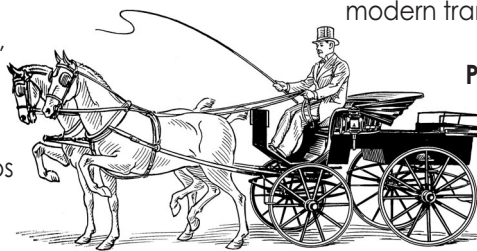
**Carriages** - Horse-drawn conveyances come in numerous varieties. Several are below. Most take no damage except from crushing or blast damage.

**Gig:** A one-horse, two-wheeled carriage, with a spring suspension, carrying one or two people. A sporty two-seater with minimal luggage room. A one-person version would be a sulky (a variant of which is used for racing). Hits: 6/Speed: -2.

**Hansom:** A one-horse, two-wheeled carriage with a low center of gravity. Carries up to two passengers protected from the weather on all but the front, with the driver exposed on the top rear. A London taxi will be a Hansom cab. Hits: 8/Speed: -4.

**Clarence:** A one-horse, four-wheeled carriage with a completely enclosed passenger compartment for up to four passengers, and an exposed driver seat at the front. More commonly found in front of train stations because it could carry an entire family or small group and their luggage. Clarences were nicknamed "growlers" because of the sound their iron-shod wheels would make on cobblestone streets. Hits: 9/Speed: -6.

**Omnibus:** Or just "bus". A large carriage that carries up to twenty people on bench seats, with marginal suspension and a roof to keep out the rain. Pulled by three horses abreast. The same role as a modern transit bus. Hits: 13/Speed: -8.



**Phaeton:** The four-wheeled equivalent of the gig, pulled by one or two horses. Usually had seating for two somewhat protected from the weather, with an additional seat in the back for a servant or for luggage. What you drive if you want to go fast, but want someone to take care of the horses when you arrive. Hits: 8/Speed: -4.

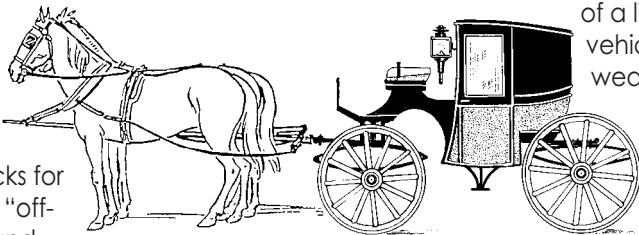
**Stagecoach:** A sturdy four-wheeled carriage with suspension, a completely enclosed passenger compartment for six to nine people, depending on how cozy they were, with an outside front bench seat for the driver and possibly the "shotgun" man, and a bustle in the back for luggage. Almost always pulled by a team of four horses. The equivalent of a long-haul bus. Will become obsolete in any area serviced by railroads. Hits: 10/ Speed: -6.

**Vardo:** A gypsy (Romani) carriage. Often ornately carved and brightly painted. Pulled by two or four horses, a vardo is completely enclosed except for shuttered windows and is the equivalent of a very small motorhome, complete with stove, water supply and larder. It would be uncomfortable to sleep more than a few people, but would usually carry supplies for pitching camp. Most would be about three or four meters long, and would have roof racks for carrying extra gear. Some were even built in "off-road" versions, designed to ford small rivers and with wider wheels to avoid sinking into soft ground. From **The Old Curiosity Shop** (by Charles Dickens):

*"Half of it...was carpeted, and so partitioned off at the further end as to accommodate a sleeping-place, constructed after the fashion of a berth on board ship, which was shaded, like the windows, with fair white curtains...The other half served for a kitchen, and was fitted up with a stove whose small chimney passed through the roof. It also held a closet or larder, several chests, a great pitcher of water, and a few cooking-utensils and articles of crockery. These latter necessities hung upon the walls, which in that portion of the establishment devoted to the lady of the caravan, were ornamented with such gayer and lighter decorations as a triangle and a couple of well-thumbed tambourines."*

A vardo will typically weigh in at 1000 to 1500 kilograms, and in terms of materials and labor would cost a few thousand Credits in **Verne** terms (≈40KCr to 50KCr in modern terms). Hits: 11/Speed: -8.

In **Verne**, Romani wagons would never be sold to outsiders, and were typically burned upon their owner's death as part of the funeral rites.



**Coupé:** A coupé would be a four-wheeled, two-horse carriage with a suspension and fully enclosed compartment for two. The driver sat in a protected area in front of the passengers. If the driver did not have protection from the elements, it was a *coupé de ville*. A landeau would be a convertible version of the coupé de ville (i.e. it had a folding top). The coupé would be the equivalent of a limousine, a luxury vehicle for two for all weather conditions. Hits: 9/Speed: -5.

**Buckboard:** A four-wheeled unsprung carriage, pulled by one or sometimes two horses. It has a front bench seat for two or three and a large, flat, low-sided cargo area in the back. Very common in the American west. The equivalent of a small pickup truck. Hits: 8/Speed: -5.

**Carryall:** A four-wheeled carriage with or without springs, pulled by one horse and having four or more seats, possibly with a folding top to keep out the rain. The Victorian equivalent of a family car. Hits: 9/Speed: -6.

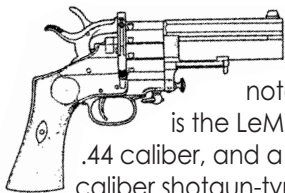
Each nation had its own variants and names for a particular style of carriage. For instance, a Brougham is about the same as a coupé de ville, except the design was invented for Henry Brougham, and a Berlin is a two-horse coupé de ville with the passenger compartment on springs rather than having a sprung suspension. A person would know the proper names and usage of the carriages appropriate to their nation and social status.

For combat purposes, a carriage and its horses are separate items. No carriage is going anywhere if *any* of its horses are incapacitated. The "speed penalty" listed for a carriage is a *relative* amount to compare against a regular horse and rider or between different carriages. Quality of horses could make a point or two of difference, but in the long run, the carriage with the better power-to-weight ratio is going to win the race. Anything with a speed modifier of -6 or worse is probably heavy enough that passengers would have to get out to help it up steep hills, and carriages like the omnibus cannot handle steep hills at all.

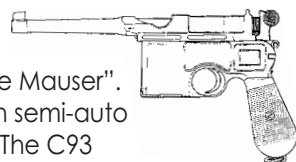
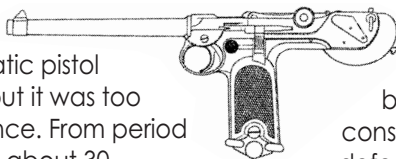
In general, due to their mechanical simplicity, carriages will have an Armor of around 1d+2 and a Damage Limit of -3. It will take several hits with any sort of non-explosive weapon to do any measurable damage to one.

**Pistols** - Almost all pistols adventurers will own will be modern cartridge firearms, using black powder as the propellant, at least at first. There are still a large number of muzzle-loading weapons out there, especially in less-developed regions, mostly as surplus from various national inventories as major nations upgrade to cartridge firearms.

Revolvers are becoming common, but single shot and double-barrel pistols are still readily available, especially for concealment or specialized uses like duelling. A revolver will have somewhere between five and eight chambers (six is the most common), and each pull of the trigger fires one shot. A "single-action" revolver means you have to pull the hammer back with your thumb to cock the weapon for each shot. This limits these to one shot per turn. A "double-action" cocks the hammer each time the trigger is pulled, and can fire two shots per turn. Either type can be "fanned", which is a technique of rapidly pulling the hammer back with one hand while holding the trigger down. This would allow three shots to be fired as a single action at one or more targets. However, the weapon must be fired from the hip and you cannot use the sights, so all fire is at +2 difficulty and the gamemaster may require a 5S specialization in "trick shots" to do this, which would also include a +1d bonus for fast-draws and other "gunfighter" techniques. A notable curiosity among revolvers is the LeMat, which had a 9-shot cylinder in .44 caliber, and a central chamber for a single .65 caliber shotgun-type round. Heavy (1.4kg) and complex, it never saw widespread use, but was commercially available.

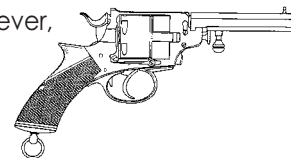


Historically, the first semi-automatic pistol was the Borchardt C93, in 1893CE, but it was too bulky to gain commercial acceptance. From period flyers, the actual cost in 1893CE was about 30 Credits (for comparison, a US coal miner in 1893CE would have a wage of about one-sixth of a Credit per hour or about 1.6 Credits for a ten-hour workday). The C96 (1896CE) was much more successful, and is typically known as the "Broomhandle Mauser". Other companies experimented with semi-auto pistols, but none were as successful. The C93 had removable clips, while the C96 had an internal magazine that was reloaded by inserting ammo in strips (as fast as reloading a clip), but the design eventually used removable magazines. The C96 was eventually modified to be a machine pistol, though historically this was past the main timeframe of the campaign. Both the C93 and C96 could have a shoulder stock attached for +1 Accuracy.



The LGP will adopt semi-auto pistols at least a decade before anyone else, and will use their advanced metallurgy to make them more powerful than weapons of similar size by other manufacturers.

The biggest pistols that will be seen in **Verne** are "howdah pistols", which were for all practical purposes, double-barrelled sawed-off 12 gauge shotguns firing a single large ball from each barrel. The notion was that if riding a howdah (the pavillion on top an elephant) and the tiger you were hunting decided to get up close and personal, you would have a powerful short range weapon to take it down with. The next most powerful sidearm was the "Lancaster pistol", which was a four-barrelled pistol that could fire two shots per turn. The Lancaster weighed a little more than a kilogram and was available in calibers up to .577 inch (14.5mm). It was considered more reliable and powerful than revolvers of the day and was popular with British officers in India and Africa (the Webley revolver in .577 held more shots, but was more time-consuming to reload because the spent shells had to be extracted one at a time). However, the Lancaster relied on a long trigger pull to fire it, making aimed fire impractical.



Until modern nitrocellulose propellants become available in a **Verne** campaign, the big problem with *all* black powder weapons is fouling. Residue from the burned powder builds up and sticks to moving parts and the inside of the barrel, decreasing reliability. At the time, fouling so bad that it rendered weapons inoperative was considered a contributing factor for the British defeat by the Zulu at Isandlwana (1879CE), though historians are of mixed opinions on this. Any black powder weapon that is not thoroughly cleaned after one or two extended shooting sessions (≈25 shots) will become Unreliable(7). A weapon that is already Unreliable(7) will become Unreliable(11).

▼ **Note** - Ammunition in **Verne** is often extremely specific. The 1903 Sears catalog listed eight different .32 caliber pistol rounds and six different .45 caliber rifle rounds! The further you get from America or Europe, the less likely it is you can find ammunition for your specialized weapon. It is best to simply assume that the *only* ammunition available for your weapon is the ammunition you brought with you.

▼ **Note** - Most guns on the weapon list are also available as cheap knockoffs, with an Accuracy of 1 point less and Unreliable(7), but at half the cost.



**Binoculars** - These came into common use among officers during the wars of this period, and rapidly became common enough for adventurers, bird-watchers and such. Binoculars will generally offset 4 points of range difficulty on sight Awareness, but using them requires an action and looking at a specific narrow arc, outside of which you don't see anything.

**Signal lamps** - For communication between ships, especially at night, signal lamps were used. On land, the same system could be used but would largely have been superseded by telegraphs. Using Morse Code or a specialized code, information could be transmitted at a rate of a few words a minute. Very slow, but if a "word" has a readily known complex meaning (e.g. "plan X"), then sophisticated maneuvers can be coordinated. During the day, the equivalent could be done with semaphore flags. Doing either counts as knowledge of a new language, with 5S required for +0d fluency.

**Caving gear** - Cave exploration is *not* a sport in 1869CE. It is something done by crazy rich people who do not have to work underground for a living, and crazy poor people who are just a little bit too curious. So, there is no dedicated caving or underground exploration gear. Everything is converted from some other use or made just for the individual involved. About the only thing that is useful off the shelf is rope and miner's helmets (with little oil lanterns on them). For much of **Verne**, the caves of note will have huge galleries, relatively easy paths to the deeper realms, and are mostly dry. *Passages where you have to extinguish your lantern and shimmy through an underwater tube, or descend a hundred meter dropoff in a Stygian darkness that swallows up the flame of your feeble lantern?* These are uncommon, but can be inserted as needed by the gamemaster to make a trip "one-way" or force the abandoning of bulky gear just to be obnoxious.

The most important thing is that the luminescent fungi used for light by the subsurface races do not begin to grow until one is a few days travel from the surface, so explorers will need to make sure they have sufficient fuel for their lights, or they could be lost forever in the underground labyrinths.

▼ **Note** - The terms "spelunker" and "spelunking" did not come into use until the 1940's. There is no special term for cave explorers in **Verne** (other than "crazy fools"), but adventurers who become famous for doing it might come up with a word that becomes common usage!

**Climbing gear** - Mountain climbing is slightly more developed than cave exploration, but the gear is still primitive. Most of the time it is simply heavy, bulky cold-weather clothing, lots and lots of rope, knives and ice axes. Specialized shoes or boots were the main specialty item for dedicated climbers. Pitons (iron spikes hammered into cracks for anchoring rope) were not common until the late 1800's and were considered cheating by some climbers. Victorian climbers had to plan their routes (and camping) accordingly.

It was not just a climb that gave climbers fame, it was the route to the top. Certain mountains had ascent routes that were considered "unclimbable". The first team to succeed at such a route would be famous. Even those who followed that route later would have more "cred" than someone who had taken an easier route.

**Camping gear** - Aluminum and lightweight synthetic fabrics are not available in a **Verne** campaign (at least not at first), so camping gear is wood, steel and canvas or oilcloth (cotton, oiled for water-resistance). If you are exceptionally well-heeled and do not mind a reduction in durability, silk can be substituted for other fabrics. The notion of being able to "camp" with only what you could carry on your own back only exists for those who are skilled enough to live off the land. *You simply could not make a tent, blankets, stove and food light enough for one person to carry.* Blankets, food and a waterproof duster to sleep on, in or under, maybe. Again, a reason why horses were so useful. They could carry what you could not.

**Expeditions** - Expeditions are going to be major undertakings. Not just financially, but logistically. We have touched on the costs, but you also have to remember how the nuts & bolts of things will affect adventurers. A major expedition will need an entire staff just for the planning, and a few members of that staff will probably accompany the expedition, at least to its first major destination. It isn't just things like food, weapons, tools, clothing and sundries. You also need to deal with getting diplomatic permission from local poobahs, taking into account the local weather (you do not want to arrive in the monsoon season), shipping schedules, current or brewing international tensions and so on. Even "routine" expeditions like big game hunts will probably have specialists in the home and destination country to make sure the hunter arrives with what they need, and gets to and from where they need to go in one piece. These things often take months to plan, not counting the travel involved, so an announced expedition can itself generate adventures because of actions taken to oppose it.



**BASIC ERA MELEE WEAPONS**

NAME	DAMAGE	DAMAGE TYPE	LENGTH	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Brass knuckles	punch+0	half-lethal	short	.3kg	1Cr	1d+2	2	balanced
Police truncheon	punch+0	half-lethal	short	.3kg	1Cr	1d+0	2	balanced
Hunting knife	punch-1	lethal	short	.3kg	1Cr	1d+2	2	balanced
Hand ax e	punch+0	lethal	short	.7kg	2Cr	1d+1	2	balanced
Machete	punch+1	lethal	medium	1.0kg	2Cr	1d+2	3	balanced
Saber	punch+2	lethal	long	1.1kg	15Cr	1d+2	3	balanced

**BASIC ERA RANGED WEAPONS**

BOWS & CROSSBOWS	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Light bow	arrow	0	0d+2	1 internal	.9kg	10Cr	1d+0	2	Reliable, Str 5
Medium bow	arrow	0	1d+0	1 internal	1.2kg	15Cr	1d+0	2	Reliable, Str 6
Heavy bow	arrow	0	1d+2	1 internal	1.5kg	25Cr	1d+0	2	Reliable, Str 8
Medium crossbow	quarrel	1	2d+2	1 internal	3.2kg	35Cr	1d+0	3	Reliable, Str 8

**INDUSTRIAL ERA WEAPONS<sup>bp</sup>**

NAME	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Brown Bess musket <sup>bp</sup>	.75 cal ball	1	2d+2	1 internal	4.4kg	25Cr	2d+0	4	Muzzle-loading wpn
Baker rifle <sup>bp</sup>	.62 cal ball	3	3d+1	1 internal	4.1kg	45Cr	2d+0	4	Muzzle-loading wpn
Whitworth rifle <sup>bp</sup>	.45 cal ball	6	4d+0	1 internal	4.8kg	500Cr	2d+0	4	Muzzle-loading wpn, telescopic sight
Sharps Model 2 <sup>bp</sup>	.32 caliber	0	0d+1	4 internal	.4kg	10Cr	1d+2	2	
Remington Derringer <sup>bp</sup>	.41 caliber	0	0d+2	2 internal	.4kg	10Cr	1d+2	2	\$5 in 1903
Webley Bulldog <sup>bp</sup>	.442 cal bullet	1	1d+1	5 internal	.5kg	15Cr	1d+2	2	Dbl-action revolver
Colt Lightning <sup>bp</sup>	.38 cal. bullet	1	1d+1	6 internal	1.0kg	25Cr	1d+2	2	Dbl-action revolver
LeMat .44 <sup>bp</sup>	.44 cal bullet	1	1d+2	9 internal	1.5kg	65Cr	1d+2	2	Dbl-action revolver
	00 buckshot	1	1d+0 x 2	1 internal					
Colt SA Army <sup>bp</sup>	.45 cal bullet	1	2d+0	6 internal	1.1kg	45Cr	1d+2	2	Sngl-action revolver
Webley Boxer <sup>bp</sup>	.577 cal bullet	1	2d+1	6 internal	1.4kg	45Cr	1d+2	2	Sngl-action revolver, takes 2x reload time
Lancaster <sup>bp</sup>	.577 cal bullet	0	2d+2	4 internal	1.1kg	45Cr	1d+2	2	
Howdah pistol <sup>bp</sup>	12ga bullet	0	2d+2	2 internal	1.2kg	45Cr	1d+2	2	
	00 buckshot	1	1d+2 x 2						
Henry Rifle <sup>bp</sup>	.44 cal bullet	2	3d+0	18 internal	3.8kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	Reload 1 shot/turn
Sharps 1853 <sup>bp</sup>	.52 cal bullet	2	3d+2	1 internal	3.6kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	
Springfield 1873 <sup>bp</sup>	.45 cal bullet	2	3d+2	1 internal	3.3kg	65Cr	1d+2	3	
Martini-Henry <sup>bp</sup>	.450 cal bullet	3	4d+0	1 internal	3.9kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	
Sharps Buffalo rifle <sup>bp</sup>	.50 cal bullet	4	4d+1	1 internal	7.2kg	175Cr	2d+0	4	
Double rifle <sup>bp</sup>	.577 cal bullet	3	4d+1	2 internal	6.0kg	175Cr	2d+0	4	
4 bore double rifle <sup>bp</sup>	25mm bullet	2	5d+1	2 internal	11kg	250Cr	2d+0	5	
Greener double <sup>bp</sup>	12ga bullet	1	3d+0	2 internal	3.8kg	175Cr	2d+0	4	
	00 buckshot	2	1d+0 x 3						
Remington double <sup>bp</sup>	12ga bullet	0	3d+0	2 internal	3.6kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	
	00 buckshot	1	1d+0 x 3						
Export double <sup>bp</sup>	12ga bullet	0	3d+0	2 internal	3.6kg	30Cr	2d+0	4	Unreliable(7)
	00 buckshot	0	1d+0 x 3						
Gatling gun <sup>bp</sup>	.45 cal bullet	2	5d+0	240 clip	180kg(23)	1.5KCr	2d+0	7	Autofire only, add 260kg for carriage

<sup>bp</sup>black powder weapon, may have special cleaning requirements

\*remember that all prices are adjusted to match Verne levels of income and gear imported to or exported from Verne may need cost adjustment

# Verne<sup>1.0</sup>

## INDUSTRIAL ERA WEAPONS<sup>bp</sup>

NAME	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
6-pdr cannon <sup>bp</sup>	93mm ball	2	8d+2	1 internal	500kg(3)	100Cr	3d+0	12	Muzzle-loading wpn
12-pdr cannon <sup>bp</sup>	117mm ball	2	10d+0	1 internal	700kg(6)	200Cr	3d+1	13	Muzzle-loading wpn
24-pdr cannon	148mm ball	2	11d+1	1 internal	1000kg(12)	300Cr	3d+1	14	Muzzle-loading wpn
10-pdr Parrott rifle <sup>bp</sup>	74mm shot	3	9d+2	1 internal	500kg(5)	200Cr	3d+0	12	Muzzle-loading wpn
20-pdr Parrott rifle <sup>bp</sup>	93mm shot	3	10d+2	1 internal	850kg(10)	400Cr	3d+1	13	Muzzle-loading wpn
Black powder <sup>bp</sup>	-	-	2d+2 expl.	-	.5kg	.3Cr	-	-	+1d each 2x mass
Ketchum grenade <sup>bp</sup>	grenade	0	2d+1 frag	-	.5kg	2Cr	1d+2	1	US Civil War leftover, impact, Unrel.(11)
Ketchum grenade <sup>bp</sup>	grenade	0	3d+2 frag	-	1.5kg	5Cr	2d+0	2	US Civil War leftover, impact, Unrel.(11)
Adams grenade <sup>bp</sup>	grenade	0	4d+1 frag	-	2.5kg	6Cr	2d+1	2	US Civil War leftover, 5 sec fuze, Unrel.(7)

## INDUSTRIAL ERA WEAPONS<sup>sm</sup>

NAME	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Colt SA Army <sup>sm</sup>	.45 cal bullet	1	2d+1	6 internal	1.1kg	45Cr	1d+2	2	Sngl-action revolver
Borchardt C93 <sup>sm</sup>	7.63mm bullet	2	1d+2	8 clip	1.3kg(.2)	65Cr	1d+2	2	Semi-auto
Mauser C96 <sup>sm</sup>	7.63mm bullet	1	2d+0	10 internal	1.3kg	65Cr	1d+2	2	Semi-auto
Winchester 1873 <sup>sm</sup>	.44 cal bullet	3	3d+0	15 internal	4.3kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
Remington-Lee 1885 <sup>sm</sup>	.450 cal bullet	3	4d+0	5 clip	4.2kg(.3)	90Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
Winchester 1894 <sup>sm</sup>	.30 cal bullet	3	4d+0	7 internal	3.4kg	75Cr	1d+2	3	One shot per turn
Mannlicher M1888 <sup>sm</sup>	8mm bullet	3	4d+1	5 internal	4.5kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
Lee-Enfield <sup>sm</sup>	.303 cal bullet	3	4d+1	10 internal	4.2kg	90Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
Madsen 1897 <sup>sm</sup>	7.92mm bullet	2	4d+2	30 clip	10kg(1.0)	250Cr	2d+0	5	Autofire, unreliable(7)
Double rifle <sup>sm</sup>	.577 cal bullet	3	5d+1	2 internal	6.0kg	175Cr	2d+0	4	
4 bore double rifle <sup>sm</sup>	25mm bullet	2	6d+0	2 internal	7.2kg	250Cr	2d+0	4	
Coach gun <sup>sm</sup>	12ga bullet	0	3d+0	2 internal	3.0kg	90Cr	1d+2	3	
	00 buckshot	0	1d+0 x 3						
Greener double <sup>sm</sup>	12ga bullet	1	3d+1	2 internal	3.8kg	175Cr	2d+0	4	
	00 buckshot	2	1d+1 x 3						
Winchester 1887 <sup>sm</sup>	12ga bullet	0	3d+1	5 internal	3.6kg	125Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
	00 buckshot	1	1d+1 x 3						
Winchester 1901 <sup>sm</sup>	10ga bullet	0	3d+2	5 internal	4.1kg	125Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
	00 buckshot	1	1d+2 x 3						
Maxim M1910 <sup>sm</sup>	7.62mm bullet	2	d+	250 belt	53kg(10)	2KCr	2d+2	8	Autofire only, tripod, 2d+2 gunshield
Hotchkiss Mtn. Gun <sup>sm</sup>	42mm shot	2	8d+0	1 internal	165kg(1.2)	200Cr	2d+2	10	1 shot each 5 sec.,
	explosive shell	2	2d+1 lethal						weapon and ammo
	cannister	2	3d+2 x 3						(50 shots) is a 3 mule load
Dynamite	-	-	3d+1 expl.	-	.5kg	.5Cr	-	-	+1d each 2x mass
Mills bomb N°5	grenade	0	3d+0 frag	-	.6kg	2Cr	1d+2	1	5 sec. fuze

<sup>sm</sup>smokeless powder weapon, lower tech armors may be at -1d vs. these weapons

**MARTIAN WEAPONS**

NAME	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Heatray pistol	energy cube	2	3d+0	65 clip	1.0kg(.3)	350Cr	1d+2	2	Two shots per turn
Heatray carbine	energy cube	4	4d+2	20 clip	2.5kg(.3)	1.4KCr	1d+2	2	Two shots per turn
Heatray rifle	energy cube	5	5d+1	12 clip	4.0kg(.3)	2.5KCr	2d+0	3	Two shots per turn

All heatray weapons are Unreliable(7) if fired more than once per turn. Not available for sale, cost is only for comparison

**VRIL WEAPONS**

NAME	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Heavy force MG	Vril power	3	5d+1	800	500kg	32KCr	2d+1	10	Veh. mount, autofire
Light force cannon	Vril power	4	8d+1	200	500kg	32KCr	2d+1	10	Veh. mount, one shot per turn

Vril weapons do battering damage (+2 to effect for each 1d if armor is penetrated, +1 to Damage Limit for each 2d). Vril weapons explode if destroyed. Not available for sale, cost is only for comparison

**LGP WEAPONS**

NAME	USES	ACCURACY	DAMAGE	SHOTS HELD	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Improved Mauser	7.63mm bullet	1	2d+2	10 internal	1.3kg	250Cr	1d+2	2	Semi-auto
Improved Borchartd	7.63mm bullet	2	2d+1	8 clip	1.3kg(.2)	250Cr	1d+2	2	Semi-auto
Improved Winchester	.44 cal bullet	3	3d+2	15 internal	4.3kg	360Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
Improved Remington	.450 cal bullet	3	4d+2	5 clip	4.2kg(.3)	360Cr	2d+0	4	One shot per turn
Improved dynamite	-	-	3d+2 expl.	-	.5kg	2Cr	-	-	+1d each 2x mass

All LGP weapons are armor-piercing against lesser tech armor and materials. Not available for sale, cost is only for comparison

**INDUSTRIAL ERA PERSONAL ARMOR**

NAME	ARMOR	COVERS	WEIGHT	COST*	NOTES
Heavy clothing	0d+1	all	4.0kg	-	Equivalent to workman's or outdoor gear adds 0d+1 to any other worn armor
Winter clothing	0d+2	all	8.0kg	-	Equivalent to winter coat and underlayers, adds 0d+1 to any other worn armor
Corset	0d+2	torso(10-11)	1.0kg	2Cr	0d+1 vs. black powder weapons
Silk undervest	1d+1	torso(10-11)	2.5kg	150Cr	Concealable, -1d vs. smokeless powder firearms, hand-tailored for an individual
Cotton armor	1d+1	torso(9-12)	5.0kg	10Cr	Not concealable, only covers front, -1d vs. smokeless powder firearms
Steel cuirass	2d+0	torso(10-11)	3.0kg	40Cr	Covers front of chest and abdomen, barely concealable
Stahlhelm	1d+2	head(5-6)	.8kg	15Cr	not concealable

No one historically uses protective helmets in 1869CE, but they could be introduced later

**ATOMIC ERA PERSONAL ARMOR**

NAME	ARMOR	COVERS	WEIGHT	COST*	NOTES
LGP scale undervest	3d+0	torso(10-11)	4.0kg	350Cr	concealable
LGP armored duster	2d+0	body(7-14)	9.8kg	250Cr	outermost layer
LGP armored overvest	2d+1	torso(9-12)	5.0kg	150Cr	not concealable
LGP stahlhelm	2d+2	head(5-6)	.8kg	100Cr	not concealable
Selenite ceremonial cuirass	2d+1	torso(9-12)	3.0kg	-	One-sixth weight on the Moon, -1d vs. smokeless powder weapons
Martian resin cuirass	1d+2	torso(9-12)	2.0kg	150Cr	One-third weight on Mars, +1d vs. heatrays
Martian resin helm	1d+2	head(5-6)	.6kg	150Cr	One-third weight on Mars, +1d vs. heatrays

## INDUSTRIAL ERA STUFF

NAME	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Work pants	1kg	4Cr	0d+1	3	Generic working-man's clothing, upper-class outdoor clothing would be at least double the price
Work shirt	.3kg	2Cr	0d+1	2	
Work gloves	.2kg	2Cr	0d+1	2	
Work boots	1.5kg	10Cr	0d+2	3	
Off-the-rack suit	1.5kg	40Cr	0d+1	4	Includes suit, vest and slacks. Formal clothing provides no protection to the wearer (its Armor only protects itself)
Tailored suit	1.5kg	80Cr	0d+1	4	Minimum price for a tailored suit, note that a tailor must be aware of any adjustments needed for body armor
Dress shirt	.2kg	5Cr	0d+1	1	Minimum price for a dress shirt
Dress slacks	.6kg	10Cr	0d+1	2	Minimum price for nice slacks
Dress shoes	.8kg	10Cr	0d+1	2	Minimum price for nice shoes
Overcoat	2.5kg	40Cr	0d+1	4	Waterproof, knee- or ankle length
Winter coat	6.0kg	80Cr	0d+2	6	Fur-lined, knee- or ankle-length. Note that winter gear made by Arctic aborigines generally weighs less and performs better than its European/American equivalents
Winter mittens	.6kg	5Cr	0d+2	2	With or without trigger finger flap
Pocketwatch	.1kg	5Cr	0d+2	1	Cheap watch. A gold pocketwatch could be >200Cr
Cane/walking stick	.5kg	2Cr	1d+0	2	As fancy and expensive as desired
Umbrella	.6kg	10Cr	0d+2	2	0d+1 when opened
Light tack	6kg	40Cr	1d+0	5	For light- or short-term riding, saddle, blanket, reins, bit
Heavy tack	18kg	90Cr	1d+0	7	For heavy- or long-term riding, saddle, blanket, reins, bit
Saddlebags	2kg	10Cr	1d+0	4	Carries about 5kg on each side, up to 10kg per side if you want to risk bruising the horse's kidneys, usually has a spot for a bedroll or rolled-up overcoat on top.
Haversack	.8kg	2Cr	0d+2	2	About the size of a large purse, slung over one shoulder
Military backpack	2kg	5Cr	1d+0	3	Waterproofed canvas, about .6m x .3m x .3m, poorly designed, uncomfortable. Loaded weight of about 18kg, including blanket, shelter half, groundcloth, overcoat, mess kit and spare clothing.
Trade paperback	.2kg	.25Cr	0d+1	2	Generic dime-store novel
Softcover reference	.3kg	1Cr	0d+1	2	Reduces difficulty by 2 on a specific subject where reference data would help
Hardback reference	1kg	4Cr	0d+2	3	Reduces difficulty by 2 on a specific subject where reference data would help
Set of encyclopedias	15kg	40Cr	0d+2	7	Reduces difficulty by 1 on most subjects where reference data would help
Microscope	5kg	120Cr	0d+2	2	Includes wooden travel case(1d+1)
Doctor's bag	6kg	100Cr	1d+0	5	Basic tools and medicine a doctor would need in the field, sufficient for treating up to 10 Hits worth of injuries
Carpenter chest/tools	40kg	100Cr	1d+2	8	Includes wooden travel case(1d+2)
Drafting set	1kg	20Cr	0d+2	2	Includes wooden travel case(1d+0)
Typewriter <sup>o</sup>	5kg	100Cr	1d+0	2	Includes wooden travel case(1d+1)
Telegraph set(1)	3kg	10Cr	1d+0	2	Uses 1 energy per hour of use, uses one wet cell battery, Includes wooden travel case(1d+1)
Box camera <sup>o</sup>	.5kg	20Cr	0d+2	2	Holds 12 pictures
Quality camera	5kg	80Cr	1d+0	4	Holds 1 picture, usually uses tripod, Includes wooden travel case(1d+1)
Film developing kit	3kg	20Cr	0d+2	4	Includes wooden travel case(1d+0)
Gramophone <sup>o</sup>	10kg	100Cr	0d+2	3	Includes wooden travel case(1d+1)
Edison kinoscope <sup>o</sup>	20kg	400Cr	1d+0	4	Includes wooden travel case(1d+1)



## INDUSTRIAL ERA STUFF

NAME	WEIGHT	COST*	ARMOR	HITS	NOTES
Oil lamp	.6kg	4Cr	1d+0	1	Negates darkness penalties out to 4 meters, -2d penalty per range band after this. Refill with .2kg oil each night.
Carbide lamp	.3kg	8Cr	1d+0	1	Negates darkness penalties in a 60°arc out to 15 meters, -2d penalty per range band after this. Refill with .1kg carbide each night.
Flashlight(2) <sup>a</sup>	.6kg	20Cr	1d+0	2	Negates darkness penalties in a 60°arc out to 8 meters, -2d penalty per range band after this. Uses 10 energy per hour, uses two dry cell batteries.
Wet cell battery	1.0kg	5Cr	0d+2	1	Holds 100 energy, not suitable for rugged applications
Dry cell battery <sup>a</sup>	.1kg	1Cr	0d+2	1	Holds 10 energy
Shelter half	3kg	5Cr	0d+2	3	Half of a small, two-person tent, 0d+1 vs. puncture, takes no Hits from punctures
Small tent	8kg	10Cr	0d+2	6	2m x 3m, 0d+1 vs. puncture, takes no Hits from punctures
Expedition tent	25kg	25Cr	1d+0	8	3m x 4m, 0d+2 against melee, takes no Hits from punctures
Expedition tent	50kg	60Cr	1d+0	9	5m x 6m, 0d+1 vs. puncture, takes no Hits from punctures
Folding canvas canoe	16kg	80Cr	0d+2	5	For 2 persons, 0d+1 vs. puncture, takes no Hits from punctures but will leak
Expedition cookware	35kg	20Cr	2d+1	8	Sufficient for all needs of a party of up to 8
Portable smithy	100kg	100Cr	2d+1	10	All tools for basic blacksmithing tasks
Sewing machine	50kg	50Cr	1d+2	6	Treadle-powered
Steamer trunk	20kg	20Cr	1d+2	6	About 1m x .5m x .5m, may be padlocked
Wardrobe trunk	50kg	100Cr	2d+0	8	About 2m x 1m x 1m, may be padlocked
Field desk	50kg	100Cr	2d+0	8	Chest that converts to desk, drawers and chair
Leather suitcase	3kg	5Cr	1d+0	3	Hardsided, with simple lock (difficulty 7 to pick)
Camping blanket	4kg	20Cr	1d+0	5	Provides a +10°C temperature shift. Does not lose Hits to simple punctures. Armor of 0d+1 when unfolded.
Sleeping bag	10kg	50Cr	1d+0	6	Provides a +20°C temperature shift. Does not lose Hits to simple punctures. Armor of 0d+1 when unfolded.
Mess kit	.5kg	5Cr	1d+0	2	Tin cup, tin plate, small pot, fork and spoon
Sundries kit	.3kg	5Cr	1d+0	2	Soap, razor, mirror, washcloth, etc.
Army rations	2.5kg	1Cr	1d+0	3	Three days of biscuits, salt pork, coffee and sugar. Note that this is <i>not</i> sufficient nutrition for a man on the march for three days, but it will replace some of the lost calories. These rations merely supplement foraging and camp kitchen fare
Heavy padlock	.5kg	3Cr	2d+0	2	Difficulty(11) to pick
Binoculars	1.0kg	50Cr	1d+0	1	Gives +4 to Awareness roll to see something in a particular direction, no sight Awareness rolls allowed in other directions.
Lightweight binoc. <sup>a</sup>	.5kg	80Cr	1d+0	1	As above, but aluminum instead of steel body
Telescopic sight	.5kg	250Cr	1d+0	1	Adds 2 to Accuracy of rifle with base Accuracy of 4, adds 1 to Accuracy of rifle with base Accuracy of 2 or 3
Rope, 50 meters	4.5kg	5Cr	1d+1	5	Strong enough to hold a person and worn or carried items.
Bicycle <sup>a</sup>	15kg	60Cr	1d+1	5	Provides x2 running move on roads or similar surfaces
Light carriage	-	120Cr	-	-	Gig, sulky or buckboard
Medium carriage	-	200Cr	-	-	Hansom, clarence, coupé, phaeton or carryall, often at increased cost due to luxury
Large carriage	-	400Cr	-	-	Stagecoach, omnibus or vardo(x2 cost)

<sup>a</sup>this item is not available at the start of a campaign

# EABA™

Blacksburg Tactical Research Center

Extra type

Power level

Gameworld

Notes

Name

Motivation

<b>Strength</b> Punch $d+$ Kick $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Hits</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>20</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Hits		1	11	2	12	3	13	4	14	5	15	6	16	7	17	8	18	9	19	10	20
Hits																									
1	11																								
2	12																								
3	13																								
4	14																								
5	15																								
6	16																								
7	17																								
8	18																								
9	19																								
10	20																								
<b>Agility</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Awareness</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Will</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Health</b> Walk <input type="checkbox"/> Run <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Fate</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Encumbrance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Armor <b>Body</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Other info</b> <input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Head</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Arms</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Legs</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							

Name

Motivation

<b>Strength</b> Punch $d+$ Kick $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Hits</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>20</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Hits		1	11	2	12	3	13	4	14	5	15	6	16	7	17	8	18	9	19	10	20
Hits																									
1	11																								
2	12																								
3	13																								
4	14																								
5	15																								
6	16																								
7	17																								
8	18																								
9	19																								
10	20																								
<b>Agility</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Awareness</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Will</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Health</b> Walk <input type="checkbox"/> Run <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Fate</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Encumbrance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Armor <b>Body</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Other info</b> <input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Head</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Arms</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Legs</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							

Name

Motivation

<b>Strength</b> Punch $d+$ Kick $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Hits</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>20</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Hits		1	11	2	12	3	13	4	14	5	15	6	16	7	17	8	18	9	19	10	20
Hits																									
1	11																								
2	12																								
3	13																								
4	14																								
5	15																								
6	16																								
7	17																								
8	18																								
9	19																								
10	20																								
<b>Agility</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Awareness</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Will</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Health</b> Walk <input type="checkbox"/> Run <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Fate</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Encumbrance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Armor <b>Body</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Other info</b> <input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Head</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Arms</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Legs</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							

Name

Motivation

<b>Strength</b> Punch $d+$ Kick $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Hits</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>20</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Hits		1	11	2	12	3	13	4	14	5	15	6	16	7	17	8	18	9	19	10	20
Hits																									
1	11																								
2	12																								
3	13																								
4	14																								
5	15																								
6	16																								
7	17																								
8	18																								
9	19																								
10	20																								
<b>Agility</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Awareness</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Will</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Health</b> Walk <input type="checkbox"/> Run <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Fate</b>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Encumbrance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
Armor <b>Body</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
	Roll $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<b>Other info</b> <input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Head</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Arms</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							
<input type="text"/>	Armor <b>Legs</b> $d+$	Roll $d+$																							









# EABA

## A

Ada Lovelace .....6.62  
Adam Wild .....5.2  
Adventurer record .....7.15  
Adventurers(points) ....4.2  
Allan Quatermain .....6.60  
Armor .....2.37,3.24  
Attitudes(personality) .4.8  
Ayesha .....6.61

## B

Beliefs .....2.17  
    Cultural superiority.2.17  
    Sex .....2.17  
    Religion .....2.19  
    Race .....2.20  
    Class .....2.23  
Big game rifles .....7.3

## C

Cavorite .....3.7  
Clockwork power .....3.9  
Common knowledge .2.2  
Communication ..2.35,3.6  
Crimes .....2.15  
Custom gear .....7.2

## D

Death penalty .....2.12  
Diogenes Club .....5.10

## E

Eclipse chart .....6.36  
English Common Law.2.12  
Entertainment .....6.7  
Exchange rates .....2.27  
Expeditions(historical) 6.14  
Expeditions(organize) ..7.7  
Extras .....7.13

## F

Fashion .....2.32  
Florence Baker .....6.60  
Flower code .....2.34  
Foraging .....6.5  
Free skills .....4.3

## G

Gear listing .....7.11  
Geopolitics .....2.4  
    United States .....2.4  
    Great Britain .....2.5  
    France .....2.6  
    Germany .....2.7  
    Spain .....2.7  
    China .....2.8  
    Russia .....2.8  
    Turkey .....2.9  
    South America .....2.9  
    Italy .....2.10  
    Japan .....2.10  
    Africa .....2.11

## H

Harry Flashman .....6.58  
Horror campaigns .....6.3  
Horses & carriages .....7.4

## I

Ida Pfeiffer .....6.59

## J

John Carter .....6.60  
John Clayton .....6.61

## K

## L

Language notes .....4.4  
Lasers .....3.27  
Law & Order .....2.11,2.13  
Leadership .....6.9  
LGP .....5.12  
LGP tech .....3.16  
Life in general .....6.8

## M

M .....5.10  
Martians .....5.15  
Martian tech .....3.14  
Mecha .....3.18,3.22,3.32  
Medicine .....2.38  
Messr. Engine .....5.5  
Military life .....2.21  
Money .....2.27  
Morlocks .....5.8  
Morlock tech .....3.17

## N

Napoleonic Code ....2.12

## O

Occhi del Dio .....5.11  
Out of Time's Abyss .....1.2

## P

Pay scales .....2.27,4.14  
Photography .....3.6  
Political systems .....2.28  
Prisons .....2.11  
Professions .....2.25

## Q

Qing Legal Code .....2.13  
Quartermaster skill .....4.4

## R

Real estate prices .....4.14  
Richard Burton .....6.56

## S

Sample adventurers .4.15  
Secret Service(US) .....5.11  
Selenites .....5.18  
Selenite tech .....3.13  
Servants .....2.24,2.29,6.6  
Sharia Law .....2.13  
Social graces .....2.33  
Status .....4.9

## T

Technology .....2.35,3.3  
Thuggee .....5.13  
Timeline(SF) .....6.12  
Timeline(historical) ....2.40  
Traits .....4.6  
Travel notes .....2.28  
Triad .....5.14

## U

Una Persson .....6.62

## V

Vertue Club .....5.13  
Victorian Era .....1.5  
Vril .....3.11  
Vril Society .....5.4

## W

War .....6.5  
Wealth .....4.12  
Weapon listing .....7.8  
Weapons .....2.37  
Women's roles .....2.26

## X

X Club .....5.3

## Y

## Z

December 10, 2008

**Blacksburg Tactical Research Center** has made **EABA** supplements by third parties possible under the terms of the **EABA Open Supplement License**.

### **EABA Open Supplement License, Version 1.12**

The following License governs the copying, modifying and distributing of **EABA**-compatible material. By copying, modifying, and/or distributing such material, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this License. The content of this license may not be modified, but format, size and placement may be adjusted to suit the nature of a particular **EABA**-compatible work.

#### **1. Application**

This License applies to supplement material compatible with **EABA** produced by any individual or entity other than **BTRC**. **EABA** itself is a copyrighted work and may not be copied, modified, translated or distributed without permission from **BTRC**. This license does allow specific, limited sections of **EABA** to be used in **EABA**-compatible supplement material, as delineated in section 3.2.

#### **2. Definitions in this License**

"Copyright Notice" means any copyright notice applying to **EABA**, **EABA**-compatible material or derivative works.

"**EABA**-compatible" means a work which is not **EABA** but which refers to, is compatible with, and/or depends upon **EABA** in order to be fully utilized.

"Distribute" means to distribute by any media and in any form, whether gratis, for a direct or indirect fee, or any form of exchange. "**EABA**" means the copyrighted **EABA** roleplaying system, as expressed in the downloaded, printed, electronic storage media or any other versions of the product.

"The **EABA** Open Supplement License notice" means the following: "This work contains material copied from or derived from **EABA**, the roleplaying system created by **BTRC**. You may not copy, modify, and/or distribute this material except in compliance with the **EABA** Open Supplement License. To learn more, visit the **BTRC** web site at <http://www.btrc.net>."

"You" or "Your" means an individual or a legal entity exercising rights under this License.

### **3. Consideration**

In consideration for agreeing to use this License, effective on the date You accept this License, **BTRC** grants you a world-wide, royalty-free, non-exclusive License to the permitted uses described below.

**3.1.** You may Distribute Your **EABA**-compatible or derivative material, provided that You must in every instance retain and prominently reproduce in all copies the **EABA** Open Supplement License notice, the Copyright Notice, and this license.

**3.2.1** You may include terminology specific to **EABA**, page format, blank reference sheets or diagrams from **EABA** and add to or expand upon **EABA** rules or rule concepts, so long as these do not exactly or conceptually reproduce existing **EABA** rules.

**3.2.2** You may create software to make **EABA**-specific dice rolls, utilize the **EABA** Universal Modifier Chart, or list equipment from **EABA**. You may not create software that uses the rules for adventurer creation.

**3.3.** You may copy and Distribute Your **EABA**-compatible work, provided that You must in each instance send a copy of the **EABA**-compatible work to **BTRC** (if hardcopy or data storage medium) or [btrc@btrc.net](mailto:btrc@btrc.net) (if electronically transmitted) so that it can be archived publicly if a freely available work, or kept for private archival purposes if not.

### **4. Representation**

By Distributing Your **EABA**-compatible work, You represent that it is Your original creation and/or that You have sufficient rights to Your **EABA**-compatible works to make the grants described in this License.

### **5. Versions of the License**

**BTRC** may publish revised and/or new versions of this License from time to time. Each version will be given a distinguishing version number. New **EABA**-compatible works must always use the most recent version of the License from the **BTRC** web site. Once an **EABA**-compatible work has been published under a particular version of this License, You may continue to use it under the terms of that version or You may choose to use it under the terms of any subsequent version of this License published by **BTRC**. No one other than **BTRC** has the right to modify the terms of this License.

## 6. No warranty

You expressly acknowledge and agree that use of **EABA** is at Your sole and entire risk. **EABA** is provided "as is" and without warranty of any kind. **BTRC** expressly disclaims all warranties and/or conditions, express or implied, including but not limited to, the implied warranties and/or conditions of satisfactory quality, merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and non-infringement of third party rights. No oral or written information or advice given by **BTRC** shall create a warranty.

## 7. Limitation of liability

Under no circumstances shall **BTRC** be liable for any incidental, special, indirect or consequential damages arising out of or relating to this License or Your use of **EABA**, whether under a theory of contract, warranty, tort (including negligence), products liability or otherwise. In no event shall **BTRC** total liability to You for all damages under this License exceed the amount of ten dollars (US\$10.00).

## 8. Trademarks

"**EABA**" is a trademark of **BTRC**. Subject to the terms and conditions of this License, **BTRC** hereby grants You, effective on the date You accept this License, a world-wide, royalty-free, non-exclusive License to use the trademark "**EABA**" for the sole purpose of Distributing **EABA**-compatible works. Acceptable graphic representations of the **EABA** logo are available at [www.btrc.net](http://www.btrc.net).

This License does not grant You any rights to use the trademark or trade name "**BTRC**", "**Blacksburg Tactical Research Center**" or any other trademarks or trade names belonging to **BTRC** except as part of this License agreement.

## 9. Termination

This License and the rights granted herein will terminate automatically without notice from **BTRC** if You fail to comply with any term or terms of this License and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of being notified of such breach by **BTRC**.

**9.1.** Where **BTRC** determines that a purportedly **EABA**-compatible work is in fact a violation of copyright, this constitutes a breach of this License. **BTRC** may terminate this License and the rights granted herein if You fail to cure such breach within 30 days of being notified of such breach by **BTRC**. **BTRC** may, at its option, use any applicable copyright law to protect its intellectual property rights.

**9.2.** Where **BTRC** determines an **EABA**-compatible work does not comply with subsection 3.1 of this License, this constitutes a breach of this License. **BTRC** may terminate this License and the rights granted herein if You fail to cure such breach within 30 days of being notified of such breach by **BTRC**.

**9.3.** Upon termination, You agree to immediately stop any further copying, modifying, and/or Distributing of the **EABA**-compatible work in question. Except in the case of copyright violation, You will not be liable to **BTRC** for compensation, indemnity or damages of any sort solely as a result of terminating this License in accordance with its terms, and termination of this License will be without prejudice to any other right or remedy of either party.

**9.4.** Termination of Your License by **BTRC** shall not be effective to terminate the License of anyone else enjoying rights under this License.

## 10. Miscellaneous

**10.1.** This License will not be construed as creating an agency, partnership, joint venture or any other form of legal association between You and **BTRC**, and You will not represent to the contrary, whether expressly, by implication, appearance or otherwise.

**10.2.** Nothing in this License will impair the **BTRC** right to acquire, license, develop, market and/or Distribute products that perform the same or similar functions as, or otherwise compete with Your **EABA**-compatible work.

**10.3.** Failure by **BTRC** to enforce any provision of this License will not be deemed a waiver of future enforcement of that or any other provision. Any law, regulation, or rule of interpretation which provides that the language of a contract shall be construed against the drafter will not apply to this License.

**10.4.** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

**10.5.** This License constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter thereof.