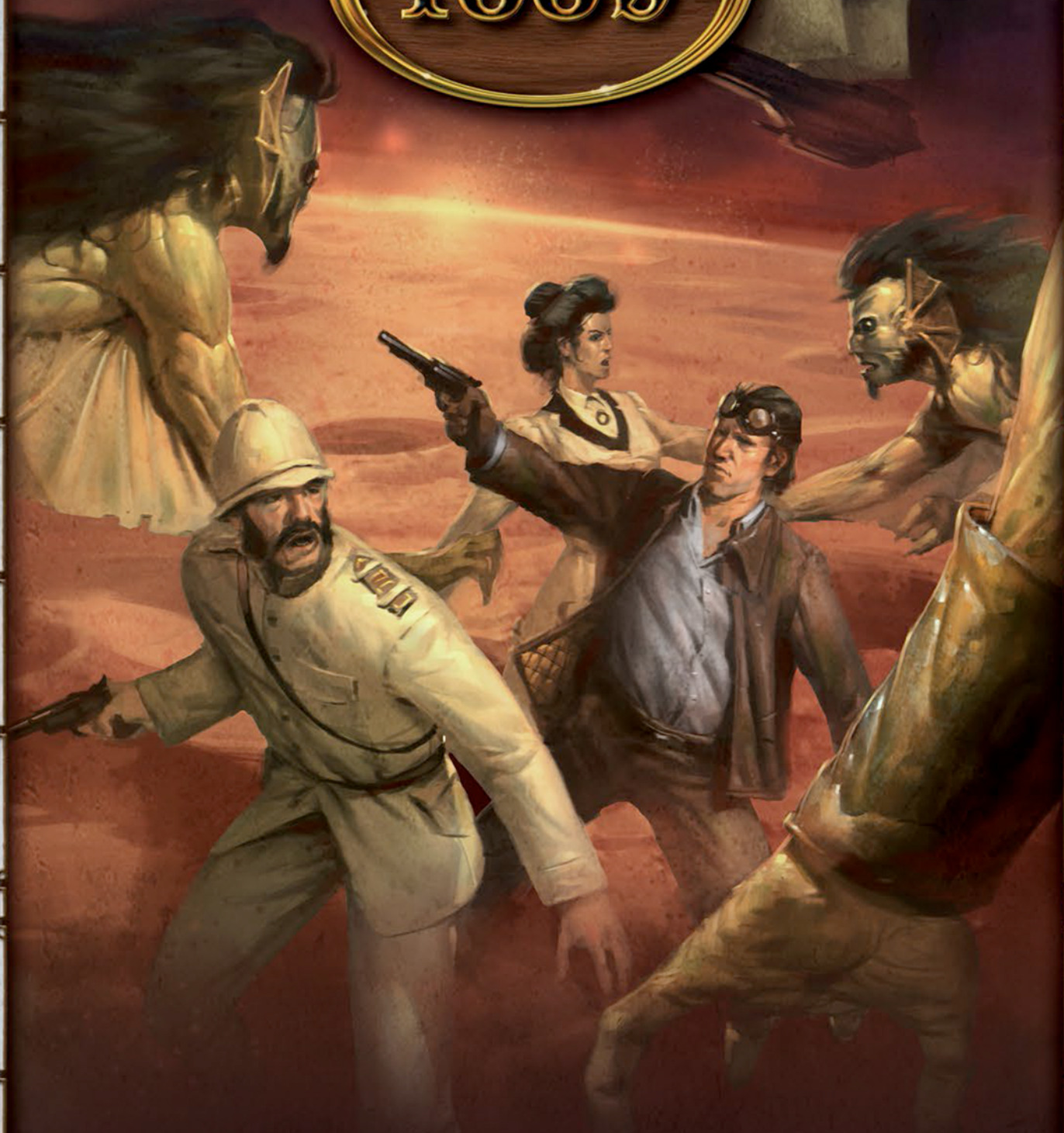


# SPACE

## 1889



### CORE RULES



THE THREE FACES OF

# MARS



0 1000 2000 3000  
MILES



THolzum





# SPACE

1889



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# Preface

Welcome to the world between ether and steam, in a time of progress and journeys to the stars!

It has already been 25 years since *Space: 1889* was brought to existence. In 1988, the first American edition of this roleplaying game was published. Numerous products such as tabletop roleplaying games, board games, computer games, audio dramas, e-books, and other products have been since published – proof if it was ever needed of the continuing interest in this unique game setting. The German edition published in 2012 was received with great enthusiasm, and the production of this English edition was realized thanks to the amazing support of fans and gamers!

With this core rulebook, *Space: 1889* finally returns, ready to lead players into a world full of adventures, ancient secrets, and technical revolution.

Since 1870, mankind has been able to visit the inner planets of the Solar System by means of ether flyers. He has discovered the ancient civilization of Mars, set foot in the primeval jungles of Venus, and prospected Mercury for the many precious raw materials it offers. Yet there remain many places waiting to be explored, primarily the Asteroid Belt and Luna, the Earth's moon, but also beyond the Asteroid Belt – if mankind can yet make the technological breakthrough to travel so far from the Sun. The Earth too, is an exciting place. There is adventure to be had under the gas lamps of the streets of London just as much as in the Academy of Sciences in Berlin or at the banks of the Amazon or the Nile.

On Mars, the archaeologist and thief alike explore ancient Martian palaces, but one searches for forgotten knowledge while the other hunts for forgotten treasure. Daring adventurers start anew in the colonies of Venus or in the pioneering stations in the Twilight Zone of Mercury. Inventors have solved the problems of flying between the planets and are now trying to develop the device that will conquer the ice desert of Mercury or the jungles of Venus. Big-game hunters go after Venusian dinosaurs, while the ladies enjoy a cup of tea in a salon cooled by modern technology. While many explorers have turned toward other planets, other bold researchers range across the primeval forests of South America and the icy wastes of the Antarctic.

The world of *Space: 1889* is the home of explorers and adventurers as it was told in the novels of Kipling, H. G. Wells, H. R. Haggard, Jules Verne, Arthur Conan Doyle, or films like *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*, *The Man Who Would Be King*, *Steamboy*, *The Lost World*, or *King Kong*.

*Space: 1889* is perfectly suited for classic adventure novels and science fiction adventures with a bizarre or nostalgic touch.

The term 'steampunk' is often associated with off-the-wall technology before the ages of Diesel and nuclear power. *Space: 1889* has as many (or as little) steampunk elements as the stories of Jules Verne. Not all of the technological inventions that appear in this game are steam-powered, but many that are function in ways that are inexplicable or even completely crazy according to our understanding of technology and physics. Ether flyers push forward to alien planets, mole drills bore down into caves in the Earth's interior, and mechanical men stand ready to do the work of ten men. Everything an inventor wants to invent is possible, be it radiotelephony, an energy weapon, or a time machine.

The laws of physics and nature may be bent or ignored if it makes for a good story. Nevertheless, the world of *Space: 1889* has physical rules of its own which should be respected during the game. Occultism might be quite popular in 1889, however, 'real' magic or the supernatural are not part of the game. Still, supposedly supernatural events might turn out to be very real phenomena.

The end of the 19th century was a time of colonialism and imperialism, both of which caused many atrocities, but this was also a time when the view of the world was very different and such incidences were perceived very differently by many. Such views are very much part of the historical background for the game, which is why we chose not to make any judgment of any actual or fictional historical crimes. Every gaming group should decide on their own how they are going to deal with colonial crimes and the rights of suppressed minorities as well as how and if they are going to include these subjects into the game.

*Space: 1889* is a roleplaying game in a more civilized time. Normally, each player will choose a gentleman as his character, bravely defying villains without putting the boot in when he succeeds in flooring him – and neither would the culprit, even as he lies on the floor swearing that he will return to take his revenge. Even so, this should be done in style, knowing that humankind is at the height of its culture and its work.

Have fun with this rather special journey to the stars!

**Stefan Küppers,  
Würselen, October of 2013**



# The World of Space: 1889

It was the brilliant mind of one man, or rather the deed of two men that in 1870 was to change the world forever. With the invention of the ether propeller, genius Thomas Alva Edison succeeded in overcoming the distance between the planets. Accompanied by the adventurer Jack Armstrong, he eventually reached the Mars and discovered the Martian civilization. For many millennia, this ancient people had fathomed out many a secret, and sadly forgot a good few of them as well. They crossed the skies with flying ships; built cities inhabited by thousand or even millions long; and in the Grand Canals, constructed a planet-wide feat of engineering that would save their civilization, all long before the Sumerians built their first cities on Earth, using clay bricks. Yet by the time Edison and Armstrong reached Mars, the Martians' knowledge about their ancestors' technical relics was lost, and nobody today is capable of building those Grand Canals that the ancient Martians had once constructed.

Many daring adventurers followed in Edison's footsteps and set out to explore the planets of the inner Solar System. Not everyone returned though, for it takes more than thirst for adventure and action to withstand the dangers of space. However, every setback drives men ever onward, presenting a challenge to be overcome and so free explorers to once again venture into the unknown.

After Mars had begun to be explored, men set their sights on Venus, but when several expeditions sent out to Venus failed to return, Mercury became the new focus of attention. Closest to the Sun, this planet is a world of extremes, one face broiling hot, the other frozen solid. Its plentiful resources would tempt many a venturesome engineer and scientist, but the daunting challenges that Mercury presents means that even thirteen years after the first expedition, attempts to exploit the planet are still at an early stage.

Eventually, an expedition returned from Venus to tell of a misty jungle world whose dangers had sealed the fate of the first three expeditions. Prehistoric monsters, great dinosaurs, strode through the jungle, tribes of spear wielding lizards lurked in the swamps, and the very air seemed to rot everything that man brought with him, but none of this has been enough to dissuade the intrepid from travelling to Venus. Not only will dinosaur hunters find their prey here; precious resources attract businessmen, industrialists, and settlers just as well. Cultivation of this inhospitable planet began ten years ago. Yet it takes the Terran colonists a great effort to slowly wrest some ground from this tropical planet in order to build plantations and settlements. The planet's many dangers still remain though and so just like Mercury, Venus also remains widely unexplored.

Nineteen years after humans first set foot on the red sand of Mars, Earthmen are expanding their influence on the planet: The Earth powers have established colonies and other political structures through which they struggle for power with the Martians as well as with each other. Such conflicts are mainly about economic interests, sometimes about military interests, but one interest on Mars has been the cause of conflict between the Earth powers more than any other. Right after his landing, Edison made another discovery – liftwood, cut from a Martian tree, has for millennia provided the Martians with the resource that enabled their cloudships to take to the air. The Earthmen soon came to understand the strategic importance of liftwood, and are

now all striving for dominance over as many of its sources as they can. While the Earth powers are fighting over the best slice of the 'colonial cake', honorable canal princes vigorously cling to their territories lest they fall into the hands of the Earthmen or are lost under the encroaching sands of Mars, and as merchants from Earth work to enrich themselves from Mars' resources, aerial pirates seek to make a profit in their own way as well.

On Earth, tradition and modernity stand side by side. In 1889, Britain and the German empire are constitutional monarchies; the U.S.A. is a stable republic, France an instable one; Russia is ruled by an autocratic, hereditary monarchy, and the Japanese society is shifting between progress and old traditions. However, all of them strive for dominion, and by the year 1889, this is over interplanetary colonies and trade, as well as liftwood. Only Belgium, or rather the King of the Belgians, flies in the face of this drive for dominion. Executed by his private enterprise – neither his people nor his government share his colonial visions – King Leopold II is known for his aggressive and exploitative actions in the Congo as well as on Mars, and thus contributes more to the destabilization of these regions than any other colonial power. Unnoticed by the public, the king's mercenaries are looting their way through his two territories, the African Congo basin, and the Martian Coprates.

Even though the year 1889 might seem long ago, there are many famous people from the period that have since become legends. Authors like Jules Verne, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, Mark Twain, Karl May, and H.G. Wells tell stories, realistic and fantastic alike, which sometimes are overtaken by the reality.

Besides various crowned heads, the characters could encounter carry Buffalo Bill, zoo owner Carl Hagenbeck, freedom fighter Sitting Bull, or Wild West legend Wyatt Earp. They could also go on adventures with explorers and venturers such as Cecil Rhodes, Emin Pasha, Fritjof Nansen, Henry Morton Stanley, or Charles Gordon; they could share thoughts with Sigmund Freud, Robert Koch, or Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche; they could compete with engineers, scientists, and artists like Thomas Edison, Werner von Siemens, Nikola Tesla, Alfred Nobel, Otto Lilienthal, Gustave Eiffel, Heinrich Schliemann, Paul Gauguin, or Claude Monet. It could also be quite interesting to encounter Winston Churchill or Albert Einstein in their early years before they found fame.

Today, in the year 1889 and 19 years after Edison and Armstrong's historical flight, archeologists and linguists conduct investigations into the ancient high culture of Mars while venturers dig for gemstones in old vaults. Engineers are trying to build transport routes throughout the Venusian swamps as British gentlemen hunt for steppe tigers on Mars and tyrannosaurs on Venus. Inventors work to improve or develop new ship designs to take account of the miraculous substance that is liftwood while adventurers race their cloudships through the skies above the red steppes of Mars chasing down aerial pirates aboard their sky galleons. Anthropologists work to decipher the mythology of the Venusian Lizard-men as diplomats negotiate new settlements for the hundreds of colonists that arrive every year on the 'new' worlds. Mercenaries find work in Africa as on Mars whether with Imperialist or native masters while merchants expand their empires from the Earth to Mars or Venus.



Yet while Martian priests and warriors are confronted with the seemingly strange rites of the Earthmen, proud and confident Martian women make human gentlemen blush, while Martian merchants cheat tradesmen from Earth by selling them faked spices.

As tempting as the distant planets are there are still many things left to discover on Earth. The Amazon Basin and the center of Africa have only been partially explored yet by the white men, and the newly discovered cloudship technology not only enables explorers to reach their darkest hearts, but even makes it possible to travel to the ice poles. Other ingenious machines of daring construction might solve the mystery of Oak Island or the treasure of the Nibelungs, yet other adventurers might track down the lost treasure of the Knights Templar the old-fashioned way – through extensive research in old libraries.

New technologies are not solely based upon discoveries on other planets though. In Essen, the steel company town of the Krupp dynasty, German engineers are working on the development of new materials and metals, such as Wilhelium, which enable the design of innovative constructions. Such technological advancements arouse the interest of agents of foreign powers or rival companies wherever they are developed.

Meanwhile, the first voyage to Mars organized by Thomas Cook is expected to depart soon. It will offer paying guests the opportunity to see the wonders of Mars with their own eyes. Those unwilling to leave the Earth may find animals from foreign worlds in the big zoos quite soon.

The world is changing and the interesting days of 1889 offer many chances to shape and explore the Earth, Mars, and beyond...

## Technological Progress

Space: 1889 follows in the steps of early Science Fiction (for more on this topic, see p. 10).

You can find any sort of invention that might have arisen from the tales of Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, Kurd Laßwitz, or Arthur Conan Doyle. Submersibles, time machines, invisibility elixirs, steam-powered space vessels, flying ships, all this and much more is possible in the universe of Space: 1889. Most of these inventions are actually intended as an inspiration for the Gamemaster – they are not commonly available in the Space: 1889 universe. Space and ether vessels are expensive, tripods are only used in small numbers, land juggernauts are single experimental copies, and submersibles are just as rare – it is ultimately the Gamemaster's decision as to which device he will allow in the game and which he will not. Nevertheless, the player characters may also own such a device, or even invent one, which would thus give them a unique Artifact (suggestions can be found on p. 234ff.).

## Science

The Victorian Age views the sciences with a mixture of excitement and concern. On the one hand, the blessings of modern medicine and engineering allows any reputable citizen to have a more prosperous and comfortable life. He believes in 'progress', as he can observe the progress of science all around him, not only with steamboats and telegraphs, but also in domestic matters such as electric light and reliable sanitary facilities.

On the other hand, scientific developments pose a threat to many things Victorians consider sacred. Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) revealed the conflict between traditional Christian beliefs and the consequences of the latest discoveries. The upheaval caused by Darwin's research is mirrored in the literature of this period. Many literary figures of that time went through a crisis of faith, as can be seen, for example, in Matthew Arnold's (1822-1888) famous poem *Dover Beach*, which symbolically pictures a retreating "Sea of Faith". Biologist T.H. Huxley (1825-1895), who led a crusade for the sciences in a series of debates with Bishop Wilberforce, is of the opinion that science has rendered religion virtually redundant. This is a frightening idea to devoted Anglicans, Methodists, or Catholics, who in no way feel the need to withdraw from either their religion or the blessings of science.

Another question that poses a threat to the established society is the question of the future position on educational matters, a battle fought under the heading "art versus usefulness". Huxley, founder of the journal *Nature*, suggests in a number of articles written in opposition to Matthew Arnold, that poetry, the humanities, and the classical pattern of Greek verbs and Latin verses, which constituted the education of the landed gentry, would be swept aside. This revolution would be accomplished by the most dangerous weapon (from the aristocrats' point of view) in the hands of non-noble engineers and industrialists – modern technology and the natural sciences. Thus for modern society, science is a double-edged sword – a blessing and a curse at the same time.

Although the debate is never fully concluded to either side's satisfaction, the solution that follows is a typical Victorian compromise. Science becomes an accepted playing field for 'talented amateurs', gentlemen who tinker with their inventions or engage with unobjectionable theories, always anxious to protect society from any revolutionary discoveries or heresies that could undermine the *status quo*. A quite enthusiastic representative of this type would be Lord Salisbury. His experiments with hydroelectric energy (which lit up Hatfield House, frightening its visitors) could hardly compromise his pre-industrialization mentality.

Player characters are certainly likely to be more open-minded when it comes to their research and the application of their findings. They will probably accelerate the development and lead the world into a new future.

## Energy

In 1804, the first mobile steam engine was invented, and with it a way to harness its mechanical workforce outside of a factory. It was a small step to use these snorting monstrosities for the transportation of goods and passengers. In the following years, steam engines not only lead to the development of a continuous railway system throughout Europe, but they also power diggers and construction vehicles, making it possible to erect buildings which dwarf even the pyramids at record speed. Pumps and irrigation systems ensure an explosive growth in agriculture, and thus a better supply for the population.

Electricity is widely known and utilized, but widespread residential electrification is still a long way off. In the larger cities, many houses are lit by gas lamps, and all appliances are hand-powered. Indoor-plumbing, on the other hand, is already widespread throughout the cities of the industrialized nations.

Industry is almost universally powered by coal-fired steam boilers. Oil-burning boilers are in use wherever oil is plentiful. In the mid-1880s, Gottlieb Daimler and Carl Benz developed



the gasoline engine, and Rudolf Diesel is working on his own oil-burning internal combustion engine; outside of Germany however, combustion engines are still rare.

Steam is also used in space. Steam boilers are heated up by the power of the Sun, and then provide the energy for the ether propulsion. As of yet it is impossible to leave the Asteroid Belt, at that distance, the Sun's power is insufficient to heat up the steam boilers, but the technology and resources needed to overcome this threshold are already available...

## Communication

When in 1833 the first telegraph message was sent in Germany, the inventors of this technology did not yet imagine that they had made the world a considerably smaller place. It would take another few decades before a universal telegraph system spanned the greater land masses of the world and connected them with each other. Under the terms of the telegraph agreement of 1857, the nations of Europe created a wide-reaching net of stations and with the successful laying of the transatlantic cable in 1866, telegraphy between England and America was made possible.

Thanks to the dial telegraph, Morse code no longer has to be learned to use a telegram, which makes it possible even for laymen to quickly send and receive messages. In 1889, a short message of 80 characters is almost as cheap as a letter, even though one demand had still not come true: "Sending a telegram through your own country must never be more expensive than having a pint in the village pub!"

In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell was the first to make the telephone ready for the market, and it is already in limited use in major metropolitan centers.

Wireless telegraphy (the radio) has not been invented yet. The closest approaches to date are the heliograph and the photophone, which converts speech into light. The latter is in ongoing development as a means to simplify short-range communication between the ether flyers.

The heliograph consists of mirrors that reflect the sunlight toward the receiver, who then detects a series of flashes. The sequence of these flashes produces a readable code, just like the dots and dashes of Morse code on the telegraph. Field heliographs, with a range of a dozen miles, consist of nothing more than a five-foot tripod and a lens. The largest heliographs are the *Harbinger* and the *Foresage*, the two British orbital heliograph stations above the Earth and Mars respectively. Their giant lenses have been powerful enough to flash messages between both planets since 1882.

Unfortunately, depending on the position of the planets, there are times during which there is no direct line of sight between the stations, making communication impossible. When Mars is in conjunction to the Sun, that is, when to viewers on Earth, it disappears behind the Sun, it is basically invisible for half a year, and no signals can be received during that time.

## The Solar System

The Solar System consists of the Sun and all its orbiting planets and satellites, as well as the Asteroid Belt which orbits the Sun between the planets of Mars and Jupiter.

These bodies are generally divided into the Inner (or Cisasteroidal, that is, lying on this side of the Asteroid Belt)

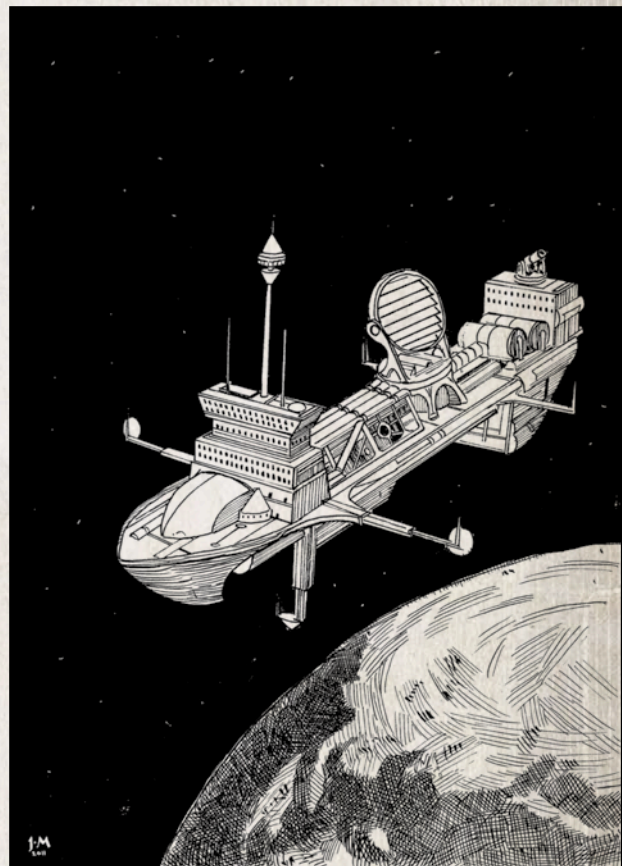
Solar System and the Outer (or Transasteroidal, that is, lying beyond the Asteroid Belt) Solar System. However, the four transasteroidal worlds – (Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, and Uranus – are considered too cold and distant to allow for genuine life to develop or life forms from Earth to survive. What lies beyond Neptune is unknown to the people of 1889.

Due to technical limitations, the outer planets are beyond the current range of ether flyers, and thus are of little concern. It is the inner, cisasteroidal worlds of Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars that are of genuine interest.

It is generally assumed that when the Solar System formed, the planets cooled out of the primordial stellar matter individually at intervals about 150 million years apart. Consequently, the planets' geological time periods are also about 150 million years apart.

This is why scientists assume that the first of the inner planets to coalesce and solidify has long since broken into pieces. Following this theory, the Asteroid Belt consists of the shattered remnants of the hypothetical planet of Vulcan. There are fierce debates among scientists as to how and why the planet broke up, but no one has found a real answer yet.

Following in succession to this first planet were Mars, Earth, Venus, and finally Mercury. For the Earth's scientists, this relationship provides valuable information about the history and the future of the Earth. How Mars appears today is probably what the Earth will look like in 150 million years, while the shattered remains of the (hypothetical) planet Phaeton possibly foretells the ultimate fate of all of the inner planets. Venus resembles the Earth as it must have been like 150 million years ago, during the age of the dinosaurs, and Mercury gives us hints of a much more distant prehistoric past.





## The Inner Planets

In this section, we will have a closer look on the inner planets of the Solar System and provide you with some general information about their characteristics. On the following page, you will also find a chart on the most pertinent physical data concerning all known planets of the Solar System.

### Mercury

The innermost planet (p. 125ff.) constantly keeps one face toward the Sun and as a result, is a broiling desert; the other hemisphere of Mercury eternally faces the depths of space and is locked in a perpetual winter.

Between these two extremes is the twilight zone of Mercury – a band about 300 miles wide of temperate climate which circles the entire planet. The twilight zone of Mercury is trapped between a sun that never really sets and a night that never really falls. This area encompasses a many-channeled river which makes its way entirely around the planet, crossing deep river valleys lined with rocky cliffs and exotic plant life. The twilight zone is inhabited by occasional prehistoric shelled creatures just beginning to emerge from the water onto land.

### Venus

Beneath its constant shroud of clouds, the second planet of the Solar System (p. 101ff.) is a swamp world drenched with nearly continuous rainfall and withering heat, transforming the planet into a genuine greenhouse.

The main part of its surface is covered with water, but the average depth is less than 10 feet. The mainland is mostly covered with thick jungle. Life on Venus has adapted to these environmental conditions and consists mainly of large dinosaurs similar to those that could have been found on Earth during the Mesozoic Age. Beside these lumbering giant reptiles, there also exists a race of intelligent Lizard-men that mostly subsist on foraging or primitive agriculture. Large parts of the planet however, remain unexplored and who knows how many surprises Venus might still hold.

### Earth

As the original cradle of humanity, the third planet of the Solar System (p. 17ff.) is the standard against which all other worlds are judged. It has a great variety of life forms and possesses a rich number of natural resources. Above all though, it might have bred the most advanced culture of the Solar System – at least according to the opinion of its inhabitants.

Driven by boundless curiosity and the prospect of a better life, many humans set out on a journey to the other planets of

the Inner Solar System. It is of course, once there, vital to act as a model of civilization and development for the alien peoples on those planets, that often invoked and oh so heavy “White Man’s Burden”, surrounded by savages on foreign worlds far from home.

### Luna

Of all the inner planets, only Earth has a companion of any significant size, the Moon (p. 62ff.), known more properly by its astronomical name, Luna.

Luna has no surface atmosphere and no surface water, two aspects which make it extremely inhospitable to visitors and difficult to explore without specialized equipment.

### Mars

The planet next outward from the Earth (p. 63ff.) is a barren world which long ago lost the water of its seas to the iron oxides of its desert sands and the ice of its polar glaciers.

Centuries ago, ancient civilizations dug vast networks of canals to carry what water there was to the drying, dying fields and cities. Today though, even after herculean efforts, Mars is a dying planet. Yet, its inhabitants are proud on their ancient culture, existing for many millennia, and react with indignation towards the arrogant pretention with which the parvenus of Earth place themselves at the center of the universe.

One mystery which continues to confound scientists is the Red Planet’s comparably high surface gravity, almost equal to that of Earth or Venus, although it is considerably smaller in size. While the orbital period of Mars indicates that it is indeed denser than its two sunward companions, it is not sufficiently so to account for this discrepancy.

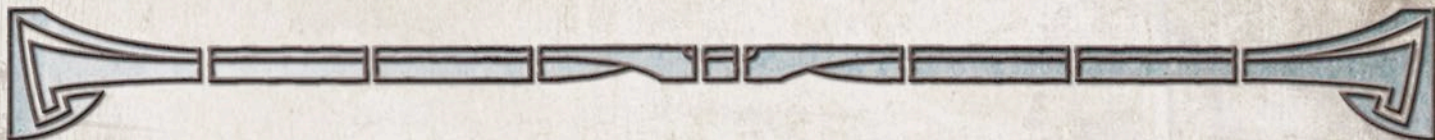
### The Asteroids

What was supposedly once a large planet, named Vulcan by astronomer-historians, today merely consists of rocks orbiting the Sun at a distance of about 200 million miles. Some scientists claim that this world exploded more than 300 million years ago as a natural consequence of its age, others however, reject this theory and prefer to assume a cosmic catastrophe. Whatever its causes, this cataclysm created a band of rocky asteroids that today circle the Sun in an otherwise vacant orbit.

The individual asteroids are gathered in a swarm of chunks of several ounces up to large pieces of several miles in diameter. Some however, are surface pieces revealing evidence of what some ascribe to a long-extinct civilization.

There have already been several attempts to reach the Asteroid Belt, but the large distance to the Sun makes such an expedition highly dangerous.





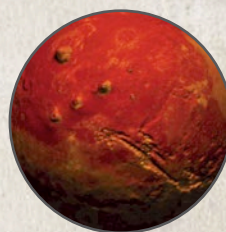
Earth



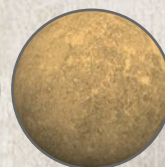
Venus



Mars



Mercury



The World

### The Inner Worlds

| Name    | Orbit* | Day** | Year*** | Diameter | Circum. | Gravity**** |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Mercury | 36     | -     | 88      | 3,030    | 9,519   | 40%         |
| Venus   | 67     | 23    | 248     | 7,526    | 23,643  | 100%        |
| Earth   | 93     | 24    | 365     | 7,927    | 24,890  | 100%        |
| Mars    | 141    | 24    | 687     | 4,200    | 13,195  | 90%         |

### The Outer Worlds

| Name    | Orbit* | Day** | Year*** | Diameter | Circum. | Gravity**** |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Jupiter | 480    | 10    | 4,335   | 88,846   | 279,118 | 260%        |
| Saturn  | 900    | 11    | 10,760  | 74,897   | 235,297 | 91%         |
| Uranus  | 1,800  | 17    | 30,708  | 31,763   | 99,787  | 89%         |
| Neptune | 2,800  | 16    | 60,265  | 30,775   | 96,682  | 110%        |

\* Orbit is given in millions of miles from the Sun.

\*\* Lengths of days are given in Earth hours. Mercury has no days, since it is gravitationally locked facing the Sun.

\*\*\* Years are given in Earth days.

\*\*\*\* Gravity is given as a percentage of that found on Earth.

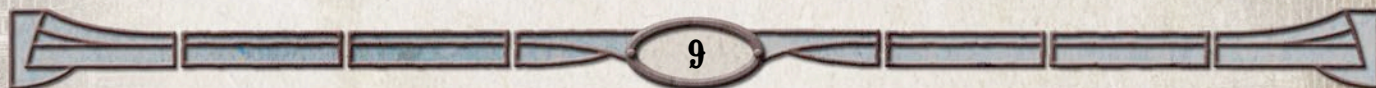
### Luna: The Moon

| Name | Orbit*  | Day** | Year | Diameter | Circum. | Gravity |
|------|---------|-------|------|----------|---------|---------|
| Luna | 237,780 | 28    | 365  | 2,160    | 6,786   | 16%     |

\* Orbit is given in miles from the Earth.

\*\* Length of Luna's day is given in Earth days.

The rest of the data corresponds to those of the planets.





# Storytelling in Victorian Space

The inspirations for Space: 1889 come from some of the greatest fields of storytelling – Victorian Science Fiction, classic adventure novels, crime stories from the late 19th century, and many other literary genres. Space: 1889 features the eccentric technological devices invented by Jules Verne, the inconceivable bizarre phenomena described by H.G. Wells, the grueling wilderness adventures conceived by Henry Rider Haggard, and the inscrutable mysteries presented by Arthur Conan Doyle.

Space: 1889 allows your players to follow in the footsteps of Allan Quatermain, Denis Nayland Smith, Sir Harry Flashman, Sandokan, John Carter, and Professor George Challenger – and perhaps even in those left behind by Arsène Lupin or Captain Mors, the aerial pirate with his amazing dirigible airship!

Every relevant adventure novel from the late 19th century may provide a plethora of hooks for your Space: 1889 adventures. As the Gamemaster, you have the utterly entertaining task of familiarizing your players with the unique and exciting peculiarities offered by Victorian adventures. This chapter will give you some information on the literary sources that the world of Space: 1889 is based on and provide you with many tricks and ruses that can make life easier for the Gamemaster.

## Victorian Science Fiction

The first real stories of the modern Science Fiction genre were written in the 19th century. They foreshadowed the origin of many new technologies, allowing the idea of ‘technical progress’ to take gradual hold in the human mind. What was evident however, was that an ever increasing number of innovations were changing both life and society at an accelerating speed. For the first time, people began to wonder where all these developments would lead on to. What inventions might come next? This was the birth of the Science Fiction genre we know today. Although even pre-19th-century literature had seen stories which carried some Science Fiction traits in them, the genre only got off to a real start when the first tales from authors such as Mary Shelley, Jules Verne, George Griffith, Herbert George Wells – or to also name a German example, Kurd Laßwitz – were published.

The topics explored by 19th-century Science Fiction were surprisingly similar to those still addressed today. Ambitious concepts like the creation of artificial life or the imminent end of the world caused at the hands of mankind could be found alongside more ‘down-to-earth’ ideas about the social influence of mass media or near-future technologies like submarines. The classic space opera, which today is widely considered to represent the genre as a whole, also took its first tentative steps in this era – albeit with 19th-century spacefarers first trying to reach Earth’s neighboring planets instead of rushing from one galaxy to another like later Science Fiction heroes.

Even though the humans of the late 19th century are said to have been strongly optimistic towards progress, the Science Fiction stories of these days were surprisingly aware of the problems it might entail. Indeed, as much as technological opportunities were acclaimed, the dangers to be possibly caused by them were also warned against.

It was at a yet very early point in time when the Science Fiction genre was divided into two different movements – the movement that today is referred to as ‘Hard SF’ and the one that

is generally called ‘Soft SF’. The term ‘Hard SF’ means Science Fiction which is solidly based on scientific facts and only features few or even no fantastical elements. Many examples of this literary sub-genre were created by Science Fiction pioneer Jules Verne, who analysed his era’s technological developments with meticulous accuracy and strictly had his novels based on what was considered scientific facts at that time. Therefore, he was able to foresee many of the technological advancements of the period with quite a high degree of precision.

‘Soft SF’ is less concerned with the technological feasibility of things. Instead, it rather examines how humans will react when they are confronted with obviously fantastical elements. Many tales told by H.G. Wells fall into this sub-genre. Wells, for example, tries to find out in his stories what a person would do if he or she were invisible, what would happen if time travel was possible, or what would be the consequences of medical experiments transforming people into animals. Similar issues are addressed in the novels, poetry, and short stories of Kurd Laßwitz, who for example, shrinks adventurers to send them onto the surface of a soap bubble or has his stories told from the perspective of a plant from Neptune’s moon.

Around 1889, another quite separate branch of Victorian Science Fiction was particularly popular in the Anglo-Saxon world. This branch, called ‘invasion literature’, predominantly described the imminent conquest of England in particular and the downfall of the western civilization in general. One remarkable feature of ‘invasion literature’ is that it anticipates both the horrors experienced in the World Wars to come and modern technology’s tremendous impact on warfare.

## Victorian Science Fiction in Space: 1889

In 1889, human development appears to have accelerated, with a new invention promising revolutionary progress heralded in the newspapers almost every month. Of course, more than a half of these inventions are basically pointless nonsense, but this does not negate the optimism fuelled by progress during these days. Many of the general public are fascinated by technology, cheering every new development. Governments, business corporations, and universities invest staggering sums of money into scientific research, thus making it no surprise that the civilized states of the world pursue a multitude of ambitious large projects – with the intention to advance nation first and mankind in general second.

The supermodern metropolis Port Progress, designed from scratch by Thomas Alva Edison; the new Westinghouse orbital station, where Nikola Tesla is busy developing his mysterious teleforce project; the French government’s ambitious undertaking to annihilate all harmful bacteria within its borders by using extraterrestrial chemicals; and the secret Japanese plans to plant human brains into great apes in order to produce superhuman soldiers may serve as examples within this context.

There is hardly a goal that modern science cannot reach. Of course, mankind will repeatedly suffer setbacks on its way to progress as innovative ether ships come crashing down to Earth, large-scale construction projects are sabotaged by the enemy,



and the subjects of a superserum suddenly develop unsuspected side effects. Naturally, even as early as in the 19th century, progress is not supported by everyone. Not every invention is immediately accepted by the general public, and in the beginning some inventors may be ridiculed or even have to expect hostile reactions if their ideas are deemed too progressive.

Likewise, inventors always have to be on the lookout against greedy competitors who would steal or sabotage their ideas and inventions. Inventions and major technical projects may serve as the central topic of an entire campaign.

The subject of 'technical progress' can be easily combined with the other topics emphasized by Space: 1889. Novel means of transportation could allow for journeys to still unexplored regions and the invention of a new secret serum could be the hook for a thrilling spy adventure, while a new secret weapon could bring about a war's turning point. Of course, space travel and the technologies associated with it are not only part of the Science Fiction genre, but fundamental to the setting of Space: 1889. This topic will be addressed on page 12 in the section "Adventure Novels," describing it within the context of classical journey adventures.

Space: 1889 features elements of both 'Hard SF' and 'Soft SF'. In general, readers should expect that any terrestrial sciences and inventions – with the notable exception being Edison's ether propeller – are principally based on the ideas spawned by Jules Verne. Although the 'future technology' of the aspiring human race is indeed fantastical, it is not able to do anything that opposes the laws of nature. Yet, in terms of extra-terrestrial technology and strange space phenomena the Gamemaster should feel free to make use of the concepts contrived by H.G. Wells and co.

However, you should keep in mind that Victorian Science Fiction – despite all the visions it offers – is first and foremost

Victorian! By far the largest part of the fantastical inventions and scientific theories to be encountered in the world of Space: 1889 is based on ideas born in the 19th century. All too often, these are things that already existed in the 19th century with the addition of a more or less fantastical twist. Thus, warships operated by the major powers became flying battleships, simple dirigible balloons were turned into spacefaring airships, new medications became superdrugs, and so on. Technologies like the internet, electronic data processing and the like might have been known by ancient, extinct alien races, but the mankind of Space: 1889 is still far away from thinking in these dimensions.

## The Victorian Adventure Novel

The classic adventure novel known by arguably everyone is another important source for Space: 1889. The 19th century was its golden age. The vast number of authors who wrote adventure novels during the reign of Queen Victoria and have continued to be popular until today is almost unimaginable, with the most well-known novelists of this genre probably being Karl May (Germany's most famous writer of adventure novels), Henry Rider Haggard, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Emilio Salgari. As a genre, the adventure encompasses a wide field as by its very definition, it must include every novel that deals with one or more 'adventures'. To slightly narrow down this list, we would like to focus on those types of novels which particularly define Space: 1889 – those novels that are all about adventurous journeys and encounters with alien cultures.

The discovery and exploration of unfamiliar locations and peoples has always been interesting to readers. Most stories see a hero or a group of heroes leave their familiar environments for unknown, dangerous worlds where they have to risk their lives to deal with all kinds of tasks and problems. Sometimes, it is





for heroic reasons like the need to rescue somebody or to fight a hostile power that prompt the hero to embark on his journey. Other times, it is not. Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* or Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, for example, primarily see the protagonists trying to prove a scientific theory. Both examples do not feature any villains at all as the thrill is provided by the dangerous environment that the heroes have ventured into.

In addition to fighting and surviving in the wilderness, encountering foreign cultures plays a huge role. Sometimes these encounters take place in the form of a conflict between the cultures involved. Salgari's *Sandokan*, for example, depicts the struggle between the colonial rulers from Great Britain and the indigenous populace of Borneo. Other times however, cultures may make peaceful contact as is the case in many novels written by Karl May, which see the heroes bravely fight against evil while at the same time actively furthering international understanding. Barring some slightly over-the-top elements like surviving dinosaurs or the mines of King Solomon, late 19th century adventure novels almost do not feature any fantastic elements at all.

What Victorian adventure novels do feature however, are romanticised stereotypes galore – savages are either cruel or noble, beasts of prey are bloodthirsty predators, jungles are dense, and Indian palaces are richly ornamented jewels, their treasures offering hoards of treasures. Today, many of these notions seem peculiar. Still, it is just the very romanticizing of such stereotypes that in part makes this kind of adventure literature so attractive. Alongside distant lands, sunken cultures repeatedly play an important role as well. Archaeology was still in its infancy and had only just become the focus of public attention. People continued to be excited about classical antiquity and were curious as to what other things archaeologists would be able to re-discover. Naturally, archaeology also became a popular element of adventure novels, albeit its character was not as defining as in pulp stories such as those of Indiana Jones and his ilk.

## The Classic Adventure Novel in Space: 1889

Opening the gateway to the stars or at least the nearest planets has allowed mankind to enter a new age of discovery. What wonders might lie hidden in the jungles of Venus? What is really on the cold side of Mercury? Is it true that no one has crossed the pole ice caps of Mars yet? What does the world look like that lies below the surface of the moon? The Solar System offers many mysteries waiting to be solved. Uncharted territories cannot only be found in space, however. Although there are increasingly less white spots on the maps of Earth, even our world retains some regions that civilized humans have not set a foot on yet – the interior of Antarctica, remote valleys in the Amazon Basin, or the impenetrable rain forests of Borneo, for example.

The people of the world's leading nations are downright obsessed with the idea to explore and chart each and every corner of the cosmos. Governments as well as research institutes, newspapers, churches, or private foundations organize research missions to all regions of the Solar System both within and beyond reach. Consequently, expeditions and discoveries provide an excellent background for *Space: 1889* adventures – where the players assume the roles of explorers, of course! Manifold dangers are waiting for those venturing into the unknown. The bold adventurers must brave the forces of nature, find their bearings

in unfamiliar terrain, and are possibly even forced to deal with competing expeditions, unknown phenomena, or hostile natives.

Encounters with peaceful natives in unexplored regions of the Solar System likewise provide numerous opportunities for adventure. Since *Space: 1889* allows the player characters to access space, their discoveries and expeditions do not necessarily have to take place somewhere in the rainforests of Earth: Space expeditions might be an adventure on their own. Nor do any of the 'indigenous peoples' encountered on such expeditions and living in isolation are always bound to be 'primitive savages'. Far out in space, the player characters might even encounter other races or nations whose technological knowledge exceeds that of Earth's inhabitants by far.

The Solar System also offers perfect opportunities to archaeologists. If such obscure cultures like those of the lost Atlanteans or the mysterious Lemurians are allowed to count, mankind alone can look back to an estimated 10,000 years of civilization. The history of some alien species like the Martians or the presumably extinct Phaetonians dates back even further, ensuring that there is certainly no lack of ancient ruins or age-old secrets in our Solar System. Thus, it is no wonder that in *Space: 1889*, both adventures and entire campaigns might revolve around the exploration of ancient cultures. The people of the Earth are particularly captivated by the legacies of the pharaohs and the breath-taking structures of the ancient Martians; however, archaeological jewels remain hidden in other parts of the Solar System. The Hittite ruins on the Anatolian plateau, for example, have as of yet largely gone unnoticed, with the same being true for the remains of ancient cultures in Asia and South America. What is more, some discoveries will even require the player characters to journey forbidding regions like the Asteroid Belt. Yet, not all potential ancient secrets have to lie far away from home. After all, archaeological discoveries can even be made in good old England – who knows, it might just be that traces of the ancient British Kingdom of Mercia can be found near a player character's cottage.

## The Dime Novel

Yes, we admit it – *Space: 1889* references cannot only be found in the literary classics, but also in cheap dime novels or 'penny dreadfuls' as they were called in the UK. Dime novels are by far no invention of the 20th century as a confounding number of them already existed during the Victorian Age. Almost all dime novel genres still present today were covered – whether be it cheesy romances, frightening horror stories (like, for example, the "Varney the Vampire" novel series), overly heroic tales of war, or whacky wild west stories. What is more, Victorian penny dreadfuls even featured a precursor of the superhero genre – 'Springheeled Jack', a technically enhanced avenger, who, disguised as a bogeyman from British folklore and resembling a certain 'Caped Crusader', gave the criminal underworld the shivers.

As many penny dreadfuls targeted an audience of young male readers, it is no wonder that they offered a hatful brimming with breath-taking action. Likewise, it goes without saying that quite a few of the educated men and women of the period would have liked to see the miserable concoctions – pathetic both in terms of production and contents – being shredded completely to save the youth from the reprehensible impact this trash might have on them.



Science Fiction was another genre that found its way into the world of cheap serialized novels. In addition to scary vampires and masked riders, the plethora of thin, shoddy paperbacks on the market also showcased adventurous inventors, space travellers, and air pirates. The Science Fiction stories told in dime novels, of course, were a literary world away from the technical accuracy displayed by Jules Verne or the philosophical depth offered by H.G. Wells, milking their readers' naïve obsession with progress to the very end. The hero of the eponymous US dime novel series 'Frank Reade' fought evil with ever-new, steam-driven robot designs, while in Germany, hosts of young readers devoured the adventures of the zorro-mask-wearing air pirate Captain Mors, who used his airship to put myriad criminals out of business. Furthermore, Captain Mors is one of the first dime novel heroes to travel into space. The futuristic plot of particularly early novelettes almost always took place on Earth – it was only around the turn of the century that their protagonists started to be attracted by journeys into space.

## Dime Novels in Space: 1889

Even though Space: 1889 itself is no pulp roleplaying game, the associated setting features many traits of the early pulp novels. The exotic kingdoms on Mars or the primeval Venus, for example, are far more probable to have come from the imagination of Edgar Rice Burroughs and numerous dime novels than from the novels written by 'serious' Science Fiction authors of the late 19th or early 20th century, with the same applying to the space-faring approach taken by Space: 1889. The ether ships used by Victorian age earthlings to travel around the Solar System bear a far greater resemblance to the air vessels employed in the anonymously penned *The Air Pirate and his Steerable Airship* series than to Jules Verne's comparatively realistic spacecraft. So if you want your Space: 1889 campaign to be a bit more action-loaded and slightly more 'gonzo' in character, it cannot hurt to look to the penny dreadfuls for inspiration.

## Ruritanian Romance

Many readers may have never heard of the term 'Ruritanian Romance', which describes a small but exclusive literary genre dealing with adventures and events in fictional countries. The name of this genre is derived from 'Ruritania', a fictional German-speaking microstate that provides the setting for the 1894 Anthony Hope novel, *The Prisoner of Zenda*. This novel was so successful that it was followed by a whole series of similar books. Small, fictional monarchies became a popular setting for a host of adventures. After all, they boasted numerous advantages – authors were able to devise gripping, near-realistic political thrillers without the need to do some local research and without being afraid to clash with existing political realities.

## Ruritanian Romance in Space: 1889

Fictional microstates (also called "operetta states" as this is the genre where they originated) in the style of Ruritanian Romance also make for excellent Space: 1889 locales, providing the Gamemaster with almost the same advantages as their authors. The Gamemaster does not have to do time-consuming research and is allowed to concoct the boldest state of political affairs without having to pay mind to actual historical facts. Do your player characters want to topple a dictator or help an outcast

heir to the throne return to where he belongs? Or perhaps you need a devious political scheme, but are not satisfied with what the historical international stage has to offer for what you are planning? Or does your group simply include among its number a history graduate who happens to have studied the period and knows more about it than you do? No matter – operetta states allow it all!

Several variants of these microstates can be designed. The European operetta state – as can be inferred from its name – is located in the center of Europe and is usually based on a major European nation. Even though countries like 'Ruritania' and 'Graustark' – first described by the American author George Barr McCutcheon in

*Graustark: The Story of a Love Behind a Throne* (1901) are modelled on Germany, the imitation of Slavic countries is particularly popular, with fictitious microstates often located somewhere in the Balkans. Hergés' kingdom of Syldavia, first mentioned in the *Adventures of Tintin* graphic novel *King Ottokars Sceptre*, is an excellent example of this idea. Islands in the Mediterranean Sea, whether fictional or factual, also make for excellent operetta states.

Outside Europe, there are of course, the famous Latin American banana republics, which even as early as the late 19th century offered plenty of potential for adventure. In terms of technology, they are usually quite modern and only lag some years behind the newest developments. The world at large might regard them as being a bit antiquated in nature, but they have not completely ignored the advantages that progress offers. African or Asian operetta states – Indian principalities, Arabian sultanates, or Far Eastern kingdoms somewhere in the Himalayas – are quite different, however. These types of countries are generally depicted as having a 'medieval' character and in game terms can effectively be used for 'pseudo time travel' adventures into what is in comparison with the modern world, an archaic environment. Typically, they are isolated from the modern world and sometimes even completely cut off from the rest of our planet.

The science-fiction aspect of Space: 1889 permits the number of potential operetta states to be expanded by two additional categories. The city states of Mars are basically just a collection of operetta states resembling those of the African-Asian category. The availability of fantastic science-fiction technology however, also allows for the existence of concealed, utopian countries like 'Antekirra', described in the Jules Verne novel *Mathias Sandorf*, or Templemer from the movie *Captain Nemo and the Underwater City*. In most scenarios, these utopias do everything to ensure that they are completely hidden from the outside world – for they have knowledge that is too dangerous as to be handled by anyone in the world at large. Should the player characters encounter such a utopia, perhaps somewhere below the surface of the oceans of Venus, inside of Luna, or at the south pole of the Earth, what they have is the chance to 'visit the future'. For those of you who like the atmosphere of operetta states, but prefer them to be more historically accurate, then you might want to do some research on real 19th century microstates such as Sarawak, Hawaii, the Cocos Islands, or Andorra.

## The Crime Novel

The universally popular crime novel is another book form that originated in the 19th century. Stories about crimes have of course, been written since the first crimes were committed. The idea to have the focus of a novel's plot be totally on one or more complex crimes and their solutions however, only became



increasingly widespread in the 19th century. Eventually, it was at the turn of the century that the crime novel wave really got rolling. The crime novels of the late 19th century usually do not share the ‘action thriller’ element common in most of today’s crime movies. Instead, the process of clearing up crimes is deemed a kind of intellectual exercise, which is not about dispatching criminals with barking revolvers – crimes are considered a fascinating mystery in need of solving. Consequently, the crimes depicted in this era’s crime novels are not simple ones like mere kidnappings or robberies, but sophisticated malefactions, devious schemes, or downright brilliant coups. As a result, the struggle between investigators and criminals often resembles a duel staged by two genius minds with many crime novels not being set among the lower classes, but in bourgeois and elevated circles. This sort of crime novel is best exemplified by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s famous Sherlock Holmes short stories and novels.

## Crime Novels in Space: 1889

The Solar System of the late 19th century offers more than enough potential for the type of tale depicted in the crime novel. The slums of the cities teem with criminal elements. Smuggling syndicates and seedy racketeers operate both between Shanghai and Rio de Janeiro, between Paris and Syrtis Major. Precious jewels and extra-terrestrial artefacts that are the boast of the world’s museums attract the ambition of crafty thieves. Behind the façade of polite society, the nobility and bourgeoisie are quite often governed by malevolence, intrigue, and legacy hunting. Competing nations try to spy on and deceive each other. That is just the tip of the criminal iceberg! The police of the Victorian Age employ rather primitive crime fighting methods and are often completely out of their depth when it comes to solving more complex crimes. Thus, it is only appropriate that private crime fighters like the player characters should declare war on the Solar System’s criminal ‘fraternity’, from the scum to the mastermind! Space: 1889 campaigns will see the characters engage the most diverse types of criminals – so the Gamemaster should not shy away from being directly inspired by Victorian or Edwardian crime novels. Space ships are an ideal place for closed-room mysteries in the style of *Murder in the Orient Express*. For intrigue in the noble classes, you might find it helpful to take a look at the anthologies of Sherlock Holmes stories. People looking for more sinister inspiration are highly recommended to check the novels of Edgar Wallace.

Do not hesitate to once in a while use more ‘colorful’ criminals as in *The Fellowship of the Frog* or fantastic mysteries such as *The Door with Seven Locks* (both written by Edgar Wallace). The Gamemaster looking for even more extreme ideas might want to turn to Sax Rohmer’s Fu Manchu series. This line of novels offers inspiration for adventures with downright James Bond-like dimensions, and what is more, serves as a fine example of how adventure, Science Fiction, and crime elements may be blended into one coherent setting. Enjoyment of this series is however, seriously diminished by the anti-Asian racism present in all of its books.

Experience has shown that ‘pure’ crime adventures are comparatively hard for the Gamemaster to design as the plots from crime adventures are considerably more complex than that of other Space: 1889 adventures. After all, Victorian crime fiction is about mysterious riddles and not about senseless killings. That said, it is just that complexity which makes such crime adventures highly attractive to experienced players and Gamemasters alike.

## Some Practical Advice

Having read about the potential sources for Space: 1889 adventures and the Victorian Solar System, we would like to give you some practical gaming advice. At a first glance, the task set out for the Gamemaster appears dauntingly difficult – after all, he is the director, script writer, referee, and actor of all the non-player characters and antagonists in his campaign all at the same time. We can reassure you though – running a game and being a Gamemaster is not half as complicated in practice as it may seem in theory.

### Bringing the Victorian Age to life

Even though large parts of Space: 1889 take place in space and encountering numerous bizarre inventions is commonplace for the player characters, the year the game is set in still is 1889. Space: 1889 also is a historical role-playing game. Before each game, you should take the time to think how you can help your players immerse themselves in the particular atmosphere of the Victorian Age and thus enhance both the atmosphere and enjoyment of the game together.

Have a glance at the sources listed in the annex (see p. 238ff.) and contemplate inviting your players to an evening of Victorian adventure entertainment. This is best done with some movies or a good TV series, but in the meantime you should get a few books or comics and hand them around your players, or visit the local library to look for archived copies of contemporary magazines and newspapers. You can get to know this period together and allow yourselves to be inspired by it.

That said, you need not spend too much playing time on re-living the Victorian Age – some well-placed allusions will be enough. This technique is particularly effective at a campaign’s beginning. Use articles of contemporary newspapers or journals to set the mood for Victorian adventures – they can easily be found online. Mention brand names that were popular in 1889 – perhaps in advertisements or on bulletin boards. Find a dictionary with colloquial phrases common to the period and use these expressions to spice up conversations between NPCs and the player characters. Play some contemporary music such as classical salon or café music or maybe even ragtime although ragtime is actually a bit anachronistic as it really only came to prominence in 1897 before achieving widespread popularity in 1899, but please feel free to take some liberties as ragtime can heavily contribute to the optimistic mood of Space: 1889. Drop the names of famous real persons into conversation, even if the player characters are not going to be involved in their affair, though sometimes they should be! Perhaps the inventor Thomas Alva Edison or the animal merchant and zoo entrepreneur Carl Hagenbeck are secretly funding an expedition into space or one of the characters is an adventure-thirsty officer who happens to know a British military hero in person, like Sir Harry Flashman or Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Roberts. As your game progresses, you might even enhance the credibility of your game by having some of these celebrities make an appearance and thus allow your players to consort with some of the Victorian Age’s most famous persons.

### Group Composition

The Solar System of the year 1889 is huge – even gigantic, allowing for a wide array of different stories and adventures. Before getting started, you and your players should therefore be absolutely clear about what kind of story your Space: 1889 campaign will focus on. Military missions on Mars? Criminal secret societies that have infiltrated Boston’s upper class? An



expedition to explore further the sources of the Nile? Or a railway project on primeval Venus?

Ask your players what they expect of Space: 1889 and what types of character they favour, and then agree on a direction to take. Once the general course of your campaign is clear, you and your players can start designing fitting characters. It is of utmost importance that the roles taken by the group's players and the campaign will allow everyone involved to have fun playing in it.

Yet this does not mean that the focus of a campaign should preclude another type of adventure or a type of adventure preclude particular types of characters. Thus there is no reason that a military campaign should not include a crime adventure and that a big game hunter or a nomad from the Martian steppes cannot take part in a crime adventure. The only thing needed though, is a good explanation why, for example, a Martian hailing from the Nepenthes-Thoth steppes would go chasing smugglers in misty Soho – a bit of imagination will always bring about a fitting solution.

### Planning and Plotting Adventures

An old role-playing phrase says, "No adventure plot survives an encounter with the group." This saying contains a great deal of truth. No matter how well and precisely you plan an adventure – there will always be a player who has ideas that you did not foresee which will disrupt your plans completely. The Gamemaster should always expect the unexpected! As daunting as that idea sounds, it should never be a problem for the Gamemaster – or at least, be a problem that cannot be solved by maintaining a certain flexibility.

*One example: The players just won't ride through the Canyon of Death, where your bandits are lying in ambush, but instead hire an airship to just fly over it. The result is that your carefully prepared ambush falls flat! No problem – show some flexibility and leave the bandits in the canyon where they are. When it comes to airship travelling, thunderstorms are much more fun anyway.*

What this illustrates is that the Gamemaster should not plan his adventure plot as if he was writing a novel, but should instead prepare a flexible adventure layout. Such a layout might look as follows. The basic situation is that rebels hiding in the Swamps of Gorlimsk kidnapped the heir to the throne of a small Martian city-state. This heir apparently is of utmost importance to the player characters' home nation, which is why they should free him. The Gamemaster should roughly plan how the rebel camp looks like, decide how many men are stationed there, how it is defended, and so on. What is even more important, he should give the rebel leader and his officers a character with certain political objectives, preferences, and aversions. Thus, the Gamemaster has the basic situation in hand – now it is up to the players to decide how they will let their characters act. Will they try to solve the problem in a diplomatic manner? Will they attack the rebel camp using blunt force? Or will they sneak in at night and make a surreptitious attempt to get the nobleman out? There are many paths to pursue...

The Gamemaster should never forget that one of the charms of classical pen & paper role-playing games is that the players can have a huge impact on the adventure plot instead of having to follow a pre-designed path like in computer games. Of course, you may also use so-called 'cut scenes' – if it is utterly important for the adventure that a collision with a meteoroid causes the player characters' ether ship to crash on an asteroid, then let it collide with an asteroid. Avoid giving your players the feeling however, that their actions do not have any repercussions

on a plot that has been fixed from the start. Most players abhor that approach. If you use pre-conceived adventure models, please keep in mind that they only represent a particularly elaborate layout, as described above, and do not constitute a script that everyone must strictly adhere to.

## On the Structure of Stories

A successful, that is, enjoyable and entertaining, Space: 1889 story combines many elements from the literary sources previously discussed. Preparing a good adventure or campaign is more akin to brewing an alchemic potion than it is to science. You may have a certain checklist to work with, but sooner or later you will reach the point at which you have to deviate from it and add some new elements to it in order to keep the procedure from getting stale and uninteresting.

Most adventure stories follow a formula – and you may stick to that when designing a one-shot or a short campaign (see below). Long campaigns are likely to call for the greatest deviations from this tried and tested method. Space: 1889 stories work best if you allow yourself to be inspired by adventure novels (or movies) which have clear beginnings and ends and feature elements from the genres that have been more precisely discussed above. Naturally, it is also possible to deviate from these sources. Gothic tales, for example, are definitely not out of place in the world of Space: 1889 – even though they must do without their traditional supernatural elements as magic does not exist in Space: 1889.

A brief glance at the Character Creation chapter (p. 139ff.) shows that the selection of an Archetype and a Motivation supports and explains why the character is prepared to throw himself into a Space: 1889 adventure. Really anyone can be a Space: 1889 hero – provided he has a good reason to be involved in the mission set out by the Gamemaster. Once specific circumstances have drawn a character into the adventure, these circumstances will take a back seat, and it will be much more important to see how his actions will be influenced by his ideals, aims and emotions – for these are the factors that will control his reactions to the unknown dangers and miraculous discoveries that lie before him.

## Standalone Adventure

Standalone adventures, or one-shots, do not take up more than one game session. In a way, they are the short stories to the novel or multi-part novels of the role-playing campaign. Typical adventures in this style, for example, comprise adventures that see the players solve a single, not too complex crime, discover and explore a particular ruin, or deal with an attack by air pirates. The basic situation is usually quite simple as it must be feasible to complete the adventure within a single evening or session. Most one-shots have a pre-defined ending that concludes the adventure story once and for all – open endings and unanswered questions are not common to the format. A Gamemaster generally uses one-shots to either familiarize a group of players new to roleplaying with the hobby or an experienced group new to a setting and if they take a liking to the game, it is not very difficult to expand the one-shot into a longer campaign. The more experienced Gamemaster will sometimes use the one-shot format to achieve something altogether different. As part of a longer campaign, the one-shot can be used to allow the players to experience subplots, flashbacks, or different perspectives with other characters than those normally played in the campaign.



It can also be appealing to have the players slip into the roles of characters other than their own for an evening. For example if as part of a military campaign, the player characters serve as the bridge crew of a Royal Navy ether ship tasked with hunting down ether pirates operating between Mars and Earth, it may be a quite amusing and interesting experience to allow the players to take the roles of the pirates for a single game session. This not only enables the player characters to experience playing different characters and different aspects of the Space: 1889 setting, it also permits the Gamemaster to use one-shots to tell tragic stories, which is quite uncommon in longer campaigns. Lastly, characters biting the dust during the course of a one-shot do not present the Gamemaster or his players with the problem of a character's death, after all they are only expected to be used once anyway.

## Short Campaigns

Many adventure stories cannot be told in one evening alone. If the adventure's basic situation is rather complex, the story may take three to four consecutive game sessions in order to be completed. If the player characters have to organize the defense of the Martian city Moeris Lacus against the attacking Oenotrian hordes, or recover a spaceship crashed in hostile tribal territory in the Venusian jungles, the whole thing cannot be handled in one game session alone. Whereas one-shots usually resemble pretty simple short stories, short campaigns are similar to full-grown adventure novels with several locales, a multitude of NPCs, and a more complex initial situation. The characters defending Moeris Lacus could, for example, have to deal both with traitors within the city council and with the chieftain of a tribe of steppe nomads, who might be a suitable potential ally. Just like a one-shot, a short campaign also has a pre-defined ending. The Oenotrians have been repelled, the downed spaceship has been found – and the story is over.

## Long Campaigns

In role-playing games, long campaigns are the rule rather than the exception. Most players are fond of their carefully designed characters and enjoy playing them over a long period of time. This results in role-playing campaigns being more similar to TV series than to stand-alone adventure novels. Where such campaigns have a pre-defined objective, it often requires the characters to perform downright superhuman actions. They could, for example, be committed to toppling a powerful tyrant on Earth or Mars. Victory over the dictator requires a whole series of adventures, which may take months or even years to be completed. A fine, albeit somewhat anachronistic example of such efforts, would be those of Flash Gordon, whose struggle against Emperor Ming provided fodder for many years of comics.

Alternatively, the player characters' group might be sent on a long-term expedition to the edge of the Solar System – a journey that will take even state-of-the-art etherflyers several years to complete. Over the course of the campaign, the characters will visit the transasteroidal system's many moons and the planets of the Outer Solar System and in the process undertake a plethora of fabulous adventures. It is not necessary to give a long-time campaign a fixed frame, though. In most cases, a long-time campaign is composed of a whole series of short campaigns that always feature the player characters as main protagonists. This set-up is more similar to book or story lines like those seen in the western novels written by Karl May, Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu novellas, or the Sherlock Holmes series – and allows the player characters to take part in different stand-alone adventures with potentially wildly varying themes. One of the player characters' adventures might be about clearing up an intricate murder plot aboard a passenger space cruiser, while the next one might require the characters to venture into the ruins of a Martian metropolis to find the treasure of ancient nobleman.





# Earth

## Earth - Planet Facts

Diameter: 7,920 Miles

Circumference: 24,890 Miles

Duration of a year: 365 days

The following chronology only lists those political and scientific events which are of significance to the historical background of Space: 1889.

## The Year 1853

- In Sweden, Scheutze and Son build their so-called Scheutzian calculation engine, a further development of the analytical engines as invented by Babbage. This computing machine, capable of calculating numbers up to 15 figures in length, can now also operate tables and graphs. This allows for the quick and standardized calculation of construction drawings and maps, thus leading to an unprecedented growth in the number of ambitious buildings and projects. The world is soon to see the first four-story buildings, the precedents of the skyscrapers; higher production levels thanks to more effective steam engines; and faster trains thanks to more powerful locomotives and sturdier bridges.

## A Survey of the Planet

*"I love this world. It is not cold and empty as is the space up there."*

**Quote of mythological origin, ascribed to a Polynesian goddess.**

Earth circles around the Sun in an orbit right between those of Mars and Venus and is the largest planet within the Asteroid Belt – followed by Venus. The Earth's landmass is about as large as the surface of Mars, but the majority of the planet's surface, is covered by oceans.

Since the reader should be familiar with the geological and geographic facts of this planet, the following chapters will focus on the particularities that shape the world of Space: 1889.

For a long time, the third planet of the Solar System was assumed to be the only one capable of producing life. This assumption however, was corrected when Edison made his amazing discoveries.

## Chronology of Historic Events

With its reorganization of Europe in 1815, the Vienna Congress laid the political groundwork for the 19th century and prepared the path on which history should follow over the next decades.

Yet it was one theory and one pioneering achievement from past centuries that was to influence the 19th century even more than these political restorations. No one at the tables of the Vienna Congress would have dreamt, that 70 years from now the world that had just been rearranged would be but one planet among many others upon which humans would settle.

In 1638, René Descartes had an insight with far-reaching consequences: "Matter is solely characterized by expansion, and thus expansion cannot exist without matter. Therefore, the entirety of space must be filled by a substance, the aether." He concluded that it would be possible to travel through the Ether as soon as humanity would succeed to lift from the Earth's ground.

On July 4th 1783, the French Montgolfier brothers successfully made a hot-air balloon lift and could thereby show that men were able to fly. From now on, the 19th century was governed by the questions of where and how far they could fly. No one expected the Ether to be the opening gate to space.

## Analytical Engines

In 1842, Charles Babbage gives a speech on the state of development of the Analytic Engine, an efficient computing machine with the potential to revolutionize engineering and administration processes by means of its computing power. The inventor has been working on this project since 1820.

At first, British investors are hesitant to put their money into the expensive project, but are eventually persuaded by Babbage's enthusiasm for the Analytic Engine's potential. The development of the Scheutzian calculation engine in 1853 meant a considerable improvement in the calculation power of analytical engines. With the invention of a gear cutter by a German tool manufacturer, highly precise and robust gears can now be produced in large quantities. Thanks to these innovations, the calculating power of the new analytical machines combined with precision cut components now allow for rapid advances in the construction of aircraft and the processing of materials, which shaped the year 1889.

*Imperial Babbage Machines* and the *Difference Engine Corporation* are the major players in the field in 1889, both working on scaling down analytical engines and fitting them into various technical applications. *Schlesische Analysemaschinen-Produktion* (Silesian Analytical Engine Productions) is a more recent entrant to the market that is hoping to win against its competitors.

Earth





### The Year 1861

- Outbreak of the American Civil War, which is to last for four years.
- Mexico refuses to pay its debts, angering the donor countries – Spain, France, and Britain – and causing them to invade it.

### The Year 1862

- President Abraham Lincoln, leader of the Northern States, dies of Typhus. His death leads to a political paralysis among the Northern States, and forces victory over the Southern States, already thought to be theirs, to slip out of their hands.

### The Year 1863

- The world's first subway is opened in London.

### The Year 1864

- In America, the two fighting parties conduct peace negotiations as a result of which the land is divided into the USA and the CSA.
- Maximilian is appointed Emperor of Mexico by France.
- The German Confederation and Denmark go to war over Schleswig-Holstein.
- Adoption of the first Geneva Convention.

### The Year 1866

- After several failed attempts, the installation of the first transatlantic telegraph cable is completed.

### The Year 1867

- Establishing their own parliament, several Canadian regions unite as the Dominion of Canada. Although still subject to the British Empire, the country is granted special rights.
- The USA buys Alaska from Russia at a bargain price.

### The Year 1868

- The mysterious sinking of an unidentified submarine craft off the Norwegian coast puts an end to a series of unprovoked attacks on ships of all colonial nations that had occurred over the previous two years. This event is the inspiration for Jules Verne's novel about Captain Nemo. More mysterious though, is the fact that just two months after the sinking of the unidentified submarine, various renowned universities are offered the chance to buy two research papers. The contents of both, *Reprocessing of Air* and *Pressure Resistant Hull Sealing*, would prove fundamental to the design and safety of spacecraft in the following decade. The origins of both scientific papers would be the source of much speculation and even as of 1889 has yet to be determined to anyone's satisfaction.
- In Japan, Mutsuhito is crowned Emperor. Under the name of Meiji Tenno, he initiates the modernization of the country.

### The Year 1870

- Edison and Armstrong make a test run with their ether propeller, choosing Mars as their destination. This voyage marks the beginning of the age of space travel. On Mars, the two adventurers find the peoples of Martians, as well as the precious liftwood, which they use to repair their ship and eventually



return to Earth, joined by a Martian. Their stories and discoveries infect the world with space fever.

- France opposes Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's plans for German Unification and as a result, Prussia invades and defeats France.

## The Year 1871

- French emperor Napoleon III resigns after his defeat at the hand of Germany and is exiled in England. France declares itself the French Third Republic and surrenders.
- In January, the German Empire is proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. The uncertainty caused by the thought of a strong Germany at the center of Europe is masked by the continuing worldwide space enthusiasm. Thus, within a few months, German politician Bismarck manages to establish the young empire politically, socially, and economically. It would take the German Empire another fourteen years before it would establish its first colonies on Earth, but it would quickly establish itself as one of the front runners in the space race.
- The newly declared French Republic is shaken by internal conflicts between Monarchists and Republicans. In the autumn, the 'République Démocratique et Sociale' or 'the Democratic and Social Republic', previously thwarted by Napoleon III's coup of 1851, reemerges from the crisis invigorated and strengthened as never before. A compromise between the radical and liberal wings of the Republican movement, it establishes a so-called Commune to rule France, a government composed of the bourgeoisie and the liberal aristocrats. French ideas of equality, democracy, and fraternization of the classes evoke abhorrence and dismay in their conservative neighbors just as they had done a century before during the French Revolution. The young Republic is therefore politically isolated right from its founding and particularly exposed to Germany's hostility.
- Charles Darwin publishes a preliminary work on his theory of evolution. *The Descent of Man* sells well, but its readership expects a sequel which would resolve the question of whether or not Darwin's principles apply to Mars as well as the Earth. The scientist kindly refuses the British Geographic Society proposal that he board an ether ship and travel to Mars as soon as possible. Upon his recommendation, Alfred Russel Wallace fills in his place, and in 1876 presents *The Descent of Martians*, which includes a preface by Charles Darwin and is by far the best-selling book of the 1870s.
- After his Red River Rebellion of the Métis people failed, Louis Riel flees from Canada to France, where he helps to establish the Commune.

## The Year 1872

- The British land on Mars. They are welcomed and establish a permanent representation in Parhoon, but fail to gain political influence on Mars over the next eight years. British presence on the Red Planet, however, leads to the color red becoming the latest fashion on Earth in the following months.

## The Year 1873

- Led by Doctor Claude Massigny, the first French scientific expedition to Mars lands at Ideaus Fons, establishing friendly contact with King Lotmar.

- The League of the three Emperors is signed by Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia, thereby isolating France even further. Only the USA and Japan still maintain diplomatic contacts with the Grande Nation.
- Japan undergoes political and military modernization, including an ether travel program that aims to establish a colony on Mars.
- Archeologist Heinrich Schliemann excavates 'Priam's Treasure' in Troy, including a strange copper disk. Some scientists suggest that the disk is a sky map, leading to speculations about early contact between ancient men and one or more alien species. This thesis is rejected indignantly among experts as such a visit more than 2,500 years ago could only have been conducted by a civilization highly advanced in technological terms. In addition, were such a thesis to be true, it would mean that it was not mankind that pioneered space travel and discovered ill-advanced alien races, but rather that it had been another species who long before had reached the high cultural level that humans have today.

## The Year 1874

- The Armstrong-expedition to Venus does not return and is presumed lost.
- Chancellor Otto von Bismarck declares that Germany has no interest in colonial possessions on Earth. The international press however, considers this announcement to be a diversion and speculates that Germany might be preparing a large-scale expedition into space. Although no-one outside of Germany can be certain that such an expedition is being planned, it is known that German engineers are working frantically to develop space travel technology. The same year, a dozen cases of manipulation are registered in the German zeppelin shipyards. The German press speaks of acts of sabotage by foreign nations attempting to thwart a planned space expedition.
- Belgium and France also establish colonies on Mars.

## The Year 1875

- Sir William Otterbein and his assistant, Luigi Piachetti, are the first men to land on the Moon and almost get lost during a moonquake.
- King of the Belgians, Leopold II takes action in the Congo, and his *Société pour l'exploration coloniale* sets out to explore the area for economic purpose.
- Founding of the German Socialist Party, the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland (SPD)*. Space travel is financed with money needed for social projects and the improvement of general living conditions down on Earth. Worried that the proletariat is to suffer most of all facing this budget shortages, the SPD is formed up as a powerful lobby. If the Socialists remain critical when it comes to social and societal issues, they do however, support the colonization of space according to their 'Gera Program'.
- By means of the 'Meter Convention', the measurements 'Meter' and 'Kilogram' are standardized in most parts of the world.
- 'Planet Exhibitions' are set up everywhere on Earth, showing animals and plants from the extraterrestrial colonies. Many of these Planet Exhibitions expand or replace the zoological gardens of the big cities.



- Financed by the members of the Royal Society, Edward Barton Collingswood takes off for Venus on a rescue mission which intends to search for the Armstrong Mission that had gone missing the year before. However, Collingswood's party eventually disappears as well.
- For the sum of £4,000,000, Britain obtains the Egyptian Khedive's share of the Suez Canal and thus begins to expand its influence in this region.

## The Year 1876

- The Ottoman Empire declares national bankruptcy, after buying an ether flyer that got lost during transport. This event prepares the ground for a political reorganization of the Balkans. The same year, a constitution comes into force which stabilizes the state of affairs in the Ottoman Empire.
- In the USA, the Sioux defeat General Custer at Little Big Horn.
- After Armstrong and Collingswood, *The Times* newspaper funds a third expedition to Venus, heavily armed, under the command of former Colonel Aloysius Ditherby Stoot.

However, this expedition is as unlucky as the first ones and disappears as well.

- Sir Basil Throckmorton arrives on Mercury on board of the HMS *Achilles* and explores the planet.

## The Year 1877

- For the very first time, the two scientists Michelson and Morley measure the Ether current influx on Earth. Based on these experiments, it is now possible to calculate comparably accurate Ether flow tables and to develop 'Ether charts'. Ether vortices thus become predictable, at least to some extent, making space travel significantly safer.
- The second British expedition to Mercury led by Sir Basil Throckmorton explores the planet's Hot Side and lays claim to large areas of the planet's surface.
- On July 14th, an attack by the government forces takes the French legation in Ideaus Fons by surprise. When the Martian potentate, King Lotmar, refuses to negotiate with the French, he provokes an uprising among his people. The government of the city state is overthrown, and the 'Committee of Revolution', formed by French 'military advisors' takes

## The Long Road to Space Travel

When Edison and Armstrong returned from their journey to Mars, the world was electrified. The question of whether mankind was alone in the universe was answered and left no doubt in anyone's mind that mankind was powerful enough to colonize and exploit other planets. It is impressive and frightening at the same time to see how quickly the nations of Earth were able to launch missions to the other planets and establish settlements.

The continuing interest in space and space exploration came at a cost and was not without its victims. Research and expeditions into space devoured incredible amounts of money which was only available at the expense of other investment areas, particularly the exploration of the Earth. Many places which had already been discovered in our real world by 1889 might still await their eventual discovery and exploration in the universe of Space: 1889.

The main victims of the space craze are the lower classes. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s social critics from the left and the right assert that the demands made by the Space Race upon the resources and peoples of the Earth were unreasonable and that it would be much easier and more profitable for the prosperity of mankind if the nations of Earth were to apply such resources and peoples to the betterment of their own world. Further, people were aghast at what they saw as thoughtless investments made by others in the hope that they might one day make gain a fortune on Mars or Venus. Think of the Earth they imploded.

However, such assertions and implorings to think and act reasonably were ignored. Mankind was caught up in the frenzy of space travel and wanted these expeditions at any expense. Everything that the newspapers could print about space travel and the exploration of

the new worlds was eagerly devoured by the public. Space travel soon became a question of national pride, one that everyone was expected to make sacrifices for. When nations were unable to raise no more funds through taxation or private donations, it became common practice for their governments to sell or lease former state businesses. The perfect example of this practice is the countless private companies which have leased colonies from the state and exploit them in exchange for paying taxes.

A perfect illustration of this enthusiasm for space travel and the irrationality of the discussion of its advantages and disadvantages might be the so-called 'AZ Affair' which occurred in the German Empire in 1873. In that year, the newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung* (General News) published an article entitled 'Why long for the distance, when so much beauty is right before your eyes?' by the journalist Georg Wilhelm Barth in which he pleads with the government of Germany to abandon its expensive space travel projects and to instead concentrate all efforts on the colonial possessions on Earth, which would be much more useful and profitable, while costing less. The money wasted he suggested should instead be invested into social work and the city's infrastructure, particularly into the construction of sanitary facilities to help improve the lot of the working classes. Barth's suggestions were not received particularly well. In the week after the article was published Barth was beaten up on the open street by furious radicals and left severely injured.

Since that incident, Barth has a limp and is blind in one eye; however, he is still the most outspoken and best known opponent of Germany's current space policy. He is also an outspoken critic of the Berlin police, who he claims to have not only ignored the attempt on his life, but to also know who was really responsible for it.



control of the city state. Foreign observers suspect the cause of the upheaval among the population to be a clever campaign to influence the 'Martian lower class.'

## The Year 1878

- The German Heidelberg mission – named after Colonel Doctor Ruprecht von Heidelberg – succeeds in landing on Venus by means of a Zeppelin. On their arrival, the explorers not only discover the precious resources to be had on the planet, they are also able to rescue several survivors of the previous three, unlucky British expeditions. The expedition stays on Venus for over a year.
- A German expedition spends half a year investigating Mercury, in particular sailing the length of the World River.
- In memory of British Prince Consort Albert, who died 17 years previously, Britain establishes a rapid messenger service by means of fast ether flyers, improving the communication between the British Empire and her space colonies. The other nations of the Earth are forced to catch up, inaugurating an expensive competition to see who has the fastest courier ship that will see a rapid progress in ether shipbuilding. Several international investors, most notably the publisher of the *New York Herald*, Gordon Bennett, offer a prize for the fastest ether ship, the so-called 'Golden Ribbon'
- In the so-called Gorovaangian War, British forces suppress a Martian rebellion. The first aerial war in history not only brings victory to the British, but also important insights into air combat.
- Brian Masterly lands on the backside of Luna with his ether flyer, the *Queen of Cambria*, and is the first to relate the mysterious 'glow'. Furthermore, what Masterly and his crew initially believe to be huge 'moon diamonds' on a crater slope, turn out to be mountain crystals when brought back to Earth.
- The Emir of Kabul, Sher Ali Khan, receives a Russian delegation, but refuses a British one entry to Afghanistan. This causes the second Anglo-Afghan War which ends in 1879 with victory for Britain.

## The Year 1879

- For the third time, Sir Basil Throckmorton returns to Mercury, this time attempting to travel around the planet along the World River in the Twilight Zone. The explorer also risks several trips into the arctic cold of the Dark Side, and eventually concludes that the planet is only habitable on the shores along the World River.
- Based on his previous designs, German engineer Carl von Linde presents a compressor which makes construction of commercially successful cold-storage rooms possible. This invention not only makes ice cream, previously considered to be unhealthy, quite popular, but also allows the storage of fresh food. The Linde machine contributes heavily to the colonization of Venus, most notably in the form of the Ice Palace in Venus city.
- Several nations pass laws regulating the recruitment and training of special regiments for deployment beyond Earth. In the following years, great amounts of money are paid to private entrepreneurs in order to develop space suits to replace the diving suits previously used.
- On behalf of the Tsar, Vladimir Tereshkova makes the first of his five expeditions to the Moon.



Earth

- Louis Pasteur and others search frantically for vaccinations against diseases on Earth as well as remedies for those diseases the soldiers have to face beyond Earth.
- Maximilian I of Mexico dies in an attempt on his life; he is succeeded by Augustín de Itúrbide y Green.

## The Year 1880

- Germany establishes the first colony on Venus. In the same year however, much to the annoyance of the German colonial movement, Russian and Italian expeditions set foot on the planet's ground and found their first colonies as well.
- Inspired by the success of the German expedition of 1878 as well as Throckmorton's extensive explorations, the British establish their first settled base camp on Mercury, the Princess Christiana Station.
- The Second War of Parhoon Succession comes to an end, when the British succeed in installing their candidate on the throne of Mars. This political stratagem finally enables the British Empire to officially exert substantial influence on Mars and firmly establish their colonial power.
- After aerial photography has some remarkable successes on Earth, several nations and investors offer a considerable prize for the systematic recording of their extraterrestrial colonies from above.
- In Africa, the Boers revolt against Britain and declare their independence. For the moment, the new nation is not diplomatically recognized by any other nation as no one wants to incur British wrath.
- American entrepreneur Andrew Carnegie promotes the manufacture of a large furnace that would revolutionize steel production.



- Tin cans become widely available and revolutionize the provision of food in the cities and in the armies. Soon after, the first canning factories are established in the colonies, and tinned alien foodstuffs are brought back to Earth where they sell for astonishingly high prices. The profit is enormous, and consequently leads to several fraud cases of Earth foodstuffs being heavily spiced and sold as alien products.
- Cologne Cathedral is finally completed – 632 years after construction started.

## The Year 1881

- To promote the colonization of space the British Parliament passes the *Fitzgibbon Montague Act*, a law by which the Crown will, each year, pay for the free passage to the extraterrestrial colonies for several thousands of healthy and unmarried men and women between the ages of 16 and 35, provided that they engage themselves in work there for a period of not less than 10 years. Every year there is a run on the assigned seats among the poor.
- Inspired by the British *Fitzgibbon Montague Act*, the *Deutsche Kolonialverband* or 'German Colonial Organisation' gains an audience with the German Emperor and demands financial support, since the economic exploitation of Venus cannot be expedited with indigenous people alone. An attempt to resettle impoverished country nobles by promising them estates on Venus fails, but the prospect of tax relief and financial support induces several industrialists to promote the settlement of the German colonies in space at their own expense.
- Tereshkova undertakes his second expedition to the Moon.
- The first steam-powered aerial gunboat constructed by the British, the HMS *Aphid*, is launched on Mars.
- The gunfight at O.K. Corral in Tombstone, New Mexico, makes evident that the times of the Wild West are not completely over yet.
- The Boers repulse the British successfully and inflict stunning defeats on them at Laing's Nek und Majuba Hill. At the end of the year, a ceasefire is established, and the British eventually recognize the South African Republic, as the empire realizes that another war against the Boers would be too expensive and would drain precious resources needed for the space program.
- An invasion by Tunisian outlaws in Algeria gives France the pretense to invade Tunisia.
- Berlin has a telephone network comprising 48 participants.
- Irish 'freedom fighter' – others call him an anarchist – O'Conner carries his fight for the liberation of Ireland to Mars and attacks several British ships. In the following years, he becomes a serious threat to the British troops stationed on Mars.

## The Year 1882

- Jakob Einstein invests the first transportable ether measuring device. The 'Einstein Etherometer' becomes an integral part on every ether ship's bridge. The patent makes so much money, that Jakob and his brother Hermann Einstein found the *Elektroätherische Fabrik J. Einstein & Cie* (Electrical Ether Engineering Company) in Munich. Although the small company has its competitors, its Einstein Etherometers

maintain a premium quality that ensures they are bought all over the world.

- Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary form a defense alliance, the so-called Triple Alliance. Secret additional clauses settle the distribution of the extraterrestrial colonies.
- The Martian city states of Meepsoor and Moeris Lacus accept the status as British protectorates. By this measure, the empire further reinforces its hegemony on the planet.
- Traditional Chinese medicine, including acupuncture and herbal remedies becomes popular throughout Europe. Conventional medicine rails against the use of Chinese medicine, denouncing it as "humbug" in public. Over the following months and years, the space craze means that drug stores and pharmacies all over the world begin to stock extraterrestrial elixirs of questionable effectiveness and origin. In July, a weeping and ill smelling rash spreads among the consumers of a 'remedy' with the illustrious name 'Venus Awakening'. Doctors explain that the rash is caused by an allergic reaction to one of the ingredients. Critics of the space race and the colonization of other planets, warn of the imprudent and untested use of alien substances and so take advantage of this incident to get attention from the world's press for the first time in years.
- The heliograph stations in the orbits of Mars and Earth are completed and accelerate the communication between these two worlds significantly.
- The German Empire sends a Reichskommissar (Imperial Commissioner) to Venus who takes up residence at Venus City.
- Mahdists proclaim a theocracy in Sudan.
- In Bayreuth, Erich Berghammer founds the 'Walhall Foundation'. His alleged objective is the construction of 'New Walhall' a town-sized orbital platform, which according to advertising posters would feature golden towers and a mixture of neo-gothic and Norse architecture. According to estimates, the costs for this megalomaniac construction would exceed the gross domestic product of the German Empire by a factor of eight. While the German press makes jokes about "Berghammer's Castle in the Sky", he finds a number of famous people ready to invest in his project, among them Richard Wagner, who donates half of his fortune to Berghammer in his will.

## The Year 1883

- Health insurance is introduced in Germany. This concession is intended to persuade the *SPD* (German Socialists Party) to approve of further expensive space travel projects.
- A French group of mathematicians, precision mechanics, and engineers optimizes a new command system for the Scheutzian calculation engine, which improves and simplifies its operation and programming. However, the new command format is slow to achieve market penetration, since the existing engines are not compatible. Due to the demand for new Scheutzian calculators the French *Centre de la Technologie des Ordinateurs* (Center for Ordinator Technology) is established in Montpellier.
- The Russians land on Mars. Their intervention in the civil war which was raging in Hecatus Lacus leads to the signing of the Treaty of Cebrenia by which the Martians recognize Russia's special interests in the region. Thus, Russia



becomes a serious competitor to both France and the British Empire on the Red Planet.

- A German pharmaceutical enterprise introduces an enhanced pain killer based on salicylic acid as a main ingredient. Over the following years, the recipe is further optimized and partly fortified with substances from the extraterrestrial colonies. Thanks to this success, the company manages to launch several alien remedies on the world market, among them a skin cream and a cure for nervous hysteria.
- The army of the German Empire commissions the first zeppelins of the LZ 5 type. Over the following years, a dozen of these light-armored spotter vessels embark from the shipyards of the Kaiserreich, forming the backbone of the German Air Force.
- The British Air Force, still in its infancy, conducts several aerial campaigns against pirates in the Aerial Hills.
- With his luxurious fairytale castle Neuschwanstein not even finished yet, King Ludwig II of Bavaria already commissions the construction of the *Pfauenflugschiff* or 'peacock air ship' – the first private luxury space yacht. The baroque style yacht is completed the same year and proves to be fully capable of space travel. The maiden flight of the *Pfauenflugschiff* takes Ludwig II to *Harbinger* space station which the monarch visits with great interest. After his journey, Ludwig can claim to be the first monarch ever to have entered space.
- The Orient Express, a rail connection between Paris and Istanbul, makes its first run. While the train represents the ultimate in luxury travel, the wealthy and more adventurous traveler grows increasingly interested in the possibilities of civil space travel.

### The Year 1884

- German investors in Togo, Cameroon, Southwest Africa, and German East Africa seek the protection of the German Empire, wanting to defend themselves against the advance of British and French investors. The Emperor however, complies with this request in a halfhearted fashion as he concentrates on his possessions on Venus. The German investors in the colonies are forced to resort to employing private mercenaries.
- Japan decides to join in the colonial dance and sends out an expedition to Mars. The Japanese consolidate their influence and establish a station at Euxinus Lacus the following year.
- The two transport and passenger ether vessels, the *John Wycliff* and the *Mary Celeste* disappear without a trace with more than 150 men, women, and children aboard. To this day, their fate is unknown.

### The Year 1885

- The 'Tournai Incident' nearly provokes a war between France and Germany as the German Empire interferes in a dispute about the French-Belgian border. Intending to support striking textile workers, a French battalion marches into the Belgian town of Tournai, thereby violating the Belgian frontier as guaranteed in 1830. Being one of the guaranteeing nations, Germany demands an immediate retreat by the French troops. With war on the verge of breaking out between France and Germany, Britain intervenes in support of Germany and France gives in. This brings about an improvement in Anglo-German relations and the British and the German Empires agree upon mutual support with regard to certain political

and economic questions. Meanwhile, Bismarck reins in the ambitions of General Helmut von Moltke who had intended to make the incident cause enough for the Imperial Army to march on Paris once again. The general is forced to shelf his plans and Bismarck's actions causes no little discontent within the ranks of the German Army.

- Mahdists take overrun Khartoum. Governor Gordon is rescued at the last minute by Frederick Gustavus Burnaby's air ship *Penelope*, and the British withdraw from Sudan.
- By the terms of the military reform act enacted by Secretary of State for War, W.H. Smith, it is mandated that all of the aerial and ether vessels in possession of every branch Her Majesty's armed forces would be solely operated and commanded by the men of the Royal Marine Light Infantry. Parliament is of the opinion that personnel of the Royal Marine Light Infantry are best suited to man Her Majesty's air and ether ships. However, this decision smashes the hopes of those who thought that such air forces, or the 'Royal Etherforces' as they were unofficially known, would be established as an independent branch of the military. The resolution has far reaching consequences. Army officers who have been serving on aerial vessels are now sent back to regular Army divisions. Similarly, Naval officers who have been serving aboard ether ships are returned to surface vessels. This not only leads the newly founded Royal Marine air forces losing qualified aeronauts and ethernauts, but also causes dismay among the officers. Following the example of famous air travel pioneer Frederick Gustavus Burnaby, many officers quit their service and become privateers. Many of these join the so-called 'Red Captains' on Mars.

### The Year 1886

- American chemist Pemberton invents a lemonade which he renames 'Bhutan Cola' shortly after for marketing reasons – even if the name giving spice is only a minor ingredient. Several weeks later, 'Doctor Müller's Venus Tonicum' is launched on the German market. It contains ingredients from Venus. The sherbet is mixed with the Venusian Bau-Bau fruit and is an immediate success in the German Empire. Attempts made by German beer brewers to mix their products with alien additives fail miserably, however. In Bavaria, several public protests occur denouncing the "violation of the Purity Law".
- Britain secures its influence in Burma, Indochina, and Nigeria, though Siam stays steadfastly independent. Parts of these new acquisitions are instantly leased out to the *British Trade Company*. The Company starts cultivating a Martian food crop that is supposed to be more robust than wheat. Unfortunately, the alien monoculture secretes an acid into the soil, destroying several hundred square miles of fertile farmland. The famine that follows leads to severe uprisings in the affected regions. The Church, politicians, and scientists alike are warning to conduct another experiment of this kind.
- Britain commissions its first air ship class, the *Locust* gun boat, which is manufactured on Earth.
- Berghammer continues to search for investors for his Walhall foundation in the USA, and is elected the "Megalomaniac of the Century" by the readers of the *New York Times*.
- The so-called 'Mylarkt Incident' keeps the world in suspense, as British and German aerial vessels exchange gunfire on Mars. Since no one is able to determine who opened fire in the first place or why, no major diplomatic complications occur.



- Ludwig II of Bavaria drowns in the Starnberger Lake under mysterious circumstances. The death of the monarch is as puzzling as is the whereabouts of his staggering private fortune, which the king had made through clever investments in ether travel.
- Carl Benz obtains a patent for his Motorwagen.

### The Year 1887

- The German Imperial Army establishes the *Deutsche Luftschiffabteilung* or German air ship division, an air force division under the command of Duke von Zeppelin; its one task is the development and construction of new air ship technology. The division's most prestigious project are the heavily armed combat zeppelins, the *LZ-41s*, already completed in the same year.
- At the gates of New York, Thomas Edison begins construction on his utopian city Port Progress.
- Queen Victoria celebrates her Golden Jubilee.
- Tereshkova leaves for his last journey to Luna. The expedition disappears without a trace.
- British troops besiege and capture the Martian city of Shastaph.
- The USA establishes a Marine base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- In Warsaw, Ludwig Zamenhoff publishes his first book on the artificial language Esperanto. It is expected to facilitate communication, even with the inhabitants of Mars.
- The British Marine sends the HMS *Theseus* on a spectacular mission. By means of a newly invented Swiss solar boiler, the research vessel is supposed to be capable of reaching as far as the moons of Jupiter.

### The Year 1888

- The Year of the Three Emperors begins in March with the death of Emperor Wilhelm I from old age. His son, Frederick III, succeeds him, but suffering from cancer, he dies in June and it is his son, Wilhelm II who succeeds him.
- The *Deutsche Luftschiffabteilung* commissions two flying fortresses or 'Luftfestung' on Earth, the LF *Wotan* and *Donar*.
- A series of murders shocks London. One fairly popular theory about the murderer, whom the papers call Jack the Ripper, asserts he has been the victim of a Venusian brain worm which had been sneaked into the drinking water supply in Eastend by German spies or French anarchists in order to attack the empire from within.
- On June 30th, the HMS *Theseus* has to turn around half way through making its way between the Asteroid Belt and Jupiter. The Sun's light which is to heat up the vessel's solar boiler is already too weak by this point. Nonetheless, the journey is considered a success, as astronomic observations made during the trip show that the heat emitted by Jupiter is sufficient to make life on the Jupiter moons possible! By means of the ship's telescopes, the crew of the *Theseus* discovers brown-greenish areas of vegetation on Io and blue-green oceans on Ganymede.
- The *Westinghouse Company*, Edison's competitor, reveals its latest product to the astonished public – The Westinghouse Orbital station.

- In Brazil, all slaves are freed by the "Golden Law".
- Beginning of the so-called 'Abushiri Revolt' in German East Africa; its suppression is organized by Hermann von Wissmann.

### The Year 1889

- The French Panama Canal Company declares bankruptcy. Business is taken over by the New Panama Canal Company, which is supported by several international investors.
- The Tehuantepec Ship Railroad begins operation.
- After only single year's construction, the Westinghouse Orbital station is almost complete and Nikola Tesla starts installing his laboratory on the station.
- Buffalo Bill tours with his Wild West show through Europe. He refuses an offer to include Canal Martians into his company since he only wants to present what he calls "real savages".
- British engineers build the first *Intrepid* Class Cruiser from liftwood.
- Pedro II, emperor of Brazil, is overthrown by a military *coup*.
- A cyclone sinks several German and U.S. American combat ships anchored off the coast of Samoa. This incident prevents a war between these two powers over the islands.
- Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria dies under mysterious circumstances at Mayerling Castle.
- Erich Berghammer goes into hiding in Siam, after the police forces of fifteen nations open investigations into what are claimed are his fraudulent activities.
- Japan adopts a modern constitution and becomes a constitutional monarchy.
- The world exhibition in Paris presents the current state of science and research. Opening of the Eiffel Tower.





# Flora and Fauna on Earth

The inhabitants of Earth are commonly known to the reader – to the adventurer going for a hunt in 1889 however, they are not. Many creatures have not been discovered yet, and it is possible to hunt for ‘new’ plants and animals, perhaps even being the first to name them. Who knows whether the Okapi will soon be discovered and named the Victoria gazelle in honor of Her Majesty?

A special discovery would also be that of an animal which is considered to be extinct, such as the Dodo. Such a rediscovery could mean fame and glory to a scientist just as much as the sighting of a new species in the depths of the jungle. More stunning still would be the encounter with a mythical creature like the monster of Loch Ness, unraveling the mystery of its existence. Hidden in remote valleys or regions of the Earth, there could even still live creatures that have survived since prehistoric times – woolly rhinoceros, mammoths, and maybe even dinosaurs.

Of course, there are many who would hunt for reasons other than science. They go hunting for lions, tigers, dire wolves, or other creatures that would make splendid trophies.

Listed below are the statistics of some creatures that can be found in Europe and beyond in even the most remote corner of the Earth.

## Anaconda

### Animal Companion 2

**Archetype:** Animal **Health:** 8

#### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 3 **Charisma:** 0  
**Dexterity:** 4 **Intelligence:** 0  
**Strength:** 4 **Willpower:** 4

#### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 1 **Initiative:** 4  
**Move:** 8 **Defense:** 6  
**Perception:** 6 **Stun:** 3

| Skills    | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|-----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl     | 4    | 4      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth   | 4    | 3      | 6*     | (3)       |
| Survival  | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |
| Athletics | 4    | 4      | 8      | (4)       |

#### Talents

**Alertness (+2 Perception rating)**

**Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)**

| Weapons   | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|-----------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite      | 1 L    | -1   | 8 L    | (4) L     |
| Grapple** | 1      | -1   | 8      | (4)       |
| Crush     | -      | -    | 5 N    | (2+) N    |

\*Anacondas suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth roles

\*\*See Grapple (p. 206)

## Bestiary

Edison’s venture to the stars not only opened up the path to the planet’s treasures, but also made mankind realize that the variety of God’s creation is far larger than it had previously supposed.

Information and ratings for animals and plants of the explored planets of the Solar System can be found on the pages 25ff. (Earth), 71ff. (Mars), 106ff. (Venus), and 130ff. (Mercury).

All creatures in this rule system have the same basic traits:

**Archetype:** Dinosaur, insect, animal, or plant

**Motivation:** Survival

**Style:** 0

**Resources:** None

**Flaws:** Bestial (Character cannot communicate or use tools)

### Animal Companion

The Animal Companion rating is an additional measurement for the strength and aptitude of a creature. The higher its level, the better its Attribute, Skill, and Talent ratings.

### Move

The following rules complete the information on the Move rating on page 148.

*Amphibious:* Amphibious creatures use their full Move rating when swimming and half their Move rating when on land.

*Flying:* Flying creatures use their full Move rating for flying and half their Move rating when on the ground.

*Burrowing:* Burrowing animals dig up to their Move rating in feet per hour.

*Swimming:* Swimming creatures double their Move rating when swimming, but cannot move outside of the water.

*Immobile:* Plants or other immobile creatures have a Move rating of zero. Instead they have natural armor that provides a +2 Defense Bonus.

*Multiple legs:* Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.

Earth



## Bear

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

### Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 4 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 2  
Move: 6 (12)\* Defense: 6  
Perception: 6 Stun: 5

| Skills    | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|-----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Survival  | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |
| Athletics | 4    | 4      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth   | 2    | 5      | 6**    | (3)       |
| Brawl     | 4    | 4      | 8      | (4)       |

### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 1 L    | -1   | 8 L    | (4) L     |
| Claw    | 1 L    | -1   | 8 L    | (4) L     |

\*Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Bears suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth roles

## Boar

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 6

### Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 3 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 Initiative: 2  
Move: 5 (10)\* Defense: 6  
Perception: 6 Stun: 3

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)       |
| Stealth  | 2    | 3      | 6**    | (3)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Tusks   | 1 L    | +1   | 8 L    | (4) L     |

\*Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Boars get a +1 Size bonus on Stealth roles

## Chimpanzee

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 4

### Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 1  
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 2 Willpower: 3

### Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 Initiative: 4  
Move: 5 (10) Defense: 6  
Perception: 6 Stun: 2

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Empathy  | 1    | 1      | 2      | (1)       |
| Brawl    | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)       |
| Survival | 1    | 5      | 6      | (3)       |
| Stealth  | 3    | 3      | 7*     | (3+)      |

### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Climb (double Move rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 0 L    | +1   | 5 L    | (2+) L    |
| Punch   | 0 N    | +1   | 5 N    | (2+) N    |

\*Chimpanzees get a +1 Size bonus on Stealth roles

## Crocodile

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

### Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 5 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 4  
Move: 9 (5)\* Defense: 8  
Perception: 6 Stun: 5

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 5    | 3      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth  | 4    | 2      | 5**    | (2+)      |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 3 L    | -1   | 10 L   | (5) L     |
| Tail    | 1 L    | -1   | 8 L    | (4) L     |

\*Crocodiles use their full Move rating when swimming and half their Move rating when on land

\*\*Crocodiles suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth roles

## Elephant

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 12

### Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 6 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 2  
Move: 8 (16)\* Defense: 6  
Perception: 6 Stun: 6

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 6    | 4      | 10     | (5)       |
| Stealth  | 2    | 2      | 2**    | (1)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |



## Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Tusks   | 4 L    | -2   | 12 L   | (6) L     |
| Stomp   | 2 L    | -2   | 10 N   | (5) N     |

\*Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Elephants suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth roles

## Gorilla

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 8

### Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 1  
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 5 Willpower: 3

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 4  
Move: 8 (16) Defense: 8  
Perception: 4 Stun: 5

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 5    | 3      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth  | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)       |
| Survival | 1    | 3      | 6      | (3)       |
| Empathy  | 1    | 1      | 2      | (1)       |

## Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Climb (double Move rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 0 L    | 0    | 8 L    | (4) L     |
| Punch   | 0 N    | 0    | 8 N    | (4) N     |

## Large Cats

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 7

### Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 5  
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 3 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5  
Move: 8 (16)\* Defense: 8  
Perception: 6 Stun: 3

| Skills    | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|-----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl     | 3    | 5      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth   | 5    | 1      | 6      | (3)       |
| Survival  | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |
| Athletics | 3    | 5      | 8      | (4)       |

## Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 0 L    | 0    | 8 L    | (4) L     |
| Claw    | 0 L    | 0    | 8 L    | (4) L     |

\*Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

## Raptor

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 5

### Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 1 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 Initiative: 5  
Move: 6 (3)\* Defense: 8  
Perception: 4 (8) Stun: 2

| Skills    | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|-----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl     | 1    | 3      | 4      | (2)       |
| Stealth   | 5    | 2      | 8**    | (4)       |
| Survival  | 0    | 4      | 4      | (2)       |
| Athletics | 1    | 1      | 2      | (1)       |

## Talents

Keen Sense (+4 on sight-based Perception rolls)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | -1 L   | +1   | 4 L    | (2) L     |
| Claw    | -1 L   | +1   | 4 L    | (2) L     |

\*Raptors use their full Move rating for flying and half their Move rating when on the ground

\*\*Raptors get a +1 Size Bonus on Stealth roles

## Shark

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 12

### Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 6 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 2  
Move: 16 (0)\* Defense: 6  
Perception: 4 (8) Stun: 6

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 6    | 2      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth  | 2    | 2      | 2**    | (1)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

## Talents

Keen Sense (+4 on smelling-based Perception rolls)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 4 L    | -2   | 10 L   | (5) L     |

\*Sharks double their Move rating when swimming, but cannot move outside of the water

\*\*Sharks suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth roles

## Venomous Snake

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Animal Health: 2

### Primary Attributes

Body: 1 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 2 Willpower: 2



**Secondary Attributes**

| <b>Size:</b> -1      |               | <b>Initiative:</b> 4 |               |                  |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <b>Move:</b> 6       |               | <b>Defense:</b> 6    |               |                  |
| <b>Perception:</b> 2 |               | <b>Stun:</b> 1       |               |                  |
| <b>Skills</b>        | <b>Base</b>   | <b>Levels</b>        | <b>Rating</b> | <b>(Average)</b> |
| <b>Brawl</b>         | 2             | 2                    | 4             | (2)              |
| <b>Stealth</b>       | 4             | 1                    | 6*            | (3)              |
| <b>Survival</b>      | 0             | 2                    | 2             | (1)              |
| <b>Talents</b>       |               |                      |               |                  |
| <b>None</b>          |               |                      |               |                  |
| <b>Weapons</b>       | <b>Rating</b> | <b>Size</b>          | <b>Attack</b> | <b>(Average)</b> |
| <b>Bite**</b>        | -1 L          | +1                   | 4 L           | (2) L            |

\*Venomous snakes get a +1 Size Bonus on Stealth roles

\*\*The snake's bite induces a poison which causes 3 L (see rules on poison p. 217)

**Wolf****Animal Companion 1**

**Archetype:** Animal **Health:** 4

**Primary Attributes**

**Body:** 2 **Charisma:** 0  
**Dexterity:** 3 **Intelligence:** 1  
**Strength:** 3 **Willpower:** 3

**Secondary Attributes**

| <b>Size:</b> -1                                           |               | <b>Initiative:</b> 4 |               |                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| <b>Move:</b> 6 (12)*                                      |               | <b>Defense:</b> 6    |               |                  |
| <b>Perception:</b> 4 (8)                                  |               | <b>Stun:</b> 2       |               |                  |
| <b>Skills</b>                                             | <b>Base</b>   | <b>Levels</b>        | <b>Rating</b> | <b>(Average)</b> |
| <b>Brawl</b>                                              | 2             | 3                    | 5             | (2+)             |
| <b>Stealth</b>                                            | 3             | 2                    | 6**           | (3)              |
| <b>Survival</b>                                           | 1             | 5                    | 6             | (3)              |
| <b>Talents</b>                                            |               |                      |               |                  |
| <b>Keen Sense (+4 on smelling-based Perception rolls)</b> |               |                      |               |                  |
| <b>Weapons</b>                                            | <b>Rating</b> | <b>Size</b>          | <b>Attack</b> | <b>(Average)</b> |
| <b>Bite</b>                                               | 2 L           | +1                   | 8 L           | (4) L            |

\*Creatures with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Wolfs get a +1 Size Bonus on Stealth roles

## Countries of the Earth

The countries and states existing in 1889 are subject to constant change. Colonization continues apace on the Earth even though the many imperial nations' capacities to colonize the planet have been tied up by colonial expansion into space.

Backward states and regions stand right beside aspiring civilizations which reach for the stars and give their 'blessings' to spots both all over the Earth and on other worlds. All this change is not simply accepted, for new forms of government are on the rise and many places see resistance stir against established cultures and hegemonies.

The world is primarily dominated by the powerhouses from the European continent and, in particular, Great Britain and its long-serving monarch Victoria. After all, the whole era got its name from this Queen of the United Kingdom and later Empress of India.

## Great Britain and the Victorian Age

*"This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England"*

*William Shakespeare, Richard II*

In the year 1889, Great Britain is about to reach the pinnacle of her power, pride, and prestige. She rules over a quarter of the Earth's mainland and over the oceans with an inconspicuous, yet iron fist. She controls a large part of the international commerce, and her industry is clearly more advanced than that of most other nations. She possesses a political stability unknown amongst the other nations of Europe – constantly embroiled in wars of conquest or revolution –, and has, just two years ago, even celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the coronation of her ruler, Queen Victoria. The British Empire exudes confidence, comfort, and vitality – even though it may have become a little chubby around the jowls – and it keeps growing and growing. In 1889, British troops are fighting in Nyasaland and Sierra Leone in Africa, in Sikkim and Lushai in Asia, and in Syrtis Major on Mars. Recently, the British crown has taken over control in Burma and Bechuanaland, and its armies are about to march through Mashonaland and the Malakand Pass within the next year. There seems to be no limit to British energy, determination, and ambition. Every day, the frontiers of the empire are pushed outward ever further and – since Edison and Armstrong's journey to Mars 19 years ago – there have been two planets with vast areas, upon which, it is said, the Sun never sets.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was formed when England conquered its three Celtic neighbors Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. In 1889, it consists of two large and several smaller islands located off the northwestern coast of Europe in the warm Gulf Stream.

Historically, this small nation has mostly been of minor importance. While Greek merchants only visited it, Roman conquerors added the southern half to their empire – and built a guarded wall designed to protect them against the uncivilized northern half. Saxons and Jutes pushed the Romanized Celts westwards, only to see themselves bow to the Danes and Normans later on.

It was the reign of Elizabeth I – another highly revered queen – during which glimpses of Great Britain's upcoming greatness and destiny could be seen for the very first time. Colonies were established along the coasts of Northern America, India, and many Caribbean Islands. By 1763, two centuries of seafaring audacity and relentless colonization had earned Great Britain possession of vast territories in North America, key areas in India and the Caribbean, and footholds in Africa and on the Antipodes. When the older colonies of the North American seaboard commenced and won their struggle for independence, Great Britain responded to the loss of an empire by simply creating another one. In 1889, it is still busily doing so.



## Great Britain and the World

To say that Britain set out to conquer the world would be an overly simplistic statement. Only in rare cases do the British want overseas territories merely for the sake of possessing them. Great Britain is a trading nation, and her colonies serve an economic purpose. If they provide raw materials, offer a market for British goods, or allow for strategically important bases from which the Royal Navy can protect British ship lanes, they are worth keeping – if not, London intends to get rid of them, or at least tries to avoid spending money for their upkeep. In the middle of the 19th century, the British government was less concerned with expanding the empire than it was busy making a profit from the useful territories and preventing hot-blooded men on the spot from getting into expansionist adventures. When an army was sent out to fight against King Tewodros II of Ethiopia in 1867, it marched in, defeated the king, freed some British hostages, and marched out again – owning Ethiopia was just not part of the Imperial plan. Likewise, London's reaction to the break-out of the Zulu War in 1879 was one of incredulous horror about the fact that local officials had provoked a war without the government having been consulted in advance, let alone having approved of it. India, the 'Jewel in the Crown' and the romantic heart of the empire, had largely been conquered against instructions from London, as aggressive governor generals annexed Sikh states and Hindu principalities one after another.

By the 1880s however, a new spirit of populist expansionism arose. This 'New Imperialism' embodied by men like Joseph Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes, constitutes a belief in the "White Man's Burden," in divinely inspired missions and in the idea of a race of natural-born rulers being entitled and obliged to dominate foreign lands and peoples. This was no

longer the old style of a mercantilist empire – even though profit was still of great importance both in rhetoric and in reality – but a new and proud expression of British ambition. Fueled by the so-called "Yellow Press", the leading figures of 'jingo' imperialism envision Cape-to-Cairo railways meandering through purely British territory – and dream of entire maps awash in British red.

*"We have stood alone in that which is called isolation—our splendid isolation, as one of our Colonial friends was good enough to call it."*

*Lord Goschen, in a speech from 1896*

It is little surprise that Great Britain has few friends. The traditional isolationism of a sea power, the rapid growth of her overseas colonies, and the ancient British contempt for those unlucky to have been born elsewhere meant that England sought few alliances. Most of her European neighbors cast envious looks at British wealth while also disliking the tendency of her inhabitants to swagger. However, even though they may ridicule the small size of the British Army, they have a healthy respect for the firepower boasted by the Royal Navy.

Great Britain's relationship with France is based on ancient rivalries, and threats of an invasion issued by Napoleon III in the 1850s and 1860s. The Paris Commune is regarded with a mixture of amusement ("Something like that is never going to work!") and fear ("Do you remember Worthington from Lord Muffley's ball last week?" – "Horrible person, manufacturer or something like that" – "One of his workers said Britain should also have a commune like that in France" – "Shocking!" – "Of course, he threw him out immediately" – "He'd be better to have him hanged.").

Earth





Germany and its rapidly growing industry are increasingly considered an economic threat. Moreover, the new emperor Wilhelm II tends to repeatedly make insolent and outrageous comments, to the great worries of his grandmother Queen Victoria, and her government. Not least, London is discomfited by Bismarck's reversal in terms of colonial policy. After many years of denying his country's colonial ambitions, Germany is now claiming large parts of Venus. Relations with Russia are even worse than those maintained with France – for the 'Great Game' of intrigue and exploration, revolving around the mountain passes from Afghanistan to India, has yet been in full swing for some time. As Austria-Hungary is a landlocked country, it is of minor concern to Britain's interests. As to the smaller states of Europe – Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the Ottoman Empire – they are treated with an arrogant mixture of patronizing goodwill and callous disregard.

The United States of America is the only nation that appears to be on more than cordial terms with Great Britain. While many US citizens are of German, Italian, or other origins and do not intend to deny their roots, with some even unable to speak English... It is common enough for American heiresses to marry British noblemen – such as Lord Randolph Churchill's wife, Jennie Jerome – and the U.S. Navy tacitly supported the British

seizure of the Suez Canal in 1882. The Confederate States in the south are of no economic and military relevance even though at the time of the Civil War, the USA complained at Britain's support for the CSA. Even so, public opinion considers the CSA to be decadent and morally depraved especially given that the practice of slavery is still common there. Politicians also like to voice this opinion when talking about the competition between CS and Anglo-Egyptian cotton.

Whatever the attitude of foreign powers towards the British government, private travelers are usually welcome everywhere, with many wealthy Britons spending large parts of their leisure time in fashionable spas and health resorts on the European mainland.

## Great Britain

Beneath its outward splendor, The British Empire is an odd, ramshackle entity, working in spite of, rather than because of, its internal organization. Great Britain is an industrial nation ruled by landed aristocrats, proud of her achievements in trade, manufacturing, and engineering. Since the 1860s though, her economic power has been in a state of decline *vis-à-vis* her German and American competitors, and the country has been mired in a

## Victorian Values

*"But while John Bull is the coldest friend, he is the surest of neighbors and the most straight-forward and generous enemy."*

*Heinrich Heine, English Fragments*

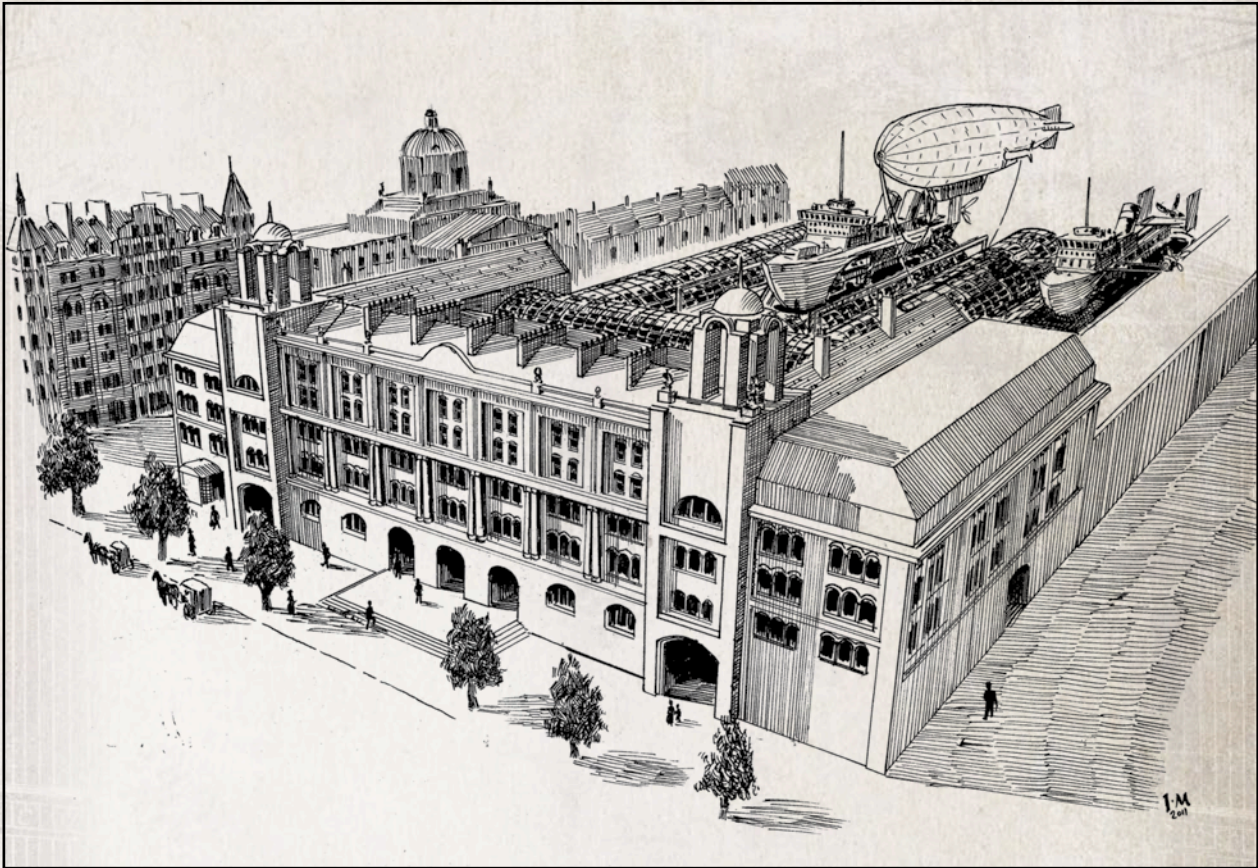
Victorian society is characterized by strong adherence to a set of widely accepted values, and many actions taken by the British nation and its citizens can be explained by these moral beliefs. Each value spawns both virtues and vices – and, even though it may sound paradoxical, sometimes one person might exhibit both at the same time. All the best and all the worst aspects of Victorian society lie in these virtues and vices.

| Value              | Virtue                        | Vice                                                        |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Honesty            | Personal integrity, fairness  | Naïveté and contempt for alien codes of behavior            |
| Loyalty            | Sense of duty                 | Blind obedience                                             |
| Resolution         | Dynamism, purposefulness      | Inflexibility, intolerance                                  |
| Belief in progress | Concern for improvement       | Disrespect of foreign values, tendency to meddle            |
| Enthusiasm         | Good humor, buoyancy          | Poor foresight and planning, inability to learn from others |
| Sportsmanship      | Fitness, team spirit          | Obsession with games and sports, anti-intellectualism       |
| Bravery            | Courage, leadership qualities | Rashness, militancy                                         |
| Detachment         | Fair judgment, cool reasoning | Coldness, lack of sympathy                                  |
| National pride     | High self-esteem              | Racism, intolerance                                         |

At his best, the Victorian Englishman combines a drive for hard work and adventures with tremendous personal courage and integrity. At his worst, he is snobbish, prudish, stupid, immeasurably obsessed with sports, and hostile to anything and anyone alien to his nation or class. The particular difficulty for outsiders is that all of these properties – positive and negative – can be found in the same individual all at once. Thus, adding to this blend the typical Victorian eccentricities results in a particularly 'rum character' or 'queer fish' – a fellow whose obvious virtues are somehow counterbalanced by strange or unpleasant traits of character.

Players should be aware of the need to accept and adhere to these values, should they want to be successful in Victorian society. That does not mean however, that the characters you play in Space: 1889 are inevitably obligated to be endowed with every positive and negative virtue listed in the above table. Instead, these properties are rather intended to serve as a source of inspiration for those players who wish to design a 'Victorian character'.





depression since 1875. With its four million inhabitants, London is the largest city of the Earth, yet many members of the ruling class still consider the British way of life to be essentially rural.

The British Empire is a hodgepodge of different governmental systems. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have elected parliaments following the model of Westminster, whereas India is ruled autocratically by a Viceroy who is directly appointed by London. Egypt continues in a pretense of independence, while in reality the country is run by British administrators working in the background. In Western and Central Africa, private trading companies such as the *Royal Niger Company* or the *African Lakes Company* have bought the writs to govern and produce dividends for their investors – without any real supervision by the crown. In remote areas, British officials have not replaced the old rulers – a pragmatic decision, later developed into the ‘theory’ of the Indirect Ruler, while valuable regions are under direct control. Every rule seems to have an exception to it, and all of them are strictly adhered to.

### Government and Politics

Great Britain is a constitutional monarchy – the first of its kind. Over the centuries – from the Magna Carta of 1215 through the Glorious Revolution in 1688, and eventually, to the period of electoral reforms starting in 1832 – the crown has been gradually stripped of power; as a result, it has become a merely ceremonial, almost ritual symbol of the British nation by 1889. The Queen, much beloved by her subjects, reigns, but does not rule. Instead, governmental power lies in the hands of the Parliament, composed of the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and specifically with the Prime Minister and his cabinet.

By 1886, universal suffrage has been introduced for males, but this has not yet changed the traditional pattern of government. A small ruling clique of eminent, usually noble families,

who have been controlling British politics for centuries, remains in power; for example, almost all members of Lord Salisbury’s cabinet are patrician in character.

A two-party system is in force. The Whigs of the 18th century have become Liberals, while their Tory opponents are now called Conservatives. Both are controlled by established, land-owning families and both constantly feel a pressure from below, exerted by ambitious middle-class politicians and working-class voters. The Liberals are more inclined to accept ‘progressive ideas’ – a tendency which, by 1889, has caused a rift in the party that will keep them out of office for two decades.

This development has been brought about by two issues. First, the old Irish Question which has divided the party into ‘Home Rulers’ who advocate limited self-government for Ireland, and ‘Unionists’ who oppose that notion. The ‘Grand Old Man’ of the Liberals, William Ewart Gladstone, has been trying to preserve unity, but the failure of his Home Rule Bill (1886) broke the party, allowing Salisbury’s Conservatives to come to power. The second issue is the New Imperialism, the aggressive expansion of British influence in Africa, in Asia and, most importantly, on Mars. Gladstone has railed against the expense involved, has questioned its moral justification, and voiced his anger about the motives – to no avail. The Liberal Unionists, led by Joseph Chamberlain under the slogan “Unity, Empire and Mars” – as Chamberlain will put it in his Selly Oak speech of 1890 – have changed sides to join the Tories, while the rest of the Liberals are plunged into chaos until Gladstone finally retires, at the age of 82, in 1891.

Thus, it is up to the Conservatives now. Spearheaded by the farsighted Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), the Tories have discovered the confident and assertive spirit of Imperialism and have found it to be a cause which attracts votes both from the working class and the old land-owning elite. Lord Randolph Churchill



makes the exploration of Mars part of his 'Tory Democracy' program, advocating investment and settlement in the envisaged 'White Man's Country' in the Meepsoor Highlands. More aggressive still are tendencies exhibited by Chamberlain, who as early as 1882, was looking forward to standing in the Commons Lobby, joined by the Honorable Member for Parhoon-West.

All of this is quite startling for Salisbury, an old-school Tory, who believes that Britain should be governed by gentlemen born and raised for this purpose. Half a century in politics has made him realize the ephemeral nature of Imperial glory, prompting him to consider this 'Martian adventure' a distraction from Britain's efforts to preserve its hegemony on Earth. He is by nature a power politician and negotiator, who allegedly scared his cabinet to death in 1888, by advocating to barter Syrtis Lapis,

Heligoland, and Ceylon for the entire German sphere of influence in Africa.

The two big fish, governing alternately, are not the country's only political parties or its only political movements, though. The Irish Nationalists, led by Charles Stewart Parnell, are represented in the House of Commons. George Bernard Shaw founded the Fabian Society, an organization of moderate Socialists, while William Morris – the polymath and Renaissance Man of Victorian Britain – advocates a Utopian society. London has a reputation for harboring Europe's radicals. After all, Karl Marx (1818-1883) developed his theories in London and is buried in Highgate Cemetery, while the Russian anarchist Prince Kropotkin promotes a policy of terrorism and bomb planting from his home in Hammersmith.

## Government Officials

*"He was the product of an English public school and university. He was, moreover, a modern product of those seats of athletic exercise. He had little education and highly developed muscles—that is to say, he was no scholar, but essentially a gentleman."*

**Henry Seton Merriman**

The men administering the Imperial colonies are the product of a narrow social class, and most of them spend their entire careers running Britain's overseas possessions. Sweating in Sarawak and Swaziland, they hope to get a nice post at some point in the future – a governorship in a pleasant country with a decent climate and properly organized sporting activities. Mostly young men of the upper middle class, who attended public schools and graduated from established universities, they are usually Anglican in faith and Conservative in politics, and totally obsessed with the sports and game playing cult of 'Muscular Christianity.'

The selection tests for the Foreign Office are known and feared for their notorious difficulty. Those candidates who have passed them go on to study law and foreign languages for a year, before being transferred to a posting abroad. The less prestigious and less pompous Colonial Office selects its men by personal recommendation and an informal interview, stating that the alien and backward territories they administer require 'character' and robust good health rather than intelligence and knowledge.

Once he has arrived in Upper Burma or deep Gorovaan, the new District Commissioner – or whatever his local title may be – will function as policeman, judge, tax collector, census taker, architect, and civil engineer as well as performing a variety of other duties. He will try to comply with the local laws as far as possible – except those deemed repugnant to Anglo-Saxon tastes – and will devise legal theories and procedures as seems appropriate to the day-to-day problems that he faces.

Some stations are more convenient than others – Ceylon and Syrtis Major are renowned as 'nice assignments', whereas others offer only clay huts and mosquitoes, the nearest white man likely to be the French or German official in his own thatched hovel on the other

side of the vaguely defined border. Not surprisingly, some civil servants become weak, indulging in imported liquor and local mistresses – particularly in tropical Africa, where the 'Old Coasters' of the western African colonies have gained an unenviable reputation.

While the statesmen in London might devise policy and issue orders, the administration is in the hands of civil servants. The Victorian Era has seen a dramatic increase in bureaucracy – a response to the growing conviction that more government representatives would also result in improved living conditions. Among the civil servants, it is those with responsibility for the colonial empire – the men employed by the Foreign, Colonial, and India Offices – who are most inspired by the spirit of their task and destiny, that which Rudyard Kipling would term the "White Man's Burden."

The three governmental departments maintain a fierce, albeit friendly rivalry, when it comes to controlling the most prestigious territories – and the budgets that went with them. The **Foreign Office** is in charge of relations with foreign powers, from France and Russia to the Martian treaty dependencies, whose independence is merely nominal. This situation leads to friction with the Colonial Office, who took over control of Syrtis Major with the establishment of the crown colony in 1881. The idea that the upstarts from the **Colonial Office** – run by "missionaries, philanthropists and Jews" as Cecil Rhodes has denounced it – are supposed to administer new and important territories annoys both the elegant society in the Foreign Office and the powerful **India Office** alike. In 1878, although quite busy invading Afghanistan, the Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, took the time to declare that the broad experience, huge treasury, and powerful armed forces of British India made India Office the obvious choice to govern the Martian Regency – just as it did so many of the Indian principalities. The idea eventually fell through thanks to a series of biting editorials in *The Times*, and a famous Punch cartoon showing a winged elephant carrying the Viceroy from Calcutta to the Red Planet for the summer months – despite the fact that there were Indian troops serving in the Gorovaangian War as instructors to the Parhoon Rifles. The father of the famous Martian writer, Gurchan Xyypt Singh, is one of these Indian soldiers.



## Victorian Society

British society in the 19th century is strictly divided into classes which determine the lives and expectations of their members. Movement between classes is not easy. Those attempting to climb the social scale often meet with disapproval – while those falling down suffer a downright humiliating experience.

This class system is not even a real ‘system’: there are great differences between the townsfolk – who, for the first time, make up the majority of the British population – and the country dwellers, as well as between the different regions. The amount of wealth does not define a class *per se* – certainly less than good manners – but the desire to improve one’s personal fortune might well be a motivation to acquire the behavior and attitudes exhibited by higher classes – an effort that may succeed or fail, depending on the whims of fate and the expertise of one’s etiquette tutor.

To Victorian observers, the class hierarchy looks as follows (in descending order):

**The Royal Family**, which is fairly large during the period. In addition to the Queen herself, there are royal personages occupying key positions in society. The Prince of Wales, Prince Edward, is the leader of the London ‘fast set’ of *bon viveurs*, while the Duke of Cambridge, the Queen’s cousin, was commander-in-chief of the army between 1856 and 1859. Nevertheless, many of England’s older noble families prefer to regard the current royal family as upstart Germans of questionable education and behavior.

**The Aristocracy** is the elite of British society in terms of holdings, prestige, and power. It is true that political reforms are beginning to undermine the traditional domination exerted by the titled and privileged over the government circles, and that the decline in land prices is gradually devaluing the estates that noble fortunes have been based on; yet, if their demise has been foretold, it is not evident in 1889.

In many respects, the aristocrats are the least ‘Victorian’ element of British society. They may come to enjoy the conveniences offered by the modern world, but a time of serious and somber virtues however, they long for the carefree days experienced under King George II or during the Rococo period. The nobles are not really concerned with ‘progress’; they are perfectly content with the way things have been all along. Fox hunting, balls, winter in France, afternoon rides, and dinner at the Carlton or the Turf club – these are the pursuits of a leisured class, a class whose wealth – though based in myriad acres of farmland – allows them to live wherever and however they choose. Noble government representatives are scarcely interested in trade and industry, their education largely consisting of Latin and Greek, with an increasing emphasis on sports – after all, a gentleman needs little knowledge of mathematics or science. Consequently, after years spent at Eton, Harrow, or Winchester, perhaps followed by a period at Oxford or Cambridge, a nobleman has few options when it comes to a career to pursue. The eldest son retains the family title and estate, while the younger brothers join army regiments befitting their social status, become churchmen, or enter politics. By the last quarter of the 19th century, they may also choose to become a judge or to enter one of the more prestigious parts of the civil service.

The English aristocracy – as opposed to the country squires in Berkshire or Kent – does not comprise more than some two hundred families, and those born to rule have known each other since their childhood days. Men are expected to be leaders, but might also lead comfortable lives as rogues – one of Lord Salisbury’s sons is alleged to have died a drunkard in Australia. Women are luxuriously cloistered and bargained away in marriages every bit



as forced and arranged as those of Indian potentates. Female education is limited to music, the arts, and the conduct befitting a lady. The nobility is not prepared for the 20th century and the fate of almost completely sinking into insignificance; indeed, the only concession made to the 19th century is a slight adjustment of the lax morality and the extravagant life it has been enjoying since 1066 – or thereabouts. Yet, even though he might appear somewhat bizarre in his monocle and paisley tie, young Lord Algie is certainly a fine horseman, probably an excellent gunman, and knows very well indeed that he was born to run things.

**The Gentry** are poor cousins to the aristocracy. They are neither dukes nor earls, though some may carry minor titles with or without a seat in the House of Lords, and are often of very ancient lineage indeed. These people would hardly admit to be inferior to other noblemen, least of all those upstarts who have only been granted their titles by Charles II. Their education and attitudes are quite similar to those displayed by the higher nobility; however, they possess lesser expectations, assumptions, and of course, bank accounts. These are people who go hunting for foxes and pheasants in their own shires rather than in Argyllshire or India, and who have traditionally held venerable government offices in the countryside – those of sheriffs and magistrates rather than ambassadors or ministers.

Likewise, their opportunities for employment are restricted – estate management, the church, the armed and diplomatic services, perhaps a career in law. ‘Trade’ is beyond the question, of course. In retrospect, the country gentry appear to be as anachronistic and hedonistic as the aristocracy – a little fustier and more reactionary, yet more cordial. They have strong ties to the countryside, take their traditional obligations seriously, are steady and honest, and enjoy tremendous respect in their boroughs – far greater than any self-made gentleman can ever expect. Country gentlemen can be expected to be model Englishmen, courteous and dutiful, at home in the Manor or serving as a District Commissioner in Uganda or Avenel on Mars.



Below the high society, the counties provide for yet another group, which hardly receives recognition as a class, but which contributes many of its sons to the service of the empire. These are the country doctors, parsons, lawyers, and the wealthier type of landholding or tenant farmer. Their traditional role is to support the gentry and maintain the old rural-based order. Many of them serve in the Royal Army or Navy, or in the civil services of India or Syrtis Major, where they enjoy a frugal prosperity and a sense of satisfaction in serving the British crown overseas.

**The Urban Middle Classes** are the Victorians *par excellence*. It is the values and virtues of this rising bourgeoisie – modesty, duty, competition, piety, frugality – that characterize the era. The respectability they enjoy thanks to their social and – often modest – economic success based on these values allows these tradesmen, lawyers, manufacturers, parsons, and clerks to determine the tone of British life and dominate many of its institutions. Britain is a middle-class empire, and Victoria – in her attitudes and pronouncements – is a middle-class queen.

The rise of the Victorian middle class is a consequence of the burgeoning economy driven by Britain's industrial and commercial dominance. The traditional elites might scorn trade as a "money-grubbing" business, but their social inferiors do not, and as a result dramatically increase their wealth, prestige, and influence throughout the Era. The Christian movement they follow – most of them being Methodists or Baptists – makes them abstinent and prudish, moralistic and judgmental; they believe in 'progress', and dominate the town councils, welfare organizations, and the Temperance movement. The middle-class men tend to look down on the workers, disparaging them as morally depraved drunkards and paupers engaging in savage amusements, and if they consort with the poor at all, it is to give them education and the opportunity to improve their lot in his own likeness. As for the upper class, the situation is completely different.

Even though the bourgeoisie does not appreciate the idleness, frivolity, and scandalous moral blunders of the nobility, many are pushing to join the ranks of the latter. A Scottish engineer or a steel tycoon from Lancashire, who might be a little too 'rough' to join high society himself, will send his sons to the right schools where they will learn Latin to become advocates or merchants – while hoping to marry his daughters to young aristocrats of ancient pedigree who need the wealth that their dowries will bring.

The middle class is not adventurous in spirit. Instead, their life is centered on prudence, austerity, profit, and good planning. The daring frontiersman riding with the Rhodesia column or venturing into the Meroe Badlands is more likely to be an impoverished nobleman or grim-jawed millwright. The middle class provides merchants, tradesmen, architects, and senior clerks, who in their way, are pioneers, as well. They concern themselves with steam turbines, the price of liftwood, the appalling moral decay of the Canal Martians – and the rarity of a decent cup of tea. Together with their wives, housemaids, and rosy-cheeked children, they epitomize Victorian civilization on Mars and in the suburbs of London, Manchester, and Bath.

**The Urban Working Class** is divided into several categories – something that is only dimly understood by those better placed in society. At the top are the craftsmen. Careful budgeting, good health, and twelve-hour shifts may allow them to attain moderate wealth, enjoy additional amenities, and adopt some of the values upheld by the middle class. Often deeply religious, they help each other in the form of trade unions and cooperative enterprises or societies. On the one hand, they oppose the bourgeoisie in the eternal struggle between workers and employers; on the other hand, they share with them a fear of the teeming

masses of the poor. Able to read and write, they show faith in the empire, yet also support reform, which most recently has taken the shape of a practical, populist socialism that will grow into the Labour Party and the Liberal Radicalism of David Lloyd George. Usually, they do not support the empire in the sense of administrators and soldiers, but their contribution will come later, as settlers, railroad engineers, or skilled workmen hired to oversee the local laborers in distant territories.

This comparably wealthy group is followed by the poor, who constitute the largest group of all English city dwellers, but are only recognized in form of a narrow and unfair stereotype. The myth sees them immoral, lazy, and constantly drunk. In truth, they have every reason to fit this image – squeezed into tiny, dark, cold rooms and being grossly underpaid for their labor. If they vent their bottled-up anger in brawls outside pubs and riots at Trafalgar Square, they have every right to do so – that was the opinion of reformers, at least. Terrible living conditions, bad food, moist lodgings, and back-breaking work that can be – and often is – ended at short notice, result in the bulk of the city's population being malnourished and small in stature. Army statistics show an alarming decline in body size and general health of recruits enlisted between 1800 and 1900 – the period during which the slums replaced the country villages as prime sources of young men.

The London inhabited by the literary Sherlock Holmes and the real Jack the Ripper – both at the respective peaks of their careers at this time – is characterized by the dim alleys of Whitechapel, the Dickensian workhouses, and the desolate streets full of houses devoid of any sunlight, water, or a sewerage system. Yet, besides those actually living on the streets – the thieves and prostitutes who dominate the stereotype, there are millions of honest working people, deprived of the opportunity to improve their situations, who are destined to remain day-laborers – and prevented from becoming skilled craftsmen – their entire lives. They do not need any police to watch over them, nor any charity preachers to teach them frugality and abstinence; what they do need is a decent place to live, a reasonable wage, and a chance to improve their lot. To get this chance, many of them choose to emigrate – to New Zealand, Canada, or as most recently suggested by politicians to the cool, dry highlands of the Red Planet.

In doing so, they take advantage of properties that already helped them to master their old lives at home – inventiveness and improvisational skill. With many of them having had to eke out a living as street kids, they have learned the advantage of collaboration. Consequently, the social cohesion amongst them often is much stronger than that of the 'high society', whose members are bound to social constraints completely unknown to the poor.

**The Rural Laborers** are, perhaps, the poorest of all. The green fields might not run rife with beggars and pickpockets, but there is little hope of some day leading a comfortable life as an established urban craftsman. Eager to find success, many country dwellers move to the towns, hoping that employers will appreciate the work of the 'thick-set, red-faced men of enormous strength' hailing from the shires. Keeping a pig and a vegetable garden in the cottage yard, most farm laborer's families are unlikely to starve – yet, as the tragedy of the 1840s testified, the devastating poverty of Ireland could not guarantee access to the most basic supplies. At best, prospects are slender – with daughters becoming housemaids and sons becoming farm workers, who even when allowed to attend school, have to stay away from their limited studies and work the fields during the harvest season. Their wages are low – especially in the marginal regions like the moorlands of the north, the thin-soiled glens of the Scottish highlands, and in particularly in Ireland. Irish tenants have fewer rights to their land than even English



cottagers. Moreover despised for their Catholic beliefs and their 'ignorance', they probably represent the poorest, worst-treated and angriest inhabitants of the "Scepter'd Isles" that comprise Victorian Britain. Since the urge to escape from rural poverty is strong, English country folks can be found in all corners of the Earth and beyond – as soldiers, sailors, domestics, horse

traders, blacksmiths, or doing any job that honest labor and a strong back can take on. As much as he may be an unsophisticated country 'yokel', a former farmhand often is just the man an empire-building gentleman would want at his side, and at his back, in even the most difficult of moments.

## Ladies and Gentlemen

*"By the by, if the English race had done nothing else, yet if they left the world the notion of a gentleman, they would have done a great service to mankind."*

**Gerard Manley Hopkins**

You want to play a gentleman? A good choice, for he is more or less footloose and fancy-free, wealthy enough to set out for adventure and even though not everyone is a member of the same Gentlemen's Club as the Prime Minister or the Prince of Wales, he at least has access to the corridors of power. But what actually is a gentleman?

The term was coined in the Middle Ages, and was originally a nebulous designation applied to people of noble origin. With an increasing number of people attempting to achieve gentleman status over the centuries, it has become much vaguer, however. Even though the more exclusive circles might insist on stricter rules, the definition seems to be founded on a broad basis stating that a gentleman does not live off the work done by his hands, but rather off interest, dividends – or as befitting his status – numerous acres of land let for rent.

What this means is that according to the polite society, a gentleman must not pursue any regular work or otherwise receive money for his services or products. That is why a barrister is only given a 'small gift for his services' – according to the current rare, of course, which still allows him to qualify as a gentleman with some window dressing. The solicitor, who receives money from his clients to prepare a specific case, evidently provides a service instead. The factory owner, who only keeps his business running and his workers sweating, meets the prerequisites to become a gentleman, yet may still be considered too much of a money-maker by society to be a real gentleman anyway.

The administration of an estate is permitted, of course – even though adventurers will most certainly appoint a caretaker during times of absence. In general, a gentleman needs personnel to survive. To be sure, the honorable Algernon St. John-Smythe will know how to groom his gashant when out in the Dioscurian wilderness, but at home he employs a servant for just that purpose. Likewise, a gentleman will never pick up a cleaning rag in his hands or wash his own clothes or starch his linen shirts, or – Heaven forbid! – ask his spouse to do it. Thus, even the most impecunious gentleman is visited twice a week by a 'dogsbody' who will perform all manner of household chores, with larger households typically employing a myriad number of specialized servants.

Polite behavior is a general prerequisite for being accepted as a gentleman. This concept is so comprehensive that even an expensive etiquette tutor will be hardly able to familiarize an upstart with more than a modicum of good manners. It needs to be felt and displayed right from the

cradle. The rest of a gentleman's education may instead be neglected. Gentlemen deem it sufficient to be able to cite the Greek and Roman poets and philosophers that the peculiar humanism of their class is apparently based upon. They set forth the guidelines of their actions; executing these actions, if required, is a task to be done by specialists, that is, personal servants.

The tribulations experienced at England's famed public schools bind the future gentlemen together; it is here that they come to know people they will re-encounter on the social stage time and again.

Decent behavior upon the part of a gentleman will open the door to (the high) society, where the rich, the ruling, and the reputable keep company – quite frequently in elegant clubs. Membership of a club is not mandatory, but is certainly nice to have and does have its social advantages. Such membership is often expensive and sometimes quite hard to obtain, for its current members are usually entitled to veto a prospective new member's admission. (Indeed, it might be an interesting endeavor to acquire membership in a certain club with the player character's arch-enemy sitting on the club's board constantly trying to prevent just that.)

A gentleman can dance, ride a horse, cut a fine figure on the social scene, and is a decent gunman at least. He is usually friendly, observant, and unobtrusive, particularly towards the 'weaker sex', and if he is still young, keen on sports. Keeping his personal honor is of utmost importance and fame and credit are – in all modesty – something to strive for. He loves his freedom and the financial independence granted by it, and is well aware of his social position – both among his peers and within the social pyramid. Moreover, he firmly believes to be and to do exactly what God and he himself intends him to do.

Basically the same notions also hold true for ladies – only that they must never display it. Many of their traits are defined by their fathers, brothers, and husbands, and as they rarely or are even allowed to have their own property or financial means, they do not even have the excuse to be busy administering them. The extent of this rejection of manual work in some of society's most ambitious families is such that the lady of the house and her daughters are even reluctant to brush their hair themselves – after all, there are ladies' maids for that. Yet, if Major Charles Whittington, Mrs. is on her own, trying to escape from an Oenotrian mob, she will turn out to be just as brave, smart, and tough as her dashing husband.

The most common in-game motivations for ladies and gentlemen are **Duty** and **Fame**, with **Faith**, **Love** or **Greed** clearly trailing behind. Their most common Flaws are **Overconfident**, **Impulsive**, **Absent-Minded**, **Condescending**, and **Callous**. The group should decide whether correctly displaying the gentleman virtues will be enough to gain Style points or if this will require particularly outstanding deeds instead.

Earth



## The Scoundrels of the Empire

*"They bribed, they lied, they swindled. They lived at the best hotels and drank champagne at eleven o'clock in the morning. When not involved in some sordid financial intrigue, they spent their time making open and indecent love to the maids behind the bars set up at almost every corner."*

This description, by the jaundiced Mr. Vere Stent, refers to the erratic collections of British scoundrels, shysters, and petty criminals who manage to lead an easy life in almost every part of the empire and beyond. Whether it is Johannesburg in the Transvaal gold belt or the bleak ruby pits of Moerus Lacus – to these adventurers the British Empire merely meant an opportunity to play according to their own rules and to disobey the laws of others. Some of them are from the lower classes – escaped convicts, descendants of deported criminals, thieves, and con men from London, Glasgow, and Dublin. Others are of noble origin – the black sheep of their families – like Lord Avonmore, or 'Have-one-more', whose well-equipped entourage conspicuously failed to reach the Yukon in time for him to make a fortune in the gold fields. Actually, it did not arrive at all. A low-born vagabond may be chased out of Singapore or Syrtis Major before he might bring discredit to the city; hired as a plantation manager, however, he may abuse the natives at will. A public school 'bounder' might take advantage of his charm and education to cheat his way to property and position. His astonishingly lax morals and his often brutal conduct towards indigenous people are dismissed as 'Tropical Frenzy', a behavioral disorder caused by the strenuous living in a hot climate – when, in fact, it is more a matter of bad character combined with poor whiskey and the conviction that a fox – provided that he is a British fox of proper origin – can be trusted to left in charge of a henhouse.

## Domestics

Characters from the lower classes have few opportunities to go on adventures – if only because they are constantly slaving away for their meager wages. Those who do set out are either fortune hunters, dismissed soldiers who have stayed abroad, settlers who have lost their roots, or workers seeking greener pastures on distant shores. Or they are servants accompanying his Lord and his Lady on their journey to Mars, living adventures with, or better, for them – just imagine that Milady has met her old friend Lady Amanda Willcombe in Solis Lacus and has invited her over for tea – just where in this town will one get cucumbers for the sandwiches in time for tea?

As of 1889, neither the washing machine or the vacuum cleaner has yet been invented. Nor is running hot and cold water available either. Consequently, there is a large need for household personnel, servants who constitute as much as one sixth of the working population. Given the lack of modern conveniences, they certainly have their work cut out for them. The larger estates owned by the aristocracy employ dozens of specialized servants; cutting and replacing candles alone can be enough to keep a handful of people busy an entire evening. Even a modest middle-class city household apparently cannot survive without a cook, a house- and a nursemaid.

Their conditions are bad – since the ladies and gentlemen tend to get up early, the staff have to get up even earlier for a workday that is long, hard, and ill-paid – but still better than life in the slums. For a few shillings, clothes, board and lodge, they are expected to do an exceptionable job – and also display an impeccable life-style. While administrators, butlers, and housekeepers are allowed to have children, this does not apply to lower and younger staff, and a pregnant house maid will be sent packing without hesitation – unless she is lucky to bear the child of the 'young lord' – who often regards such girls as "fair game", which will earn her and the bastard child a life in the boondocks made tolerable by a nice sum of shush money.

Between the nursery maid and the school, it is the governess who is in charge of educating the children of middle and upper class households. Her position is particularly unenviable, for on the one hand she is still a servant while on the other she is expected to behave just like her employers – after all, she is supposed to teach the offspring good manners. Yet, the position of a governess is, at least to some extent, considered suitable employment for middle-class daughters who do not have access to many other jobs, much to the relief of the young ladies themselves and their families.. A governess teaches basic Latin, Greek, Mathematics, and Geography, good conduct and the female virtues ranging from needlework to housekeeping. One appealing, albeit demanding, option would be to play such a stressed governess, who having survived an airship crash, has to lead a handful of lively nippers safely through the swamps of Venus.

Playing a servant – perhaps a butler, who is in charge of a household as well as the family silver, or a personal servant or maid, who is more directly concerned with the lord or lady – is more interesting than it appears. The slightly dim-witted lords and ladies, played as either non-player characters by the Gamemaster – or as a mixture of the resources **Follower**, **Mentor**, and **Ally**, perhaps even partly played by the player himself – can be the source of much adventure. After all, they need to be accompanied at every turn and protected from harm or foolish coercion – "Your Lordship certainly meant 'the exact opposite'." Or be subtly kept on the right path or pushed forward at the right moment, for example if the Dioscurian ambassador has to be unmasked as an ether pirate, while attending a soiree of the Belgian resident.

Since capable personnel are in high demand, a servant's life is not necessarily a life without dignity. Both butlers and ladies' maids are keen to uphold their honor and integrity, with discretion and a sense of duty also being highly regarded. Often, they are deeply religious, yet they are no slaves and it is a rare occasion when they are prepared to sacrifice themselves for their employers. **Duty**, **Faith**, and not least **Greed** are proper motivations. Those with obvious physical weaknesses are precluded from becoming servants – after all, the Victorian Age is the time when lackeys are paid stockings matching the shape of their calves. **Obsession**, **Coward**, and **Impulsive** are fitting Flaws – and the Gamemaster who wants to play the game at the highest difficulty level will give his non-player character lords and ladies the Flaws **Unlucky** or **Danger Magnet**.



## Going Native

‘Going native’ is a phenomenon that the Victorian world regards to be eccentric, disgraceful, and, worst of all, un-British. As late as in the 18th century, Englishmen living abroad were expected to adapt to local conventions; an officer or administrator would settle down with a Hindu wife, wear Indian clothing, and embed himself in the indigenous culture. In the late 19th century, this is no longer tolerable. Now, Englishmen are expected to dress and behave like Englishmen at all time – in Bangalore and Syrtis Major as much as in the Buckingham Palace. Yet, there are still some individuals, relishing their independence and reveling in their revolt against convention. They are ‘going native’ with their heart and soul.

- **Wilfried Scawen Blunt** (1840-1922) served for eleven years in the diplomatic service, but left to marry a granddaughter of the poet Byron and travel with her through Northern Africa and the Middle East. Blunt is enthralled by the Arab world, and – being given brood mares by an Emir – establishes a stud farm in Sussex. He buys an estate, ‘Sheikh Obeid’, which he refers to as “my house in the desert,” although it is actually located in the suburbs of Cairo. His studied adoption of Bedouin customs, vocal anti-Imperialist agitation, and bad poetry made him something of a celebrity in British-occupied Egypt. He may be a show-off and a madman, but he is good company, and his attempts

to provoke the Consul-General are always an event. Blunt’s amorous adventures led to a separation from his wife. She remains behind in Sheikh Obeid, while he retires to Sussex with a ‘niece’.

- **Franklin Jeroboam Peel** (1858-1965) is a geologist in the service of the Royal Moeris Lacus Company, who left his excavations behind to take off into the wilderness of the Astusapes Mountains in 1884. His pale complexion and peculiar physique lead the High Martians to believe him to be part-Martian and welcome him in their society. Peel adapts to their culture, transcribes their war chants for the Spanish guitar, drinks the potent Yfgraag liqueur in legendary quantities, and occasionally comes down from his mountain to deliver the manuscripts of his influential *Treatises on the Geomorphology of the Astusapes Highlands* (Volume 1, 1893; Volume 2, 1898) and his widely neglected work, *Offal Recipes of the Martian Cuisine*.
- Few, however, go as far as **Charles de Russet** (1840-1927). The son of a British contractor resident in Simla, he abandons his faith and family to become a disciple of the Fakir in the Hindu temple of Jakko. Silent, draped in saffron robes, wearing a leopard skin headdress and surrounded by monkeys, he spends two years alone in the temple of Hanuman the Monkey God. As late as the 1920s, he is still living in the jungles near Simla, having forgotten his native tongue almost completely.

## Europe

*“Insane Europeans who plot to cut each others’ throats, now that one and the same civilization enfolds and unites them all!”*

**Anatole France**

The Europe of today is the home to those states that exert the greatest impact on the politics of the Earth – and its colonies. While Great Britain, which has influenced an entire age and is strongly present on two worlds, has been described on the last few pages, the following pages will give you information on the other states that dominate the world in 1889 (as well as their smaller neighbors), focusing in particular, on those states that – thanks to their former or current colonies – have strongly shaped the fate of the world.

In the late 19th century, Europe is in a state of flux. In the more advanced nations, their agrarian sector is slowly overtaken by industry and trade, while the inhabitants of the poorer regions located at the continent’s outer fringe almost exclusively rely on agriculture and often live in severe poverty. Rapid progress in science and industry along with factories, railroad networks, telegraphy, and the rotary printing press lead to the first signs of a modern mass society the continent’s metropolises and production centers. In contrast to these modern advances, most forms of government found across Europe were introduced in the Middle Ages, and the elite that emerged with them has hardly noticed that its fight against capitalism, civil liberties, broader education, and the claim for political participation has already been lost.

At the same time, nationalism is looming over Europe like the sword of Damocles – a young ideology that has not yet been

stained by the cruelties which are to be committed in its name. Nationalism threatens to tear the multiethnic empire states apart and also causes tensions between the more homogeneous states, as almost every border region has been claimed by its neighbors for eons.

Yet, the countries of Europe have the capacities to subdue almost the entire world – as well as other planets – and to familiarize any indigenous peoples with the blessings of Christian civilization, from medicine to machine guns, expecting progress to bring peace and prosperity to all countries within a few decades.

## The Heart of Europe

### The German Empire: Between Tradition and Modernity

For much of her history, Germany had consisted of minor states and principalities, but in the aftermath of Germany’s victory over France, the princes of these states assembled in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles. There on January 18th, 1871, they proclaimed the new German Empire and the King of Prussia as its emperor. Thus the German states were finally unified. This political unification was followed by a social unification as the various national minorities and the different peoples and social classes from what were now regions rather than nations had to find a common identity. Today, the bourgeoisie has achieved the objective of a German constitutional state, with the nobility and the military also being able to identify with the concept of a constitutional monarchy and the victorious army. The



Prussian-German power elite is primarily made up of the officers and the agrarian Junker class or Prussian landed gentry, complemented by an increasing number of industrialists.

The lower classes have not yet become a part of the new state, though. Likewise, the former German states continue to have a strong regional character, preventing the inhabitants of the newly founded empire from developing a common identity. The emerging nationalism therefore pursues the goal to create an ethnically homogeneous national state.

## Nationalism in the German Empire

In Bismarck's Germany, national thoughts and feelings occasionally took on a conservative, anti-democratic, and even militant-aggressive character. This development carries on under Emperor Wilhelm II. Whereas liberal ideas had been openly discussed before the empire was founded, the new German Empire became increasingly conservative with the union of the empire becoming much more important than the notion of civic liberty. In order to erase even the last memories of any former German regionalism, the new state has set great value on 'patriotic thinking'. Borne by numerous sports, rifle, and glee clubs, this increasing nationalism gained ground particularly in the middle and upper classes, with the working class usually being attracted to the socialists, the "Vaterlandslose Gesellen" ("men without fatherland"), instead.

Jealous of the territorial possessions and prestige of the British Empire – and to some extent, the French Empire, there is a widespread feeling in German society that the new Germany has come too late to the table to get its proper share of the world. If it could not gain the territorial possessions and prestige that it deserved on Earth, then the German Empire would look elsewhere. With the constant growth of its population, its economic success, and its semi-hegemonic position in Europe, the German Empire is enticed to become the world's leading power, not on Earth, but in space!

## German Class Society

The industrialization of the 19th century has had a far-reaching effect on Germany's social structure. The old ranks – the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the peasants – have remained, but the leading groups have increasingly lost their political and social prerogatives. As everywhere in Europe, a growing economic influence has created a new 'working class'. People have become members of social classes that are no longer based on birth rights, but on wealth and professional performance instead. As this 'new' class has emerged, the former elites have retained some of their influence and are not willing to part with it completely.

Germany's social system is characterized by occupations and classes being strictly separated from each other. Superiors make their higher ranks unmistakably clear to their subordinates. The principles of hierarchy, authority, respect, and command and

obedience pervade almost all social relations, particularly within families, at work, at school, and in the military.

## The Military

The victories in the wars of unification have allowed the military to gain great prestige and favored the rapid formation of a military elite in the German Empire. The officer corps considers itself the highest class and a state within the state. This attitude has resulted in a form of militarism that is swiftly making an impact on everyday life. Embodying the virtues of patriotism, order, authority, and loyalty to the emperor, the Prussian officer is regarded as the most important role model in German society.

Public life is characterized by military demeanor, uniforms, and parades, with the officers of the German Air and Ether Force being particularly revered. Since the Germans display an almost pathological enthusiasm for space travel, they regard the national ethernauts as nothing less than the epitome of patriotic heroism. It goes without saying that military service is virtually compulsory – anything else is considered a blemish on the character of the man who would refuse. Likewise, it is impossible to pursue a successful career without a reserve officer's commission.

The military has its own order, isolated from the civilian world. This is reflected by its special status laid down in the constitution. Any bills concerning the military can only be vetoed by the Emperor alone; the German Chancellor – actually nothing less than the head of government – does not have to be consulted in any military matter. An absolute trust in authority, a servile spirit, and a high degree of hubris are the result of this negative development, which tends to be ignored in public, but nevertheless offers subject matter for writers like Heinrich Mann. Pervading the military and the population alike, this development is often reflected by the rejection and denigration of others.

## The Entrepreneurs

Having been the fastest to grasp the principles and the interaction of technology and relentless profiteering, it is the entrepreneurs and large-scale manufacturers who have benefitted the most from the industrial revolution. Their enterprises have allowed the German Empire to become a European industrial power and at the same time, the frenzied technical and economic progress has permitted any entrepreneur willing to take risks to gain a lot of influence and wealth – sometimes, even more wealth than that amassed by the old land-owning nobility. On the strength of their newly acquired fortunes and their continued support for the new Germany, it is no wonder that this class has climbed to the top of German society.

In the years before and shortly after the founding of the German Empire, most entrepreneurs had been members of traditional business and it is these bankers, successful craftsmen, merchants, and scholars with technical skills that founded the first enterprises. Their sons and grandsons would continue their efforts and so ensure the rise of their families, and consequently, their class. Academic education, which yet is still fairly uncommon, is an essential element of the homogenization of this new class and serves as the basis of further technical and logistic innovations. Moreover, it allowed German industrialists the foresight to make early investments in the burgeoning aerospace industry. The British Empire might have liftwood, but thanks to its entrepreneurs, the German Empire has the best airship engineers.

The wealth acquired has promptly led the entrepreneurial class to enjoy a lifestyle beyond their middle-class origins. Not only do these affluent industrialists imitate their noble



counterparts in terms of architecture and lifestyle, but also they frequently approach them socially by marrying into their ranks and maintaining good relations with the aristocratic elite. Many entrepreneurs, for example, consider it appropriate to either purchase or build for themselves a handsome manor, the status symbol of the old Prussian nobility. For a not inconsiderable number of particularly successful entrepreneurs this affluent lifestyle is matched by social recognition when they are ennobled for their “services to the state and the society”. Even though the diverging opinions voiced by the two classes render any “feudalization” of the entrepreneurs out of the question, they do have some things in common, as both of them are characterized by great wealth and the desire to stabilize the social *status quo*.

### The Workers

The working class developed as a result of the high demand for manpower in the new factories, which had been characterized by the mass employment of cheap human labor. The workforce – men, women, and many children – is made up of wretched lower class individuals and impoverished craftsmen who fell victim to the pauperism of the early 19th century. Now, the term ‘worker’ as it applies to this new class does not describe a vocation, but a form of existence that cannot be simply changed and is passed on from one family member to the next. Workers live among their kind, in their own environment which is primarily influenced by social-democratic thoughts and ideals. The upper social classes respond to this by denying the workers any social recognition and political voice as they often consider the social democratic laborers to be enemies of the state and traitors to their country.



The workers in the cities have to cope with poor working and poor living conditions. The enormous supply of labor allows the entrepreneurs to easily dictate the conditions of work, with low wages for long hours of work, no holidays, and no protection against work that is invariably dismal, with dangerous, often harmful work being nothing out of the ordinary. Yet, the people accept these conditions, for the next candidate is already lining up and only waiting for his chance to get work. Even though the working class also includes established groups like the ‘labor aristocracy’ of well-trained skilled workers, in the end all laborers lead precarious lives below the poverty level, struggling with miserable housing conditions and facing a large number of hazards to their lives. At first, neither the government nor the

entrepreneurs waste any thoughts on how to improve their workers’ fates. Instead of spending money on social projects, they prefer to invest it into space travelling, which looks so much more promising to them.

Given the deteriorating living conditions and the need to stick together in order to preserve their constantly threatened existences, many workers develop a common identity and a feeling of solidarity with each other. This development ultimately results in the foundation of the Social Democratic Party or *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD), and the associated trade unions. Not only did Bismarck consider the social democracy movement a political threat to the new Germany, but also an obstacle to free economic progress. His attempt to fight this movement through lawful means however, failed and was even counter-productive. Threatened and forced to hold their ground, both the social cohesion and the solidarity among the workers became even stronger.

Successful gains made by the SPD during the following elections obliged the government to accept their demands. Although the SPD supports the colonization of space in its party program, it continues to be much more interested in the Earth. Since its foundation in 1875, it has been able to achieve significant improvements in the lives of Germany’s workers. In 1883, the government passes the Health Insurance Bill to gain the SPD’s support for more space projects. A year later, in 1884, the government passes the Accident Insurance Bill, following pressure from the SPD. In return, the SPD faction in the German parliament, the Reichstag agrees to the release of budget funds required for the construction of the Emperor Wilhelm Spaceport in Berlin.

Despite the various improvements made the workers’ lives and working conditions, which – given the entrepreneurs’ unbroken power – many social democrats do not consider to be far-reaching enough, the workers’ unsafe living conditions continue to be the biggest social problem in the German Empire. The upcoming space euphoria though, causes the problem, dubbed the “Social Question”, to largely disappear from the public interest and once forgotten in the wake of the space craze, the government is particularly anxious to keep the matter out of any public discourse. Of course, without a permanent solution to the conditions of the workers, the SPD cannot be totally silenced.

### Women in the German Empire

Just as in other countries, women do not have equal rights in the German Empire. They are considered easily-led, weak, in need of protection, and – at least in the higher classes – primarily interested in culture and literature. Since they are not allowed to pursue an academic career, certain occupations are closed to women. The form of education enjoyed by the ‘higher daughters’ of the bourgeoisie is considerably different from the education that their brothers receive and is not meant to prepare them for professional life. Likewise, they are refused to vote as women’s suffrage is said to bring political arguments into the family and thus pose a danger to any peace in the family, a peace that is kept by the husband and head of the household who also determines the family’s living conditions and property on his own.



Women who do hold jobs are often treated with hostility by a German society that believes that the traditional role for women is that of housewife and mother. This does not prevent many women from providing a helping hand in their families' enterprises, with most female members of the lower classes either employed in the factories or as servants. Almost a quarter of the working class women in work are employed as servants. Of course, the wages of women working in industry are lower than those given to men, despite the work being essentially the same.

Bourgeois women are typically employed as governesses or teachers. They often have to comply with the standard stating that employed women need to be unmarried. Marriage almost automatically leads to the termination of their employment. Upper class women are served by ladies maids, housemaids, and other servants who do all of the physical work a household typically needs, thus leaving the lady of the house to oversee the servants and uphold the status of their family at appropriate social events. For such ladies, welfare clubs provide the only opportunity for them to become active in society.

The *Allgemeiner Deutscher Frauenverein* (ADF) or 'General German Women's Association', the first organized women's movement, is founded in 1865. Its primary objectives are better educational and occupational opportunities for women – for middle- and upper-class women in particular. Some feminists claim however, that this is not enough and call for completely equal political rights with men and – as a consequence – for women's suffrage. At first, these radical demands were hotly debated even within the SPD; yet, ultimately such demands were included in the party program in 1891. Still, the image of men's natural superiority and women's subordination remains deeply ingrained in contemporary German society.

### The Venus Project

To establish itself as a space superpower, Germany pushes full steam ahead in advancing its ambitious plans to make Venus a more livable place. Naturally, the 'Venus colony' project has the full backing of the Emperor and his government, but it is also supported by many liberalist and socialist groups, who do not regard the colonization of Venus as mere imperialism, but as a peaceful project to bring civilization. According to official statements, the indigenous Venusians have not been subdued, but instead civilized. One of the many pamphlets describing the Venus colony says, "Where other powers use weapons for conquest, German pioneers use spades and plows instead!" Numerous settlers are recruited to further expand the colony. The German Colonial Society boasts that from 1890, Venus will be colonized by up to 5,000 settlers per year. It remains to be seen whether these plans can actually be implemented. Yet, it is a fact that an increasing number of Germans have decided to try their luck on Venus. In contrast to what the government would like to see, most of these settlers are not ardent nationalists or even particularly loyal to the emperor, but simply those individuals that can no longer stand the rigid structure, narrow-mindedness, and oppressive atmosphere of the German Empire. Instead of regarding Venus as a new world to be 'conquered' or 'civilized', they consider the planet to be some kind of 'promised land' – one which allows them to start from scratch without the restraints of Earth. Thus, it is first and foremost liberals who have been disappointed by the empire, communists, pacifists, and other dissenters who are attracted to a life on Venus; and even though the German authorities are glad to be rid of these dissenting voices, what they do not yet suspect is that they could soon be the cause of a major headache for the empire!



### Spacefare Everywhere

Without a doubt, the entire German Empire has contracted an incurable space fever! Since the invention of spaceships and the successful foundation of a German colony on Venus, the notion of space travel has taken a firm hold in the mind of the German people – after all, it offers the German Empire the opportunity to finally become a true world power. Anything remotely related to space is celebrated with enthusiasm. Scientific literature about alien worlds is just as fervently devoured as trashy novels full of naïve space fables. Millennia old Martian operas are staged in opera houses like the Semperoper in Dresden or the Bayreuth Festspielhaus. People selling Martian or Venusian items in their stores make huge profits. Private aerospace and astronomy clubs have sprung up like mushrooms everywhere. All little German boys want to become 'spacemen' these days and it has even been suggested that astronomy as a subject be added to the curriculum of academic high schools. This enthusiasm has both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, the German Air and Ether Force will never be threatened by a lack of competent personnel as the Aerospace Academy in Radebeul, recently founded by the German Aerospace Office, is swamped with young and qualified applicants. On the other hand, the blind enthusiasm for anything flying, hovering, or related to space offers many fraudsters undreamed-of possibilities. It can hardly be a coincidence that the internationally wanted master fraudster Erich Berghammer just raked in vast sums of money by selling German citizens the idea of his 'New Valhalla' space city.

Be that as it may – no one truly doubts that the stars are Germany's future. Some people even dare to predict that in the near future German explorers will conquer space just as Spaniards and Portuguese conquered the oceans of our world 300 years before – all the while hoping that they will not repeat their mistakes. Only time and German Imperial policy will tell.



## Austria-Hungary

Austria-Hungary – of all states entirely located in Europe the largest in terms of area and the second-largest in terms of population – is a melting pot of more than a dozen different peoples. The country is divided into Austria in the West and Hungary in the East, both of which, in turn, are comprised of a large number of historical regions like Croatia, Slavonia, Galicia, and Bohemia. Even though the majority of her population consists of Austrians, who are of German descent, and Hungarians, the country is also home to large minorities of Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenians, Croats, Serbs, Bosniaks, Poles, Ruthenians, and Ukrainians as well as several smaller ethnic groups.

The nation has been governed by Emperor Franz Joseph for over 40 years. He is aided by a prime minister who has to comply with his desires though, and almost never manages to acquire renown of his own – or indeed to stay in office long enough as to have a real influence on political matters. Austria has experienced dramatic changes since Franz Joseph's coronation in 1848. Having already lost her territories in Northern Italy as a result of the Second Italian Independence War of 1859, the country became even less influential when it left the German Federation and lost its supremacy to Prussia in 1866. At the same time, domestic riots would have caused the state to collapse if concessions had not been to the Hungarians in 1867 to form a dual monarchy with them. Hungary was given its own constitution, its own parliament, and its own prime minister, thus becoming a kingdom that was also ruled by the emperor of Austria. Consequently, Franz Joseph has effectively become the head of state of two countries that only acting together in matters of foreign affairs and war policy.

Although the domestic situation has been calm since 1867, the problem of how to handle the minorities of Austria-Hungary has only been put on the shelf. The Hungarians are not willing to make concessions to the other ethnic groups living in their part of the empire – such as the Croats or the Ukrainians, whereas some of the peoples in the Austrian part demand to be given the same rights as Hungary. Support from outside of Austria-Hungary, including various foreign powers, only adds further fuel to the potential fire.

It is, for example, widely known that Russia has taken up the cause of the Slavs and supports both Serbian and Ukrainian nationalists; that the Ottomans, in contrast, primarily supply weapons and money to the Muslim Bosniaks; and that the Paris Commune of the Social Democratic Republic of France supplies the workers of Vienna with money and ideas.

To push these tensions to the back of their minds, the more genteel of Franz Joseph's subjects indulge in many different activities ranging from all kinds of balls and coffee house debates to convivial evenings spent in the local wine tavern. This allows the Vienna and Budapest court culture to continue to boast the kind of pomp and flamboyance that other European capitals lack today. Many respectable citizens of Austria-Hungary long for the more glamorous times of the past and are just as willing to keep on living like they used to. A large part of the poor and rural population however, does not share this luxury and often live in precarious conditions. This is particularly true for the country's minorities that have only been given very few rights. Moreover, the industrialization process, which in other countries brought the poor masses together and pushed them to organize, is slower than in other European countries. Besides the ethnic riots, this lack of work is one of the main causes for the large number of emigrants looking for a new home abroad – predominantly in America, but also in the British and German colonies on Mars and Venus.

The European melting pot that is Austria-Hungary continues to seethe with ethnic and nationalist sentiment and is certain to boil over sooner or later – which might have consequences for all of Europe. The situation in the Balkans in particular, could prove highly volatile and threaten the pompous life of Vienna's high society.

## The Social Democratic Republic of France

The Revolution of 1848 saw the French Monarchy overthrown for a second time and ushered in the Second Republic. In that year, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, a nephew of the famous Corsican and former emperor, left his exile in England and succeeded in being elected President of France.

When, in 1851, his plans to amend the constitution met with resistance, Monsieur le Président simply staged a *coup d'état* to reclaim his uncle's throne as Napoleon III, ruler of the Second Empire – a step which was widely approved in a national referendum.

It was the rural population and the assembly of notables who would benefit from the economic boom enjoyed under his rule. The situation of the urban workers did not improve though, resulting in a discontent that would not be quelled for decades.

When the Franco-German War ended with the defeat of Napoleon III, riots broke out in Paris, with members of socialist and anarchist groups proclaiming the 'democratic and social commune' and taking over the government. This process served as a starting signal for the entire country, with riots flaring up in other cities across France.

Most likely, the 'Communards' would not have remained in power for long if fate had not favored them twice. First of all, none of the weapons captured by the Germans during the war were returned to the French government. The reason for this is not clear, but it seems probable that Bismarck simply applied the principle of 'Divide and Conquer'.

Another factor was the influence exerted by the Franco-Canadian, Louis Riel, who in the autumn of 1870, arrived in Marseille fleeing North America and wanted by the British in Canada. The people of Marseille took him to their hearts and he was immediately stylized a tragic hero who had bravely risen up against the English yoke. When the riots broke out, Riel joined the rebels, united the quarrelling groups in Marseille, and combined them into a powerful army that he led northwards. Along the way, the march was joined by an increasing number of ecstatic French citizens, eventually ending in Paris which was 'liberated' by the People's Army on 1st May, 1871.

Following several weeks of chaos and civil war, the remains of the old regime were finally defeated. The remnants of the old government, along with its supporters, fled to Algeria, where they have been making plans for their return ever since (see page 50).

The principles of the Paris Commune have seen the "land of cognac and honey" become decentralized. It has been divided into 100 departments, each of which has approximately the same number of inhabitants (approx. 380,000) and is further divided into several communities. The inhabitants of a community elect a community council, which in turn, appoints a delegate to the department's general council. Each council is free to deal with any local concerns as it sees fit – there are no representatives of a central government meddling in the departments' affairs.

Each general council appoints a delegate to the National Council in Paris. One half of the National Council is made up of the 100 delegates from the departments, the other half is



composed of delegates from different national institutions, such as the Army, the national railroad company, large enterprises, and the universities.

From its own ranks, the National Council elects the nine members of the Committee of Public Safety which serves the cabinet of the French government. The committee's oldest member, called the 'premier citoyen' or 'first citizen', is the French head of state – a position that has been held by Louis Charles Delescluze, an 80-year old radical, for several years.

The National Council votes on bills, which are presented by its members and are passed by a two-thirds majority. The laws are put into action by various committees constituted by the Committee of Public Safety. Matters affecting several departments are the responsibility of regional committees – there is one for shipping on the Loire, for example – which are composed of delegates from the departments concerned. In special situations such as a war, a dictator – staying in office until the situation is over – may be appointed by the Committee of Public Safety with the approval of the National Council.

The establishment of the Social Democratic Republic of France under the Paris Commune ushers in a 'Belle Époque', a golden age that finds the country in an optimistic mood, with the minimum wage for workers and the maximum wage for executive staff having greatly contributed to social peace. In addition, every citizen is granted access to free medical care.

With the economy booming, any factories and country estates left empty by their owners after the revolution have been taken over by the employees, who forming works committees, now control their companies' fates themselves. In addition to their wages, all employees receive a share in their company's profits, which explains the French workers' growing reputation for industriousness.

It is in enacting its education reforms that the Commune achieves its great success. Every child is entitled to enjoy free school education; and universities may be attended without any fee required. Anyone passing the entrance exam can begin their studies – even women!

All this radical social change is watched with keen interest by France's neighbors, particularly the German Empire, as the issues that the French Republic seems to have addressed are becoming increasingly difficult to cope with at home. This might also be one of the reasons why Bismarck pushed his social acts through the Reichstag. Of course, not everything in the French Commune is 'sunshine and roses' – even though the members of the National Council like to convey this impression to the outside world, making the workers of the neighboring countries firm believers of this idea. Since some millennia-old social structures cannot be shaken off easily, the theoretically modern French state is pervaded by a large number of anachronisms. This is especially so in the countryside where old cadres and former landowners continue to hold sway and this is also reflected in the elections to the National Council. Age-old bonds, debts, and patronage often keep the 'free' rural population from daring to elect another representative than the one suggested by their 'equal' lords. Yet, social injustice cannot only be found in the countryside, but also in Paris, where the committees are frequently locked in stalemates that prevent important decisions from being taken. Sometimes, this is due to the personal interests of the delegates – other times however, it is due to political quarrels. For even though the radicals, socialists, and liberals all wanted to abolish the monarchy, today they often find it hard to agree to a common policy. An even more serious issue is the fact that the modern political movements and reforms of the Social Democratic Republic of France are not approved by all of the

French citizenry in equal measure – albeit it was these elements that brought them their 'freedom' in the first place. Many French though, consider this freedom to have merely turned the previously stable conditions upside down. For the most part, this divide lies between age and geography, the Commune having the endorsement of the young and the city working classes, whereas the old and rural classes are far from being convinced.

### Louis Riel

Louis Riel was born the son of a small businessman in Manitoba, Canada in 1844. At age 13, the bright lad was sent to a seminary to become a clergyman. Following his father's death in 1864, he abandoned these plans and worked as law clerk before eventually returning home, where an increasing number of settlers from the east became engaged in conflicts with the local Métis people. In 1870, Riel emerged as the leader of an open rebellion, championing the rights of the Métis people. Although the revolt was successful, Riel had to flee the country, first moving to the USA and then leaving it again, when the British called for his extradition. Arriving in Marseille aboard a freighter, he was celebrated as a brave hero who had defied the English. He soon realized that the situation of the poor in France was even worse than at home, prompting him to snatch up a rifle and join the riots once they had broken out before leading a peasant army on Paris.

Today, Louis Riel – the Hero of the Revolution – lives as a poet in Paris.

### Switzerland

It is only in Switzerland that the three ethnic groups, German, French, and Italian speaking inhabitants, get along, even seeing each other as confederates. Napoleon had occupied the country and gotten rid of the old circumstances; once it had been freed, though, Switzerland gave itself a modern constitution. Eventually, the Congress of Vienna required the country to take a position of armed neutrality – a demand the *Confoederatio Helvetica* meticulously complies with, even though there is still the occasional Swiss man who leaves to earn his living as a mercenary.

Industrialization began in Switzerland to meet the demand for machines employed in the Swiss textile industry. In the years since, Swiss companies have established themselves as manufacturers of high-precision instruments. Politically, the country's flexible constitution, established following a short, conclusive, if relatively bloodless civil war, has allowed Switzerland to adapt to any conflicts arising from changes in society and resulted in the country arguably being the most stable and modern state in Central Europe – though the Social Democratic Republic of France would dispute this if asked.

Even the Catholic Swiss people are influenced by the essentially Protestant Calvinistic work ethos stating that God determined work to be the purpose of human life. Both luxury and excessive sleeping are considered a sin, with wasting time being the only thing considered to be even worse. The Swiss also have a well-deserved reputation for discretion which began with the



constantly cash-strapped French kings who required discretion from their Swiss creditors. This requirement was such that this need for discretion was eventually enshrined in law by the Swiss Federal Assembly. Since then, Switzerland has become known as a safe haven for unsafe money. The assumption that the crown jewels once owned by Seldon the Great lie hidden in the vaults of a bank in Zurich – and that a German master detective is said to have assisted in smuggling it – is strongly denied by everyone involved.

Shrewd Swiss businessmen can also be found on Mars and Venus. One of them is *Albert Eichele* (1865-1922), who – on behalf of the Oerlikon machine works – is trying to sell a canal power plant plus high-voltage line to Prince Amraamtaba X in order to supply the Emerald Palace with electricity. In his free time, he often takes his penny farthing – the first one ever seen on Mars – on a ride through the streets of Syrtis Major, startling children and draft animals alike.

## The Benelux Countries

The Congress of Vienna saw the by then Austrian southern Netherlands and northern Netherlands united to counteract the power exhibited by France. The new king William I, a son of the Dutch Republic's last stadtholder, promoted trade, seafaring, and industry, but proved not be very adept when dealing with his people. Eventually this drove the inhabitants of the southern Catholic and partly French-speaking regions, who felt particularly discriminated against, staged the Revolution of 1830. Subsequently, the south constituted itself as the new state of Belgium and in the following year elected the first King of the Belgians, Leopold I.

With the south having seceded from the kingdom, the **Netherlands** lost much of its industry, yet were able to compensate for this thanks to revenues from its terrestrial colonies. Its economy has been centered on agriculture, fishing, and sea trade ever since.

Even though the 1848 Revolutions were more or less ignored, its then king, William II, adopted a liberal constitution that turned the Netherlands into one of the freest countries of Europe. The current king, William III, has been sitting on the throne for 40 years and is trying in vain to restrict these liberties once again. He is a quick-tempered lout, whose bad manners undermine the monarchy's reputation – after all, he is not called 'King Gorilla' without a reason.

A modern industrial country since its foundation, **Belgium** has come to enjoy economic prosperity – which however, cannot help to ease the troubles in the country. First, there is the language conflict. French, Belgium's official language, is also the common speech spoken by the upper class of Flanders. Thus, the difficulties faced by any inhabitants only speaking Flemish are considerable. In addition, there is a conflict between the Liberals and the Clericalists, who are under the influence of the Catholic Church, mainly revolving around education. Last but not least, there are also the issues related to the workers' situation, known in every industrial nation. These conflicts have already led to several riots. These circumstances – plus the danger of Belgium being crushed between France and Germany sometime – have prompted King Leopold II to look further afield for a possible safe haven. Hence, his agents have arranged for the purchase of overseas and interplanetary possessions – neither the Congo Free State nor the Martian Coprates are Belgian colonies, but Leopold II's private property that he may deal with as he likes.

Finally, **Luxembourg** – the largest microstate of Europe – is an independent nation, whose head of state is also King of the

Netherlands. Since William III does not have any male descendants though, Luxembourg's law of succession will oblige the country to look for a new Grand Duke when he dies.

## The Sunny South

### Italy

The Kingdom of Italy was born in 1860 when the great national hero Garibaldi and 1,000 of his men arrived on Sicily and started a campaign that within a year would unite most of the Italian states. It would take several years for them to be fully united as some territories needed to be swapped for regions that had previously been French, while others had to be wrested from the Austrians with the aid of Prussia.

The young nation has to cope with several severe problems. While the north enjoys subsidized industrial growth, the south has been neglected from the very outset, causing this region to become increasingly impoverished. As a consequence, numerous Italians leave the country to seek salvation, either in North or South America or even straight into space!

Although Italy has been united, it is constantly being shaken by uprisings, strikes, and political quarrels. The country is heavily indebted, and its citizens have to pay high taxes while wages are low. To calm down the situation inside the country, the government of King Umberto I makes every effort to achieve success abroad. Having joined the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria in 1882, Italy has gained a certain influence. In addition, the success of its foreign policy seems to be confirmed by the colonies acquired in Africa and particularly on Venus. Still, both Italy's Army and Navy do not enjoy the best of reputations, and its administration, too, is considered ineffective and partially undermined by various mafia clans.

### Portugal

Portugal has remained an agricultural country, with Lisbon the only major city of any note. After its liberation from Napoleon, the country went through several troubled decades (see Brazil, page 49). Since 1850, Portugal has been largely unsuccessful in developing its infrastructure and promoting its industry. Were it not for the revenues gained from its African colonies, Portugal would already be bankrupt. Therefore, Lisbon is making plans to create a corridor that will connect the two colonies of Angola and Mozambique, one of which lies on the west coast of southern Africa, the other on the east coast. It is quite unlikely that the other colonial powers would be enthralled by this idea – and Portugal is hardly powerful enough to implement these ambitious plans on its own.

### Spain

Spain is only a shadow of its former self. In the past few decades, the country was shaken by three succession wars, all of which have been won by the ruling family. Once the last Spanish king died in 1885, his widow Christina became the regent for their child, born in early 1886. One day, Alfonso XIII, the future King of Spain, will rule over the pathetic remnants of a fallen empire, whose latest colony in the Western Sahara has nothing to offer but rocks and sand.



## On the Sidelines

### The Balkans

The Balkan Peninsula is bustling with diverse ethnic groups: Albanians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Germans, Greek, Croatians, Romanians, Serbians, Slovenians, Hungarians, and many more, each divided into their own subgroups and clusters. They all have been in constant flux for a long time, invading each other, fleeing, migrating or being cast out, settling and resettling. Of course, every group firmly believes their claimed territory to be their ancestral homeland, although no one can really tell anymore these days. For nearly two centuries, the whole region was part of the Ottoman Empire, but with the sultanate's downfall, its inhabitants were either able to secure some degree of autonomy or were absorbed into their larger neighbors' spheres of influence. While Austria-Hungary focuses on the geographical proximity, the Russian czar styles himself patron saint of all orthodox Christians, which are by far not all Balkan citizens, to justify his ambitions. Great Britain on the other hand worries about the *status quo* and Russian access to the Mediterranean Sea, which needs to be denied if the British Empire is to maintain control of the Suez Canal and easy access to India.

As a result, states like Greece, Albania, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Montenegro, plus a rash of other tiny picturesque tin-pot countries were formed, their rulers portraying themselves in the manner of Vienna or even Versailles. None of the independent Balkan countries are truly sovereign though; if not an 'autonomous region' of a major power, they are obliged to pay tribute or answer in some other way to Vienna or Saint Petersburg, thus preventing them from pursuing a truly independent policy.

Despite no longer being part of the Ottoman Empire, the sultanate maintains a strong, cultural influence over the Balkans, which means that they represent a piece of oriental exoticism directly on the doorstep of European characters. The big powers' wrangling over the region resembles the Great Game, but is achieved between appetizer and dessert on the Orient Express. The Balkan people are so rich in features and peculiarities, not even their clichés can be listed in their entirety – veiled beauties, noble and barbaric highlanders, and corrupt officials who refuse to lift a finger without baksheesh greasing their palms. Here, sophisticated freedom fighters can be spotted shooting at practice targets with archducal silhouettes, the Habsburg secret police and agents of all nations roam the region, and while every petty king or princeling could have a double in the dungeons of his own personal Neuschwanstein, it is unlikely that anyone involved in the tangle of palace intrigues is sure which one of them is real or the elder, and thus has the right to sit on the throne...

### Russia

Among the great nations, Russia certainly is the most backward. The defeat during the Crimean war at the beginning of his reign led czar Alexander II to enact a variety of reforms, all of which proved unpopular with every just about segment of population. Too ineffective for the military, not radical enough for the liberals – let alone the emerging socialists – and the nobility resented them for reducing their influence and removing their sinecures. One reform would have lasting consequences. Although the 1861 abolition of serfdom would mean freedom for the mass of rural peasants that made up the majority of Russia's population, it forced them into a financial dependency upon their former masters, now landlords, a dependency that was no

longer offset by any feudal obligation from their former masters. Disappointed by the pace of reform, many members of the opposition joined the newly formed secret societies, some of which would develop into terror organizations. After surviving several attacks on his life, Alexander II's rule became increasing repressive. He ruled with an iron fist and granted the Okhrana, the secret police, free reign. Uprisings in Poland, which like Finland and the Baltic states, belongs to Russia in 1889, were violently crushed and the land ruthlessly 'Russified'. In 1881, the underground organization *Narodnaya Volya* or 'People's Will', succeeds in killing Alexander II. His son, Alexander III, continues his repressive politics and pushes for the building of colonies on Mars and Venus to distract the populace from domestic problems. Russia's peasants gain nothing from it, and it becomes evident that a man of steel is needed to destroy the old, and drag the land – screaming and punching – into the modern era.

Internationally, Russia contends with Great Britain in the Great Game, fighting for more influence in Central Asia, especially Afghanistan and Persia. On the European Continent, Russia advocates Pan-Slavism, the unification of all Slavic races – under Russian dominance of course, while also slicing away satellite states away from the crumbled corpse of the Ottoman Empire. The czar also sees himself as the patron of all orthodox Christians, which includes all those in Balkans. Both causes stir trouble on the Balkans (see below).

The most common Russian figures that the characters will generally encounter will most likely be merchants and industrialists (sophisticated capitalists), soldiers (stoic muzhiks) and czarist officers, these ranging from liberal idealists and fanatic loyalists to the czar to despotic and sadistic Okhrana agents. They will be organizing cartographic expeditions on Mars and Venus, hunting for natural resources for the slowly developing Russian industry, or bargaining native products for the colonial trade. Perhaps the characters may even meet exiles, planning the downfall of the Czarist Empire and the founding of a new Russia from abroad – with pamphlets or bombs in their pockets.

Russia itself is a country of captivating superlatives. Her wilderness seems infinite, so much so that her vast populations could get lost within her borders. The mites of its poverty-stricken peasants add up to a multi-billion amount, funding, above all Saint Petersburg's, big city splendor. Given her size, it is no wonder that Russia is a land of many tongues. Russian is the official language of course, but innumerable languages are spoken by the various minorities, from Ukrainian to Buryat. In polite society and at the Imperial court, French and German are commonly spoken. Indeed, tourists having problems with the Russian language will be glad to find many a Petersburg cab man to be a former French noble.

### Scandinavia

Scandinavia, that is Denmark, Sweden, and Norway (the latter belonging to the first of these states until 1809 and afterwards to the second one), is as of 1889 a mostly agrarian country, however the capitals have already made first approaches towards industrialization. The railway makes the riches of the land accessible – which is for one part wood allowing the cellulose and paper industry to grow at a tremendous pace, and on the other hand ore deposits in the center, and later, in the north of the Scandinavian peninsula.

However, the times when almost the entire coast of the Baltic Sea belonged to Sweden are long gone, and ever since Denmark's defeat in the wars against the German Confederation between 1848 and 1851 and against Austria-Prussia in 1864,



the Scandinavian states have had little presence in international or even European affairs. Only Denmark holds foreign possessions; these include the Faroe Islands north of Great Britain, Iceland, and Greenland, as well as – depending on the manner of counting and the sea level – between 3 and 97 islands of the Lesser Antilles.

Although they lack any kind of imperialistic ambition, the people of Scandinavia can be met everywhere. As the descendants of the Vikings, who after all ventured in their fragile wooden longboats as far away as North America, it is no surprise that they include many courageous explorers amongst their number. Nevertheless, the news about a polar explorer named Nansen setting out with a Danish ether flyer in order to hoist the Dannebrog on Ceres is without a doubt a canard, for it is widely known that this minor-planet has no atmosphere which would allow for such a landing.

## America

*"America, you've got it better..."*

Goethe

In comparison to a Europe frozen in conventions, America sees itself as the continent that provides its people with the chance to change their lives. Its lands are still young and expanding, and thus are considered the ideal place for ambitious men (and women), longing to achieve their own goals (on Earth). Obviously, not everyone can go from rags to riches, but here one is more likely to risk it.

America also has a well-deserved reputation for liveliness and those who ignore the call of the wild and head out to the frontier can still experience excitement and danger in America's populated areas. In the CSA, slaves are waiting for selfless escape helpers. Mexico's rebels are in a constant need of weapons and supplies. Some cities in the USA are more dangerous than the jungles on Venus; the most evil-minded crooks are entrenched in New Mexico; and Latin America is rife with diplomatic intrigue as one faction or another works to extend its influence.

## North America

### Canada

*"It will be pretty, when it's done."*

Oscar Wilde

At the beginning of the century, Canada's inhabitants began to demand the same rights as their southern neighbors. In order to diminish US influence, in 1837 the British government granted the Canadians more rights, and in 1867, as a federal state of the British Empire, the Dominion of Canada was founded, its inhabitants electing their own parliament.

One of the new government's first actions was the purchase of the Rupert's Land, a vast area in the west, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. The inhabitants of the province, the French speaking Métis, immediately sent home the newly appointed governor, and under Louis Riel, elected their own government. That revolt was quelled, and Riel fled into exile to France in 1871. There, he was welcomed with great enthusiasm and would go on to define the politics of the Paris Commune.

Afterward, the situation calmed down and numerous immigrants, preferring Canada over the turbulent USA, entered the

country. The transcontinental railroad was completed by 1885 and is now opening the deserted western lands for settlers. To many Canada is an attractive prospect, with its rapidly growing industry in the east that provides numerous jobs for the influx of immigrants and its unexplored west that promises endless room.

## United States of America (USA)

*"There is a special providence for drunkards, children, and the United States of America."*

Otto von Bismarck

Within only a hundred years, the USA has grown inexorably from a few former colonies on the East Coast to reach across the continent to the West Coast. From the start, the nation was split into two camps – the supporters of a strong central government and the advocates of preferably independent federal states. The debates between the two camps were often heated, and merged over time with the slavery question. Eventually, after the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1861, they culminated in the American Civil War.

No one actually thought the South would stand a chance, but then in 1862, Lincoln died of typhus and the northern states lost the man who had kept the country united. Lincoln's Vice President, Hannibal Hamlin succeeded him, but Hamlin and the cabinet got lost in petty arguments that left the Union war effort without direction or success, until finally in 1866, the new president George B. McClellan entered into peace negotiations with the South.

With the loss of the Civil War, the Union lost half of its territory and the land plunged into a deep depression. Bust war bonds created inflation and suddenly all of its citizens were in debt. Many veterans made the bitter discovery after their home coming their houses now belonged to the bank. In order to boost the economy, the US government ordered the construction of new railroad lines in the late 1860s, paying for them with land endowments to the railway companies. The railways in turn resold the land, mainly to associations that established big ranches on their newly purchased parcels. The country was scandalized when it was revealed in 1872, that rich planters from the CSA were part of these associates and as a result, the government assigned numerous small parcels to new settlers, in order to avoid what was termed the "prairie's buyout".

Today, the USA is on its way to becoming a major power. Washington is still the federal capital, but because it sits directly on with the border with the CSA, many of the government's most important departments have long since been moved to Philadelphia and Baltimore. The White House and the Capitol remain in use though, and no one would countenance their being moved. Although the USA is a popular destination for immigrants coming from Europe, they are no longer freely allowed to enter the country. Instead, they are being selected – today the USA needs workers for its growing industry, not farmers for the western prairie. The upper classes of the USA own most of its industry and are as a result, not only wealthy, but also the nation's *de facto* rulers. The governing politicians are often on their payroll and enact laws as requested by their masters. The workers in the factories toil under wretched conditions and are tossed out on the street if they dare to protest. If the threat of losing work fails to suffice, the militant amongst the hungry masses are contained by private henchmen or employees of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, known as Pinkertons and notorious strikebreakers.

Earth



## Port Progress: City of the Future

In 1887, Thomas Edison needed a new laboratory and, thanks to his ether patents, had the resources to straightaway build a complete city founded on his ideals – progress and pacifism.

Port Progress is located just outside New York, on the southern tip of Long Island, and is laid out in four concentric rings. At the center stands an opera house inside a huge park, which is separated from a ring of modern office buildings by a wide boulevard. Behind it, the second ring contains apartments and shops beyond which is a ring of houses for the middle class. The outer ring is reserved for the villas of the city's elite. Currently only Edison's houses and those of the most important scientists can be found here.

The houses in the city are constructed in a classicist style and equipped with the latest technical gadgets – all buildings have electricity and phones, and the laboratories and offices are interlinked by a pneumatic post network. The city is connected to New York City by an electric tramway which is mainly used by construction workers and housekeepers to get to work. After all, there is hardly any place for them in the city of the future.

## Confederate States of America (CSA)

The Confederates waged the Civil War as they were unwilling to be regulated by the Yankees, especially in the matter of their 'special institution' – Slavery. The secession's spokesmen, mainly rich plantation owners, still shape the nation's politics today.

The CSA is an agrarian state, and should, according to the planters' intentions, remain one. Cotton has been the CSA's most



important export to date, but in the wake of the Egyptian cotton boom, that is set to change. Planters are switching to tobacco on their plantations and raising cattle on their western ranches. The empty regions of the West were sold to ranchers at preferential prices, thereby greatly expanding their properties and their wealth. It also ensured that the major landowners would remain the ruling class in the CSA. The interests of the CSA's 'planter aristocrats' are the opposite of the white middle class, which profits from the country's growing industries, especially in Texas. The voice of the middle classes grows, discussing reforms and the possibility of a reunion with the North.

The slaves have no say in the matter, or indeed, any matter. Their lot is to work the plantations and in some factories. They are the property of their owners and being property, they have no rights. They are only allowed to leave their master's properties with special passes. To ensure compliance with these rules, 'slave hunters' roam the land, tracking down absconded slaves.

Internationally, the CSA is a pariah. Decent people despise slaveholders, and other nations constantly exert pressure towards the CSA to finally prohibit slavery. Her relationship with England is ambivalent – indeed, while English politicians denounce slavery, English banks finance the majority of plantations. The South States' only real friends are the Boer states, Brazil, and Mexico.

## The Wild Wild West

The New Mexico territory is a buffer zone between the USA and the CSA. Before the war, many of its inhabitants considered themselves to be part of the South, and the CSA made part of the region – Arizona – one of its federal states. The Union managed to conquer New Mexico very early on and was unwilling to give it up after the war as it would have meant that the CSA would share a border with Unionist California. As the South wanted an end to the war as well, the region eventually was declared 'neutral territory'. New Mexico became a lawless no-man's-land, ruled by chaos and anarchy. Bigger than the German Empire, the region has approximately as many inhabitants as Hannover (around 140,000). They live on mining and animal husbandry and crowd together in small cities, scattered throughout the region. The cities are generally ruled by local businessmen, drawing their income from smuggling and saloons.

A lot happens in this scarcely populated area. Smugglers, bandits, and spies slip through the bleak wasteland that extends between the cities. They are joined by military 'observers' from both camps as well as Indians – mainly Apache, Comanche, and Navajo – fighting for or against both governments and constantly switching sides. Completing this turbulent picture are Mexican rebels, using the territory as shelter, and Mexican soldiers, tracking the rebels.

Since no one is willing to construct a railway under these circumstances, travelers depend on horses or one of the bizarre, heavily armed steam-powered vehicles the locals use to patrol the desert.





## Latin America

*"America is ungovernable."*

**Simon Bolivar**

The occupation of Spain by Napoleon 1808 triggered independence movements in South and Central America. In the following two centuries, the regions detached themselves from the motherland through a series of bloody battles. These revolutionary efforts were, unlike in Europe, not only supported by the middle classes, but also by the governing elite. Soon, a conflict ensued in the new nations between the civic liberals who supported strong central governments and the conservatives supported by the church, who wanted to keep their privileges. Even today, that conflict continues to shape Latin America, and has been the cause for countless riots, civil wars, and *coups* – Honduras alone experienced 85 changes of government between 1821 and 1876!

Soon after South American nations won their independence, interested foreign parties stepped forward to help. English banks granted generous loans for modernization, which over time led to several national bankruptcies. The USA has made attempts to forge a 'Pan-American Alliance', while some people in the CSA have considered the military conquest of various Latin American countries. Economically, all of the Latin American states depend on agriculture, which of course strengthens the conservatives as they own the majority of the land. Although both the church and the conservatives often resist modernization, all of the region's nations have begun construction of railroads, telegraphs, and schools. Latin America dances to a special rhythm though the pace is set by only a few countries.

## Mexico

*"Poor Mexico! So far from God, but so close to the Confederate States!"*

**Porfirio Díaz**

In 1821, Mexico gained its independence from the Spanish Empire and as the First Mexican Empire held territory from the Californias to Costa Rica. The history of the young country has been rife with revolts, riots, and civil wars. In addition, it has lost more than half of its territory through wars and corruption. After the last civil war in 1861, Mexico was bankrupt and unable to pay off its international debts. Subsequently, the French Empire invaded and established the Second Mexican Empire, putting Maximilian I, a younger brother of the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I, on the throne.

With the Civil War raging in the USA, the French made a deal with the Confederates. France would recognize the CSA and in return, the CSA would recognize the Second Mexican Empire. After the 1871 *coup d'état* in France, the CSA became Mexico's sole benefactor.

After his coronation, in order to soothe his people, the childless Maximilian adopted two of the first Mexican emperor's grandchildren. After Maximilian was assassinated in 1879, the sixteen year old *Agustín de Iturbide y Green* had the greater claim and so succeeded his adoptive father as the new emperor.

The empire is split into 50 departments, each of their governors being reliant on the grace of the emperor. Agustín has the support of the majority of Mexico's upper classes, but not the lower classes and the radicals of the middle classes. Riots are commonly quelled by the Emperor's soldiers and secret police. In the south, on the Yucatan Peninsula, the Mayans have been



in rebellion for over 40 years. Open revolution prevails in the north as well where an angry mob has gathered around General *Porfirio Díaz*, a confidant of the legendary Benito Juárez. Determined to overthrow the Emperor and to chase his foreign advisers out of the country, Díaz is secretly backed by the USA, which thereby continue its fight against the CSA.

### The Tehuantepec Ship Railroad

The North American continent is well known for the marvelous state of its rail communications, particularly in the United States. Travel by rail from the shores of the Atlantic to the Pacific can be done by means of a number of lines. Of all those magnificent railroad lines, the most famous one is the Tehuantepec Ship Railroad in Mexico. The ship railroad was designed and realized by the American engineer James Buchanan Eads. Simple in concept, the railroad presented an engineering challenge heretofore never attempted. The result is a means of transportation by which very large seagoing ships can be raised from the ocean, placed onto large railroad cars, and transported across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Once they have reached the other coast, the ships are returned to the ocean to continue their journey from there.

A ship begins its journey by entering a large dry dock which contains a submerged railroad car. The railway starts about 35 feet below the water level, and a slope of 1% elevates the rail line to sea level 1000 yards from the dock. The ship is maneuvered into its berth on the rail car, and the water is pumped off the dock. Afterwards, the car is connected to four large locomotives, which have sufficient motive power to draw the vessel across the isthmus on a journey that takes twelve hours. The car is made of cross girders of plate iron, designed to move on twelve rails of standard track width. Its wheels are placed as close together as their diameter will allow (three feet from axle to axle), with each wheel bearing on an independent axle, and with a separate set of springs. A car 300 feet in length - capable of carrying a ship of 4,000 tons - has 100 wheels on each rail, or 1,200 wheels in total. This gives a pressure of five tons on each wheel, which is less weight than is borne by the roadbed of an ordinary railroad.

### Nicaragua

Nicaragua has two particular characteristics. For a long time, the Caribbean Mosquito Coast was a British colony. It was relinquished to Nicaragua in 1860, and is now an autonomous region within Nicaragua. The Miskito, a mixed race of escaped black slaves and native Indians, live here in small villages governed by their own king.

Another highlight is a canal, supposed to connect the Caribbean and the Pacific. Until recently it lacked funding, but immediately after the Panama Canal's failure, a mysterious investor entered the picture, planning to finance the Nicaragua

Canal by himself. Nobody knows the financier's identity. To date only a few of his 'agents' have appeared to conduct preliminary negotiations with the government. Despite all attempts, investigations into the identity of this mysterious investor and his agents have fizzled out and naturally led to wild speculations. Rumor has it, that the Paris Commune, or a mad aristocrat bent on world domination are at the heart of it. One thing is certain though, the investor exists. Properties have been acquired and paid for in cash, and at the failed Panama Canal construction site, equipment has been purchased and specialists hired.

### European Colonies

The colonial powers also possess several areas in Latin America.

- The British Empire owns the largest portion, including various Caribbean islands, like **Jamaica**; **British Honduras**, which borders Mexico; and **British-Guyana** in South America. In the very south lie the **Falkland Islands**, from where the British monitor the naval traffic around Cape Horn.
- The Netherland's property mainly consists of **Suriname**, which was partly made arable through dykes and canals. In addition to that, the Netherlands hold a few Caribbean islands that mainly produce sugar.
- The Paris Commune, along with some islands in the Caribbean, also inherited the barely tapped **French-Guyana**, which is especially well known for its penal colony. Although they released the political prisoners of Napoleon III, the Paris Commune's idealists now use the island to lock away 'troublemakers'. So far, plans to construct a military ether airfield in the nearby Kourou have failed due to the tropical climate.
- **Puerto Rico** and **Cuba** are all that remains from the former Spanish colonial holdings in America. On Cuba, the rebels lost in 1878 after ten years of fighting for their independence. Their leaders fled into exile from where they plan their return and the overthrow of their Spanish masters. In the USA, the rebels enjoy great sympathies, and even the CSA tries to cozy up to them.
- The smallest colonial power is Denmark, owning some of the practically insignificant **Virgin Islands**.

### Colombia

1821, *Simon Bolívar* proclaimed the Republic of Colombia, which fully included the Spanish viceroyalty of New Granada at that time. After a few years, local politicians decided that their countries would be better off without Colombia and split from the general government. First Venezuela in 1828 and then Ecuador in 1830.



## Hispaniola

Hispaniola is the one Caribbean island that is not the colony of a European power. It is divided between two republics. Haiti won its freedom 1801 after the black slaves rose against the French. Following their independence, open hatred between the “Mulattos” and the “Negroes” temporarily divided the country. Subsequently, the land was bled dry by a number of tyrants and kleptocrats, causing riots time and again. *Florvil Hyppolite* became president in 1889 and established friendly relations with the USA, which is interested in building a naval base on the island. After its independence from Spain in 1821, the Dominican Republic was conquered by Haiti, but liberated itself 1844, and since then managed to repel several attempted conquests by its neighbor. The current president, *Ulises Heureaux*, holds the office for the second time and has developed dictatorial ambitions.

Since then, Colombia suffered various riots and civil wars and changed its name several times. In the aftermath of a civil war, a new constitution was passed in 1866 and the country became a police state. Eventually in 1880, after more civil unrest, *Rafael Núñez*, a jurist and journalist, came to power. Núñez has carried out a number of improvements that have since helped calm Colombia's civil and political situation.

This was the reason why the Paris Commune decided to start the construction of the Panama Canal here. On the Paris Commune's 10th anniversary, President Núñez ceremoniously broke ground on the canal. The works progressed slowly from the start. Difficult terrain and plagues took a deadly toll on the workforce and constant quarrels between the conservatives and the French advisors, who sided with the workers and criticized the country for its grievances, obstructed the construction. The turning point came in 1886, when Núñez passed a constitution which re-established the church's privileges. Afterward, the project lost more and more support in France, and a financial scandal during the start of the year meant the canal's end. The only thing remaining of this most ambitious project is the biggest abandoned construction site of all times.

## Venezuela

In 1864, a civil war brought the liberals to power and they have remained in office ever since. Their leader is *Antonio Guzmán Blanco*, who has been president several times before. Guzmán tried to transform Caracas into a second Paris and financed his ambitious constructions with foreign loans, driving Venezuela into dependence from the investors. Guzmán's last term of office ended 1887 and despite his living in Paris now, he still exercises great influence.

The current president, *Juan Pablo Royas Paul*, has initiated reforms that deviate from Guzmán's policy. Although they stimulate the economy, they face opposition from supporters and beneficiaries of Guzmán's policies. *Joaquín Crespo*, an old companion of Guzmán, living on the nearby island of Trinidad, is rumored to be preparing a *coup d'état*.

Venezuela and Great Britain are engaged in a long running dispute over the territory of Essequibo and Guayana Esequiba, which the government in Caracas claims the British have connected to their colony British Guyana by means of creative cartography.

## Peru

Like many of her neighbors, Peru experienced several turbulent decades after its independence in 1825 – from 1826 to 1865 it had no less than 35 presidents. Adding to her internal unrest, Peru's neighbors also kept causing trouble. In 1879, the so-called “Saltpeter War” broke out between Bolivia and Chile. Being allied with Bolivia at the time, Peru got entangled in the war, which ended in 1884 with Chile's victory. Afterwards, Peru got caught up in another civil war. Its winner, general *Andrés Bello Cáceres*, has been the president since 1886. Cáceres has succeeded in reducing the country's debts, and the situation has calmed down.

Peru is an Eldorado for archaeologists, who are on the tracks of the Incas. In 1887, during a ‘friendly visit’ to the Nazca desert, the crew of a British aerial cruiser spotted huge figures scraped into the ground. Whoever painted these geoglyphs in the deserts is unclear, but at least one of the figures resembles a Martian roogie.

## Brazil

After Napoleon's invasion of Portugal, the Portuguese court fled to Rio de Janeiro, which for a while became the capital of the Portuguese Empire. After the king's return to Lisbon, his son was named governor. In 1822, he declared Brazil's independence and was crowned first emperor as Pedro I. In the 1830s the situation in Portugal grew tenser, and so Pedro I resigned in 1831 to restore order at home. His son, Pedro II, was only 14 years old when he was crowned the new emperor in 1840. The first decades of his reign were turbulent with the empire becoming involved in several riots and wars.

Between 1864 and 1870, a triple alliance consisting of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, waged war against Paraguay, its crazy dictator Lopez fighting the conflict to the bitter end. The war resulted in glorious victory for the Brazilian army, motivating many young middle class men to pursue a career as an officer. The majority of these young officers were committed republicans, but due to the emperor's popularity with the rest of the people, could not win any support for a coup. With republican sentiment in the minority, Brazil has flourished since the 1850s under the reign of the ‘scholar emperor’, Pedro II.

With the development of her infrastructure Brazil's economy grew, culminating in the rubber boom of recent years. The income from the rubber is so huge that the small village of Manaus grew into a modern city within a few years, complete with electric lighting and an opera house, though the latter is still under construction.

One thing however, cast its shadow on those achievements – slavery. The continuing practice of slavery in Brazil has incited protests both nationally and internationally. Over time, legislation was introduced which steadily reduced the number of slaves, but keeping the institution intact. In May 1888, the ‘Golden Law’ was adopted, freeing the country's last slaves. While it was celebrated by the people's majority, the emperor lost loyalty with the aristocrats, who now support bourgeois officers. In November 1889, Field Marshal *da Fonseca* proclaimed the republic. Pedro II went into exile to Paris, where today he is idolized as a tragic hero.



## Chile

Following Chile's independence in 1818, the nation plunged into a series of civil wars, which did not end until 1833, when a conservative constitution was adopted. It ensured stability and gave the country a relative sense of inner tranquility. Over the course of the century, Chile has been involved in several wars, usually emerging victorious.

The last of those wars was the War of the Pacific, which Chile waged against Peru and Bolivia between 1879 and 1884. During the conflict, Chile won control over the Atacama Desert, which has the largest deposits of saltpeter worldwide. Saltpeter (sodium nitrate) is highly sought-after by the chemical industry, and since Chile virtually has the monopoly, it became rich.

As much as this wealth has helped improve Chile, it also created a number of problems for the country. The mines actually belong to foreign investors who maintain a great influence over the country's politics in order to keep output from the mines low and thus prices high. The government would prefer to put as much saltpeter on the market as possible to increase tax income.

In 1886 *José Manuel Balmaceda* was elected president. He instituted several different reforms and construction projects, in the process devouring more money than taxes and duties could generate. The difference is paid by foreign loans. Many of the projects are carried out by 'friends' of the government and the majority of the money was lost through corruption. With the progress on many of his projects slow, Balmaceda decides to defy the constitution to fulfill his plans, and becomes increasingly unpopular.

## Africa

*"Quid novi ex africa? - What of the new out of Africa?"*

*Aristoteles*

In the eyes of the Europeans, Africa is the 'dark continent'. For them, North Africa is some kind of fairyland with restless Bedouins roaming the desert, while the jungles south of the Sahara is thought to be haunted by cannibalistic savages, who are well below the level of cavemen. Reality paints another picture.

## The Colonial Powers

*"Whatever happens - we have got the Maxim guns, and they have not."*

*Hilaire Belloc*

In the 19th century, Europe looked to Africa to satisfy certain desires. It would provide raw materials and consumers for Europe's industries as well as 'unclaimed' land for would-be landlords. In exchange the natives would receive the blessings of civilization – whether they wanted to or not.

Colonies are typically administered by trading companies, which secured their licenses from the respective colonial power. Only a handful Europeans live on site, controlling tens of thousands of natives with the help of African mercenaries. For the most part, the colonies only exist on the map. Those colonies marked out in the heartland are seldom toured by their colonial masters and for the moment, European focus is mainly on the coasts. The various colonial powers no doubt plan to penetrate the hinterland soon.

Throughout the 1870s, the King of the Belgians, Leopold II, campaigned to secure the Congo basin, an area also desired by

England and Portugal. To settle the matter, Bismarck convened the Berlin Conference in 1884 to which he invited the various colonial powers with an interest in Africa. By the terms of the General Act of the Berlin Conference, not only was the Congo's fate settled, but Africa was divided among the colonial powers – without asking a single African.

## France

After the Paris Commune's victory in the 1871 revolution (see page 19), the French government, a majority of the conservatives, and parts of the army fled to North Africa, where they made Algiers the 'provisional capital' of the 'legitimate' French government. Thanks to its military superiority and the discrete support of the other European powers, the Algiers government remains a thorn in the Paris Commune's side. The other French colonies in Asia and the Americas however, remain under the control of the Paris Commune.

The regions of the Grande Nation form a continuous area in the north and west of Africa, in addition to possessions in the Horn of Africa and the Comoros. The most important colony is Algeria, which was conquered in the 1830s. Some Algerian provinces were considered full parts of France with the white inhabitants being entitled to vote for the French parliament.

Exiled from their homeland, the French of North Africa have developed a siege mentality. The French form the upper class, dominating the natives with donned bayonet or rather "protecting the gullible savages from the Paris Commune's socialistic agents", to quote an Algerian schoolbook. Although officially it has a parliament, French-Africa is governed by a clique of military and public servants, who pass the main appointments back and forth between one another. The army, including the notorious Foreign Legion, has regained its confidence in countless battles against insurgents, and since it cannot start an invasion at home, aspires to expand the African colonies. The attempt to seize Madagascar failed (see below), but this does not stop the generals in Algiers drawing up new plans. The raid of Tunisian bandits in 1881 on the other hand, presented a welcome opportunity to invade Tunisia and annex the sultanate.

## Great Britain

As a virtual counterbalance to France, most British colonies lie in the east and south of Africa, although the British Empire also holds territories in western Africa –Nigeria, Gold Coast, and Sierra Leone – as well as various islands in the Indian Ocean.

The focus of British interests in Africa are Egypt (see below) and South Africa (see below), where vast gold and diamond deposits have been discovered. It is suspected that more natural resources lie in the neighboring territories, and politicians and industrialists, particularly Cecil Rhodes, are working to bring those deposits under British control.

Furthermore, Great Britain is currently in negotiations with Berlin for the transfer of the North Sea island Helgoland to the German Empire. In return, Germany is supposed to not intervene, if the English eventually occupy the sultanate of Zanzibar, which borders directly on German East Africa and has signed protection treaties with the German Empire.

## Portugal

It was a Portuguese explorer who first sailed around the Cape of Good Hope, and Portuguese forts once ran like a string of pearls along the African coasts. That though, is history now. Today, Lisbon's African possessions consist of some islands



in the Atlantic, Angola, and Mozambique in South Africa, and Portuguese Congo and São João Baptista de Ajudá. The latter is a fort near the city of Ouidah in West Africa and is possibly the world's smallest colony. The colonies are ruled by a tiny Creole upper class who avow themselves to Portugal, but otherwise pursue their own interests.

## The German Empire

Although a relative newcomer to the building of an empire abroad, Germany has managed to pick a few attractive cherries from the African cake. In addition to Togoland and Cameroon in West Africa, Berlin's protectorates consist of German Southwest and German East Africa, and the small Wituland, a coastal strip north east of Mombasa. German-Somaliland was abandoned in 1888.

At the moment, the situation in German East Africa is very tense. After the agents of the *Deutsche Ostafrika Gesellschaft* (DOAG) or 'German East African Association' behaved like typical squires, the furious population rose. The conflict has been raging for a year now, and the DOAG's Wissmann troop, named after the Imperial Commissioner Hermann von Wissmann, is overwhelmed with the effort required to suppress the rebellion. It has been reported in the German press that this unrest is due to insurgencies upon the part of Arabic slave merchants, and sooner or later the government will have send in regular troops to assume control of the colony.

## Spain

Spain has never owned large estates in Africa. Over the centuries, it governed several minor territories along the Mediterranean coast, of which only the small towns of Ceuta and Melilla as well as some minor islands remain today. Spain also possesses Spanish-Guinea on the equator of West Africa. At the 1884 Berlin Conference, Spain was awarded the coastal area of Western Sahara which up until then had belonged to Morocco. Right after the Spanish appropriation, the local Sahrawis began to offer resistance. In 1886, the Spanish launched an expedition that crossed the land for the first time to collect scientific facts about the region, but did not find anything interesting short of sand and grumpy tribes Berber – at least according to official Spanish statements.

## Italy

Of all the colonial powers, Italy controls the smallest estates in Africa, these being her sole colonies worldwide. They are Eritrea and Somaliland on the Horn of Africa. The reasons for their acquisition – and that of the Venusian colonies – were the large growth in the Italian population, a lack of raw materials for the Italian industry, and the desire of many Italians to leave home and emigrate. With new territories, the government in Rome hopes to deal with these problems while providing a distraction from the country's domestic problems. Whether this will work remains to be seen. Under the terms of the recently signed Treaty of Wuchale, Italy has all but turned Abyssinia into an Italian protectorate. However, this fact is only noted in the Italian version of the treaty, and the Abyssinians have yet to learn of their ill luck.

## The Ottoman Empire

The province of Tripoli is the only thing remaining of the African territories of the *Sublime Porte*. For centuries the Turkish sultans

ruled over almost entire North Africa. Local representatives ran each country in the name of the sultan, but usually did what they wanted. About 50 years ago, this autonomy was terminated and Tripoli was put on a short leash, yet Turkish administrators still only govern the coastal regions.

The South is controlled by the Senussi, an order practicing an ascetic-mystical form of the Islam. The order has numerous followers in the whole Islamic world, but its center lies in the eastern Sahara, where the Senussi maintain a network of zawiyas, or Islamic schools. The order's leader, *Sayyid Muhammad al-Mahdi*, could be characterized as the king of the Sahara, but recently received a visit from the local Turkish pasha, who politely warned him against developing ambitions beyond his means. How serious that warning is, remains to be seen. The Ottoman Empire has been crumbling for decades, and in the distant Constantinople the remote province sits at the bottom of a long list of priorities.

## The Congo Free State

The Congo Free State is not a colony in the traditional sense. Instead it belongs to a corporation, the *Association Internationale du Congo* (AIC), whose sole stockholder is the King of the Belgians, Leopold II.

In the early 1880s, the pioneer Henry Morton Stanley acquired huge areas in Central Africa on behalf of Leopold II. Leopold promised to allow free trade through the Congo basin and to fight the slave trade among other things. With these promises, he convinced the participants of the Berlin Conference of his only having the best interests of the Congolese in mind, and his claim to the Congo was accepted as part of the General Act of the Berlin Conference. The State of Congo is divided into provinces which in turn are broken down into stations. Each station is governed by a white administrator, who is responsible for the district turning sufficient profit. To ensure this, high quotas of ivory, rubber, and so on, need to be fulfilled and these are imposed upon the natives. If the quotas are not met, the natives are punished for their 'laziness'. The AIC's armed troops, the *Force Publique*, act here without mercy.

The east of the Congo State is still controlled by slave traders, their presence sadly posing a lesser threat to the natives in comparison with their new corporate master. The future will show if the *Force Publique* can hold their own against the traders' troops.

Outsiders know only a little about the events in the Congo, since most visitors only get as far as the Port of Boma. The only ones allowed into the country's interior are AIC employees or employees of companies that have rented land from the AIC. However, rumors have begun to circulate about the vile abuses of the natives at the hands of the AIC and the *Force Publique*. Up until now, nobody takes the rumors seriously, although eventually some adventurer might ask himself, why the AIC exports rubber and ivory, but only imports ammunition and shackles?

## African States

*"This vast continent, though associated from the dawn of civilization with traditions and mysteries of the most stimulating kind, has remained until recently one of the least known."*

*Encyclopædia Britannica, 9th edition, 1889*

Africa is a patchwork of the widest variety of cultures – in Germany's colony Cameroon alone, 200 languages are spoken.



Many of these different cultures have been connected for centuries by a network of trade routes that span the entire continent. With so much of the continent still to be explored, these routes are the best choice for the adventurer wanting to make new discoveries and a name for himself in Darkest Africa.

## Abyssinia

The last few decades have been a turbulent time for this Christian nation in East Africa. In 1855, *Tewodros* declared himself emperor and began to modernize the country, though not without some defiance from his subjects. Following his death, the provincial lords disputed the imperial line of succession until *Yohannes IV* prevailed. In March 1889, he died in the battle against Mahdists from the Sudan, and the current Negus Nagast, or King of Kings, *Menelik II*, seized power. In his first official act, Menelik moved the empire's capital to Addis Ababa and summoned foreign specialists to help modernize Abyssinia.

The country's future is uncertain, surrounded as it is on all sides by unfriendly neighbors who covet its lands. To the north, east, and south lie European colonies, while to the west, Islamist Mahdists wait for the opportunity to bring their jihad into the country. Worse, the recently signed Treaty of Wuchale has turned the country into an Italian protectorate, though as yet, the government in Addis Ababa is unaware of this.

## Egypt

For centuries Egypt was a province of the Ottoman Empire. That changed, when in 1798 Napoleon's Egyptian expedition marched in and was forced to withdraw following defeat by the British in 1801. In the chaos that ensued after the French withdrawal, an Albanian officer in Ottoman services named *Mehmet Ali*, took his place on the governor's throne. He and his successor started to modernize Egypt on their own account, which besides the expansion of the irrigation system, the construction of numerous schools, and the creation of a modern industry, included the support for the construction of the Suez Canal, which opened in 1869. A modernized army helped to expand Egyptian territory up to the Nile into the Sudan and east into Syria. As a result, the khedives of Egypt grew increasingly powerful during the 19th century until they finally surpassed their Ottoman sovereigns.

The success had a price – a colossal mountain of debt that piled up in the banks of Europe. Those investors exercised more and more control over Egypt, until in 1882, Egyptian officers revolted in order to drive the foreigners from their land. After that, the British invaded and following a short and unilateral war, occupied the land. Although officially, Egypt is still ruled by an Ottoman governor, in truth he is the British consul's puppet. The Egyptians grow increasingly dissatisfied with this state of affairs.

## Equatoria

Originally, Equatoria was the most southern province of Egyptian controlled Sudan, and Egypt still regards it as such. In 1878, *Emin Pasha* was appointed the province's governor by the khedive. Emin Pasha, a German doctor named Schnitzer who converted to the Islam, fought the slave trade, reorganized Equatoria, constructed roads, and noticeably increased the people's living conditions.

The Mahdist Revolt isolated Equatoria from Egypt, leaving the province to its own resources. Despite Emin Pasha, and his experienced soldiers, having been resupplied by air ship several

times, information about the current state of the province is scarce. Several different expeditions are in the race to reach Equatoria, the prize being to the one who saves Emin Pasha.

## The Boer Republics

During the Napoleonic Wars, the British occupied the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope. The local Boers were disgruntled, especially when the British started to treat the native inhabitants as humans. Many Boers left the Cape colony to lead a life "willed by God", as white landlords over black servants. They founded multiple colonies in the north, but only the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and the Orange Free State prevailed.

When the Cape Colony's population grew, its territory was expanded. In 1877, the British found a reason to annex the RSA. Three years later the Boers revolted and a war broke out, lasting until 1881. In 1884, the British recognized the RSA's independence, but a year later, the largest gold deposits in the world were found in the RSA.

The discovery caused a gold fever similar to that in California in 1849. However, anyone expected to be able to dig the gold out of the ground with his bare hands would be disappointed -- modern mines had to be constructed in order to get at the gold. The lucrative jobs in the mines are reserved for whites, while the hazardous dirty work -- each year mining disasters cause hundreds of deaths -- is done by black migrant workers, who when not in the mines, are penned together in ghettos outside them.

White immigrants continue to pour into the country, hoping for quick riches. Nowadays, these so-called Uitlanders, mainly from England, are nearly as numerous as the Boers, making the latter nervous. The RSA government is thinking about limiting the civil rights and privileges held by all white men to white Boers only.

In comparison, the agrarian Orange Free State fostered good relations with the Cape Colony following its independence. However, these relations have deteriorated following the inauguration of the new president, F.W. Reitz, who almost immediately concluded a military alliance with the RSA. The British are not at all pleased about this, especially given that political groups demanding the unification of all of the Boers in South Africa are currently being formed. Nor are they pleased about the alleged sighting of German zeppelins above the Transvaal which is causing further tensions in the Cape Colony and London.

## Liberia

Liberia is the counterpart to the Boer Republics. In the 1820s, the American Colonization Society began settling freed slaves from the USA on West Africa's Atlantic shore. The freed slaves brought American technology and culture with them, developed the land and proclaimed their independence in 1847. Over the years, they were joined by freed slaves from the Caribbean and captured slave ships. All those people were settled in Liberia, because "after all, blacks are from Africa", but one could not return them to their true homeland - or would not.

Today, the ex-slaves form the upper class and govern the country. They mainly live in the coastal cities while the natives live in the outback. Relations between the two groups are tense, primarily because the natives have no civil rights. In response, upper class families are starting to accommodate and educate children from native families. Only time will show, if that will unite the land.



## Madagascar

The world's third biggest island is officially governed by Queen *Ranavalona III*. The man behind the throne is Prime Minister *Rainilaiarivony*, who is also her husband. He was also married to the queen's two predecessors, which explains why he has been prime minister for 25 years.

'Raini' is a gifted politician. During his years in office he has, among other things, ensured the construction of schools and the foundation of the first industries. After the construction of the Suez Canal, he raised a modern army, expecting the Europeans to knock at the door soon. He was not be mistaken. The French occupied some ports and set out to conquer the remaining island, but had a tough time against the climate and Madagascan resistance. Eventually, the French forced the Madagascan to sign a contract that made the island a French protectorate. Ever since, the French have been working to complete the conquest of the island while Raini looks for a way to get rid of them.

## Mahdia

In the early 1870s, a preacher named *Muhammad Ahmad* began travelling across the Egyptian-controlled Sudan preaching the return of the Islam. He gathered more and more followers, who named him Mahdi – the rightly guided. When the British invaded Egypt in 1882 (see above), the Mahdists used the chaos and proclaimed a theocracy in the Sudan, at the head of which stood the Mahdi.

The Mahdists swiftly conquered territory after territory, gaining ever more supporters. The Mahdists seemed invincible, especially after they lay siege to Khartoum in 1884, trapping the British governor Gordon inside for almost a year. Practically against his will, Gordon was evacuated at the last minute by aerial flyer as the Mahdists stormed the city and the last remnants of the garrison fell under their assault. Muhammad Ahmad died a few months later. While still alive, he had named three caliphs as his successor, but the matter of succession is still not settled. Usually, this would be a good opportunity for the British to invade and clean up the mess, but several issues preclude it. On the one hand, the troops necessary for such an expedition are needed at different locations such as Afghanistan or on Mars; on the other hand, it would unite the caliphs immediately. Besides, the Mahdists captured thousands of modern rifles, numerous cannons, and several steamboats. They are currently putting up a telegraphing system. Nobody wants to think about what would happen, if one of the caliphs got his hands on an aerial flyer.

## Morocco

In the 1830s, 50 years ago, Morocco supported the Algerian resistance against the French invasion and invoked the Kingdom of France's wrath. Following a crushing defeat, Morocco lost parts of its territory to Algeria, causing unrest among its population. That discontent strengthened when the former sultan adopted a modernization program, which had to be financed by new taxes and foreign loans. The European investors demanded concessions, which further intensified the Moroccan rage, especially when big parts of the Atlantic coast were occupied by Spain. The current Sultan *Mulay Hassan's* situation is pretty tense – he rules over the cities, but the Berbers in the countryside grow increasingly defiant. It is unclear however, how long he can play the Europeans against each other.

## The Rabih Empire

*Rabih az-Zubayr ibn Fadl Allah*, also known as *Rabih*, is considered the African Napoleon. Born in the Sudan, he served in the Egyptian army as a young man, before signing on as the lieutenant of a slave trader. When the slave trader was imprisoned and the slave trader's son executed, Rabih fled south with several hundred men. In the last decade he has carved out his own empire, which is now spanning from the south shore of Lake Chad to the Mahdian border.

Rabih's power is primarily based on the hundreds of mercenaries he has in his employ, all being rewarded for their services with loot, primarily in the form of slaves. Rabih finances himself with raids and the slave trade, residing in a palace in Dikoa, south of Lake Chad, together with numerous women, slaves, and mercenaries.

## Adventures on the Continent

Africa is ripe for development, and such development may need the special skills of adventurers – which may garner them special assignments. Be it for Queen and Country, King and fatherland, a company's profit, or the Church, someone has to provide the wild and unchristian natives with the blessings of civilization. It is not an easy task – fever, wild animals, a murderous climate, and the difficult, sometimes even murderous humans are the biggest threats. Whether the adventurers are tasked to construct a hospital, establish a plantation, or hunt slave traders, they do it with the certainty that they are bringing the light of civilization to the Dark Continent.

Or perhaps the player characters would rather fight against the white invaders? Naturally they talk about progress and civilization, but essentially they just want to squeeze as much money as possible from the land, while the Africans are treated worse than animals.

The whites have two advantages, making a fight against them difficult: their modern weapons and the Africans' quarreling. It is possible to counter the first, but the second seems to be an insurmountable obstacle. Or does one of the characters have what it takes to unite Africa and chase the whites back into the sea?

## Zanzibar

For over 1,000 years, Arabic merchants have been visiting East Africa. 200 years ago they were joined by the sultans of Oman. When the market here grew increasingly important, the sultan even relocated his court to Zanzibar in 1840. After his death, the empire was divided between his sons. One received Oman and the Arabic regions, the other Zanzibar and the African territories.

For most of the 19th century, Zanzibar was the world's largest slave market. Estimates suggest that 20,000 or more



unfortunates were sold on Zanzibar's market every year. In 1873, the English convinced the sultan to prohibit the slave trade, even though the possession of slaves is still allowed. Most are owned by the Arabic upper class who employ thousands to work their plantations, growing grow cloves and sugar cane. Nor does this mean that the trade in slaves stops, it is too lucrative a business for traders to stop. One of the few African power plants stands on the island of Zanzibar. It provides power for the lighthouse and the sultan's palace.

## Asia

*"He who asserts his own views is not distinguished."*

Laozi

For Europeans, Asia is the 'Dragon' among the continents, unpredictable and dangerous, but above all mythical and ripe with legends. As the largest continent, it covers almost a third of the world's complete landmass, managing to dwarf Europe next to it. European colonialism has been shaping the continent's fortunes since the year 1500, at first to bring home highly prized spices, but later on every other exploitable treasure that could be exported back to Europe. As a result, large parts of Asia are in possession of the colonial powers by the end of the 19th century.

## Western Asia

### The Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Empire touches Europe and Africa in the Mediterranean region. Once, it reigned over almost all of Western Asia and North Africa, but by the 19th century it has lost wide swathes of its former territories. During the second half of the 19th century, the attempts of the so-called "sick man of the Bosphorus" to reorganize itself, and to effectively reform the ailing state structures with a new justice and tax system, were in vain. Some reforms were carried out, most notably non-Muslims within the empire being given similar rights as Muslims. The country also opened itself towards Europe, despite the European powers annexing parts of her former territories – in 1881, Tunisia is seized by France, and in 1882 the former Ottoman Egypt is occupied by Great Britain. Frequent territorial conflicts with Greece also lead the Ottoman Empire losing yet more land.

The war against Russia in 1878 turned out to be a disaster for the Ottoman Empire. During the following international peace negotiations, the Berlin Congress, the European states openly interfered in domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire. From the inside, the empire is shattered; the ruling elites under Sultan *Abdülhamid II* pursue a stern, reactionary course and fight all of the population's democratic ambitions. Furthermore, the once fantastically rich Ottoman Empire is bankrupt and dependent on European money.

Since the Berlin Congress, *Abdülhamit II* has been relying more and more on the German Empire. With the support of German experts, the empire's budget is supposed to be straightened out and the Ottoman army is to be restructured.

## Persia

In the mid-19th century, Persia had to forfeit vast parts of its territory after wars against Russia and the British Empire.

Following that debacle, the ruling family of the Kadscharen dynasty was confronted with domestic problems, primarily religious conflicts as it struggled to bring about economic and social reforms.

The Shah of Persia, *Nâser ad-Dîn Shâh*, has visited Europe several times, each time more amazed by the technology he saw there. No longer interested in reforming Persia, he does want to modernize the country. Rather than modernizing Persia through its own resources, he has pursued a policy of granting concessions to foreign individuals and companies. As a result, British, German, and Austrian industrialists have managed to secure vast amounts of influence in Persia. Since 1880, with the help of Austrian and Russian military, a Persian army has been formed and trained, to counter any civil unrest. Foreign funds and the army help the Shah to sustain his autocratic reign, despite mounting criticism.

## Caucasus

Almost 700 Miles long and running from west-northwest to east-southeast, the high mountains of Eurasia have often been the site of ethnic conflicts and a pawn of the great powers. Since the Late Antiquity, the 50 or so races populating the Caucasus have been consistently under foreign domination. In the middle of the 18th century, Russia conquers the region inch by inch from the Ottoman Empire and is involved in skirmishes with Persia time and again. The Crimean War (1853-1856) was the climax and turning point in those decades-long conflicts. Although the Russians consistently work to strengthen their hold on the region, it would take only the slightest of reasons or impulses to reignite the Caucasian tribes' old demands for independence.

## South Asia

### (British) India

Extending over the entire Indian subcontinent and parts of Southeast Asia, India is the British Empire's 'Jewel in the Crown'. Initially, the empire exerted its political influence over the subcontinent indirectly, leaving the East India Company in charge of representing the crown's economic and political interests. Following the upheaval of the Mutiny of 1857, the British Empire stripped the East India Company of all its rights and made British India a crown colony. Roughly 60% of the crown colony, divided into several provinces, is under direct British control. The remaining country consists of over 500 'princely states', each ruled by a native 'raja' or 'nawab', but typically administered by the British. In 1858, to reflect the positions' new found status as Queen Victoria's representative over these princelings, the Governor-General of India was given the additional title of viceroy. The significance of the crown colony would be recognized in 1876 when Queen Victoria took the title 'Empress of India'.

British dominion over India does not go unchallenged. Time and again the peoples on the crown colony's frontiers cause problems. Many strive for independence, while on the colony's northern border with Afghanistan, the empire is regularly faced by trouble stirred up by Russian interference in Kabul. Domestically, a strong voice for India's independence was born with the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. With the British Empire focusing its main attention towards space, its critics claim that it has become too inactive in



the crown colony, both economically and militarily. It is only a question of time until British India vigorously pursues its demands for self-governance.

## Tibet

The Tibetans live in a feudal system led by the Llamas, spiritual teachers and religious leaders who reside in large monasteries and control the majority of the country and most of its economic activities. Residents on the monastery's estates are subject to various duties and have only few civil rights. There is not educational system outside of the monasteries. The land is isolated and only trades with India, Turkmenistan, and China. British attempts to gain a foothold in Tibet have so far failed. China however, is permitted to station troops in Tibet. The Dalai Lama is regarded the head of the country, although his influence fluctuates depending upon the current incumbent's political acumen.

## Nepal

The Kingdom of Nepal has officially been a British protectorate since the beginning of the 19th century. The British Empire has been authorized to trade with Nepal and to hire Nepali auxiliary troops, the so-called Gurkhas. In domestic affairs, the kingdom maintains its independence. This did not even change in the middle of the 19th century when a *coup* deprived the king of power and made the respective prime minister the sole ruler. After the coup, Nepal isolated itself from the outside world until the end of the 19th century, remaining content to maintain friendly, albeit deliberately reserved relations with the British.

# East Asia

## China

The Qing Dynasty has ruled over the Chinese Empire since 1644. Since the beginning of the 19th century, China has faced unrest at home and economic interference by foreign powers that it proved unable to fend off. In particular, Britain was able to expand its economic influence during the two Opium Wars (1839-42 and 1856-60) and in turn, France, Russia, and the USA also established their spheres of influence in China. Through unequal contracts with foreign economic partners, almost always to the detriment of China, the Chinese economy finally collapsed. Mass poverty and several riots, which the Chinese empire could only quell through foreign help, were the result. Thus China increasingly resembled a colony.

As a result, the recent emperors of the Qing Dynasty have been forced to accept too much loss of face over the years, and because Confucian rule mainly rests on the emperor's reputation, the people of China have lost much of their faith in the imperial court. Thus, the two millennia old Chinese Empire, domestically unstable and dependent on outside help, is suffering from a severe crisis. How long this will last no one can say, but since her 'gwai lo', so-called partners have turned their attention towards the sky, it is only a matter of time until the China of old can re-emerge on the international stage and once again dominate the whole Asian region. When this happens, the old remark of the French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, "When China awakes, the world will tremble", will gain a new meaning.

Earth





## A Guest of the Asian Dragon

The lucrative and long established trade routes via Africa to India and China make travel to Asia easily available and inexpensive. Many European and American merchant companies maintain their businesses in Asia, usually based in enclaves in the bigger Asian cities where foreigners steadfastly practice their western lifestyle. Despite the legendary reputation for Asian hospitality, strangers are treated with reserve.

It is rare for the average Asian man or woman to speak a western language. Communication with the colonial powers or trade prospects happens through the help of an interpreter, who sometimes relays the content of conducted discussions to the local ruler.

The political and economic situation is strained in most of the continent's countries. The public is often needy and regards its sovereigns only as puppets of the West. As a result, even minor misunderstandings and quarrels between Asians and foreigners can create turmoil, undermining existing power structures. Accordingly, many rulers dislike Europeans or Americans roaming about without the 'protection' of their government. Large parts of the continent remain closed to foreigners from the West, and while travel into those isolated territories might be lucrative and expand one's horizon, they are also treacherous.

## Japan

The Japanese Empire experiences profound changes under the reign of *Tennō Mutsuhito*. The ruling emperor ascended the throne on January 25th, 1868. Shortly after taking his office, Mutsuhito managed to break the influence of the military and the up until now predominant magistrate administration. Hence, the emperor could start a series of reforms, economically and militarily strengthening the country in the following years. The nation opened itself diplomatically and economically to Europe and the USA. The economic policy of the emperor led to an industrial revolution and raised Japan to Europe's level within almost 20 years. The educational system also underwent revisions. With the creation of a parliament, the country slowly transformed from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy. In a ceremony on February 11th, 1889, with foreign representatives present, the Japanese constitution was solemnly adopted. Japan is without a doubt on the brink of joining the circle of "ruling powers."

## Southeast Asia

To the north, the Southeast Asian region is isolated from China and India by a mountain chain, while it is surrounded by oceans in the east, south, and west. Distinctions are made between Mainland Southeast Asia (also known as Indochina) and Maritime Southeast Asia.

The independent monarchy of Siam is the only state in Southeast Asia not under the domination of one of the colonial powers, fulfilling the role of an ungracious buffer zone between

the British and French spheres of interest. The British Empire owns the most important port in the region, the heavily populated city of Singapore. It also rules in Malaya and has concluded contracts with the sultanate Brunei. France plays the major role in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam and quarrels over the region's control with Britain. Indonesia is a Dutch colony, while the tiny island East Timor belongs to Portugal. The Philippines are a Spanish colony, even though their population has been striving for national independence since the 1870s. The region is a political powderkeg waiting to go off when colonial interests and freedom fighters collide.

## Asia throughout the World

Even though the continent might be far away and quite exotic, Asia has left its traces in the home countries of the colonial powers. While space offers exotic luxuries for the rich, Asian products are available to less fortunate Europeans and Americans as well. Traditional Asian Remedies are especially popular with the middle class. No one really trusts in their healing power, but the consummation of balms and teas from Asia as a preventive and strengthening measurement is considered to be quite chic. British officers brought the art of acupuncture to Europe via their Asian employees. Outside of Europe though, the custom of having needles inserted into one's skin is not very popular. In addition to Asian herbs and teas, intoxicants such as opium or tobacco are also exported to the West.

Asian fashion is not taken seriously, for the men's outfits resemble women's dresses, and the women's dresses lack the fashionable finesse of Paris. The Asian art of hairdressing and make-up is much appreciated though, particularly among some young women who even show off their white painted faces in public, much to the dismay of their parents. Japanese themed wallpapers have made their way into the living rooms of the bourgeoisie, although they are manufactured and sold by European producers.

## Australia

In 1788, following the loss of its colonies in North America, Great Britain established a penal colony named Sydney. Only a few years later, after a French expedition explored Tasmania, a small island south of Australia, British settlers founded a penal colony there as well.

Australia's enormous size and its physical conditions resulted in a slow development. It would be more than 40 years before the colony would expand beyond the Blue Mountains near Sydney and decades before the interior was truly explored. Numerous expeditions failed, like the one led by *Ludwig Leichhardt* who disappeared without a trace after his second expedition in 1848. Due to the arid hinterland, new cities were only built in coastal regions.



The discovery of gold in 1851 sparked a gold rush and people from around the world poured into Australia to try their luck. For the first time, people voluntarily made the long trip to Australia and the population doubled to over a million within a few years. With the immigration, the demographic structure changed and the calls for democratic reforms grew louder and over the years, the tent camps that had originally housed the convicts evolved into smaller cities. Considering the island's popularity, 1868 the British government ceased the prisoner transports to Australia. By 1890, Australia's colonies have received a greater degree of autonomy from the British crown and their unification into a nation of its own seems imminent.

The Aborigines are not a unified people, but consist of tribes with very different customs, mainly living as hunters and gatherers. The first contacts with the British were peaceful, although many Aborigines fell sick and died of imported diseases. Due to the gold fever, more and more settlers push into their territories, desecrating holy sites and destroying hunting grounds. That in turn leads to armed conflicts, massacres, and other atrocities. For the most part, the Aborigines are poorly understood; their belief in Dreamtime especially mystifies the Europeans. As not all of the tales told by the Aborigines are meant for outsiders, it is widely believed that they are hiding treasures and other secrets within those tales.

## International Relations A brief Summary

The 1880s was a time of relative stability. There were no armed conflicts among the European states after the German-French War, and the British Empire's economic and political power determines the international landscape. Below follows a brief summary of general relations, divided by nations.

### Great Britain

The British Empire is powerful enough to get by without official allies. France is the traditional rival, while the Russian Empire is considered the natural adversary, especially after the 1885 Russian-Afghan border incident when the Russians lead a military campaign into a region contested by both countries. At the time, it was feared that war would break out. That fear has barely faded in 1889.

The Germans are generally highly appreciated, although Baron von Gruber's activities on Mars have caused tensions lately. The Japanese are deemed very able – for Orientals.

Britain was the traditional sponsor of the Belgian neutrality, but that does not include the Belgian king's private adventures in Africa and on Mars. The Americans, being Anglo-Saxon brothers, are much respected, but the country's division is viewed with concern. It is a widely shared notion that the North Americans should be able to take care of themselves pretty well, if they manage to drop their brazenness. Colonel Kitchener is said to have remarked to Edison, "You Yankees beat all creation", and this fairly well sums up the British attitude.

### France

At the beginning of the 1880s, France had no real allies, mainly due to Emperor Napoleon III's diplomatic incompetence and Bismarck's intrigues. France's defeat by Germany shattered the Second Empire, but the succeeding Paris Commune does not appear to be an improvement. If France is to regain Alsace and

Lorraine, the provinces it lost in 1871, it needs something that Germany has already successfully forged – a complex network of alliances. Since 1880 French banks have invested in Russia and, although the two nations have little in common, both are looking for allies. Diplomats in both countries hope that the beginnings of what is an informal friendship will flower into something more in 1889.

### Germany

Germany is dominated by Bismarck's strategies. The Chancellor, *Otto von Bismarck*, is an old hand in the chess game of international relations. His system consisting of alliances, threats, and actions controls the unification and preservation of the Prussian dominated German Empire. The 'Iron Chancellor' has secured allies for Germany, arranged for France to have none, capped the Balkans – a region with volcanic instability, and ensured that the British have no reason to think about the continent.

The League of the Three Emperors, which aimed to isolate France, was followed by the stronger Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1879. The ancient enmity between Prussia and Austria was broken, by drawing attention to the fragile Ottoman Sultanate in the Balkans. In 1883, the Italians joined the alliance, but that proved to be its undoing: 'Austria's ambitions overlapped with those of Russia and Italy, and Berlin had to mediate. In 1889 the alliance is on the brink of collapse and only Bismarck can hold it together.

In 1888, a new factor entered the equation, Emperor Wilhelm II. Before he took the imperial throne, it appeared as if he and Bismarck would fall out, but lately it seems as if the bone of contention – national pride and the demand for more colonies – has been buried and the new Emperor and the old Chancellor have made their peace for the time being.

### Russia

Prior to 1889, the czar had entered into a series of agreements, which in the light of later developments were in no way appropriate to its needs. Bismarck had used the fear of a revolution to convince Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia to join the League of the Three Emperors in 1873, which was renewed in 1881, and again in 1884. The alliance proved to be worthless in 1877 when the Russian victory over the Ottoman Empire was contested and it was clear, that the Russian and Austrian ambitions regarding the topic were on a collision course. It did not auger well that Austria sided with the British. Britain undoubtedly is the Russian's prime enemy, especially given the British egoistic attitude towards Central Asia; Germany's friendship seems less and less sincere; and the Japanese are a growing threat in the Far East, where Russian territories are particularly vulnerable. In light of those factors, France, although no longer a monarchy, seems a potential ally.

### America

Neither of the two North American states, the CSA and the USA, have an interest in the developments of European alliances. There is a certain degree of sympathy from the USA towards the libertarian France, allies during the revolution and donator of the Statue of Liberty which was constructed in 1886. Germany draws admiration through its power and dynamism. Britain, as the former motherland, is held in a mix of unfeigned admiration and enormous irritation. The Americans mainly regard the European states as crumbled relics of times long past, about to be crushed under their own weight.

Despite having no particular colonial interests, the North Americans still tend to effectively regard Central and South America as 'their property'. However, American traders are



everywhere, and the diplomatic relations typically proceed with an open door policy of free trade and cut-throat competition.

#### Japan

Japan wants to prove itself to the world, and with the exception of Russia, most of the other great powers look favorably upon the island state's modernization. After an incident in the 1850s when the British fleet took Kagashima under fire to "teach the Japanese a lesson" after murdering a British merchant, the British navy serves as a role model.

The Japanese have a special affinity for Germany, whose authoritarian governmental system apparently addresses similar factors within the Japanese mentality. Therefore, its political structures were a big influence for *Ito Hirobumi*, when he wrote the constitution in 1889.

#### Belgium

Under the terms of the 1839 Treaty of London, Belgium has been an "independent and completely neutral state", its neutrality guaranteed by the five signatures on the treaty. King of the Belgians, Leopold II is keen to maintain good relations with everyone, as it is expected from a man whose kingdom was the 'traditional European cockfight arena' and whose business practices would not withstand any thorough investigation.

## The Rest of the World

The Earth is considered the most advanced planet in the Solar System, nevertheless its inhabitants know less about large parts of their world than they do about the canals on Mars.

### The Oceans

The high seas lie three nautical miles off the coasts. It is practically unknown, what hides on or in them – the science of oceanography is still in its infancy. Scientists are looking for remains of the land bridges, which in the dim and distant past brought plants and animals to other continents, and for sunken legendary realms like Atlantis. The search is dangerous. Apart from storms and massive waves, some waters still have pirates, but new ships, modern submarines, and diving suits increasingly simplify the exploration of the depths.

### The Poles

It was very soon discovered, that the way to the poles was through the air. 1874 Sweden could win over Graf Zeppelin and make him contribute an airship for a polar expedition. The expedition's leader, *Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld*, was also the first human to set foot on the North Pole, during the midsummer festival of 1875. Today, the North Pole's neighboring countries maintain a few huts on the ice, which serve as starting points for their researches and explorations.

An attempt in 1883 to reach the South Pole by liftwood flyer failed. The expedition is regarded as being lost. Since then, anyone with an interest in polar research or further polar expeditions has had a miserable time of it – the other planets are of far greater scientific interest and offer greater opportunities for prestige.

At the edge of Antarctica lies Antipodia, a small station maintained by the British, from where the young lieutenant *Robert*

### The Kingdom of Hawaii

What was once a paradise now festers with civil unrest and the threat of open rebellion. Since the 1840s, white settlers have been building and running pineapple plantations, worked under menial conditions by a burgeoning workforce of Chinese immigrants. The planters founded the Hawaiian League, which fought for their interests and eventually would bring unification with the USA. In 1887, *King Kalakaua* was forced to pass a new constitution, favoring the planters and taking away voting rights for the poor and all Asians. In the same year, Pearl Harbor was made a US naval base. Just like that, the Hawaiians became a minority in their own country.

Currently the resistance comes together behind *Queen Lili'uokalani*. For now, it is satisfied with pamphlets and small acts of sabotage, but rumor has it that warriors are being trained in the island's jungles. A submarine is suspected to be behind the disappearance of several pineapple steamers, but who would make such a vehicle available to the rebels?

*Falcon Scott* wants to tackle the South Pole's conquest anew. To date however, he lacks investors for the daring venture.

## Adventurous Earth

"It is not in the city, but in the wilderness, where one gets to know a man."

*Nigerian proverb*

Many researchers have turned towards the 'new' planets and neglect the unexplored parts of Earth. Although the continents have been explored by many travelers and overflown by aerial flyers, the interiors of both Africa and South America remain practically unknown – at least to the Europeans. These remote interior regions, as well as those in Asia, offer numerous possibilities for fame and honor, or at least an opportunity to find a spectacular end.

Even the 'explored' regions present opportunity aplenty for adventure. Especially the Americas, whether it is the chance to enforce law and order in New Mexico or to construct a railway through the Andes. Either way, there is much to be done in the 'new world'.

### Mysterious Ruins

The history of America is unknown for the most part. The double continent is dotted with ruins, all raising many questions. Who built the earth mounds along the Mississippi? Where is the fabulous Vinland of which all Nordic chronicles report? Who taught the Mayas how to construct the pyramids? Where did the Incan gold disappear to? And when and where did humans first reach America? There are many mysteries and whoever finds the answers, will reap more than fame and honor. This is true for Asia and Africa, too. Both continents are covered with the remains of ancient cultures. Familiar of course, are the



Pharaohs' ruins in the Nile Valley, as are to an extent, the ruins of Zimbabwe in East Africa. Along the length of the Gambia lie hundreds of stone circles, similar to those found in parts of Europe. Nobody knows who constructed those monuments. One theory of European scholars is that a forgotten advanced, and of course, white civilization created those building at the dawn of time. Another theory holds that they are traces of alien visitors. That theory's proof might be located at the center of the Sahara. In 1881, the crew of an aerial flyer reported a giant mask, staring at the sky like the Face of Cydonia on Mars. The discovery has not yet been confirmed. A French expedition, set out in 1882 to find the mask, but were misled and massacred by the Tuareg. Further, who knows what is concealed underneath the Nemrut Dagi or the Borobudur ruins, what the Indian jungles will reveal, and why the inhabitants of Nan Madol have legends of men in flying ships who left their stone relics behind for reasons unknown.

## Mysterious Peoples

American trappers describe a tribe of blonde 'Vikings' supposedly living in Labrador's forests and calling the neighboring Native Americans, 'Skraelings'. Similarly, sailors disembarking at Borneo's coasts, have made reports about an 'advanced white civilization'. In the expanses of the Amazon live plenty of tribes that have yet to make contact with modern society. One of those tribes, the Icamiabas, consists of warlike women who only meet with men when they want children. Similar accounts exist in Africa. At the Niger's upper reaches, people are said to live in villages which stick to high rock faces like swallow nests. There also is talk about a 'fair-skinned' community, reputed to be a forgotten Roman colony somewhere in the Dark Continent's interior. On one of his expeditions, Rabih supposedly encountered an enemy who inflicted a stinging defeat on him. If an unknown power, capable of withstanding modern weaponry, actually resides in the Southern Sahara, it will be of great interest to the colonial powers.

Then there are rumors about the white Goddess of Darfur, who allegedly rules the tribes of Western Mahdia. If this goddess is truly real, it raises certain questions. Has she something to do with the 'Roman colony' mentioned above, or is she a survivor of the Khartoum massacre? Perhaps someone should go and find out...

## Mysterious Nature

When it comes to their flora and fauna, Asia and Africa are full of surprises. The forests of Central Africa are inhabited by antelopes as small as cats. A kind of zebra, called okapi by the natives, is also rumored to live there. Similarly, it is rumored that the Mokele Mbembe dwells in the Congo's tributaries, the local pygmies' description indicating it to be some kind of saurian. Whether in fact a saurian species survived here from Earth's past, or if a Venusian dinosaur has been released in Africa's interior – and if so, by whom and when, is currently the subject of spirited debate.

Africa is of course, home to the old legend concerning the elephant graveyard. It is said, that elephants who feel death approaching, travel to a special place, where they can die in peace. Countless adventurers have taken off to find that graveyard – so far without success. Some never returned...

Several of the Indonesian islands are rumored to be home to giant animals, or at least, deadly insects. The Australian fauna

consistently poses new riddles as well. Many animals appear to be hybrids of different species, and due to their way of life, constantly evade focused observation. Unwary settlers in Australia also die of snake bites, the toxicity of which surprises even experienced zoologists.

Of course one does not have to travel far away from Europe to hunt for mysterious creatures. Scotland's Loch Ness monster or the giant squid, allegedly roaming the seven seas, are only two examples.

## Minorities

*"I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race."*

**Cecil Rhodes**

*"Aliens! Pha! I can still live with those arrogant red snouts, even if with a heavy heart. But ugly, talking lizards? Enough is enough!"*

**Gnoopho Spuumaani, dock worker from Parhoon.**

Throughout history and wherever they have settled, people have thought themselves superior to their neighbors. Humans of the 19th century are no exception, and neither are some Canal Martians, referring haughtily and pretentiously to their ancient culture. Some races are vain in regards to their superiority and consider themselves the crown of creation. Thus all other groups are of secondary importance at most. Those 'others' stand much lower in the pecking order, especially from a European and American perspective.

### The Dear Neighbors

Each nation has the tendency to believe, that it is the biggest, the most powerful, the most magnificent, the noblest, and so forth, country of them all. To keep it that way, sabers are occasionally to be rattled – if not actually drawn.

England is labeled as that 'perfidious Albion', known for immediately breaking concluded agreements, if it sees an advantage in so doing. The Paris Commune is a stronghold of socialism and immorality. Germany is home to beer-drinking monocle wearers, whose industrial mania and strong work ethic threatens the prosperity of other countries.

### Women

In none of the world's countries do women have voting rights for a national parliament. In some countries, such as United Kingdom, Sweden, and Austria, they are allowed to participate in local elections, but even in such cases, only certain women are allowed to vote. In many countries, women are not permitted to study, if they are, then the permitted subjects are limited. Most of the time, they are practically under their husband's guardianship and because it is expected that each woman at some point will become a good wife and mother, she is not provided with any special education. Becoming a governess is the only viable career opportunity for middle class women, those from humble backgrounds work either as maids or in a factory under alarming conditions.

### The Poor

While poverty was previously more like a stroke of fate, and the poor – it being a Christian duty – were helped, that attitude has radically changed over time. Now, poverty is considered to be self-inflicted, and the poor are deemed lazy and morally weak.

Social Darwinism offers an excuse for that opinion – proficient people make their own success and pass on the fruits of



their labor to their offspring, which 'proves' that the rich are better. Since the rich are 'better' from the get-go, they should not deal with poor people. Which is the rich and the poor practically live in different worlds.

The state and the Church help the poor with small charities, but those are meagre at best and are meant to persuade them to improve their situation themselves. Anyone who refuses to work usually ends up in the workhouse, where he is expected to 'learn' to work. In Germany alone, there are currently over 16,000 people living in such institutions.

### Different Skin Colors

According to popular opinion, the people from Earth were divided into different races, all provided with characteristic properties. The white race counts as the best, the smartest, and the noblest, therefore dominating all the others. Since the 'savages' and 'heathens' are considered 'uncivilized', many whites see it as their duty to take them under their wings.

Humans with different skin colors are roughly divided into three classes. First of all, there is the noble savage, who proudly lives in harmony with nature, just like his ancestors. An especially noble savage can definitely become a friend or even a blood brother to a white man. Noble savages know their place and do not wish to be treated like 'civilized humans'. Then, there are the protégées. They thankfully accept the white man's rule and supremacy who looks upon them as immature children, requiring the whites' leadership. For this, they are even allowed to carry their master's luggage during the safari.

Finally, there are the barbarians. A barbarian is so stubborn, he dares to resist against the white man's rule. In the best case, he is lazy and naughty. In the worst case, he seeks to gain dominance over the white man. The black barbarian often is a slave trader, also probably a cannibal. The Asian barbarian is inscrutable and ruthless. All barbarians are cruel and devious.

### Traditional scapegoats

Every society has groups that it makes into scapegoats, because the minority cannot defend itself. Oftentimes, this is tolerated by those in power or authority, so that the population's majority can blow off steam instead of looking for the real reasons behind the grievances.

The role of the social doormat is known everywhere in the world, be it the Jews or Gypsies in the west, the untouchables in India, or the Buraku in Japan.

## A Better World?

Even though part of humanity has those opinions, there are enough people fighting that attitude. In Europe, many humans who reject the idea of the colonialism can be found and instead fight for the fair treatment of humans within the colonies.

In North America, whites allow black slaves to flee and risk their lives by doing so. Not only socialists and churchmen demand more rights for ordinary people. In Germany, businessmen like Krupp or Siemens support their workers with voluntary social insurances or industrial residential centers and so help to ensure their employees' loyalty.

Everywhere, also in Germany, many people take a stand against the anti-Semitism.

For decades, women worldwide have been fighting for their rights. Most by political means, but some leave it to their deeds to show what a woman is capable of.

## Anti-Semitism

*"Well you know, the anti-Semitism is a great means of agitation to move up in politics; but once you are up there, it is useless, because it is a rabble sport!"*

**Karl Lueger (1844 - 1910), Austrian delegate**

For centuries, the Jews have been playing the role of a scapegoat in European culture.

Since time immemorial, Jews were forbidden from owning land and practicing many professions. Therefore, they were forced to survive through means typically stigmatized as unchristian, such as lending money.

Industrialization changed a lot of things. Tasks opened up in the new companies, which needed the traditional Jewish virtues like education and flexibility. Christians, wanting to profit from the new possibilities were shocked to find out that they suddenly were surpassed by members of the despised minority. Many people did not like that, and several politicians and arsonists jumped on the bandwagon to promote their own goals.

Internationally, anti-Semitism is on the rise, but is still far from dominating society. In England, the Jews are tolerated, but considered to be the backers of German industry, threatening the British prosperity. After the death of Alexander II, anti-Jewish riots erupted in Russia, which were tolerated by the government. Since then, the government has intensified its anti-Semitic politics, forcing many Jews to immigrate. Russia's loss is America's gain.

In Germany, where the Jews have been fully emancipated since the empire's foundation, associations currently evolving into anti-Semitic parties are forming. In the empire, this anti-Semitism is divided into two camps. The first is religious – "They are no Christians!", while the second is racist – "They are no Germans!". For many, anti-Semitism is socially acceptable, but at least as many reject it.

So what if your hero belongs to a minority and does not want to raise his hat in front of every stuck-up prig? For a better life, he could try to deny his nature or origin. That would be a small, embarrassing **Secret** (see page 176), and his life would be shaped by the constant fear of discovery. Or he might as well decide to "show them all" and to settle the score with those who despise him. In game terms that would mean the motivation **Revenge** (see page 145) or an **Obsession** (see page 176).

The age of steam and electrification is a time of change, where with discipline, ambition, and a bit of luck one can make his mark – and a fortune. However, fine society would then not only despise the character, but loathe him, for having the impudence to be successful without his ancestors being of 'noble blood'.



He can also strive to change society and make the world better place, so that all humans can breathe more easily. Whether or not he succeeds, it is the attempt that makes him a true hero.

## Remarkable Women

The traditional picture of the Victorian woman presents us with an image of frailty and timidity – an oppressed group, tightly laced into a corset, in a sternly respectable second place behind the man. There were however, women unwilling to submit to those conventions, and many more who were hiding a spirit of inner strength, vision, and adventure under their outward elegant grace. They are exceptions and inspirations, or admired paragons for other women – and of course all female player characters.

The women presented here are British, except for the American journalist Elizabeth Cochrane.

### Elizabeth ‘Nellie Bly’ Cochrane

The American Elizabeth Cochrane (1864-1922), already an ace reporter for the *New York World* by the age of 22, had a reputation for courage and determination. She had written an exposé featuring New York’s Blackwell Island Insane Asylum by successfully faking a mental illness to infiltrate the place. In 1889, she set out to beat the record set by Jules Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days* and completed the voyage without the use of liftwood within 72 adventurous days.

### Beatrice Potter Webb

Beatrice Potter Webb (1858-1943) was born into a class that “habitually gave orders”. The daughter of a wealthy businessman, she was briefly courted by the young aspiring politician Joseph Chamberlain. Through her association with the Trades Union and Cooperative movements, she started to interest herself in radical social reform. In 1892, Miss Potter married the Fabian socialist Sidney Webb, after which the couple spent their honeymoon in Glasgow, studying Trades Union records. Together, they became influential advocates of reform, founding the London School of Economics as well as *The New Statesman* magazine.

The Webbs presented their plans for a better world through a stream of books and articles, in which Beatrice often referred to the British expansion into the Solar System as “humbug” and

“sheer tommyrot designed to divert the interest of the proletariat from its legitimate concerns.”

### Mary Kingsley

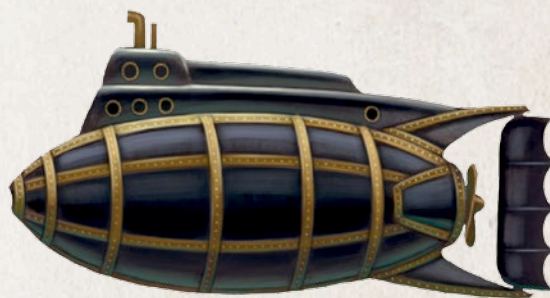
Mary Kingsley (1862-1900), a classic 30-year old Victorian maiden, took off to paddle down the crocodile-infested rivers of West Africa in a canoe, after the death of her sick parents. Two best-selling books demonstrate her knowledge and authority, revealing her compassion and understanding for the African peoples. In her books, she also opposes the expansion of British crown rule. During the Second Boer War, while tending Boer prisoners-of-war, Miss Kingsley died of enteric fever.

### Ethel St. Clair Grimwood

Ethel St. Clair Grimwood (1867-1928) was the beautiful young wife of a British political agent in Imphal, the capital of the remote protectorate of Manipur. In March of 1891, the leaders of a revolt abducted and murdered the British senior political and military officials in Imphal, including Ethel’s husband Frank. The surviving lower ranking officers of the British garrison proved incapable of leading the troops, and so Ethel, “dressed in a white silk blouse, black patent leather shoes, and a long, blue skirt,” led the small column of loyal Sepoys through the steaming jungles and on a climb of 3000 feet across the mountains to safety. Later, the troop’s officers were dishonorably discharged while Ethel, hailed “the heroine of Manipur” by the *Illustrated London News*, was awarded the Order of the Royal Red Cross and granted a pension for life.

### Frances “Fanny” Isabella Duberly

Frances Duberly (1829-1903) was the wife of a captain in the 8th Hussars. Vivacious and witty, she became a ‘celebrity’ of the British army in the Crimea. She was indeed the only officer’s wife to stay there, riding Lord Cardigan’s horse and being an observer at the Charge of the Light Brigade. In 1857, Mrs. Duberly accompanied the regiment to India, and marched 1,800 miles side by side with the Rajputana column. She wrote to her sister: “They say, there is plenty of fighting to be done. I hear ladies are not permitted to travel further than Deesa. In that case, I shall stain my face and adopt the Hindu caftan and turban. I won’t stay behind.” At Gwalior, she rode with the Hussars in a charge against the mutinying Sepoys. The rest of her life passed quietly. In 1896, she complained to a nephew, “I cannot stand dullness for long.”





# Luna

*"People 're flyin' ter Mars. People 're flyin' ter Venus. People 're flyin' ter Mercury, but nobody ever flies ter the bloody Moon. Although it's so much closer ter the chuffin' Earf. Why do they fly aw the way into space and not start wif the Moon? I don't get it."*

**Elsie Dulbottom, schoolgirl from the East End, 1888**

## Luna - Planet Facts

Diameter: approx. 2,160 miles

Circumference: approx. 6,786 miles

Gravity: 16% of the earth's gravity

## A Survey of the Moon

The Earth's closest neighbor, circling persistently at a distance of 300,000 miles, has to date been far more elusive than the much more remote worlds of Mars and Venus. Ether navigators have been put to test merely setting their vessels down on a world with no atmosphere, and every indication has suggested that Luna can offer no particular treasures or resources to the ambitious Earthmen, who raced past it in search of wealthier worlds. Telescopic observations from the Earth have been confirmed by the first-hand investigations of scientists wishing to unlock the doors of knowledge with Edison's wondrous key – Luna is a barren world without atmosphere or water.

Luna always faces the Earth with the same side, and the other cannot be observed from Earth. Luna is a rock sphere with a surface area of 14.5 million square miles, which roughly corresponds to the size of Asia. Its terrain, as can be seen from Earth, is mostly mountainous and covered with craters. It seems to be an accurate conjecture that they were caused by meteor impacts over time. The gravity on the surface of this tiny world only amounts to one sixth that of the Earth, allowing for incredible acrobatics for those willing to brave the Ether in specially adapted suits. Another discovery made by human visitors are the giant dust seas, some of which are so big that they could swallow up an entire ether flyer. In other areas, round holes in the surface make for an interesting riddle; American geologist Professor James D. Dana presumes them to be sub-lunar caves, but his German colleague Doctor Harry Rosenbusch opposes this view, maintaining that the holes developed through erosion by chemical processes.

## Navigational Pitfalls

Ether flyers used for trade between Earth, Mars, and Venus commonly take advantage of the atmospheres of those planets to get from orbit to the surface. Both liftwood and hydrogen help make the vessel 'lighter than air', so it can use the atmosphere as a buoyancy medium, either for settling to the surface, or for rising to orbit. Luna however, has no atmosphere that could propel the vessels, rendering hydrogen useless. Only liftwood keeps its ef-

fect. Due to the small distance between Earth and Luna and the high acceleration of the ether propeller, which allows for a speed of several million miles per day and is therefore hardly sensitive enough for precise manoeuvres, only the best pilots will even attempt a landing on a vacuum world such as Luna.

## Earthmen on Luna

Luna was first visited by Sir William Otterbein, in an ether flyer designed by himself and his Italian assistant, Luigi Piachetti. This undertaking was financed by Otterbein's estates and by industrial investors in London hoping to find an inexpensive source of iron ore. Otterbein managed to land his flyer in the Mare Imbrium without serious damage. He and his assistant exited the ship, only to realize that Luna was afflicted by 'Moonquakes'; that the surface, at least in the 'seas', is dusty and difficult to traverse; that the gravity is quite low; and that there is no atmosphere. After their return trip to Earth, the analysis of several samples revealed them to be almost barren of any useful materials, and Otterbein's industrial investors withdrew their support. He never returned to Luna. Others did however, among them Brian Masterly of Great Britain, the Davies Brothers of Philadelphia, and Vladimir Tereshkov of Russia. In the name of the Tsar, Tereshkov undertook a total of five journeys to Luna, the last of which he boarded in 1887 – never to return.

All scientific data gathered until today have confirmed the suspicion that Luna is of little value. This means that there are no permanent establishments on Luna, and by 1889, visits there are extremely infrequent.

## Rumors and Secrets

Occasional examinations of the Lunar surface revealed that there were entrances to the subterranean – or, more properly, sub-lunar – grottoes and caverns. A particular sensation was caused when some scientists announced that these caves had once been – and might still be – the dwelling places of unknown life forms. Approximately a mile beneath the surface, the gravity suddenly rises to almost double of that on the surface, and even traces of a breathable atmosphere are present. Deeper still, the scientists discovered a ramified cave system inhabited by primitive animals and plant species not unlike fungi on Earth.

Rumors about hidden treasures, large deposits of diamonds, or even the existence of so-called Selenites, or Moon Men, have been circulating among ether pilots for years. To date, no one has been able to confirm any of them, despite repeated visits to Luna in the last two decades. Even so – such rumors are not easily quelled –, many people still believe that the Earth's moon is hiding something. These rumors are fed by 'the glow', a peculiar event occurring on the far side of the moon. Many explorers and ether pilots claim that, from the right position, a faint glow can be witnessed on a particular part of the far side. To the naked eye, it is no bigger than a pinhead, but telescopic observers speculate that the area may actually span more than one mile in diameter. Its greenish-white light has never been scientifically examined. Another rumor has it that the Russians have further information about the glow, but frankly, they keep it to themselves. Furthermore, it is suspected that Vladimir Tereshkov intended to investigate the glow on his fateful journey of 1887.



# Mars

## Mars - Planet Facts

Diameter: 4,200 miles

Circumference: approx. 13,195 miles

Length of Year: 687 Earth days

Length of Day: 24 hours 37 min.

Gravity: 90% of Earth's gravity

in the Solar System, right after Mercury, with a surface of about one fourth the size of the Earth's. Due to its lack of seas however, the area of its landmass roughly corresponds to that found on Earth. Considering its size, it may be surprising that the gravity of Mars is just 10% below that on Earth.

A man of 200 pounds would weigh about 180 pounds on Mars. The atmosphere on Mars is breathable and quite similar to that of the Earth's. The most striking difference is its extremely dry air, a reflection of the overall dryness of the red planet. A Mars year corresponds to about 678 Earth days, while a Martian day has 24 hours and 37 minutes. Usually, the slightly longer day does not cause any problems in acclimatization to Earthmen. Although various watchmakers, such as Charles Frodsham and Co. and A. Lange & Söhne, manufacture special pocket watches – known as 'Red Watches' – that run on Martian time, most visitors keep using their own watches and alarm-clocks and simply have them adjusted to run three per cent slower than usual.

For centuries, the dark red mystery of Mars has excited the imagination of humanity. Hence it was little wonder that Thomas Alva Edison chose the Red Planet as the destination of the first interplanetary ether flyer expedition. Accompanied by Jack Armstrong, an intrepid Scottish explorer and soldier-of-fortune, Edison set out on his journey to Mars on January 6th, 1870 and arrived there on March 9th. Unfortunately, the far from gentle

## A Survey of the Planet

*"The dawn commences, and Mars rules the hour."*

**Friedrich von Schiller, Wallenstein**

Viewed from the sun, Mars is the fourth world of the Solar System, circling the Sun at an average distance of 141 million miles. With a diameter of 4,200 miles it is the second smallest planet





landing tore open the hydrogen balloon needed to lift the ether flyer back into the atmosphere.

The two explorers would have been stranded on Mars forever had the planet not been inhabited. Edison and Armstrong had landed just outside the city known today as Syrtis Major, and they were taken prisoners by its local ruler, Amraamtaba IX. Armstrong quickly learned the local language however, and Edison managed to impress the Martian potentate with his tremendous technical knowledge. Soon, the two of them were released, and Edison was provided with the materials necessary to both repair his balloon and generate the required amount of hydrogen. Within a few months, the repaired flyer was ready to carry Edison, Armstrong, and a curious Martian back to Earth. The return trip was without incident, and landed outside of Cincinnati, Ohio, on August 7th, 1870.

The Earth was electrified, and Edison and Armstrong were lavished with fame and fortune. Within a year, several companies were producing Edison Flyers, and soon vessels of several nationalities were making regular trips to Mars, causing rapid and dramatic changes on the Red Planet. Martian liftwood met the industrial revolution, and life on both planets would never be the same.

## The History of Mars and His Inhabitants

*"Know, oh Prince, that between the years when the deserts devoured the canals and the crystal cities, and the arrival of the Sons of Deneb, there was an age undreamt of, when ancient cities rowed along the canals like opal pearls on a brittle string. Haat, Nompha Gisaak, Ostoot, Arenterosa. Zhoom-Panaak, with its dark-haired women and his mysterious, shattered towers. Karkaham, daring as ever. Bahaar, verging on the cool steppes of Zelasaar. Neerebar with its shadow-guarded tombs. Tossia, whose riders wore steel and silk and glass.*

*But the proudest city of all was Stafraana, reigning over the dreamy canals. It was the home of Seldon, a battle leader, a plunderer, a dreamer, and a prince with the most malicious blood thirst and the most noble of visions, to stamp the false priests of the triple sacred federation into the dust by his boots of steel and climb onto the gem-encrusted throne of Mars."*

*from the Zephyrian Chronicles.  
Author unknown, approx. 1,930 BC,  
modern English translation.*

## The Climate Change

Once, about 40% of Mars' surface was covered by seas, but they dried up more than 50 Million years ago. The desiccated land, once filled with lush vegetation which rivaled that of Earth in variety and number, became a trackless desert, a barren wasteland. About 35,000 years ago, a temporary change in the Martian climate caused the icecaps to melt, forcing the Martians to leave their habitat on the seabeds. What they found was no longer a world of barren red dust, for great parts of the planet were covered with forests and the land was fertile once more. Just as the climate change was to have a profound effect upon the planet, its effects would profoundly change the Martians themselves.

## Early History

The climate change was favorable to the development of the Martians. They discovered agriculture and founded settlements and civilizations that grew, thrived, and developed. Once the Martians settled into the routine of agriculture made possible by the abundance of water, they lost their ability to fly since they no longer needed it; but with the loss of their flight began the separation of the Martian peoples (for more information, see *Martian Evolution* on p. 84).

The settlements eventually became cities that needed more land to feed their ever growing populations. This brought them into conflict with other cities and peoples, such conflicts escalating into wars. Again and again cities rose, grew, and perished under the strife that would follow contact with their neighbors. At the same time, the Martian technology developed apace, and perhaps it was those countless wars and the urge to outdo the enemy that kept such progress moving rapidly forward.

Most of the cities and relicts of this early time are long lost or lie buried in the dust of Mars leaving many things in the dark. Not even the records in the archive towers of the old cities reach back that far, or if they do, the facts have been replaced with myths and legends that have been transformed and reshaped through the course of multiple interpretations. For the most part such records only hand down names heralding the fame of their former owners. Kaalotuur the Conqueror, master of the twenty cities, is said to have defeated cloud dragons, and riding on them, to have "explored the planets and the stars". Salooa the beautiful, a warrior princess of noble descent, left her people when a warrior from the steppes won her heart, plunging both peoples and the entirety of Mars into a "war that turned the soil red". Ru Shimu the planter had woods cultivated "reaching from one horizon to the other" – they withered and died when the waters of Mars receded, for the time of growth did not last long.

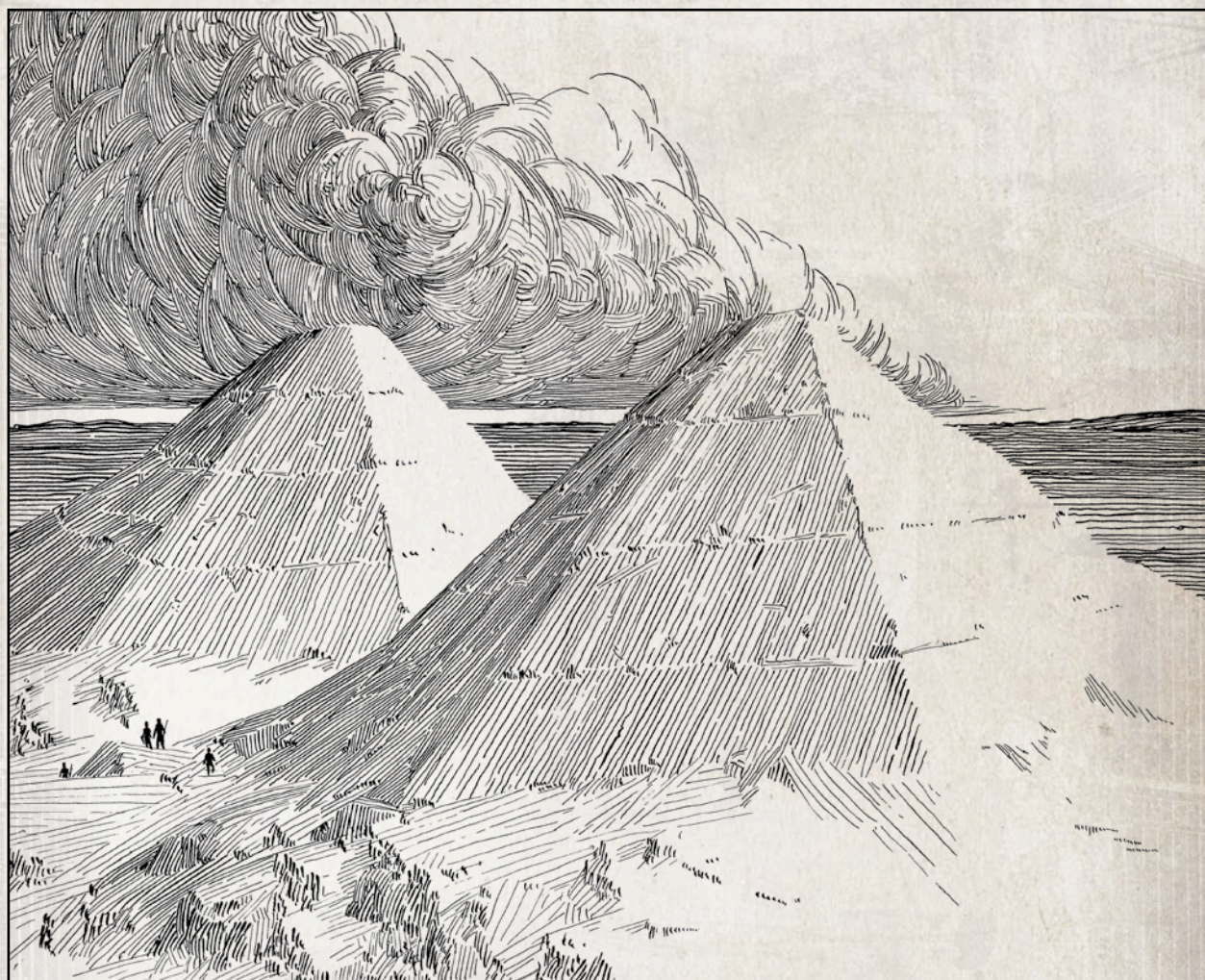
The *Brifanoon* – the Age of Water – lasted about 10,000 years. Canals were dug to bring water to the deserts and to expand agricultural civilization beyond the coastal zone. Ultimately however, the climate spasm that had produced the *Brifanoon* came to an end and with it the Age of Water.

Over a period of 10,000 years, the seas dried up once again. With every year, the shoreline moved farther out and new canals had to be dug to redistribute the water or to channel it from the dwindling seas to the existing croplands. Eventually, it became evident that a more co-ordinated effort was necessary, and the Martians launched a monumental project to channel water from the polar icecaps to the seabeds.

## The Age of the Canal Builders

25,000 years ago, the Age of Water ended and a time of drought began, when the waters withdrew and concentrated at the poles in the form of ice. At first, there were still wars being fought about the life-giving element and the course of the canals, but then something happened what only few priest kings and warlords had achieved beforehand – the shared misery unified the planet. It was only in unison that they could manage to survive and to build the canals of Mars over the course of millennia. Generation after generation lived just for the purpose of fighting the threat of their downfall. It took considerable effort to make 'the sun barque' fly through the skies and to 'dig with the gods' gleaming eyes' canal after canal. New cities evolved along the canals, old ones were abandoned. The newly dug giant canals, stretching from one pole to the other, connected isolated city states that emerged at the junctions of the canals.





By the end of the *naBrifanoon* – the Age of Drying – the Martian civilization had moved from its former shore territories to the dry seabeds and had bled dry under the emaciating efforts of generations. The Martian culture was further affected heavily when ‘a war of the gods’ shattered the skies and the world, and at about the same time, two of the most important cities burned ‘in celestial fires’. The refugees fled the conflagrations that had been their former homes. Some found sanctuary in neighboring cities up and down the canals, but many shied away from the cities fearing that they too would go up in flames. Instead, they rebuilt their lives in the steppes and hills spanning between the cities and empires.

## The Age of the 1,000 World Wars

The huge project of building the canals had unified the peoples of Ancient Mars, unfortunately though, this peace only lasted for a few centuries. The increasing depletion of resources as well as the resurgent ethnic conflicts are believed to have put an end to the peaceful empire of the canal builders. The millennia since have seen many more or less successful efforts to reunite the planet and to reestablish the glorious age of world peace. Time and again, realm or another succeeded in gaining control over Mars just to see itself sink into the dust once again. With every struggle for world power came the diminution of the Martian population, with every fallen empire the depletion of resources was aggravated, with every planetary war the technology level of the Martians declined – slowly, but steadily. While the first wars during the Age of the 1,000 Wars had been fought with the

amazing weapons and vehicles of the canal builders, by the time Seldon ascended the throne, the Martians could field no better armaments than gun powder weapons and swords.

Finally, after millennia of strife and decay, a great ruler came to lead Mars into a golden age.

## Seldon's Empire

About 5,000 years ago, a great military leader arose on Mars, the equivalent of Alexander the Great on Earth. Seldon II was born in the small mountain kingdom of Garyaan, which once had been an island before the seas receded. Seldon's father had been a great ruler in his own right, and just as Alexander built upon the achievements of his father, Philipp of Macedon, Seldon could not have accomplished what he did without the solid foundation built up by his ancestors.

Incited by an oracle's prophecy which had foretold that he was destined to conquer the world, Seldon recruited an army, built a fleet of canal ships, and sailed forth to the greater glory of Gaaryaan. On the course of his conquest, he confronted every city state with his powerful forces, and demanded obedience and allegiance. If these were given, he incorporated the community into his growing empire, granting the local potentates full autonomy as his representatives. When a city resisted, he leveled it to the ground. It only took a few such examples to be made and resistance became scarce. The co-operating city leaders became the canal princes of Mars; almost every Martian ruler today trace his power back to those original oaths made 5,000 years ago.



Seldon though, brought more than just an army. His forces were accompanied by massive engineering barges that dredged the silt from the canals, for Seldon needed the canals in working condition if he was to supply his warriors. His engineers repaired damaged canal locks, sealed up leaking levees, and cleared tangled settling pools. Wherever possible, they rebuilt pumping stations; and where not, they built new ones, although these were typically much cruder than those constructed during the Age of the Canal Builders. By all available means, Seldon had about one third of the seabed's canals rebuilt or reopened, thereby bringing about a rapidly burgeoning trade and renewed prosperity. His empire controlled more territories than any other in history, but Seldon was never satisfied, never willing to rest. Driven by the belief in the prophecy that had foretold him to conquer the whole world and that until then he would be invulnerable, Seldon took risks while in battle with no regard for life and limb, to the horror of his inferiors. As a matter of fact, he was however, never wounded in battle and fortune seemed to smile upon him right up until the very end.

Eventually, Seldon's obsession proved to be his fate. Refusing to listen to his physicians who advised him to rest, he drove himself ever harder in pursuit of his goal of world conquest. In the end, he was struck down at the height of his power by a combination of exhaustion and illness.

On his deathbed, in his temporary capital Staffraana – today known as Syrtis Major – he uttered his final words, a furious tirade against the circumstances that had prevented him from fulfilling his destiny. According to legend, he was buried alongside

numerous technological wonders of his time in a long forgotten tomb “in which he should gaze at the stars”.

His son, Seldon III, succeeded him. The dynasty lasted for 3,000 years, until the death of the sixty-ninth and last of his line, Seldon LXIX. Thus, Seldon II established not only the last world empire on Mars, but the one that also lasted the longest.

## The Heirs of Seldon

Seldon III had less ambition than his father and hence chose to consolidate and to improve rather than expand the empire. Within a generation, long-forgotten mercantile skills were relearned, and the merchant barges sailed regular routes along the newly opened canals. Local princes acquired legendary fortunes from the newly imposed taxes and vied amongst themselves in the construction of ever larger and more expensive public buildings. Tribute flowed into the empire's coffers, and Seldon III built the first of many imperial palaces at Syrtis Major.

His successors would number competent rulers, geniuses, and imbeciles. Consequently, the power and influence of Seldon's empire rose and fell according to whoever was on the throne. Since the empire was held together by personal allegiance, each canal prince had to renew his oaths when there was a new emperor. Strong rulers kept the canal princes in line – tribute flowed in, and the empire was strong. Weak ones though, were not able to control the princes and the empire grew weaker. The cycle continued, but there was always a central ruler to tie the empire together.

## The Problem with Martian History

Of all the periods of Martian history, it is the early ages of Mars that historians and archaeologists have the least reliable knowledge about. This is however, not due to a lack of sources on the long past of Mars – to the contrary. Ironically, this is precisely the reason why historical scientists from Earth are most often in the dark about the Martian history. The Canal Martians have always been friends of the written word. Every city state employs a huge quantity of city clerks and archivists to administer the city's chronicles. Almost every big city state keeps meticulous records of its history that go back over the last 15,000 earth years. Which is precisely the problem – the tremendous number of available records makes it almost completely impossible to keep track of even the smallest city's past with any coherence, let alone that of a whole planet. The royal main archive in the center of Syrtis Major, for example, consists of three towers, each 200 m height as well as a considerable number of sub-levels in the catacombs below, all crammed with codices, script rolls, metal foils, clay crystals and other, more obscure media. No wonder then, that even the Martian archivists themselves have long lost an overview of their past.

However, it is not only the sheer amount of information that swamps those who seek for knowledge. The complex catalogue system employed in the Martian archives is a science in its own, one that even today's local archivists cannot really master. Even if one does understand the way in which the archives of the Red Planet

are organized it will not be of much use. Many files and monographs were stored centuries ago wherever was convenient. Martian archives are infamously labyrinthine constructions, and every Martian city has its own legend about the poor archivist who got lost in his own archive and did not find his way out for weeks, having been forced to keep himself alive by feeding on book worms during all that time.

Worse, every few decades, some canal prince commands important chronicles to be revised for the purpose of his own glorification, the defamation of the enemy, or simply to erase embarrassing incidents from the history books, as a result of which the data on a city's history is often quite contradictory. The situation is further aggravated by the impact of an old enemy that all archives share – the ravages of time! The oldest books made of paper crumble into dust simply when touched, graphic characters fall into oblivion, electronic data media cannot be read anymore. Transferring old knowledge onto new media would be a true Sisyphean task, for not even the biggest bureaucracy could ever cope with the mere quantity of records it would need to sort and transfer.

In general, the following statement is true – the older the record, the harder it is to find in the archives. With no little effort, reports of incidents that happened after Seldon ascended to the throne are usually accessible to the diligent researcher. Earlier events are uncertain. Events that took place during the Age of the Canal Builders may well be described in the existing records, but the archivists have long lost track of such records in the dark vaults of the archives.



The names and deeds of each of Seldon II's successors were recorded and placed in the archives where many have been lost to history. Others remain known to this day, whether because their records are easily accessible in the archives or because their names and deeds have been passed down the ages by word of mouth. Seldon VII gained his epithet 'the discoverer' for his year long quest in the deserts and lost cities for the knowledge of his ancestors. It seems that he was successful for he and his dignitaries are said to have been 'speaking words that could kill' and 'holding wands that hurled lightning flashes'.

Seldon XIII banned his enemy 'to the abyss of the skies', a place that today cannot be identified anymore. It is supposed to lie either in the eternal ice of the poles or on one of the moons of Mars. The treasures amassed by Seldon XVII must have been enormous, for as a reflection of his glory, little golden statues, one for each of his subjects, were placed with him in his tomb. Seldon XXII too, was rich beyond legend – his flying palaces were covered with fire jewels, sun stones, and gems, making them 'gleam in the sun like hundreds of thousands of stars'. Seldon XXVI would have been forgotten were it not for the fact that his wife ruled in his name and built a prosperous empire despite being in constant quarrel with the Hill Martians. The reign of the madman Seldon XXXI ushered in both another age of war and the end to the renaissance in the technologies from the Age of the Canal Builders and before. During the reigns of previous emperors the peoples of Mars had gradually regained insight into the astonishing knowledge of their ancestors and had even managed to recreate some of their ancient marvels. Many priest technicians lost their lives owing to the paranoia of Seldon XXXI and his belief that every technology to be 'a temptation of the Worm'. His successor, Seldon XXXII was just as possessed by this delusion and only his violent death put an end to his reign of terror. His corpse was buried in the desert, joined by his closest living relatives.

Seldon LVII lived a life of contemplation, leaving the direct rule of the empire to his priests who in the process built up a power base that they maintain to this day. Eventually, Seldon LVII went off into the desert searching for a simpler life. After his death, his followers kept wandering across the land. They later formed the Seheldonnar, the Veiled People of Cydonia.

## The End of the Empire

Seldon LXVII was killed during his coronation ceremony and died without leaving a clearly designated heir. In the end, the emperor's nephew, Seldon LXIX, ascended the throne, but the legitimacy of his reign was not recognized by all of the canal princes, some of whom put forward their own candidate. The resulting dynastic struggle between the opposing candidates to Seldon's throne plunged the empire into a century-long civil war that proved to be its death spasm.

The empire found itself assailed from all sides even as canal prince after canal prince seceded from the empire. Forced to defend itself, the empire withdrew forces from other areas, leaving those cities open to attack or forced to defend themselves. Whenever the empire withdrew from an area or was ousted from power, the responsibility for the canals passed on to the individual city-states that the canals served. Soon, the canals of the poorer states fell into disrepair and transformed into marshland or even dried up, as the money and resources needed for their maintenance were spent on buying and equipping military forces instead. City-states that had been founded during the Age of the Canal Builders as well as during the height of Seldon II's empire were either destroyed or impoverished by the war. By the time the war finally ended, civilization on Mars was but a shadow

of its former self, and the magnificent empire of the Seldon Dynasty comprised nothing more than a few dozen meaningless principalities, collections of city-states ruled by particularly capable canal princes. Occasionally, these principalities would harbor ambitions to greatness and call themselves 'empires', but these 'empires' at their largest were but pale shadows of Seldon's mighty conquests.

For about 2,000 years, the world lingered on in this state of power vacuum, until one morning when a tiny spacecraft from a previously unnoteworthy blue-green planet plunged down from 'where the moons dance'.

## The Present Political Landscape

Preceding the arrival of humans, the major Martian city-states were in some kind of rough equilibrium with each other, although a few of them had achieved some prominence. Of particular importance were, and still are, the **Oenotrian Empire**, the **Boreosyrtris League**, the **Tossian Empire**, the **High Martians of the Astusapes Mountains**, and the **Tribes of the Nepenthes Thoht**. For more information see p. 92ff.

## Martian Geography

Just like Earth, Mars has a variety of diverse landscape forms. In broad terms, the world is divided into the ancient seabeds, the vast deserts, the craggy mountain ranges, and the polar icecaps. The most salient feature though, which gave the Red Planet its current shape, is the lack of rainfall. On Mars, there is never any rain. The unbound water of its ancient lakes and seas vanished long ago and is now frozen in the glacial wastes of the polar icecaps or chemically bound in the rust-red sands of the deserts. The planet of Mars is older than that of Earth and is thus in a later stage of development. Its surface structure is more leveled, whilst at the same time it shows greater asperity. In the northern hemisphere, the landscape of Mars is characterized by mighty sand deserts and cool, dry steppes covering primarily the, whilst the southern hemisphere is dominated by the lower, desiccated seabeds, limited by the mountains which form a gigantic massif around the equator that runs for almost 3,000 miles. The north and south poles are capped by hostile, frozen wastelands that cover about one third of the planet's surface. Parts of these frozen caps melt over the course of the seasons and so fill the monumental canals that predominately lead north and south with water. Over the centuries, these canals, together with the natural formations of the surrounding landscape, have developed into a micro climate of their own, one which enables a significant part of the Martian civilization to subsist and survive.

## Canals and Cultural Landscape

### Canals

The canals of Mars are the biggest construction project yet to be discovered by humans. There is no comparable construction on Earth that could come even remotely close to the sublime engineering achievement of Mars' canals. No monument on Earth is visible from out of space in a way the Martian canal network is. The ability of the Martians to begin and finish the construction of this network is proof of their survival instincts, for without the canals Mars would be a dead planet by now.



The typical Grand Canal is about a mile wide and about 100 feet deep. In the cities, the banks are paved promenades that serve as plazas, markets, and bazaars, while also canalizing the floodwater. In the countryside, massive sand levees help contain the flooding when the first rush of floodwaters arrives in summer. Water seeping through the bottom and the sides of the Grand Canal creates an aquifer which supports agriculture, forests, and animal life for miles on each side of the canal. Depending on the local conditions, an aquifer can irrigate a land strip of 10 to 50 miles width.

### Agricultural Land

The lands surrounding the city states of Mars are cultivated intensively to meet the insatiable hunger of millions of Canal Martians. Over the course of millennia, their farmers has become unequalled masters of agriculture, are able to produce crops on the barren soils by using simple, but smart technologies which enable them to supply the nearby settlements. The exact appearance of Martian agricultural land varies from city-state to city-state and depends on the traditions of the city-state and how it organizes its agriculture.

Along the canal banks of the *Boreosyrtris League* one can find collectively cultivated plantations as far as the eye can see, thoroughly planned to the last detail. Around the more feudally organized *Syrtris Major*, a landscape of green hills and small farms has developed which resemble the Central European countryside. In *Dioscuria*, huge terrace-fields are built along the canals. In any case, all agricultural land is densely populated and one can find lots of little villages or block-shaped worker lodgings.

### Forest Land

Along the banks of several canals there still stands a remnant of the majestic Martian forest as it once must have covered the whole planet. In many ways, the forests of Mars are similar to

the mixed woodlands found in Scandinavia or Japan. There is a variety of high towering coniferous and deciduous trees which resemble oaks from Earth. The highest of them can reach the size of Californian redwoods. At their base, Martian trees build up a web of wildly ramified, maze-like roots, which quite often form corridors as tall as a man that can serve as a lair for all sorts of creatures.

Along the canals between *Titania* and *Syrtria*, Canal Martian villagers even build small settlements into the roots. Where the winds carry humidity from the canal to the forest, it does not take long for the thick red mosses, so characteristic for the Martian forests, to evolve and grow rampant over tree roots, trunks, and stones.

In general, the Martian forests never grow further than 25 miles away from the canal banks. In a strict sense, even the most savage Martian forest cannot be identified as true wilderness, since every stretch of woodland along the canals is, more or less, cultivated by a nearby city-state. There are far less settlements in the forests than in the agricultural land, but an ever increasing number of thieves, rebels, and deserters have found home hiding in the roots of the forests since the arrival of Earthmen.

## The Martian Wilderness

### Marshes

Although the idea of their existence was considered impossible on Earth, explorers and geographers have since confirmed it – there are marshes on Mars! Typically they are found where canal banks and levees have fallen into disrepair and collapsed, allowing water to seep uncontrollably into the ground and form lakes, pools, and bogs that become habitats for water plants, rushes, and trees. The marshes of Mars form a landscape similar to the spacious swamplands found in Central Europe, although they are traversed by more water streams. The Canal Martians cultivate the marshes just as they do the Martian forests. Although it is not possible to grow crops in these marshes, one can still profit from game hunting or peat cutting. The largest marshland area is formed by the legendary Swamp of Gorklimsk, an area which is only partly mapped.

### Steppes

Great swathes of Mars are covered by a landscape resembling the prairies of North America or the steppes of Central Asia. The soil is barren and too dry for forests to grow, but there are lots of resistant grasses and shrubs able to survive in this region. Although the steppes may seem deserted and dreary at first sight, on closer examination they turn out to be full of life – from small quick ground dwelling animals to the dangerous steppe tigers.

In most parts, the grass does not reach higher than up to a grown man's hip, but across the steppes close to the equator grows a plant called 'Fnuuk'. Known as the bamboo of Mars, it grows as tall as 25 feet and even forms real forests. Whilst the colder steppes of the Northern and the Southern hemispheres are easily accessible by mount or wagon, travelling the Fnuuk groves is true torture as the leaves of the Martian bamboo are as sharp as knives.

The soils the steppe grasses grow on are of excellent quality – most unlike the salty soils of the deserts – and make for good farmland if irrigated properly. Areas like the *Nepenthes Thoth* Steppe were once the bread baskets of Mars before the water re-





ceded further. Nevertheless, the natural riches of the steppes provide more than enough food for the numerous Hill Martian tribes.

## Mountains

The steep rugged mountains of Mars are not unlike those on Earth. In particular, the vast massif stretching along the equator, reaching as far as the shores of the dried out sea beds, indicates powerful geologic activity in the past, supposedly of volcanic origin some geologists claim. Others however, such as the Russian Yarkovsky, trace the origins of such mountains to a shrinking process of the planet. They argue that there is no volcanic activity whatsoever to be observed on Mars, and that if there had been any in the past, the mountains would have to be much more flattened as a result of age and erosion when in fact, Martian mountains are characterized by a markedly craggy shape.

In many areas, the wind carried away the fertile topsoil and shaped the underlying rock into steep pinnacles or flat tabletop peaks. Scorching by day and freezing by night, they collect dew, making the lack of water less of a problem in the highlands. Perhaps, this is also the reason why the liftwood tree only grows here.

For the most part, Martian mountains are dry and deserted, but in some places, springs can be found that turn basins into fertile valleys. Countless conflicts and wars have been fought over the possession of these 'blessed' valleys between the various Hill and High Martian mountain tribes who consider them to be sacred.

Although presumably once part of the seabed, the great Coprates Rift Valley is now regarded as being part of Mars' mountain ranges. It is the deepest dry land geological feature in the Solar System, and even dwarfs the Grand Canyon of Earth, both in absolute size and in breathtaking vistas.

The highest mountain is the *Saaloht Toorla* – the Olympus Mons Mountain. With a diameter of nearly 2,000 feet, this gigantic dead shield volcano towers over the surrounding plains by more than 16 Miles. As far as we know, no one has ever reached the top. In many Martian religions, the Olympus Mons is sacred and it is therefore prohibited for anyone to set foot on its slopes. There are numerous monasteries, hermitages, and monuments to the gods at the foot of the mountain. Unlike on the rest of Mars, life is not possible on Olympus Mons' summit, the atmosphere at this height is too thin for higher life forms. For this reason, the Olympus Mons is also the only mountain on Mars whose summit cannot be reached or sailed over by cloudship. It seems that the only way in which the mountain can be conquered is by using breathing apparatus and space suits. Observations from the orbit of Mars have revealed that there exists some form of dense vegetation in the deep crater of the Olympus Mons. The mere size of the mountain is a mystery in itself. Some geologists doubt that a mountain of this height could have evolved under the gravity of Mars, and they have theorized that huge cavities must lie inside of it.

## Deserts and Seabeds

Countless millennia ago, most parts of Mars were covered with narrow, translucent salt water seas. Today, the dried up seabeds form the merciless deserts of the withered planet. During the Age of Drying, the receding sea water left behind mineral sediments which now form the large reddish salt deserts spread across the center of the vanished seas where only the hardest of plants survive. In these areas, one can find basically three different types of landscapes:

- **Rocky deserts:** Rocky deserts make up the largest area of Martian deserts. Their soil consists of rocky debris and coarse sand containing high amounts of iron and salt. Every once in a while one can find places where steppe grasses or succulent plants may thrive. Explorers from Earth have observed that the landscapes of the Martian deserts remind them of the deserts of Nevada or Arizona, but with lower average temperatures.
- **Salt dune deserts:** The salt dune deserts are similar to the sand deserts on Earth such as the Sahara or the center of the Arabian Peninsula. The only differences lie in the peculiar red color of the sand as well as its coarseness. The largest of these salt dune deserts is the famous Isidis Desert. The countless dunes give these deserts the appearance of a 'sand sea', but also make travelling across them extremely difficult. Whilst there are occasional oases, most of them only consist of salt resistant plants growing around small salt water ponds. Martian desert nomads and caravan merchants however, know an easy method to make this salt water potable. They purify the water by putting small, pungent balls of 'Godhaam' into the water. The substance, which is extracted from desert plants, binds the salt and crystallizes it. At the edge of the Isidis Desert, a whole industry is devoted to the production of Godhaam; the sand of the Isidis is rich in salt, but without further processing, it is unfit for consumption.
- **Coral deserts:** Rocky coral deserts, such as the great basin of Hellas, are only found on the former seabeds. Because of their strange appearance, British discoverers called them 'Weird Wastes'. It is clearly obvious that these Weird Wastes were once the beds of Mars' seas, since they are littered with bizarrely shaped and colored coral reefs that have lasted for millennia. They not only give the landscape a distinctive alien feel, but their sharp encrusted edges also are a constant danger to travelers. Every now and then, the dry coral reef landscape is interrupted by smooth rocky cones that stand several feet high. According to some scientists that once might have been deep sea volcanoes. Except for some land corals, which have adapted to the dry environment, and a few, hardy lichens, there is almost no plant life to be found in these coral deserts. What fauna there is, is mostly made up of snakes and insects. Deep inside the great basin of Hellas one can find fascinating evidence of ancient Martian history. Scattered throughout an area of roughly 400 square miles can be found numerous wrecks of prehistoric Martian sea ships partly overgrown by the corals. Some initial examinations have shown that these vessels were not unlike the most modern ships of Earth.

## Climate

The most important difference between Earth and Mars lies in the dryness of the Red Planet. Since it never rains on Mars, it would be dead by now were it not for its canals – a sinister fate that the Earth is still awaiting, for the loss of water seems to be an inevitable 'symptom' as planets age.

High temperatures prevail on the former sea beds, only at night do they drop to a more comfortable level. Besides the highland and the lowlands with their uniform heat, only cooled down by the ever blowing winds, there is one thin circumpolar temperate zone on each hemisphere, where bitter cold winds sweep down carrying some humidity from the small ice caps.

Apart from that, evaporated water only, if ever, condensates as dew. Most water is stocked in form of ice and snow at the poles until the latter melt during Flood season.



## Seasons

The Martian year is divided into seasons of predictable lengths, each determined by the level of canal water. Throughout history, every city-state along the canals has kept an accurate record of the seasons to help its inhabitants predict precisely when the seasons will change. The seasons are in turn, Flood, Flow, Low Flow, and Surge.

Since the seasons are based on the flow in the canals, they change at different times depending on their location. Travelers not acquainted with local conditions risk being caught in the deadly flow of the Surge season.

### Jules Verne on Mars

In the spring of 1889, French author Jules Verne visited several of the Martian canals and has proposed his own theory on the canal construction.

"The grand canal blasters of the Martians best resemble a broad beamed cargo ship suspended from a truss constructed of the Martian liftwood material. Strong cantilever girders above the hull suspend a large solar reflector which channels the rays of the sun into an orifice. That orifice, in turn, directs the solar light into an internal network of lenses and out the bottom of the hull, where it is directed toward the channel to be dug.

The modified and intensified solar rays heat the Martian soil into a kind of lava, part of which then boils away, whilst the remainder forms a strong, foamed volcanic glass lining for the watercourse. As this lining cools, it fractures into a sponge-like material that allows some of the water to drain into the local water table. An examination of the Grand Canal confirmed that the canal lining consists of a foamed volcanic glass. Decorative carvings in the ruined temple at Cydonia depict just such an aerial vessel as I describe here earlier."

### Flood

Flood is a short season in which meltwater from the poles rushes down the canals. It marks the beginning of the growing season and starts with the first swell of the canal water. It lasts until the water level has again receded below the level of the canal promenades. Especially in regions closer to the poles, this rush of water overwhelms the capacity of the canal, often reaching to the tops of the levees and overflowing to the croplands and fields beyond. Navigation is often difficult during this period.

### Flow

During the season called Flow, water fills the Grand Canals to within a few feet of each bank, and navigation is easy and unimpeded. Flow continues through most of the year and is equivalent to both summer and autumn on Earth.

### Low Flow

Low Flow is the dry season on Mars. The meltwater from the icecaps has almost completely melted and the icecaps can provide

no more water for the canals; water in the Grand Canals (p. 67f.) is reduced to a mere trickle. To enable traffic to continue during this dry season, Low Flow channels were cut into the bottoms of the Grand Canals to contain what little water remained. These Low Flow channels measure 50 to 100 yards wide and 30 feet deep, sufficient for almost any canal boat or barge. The channels remain full during Low Flow, but the rest of the canal bottom is almost completely dry. The Low Flow channel snakes its way along the bottom of the Grand Canal, first touching one bank, then angling over to touch the opposite bank some two or three miles downstream. This meandering of the channel is not random, but intentional, and serves a useful purpose, reducing the distance merchants must move their goods across the otherwise dry canal bottom before they can reach a bank.

### Surge

Surge is a short season which occurs sometime during Low Flow. As the Low Flow season progresses in one Martian hemisphere, the Flood and Flow seasons are taking place in the opposite hemisphere. Some of the water flow from the opposite hemisphere makes its way, eventually, to canals on the other side of the world. The surge of water that does manage to make its way to the other hemisphere produces a temporary replenishment of water in the canal beds there.

## Flora and Fauna of Mars

*"Stringy creatures, only muscles, gristle, and tendons – put aside claws and poison fangs. Above the fireplace, Martian fauna makes up for quite a good decoration, but in the pan it looks rather disgusting."*

*Henry Fortenberry III., huntsman and cook*

The drying of Mars millions of years ago spelled the end for most its mammal species, and with their extinction came the next step in Martian evolution – the flyers. Flyers could range far and wide in search of water and prey. Natural selection and little understood components of the soil also lead some plants to develop lifting effects that negate the impacts of gravity. Thus they were able to cast their seed over more spacious areas.

By adding these plants to their diet, some animals developed a lifting gland. These animals can float through the air by shifting the orientation and strength of their lifting gland's power, using wing-like flaps of skin for propulsion, steering, and aerial maneuvers. The need to adapt to the changed circumstances also had the effect that creatures with the most differing social organization and feeding patterns, until then occupying separate habitats, were now forced to share the same environment. As a result, the evolution of Mars has gone down strange paths, many of which have yet to be examined; so there are creatures with four, six, eight, or even ten limbs. The only shared link between these plants and animals seems to be their extraordinary resistance to their environment and each other. Thick shells, scales, skins, or fur protect them against dehydration and extreme temperatures; spines, poison, claws, and teeth feed or defend them in the barren landscape away from the canals. In the decades since mankind's arrival on Mars, only a few of the Red Planet's fauna has been fully classified by natural scientists from Earth. Fame and the plaudits of his fellow scientists await the naturalist prepared to weather the dangers of Mars' harsh environment in order to exam the exotic fauna of the Red Planet.



## Martian Fauna

Over the course of the millennia, most of the Martian animals have learnt to fear High, Canal and – especially – Hill Martians. They are however, ignorant of the people from Earth which is why human beings have to be careful when confronted with the curiosity – and the occasional – murderous frenzy of the local fauna.

### Landdwelling Animals

#### Bush Monkey

During long journeys through the steppes of Mars, travelers may often get the eerie feeling that their caravan is being followed by mysterious bushes, which in the morning stand a few hundred feet away from the camp in a place where they certainly had not been the evening before. These are animals that follow the trace of caravans after nightfall and feed off the wastes that they leave behind. Deep in the night, they sometimes even crawl into poorly guarded wagon camps to steal food. At dawn, they curl up to sleep and can thus, seen from afar, easily be confused with dry bushes or straw bales. This similarity to plants, in addition to their monkey-like movement on the knuckles of their forelegs, inspired their name – Bush Monkey.

What appears to be thick blond to brownish fur is in reality a dense layer of long, spiky scales, which protect the 30 inch tall animal from dehydration. When sleeping, the bush monkey draws in its head completely into his chest, while at the same time its spikes are extended, giving the creature its characteristic camouflage.

A bush monkey is not that easy to catch, or defend against, for it has strong arms with which it can cling to an attacker, and two rows of sharp teeth which it snaps at an attacker. Fortunately, bush monkeys have not yet learnt to use their protecting spikes as a weapon, but woe betide the unfortunate fellow who tumbles onto a curled up bush monkey. Although they are generally quite shy, in case of danger the whole herd will pounce on a real or supposed enemy. There are reports of several humans having already lost their lives this way.

#### Bush Monkey

##### Animal Companion 2

**Archetype:** Animal **Health:** 5

##### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 3 **Charisma:** 0  
**Dexterity:** 6 **Intelligence:** 0  
**Strength:** 3 **Willpower:** 3

##### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** -1 **Initiative:** 6  
**Move:** 9 (18)\* **Defense:** 10  
**Perception:** 3 **Stun:** 3

| Skills    | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|-----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Athletics | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)       |
| Brawl     | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)       |
| Stealth   | 6    | 4      | 11**   | (5+)      |
| Survival  | 0    | 3      | 5      | (2+)      |

##### Talents

##### Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 L    | +1   | 9 L    | (4+) L    |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*The bush monkey receives a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

## Gashant



Gashants are upright walking bipeds generally found in herds of between twenty and seventy animals. When cornered, they defend themselves by means of their forelegs, their heavy tails, and their teeth, although none of these are particularly effective weapons. In most cases, a gashant's instinct is to flight rather than fight and although its running speed cannot be compared to that of an eegar, it does have powerful legs and impressive endurance.

Wild gashants are easy to find and the domestic form is virtually ubiquitous, being the principle draft animal on the Red Planet and the exclusive cavalry mount fielded by most Martian armies. The tough, wiry gashants of the Nilosyrtis Hills are particularly prized by those cavalry troopers who have to operate in difficult or arid terrain, and are the only gashants used by the Meepsoor Lancers. North and south of the fiftieth parallel there are gashants that have adapted to the colder climate by developing a thicker layer of fat. Their skin color varies from light ochre to dark brown, while their skull armor-plating and horn comb also differs depending on gender.

The omnipresence of gashants becomes apparent considering the dizzying number of measurements, hardly convertible, that Martians use for them as a matter of course. They depend on race, sex, age, and intended purpose of the individual and can change abruptly, if for example, a well-bred riding gashant measuring the ideal 64 oolah suddenly transforms into a 7½ tx-haatoorm leather supply after breaking its third tail articulation in an accident. Humans have good reason to adhere to their own measurements. A gashant measures between 20 and 25 feet in length and is about 6 feet in height.

Mars



## Gashant

## Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal

Health: 9

## Primary Attributes

Body: 6

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 5

Intelligence: 0

Strength: 4

Willpower: 2

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 1

Initiative: 5

Move: 9

Defense: 10

Perception: 2

Stun: 6

## Skills

|          | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 4      | 10     | (5)       |
| Stealth  | 5    | 2      | 6**    | (3)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

## Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl bonus)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 1 L    | -1   | 10 L   | (5) L     |
| Punch   | 1 N    | -1   | 10 N   | (5) N     |
| Kick    | 1 N    | -1   | 10 N   | (5) N     |
| Tail    | 2 N    | -1   | 11 N   | (5+) N    |

\*\*Gashants suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

## Martian Roundhead

The *Areocephalopsitticus mikoteitii* can be found in the cold desert surrounding Mars' southern pole. It resembles a football in shape and size and is covered with thick red-brown bristles. If needed, it can bulge a variety of small extremities for the purpose of perception, motion, and manipulation. Due to its rare occurrence, there are little known facts about the life of the roundhead. In fact, only a single specimen has ever been caught to this day, but it died during the journey from Mars to Earth and was already half rotten by the time it arrived at the Institute of Natural History in Berlin. However, the odd description of this creature, indicating that it would move forward by spinning around and that it would be able to imitate an outrageous variety of voices and sounds in a deceptively realistic way, raises doubt about its authenticity and has led many scientists to regard it as a fake. Its discoverer cannot be consulted on this matter for he has set out for an expedition to Africa and has not been seen since his departure from Dar-es-Salaam in 1887.

## Martian Roundhead

## Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal

Health: 7

## Primary Attributes

Body: 5

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 7

Intelligence: 2

Strength: 3

Willpower: 4

## Secondary Attributes

Size: -2

Initiative: 9

Move: 10 (20)\*

Defense: 14

Perception: 6

Stun: 5

## Skills

|          | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 3    | 6      | 11     | (5+)      |
| Empathy  | 2    | 3      | 5      | (2+)      |
| Stealth  | 7    | 6      | 15**   | (7+)      |
| Survival | 2    | 4      | 8      | (4)       |

## Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl bonus)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Sting   | 1 L    | +2   | 14 L   | (7) L     |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Martian Roundheads receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

## Pushti Monkey

Pushti monkeys measure about 2 feet tall and resemble tree living monkeys from Earth in appearance and behavior. They mainly live under Pushti trees (p. 77f.) and feed of the plant's luscious leaves and seeds. Right before the rutting season, the males are extremely aggressive and find themselves in constant fights with each other. It is not uncommon for these fights to result in deadly injuries caused by their mighty claws, which is why the females and young animals stay away from them. For ratings see chimpanzee, p. 26.

## Roogie



About the size of a shepherd dog and equipped with mighty jaws, these creatures are predominantly scavengers; they prefer to let other animals or Mother Nature provide them with a meal. If hungry however, they will not hesitate to attack. Generally, they move around in packs of up to 20 individuals, although they often split up into smaller foraging parties when carrion is scarce. As soon as they come across dead or living prey, they summon the rest of the group by giving out a peculiarly screeching bark.

Their brown and shaggy fur protects them in the cold regions of Mars and serves as a camouflage in the steppes, where the pack typically huddles up closely to take a rest.



## Roogie

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 9

### Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 4 Willpower: 3

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 5  
Move: 8 (16)\* Defense: 8  
Perception: 4 (8) Stun: 5

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 6      | 10     | (5)       |
| Stealth  | 4    | 1      | 4**    | (2)       |
| Survival | 1    | 4      | 7      | (3+)      |

### Talents

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on all sense-based Perception rolls)

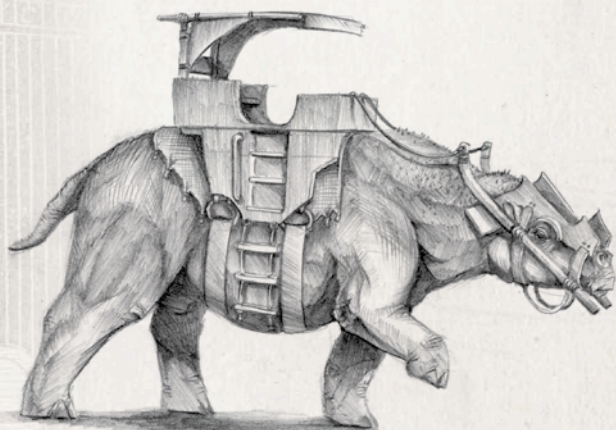
Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 L    | -1   | 11 L   | (5+) L    |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Roogies suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

## Ruumet Breehr



Originating from the wetlands of Mars, these huge herbivores have proven surprisingly hardy when used in the temperate zones north and south of the equator as well. They spread with the caravans that travel along the dry canals, and today herds of wild ruumet breehrs are a fairly common sight in the deserts as well. These canal caravans are renowned for their almost exclusive use of ruumet breehrs instead of the more common, and much smaller, gashants. Ruumet breehrs can be seen from a great distance, towing giant carts or majestically carrying the weight of a large howdah on their backs. When serving as pack or draft animals, they carry a heavy and fixed harness which can also be used to push or lift loads.

With their thick grey skin and their remarkable size, the creatures resemble elephants, although their head is more similar to that of a tapir. Unaggressive for the most part, ruumet breehrs will attack if they perceive a threat to their offspring, and will usually charge rather than flee. Especially wild ruumet breehrs tend to stampede as a group and subsequently trample upon everything that gets in their way. The size of a ruumet breehr is comparable to that of an Indian elephant, that is, eight feet high and 13 to 16 feet long with a weight of 3 to 6 tons.

## Ruumet Breehr

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

### Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 6 Willpower: 2

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 2  
Move: 8 (16)\* Defense: 6  
Perception: 2 Stun: 6

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 6    | 4      | 12     | (6)       |
| Stealth  | 2    | 2      | 2**    | (1)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

### Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl bonus)

| Weapons  | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|----------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Headbutt | 4 N    | -2   | 14 N   | (7) N     |
| Trample  | 4 N    | -2   | 14 N   | (7) N     |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

\*\*Ruumet Breehrs suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

## Snow-worm

Snow-worms can reach a length of up to 20 feet and are found solely in the northern ice deserts. Apart from that however, little is known about these solitary predators. Although not warm-blooded creatures, they are still active at temperatures far below freezing, an ability which is probably caused by certain chemical compounds in their blood. They are however, still reliant on the volcanic valleys scattered all over the polar caps, for only these oases of heat can provide enough prey on a relatively regular basis.

## Snow-worm

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal Health: 14

### Primary Attributes

Body: 8 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 7 Willpower: 4

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 7  
Move: 11 Defense: 10  
Perception: 7 Stun: 8

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 7    | 6      | 13     | (6+)      |
| Stealth  | 4    | 1      | 3*     | (1+)      |
| Survival | 1    | 4      | 5      | (2+)      |

### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception bonus)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative)

| Weapons  | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|----------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite     | 5 L    | -2   | 16 L   | (8) L     |
| Entangle | 6 N    | -2   | 17 N   | (8+) N    |

\*Snow-worms suffer a -2 Size penalty on all Stealth rolls



## Steppe Tiger



The fierce steppe tiger ranks amongst the most impressive of Martian animals. Measuring up to 10 feet long and weighing 500 pounds when in full growth, this beast is a cunning hunter. It tries to ambush its intended prey by sneaking up to the target as close as possible, before killing it in a quick and sudden attack. Steppe tigers are able to run at high speed for about 10 to 15 seconds, but after that its speed decreases rapidly. It is exactly for this reason when snatching for prey that they rely on the element of surprise and one rapid sprint. If under attack, they use their claws as primary means of defense, a weapon that can cause severe injuries and even slash the hide of a ruumet breehr. For killing their prey however, the steppe tiger relies on its massive jaws to snap its victim's neck or spine. As long as it is not hungry, the steppe tiger usually will not seek out trouble; but it will rigorously defend its territory and attack any intruder – particularly humans and Martians. It was the fearsome appearance that gave them their name, but apart from their body size and fighting strength they have nothing in common with the tigers on Earth. They have little eyes located at the back of their long mouth, on top of which a thick layer of furrowed skin covers their mighty skull bones. Their dense and shaggy fell of rust red or dark brown color makes for a good camouflage. With their mighty jaws and their long claws on all of their four legs, they can cause deep wounds.

### Steppe Tiger

#### Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 8

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 4 Willpower: 4

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 5  
Move: 9 (18)\* Defense: 9  
Perception: 6 Stun: 4

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 5      | 9      | (4+)      |
| Stealth  | 5    | 1      | 6      | (3)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

#### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception bonus)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival)

Run

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 L    | 0    | 11 L   | (5+) L    |
| Claw    | 0 L    | 0    | 9 L    | (4+) L    |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

## Aquatic Animals

Mars has no expanse of water worth mentioning, and the canals are usually very busy and heavily cultivated. Nonetheless, a variety of aquatic animals has emerged away from the decaying civilization in remote areas off the beaten track.

### Green Koko

This carnivorous species of aquatic snake is characterized by its green-turquoise skin pattern and its impressive body size, specimens of up to 20 feet in length have been sighted. The Green Koko is not venomous, but it has mighty fangs by means of which it can grab a target and keep it in a fixed position, while it entwines its prey with its body before crushing it to death. Once the Koko has managed to wrap its body around a target, this constriction is hard to remove.

### Green Koko

#### Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 9

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 4 Willpower: 4

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 8  
Move: 9 (5)\* Defense: 8  
Perception: 7 Stun: 4

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 7      | 11     | (5+)      |
| Stealth  | 5    | 1      | 5**    | (2+)      |
| Survival | 1    | 4      | 5      | (2+)      |

#### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception bonus)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative bonus)

| Weapons  | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|----------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite     | 3 L    | -1   | 13 L   | (6+) L    |
| Entangle | 8 N    | -1   | 18 N   | (9) N     |

\*Green kokos use their full Move rating for swimming, and half their Move rating when on land

\*\*Green kokos suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

### Knoe Shoshu

Rumors about this terrifying creature had been told by canal pilots for years, some of them are as old as time, but most of them have been largely discounted as nothing more than native superstition. Quite recently however, a French expedition actually killed a knoe shoshu and returned to Earth with its carcass. They appear to be scavengers, although – much like roogies – they do not hesitate to attack when they are hungry. For this purpose, they will even leave the water and climb up onto land.

The body of the knoe shoshu consists of a central body chamber, comparable to a slightly flattened, elongated sphere with a





diameter of about 3 feet, covered with fat and a rubbery, grey-brown hide. It moves by means of four large, heavy flipper feet and grasps its prey with four long tentacles of about 6 to 10 feet length. When forced to hunt, it gulps down its prey whole and alive if it is small, or if confronted with bigger animals, injects a poison through its mouth stinger into the target, then pulls it back into its lair for consumption as its leisure. Fortunately, this poison is now known not to be deadly, although it does cause unconsciousness followed by a period of disorientation and weakness.

One member of the French expedition was stung and carried off into the creature's lair; he later revived, escaped, and was finally found in the swamp, wandering around aimlessly, looking tired and battered, and talking incoherently.



Knoe Shosha

|                                                                                      |        |                 |        |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------|
| Animal Companion 3                                                                   |        |                 |        |           |
| Archetype: Animal                                                                    |        | Health: 11      |        |           |
| Primary Attributes                                                                   |        |                 |        |           |
| Body: 6                                                                              |        | Charisma: 0     |        |           |
| Dexterity: 5                                                                         |        | Intelligence: 1 |        |           |
| Strength: 5                                                                          |        | Willpower: 4    |        |           |
| Secondary Attributes                                                                 |        |                 |        |           |
| Size: 1                                                                              |        | Initiative: 6   |        |           |
| Move: 10                                                                             |        | Defense: 10     |        |           |
| Perception: 5                                                                        |        | Stun: 6         |        |           |
| Skills                                                                               | Base   | Levels          | Rating | (Average) |
| Athletics                                                                            | 5      | 3               | 8      | (4)       |
| Athletics (Climb)                                                                    |        |                 | 9      | (4+)      |
| Brawl                                                                                | 5      | 6               | 13     | (6+)      |
| Empathy                                                                              | 1      | 1               | 2      | (1)       |
| Stealth                                                                              | 5      | 4               | 8*     | (4)       |
| Survival                                                                             | 1      | 3               | 4      | (2)       |
| Talents                                                                              |        |                 |        |           |
| Dual Wield                                                                           |        |                 |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl bonus)                                                      |        |                 |        |           |
| Venom (temporary -1 penalty on Dexterity and Strength rolls for the effected victim) |        |                 |        |           |
| Weapons                                                                              | Rating | Size            | Attack | (Average) |
| Bite (Venom)                                                                         | 2 L    | -1              | 14 L   | (7) L     |
| Tentacle                                                                             | 0 L    | -1              | 12 L   | (6) L     |
| Grapple                                                                              | 0 N    | -1              | 12 N   | (6) N     |

\*Knoe shoshus suffer a -1 Size penalty on all Stealth rolls

Cissawaan

The cissawaan is a lithe, quick aquatic lizard with eight legs. Although it feeds on fish, it attacks anything in range, including ruumet breehr. The blue and grey lizard has on its back a small, but eye-catching ridge of bright red color which runs right up to the tip of its mouth. It measures almost 6 feet in length, half of which accounts for its tail. Cissawaans live in groups of about fifty individuals and they have been known to push over canoes. The best defense against them seems to be to climb a tree, as they are quite clumsy out of water, completely incapable of climbing, and will soon lose interest and wander off. In cooler regions, cissawaans fall into hibernation between the end of the Flood and the beginning of the Flow season (which would be equivalent to autumn and spring on Earth), in the course of which the whole group cuddles up together in one hideout. If woken up however, they will untangle their huddle in an instance and pounce on the intruder.

Cissawaan

|                                    |        |                 |        |           |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------|
| Animal Companion 2                 |        |                 |        |           |
| Archetype: Animal                  |        | Health: 10      |        |           |
| Primary Attributes                 |        |                 |        |           |
| Body: 5                            |        | Charisma: 0     |        |           |
| Dexterity: 5                       |        | Intelligence: 0 |        |           |
| Strength: 3                        |        | Willpower: 4    |        |           |
| Secondary Attributes               |        |                 |        |           |
| Size: 1                            |        | Initiative: 5   |        |           |
| Move: 8 (4)*                       |        | Defense: 9      |        |           |
| Perception: 4                      |        | Stun: 5         |        |           |
| Skills                             | Base   | Levels          | Rating | (Average) |
| Brawl                              | 3      | 4               | 7      | (3+)      |
| Stealth                            | 5      | 2               | 6**    | (3+)      |
| Survival                           | 0      | 4               | 6      | (3)       |
| Talents                            |        |                 |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus) |        |                 |        |           |
| Weapons                            | Rating | Size            | Attack | (Average) |
| Bite                               | 3 L    | -1              | 9 L    | (4+) L    |
| Claw                               | 0 L    | -1              | 6 L    | (3) L     |

\*Cissawaans use their full Move rating for swimming, and half their Move rating when on land

\*\*Cissawaans suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Flying Animals

There are no birds on Mars or any other kind of animal that uses its wings to take off into the air. For the flyers of Mars, wings serve primarily as a means of navigation and speed control, while their lift capacity is due to a unique substance which is poorly understood and has yet to be scientifically examined. One effect of this substance is that most flying animals on Mars are capable of hovering in one spot – provided that they can withstand the prevailing winds. Some of these creatures, for example, the eelowaan, only land to hunt for food, but have no legs suitable to move effectively on solid ground.

Durge Fly

This plague of the Martian desert regions was named after Morgan Durge, the man whose unfortunate fate was to be the first Earthman ever to be eaten alive by a swarm of Durge flies. Fully grown, the insect is almost 1½ inches long and resembles an

Mars



Earth horsefly. Its carapace is of a polished bronze color and is often manufactured into jewelry by the local people.

Durge flies only appear once a year, though the exact date of this event cannot be predicted. Under favorable weather conditions, myriads of flies dig their way up to the surface, take off into the air, and set off to a month-long feeding frenzy, consuming everything that they come across on their way. The male flies die shortly after mating, the female flies right after depositing their eggs into the soil. Although generally not aggressive, if Durge flies are disturbed, the whole swarm will attack the largest moving object and begin feeding on it. Thanks to their mighty mandibles, these flies are capable of stripping the skin off the body of a large animal, or that of a human. Even if no one loses their lives as the result of a Durge swarm, their attack may mean the end of a caravan, since they injure draft animals and consume or pollute the caravan's supplies.

According to the beliefs of the superstitious Martians, Durge flies are the medium by which the spirits of the dead leave this world. That is why they are afraid to kill them and prefer to keep them away with fire and smoke instead. They will even slaughter a ruumet breehr and leave it behind in the hope that it will lure the flies away from their camp rather than attack a swarm.

### Durge Fly (Swarm)

#### Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Insect Health: 14\*

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0  
Strength: 4 Willpower: 6

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 4  
Move: 8 (4)\*\* Defense: 8  
Perception: 6 Stun: 6

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 4      | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth  | 4    | 3      | 5***   | (2+)      |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

#### Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 L    | -2   | 8 L    | (4) L     |

\* Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict full damage on a swarm. All other weapons inflict a maximum of one point of damage per hit

\*\*Durge flies use their full Move rating for flying, and half their Move rating when on land

\*\*\*The swarm suffers a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

### Eelowaan

Eelowaans are flying carnivores with a long, snake-like body of light grey color. These vicious monsters mainly feed on small herbivorous animals, but they are definitely not averse to bigger prey either. Their means of attack – nonpoisonous fangs and constriction – size – up to 20 feet in length, and general appearance indicates that they at least share a common ancestor with the Green Koko. However, the eelowaan's capacity for flight – by manipulation of lifting membranes that have a similar biochemistry as liftwood, is clearly the product of a radically divergent evolution.

### Eelowaan

#### Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 5 Willpower: 4

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 8  
Move: 10 Defense: 9  
Perception: 7 Stun: 5

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 5    | 6      | 11     | (5+)      |
| Stealth  | 5    | 1      | 5*     | (2+)      |
| Survival | 1    | 4      | 5      | (2+)      |

#### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception bonus)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative bonus)

| Weapons  | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|----------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite     | 4 L    | -1   | 14 L   | (7) L     |
| Entangle | 6 N    | -1   | 16 N   | (8) N     |

\*Eelowaans suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

### Great Kommota

Long thought to be extinct, there have been many sightings of these gigantic flying scavengers in recent years. The kommota's body size, as well as the span of its transparent wings, can reach a length of up to 20 feet. Their barrel-shaped trunk leads to a triangular head and with their two big claws at the end of their short legs they can pick up even large objects. Kommotas have displayed a disturbing tendency to attack small ships and other sorts of prey by dropping boulders on their target. This technique has already caused at least one vessel to crash and may also account for many other disappearances over the years. Once the kommota has killed its prey, it waits for them to 'ripen' for a while and then eat the carrion later. In the meantime however, it keeps watch to prevent anyone from snatching away its meal.

### Great Kommota

#### Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal Health: 14

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 6 Willpower: 4

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 4 Initiative: 5  
Move: 10 (5)\* Defense: 6  
Perception: 5 (9) Stun: 6

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 6    | 4      | 10     | (5)       |
| Stealth  | 4    | 2      | 2**    | (1)       |
| Survival | 1    | 4      | 7      | (3+)      |

#### Talents

Keen Sense (+4 bonus on all sight-based Perception rolls)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

| Weapons    | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|------------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite       | 2 L    | -4   | 8 L    | (4) L     |
| Claw       | 4 L    | -4   | 10 L   | (5) L     |
| Drop Stone | 4 L    | -4   | 10 L   | (5) L     |

\*Great kommotas use their full Move rating for flying, and half their Move rating when on land

\*\*Great kommotas suffer a -4 Size penalty on Stealth rolls



## Flying Skrill



A Flying skrill has a long body of light blue or blue-white color and two straight horns protruding forward on its head. By stretching out its two upper arm-like limbs, a flying skrill can spread its wings – thin membranes that span the length of its arms, and then fly. Its tail serves as a stabilizer while it is in flight. This flying plant eater, which appears to subsist of the leaves of liftwood trees and bushes, grows to be quite large, approximately 8 feet in length with a 13 feet wingspan, and produces enough lifting ability to carry a rider. However, only the people of the Queln have yet succeeded in domesticating the flying skrill.

Interestingly, there are two different, but closely related species of skrill, one inhabiting the south hemisphere and the other one the north hemisphere, which differ from each other mainly in the shape their skull and their lifting capacity.

## Flying Skrill

### Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

### Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0  
Dexterity: 6 Intelligence: 1  
Strength: 4 Willpower: 3

### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 7  
Move: 10 (5)\* Defense: 11  
Perception: 4 Stun: 6

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 3      | 7      | (3+)      |
| Stealth  | 6    | 2      | 7**    | (3+)      |
| Survival | 1    | 5      | 8      | (4)       |

### Talents

### Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival bonus)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 1 L    | -1   | 7 L    | (3+) L    |

\*Flying skrolls use their full Move rating for flying, and half their Move rating when on land

\*\*Flying skrolls suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

## Legendary Creatures

Once, the prehistoric fauna of Mars was as extensive and varied as that on Earth, before the water disappeared eons ago. As extensive as Martian archives are, to date only fragments have been found that mention the relics from a time when the planet was lushly rich with flora and fauna.

Naturalists and paleontologists from Earth have managed to correlate Martian legends with a few actual fossil discoveries, their reports painting a tantalizing yet hauntingly familiar picture. The animal life of prehistoric Mars shows many resemblances to that of Earth in its present epoch.

That is why many scientists consider the course of evolution on Mars as a prediction of what is to come for the evolution on Earth one day.

## Plants

### Martian Cabbage

The Martian Cabbage, also called the Anson-Cabbage after its discoverer, thrives in the regions close to the poles, where icy winds blow down from the glaciers at night. In order to expose as much of its surface to the sun as possible, the Martian Cabbage covers the ground with its huge succulent leaves. These grow up to a length of 80 feet, radiating out from a mighty taproot that draws up precious water from far under the underground. At nightfall, these leaves roll up firmly, forming a 'cabbage head' roughly 10 to 15 feet in diameter that protects the plant against the cold. There are rumors about a cloud ship captain who crashed a few years ago and survived the nights until his rescue by placing himself on an inner leave of Martian Cabbage and letting himself get enclosed at the center of the head, where he read Nietzsche's *Thus spoke Zarathustra* by the light of a Ruhmkorff lamp. To this day however, any experiment with animals has unfortunately led to asphyxia – with or without Nietzsche.

Martian Cabbage is inedible except for the few buds sprouting out of the leaf veins which either taste musty-peppery, sweet and sour, or like nothing at all. It is considered to be a weed because when searching for aquifers, its taproot is capable of drilling even through the vitrified grounds of the canals. For this reason, even the tiniest little Martian Cabbage is usually pulled out and burnt right away.

Special ability: Spending the night in a Martian Cabbage protects against freezing temperatures down to -20°C or -4°F, that is by adding 20°C, or 36°F, to the outside temperature. However, the oxygen level will fall which requires a Body roll once per hour. In case of a fail, see Suffocation on p. 214.

In case someone tries to free himself or others out of the Martian Cabbage, the plant has Health 12.

## Pushti

The Pushti tree only thrives in well watered regions of Mars, where it can grow up to a height of 20 feet. It has a symbiotic relationship with the Pushti monkey which lives on and under



the Pushti tree (p. 72): Its inconspicuous seed can only sprout after having passed the digestive tract of the monkey. As soon as it is released into the soil it develops a tuberous root which is erroneously often called Pushti fruit. After a while, a new tree may grow out of this seed.

The similarity of the Pushti root and a Terran melon is limited to their oval shape as well as their size of 12 to 15 inches in length. Its skin is rust-colored and pithy, its flesh pale red and veined. The root is well known for its delicious taste and is therefore considered a delicacy amongst visitors from Earth. The high societies of London and Paris spare no effort in importing the 'Pushti fruit' from Mars, although all attempts to cultivate the Pushti tree on Earth have to date failed.

As a curious side note one is a lurid and obscene article concerning the relationship of the Pushti tree and the Pushti monkey published in the *Journal of the Royal British Martian Geographic Society*, which led to deep consternation at the Court of St James's and entailed an inquiry in the House of Commons, almost leading to the shutdown of this honorable society. Any repulsive rumors concerning the Pushti monkey's behavior are entirely fictitious.

## Martians

*"My conclusion is thus plain and simple: Intelligent alien species in the whole cosmos must resemble Homo Sapiens to a great extent."*

**Konstantin Eduardovich Tsiolkovsky**

There is not just one people inhabiting Mars, but three, each quite different in terms of both their culture and their physical appearance. The civilized Canal Martians (p. 78ff.) are the heirs of the vanished high culture of Mars. They mainly live in

the cities and along the canals of their ancestors. Their liftwood ships cross the Martian skies.

The tribes of the Hill Martians (p. 82ff.), on the contrary, live in or tramp through the hills, steppes, and deserts between the canals and the cities. Their lifestyle varies markedly from one tribe to another.

The High Martians are feared by Martians and Humans alike. They are considered to be savage barbarians and ruthless fiends. Unlike the other Martian peoples, they are the only ones able to fly by their own means.

## Canal Martians

Culturally as well as technologically, the Canal Martians are the most advanced of all the Martian races. They account for the majority of Mars' highest achievements in architecture, science, and philosophy. However, their civilization has been in a phase of creeping decay for more than twenty centuries.

## Physical Appearance

When Edison and Armstrong landed on Mars, they were quite surprised by how much the inhabitants of the Red Planet resembled humans from Earth. In external appearance, Canal Martians present a most pleasing, albeit still quite alien picture. The canal people are rather tall and slender. Due to Mars' thin atmosphere, they have a remarkable lung volume giving them massive, athletic-looking chests.

Their skin color is of light ochre shades, sometimes with a yellowish tinge. Their fine hair is usually black or brown. Occasionally, a Canal Martian will have sandy-colored hair. This is considered to be a sign of noble descent, for according to a legend the twelve best warriors of ancient ruler Seldon were all





blond. Their big, pointed ears give Canal Martians a faint resemblance to elves – at least in the eyes of Terran observers. Unlike humans, they have only four instead of five fingers on their hand – including their thumb. Likewise, their feet only have four toes too, including a vestigial ‘thumb’ located on what would be called the heel on a human foot. However, unlike their High Martian ancestors, they cannot use their feet as a grasping appendage. The digestive and respiratory systems of Canal Martians are nearly identical to humans’, to such an extent that both races can eat the same food. However, Earthmen should be careful when enjoying Martian cuisine; Martian dishes are extremely hot and spicy, typically bringing tears to the eyes of any human who consumes them, even Siamese and Mexican people.

## Dress

Within the Martian city-states, there is a dazzling variety of different fashion styles. From the tall conical hats of the Dioscurians to the dark robes of the Oenotrians and the kaftans of the Parhooni printed with colorful geometrical patterns, on the streets of the Martian cities, one will see a varied collection of dress styles. A description of every single style found in the cities of Mars would go far beyond the scope of this book. Generally speaking, Canal Martian dress evokes the fashion of antique oriental realms like that of the old Egyptians or the Persians in the time of Alexander the Great. With Canal Martians and humans being so alike concerning their anatomy, Canal Martian clothes can be worn by humans as human clothes can be worn by Canal Martians. The only exception being the footwear, for Martian feet are of a different shape than human ones.

For that reason, there is a growing number of earth-friendly Canal Martians that wear clothes designed and cut in a European fashion. On Earth, in turn, dressing gowns adapted to Martian patterns and ties embroidered with Canal Martian ornaments are very fashionable at present.

## Culture, Science, and Technology

The civilization of the modern Canal Martians is the result of 35 millennia of documented history. Despite the fact that they are experienced farmers, accomplished builders, and skilled artists, they are nevertheless obviously a society in decline. The Martian city-states appear to be huge and crowded – the hustle and bustle in the streets however, can only detract from the fact that the Canal Martians are but a mere shadow of their ancestors. Once, the city-states of the Red Planet were populated by millions – today they only count some tens of thousands. The Martians of the ancient times might have constructed the Grand Canals or built wondrous electrical and optical machines, or maybe even split the atom – proof of the keen achievements of the ancient Martian civilization can be found everywhere, but to the Canal Martians of today, only small fragments of their ancestors’ former knowledge are left. Their inability to maintain the extraordinarily complex machinery of the ancient times is just another sad testimony to the downfall of a once great race. The Canal Martian culture has been in a stagnant state for countless centuries. They would prefer to stick resolutely to their traditions without questioning them rather than break new grounds



or even dare to change and alter the remnants of their ancestors worshipped in many places. The artisans of the Martian metropolis continue to copy antique styles invented hundreds of generations before them; Martian scholars memorize knowledge without developing their own thoughts; and the priest-technicians make the correct observances before even daring to touch the ancient machinery under their care.

The Canal Martian mind has lost its innovative spark. It is only since the contact with humankind that some of them seem to have awakened from their lethargy and began to question the ways that their ancestors have been following for millennia. At present, the Canal Martian civilization finds itself in a state roughly comparable to that of the European renaissance. The printed word, the production of reliable firearms, mechanical clocks, lens-grinding, and similar handicrafts are widely practiced, but the fear of the artisan guilds and their reluctance to leave well-known paths hinders the further technological development of Canal Martian society. The greatest masterpieces of Martian technology are the legendary cloudships of Mars. Built out of liftwood and driven by wind and muscle power, they can reach even the farthest corners of the planet. Canal Martians are also known for their brilliant goldsmiths and their exquisite jewelry fetches high prices amongst the jewelers of Earth.

As much as Canal Martian science and society is mired in what some Earthmen like to call the ‘Martian Middle Ages’, many aspects of the wide range of knowledge that the Canal Martians have accumulated over the centuries is beyond the knowledge of mankind. The theory of evolution, for instance, is by far more accepted amongst Canal Martians than amongst



humans – after all, it has been known on Mars for countless centuries. Also in the field of mathematics, the knowledge of the Canal Martian scholars exceeds their Terran colleagues easily, but as in all other domains, such scholars only recite the research results of their ancestors without adding new thoughts to the pre-existing achievements. The only field in which the Canal Martians continue to be truly and constantly creative is literature. Indeed, such is the value that literature is held by Canal Martian society and such is the great quantity of books that are published from year to the next, it is quite common for members of the Canal Martian lower classes to be capable of reading. Time alone can tell if the Canal Martians will be able to regain their former glory or if they will be stuck in dusty stagnation forever.

## Subcultures

Every Canal Martian city basically is a subculture of its own. There are almost as many such subcultures as there are cities on the Red Planet of which the four most prominent Canal Martian peoples are the Parhoon, the Oenotrians, the Tossians, and the Dioscurians.

### The Parhoon

Quite liberal by Canal Martian standards, exceedingly business-minded, and unfortunately, incurably superstitious, the Parhoon count amongst the best allies of the British on Mars and are the most widely known Canal Martian people on Earth. If on Earth something is labeled, rather unspecifically, as being ‘Canal Martian’, it is most probably of Parhoon origin. As a result of their comparably close contact to the Earth, the Parhoon do not take the old traditions quite as seriously anymore. This is why on Earth, the Parhoon are considered to be especially liberal and open-minded. Other Martian peoples rather take the liberal way of the Parhoon to be a sign of particularly severe degeneration and betrayal of their own race.

### The Oenotrians

The aggressive and xenophobic Oenotrians are in many ways the exact opposite of the hospitable Parhoon. Their society is ruled by a caste of fanatic warrior-priests.

Trade is strictly regulated and every deviation from the established traditions of proud Oenotria is punished brutally. In comparison to the easy going Parhoon, many Earthmen regard the Oenotrians as the ‘villains’ of the Red Planet, but many Canal Martians however, have a more nuanced point of view. Oenotrians may be humorless militarists, but their city league is almost free of corruption and delinquency.

### The Tossians

The Tossians rule over the only major territorial state on Mars and are actually rather a conglomerate of several subcultures. They are unified by the belief that only the Tossian emperor and his officials will save the Canal Martians from further decline – a misbelief, for the administrative staff as well as the emperor himself are highly corrupt. On the surface, the cities of the Tossian Empire appear to be cosmopolitan, but this hides a society dominated by rigidly traditionalist thinking, scared to the bone of any kind of change. Even many Canal Martians, already quite tradition-conscious, reject the empire’s paranoid and conservative outlook. Currently, the empire is struggling with five different resistance groups and stands on the edge of disaster. This is why the emperor has just been seeking contact to human authorities, even though these Earthmen could bring about what Tossians fear the most – change!

### The Dioscurians

Nowhere else on Mars, is society dominated so much by the artisans’ guilds as in Dioscuria. Firmly under the control of the city-state’s long-established families, the guilds of Dioscuria determine at birth the future profession of any young Dioscurian. The guilds are extremely possessive about their technical knowledge, dress up all of their activities in pompous, almost religious-like rituals, and severely punish anyone who transgresses the guild bylaws – bylaws that have become actual law in Dioscuria. Leaving the own guild generally leads to the banishment of the former guild member, while anyone who divulges guild secrets – its practices and its technical knowledge, is likely to be stoned to death as a punishment. Though Dioscurian craftsmen of almost any field are considered to be the best of their profession, both the organization of the guilds and both the constant disputes and lack of co-operation between them frequently hinders the efficient production of goods and services in the city. (Currently, for example, there are no window frames being produced in Dioscuria, since the carpenters’ guild is at odds with the glaziers’ fraternity.)

Though technically ruled by a noble Parhoon family, the city of Dioscuria is firmly in the hands of the quarreling and exceedingly bureaucratic guilds – a situation, which despite all of the sympathy for the hard-working and skilled Dioscurians invariably frustrates the German colonial rulers.

## Religion

*“God at the heart of the world hear our prayer. Send us water so that our cattle shall not suffer thirst!”*

*God at the heart of the world hear our prayer. Send us water so that the crops on our fields shall not wither!*

*God at the heart of our world hear our prayer. Send us water so that the sand shall not devour our canal!*

*God at the heart of the world hear our prayer. Send us water so that we shall live to praise You!”*

**Traditional Parhoon prayer**

If there is one thing that the Canal Martians have plenty of, it is religions. The diversity of the various religious beliefs is just as wide as that on Earth. Almost every city-state has its own state religion, mystery cults, and sects. Nevertheless, there are certain basic features that all of the Canal Martian religions have in common, the most obvious one being the mystical worship of ‘Arina Stones’. Almost every city has a so-called ‘Arina Stone’ which is considered to be the keystone of the city and is regarded as being particularly sacred. Size, form, and degree of worship of the stone varies from one city to the next. In Moeris Lacus, for example, the Arina Stone is 15 feet high and weighs 30 tons. Only the city fathers are allowed to look at it; to normal mortals, this is forbidden under penalty of death. The Arina Stone of the city Alclyon, on the other hand, is a small piece of art which easily fits into a glass cabinet and has recently been borrowed by a British research institute with the permission of the canal prince.

Some Canal Martians even believe in a mighty and gracious entity located at the center of the planet. This being is often identified as mother, father, or ‘God at the Heart of the World’ and is believed to be the creator deity. Some religions, like that dominating in Dioscuria, worship this entity in a monotheistic manner, while in other religions it only presents the highest deity in a pantheon of several gods.

The Canal Martians believe that one of the gods in this pantheon, the divine embodiment of Mars and all of its liv-



ing things, to be sick or dying. Theories as to the source of this illness vary amongst the religions. At times, it is the Canal Martians' lack of faith that makes the Highest One sick; at others, it is blamed on the ramshackle state of the canals, the vital life-giving channels that exceed the capacity of Martian intelligence to keep them in good repair; and sometimes, there are demons like the infernal 'Worm God' that are trying to harm the Highest One. This Worm God is seen as a particular blight upon Canal Martian culture, although there are constant reports of decadent Canal Martians having joined perverse cults dedicated to this foul demon.

Besides the Worm Cultists, who are said to sometimes make living sacrifices to the immortal and mighty 'Old Ones', there are many other apocalyptic cults in Canal Martian society. The many Martian religions do not agree on whether or not Mars can be saved. For example, the peaceful cult of the Canal Keepers believes that the 'God at the Heart of the World', his fleshly avatar being the great Seldon himself, will live for as long there is water running down the canals. On the other hand, the nihilistic Worm Cultists mentioned above believe that 'the Ailing Mother Mars' is doomed anyway and that it would be better to join the side of her victorious adversaries, the Followers of the Worm. The warrior-priests of Oenotria, in turn, preach that Mars will flourish again once the 'infection' that the planet currently suffers from, that is, the demonic creatures from faraway worlds that now openly wander the streets of nearly every city, has been wiped out. For this reason, travel to Oenotria by Earthmen is advised against by most governments, at least not without an armed guard.

Similarly, no Canal Martian religion can agree as to the exact nature of the afterlife. Their common ground is the belief that the beyond, the paradise, or at least the place where the souls of the dead dwell between death and rebirth lies within the center of the planet. 'Heaven', the cold between the worlds, is widely believed to be the residence of demons and evil spirits. According to many legends, the Worm God was also once one of these evil spirits who somehow found his way from 'Heaven' down to Mars.

The Martian moon, *Kashaltorek* – known to the Earthmen as Phobos -, is considered to be the home, or base, of these demons. The Canal Martians have always been scared of Phobos and its red glow in contrast to dark *Sarostarr* – known to the Earthmen as Deimos. As a matter of fact, the superstitious belief that there exists a gate to hell, or even worse, on Phobos is beginning to gain ground on Earth, too. This is due in part to the strange light phenomena on the moon's surface that can be seen from space and to the fact that to this day, no ether flyer has ever returned from Phobos. Not only believers on Mars take this as a confirmation of all their worst fears.

### Political and Social System

The various and different governmental systems of the Canal Martians are presented in the section on the city-states of Mars on page 87ff.. Below the level of city-state government, Canal Martians are generally organized by clans or extended families. A clan often lives together in a shared apartment building or city block. The countless Canal Martian street gangs usually are also organized according to family membership. The organizational structures of these extended families vary in detail from one city to the next. In Syrtis Major, the head of the extended family is a matriarch, the so-called 'great aunt', while in Parhoon, the destiny of the extended family is decided by an almost democratic 'family council'. Even amongst the nobility of Mars, the extended family plays an important role, although they witness much

more internal family feuds, even bloody ones, than it is the case amongst the extended families of the lower classes.

If these clans and families are the first pillar upon which Canal Martian society is based, then the second is formed by the professional communities which can best be compared with the guilds of Europe. In most cities, these communities are rather loosely organized associations primarily responsible for the education and professional training of young Martians. Usually, a Canal Martian joins a guild at the age of five which not only trains him in his profession, but also teaches him how to read and write. The guilds differ in organization and in power from one city-state to the next. In some cities, the guilds serve a purely nominal function, while in others, public life is controlled entirely by rigid, and most often corrupt, guilds and communities.

### Canal Martians and Humans

Amongst all the extraterrestrial peoples humankind has yet met, Canal Martians are their best allies and their worst enemies at the same time. In the eyes of most Earthmen, Canal Martians are also perceived as the only civilized extraterrestrials, even though the 'degeneration of the Martian people' leads many people to look down on them. The extraordinary cultural and technological achievements cannot be denied and earn a good deal of respect from even the most stubborn of human racist. Further, the superiority of Earth culture and society over that of the Canal Martians cannot be taken for granted given the fact that their militaries are capable of competing on a par with the European colonial powers – as currently demonstrated by the Oenotrians. How much of the population of Earth regard the Canal Martians can be roughly divided into two camps. The members of the first tend to be idealistically enthusiastic and fascinated by the ancient culture of the Canal Martians, while the members of the second are scared of the 'Dormant Mars' that lies only a few weeks' travel away and fear the day that the sinister Martians will rediscover their highly evolved technological heritage and then 'blow away' the Earth and everyone on it.

The Canal Martians' view on humankind differs in a quite similar way. To many of them, the new arrivals from Earth are good friends and business partners, bringing valuable goods and new ideas to Mars. This faction hopes that the contact to the Earthmen will put an end to the crippling cultural stagnation and believes that the vigor of the young peoples from Earth will infect those of Mars, leading them into a new and better era. Another big faction welcomes humans with a certain amount of good will, although at the same time rejects these naïve intruders for their strange thoughts and habits. These Martians do not get tired of pointing out the superiority of their race in age and wisdom and that the Earthmen will have to learn one day that their weird ways are but cultural and technological dead-ends.

A vociferous and brutal minority, the 'Groundcleansers' believe that humans pose a threat to all life on Mars and must therefore be destroyed under all circumstances.

When encountered on the street, the attitude of the typical Canal Martian towards the men of Earth will depend upon two factors. The first is the political orientation of the city-state the Earthman is visiting, the second is the nationality of the visiting Earthman. The British are quite popular outside the Oenotrian spheres of influence. The Germans, Russians, and Japanese have a good reputation as well. The French and the Americans however, are viewed with suspicion. Although they make good business partners, their political opinions are too bizarre and too exotic for the average Canal Martian to really grasp. Com-



pounding this attitude is the fact that one can never be truly sure with the Frenchmen that they are not secretly Belgians in disguise. In Belgian-controlled areas, Belgians have the reputation of being tyrannical and ruthless savages.

## Hill Martians

Hill Martians live on the edge of the civilized world, beyond the reach of the canal princes' power. They do not share a single culture since they have adapted to the specific conditions of their environment. Some tribes are nomads, constantly moving about to survive in the harsh nature of Mars, while others are sedentary and practice agriculture.

## Physical Appearance

Hill Martians are slightly smaller than Canal Martians, which leaves them taller than all, but the largest of humans. In overall appearance, they are stockier and somewhat closer to human proportions, but they still more closely resemble Canal Martians than they do humans. Their most notable feature, aside from their coloration, is the fatty mass or hump between their shoulder blades, which is a water storage organ – an adaptation to their arid habitat. This hump does not stick out prominently, but it does serve to give them a more massive appearance about their shoulders. Their ear flaps are larger than those of Canal Martians, and possess a definite ribbing pattern, a feature they have in common with High Martians. Their hair color is darker than that of Canal Martians, tending towards brown, red, or occasionally, black. Unlike the almost hairless Canal Martians, Hill Martians are very hairy and often have dense hair growing on their shoulders. Their skin color is darker than that of Canal Martians and has more of a gold-brown ochre tone than the pale yellow of the city dwellers. Like all Martians, Hill Martians have a vestigial, thumb-like toe. While this toe is more pronounced than that of the Canal Martians, it is not opposable like that of the High Martians'. Like Canal Martians, Hill Martians' hands have only three fingers, but they are otherwise similar in form to the human hand. Their digestive and respiratory systems are nearly identical to humans', and both can eat the same sort of fare.

## Dress

Those Hill Martians who live near civilization and who are in frequent contact with the city-state merchants sometimes wear clothes similarly fashioned as those of Canal Martians, though they are typically simpler and adapted to their rough lifestyle. Most Hill Martians however, wear some form of primitive homespun clothing made from plant fibers, leather, and fur. Members of the tribes that inhabit the warmer steppes or equatorial regions often only wear loin cloth, and if necessary, chest cloth. Hill Martian dress varies heavily in pattern and ornament from one tribe to the next.

## Culture, Handicraft, and Technology

Hill Martians are generally more primitive than Canal Martians, both in terms of their appearance and their technology level. Many of them are very skilled when it comes to crafting wood, leather, or bones, but when it comes to metalwork, they typically lack the practical and artistic aptitude of Canal Martian craftsmen. The few sedentary tribes in possession of both a forge and the necessary raw materials rarely produce anything more than coarse worked metalwork from the ore. If a tribe wants more

## Myths about Earthmen

News about beings from out of space which landed on Mars a couple of years ago and have been wandering across the planet since, has long since made its way to even the most secluded of Martian cities. The most wondrous rumors and legends about the strange visitors from space have arisen and continue to circulate amongst those Canal Martians that have not yet had any contact with the Earthlings. The following are perhaps the most popular and bizarre myths about the inhabitants of the blue planet.

- The British are so disgusted by intercourse, that they are incapable of producing their own offspring. To avoid extinction, the British rob children from other peoples. In the land of Britannia, the abducted children are then forced to drink a magic potion that transforms them into British people.
- The peculiar machines of the Earthmen produce so much soot and smoke because they need it to survive like Martians need air and water. An Earthling that cannot breathe smoke for more than two days dies of smoke deficiency. Where there is no smoking machine nearby, humans need cigarettes to survive.
- The truth is, there are no Earthmen. The creatures that landed on Mars a few years ago are in reality disguised space demons from Phobos.
- The Belgians have built up a huge empire on Earth that spans the whole planet. The non-Belgian Earthmen on Mars are those who have fled the Belgians on Earth.
- Earthmen are able to breathe under water because their home planet is completely flooded.
- As a matter of fact, blacks are as fair-skinned as whites. Their masters just paint them dark brown to mark them as servants.

advanced metal implements, it either trades with nearby Canal Martian merchants, or simply steals from them.

Hill Martian weapons are designed for hunting and only tangentially used in warfare. The Hill Martian armory primarily consists of primitive weapons such as bows, spears, daggers, and axes. The use of gunpowder weapons is rare, although there are exceptions. Tribes that trade with Canal Martians, like the Wagon Masters of Meroe or the Urghuul, will quite often field firearms. In comparison to the Riders of the Nepenthes-Thoth, the Queln, and similar tribes, these 'blunderbusses' are rare and precious objects.

## Subcultures

### The Queln

The nomadic living Queln are one of the most exotic tribes of Mars. They have managed to tame the flying skril and to train them as mounts. As raiders and hunters, they roam the skies above the endless steppes of Mars and are feared up and down



the canals by cloud ships and caravans alike. Unlike High Martians, the Queln are indeed honorable warriors, treating their prisoners and slaves with respect. Some prisoners have even been accepted into the tribe after having proved their warrior skills in the course of the famous combat games of the Queln.

### **The Wagon Masters of Meroe**

This nomadic tribe of the hills and plains migrates with the rumet breehr herds that form their livelihood. They use the animals for every aspect of their lives and move about in huge single or multi-family wagons pulled by the gigantic beasts.

The Wagon Masters are considered to be among the most civilized of the Hill Martian tribes and their appearance is welcomed all along the trade caravan routes. They have a reputation for being savvy traders – as a matter of fact, the trade in smoked Scaambra Tea between Meroe and the Tossian Empire is under the sole control of the rich Wagon Master clans.

### **The Riders of the Nepenthes-Thoth**

The lifestyle of these Martians is very similar to that of the classic mounted tribes of Earth, approximately a cross between the North American Sioux and the Asian Tartars. They ride gashants instead of horses and roam the vast Nepenthes-Thoth and Neith Steppes. They live off hunting, animal trapping, and raiding caravans and their more settled cousins.

### **The Veiled People of Cydonia**

Little is known about this mysterious tribe that wanders through the deserts of Cydonia. Earthmen often compare this people to the Bedouins of the Arabic Peninsula. Their name derives from the scarfs and masks the Cydonians use to cover their faces to protect themselves from drifting sand. Generally calm, cultivated, and hospitable, but nevertheless possessing grim determination and military precision, they prevent strangers from transgressing the 'Holy Border' and penetrating the heart of Cydonia, the legendary Face of Mars. They seem to have a special relationship with the Canal Keepers.

### **The Urghuul**

The Urghuul are one of those Martian peoples that until now humans have only heard about from native reports. They form one of the few sedentary Hill Martian tribes and live in small villages in the coniferous forests near the southern polar caps. The Urghuul are a wary people of mountain farmers, lumberjacks, hunters, and animal trappers. Their skills in handling throwing axes and hunting rifles are legendary. They hate nomads and would do anything to keep them away from their villages.

### **The Hermit Tribes of Tan-Puu**

To the average Earthman, there is hardly another Martian people that looks more peculiar than the members of this tribal community that lives close to the equator. The Tan-Puu never wear more than a loin cloth, if at all, and are covered with red tattoos all over their bodies. They are called the 'hermit tribes' because they live far away from any of the other

peoples of Mars where they have focused their attention wholly on the otherworldly realm of spirits and demons. When encountered, Tan-Puu are often in the habit of talking to outsiders in the form of cryptic rhymes. No other people is said to be more versed in the use of poisons and psychedelic drugs than the hermit tribes. Amongst the other peoples of Mars, (High Martians included, the Tan-Puu are considered a holy people of oracles and prophets. They say, God (or the gods) himself punishes the one who lays hand on one of these sand hermits.

## **Religion**

Hill Martians practice a simple and pragmatic animism. They believe in spirits living in the wind, the grass of the steppes, and in the animals of the wild. If they want to convey advice or warnings, these spirits speak to the mortals through subtle signs in the natural environment or in dreams. The exact rituals and characteristics of the various tribal religions are as different as the tribes themselves. There are however, several aspects that all tribal religions of the Hill Martians have in common. The spirits of the dead always return to the shelter of a mighty and gracious entity at the center of Mars. The Hill Martians' oral traditions are rich in myths and legends about encounters between Martians and the animals of the wild. Like earthly fables, these stories always impart an instructive lesson. They often not only transmit moral instructions, but also worldly knowledge about the tribe's





surrounding lands and territories. Every tribe has a shaman. He watches out for messages and signs of the spirits in the lands and skies about him and counsels the tribe elders. Besides the chief, he ranks amongst the most important personalities of a tribe. At times, he is even more influential than the chief himself.

## Political and Social Structure

Calling the primitive tribal and clan organizations of Hill Martians a government is perhaps a misuse of that word. In general, a Hill Martian tribe is either ruled by a council of elders, which elects a chief from amongst their number, or it is led by a patriarch – less often a matriarch, who heads a family organization. It is not unknown for several clans or tribes to form a loose alliance. When this occurs, a high king is assigned – the selection procedure can be carried out by vote or ritual combat. This high king however, generally holds little actual power and what little power he has, he rarely exercises for very long.

## Hill Martians and Humans

To date, few Hill Martians have had little more than passing contact with the men of Earth. Thus it is no surprise that their attitude towards humans varies greatly. Many harbor a mild dislike of all Earthmen, since rumors about the atrocities that the Belgians have committed in the Coprates Catena have already reached the uncivilized steppes. Some though, do exhibit a certain curiosity about the ‘red ones’. The attitude of the typical Hill Martian towards any Earthman he meets will depend very much on first impressions. Hill Martians respect courage, determination, and skill with a weapon; demonstration of these qualities will go a long way toward impressing the inhabitants of the steppes.

Humans on the other hand tend to lump all Hill Martians together. All peoples of the hills, regardless of the cultural diversity, are considered to be little more than the equivalent of ‘Martian Indians’ – and all that implies. For some they are bloodthirsty barbarians, for others they are noble savages such as those described in *Last of the Mohicans*. Either way, to all Europeans, Hill Martians have one thing in common – they are savages. If Earthmen think of Hill Martians, they usually paint the picture of the steppe rider hunting with bow and arrow – the existence of the sedentary or ‘cultivated’ tribes is generally ignored by anyone on Earth apart from anthropologists.

## High Martians

Known as the ‘winged pests’ or ‘barbarians’, or worse; there is hardly another Martian people that is met with so much abhorrence and disgust like the savage and uncivilized High Martians. There are some who think them to be misunderstood primitives, just waiting for someone to bring them the lights of civilization and to make them into sociable beings. Unfortunately, this is far from the truth – High Martians will do everything in their power to maintain their bad reputation! As flying murderers, they spread fear and terror everywhere that they appear.

## Physical Appearance

If one is to believe Canal Martian scientists, Hill Martians are the evolutionary rootstock from which the other two Martian races evolved. The anatomy of the High Martians confirms this assumption. Other than Hill or Canal Martians, the comparably short High Martians have retained a functioning lifting gland

and wing membranes spanning under their arms like the wings of bats, which together enable them to move quickly and adeptly through the air. Hill and Canal Martians have lost these abilities in the course of evolution.

The physical appearance of High Martians is not remotely as humanoid as that of the other intelligent Martian races. Their basic body physique is closer to that of chimpanzees suffering from severe mange infestation than it is to that of human beings. The fact that High Martians have feet with fully developed grasping appendages and move with a stooping and hopping gait when on the ground, only reinforces this impression. High Martians prefer a diet of meat, a fact easily deduced from their distinctive predator’s teeth. ‘Beastlike’ would be a fitting description for the facial features of the High Martians; with its typically edgy shape, thick bulges over their eyes, broad mouths with crooked fangs, horny skin, and bad shaving, their face is considered quite repulsive. Female High Martians are generally ‘prettier’ than male High Martians, but aesthetically this is not saying much. Like all Martians, High Martians have a similar metabolism to that of humans and therefore can eat the same food. The preparation of their meals is however, not very appetizing. In most cases, they just throw the entire animal into the fire and wait until its hide has been burnt off. Then they eat the cooked flesh that has not been burnt.

## Martian Evolution

Canal Martians are descended from the primitive Hill Martians, and both are in turn descended from the positively bestial High Martians. Comparative anatomical studies prove this beyond a shadow of doubt, as each type of the intelligent Martian peoples shares certain basic characteristics with the other two, indicating phylogenetic connections. Both the higher developed races have lost their lifting glands in the course of their evolution.

Some Hill Martians are born with a small webbing extending a few inches down the armpit, a vestigial remnant of the winged skin flaps with which their forebears once flew. This feature is commonly considered a bad omen – unless it is also accompanied by black hair. In this case, according to a Martian legend, it foretells great success in battle for that individual.

It is important to note that the evolutionary distance between Hill and Canal Martians is much smaller than that of these two races to High Martians. High Martians form a completely different species, while Hill and Canal Martians are two races of the same species. Consequently, intermarriage and interbreeding between the Canal Martians and their uncivilized cousins from the hills is not unknown. Amongst the Wagon Masters of Meroe, for example, the blood of both races runs through each member of the tribe, whilst the Urghuul have a Canal Martian ruling class. The riders of the Nepenthes-Thoth, on the other hand, are almost purebred Hill Martian.



## Dress

Normally, High Martians wear, if anything, very few clothes, which are almost exclusively loin cloths or short kilts. Shirts are unknown for they would be rather inconvenient when flying. For the same reason, armor, as worn, for example by Canal Martians, is also not common. The few clothes they wear are simple fabrications of little skill. Many High Martians enjoy decorating themselves with great amounts of jewelry – the more jewelry a person wears, the higher the prestige amongst the tribe members, since to High Martians ‘lots of jewelry’ means ‘lots of prey’ and ‘many victories in battle’. Particularly successful warriors even rework the finely crafted dresses of other races they have robbed. Basically, High Martians have no customs when it comes to what they wear and how they wear it, with one exception – only high ranking tribe members are allowed to wear headgear. Generally, this headgear consists of bronze helmets or leather hoods decorated with feathers. Recently though, British military helmets and top hats are considered particularly prestigious – since they indicate, that their wearer has defeated someone from the loathed ‘red race’ in battle.

## Culture

Of the three types of Martians, High Martians are least affected by civilization. They live in remote mountain fortresses, partially consisting of natural cave systems, called kraags. From time to time, they venture out on raids, capturing slaves, or looting passing caravans and cloudships. High Martians appear like intelligent, malicious apes when compared to Canal Martians. Their behavior is bestial and barbaric in the extreme. This is why it is often implied that they are of low intelligence. Indeed, High Martians hardly ever engage in activities like education and art, but one should beware of mistaking them for simple-minded. When it comes to murder, robbery, or war, they display an extraordinary amount of cunning. Even legendary king Hattabranx is, despite his obvious barbarity and savageness, anything but dumb. His filthy appearance conceals a sharp wit and a high degree of education. The king, for example, speaks accent-free Oxford English, which he learned from some British hostages he captured.

Theoretically, High Martians would definitely be able to produce highly developed cultural goods comparable to those of the other races of Mars, Earth, and Venus, since they have both the necessary intellect as well as the required degree of craftsmanship. The reason they refrain from making use of their ‘god-given’ abilities lies in their enormous arrogance and inflated self-esteem. The self-proclaimed ‘High Martians’ think

their ability to fly literally lifts them above the other races. They consider themselves to be the ‘pride of creation’ and leave the production of cultural goods and technical devices to the ‘lower’ races. Hence, it is no surprise that High Martians have developed a distinctive slave owner society. Every menial or laborious task that arises inside a kraag is done by slaves, while High Martians devote themselves to the more important things in life – essentially fighting, eating, and breeding. Every weapon and every utensil they use has either been stolen or produced by their slaves.

Some of the more ‘civilized’ High Martian tribes have trade agreements with Canal Martian city-states and have thus been able to acquire cloudships and firearms. Since High Martians hold control over the majority of the liftwood groves on Mars, they are tolerated with no little reluctance by many city-states and are thus allowed to continue with their barbaric practices. In some areas, this situation has even led to a kind of ‘peaceful cohabitation’ between High and Canal Martians. If a city-state pays rich tributes in form of gold, utensils, and slaves to the nearby tribe of High Martians, its merchant vessels and caravans are spared. If it refuses to pay, its trade routes are raided. No such agreement has ever been made between the tribes of the Hill Martians and the High Martians, for the Hill Martians bear a deep-seated hostility to their aerial forebears in their high kraags.

## Subcultures

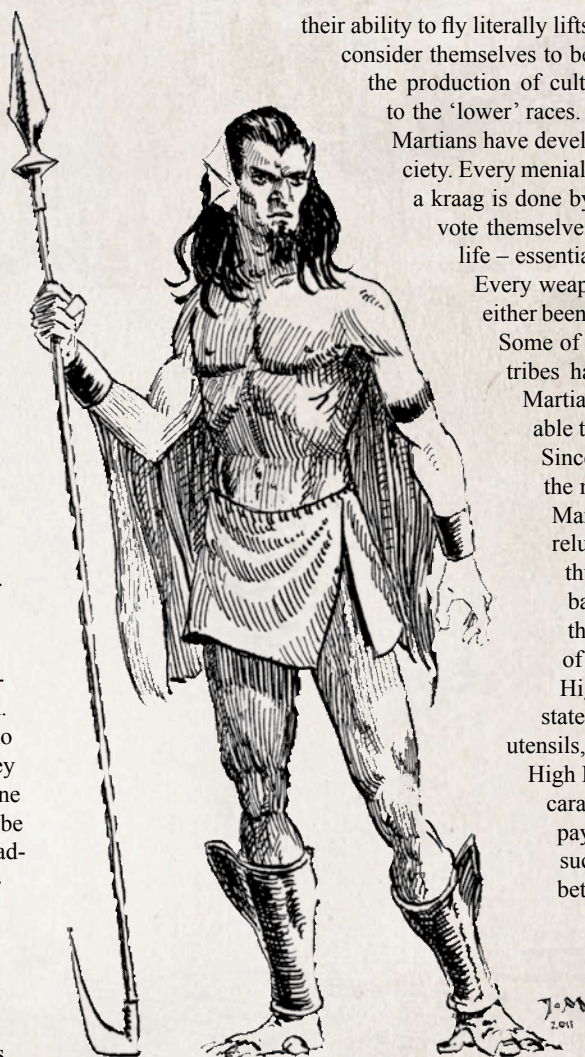
There are remarkably few cultural differences between the High Martian tribes, making it hard to speak of individual subcultures. Three groups of High Martians do stand out from the rest – Hattabranx’s Winged Horde, the Tribes of the South Wind, and the Cloud Guard of Biblis Fons.

### Hattabranx’s Winged Horde

This tribal federation has merged over the last decades under the iron fist of the notorious king Hattabranx. It lives in the Astusapes Highlands and can certainly be described as the most civilized conglomeration of the High Martians. Unfortunately, this fact only makes them even more unpleasant. Hattabranx’ winged horde has not changed a thing about their lifestyle which is based on raids, blackmail, and slavery – they have just refined their methods and now conduct their raids with perfidious finesse and unequalled cruelty. According to rumors, Hattabranx cooperates with various criminal organizations from the nearby city-states and makes use of these strategic alliances to his military advantage. The tribes unified under Hattabranx all worship the so-called ‘Worm God’. The few humans who have witnessed a ceremony to the Worm God describe the Worm God idol as having a decidedly satanic appearance and report that his priests preach a sermon of relentless violence and strong nihilism.

### Tribes of the South Wind

The mountains of Coprates-Catena are not free of the High Martians either. Unlike their cousins in the Astusapes High-





lands, the ‘tribes of the south wind’ are not unified, but wage constant warfare against each other. This is why the tribes of the Coprates-Catena are the only ones that enslave other High Martians. By and large, they are far more primitive than the High Martians of Astusapes and prefer to fight with simple spears or even pointed stones. Worse, instead of raiding for slaves or treasures, the tribes of the South Wind prefer to eat their victims, just as they do the old, the sick, or weak children of their own tribe. Their religion seems to be a crude form of Hill Martian shamanism, but they are, of course, ignorant of the deep spiritual wisdom of the Hill Martians.

#### Cloud Guard of Biblis Fons

In the remote city of Biblis Fons, the ‘City of the Crystal Oracle’, lives an odd curiosity – the only known urban-dwelling clan of High Martians. The story of this unusual group of High Martians sounds like a fairytale. More than 1,000 years ago, according to the ancient chronicles, violent earthquakes shook the city. The High Synod of the city thus consulted the legendary Crystal Oracle at the center of the city and was granted a peculiar prophecy. “Only if winged watchers were to guard the oracle,” spoke the seer of the great crystal, “the gods would prevent Biblis Fons from sinking into the steppe ground.” Driven by haste and panic, the High Synod arranged an alliance with a small group of High Martians that by coincidence, was lingering in the surrounds of Biblis Fons, raiding and terrorizing the region every now and then. Since those days, the legendary Cloud Guard of Biblis Fons keeps a watch over the gates of the sacred oracle. What has kept the High Martians at Biblis Fons for a 1,000 years is simple – luxury. The warriors of the cloud guard receive a great tribute in gold from the city each month; they are constantly provided with fresh slaves, both male and female; and they are supplied with only the finest of delicacies. In addition, they receive marvelous weapons decorated with jewels, with which they are allowed to beat up suspicious looking passers-by at the gates of the oracle.

#### Religion

When it comes to religion, High Martians are divided between two basic attitudes. Either they lack any sense of spirituality and piety, or they become completely caught up in an unhealthy form of religious fanaticism – there seems to be no middle ground. The followers of the first way practice a kind of primitive animism, though rather half-heartedly. There are no priests or shamans; everyone thanks or threatens the invariably undefined natural spirits as he likes. Followers of the second way are typically organized in dark cults that usually serve sinister idols of death and destruction. Of particular popularity is the Cult of the Worm, a malicious entity which is located at the center of Mars, on the Mars moon Phobos, or beyond the stars, depending on the interpretation, and which plans to torture all living things in the universe in a never-ending orgy of bloody carnage. The prospect of such never-ending bloody carnage makes many warriors’ hearts beat faster.

#### Political and Social Structure

The social organization of High Martians is rather simple. Several High Martian family groups form a clan lead by a single sky leader, usually the most powerful or malicious warrior. The hierarchy, or rather pecking order, inside a clan is just as simple – the stronger, more devious, or crueler a High Martian is, the higher his rank. When a number of clans bands together in a federation, they will denote a king from amongst their leaders – usually by identifying the strongest and most brutal one in the

course of bloody ritual combat. Such federations only last as long as their cruel leader can hold them together. Some of the more advanced tribes, such as those of the Astusapes Highlands, also practice the principle of hereditary monarchy. Even in these tribes however, a king can be overthrown at any time, if he is defeated in combat.

#### High Martians and Earthmen

The respective attitudes of High Martians and Earthmen are quite clear, High Martians hate Earthmen and Earthmen despise High Martians. Most humans consider them primitive, heathen scum. Other alien primitive peoples, such as the Hill Martian steppe nomads or Venusians, may be regarded as ‘noble savages’ and some Earthmen even might secretly admire their bravery and their close ties to nature. High Martians, on the other hand, are seen as nothing more than repulsive monsters. Until now, every attempt at peaceful communication, either to trade with them or to bring them Christianity, has resulted in a disaster. The dislike is mutual. At worst, High Martians see humans as nothing more than victims, or at best, as intruders that do not know that their place is amongst the subjects of the winged lords of Mars. The clans of King Hattabranx, in particular, harbor a thorough hatred of all humans, but especially the British.

#### Languages of Mars



Oenotrian Rune



Son-Gaaryan Syllabary



Umbranian Calligraphy



Cube Glyph

#### Canal Martian Languages

Just the peoples of Earth have to deal with a confusing profusion of languages, so do the peoples of Mars. The famous British linguist, Professor Forbes-Hamilton has catalogued nearly 200 different Canal Marsian languages in his fifteen volume standard reference work, *Languages and Dialects under the Double Moon*, although only about a dozen of them are in common use. The most important languages of Mars are listed below:

- **Son-Gaaryani:** The ‘Latin of Mars’. This overly complex artificial language was once the administrative language of Seldon’s Empire. The language’s grammar is even more complex than that of Sanskrit. Furthermore, Son-Gaaryan is a ‘tonal language’, much like the various Chinese dialects, and differentiates between twenty-seven meaningful intonations. The language has several highly complex writing systems with more than 21,000 characters – amongst them the obscure Martian cube glyphs, the only three-dimensional script in the Solar System.
- **High Oenotrian:** High Oenotrian is a widely spoken language, tracing its origins back to the Oenotrian Empire. It is written with a syllabary comprised of forty-six runes.
- **Koline:** The trade language of Mars is a creole with elements



from many Martian languages. It can be understood in in almost any harbor across the planet. Members of the Canal Martian upper class find Koline quite vulgar and refuse to speak this language.

- **Parhooni:** Parhooni is the English label for the Martian language Gaaryani, spoken in the Crown Colony of Syrtis Major and the surrounding city-states. The language is a simplified form of Son-Gaaryani. The flexible and simple Gaaryani alphabetic script came to prevail as the everyday alphabet in many places across Mars.
- **Umbran:** This rather melodic language spoken in the area of the Boreosyrtis-League is said to be the language of poets and writers. Umbran is generally written with the Gaaryani script. The original Umbran script is now only used in art and calligraphy, but not for everyday writing.

## Hill Martian Languages

- **Meroic:** The language of the Wagon Masters of Meroe is a combination of Umbran and Parhooni. To them, Meroic is a mere tribal language only spoken within the tribe's limits. With outsiders they always speak Koline or Umbran.
- **Nepenthese:** Nepenthese is spoken by the numerous mounted tribes of the Nepenthes-Thoth Steppe. Although this language has no written form, the nomads know a variety of epic cycles and poems which have greatly influenced Canal Martian literature. This is why there are many Nepenthese loan words in Parhooni and Umbran.

## High Martian Languages

While the languages of Canal and Hill Martians have been intensely studied by linguists of two planets, the hard and guttural sounding language of the High Martians is still mostly unknown. The winged savages usually speak Koline and other Canal Martian languages when threatening, blackmailing, or trading with Canal Martians. They only speak their native language when they are on their own and violently refuse to teach it to members of 'inferior races' Only the meanings of a very few words and phrases are known to outsiders, these words mainly holding meanings connected to war, like "die", "snuff it", "blood", or "I kill you!"

## Cities and City-states of Mars

*"In the evening, we were sitting breathlessly at the canal banks, beholding the white buildings of the old palace in the light of the moons. Uninhabited for centuries. Perfect and impeccable. Destroyed, of course – but perfect all the same."*

*Florence Maria Conklin,  
On the Silver Road of the Double Moon*

The big cities on Mars tend to occur at the junctures of the canals. The canals joining at these points not only provide enough water for the inhabitants, but also form important traffic junctions. Many of the great cities on Mars that did not originate on the drawing boards of the ancient canal builders were established by merchants and traders; wherever two or more Grand

Canals met there was trade. Where there was trade, trading posts were established, small and simple at first, growing and prospering over time into mighty metropolises – benefiting from the never ending flow of trade goods and the fertile soil on the banks along the canal.

In time, these great trade centers became city-states, important sites of cultural and political power for their canal-prince masters. Some city-states have remained independent principalities for millennia, but others have joined in greater federations (see p. 92f.).

A city-state consists of a central city and several villages and smaller communities in the arable land around it. The land controlled by the city-states along its canals usually extends as far as its military and political power – and, sometimes, its religious influence – will allow.

For that reason, conflicts over the exact location of boundaries between neighboring city-states have almost become a way of life in some areas. The existence of greater realms like the Boreosyrtis League, the Oenotrian Empire, or the Tossian Empire often mislead Terrans to believing that there are territorial states on Mars just as there are on Earth. This is, indeed, false. The city-state will always be at the base of the Canal Martian state order. Greater states only exist in the form of city confederations and can therefore barely be compared to the territorial states on Earth.

## On the Naming of Martian Cities

When the first humans set foot on Mars they brought with them their own maps of Mars. These contained names of places originating from the observations of Terran astronomers. Humans kept using these names even after establishing contact with Martians. Listed below are some of the most important Martian cities and empires as well as their most common Martian name.

Aubochon – Abak'hn  
 Biblis Fons – Thosoor  
 Copratia – Zhoom-Panaak  
 Dioscuria – Nompha Gisaak  
 Moeris Lacus – Napshtatshash  
 Neu-Amsterdam – Po-Poo-Hanna-Kitai  
 Oenotria – Shashmaghaal  
 Panthes – Fhnuukpaalquomi  
 Sithonius Lacus – Ghnool  
 Syrtis Major – Stafraana  
 Thoth – Phoomlarkt  
 Meroe – Somovaan  
 Boreosyrtis League – Confederation of the  
 Honorable Ancestors of Sguuhl  
 Oenotrian Empire – Empire of Shahmaghaal,  
 formal – Six Cities League  
 Tossian Empire – Empire of the High Lord of  
 Tossia  
 Wagon Masters of Meroe – Wagon Princes of  
 Somovaanli



## Background

Martian city-states are easily classified in size, power, and wealth by a simple indicator – the number of aquiferous canals extending out from the city. Those cities located at the terminus of a canal which thus have only one canal leading in one direction, are typically the smallest and weakest states.

A city sited along a canal can count two canals extending from it, one in each direction; it can benefit only from trade passing through it and is often under the rule of another, bigger city.

Cities situated at the crossroads of many canals – three, four, or more – are progressively stronger and wealthier. They benefit from canal trade travelling in many directions. The mightiest city-states claim six and more canals extending outward from their territory. This is where the major commercial centers of the red planet are situated. Mercantile trade brought wealth, and wealth, like everywhere else, meant military power, art, culture, and prestige for the canal prince ruling the city-state.

The biggest canal junctures are also the place where the oldest Martian city-states evolved, each true master pieces of Martian science. Built at the end of the *Brifanoon*, the Age of Water, they reflect the bright optimism of a vital, highly developed civilization at the peak of its creative power. With their sky-rising towers, each of which easily outstrips by far the limits of Terran construction methods, topped with daring domes, breathtaking curved bridges, and beamless high streets, even the most casual observer will recognize the dazzlingly high technological achievement of ancient Martian architecture. The city builders of the *Brifanoon* left nothing to chance. Everything in the cities, from residence quarters and industrial areas to city transportation and street lighting, was planned to the last detail right from the start, thereby mingling technical efficiency with unparalleled artistic aesthetics.

## City Planning

The original Martian city builders devoted their whole lives to constructing perfect communities. They made every effort to make their handiwork beautiful, efficient, and useful. With Martian technology at their service, their accomplishments exceeded even their own desires. A vast city capable of containing and supporting millions of people must meet a variety of requirements. It must provide transportation, communications, sanitation, and power. There must be enough space for people to live, work, and entertain themselves. All of these requirements were met in the ancient Martian cities. Today, the situation has changed since much of the ancient technology is no longer understood by recent Martians or is no longer operational. Perhaps the ancient builders foresaw this development, for they tried to include in their cities as many automated systems as possible. For that reason, many Martian cities function according to the same essential principles, although they vary in architectural and artistic style as much as the cities on Earth.

Each Martian city is a self-sustaining system designed to handle all of the basic requirements of its population. The brilliant sewage and waste disposal system is only one example; as in the most modern cities on Earth, all of the original buildings have integral plumbing which conveys waste material deep into subterranean chambers beneath the city; gratings on the city streets do the same. In these underground chambers, bacteria reduce the waste to simple, fertile by-products which are then piped out to the farmland around the city. At the same time, combustible

gases produced by the waste reduction are channeled into the city buildings where they fuel heaters, lanterns, and street lighting. This system is so efficient that it constantly produces more gas than it consumes. This excess gas is not stored however, but vented at the tops of the tallest towers, producing flames used as beacons.

The electrical communication systems were of equal genius, but have been far more exposed to the ravages of time than the indestructible sewage canals. Many Martian cities also had mass transportation systems such as elevated and underground railways that were also run on the gas from the sewers. In some cities, these railways are still operational, but are hardly ever used, since Canal Martians today only inhabit a small part of their cities and have thus no need for the railway.

The center of every city is dominated by the canals that flow through it. Along the canal banks are located the many trading houses, shopping malls, and bazaars, still attracting crowds of Martians to the city just as when they were first constructed.

## Decline

The technology that built the vast cities has long vanished on Mars, the exact causes being left for historians to speculation about. Historians from Earth assume a slow process of decline to be responsible. When the final drying of Mars began, advanced technology became a luxury the Martians could ill afford anymore. To assure the food supply needed in the cities, ever more labor had to be committed to agriculture, and this by necessity, included those technicians and engineers who knew how to construct and maintain the great machines powering each city. The number of technicians and engineers available to tend the machines diminished slowly, but steadily, until one day no one was left that could understand the ancient sciences. As conditions got worse, populations deserted the least hospitable of the cities, and a general decay of civilization began. Once the canal system began to fail, this decay could not help but accelerate. Critics of that theory, on the other hand, argue that the ancient Martian civilization could have easily counteracted this process by means of their immense knowledge. They think there must have been a sudden cause for the decline deeply embedded in the ancient history of Mars. In this respect however, Martian sources are as vague and contradictory as always.

## Remnants

Martian cities still present a spectacular view. They stretch for miles beyond the canal banks, their highest towers reaching upward for hundreds of stories into the cloudless Martian sky. In many a hall one can still find peculiar devices long forgotten since ancient times – immobile and unfathomable. Canal Martians though, do not exist in the numbers that they once did. Most of the cities provide space for a considerably bigger population than is actually there. The inhabitants restrict themselves to buildings closest to the canals, where they can find water, trade, and life. The massive towers are only used at the lower levels, for why bother having to climb endless stairs or wait an eternity in one of the few functioning hydraulic elevators, when there is enough room at lower levels? The city space empties as one leaves the waterways until finally there is nothing left except for deserted quarters devoid of life barring vermin, hermits, and criminals, and the wind blowing through the old ailing walls. The highest levels of a city's towers are usually given over to mold and dust, and provide a home to shady figures,



wild beasts, or occasionally even High Martians taking off on one of their raids.

## Syrtis Major - Stafrana

The famous city and space port of Syrtis Major is situated at a major junction of several Grand Canals and had already been a major city-state and a mercantile center for many centuries long before Seldon came to power. Until Seldon's Empire broke down, Syrtis Major was its capital. The remains of the gigantic imperial palaces the world rulers of Seldon's dynasty resided in are still imposing, although most of them were abandoned long ago and have long since been plundered. One of the smaller palaces is now inhabited by *Amraamtaba X*, Prince of Syrtis Major, deposed by the British in 1880.

The annexation of Syrtis Major was a major success for British colonial politics, as the city is considered to be the 'key to Mars'. It is still today the center of Martian trade and is filled with a cosmopolitan atmosphere beyond compare. The proud Syrtians – the city's inhabitants – are quite right to claim their mighty metropolis to be the center of Mars. Though by surface area Syrtis Major may not be the largest city on Mars, with its 500,000 inhabitants it does have the largest population.

Syrtis Major is not only the center of commerce for a substantial part of the Martian trade network, it is also a major trade center for interplanetary imports and exports. Many Earthmen who travel to Mars arrive at the space port of Syrtis Major – just to realize shortly after landing that they have had their wallet stolen. The crime rate of Syrtis Major is rampant. It is mostly crime against possession however, and is limited to robbery,

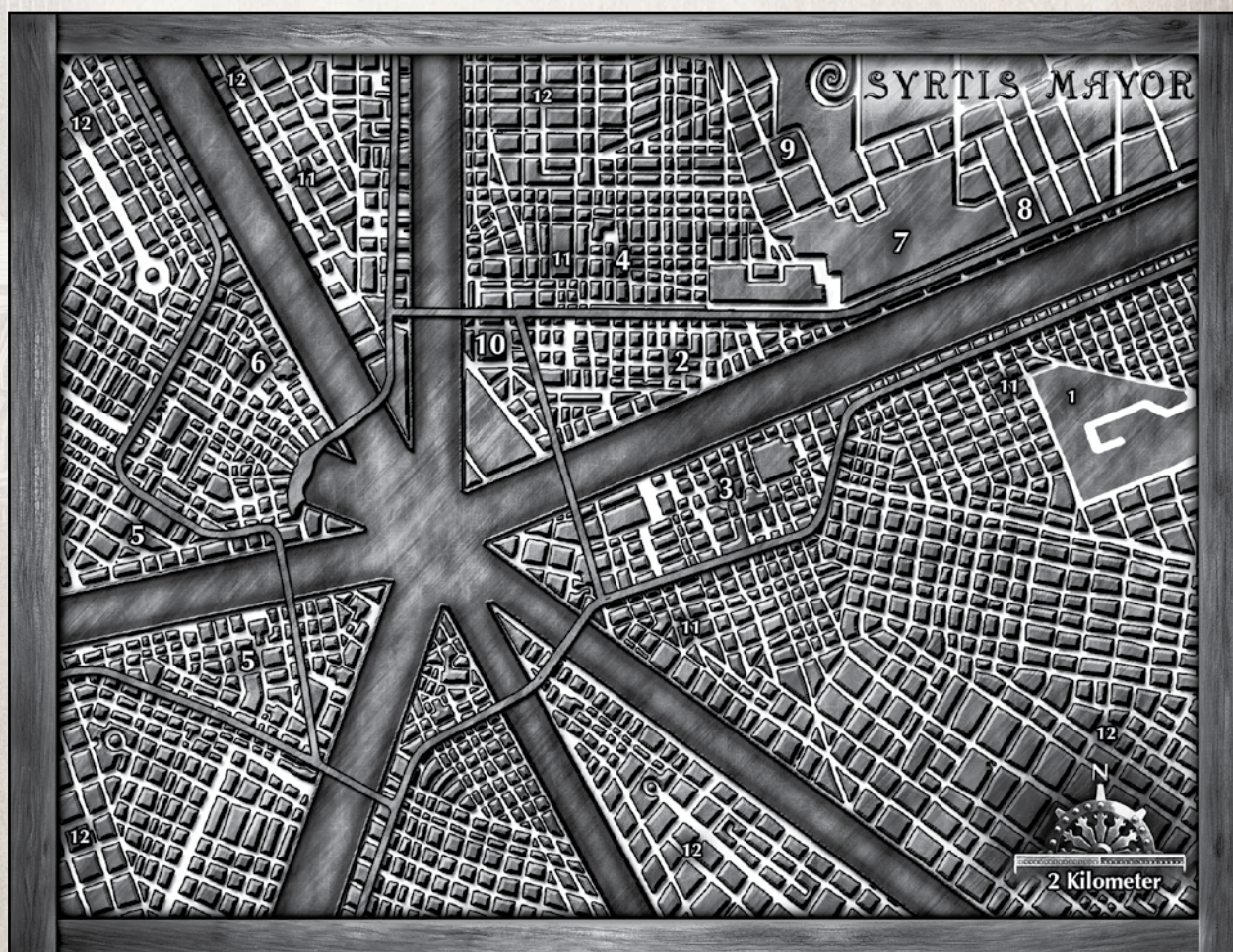
theft, protection racket, fraud, or at worst, brawling. In most cases, the criminals are more interested in knocking their victims unconscious and making off with their goods than in killing them. Cases of murder of humans or Martians are still fairly rare, but abductions of seemingly rich Terrans do seem to occur ever so often. Tourists from Earth are therefore advised to avoid sinister backstreets and to move about in small groups. In some of the particularly obscure areas, like the old harbor district, it would be a good idea to bring a Derringer and a sword cane for self-defense.

At present, the overall mood throughout the city is slightly subdued. The war between the British, their Martian allies, and the Oenotrians in the south affects the business of many merchants. Although the city is not directly involved in the conflict, many people fear air raids by the Oenotrians or attacks by Oenotrian saboteurs. Many Martians in Syrtis Major are rather friendly towards humans – after all, they are easy to rob, but the number of those who want to banish the 'red faces' from Mars increases – not least because of the work of Oenotrian agitators. Many British living in Syrtis Major are therefore getting increasingly paranoid, expecting Groundcleansers to hide behind every corner, waiting to eradicate them.

The city's locations (numbered as on the city map) are described below:

### 1 - Space Port

The first thing space travelers will see of Mars while landing is the sight of a large, leveled grass field surrounded by high towers. This area had once been a park until it was converted into a military training area by *Amraamtaba IV*. Under British rule, the



Mars



wasteland in the center of the city was eventually reconstructed as the city's central space port. It primarily consists of a large landing area with room enough for up to thirty ether flyers to land simultaneously. Only one third of the area however, is open to civil use. The whole of the space port is fenced off, the only way into the rest of the city is through the space port's entrance hall which also hosts the customs clearance. Several hotels of varying class and room cost to suit the traveler on any budget are situated right beside the hall. The space port also has facilities for cloudships and other aerial vessels to land and aerial passages to other cities and locations across Mars can be booked at the space port's busy ticket hall at any time – day or night.

## 2 - The British Quarter

A great number of humans have settled right along the Meepsoor Canal. In fact, there are now so many of them, that this area is often referred to as the 'British Quarter'. Were it not for the strange color of the sky as well as the two moons, one could almost imagine oneself on Earth – so much have the immigrants from Earth adapted the district to their needs. There are still a few Martians living in this part of the city, but they are almost exclusively well-paid civil servants, merchants, employees, and academics. Other locals could not effort the rents, which are horrendously expensive by Martian standards. Besides a British park, several European restaurants, and numerous boutiques, there is also the local branch of the British Explorers Club, which offers support to explorers – provided that they are Club members as well as British citizens. The governor's residence and the embassy quarter, seat of the diplomatic missions of nearly all space travelling nations on Earth, are located adjacent to this district.

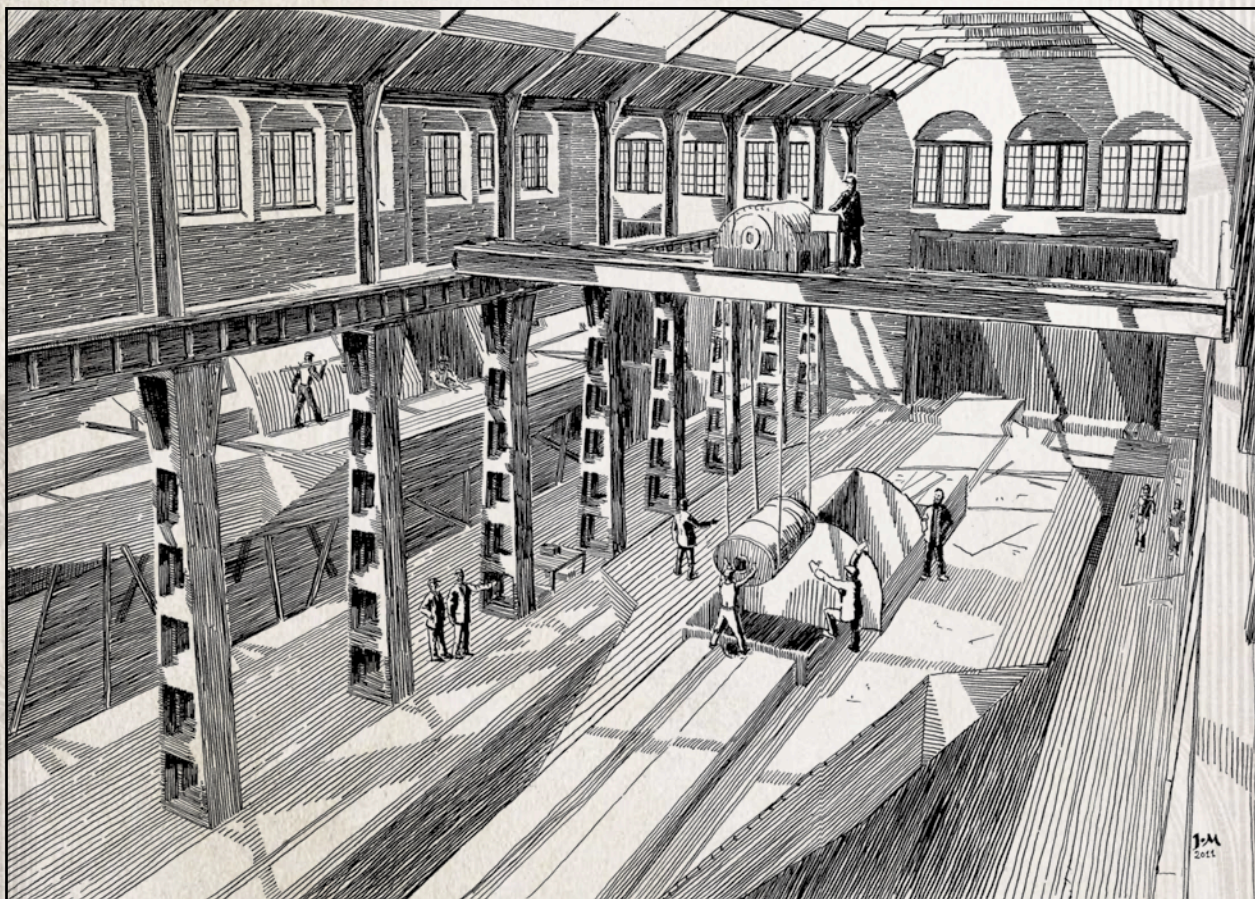
## 3 - The Shipyards and the Industrial Area

Along the southern banks of the Meepsoor Canal lies the first and so far only modern industrial area on Mars. The factories are primarily devoted to producing military goods to meet the needs of the British Marines. With only few exceptions, nearly all of Earth's modern vessels on Mars are built at the shipyard of Syrtis Major.

Several private enterprises have built the first Earth factories in this district. These manufactories are so modern that they would not look out of place were they to be relocated to Manchester or Essen. Pioneering this development are the *London Parhoon Coal Company*, *Syrtis Major Electric*, and the *Deutsche Hoffenberg Maschinenbau Gesellschaft* (German Hoffenberg Engineering Company).

## 4 - Govamaar

There are several districts in Syrtis Major inhabited by the Canal Martian's lower middle class. Typically, the poor, but well-kept apartment buildings of these districts average a height of fifteen stories tall and nest into each other such that they hardly allow any light to fall into the streets below. It is unusual for many humans to enter these exclusively Martian districts, but Govamaar, which translates as 'shoemakers' district', is an exception. Thanks to its proximity to the British Quarter, tourists regularly wander the streets and alleys of Govamaar, intent on seeing 'authentic Martians'. In response, many of the local Canal Martians have adapted to this change in their district's circumstances and profit from the deep pockets of their 'Red Men' tourists. Souvenir stalls are a common sight on Govamaar's streets and several cookshops and restaurants have customized their cuisine to the palette of the new visitors. Both of these cookshops and restau-





rants can generally be identified by a sheet marked with blue circles; those without these sheets only offer genuine Martian cuisine, which is too spicy and inedible for most humans. Behind the scenes, hidden from the eyes of wealthy visitors, there is a fierce competition going on between three family clans, fighting for supremacy in the tourism industry. The crime rate in Govamaar has soared since the district has become a popular tourist destination, mostly in form of pickpocketing and fraud. It is, for example, quite popular to trick human tourists into buying forged antiquities.

## 5 - The Bazaar

The incredible noise and the stunning variety of exotic odors might well overwhelm the inexperienced visitor upon his visit to the Bazaar of Syrtis Major. Day and night, merchants from across the known Solar System hawk their goods with the most vivid parts of the bazaar to be found in the old market halls right by the canal. The merchants of Syrtis Major advertise that there is nothing that cannot be found in the aisles of their bazaar – and there is indeed a grain of truth in these boastful words. If you know where to look you can buy almost anything, from simple vegetables to typewriters, from Hill Martian tribal weapons to machine guns stolen from military arsenals, from livestock to saffron imported from Persia. Even a Venusian dinosaur is said to have been sold here. The only commodity that cannot be found for sale at the Syrtis Major bazaar is that of slaves, for both the Syrtians and their British rulers despise slavery. Of course, every business transaction conducted in the halls of the bazaar, so the merchants assure, is strictly legal; that is, unless you get caught.

## 6 - Old Harbor District

Locals call the main street through the old harbor district the ‘the thieves’ road’, and with good reason. The buildings here are much shabbier and dirtier than they are in the better quarters of the city. There are no friendly merchants to be in the alleys here, but the dregs of the city’s population. The district has the well-deserved reputation as the place to go in Syrtis Major for anyone who wants to buy drugs, sell stolen goods, or simply engage the services of a contract killer. The local scum willingly deals with any Terran cutthroat if they can make a profit from it; however, most people here care little for their supposed ‘Red Men’ masters. Under the rule of the old canal prince, bribes could buy quite a bit of freedom, but under British rule however, things have changed, much to the dismay of the thieves’ guilds and criminal networks of the harbor district. This is why they secretly support the activities of the Groundcleansers – and even the insane Worm Cult. Humans who dare to enter this quarter all by themselves may find themselves pelted with paving stones – if they are lucky, for there is much worse that could happen to them...

## 7 - Emperor’s Palace

The minarets of the former emperor’s palace stretch out impressively toward the sky, even surpassing the towers of the nearby great archive. Once, the descendants of the glorious Seldon resided here, ruling over the Red Planet. Much like the palace of the Chinese emperor at Beijing, the emperor’s palace in Syrtis major constitutes a quarter of its own. Today however, there is nothing left of what was once a magnificent building complex except for an abandoned ruin. The dust of centuries has long since piled up on the floors of the palace’s miles-long corridors, pillared halls, and bath houses making their exploration a dirty and often frustrating experience. The frescos and epigraphs

found inside the palace are of the utmost interest for archaeologists; however, almost every room is missing its furniture and interior fittings. Shortly after the collapse of the ancient Martian realm, the emperor’s palace was plundered rigorously. Archaeologists doubt that there is even a single copper coin from the times of the last emperor left to be found in the palace. Nevertheless, rumors persist as to the existence of secret treasure vaults lying underneath the palace, each of which is said to be still filled with unimaginable wealth.

## 8 - Emerald Palace

Constructed completely of the pale green Meroe limestone – hence its name, the Emerald Palace is the only building the old Palace still in use. Originally constructed for an emperor’s concubine, it is now the residence of *Amraamtaba X*, Prince of Syrtis Major. The last of his lineage, the former potentate holds no power whatsoever, leaving him bitter and frustrated. All of his lands are already under British administration, and when he dies, the Emerald Palace and his remaining fortune will become crown property as well. By the treaty of Parhoon, which ended the Second War of Parhoon Succession, he was deprived of his right to the throne. The canal prince without a city quietly hates the British and plots against them endlessly and tirelessly, but what is even more humiliating is the fact that the prince is in fact bankrupt and bases his luxurious lifestyle on a British subsidy alone. When *Amraamtaba X* is not occupied with plotting against the foreign rulers, he numbs his frustration with exotic drugs or expensive courtesans.

## 9 - Royal Archives

This complex of buildings has already been mentioned before (see p. 66). Gomba Goormuuk, the highest archivist of Syrtis Major, is actually only supposed to grant access to the towers to government officials and those people with special permissions. Since he is quite enthusiastic about human literature however, he may well turn a blind eye for anyone who will give him books from Earth that he has not read yet.

## 10 - Syrtis Cathedral

Originally a catholic missionary church, Syrtis Cathedral is currently shared with the Protestants from the British Quarter. A new church is currently under construction right by the canal, for Syrtis Cathedral is actually housed in an ancient Martian temple. When the church was installed in 1882, the city administration, at the time dominated by Martians, made fun of the unwelcome Christian missionaries by granting them the most infamous building in the city – the ‘shrine of the 1,000 blood-swiggling devils’, the half-ruinous temple of a dubious sect which was eradicated by the city rulers about 500 years ago for its misdeeds. The local Martians strictly avoid entering this building for it is considered to be cursed. Furthermore, the missionaries are forbidden by an obscure regulation of monument conservation from making any structural changes to the building, which is why depictions of obscene monsters, barely covered with hangings embroidered with scenes from the Bible, continue to grimace down at the few believers who worship at the cathedral.

## 11 - Tunnel System of the Underground Railway

It might be hard to believe these days, but Syrtis Major once had an extensive transportation network comparable to the most



modern underground railroads of Europe. Underneath the city can be found not only sewer canals of gigantic proportions, but also transportation tunnels paved with stone tracks. Of course, it has been centuries, if not millennia, since any engine has driven along these tracks, but there are still a few places where one can find examples of the spindle-shaped vehicles which once moved through the tunnels. Experiments have revealed that these 'spindle-wagons' were apparently fuelled by gas, though no-one has yet been able to determine how exactly the propulsion system of these wheel-less vehicles worked. Since many of the transportation tunnels are in danger of collapsing, they are hardly ever used by anyone but homeless people or criminals. Indeed, some of the old railway stations have become underground living quarters for the poorest of the city's populace.

## 12 - Empty Ruined Districts

The extensive suburbs of Syrtis Major were abandoned centuries ago. Most parts of these ruined districts are now nothing more than scree deposits. In some places empty, spooky road tracks and slowly decaying towers can still be found, but there are not many people to be found here, except for smugglers, tramps, and a few plunderers. If one needs somewhere to hide, then the ruined districts might be one of the best places in Syrtis Major to do so.

## Empires and Powers of Mars

The prevailing form of government on Mars is the city-state, usually a city located on a grand canal that controls the smaller settlements in the surrounding area within about 90 miles. It is common practice for even the smallest city that exercises control of more remote canal section to adopt the mantle of the city-state, but this is typically in name only, for such cities exercise little power or influence, and are of only minor importance in comparison to one of the great cities.

In particularly secluded areas, especially in the highlands, it is not uncommon for each city along a canal to be independent, the control that each exercises over the surrounding villages, varying from one city to the next. Larger political units above the level of the city-states are rather unusual; there are however, some examples worth noting. These are the European colonies and the great empires of Mars.

## The Oenotrian Empire



The Oenotrian Empire was a rising power in the region south of Syrtis Major, having rapidly dominated the older principalities of Deltoton, Astrapsk, Iapygia, and Avenel through diplomatic, and occasionally, military campaigns of conquest. With the arrival of the Earthmen, and particularly with the establishment of a British Crown Colony in Syrtis Major, the Oenotrians have been thwarted in their northern expansionist plans. The present war between the British and the Oenotrians was almost an inevitable result of the political and diplomatic climate on the Syrtis plateau created by human settlement there.

The formal name of this political entity is the *Six Cities League*, or the *Empire of Shashmaghaal*. It is nominally a federation of the six city-states of Oenotria, Astrapsk, Crocea, Deltoton, Iapygia, and Skorosia. In practice, the leadership of the federation and all of its high administrative posts are completely dominated by the Oenotrian nobility, and the league is almost universally referred to as the Oenotrian Empire.

One major advantage of this multi-city league is that all of the towns and villages within the area defined by the member cities have been brought under central rule, and incidents of brigandage and piracy are now virtually unknown. However, Oenotrian ambitions in the north, exemplified by a long-standing claim against the city of Avenel, have brought the empire into conflict with the British. Despite the vast industrial might of the British Empire, the limited cargo capacity of existing interplanetary ether flyers as well as long transit times from Earth to Mars hinder the quick and massive reinforcement of the colony, and the war which has recently broken out between the Oenotrian and the British Empires shows signs of potentially turning into a long, bloody affair.

## The Boreosyrtis League



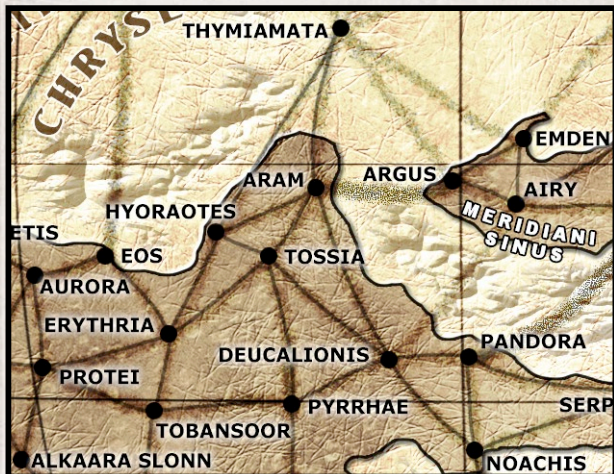
The *Boreosyrtis League* is not a civil entity, but a loose mercantile confederation known as the *Confederation of the Honorable Ancestors of Sguuhl* and comprised of the cities of Umbra, Meroe, Coloe, and Saardaar. Its organization shows many similarities to the Hanseatic League of the late Middle Ages on Earth. The league's headquarters is presently in the city of Umbra, where the major mercantile houses and princes of the cities of the league send their representatives to the League's grand council. Naturally, merchant interests dominate the governments of each city.

The principal source of revenue in the League is bhutan spice, the production of which is a monopoly jealously guarded by its members. The League has signed trade agreements which give



the British exclusive rights to purchase the spice in return for certain defensive guarantees. Relations between the two have been cordial, although the current war with Oenotria is considered bad for business and is seen as a troubling complication.

## The Tossian Empire



The Tossian Empire, or *Karuuska Tossiak Sharak*, is ruled by Emperor *Krahaanik IV* from the emerald throne in Tossia. The sprawling empire includes the cities of Hyoraotes, Thymiamata, Aramis, Duecalionis, Pandora, Noachis, Pyrrhae, Tobansoor, Erythria, and Protei, and dominates most of its neighboring cities. Increasingly concerned with the expansionism of the Belgian-backed *Association Internationale des Planètes*, or AIP (see p. 96) from the Coprates lowlands, the empire has recently, and temporarily, put aside its differences with the stubbornly independent Prince *Sitaani* of Nectar and entered into certain defensive agreements with him. The exact details of these arrangements remain secret. However, Tossian heavy cavalry units have recently arrived in Nectar and are apparently being used to augment Nectarian patrols along the western frontier, where columns of AIP raiders have made periodic penetrations in pursuit of rebels. Should these incidents become more frequent, the results could have far-reaching repercussions.

## The High Martians of Astusapes

The Astusapes Mountains are inhabited by High Martians, ruled by a number of greater or lesser kings from their 'kraags' or mountain fortress-cities. The kraags are nearly invulnerable, carved from the heart of one of the rugged mesas or cliffs that permeate the region. The highlands are also the source of liftwood, and liftwood and the kraags are the twin pillars of High Martian power. Raiding the trade routes to the north was a minor sideline that brought them into conflict with the *Boreosyrts League* and the British.

The predominant high king of the Astusapes region was the master of Kraag Barrovaar, King *Hattabranx*, that is until a British raid weakened his power in the February of 1888. Since that time, the area has been in a state of flux.

## The Riders of the Nepenthes-Thoth

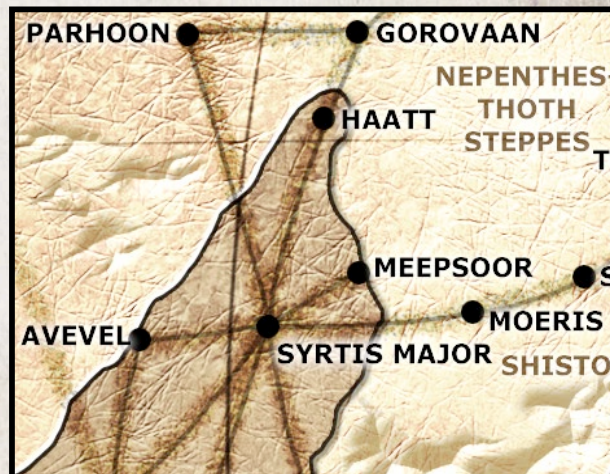
The proud and brave nomads of the Nepenthes-Thoth steppes are amongst the largest and mightiest Hill Martian people. Unchallenged, they rule over an area about the size of Germany and France combined. In past millennia, the Riders of the Nepenthes-Thoth served the Emperor of Mars as elite cavalry. Today, the steppe riders live in peaceful co-existence, loosely bound in an association of autonomous tribes and clans. However, Oenotria threatens to spread its war with the British into the Nepenthes-Thoth steppes. In the eyes of the prince of Shastapsh, forced to find refuge with the Oenotrians following the punishment of his city by the British in 1884, the nomads have long been a pain in the neck, as they resist his political influence. He has plans to subject them to his rule, and should the tribes continue to be divided, he might as well succeed bit by bit. Alternatively, should the steppe riders, as they did before, unite under a high king, they might become a serious problem for the Oenotrians.

## Syrts Lapis

The British crown colony – also counting its vassals and the jointly administered region of Parhoon – covers the entire basin of Syrtis Major and parts of the neighboring highlands. Relations with the Parhooni, Meepsoori, and the inhabitants of the Moerus Lacus highlands are good, those with the citizens of the lowlands, on the other hand, are rather tense. Britain is currently at war with the Oenotrian Empire.

For more information on the city of *Syrts Major*, the heart of the crown colony, see p. 89ff.

## The British on Mars



## The Beginnings

The British first landed on Mars in 1872 on the Parhoon Plateau, about 500 miles northwest of the great canal junction of Syrtis Major. British relations with the Anwaak of Parhoon were cordial, and a thriving commercial colony was soon established within the city. Intrigue within the court however, led to the as-

Mars



sassination of the Anwaak and his son in 1878. Although the British intervened and crushed the coup in less than a day, the next surviving heir was a three-month-old infant. Establishing the infant on the throne, Queen Victoria assumed the regency of Parhoon, to be administered by a British commissioner.

The first Regent-Commissioner to Parhoon was *Sir Phillip Adelaide*, and his first job was to reassure the population that Britain had no designs on their homeland. Fortunately, continuing bad blood between Parhoon and the powerful city-state of Gorovaan led to an invasion by the Gorovaangian army and fleet, which gave Adelaide an external enemy to fight and gave the British and Parhoonese a common foe to fight together. The Gorovaangian War was thus a complete success, and it also witnessed the combat baptism of the Parhoon Rifles – now the First Battalion, Queen Victoria's Own Martian Rifles (The Parhoons). In the end, the war resulted in the annexation of Gorovaan by Parhoon.

In 1880, war broke out again, and this time British regulars took to the field in significant numbers. As Great Britain was a formal belligerent at this time, the conclusion of the fighting saw Syrtis Major, Haatt, and Avenel incorporated as the Crown Colony of Syrtis Lapis. Parhoon and Gorovaan were now ruled by a High Commissioner, a post currently held by *Lord Dundas*, who was also the Governor of the colony.

By 1882, both Moerus Lacus and Meepsoor were treaty dependencies of the colony with their rulers supported by British subsidies and the British controlling their foreign policy through a local resident. The 'punishment' of Shastapsh in 1884, followed by an overland campaign in 1887, brought that city-state reluctantly under British rule. In an incredibly short time the British had carved out a colonial empire of considerable dimensions. The British holdings have remained roughly the same until the outbreak of the Oenotrian War in 1889.

### British Colonial Aims

The British have four main policies on Mars:

- Obtaining control over a major source of liftwood
- Fighting slavery, which is still widespread throughout cultures and cities of Mars
- Ensuring the continued stability of the Boreosyrtis League, maintaining its monopoly over the production of *bhutan* spice, and consolidating Great Britain's position as sole purchaser of the League's spice production
- Ensuring the resulting security and continued existence of the Crown Colony of Syrtis Lapis and – if possible – increasing its territorial holdings

### The Oenotrian War

The ruling nobles of the Oenotrian Empire had long been irritated by the presence of the British in what they viewed as their rightful and private domain. Blocked in their plans of conquest

by the British, the Oenotrian oligarchs were able to tolerate the new political situation brought about by the arrival of the 'Red Men', but only until the raid on Kraag Barrovaar by British gunboats.

Kraag Barrovaar is the home of *Hattabranx*, principal chief of the High Martians inhabiting the Astusapes Highlands. For centuries, the highlands had been the main source of liftwood for the whole Syrtis Major region, including the city-states of the Oenotrian Empire. Hattabranx controlled the highlands and was willing to sell to all interested buyers, until the coming of the Red Men changed things. Hattabranx, a follower of the Cult of the Worm, hated the red devils, as some Martians call the Earthmen, but loved the trade goods they could give him, goods that no Martian could offer. The situation would have remained relatively stable had not Hattabranx captured an American diplomat and his daughter bound for Oenotria. Hattabranx declared his intentions to kill his captives unless the British – all red devils look alike, after all – met his demands, which included evacuating the planet, amongst other things. With the full support of the American government, the British sent a raiding party to rescue the hostages, nearly killing Hattabranx in the process.

When the news of the raid reached Oenotria, the oligarchs were outraged. Although the Oenotrians have no great love for Hattabranx, the thought of Kraag Barrovaar – the greatest and most impregnable of the mountain fastnesses – being within the reach of British power meant that the High Martian stranglehold on the liftwood groves of the Astusapes might be loosening. The raid was obviously a thinly disguised assassination attempt, part of a greater British plan to annex the highlands and then take over the Astusapes.

It was humiliating enough that civilized people had to deal with High Martian thugs like Hattabranx in order to obtain liftwood. To be forced to deal with the red devil off-worlders was unthinkable. The red devils had to be stopped. The surface of the world must be cleansed of every vestige of their presence, including their very footprints in the sands of Mars. So far, the superior British gunboats have managed to keep the fleets of Oenotria away from the territories of the Crown Colony, and the thin red line of British and local garrisons has managed to hang onto the vital canal routes into the Crown Colony. Despite several resounding victories however, the British have been unable to mount an offensive, and the Oenotrians are unwilling to risk any more of their scarce sky galleons in combat. A stalemate of sorts has been reached, but neither side is prepared to sue for peace. Meanwhile, the rest of Mars looks on, waiting.

### The Red Captains

By the late 1870s, a small number of human ex-officers on Mars were completely captivated with its exotic culture and environment, so much so that they began making their way as private citizens. Most of these men combined their military and aeronautical skills with a natural bent toward adventure and soon became a small brotherhood of human captains of Martian ships. The Martians called them the 'Red Captains' because to a golden-skinned Martian, a European's complexion is ruddy to the point of being red. They are accepted by the piratical Cloud Captains of the Shistomik Mountains as equals, albeit grudgingly, and are hated and feared by the High Martians of the Astusapes and by the High Martians further west. The British captains are the most numerous of the Red Captains, and their outward independence does little to mask their basic loyalty to the crown. In many respects they occupy a place similar to that held by the Elizabethan Sea Hawks, and in a fairly short time they have largely displaced gunfighters as the most popular subject for



American dime novels. The most famous of the Red Captains, and the one who has come to symbolize their essential panache, is *Frederick Gustavus Burnaby*.

### The Legendary Five

*The five highest-scoring Red Captains as of January 1st, 1889:*

- Frederick Gustavus Burnaby: Steam Ram *Penelope*, 43,200 tons, 27 prizes
- Alonzo Quinton Freemercant: Steam Gunboat *Baron Lortmore*, 34,900 tons, 21 prizes
- Frederick Armand Le Begue: Screw Ram *Gloire*, 21,400 tons, 17 prizes
- Michael Paget-Smith: Gun Kite *Lismore*, 16,000 tons, 15 prizes
- Arturo Diego della Mora: Screw Ram *Gato X*, 12,200 tons, 15 prizes

### Anti-Piracy

With the outbreak of the Oenotrian War, Britain's meagre colonial forces on the Red Planet are locked in a war with the armies and fleets of the Oenotrian Empire. Although the British have won early victories in the air and have maintained the initiative, keeping aerial superiority requires skillful and continuous use of nearly all of their aerial gunboats. Aerial superiority is essential, as it is the only thing that keeps the Oenotrian host from crush-

ing the handful of colonial troops and British battalions that hold the vital canal routes to Syrtis Major, but while Britain's aerial squadrons are otherwise occupied, a renewed outbreak of piracy threatens the Umbran spice trade, forcing much of it to take the longer route through Alclyon. However, an uprising in Shastapsh, encouraged by the Oenotrians and possibly funded by German merchants, has destroyed the garrison there and closed the canal to traffic. This blockade has forced much of the spice trade to risk either the pirates along the Nilosyrtis Valley or desert raiders along the old caravan trails across the Nepenthes-Thoth Steppes to Moerus Lacus, now the easternmost outpost of British power. While hastily raised new squadrons of the Meepsoor Lancers are hurried east to guard the caravans, the British have turned to the Red Captains for protection of the skies. The Captains have been of vital importance in the pursuit of the war with Oenotria. Using letters of marque and reprisal, they have captured more than a dozen pirate vessels and driven the scum from the skies over several outlying city-states.

## Other Earthmen on Mars

Several European powers besides the British have small outposts and numerous diplomatic missions scattered across the face of the planet. Also, commercial interests from the Earth have firmly established themselves, while a small but growing military presence is to be found in those principalities that have either allied themselves to, or been bribed by, the colonial powers of Earth. Aside from the British colony of Syrtis Major, there is however, only one other sizable colonial possession on the Red Planet, the Belgian Coprates. The territories of other human powers and states are small in number, but doubtless that will change in time.

Mars





## King Leopold and the AIP

Founded in 1830, Belgium is a small country, squeezed between France and Germany, and unlike her larger neighbors, not much concerned with colonial ventures. Its monarch, Leopold II, King of the Belgians is another matter. He wanted to be rich and famous, 'rich' being the crucial part of the phrase, and colonies seemed the best way to accomplish this aim, first on Earth, and later, on Mars. Leopold was a skilled publicist and managed to persuade the major powers to give him a free hand in the Congo in 1876. The Belgian presence on Mars was handled with slightly less skill.

The king first sent an expedition to Mars in 1876 and followed it with several more in short order. The early expeditions were ostensibly scientific and exploratory in nature, but were heavily protected by Belgian soldiers. The purpose of the various expeditions was to study and explore the Great Coprates Rift Valley, and if the inhabitants of the valley were suspicious of the true intentions of the Belgians, subsequent events did little to contradict their suspicions.

After discovering that the exploitation of the valley could be profitable, King Leopold founded the AIP or *Association Internationale des Planètes*. The AIP was to represent his personal interests on Mars, protected by mercenaries recruited from Earth as well as from Mars, rather than by Belgium's small army.

By 1884, there were frequent skirmishes between the soldiers of the AIP and the Martians up and down the length of the valley. The Belgians protested vigorously the practice of American arms merchants selling the most modern rifles to the Coprates, a complaint that had little impact on American public opinion and none whatsoever on the arms trade. In any event, the American arms merchants could point out with some moral justification the fact that, insofar as modern arms might drive the Belgians from the valley, many would consider that a good thing. Although news reports were scarce from the Coprates, those which made their way out indicated that Belgian colonial rule there was even more brutal and bloody than in the Congo on Earth, if that was possible.

By 1889, the AIP had completed the conquest, for it was nothing less, of the Great Coprates Rift Valley, and an uneasy peace has settled there. The flood of refugees into Tithonius, Ophir, and Aurorae Sinus though, threatens to spread the violence. Some of the refugees return to the valley for frequent forays, raiding the gumme plantations which are now controlled by the AIP. All of this fans antihuman feelings across Mars and is used as further evidence by the Worm Priests, Groundcleansers, and other fanatical groups of the need to drive the red devils off Mars forever.



## The German Empire

After their humiliation of the French in 1870, Germany's political star was on the ascendant, but the empire struggled to consolidate its new political structure. This is why Bismarck initially rejected the idea of any colonial adventure, but he did see the enormous military potential of liftwood. These strategic considerations lead the German Empire to support Baron *Hasso von Gruber*, a veteran of the Franco-Prussian War, in establishing a colony in Western Dioscuria. Unfortunately, when it became apparent that the colony would hardly be able to provide any liftwood for the German Empire, Bismarck's interest in Mars and his support for *von Gruber* waned. Although it continues to attempt the cultivation of the liftwood tree, the *Deutsche Interplanetare Kolonial- und Handelsgesellschaft* or DIKH (German Interplanetary Colonial and Trading Company), founded by *von Gruber*, has one main aim – to break the British monopoly of the bhutan spice trade – and to secure all, or at least a portion of it, for themselves. To accomplish these aims, *von Gruber* has been financing British opposition movements and encouraging Martian anti-British secret societies inside the Syrtis Major Colony, attempting to destabilize the Boreosyrtis League whose members grow the spice.

Despite the failure of the DIKH to cultivate the liftwood tree, the German Empire has a particular interest in acquiring a stable and secure source of liftwood. The installation of a Reichskommissar (Imperial Commissioner) to promote these interests is only a matter of time – much to the displeasure of Baron *von Gruber*. Right now, other posts outside of Dioscuria are getting more interesting, and some of the German maps of Mars are already featuring settlements like Köln and Emden. Until recently, however, the Germans were unable to obtain any significant colonial possessions on Mars, their most extensive settlements to date being the trade stations in Western Dioscuria, and the military posts necessary to protect them.



## France

The news about Edison's journey to Mars aroused the enthusiasm of the people of France as much as everywhere else. Some enthusiasts even founded the Committee for the Ether in order to build France its own ether flyers. After funds were raised by its members to purchase an Armstrong ether propeller, the first French flyer, the *Liberté*, was constructed. In the autumn of 1873, the ship reached the Red Planet and landed close to the city now known as Ideaus Fons.



At first, the prince and the ruling oligarchs welcomed the new arrivals, as they were hoping that their presence would grant them privileges. It took them a while to understand the Commune's agenda, but eventually the prince, the merchants, and the priests began to rant at the dealings of the 'red devils'. Raids on the French became more frequent, finally culminating in the army's attack on the French embassy in 1877 during which several communards were killed. Fortunately, the Red Guard that the Commune had stationed in the embassy was able to prevent serious damage. The same night, an uprising broke out amongst the local labor force which had long been infiltrated by 'consultants' sent by of the Commune. The next morning, at dawn, the old gentlemen who only the day before held power in Ideaus Fons, were found dangling underneath the city's bridges or running for their lives, while above Ideaus Fons flew the red flag of revolution.

French presence on Mars is limited to the Idaeus Fons region, but France's influence is widespread. Her agents are the cause of trouble in the colonies of the Earth powers across the Red Planet as 'political missionaries' attempt to 'enlighten the enslaved subjects of the canal princes'.

## Japan

The Japanese are on Mars for the simple reason that, still smarting under the humiliating Treaties of Commerce and Navigation of 1858, which gave foreign nations a variety of privileges, they want to prove themselves a 'modern' state and a power to be reckoned with. Clearly, the only other alternative is to go the way of the fast-fading Manchu Empire, now being slowly consumed by the major powers. In a period of twenty years, under the slogan "A rich nation, a strong army", Japan has developed into a vigorous and increasingly aggressive nation, taking advice from the established powers and adding a samurai will of their own. Japan is clearly about to take a seat at the table of Earth powers who have a 'dominating influence' on the Red Planet.

Currently, the Japanese presence on Mars is still small and mostly limited to the experimental scientific research stations and trading posts at *Euxinius Lacus*.

## America

American interests on Mars are twofold. First of all, and most importantly, there is a great deal of money to be made on Mars, and Americans have always managed to show up whenever there was a penny to be squeezed out of something. Second of all, and only slightly less importantly, there is the question of national prestige. After all, it was Edison, an American citizen, who led the way to Mars. A country like the United States cannot afford to be left behind scientifically or militarily. By comparison, the Confederacy – the C.S.A. – plays no role in the exploration and exploitations of the Red Planet.

American merchants can be found almost anywhere there are human settlements, and American diplomatic legations are maintained at every major human colonial enclave. Indeed, as one British administrator put it, "The bloody Yanks are like mice... They are everywhere, and you can't get rid of them!" American merchants will sell Martians anything, including modern repeating rifles and ammunition, a fact that is a sore point with most nations, but one which the Belgians are particularly disturbed about. As of 1889, considerably large silver findings brought hundreds of Americans to Thymiamata, which has since then become by far the largest settlement of American

citizens. The presence of the U.S. Army in Thymiamata protects the American settlement and actively defies the High Martians. The only other American military unit on Mars is the contingent of U.S. Marines with the legation at Syrtis Major.

## Russia

The Russians are on Mars, it seems to most observers, because the British are. Russian presence on the Red Planet is evidently a continuation of the Great Game, and many assume that the Czar's ministers, in their obtuse way, intend to use Russian presence as a bargaining chip for the lands they really want in Asia – perhaps even as guarantees of a free hand in Persia or Sinkiang. Others however, impugn darker motives to the Russian presence. The *Ochrana*, the Czar's the secret police, has already transported some one hundred political exiles to Hecates Lacus, and it would seem that more will soon follow. Russia does not seem to be in a position to exploit the resources of Mars, and it has a vast, poorly explored region of its own on Earth to occupy it for years to come. What Russia does have however, is a very large army, an autocratic ruler, and a reputation for dealing roughly with primitive peoples. It is not for nothing that Kipling calls the Russian Empire, 'The Bear that Walks Like a Man'.

## The Treasures of Mars

Mars is a world of a great many resources. In addition to these, there are innumerable more interesting and valuable treasures to be found on the Red Planet. These include stories of great ruined temples inlaid with gold and precious stones, and rich treasures hidden in the tombs of ancient kings. The Noachis Highlands are supposed to contain a volcano that spews diamonds from the depths of the planet, and the Tharsis Plain of Lunae Lacus is said to be the site of a source of emeralds and sapphires of unbelievable size.

These and hundreds of other rumors may be as insubstantial as the Martian winds, but unbelievable finds occur often enough to fuel the dreams of a continent full of fortune seekers. The most prominent example of this is the discovery of the tomb of *Jembathranx III* found in the southern mountains of Moab, which yielded over £24,000,000 in treasures.

## Metals and Minerals

Metals are scarce on Mars. Iron is found less often than on Earth and is mostly extracted from old constructions or their remains. Copper, tin, zinc, gold, and silver occur with about equal rarity. For this reason, any metal object on Mars is prized, although gold, because of its color, is valued the most. Chieftains and kings of the High Martians can often be found adorned with copper as well as gold and silver ornaments. Petroleum is extremely rare and has never been found in economically recoverable quantities. Coal is present in some areas, and is the fuel of choice for powering steam engines such as those on aerial flyers.

### Moabite Fire Jewels

The plains of Moab are the source of one of the most prized precious stones on Mars after the diamond – the Moabite fire jewel. These stones are found in alluvial deposits throughout the Moabite plains, washed there by titanic floods at some time in the distant past. Until heat-treated they are colorful, but not spectacular, and can easily be passed over by the inexperienced



traveler. When heated in a fire, and suddenly cooled however, the stones fracture into millions of internal crystals. Most stones shatter into useless shards, but about one in ten keep their crystals interlocked, become translucent and refract light in patterns of breathtaking beauty. Easily worked using files and engraving tools before fire treatment, they can be shaped into almost any pattern desired or decorated with any ornamentation. Martian craftsmen are known throughout the Solar System for their skillful use and working of the fire jewel, typically turning them into astoundingly beautiful works of art.

## Fauna

Exotic hides and fells as well as horn from a variety of creatures are always in high demand in Earth's markets. Mars has many such animal products to offer and one may expect many more to be discovered in the future. Until now, economic interests were more focused on other treasures of the planet, especially the important liftwood. Of particular interest are the gigantic black carcasses of a previously unknown species which had been uncovered by the wind in the plains of the Oktona area. These ancient bones are carved into precious pieces of art; the firm, yet flexible material is also perfectly suited as inlays.

## Flora

### Liftwood

The greatest single resource that Mars produces is liftwood – the fabulous sapwood that carries within it the ability to defy gravity.

The inhabitants of the Red Planet have always used liftwood. The earliest civilized Martians built simple rafts of liftwood to

carry heavy loads or to travel across the trackless wastes. Today their famous sky galleons are utterly dependent on liftwood for their flying abilities. Liftwood though, is scarce and expensive. The small liftwood trees take years to reach maturity, and they only grow on remote mountain plateaus. If cut too early, the wood rapidly loses its lifting capacity, making the harvesting process a pure waste of time. Liftwood trees grown in cultivated valleys or along the Grand Canals are outwardly identical, but they lack the vital spark, the supposed essential combination of nutrients and minerals available in the highlands, and hence they lack the gravity defying effect.

Gathering liftwood is a dangerous proposition, since High Martians claim the trees to be theirs to harvest, without exception. Liftwood is a natural product, saddled with the imperfections and variations that natural resources always have. A liftwood log is a knotty, gnarled piece of wood infused with a sap that imparts its lifting properties, but those properties are not uniform or easily understood. When properly oriented, the wood produces a great deal of lift, but when twisted even a few degrees, the lift is reduced, sometimes dramatically.

Using liftwood requires careful construction. Martian cloudships and other aerial flyers mount liftwood panels on pivots or in gimbals which allow them to be adjusted for proper lift. Cables connect each liftwood panel with the trimman's levers. The trimman is responsible for maintaining the proper balance of liftwood throughout the vessel. By twisting individual panels, ship lift can be increased or decreased, and so the ship rises or falls.

Liftwood deteriorates as its sap loses its vital power. A good, seasoned piece can last up to ten years, but over time every single piece must be replaced. Under certain circumstances this deterioration process may be accelerated – for example, the influence of the magnetic field of Venus, it was discovered, causes liftwood to decay completely within a few days.

Liftwood grows only in small groves on remote plateaus in certain high mountain ranges, called liftwood highlands. These are the same highlands inhabited by the savage and bestial High Martians. The result has been a constant conflict between the savages of the highlands and the shipbuilders of the canals, as there is never enough liftwood to meet all of Mars' needs. Expeditions to buy logs from the liftwood highlands must be large and well-armed. They are vulnerable to attack at any time and from any quarter by those who wish either the valuable trade goods that the High Martians demand or the liftwood itself.

Ships of ordinary wood sail on the canals of Mars while cloudships of liftwood fly the skies. Some explorers have thought that all transportation should be by cloudship, but the practical matter is that these vessels are expensive and liftwood is rare, leaving canal ships as the cheap, simple alternative.

### Bhutan Spice

Bhutan is a flavorful and mildly narcotic product harvested from the bhutan plant, which is presently grown only by the cities of the Boreosyrtris League. The plant itself is little studied, because complete samples are difficult to obtain. The bhutan plantations are fenced in, heavily guarded, and worked by slaves. Access to a plantation has only been granted to a few humans, and then only for a few hours under heavy guard.

The spice is in very high demand, both on Mars and on Earth – and is therefore expensive everywhere. The British have managed to conclude treaties of protection with the Boreosyrtris League, and now are the sole dealers in the spice, a fact that angers Martians and non-British humans alike. Some nations, Germany in particular, have made several attempts to break the





British monopoly of the spice trade, but they have not been successful yet.

### Gumme

Gumme (from Garyaani: K'Chemmu) is a substance similar to rubber, but which retains its pliability and elasticity at lower temperatures, down well below freezing. It is also much less likely to break down chemically under high heat, which makes it usable under a wider variety of circumstances than rubber – mostly for technological purposes and particularly in the conquest of the ether.

Like rubber, gumme is not easy to cultivate. Its leaves are razor-sharp, and the bark is incredibly tough. The sap itself is a skin irritant before processing – to Martians, anyway; humans do not seem to be affected as severely. Gumme occurs only in the area called the Coprates and was not a popular crop in the time before the coming of humans.

The AIP of Leopold II, King of the Belgians, whose seizure of the Coprates area was perpetrated largely in order to establish large gumme plantations using forced labor, controls virtually the entire harvest.

## Phobos and Deimos - The Moons of Mars

Two moons are orbiting the red planet; Phobos and Deimos – fear and terror. Inspired by Greek-Roman mythology, their discoverers chose to name these two moons after the companions of the war god Mars. The moons seem almost tiny when compared to the moon of the Earth, but this does not mean that they should be ignored, for they were not named for fear and terror without good reason, as many an explorer has discovered.

The two moons play an important role in Martian mythology. Phobos is considered an ill-omened celestial body and it is associated with strange atmospheric phenomena, vivid visions, demons, and the entrance to the Martian version of hell. It is also true that no ship that ever set course for this moon has ever returned. Approaching a moon that has supposedly no atmosphere presents one of the great obstacles for an ether flyer.

Deimos on the other hand is so sinister and so far away that it can hardly be seen from Mars. Legends tell of unfathomable terrors that are said to be lurking on the dark side of this moon. Even more horrible than the demons of Phobos, the demons of Deimos destroy the mind of anyone who would dare to set foot on this wan orb.



### Professor Asaph Hall

Professor Asaph Hall was born in Connecticut on October 15th 1829. He currently works as a professor of mathematics at the United States Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C. He is a most talented theorist and an expert in calculating orbits. Even before his journey to Mars, Hall was convinced of the fact that the Red Planet must have one or more moons. He always referred to them as the companions of Mars, an allusion to classical mythology.

Since his discovery, the old professor has continued to observe the moons through his telescope. He has mapped the surface of Phobos, compared them to scientific reports from Mars, and amended them accordingly. Professor Hall seems to be possessed by these strange celestial bodies and dedicates every minute he can spare to their study. However, the scientist has recently been tormented by nightmares. He dreams of “cyclopean obelisks under grey dust, covered with bizarre symbols”, “from the dark between the stars and the red Mars himself, with hot blood running through his canals, while the moons are circling him greedily”.

During his lectures, Hall often appears to be absentminded and distracted. His wife is concerned for his health, and the professor feels the growing urge to see Mars and its moons in person to investigate the meaning of his dreams. Yet at the same time he dreads what he might find there – fear and terror.

Mars

### Phobos

#### Phobos

Diameter: approx. 13 miles  
Perimeter: approx. 44 miles  
Orbital period: 7 hrs. 39 min.  
Gravitation: approx. 0.06% of Earth's gravity

### Overview

With a distance of less than 3,700 miles, the red smoldering Phobos is much closer to Mars than Deimos. A full orbit takes less than eight hours. Phobos rises and sets two or three times per day, and with almost every turn there is a partial solar eclipse. The shadow cast by the moon traverses Mars quite fast, and sensitive souls have told about having rather vivid nightmares in its shadow. There are also stories about strange lightning patterns that flow across the moon's surface.



### Moon Walk

While the passing Mars with its red canals and its rich rust color look quite impressive to the observer walking on the surface of the moon, Phobos itself is rather bleak and desolate. With its surface of greyish-white sand broken up by innumerable, the moon does not appear to offer anything of interest. The largest crater, with a diameter of 6 miles, is named after Hall's wife, Angeline Stickney. Whatever made the Stickney crater must have struck with almost enough force to tear the moon apart.

Yet between the craters, the surface of Phobos is dotted with obelisks. Most of them protrude from the dust by only a few inches. The origin of these fascinating objects is a complete mystery. According to Martian myths, they are considered the top of the demon temples which lie deep under the moon's sand. However, both the cause of the Stickney crater and the nature of the obelisks remain a mystery, for no scientific investigation has been conducted on the strange moon that is Phobos.

## Deimos

### Deimos

Diameter: approx. 8 miles  
 Perimeter: approx. 24 miles  
 Orbital period: 30 hrs. 18 min.  
 Gravitation: approx. 0.03% of Earth's gravity

### Overview

Deimos circles Mars at a radius of 14,576 miles, its orbit taking one day and six hours. On Mars, the moon is only detectable as a blurred, wan spot, for Deimos is not only the smaller one among the two moons, but also one of the darkest celestial bodies in the Solar System. Due to its fixed rotation, Deimos perpetually keeps the same side facing Mars.

### Moon Walk

The surface of this moon is remarkably monotonous. Its dust cover is much thicker than that of its 'brother' Phobos. Explorations of Deimos are therefore quite difficult. Even the simple act of making a landing on this tiny orb requires a highly complex manoeuvre.

To date, only a single British ether ship captain has visited Deimos. After an accident, the HMS *Calypso* had to make a forced landing on the side of the moon which is facing away from Mars. The following repairs took about seven days, and during this time, twenty men died under unknown circumstances. The reports of Captain Oliver Pike are still kept under lock and seal by the British government. Captain Pike died five months later from meningitis. The last surviving crew member, a Canadian called Aaron Lockhart who was First Mate aboard the *Calypso*, ails in the Bethlehem Royal Hospital in London. The walls of his cell are covered with distorted images of the moon, bible quotes, and cryptic symbols. During every full moon, Lockhart goes into a frenzy and can hardly be restrained. The responsible physicians have no clue how to treat Lockhart's insanity or at least how to find him a means that will allow him to forget.





# Venus

## Venus - Planet Facts

Diameter: 7,526 miles

Circumference: 23,643 miles

Length of year: 248 Earth days

Length of day: 23 hours

Gravitation: 100% of Earth's gravity

ment of the planets of the Solar System, which could already be observed elsewhere. The world is still primitive, while Earth is advanced and Mars decadent. On Venus it is always raining, on Mars it never rains, and Earth lies in the perfect middle of the spectrum.

Venus is a gloomy hothouse world full of dense clouds and everlasting rain. Throughout half of the Venusian year the cloud cover seems to be absolutely closed and impenetrable. The Sun is seldom seen, and even then only from the highest of mountains. As a result of the difficult circumstances, mapping of Venus has not progressed far – which is why the map included in this book is known to no Lizard-man or character in this much detail.

For years, Venus presented a mystery to human astronomers. When the first telescopes were aligned to set sight on the world, they showed a blank, featureless surface. Several reasons were advanced for this, but when the ether flyer made expeditions to the world possible, it was discovered that the blank surface was due to the incredibly dense cloud cover. Venus, it turned out, was a hothouse world of shallow seas, steaming tropical jungles, bogs, swamps, marshes, perpetual overcast, and heavy rainfall.

The dense jungles of the Venusian lowlands produce numerous plants for which there is great demand on Earth by chemists, dyemakers, pharmaceutical companies, and florists – the Cytherian orchid is especially valued for its beauty and its hauntingly subtle fragrance. The lowlands are also home to hundreds of varieties of reptilian creatures, ranging in size from small to gigantic, naturally called dinosaurs, and to the savage Lizard-men. Humans find the lowlands almost unbearable and tend to stick to the few highland plateaus, where life is more

## A Survey of the Planet

*"O my fair evening star."*

**Richard Wagner, Tannhäuser**

Venus is the second world in the Solar System as seen from the Sun and occupies a nearly circular orbit at an average distance of 67 million miles. The planet is only slightly smaller than Earth and completely covered by dense, white clouds. Along with its proximity to Earth, this makes Venus the third brightest object in the terrestrial sky after the Sun and Luna.

At the other extreme from Mars, the nature of Venus is another piece of evidence for the theory of a sequential develop-





tolerable and the sun can occasionally be glimpsed through the thick overcast.

In recent times, large plantations have been created using Lizard-men to cultivate and harvest several of the most valuable plants. For the most part however, tribes of friendly Lizard-men roam the jungles harvesting the various plants and bringing them to the various lowland trading outposts and the settlements that have sprung up around them. Dinosaurs and hostile Lizard-men pose a constant threat to these human enclaves, and they are one reason that a permanent military presence is maintained by each major colonial power.

Although expeditions were sent to Venus as early as 1873 (using British-made Armstrong Flyers), the first one to return was the German-backed Heidelberg expedition of 1878. It was discovered that the peculiar nature of the Venusian magnetic field interacts with the Ether in an unknown fashion which causes radically accelerated liftwood decay on that world. Within days of landing, the first three expeditions of 1873, 1874, and 1876, soon found their flyers would not leave the ground as the liftwood had lost its magical power.

Unlike Great Britain, Germany was not in possession of large quantities of liftwood and so was forced to make use of dirigibles as the lifting means for her ether flyers. When a German ether dirigible carrying the Heidelberg expedition landed on what came to be called the *Kaiser Wilhelm Plateau*, they found the last few survivors of the earlier expeditions, severely reduced in number due to the attacks of multiple dinosaurs and groups of hostile Lizard-men.

Germany has dominated the exploration and exploitation of Venus ever since. The main settlements of the Germans and the British lie in the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains*, but settlements and trade enclaves of Russians, Italians, British, and Americans can also be found in other places. Although not as heav-

ily colonized as Mars, Venus presents almost equal economic potential.

Venus is not only a cosmic hothouse, but also a treasure trove of botanical products. For the resource-hungry German chemical industry, the botanical wonders of Venus for the production of drugs, dyes, and other chemical products came just at the right moment. The various heads of the German chemical companies not only funded the exploitation of Venus, they lobbied the government in Berlin to provide military protection and colonists for their plantations. So it came to be mainly the German Empire that furthered the colonization of Venus.

However, more than just German industry is attracted to Venus. Big game hunters come hoping to shoot some of the biggest creatures in the Solar System; botanists and zoologists come to look for new alien species of flora and fauna; explorers to further map Venus and discover its secrets; and plantation masters to-be come to make a new life for themselves. Venus is a rich and verdant frontier and there is money to be made if one can survive the planet's many dangers.

## The Exploration of Venus

### The Armstrong Expedition of 1873

The first expedition to Venus left Earth on January 14th 1873. Under the command of Captain Robert Armstrong – unrelated to the founder of the Armstrong Ether Flyer Company, the HMS *Minotaur* started its long journey to the Earth's sister planet not knowing that its mission was not to be favored by fortune.

The fate of the expedition was not known until 1884 when James MacKenzie, the last survivor of the Armstrong party, was discovered living among a tribe of Lizard-men about 800 miles southeast of the *Victoria Plateau*. This poor soul had "gone native" and was initially unwilling to leave, but once in human company again, he soon recovered much of his sanity. After a brief period of convalescence, he was able to dictate an account of the HMS *Minotaur's* failed expedition to Venus.

MacKenzie reported that the expedition circled the world twice and made first landfall on Mount Maxwell – which Armstrong named in honor of Thomas Maxwell, the lookout who spotted it.

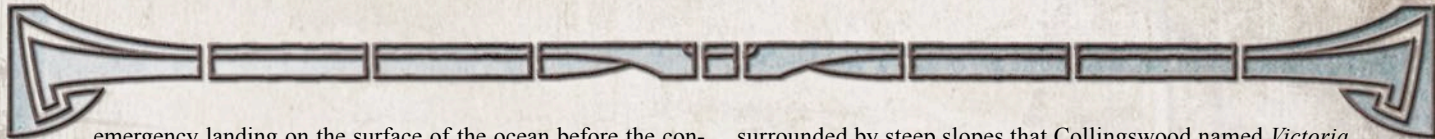
Armstrong was lucky that the mountain had been spotted, because otherwise he would have had to advance blindly down into the planet's cloud cover, always in danger of hitting an obstacle which could have had fatal consequences. At the time, Armstrong had no idea how lucky he was; Mount Maxwell, an important checkpoint in the early exploration of Venus, can only be seen on days when the cloud cover is low enough to see its peak.

After landing, the crew of the HMS *Minotaur* planted a British flag and an inscribed brass plate on a rock to secure the British Empire's claim on the planet. This is only conveyed through the officer's account – neither object has ever been found. Then, Armstrong dispatched the three smaller liftwood conveyors he had brought, one south (under the command of MacKenzie), one west, and one east. It was intended that the conveyors were to return to Mount Maxwell in four days.

During his flight, MacKenzie discovered the first large stretch of water on Venus which came to be known as the *North Ocean*, and started the first reconnaissance flight above the ocean. He was some sea miles away from the continent when he made an alarming discovery – his conveyor's liftwood was rapidly losing its lifting ability. Fortunately, his steersman was able to make an







emergency landing on the surface of the ocean before the conveyer crashed. Fortunately, because his conveyer was converted from a ship's whaleboat and was capable of floating, MacKenzie could reach dry land after a few days, in spite of the damage and being without a power unit. The damaged boat was subsequently drawn out by the tide and sank shortly afterwards.

Being left stranded in total isolation, the survivors began to trek northward in an attempt to locate the main expedition. They rapidly became lost, and dinosaurs, hostile Lizard-men, and the climate soon took their toll.

After a few weeks, MacKenzie was the only one left to struggle through the jungle. On the brink of death, he was found by a friendly tribe of Lizard-men that adopted him and made him one of their own. Later he would not stop emphasizing how it was only after this event that he learned what life really meant.

This was the end of MacKenzie's account that he dictated to his 'rescuers'. He would continue to call himself a 'Venusian' after his return to Earth where he embarked upon a series of lecture tours in which he told of his adventures among the natives and vehemently argued for respecting and preserving their culture. MacKenzie died in 1888 of what doctors believe was a lung infection acquired during his years in the Venusian jungle. The conveyer that had been commanded by chief petty officer Benjamin Hollyday was discovered by the Collingswood expedition a year after its crash. No trace has ever been found of Captain Armstrong's craft or the HMS *Minotaur* itself, which is strange considering that according to MacKenzie, the ether flyer had landed on the *Victoria Plateau* and after only a few days' time could not have been able to take off again.

## The Collingswood Expedition of 1874

The second exploratory expedition to Venus was financed by subscription from the members of the Royal Society, and Sir Edward Barton Collingswood was placed in command. The expedition departed Earth on July 3rd, 1874 on the ether flyer HMS *Shannon*.

Collingswood also made his landfall at Mount Maxwell, where he established a base camp, and in contrast to Armstrong, at first only sent out a few exploratory parties on foot. Two days after landing, one of these parties found the remains of one of the conveyors from the Armstrong expedition, crushed as if trampled by some gigantic beast. Near the wreck of the conveyer, at the top of a nearby hill, the party discovered a small, half-broken redoubt of stones and boulders, piled in a circle. Inside they found the remains of three members of the conveyer's crew, buried in shallow graves under piles of stones.

They also found the sodden remnants of a journal, so completely ruined by the damp as to be unreadable, and a message scratched onto a flat stone: "*Tarry not! This world decays lift-wood, & you will be stranded. Beware the Monster lizards and the savages - B. F. Hollyday.*"

The fate of Benjamin Hollyday, chief petty officer of the Armstrong expedition, can only be guessed at, but as his remains were never found, it can be assumed that the Lizard-men overran the stone fortlet and carried him off. The exploratory party carried the stone bearing Hollyday's message back to Collingswood, who immediately attempted to lift into orbit, but the vessel was unable to attain sufficient height to enable the ether engines to be activated. Collingswood then chose to use the flyer to lift the expedition higher up the slopes of Mount Maxwell in search of a position which could be readily defended. After he had found a suitable landing place he carefully landed the flyer. The men found themselves on a plateau

surrounded by steep slopes that Collingswood named *Victoria Plateau*.

Collingswood ordered the ether flyer dismantled and used its materials to construct shelters and to fortify the position. He hoped that his men would be safe up there. The position was such that the monstrous lizards of Venus could not easily get to it. All the same, within weeks the expedition made contact with several groups of Lizard-men, some friendly, but most hostile.

## The Times Rescue Expedition of 1876

After there had been no signs from either of the two first expeditions to Venus, people started to worry. Therefore, in June of 1876, the London *Times* financed an expedition to Venus for the purpose of locating the two previous expeditions and carry home the survivors. Expecting that some form of hostile native life was the reason for the disappearance of the first two expeditions, the expedition took along two Gatling guns of the most recent design, a screw gun of the type used by the British Army in the mountains of India, two dozen Martini-Henry breech-loading rifles, and ample supplies of ammunition. Colonel Aloysius Ditherby-Stoat, late of the 2nd Bengal Lancers, a cavalry unit of the Indian Army, was chosen to lead the expedition. His flyer, the HMS *Defence*, departed Earth on June 20th, 1876.

Unlike the previous expeditions, the *Times* expedition arrived at one of those times when Mount Maxwell was not readily visible. Thus, the Ether Flyer cautiously descended through the cloud cover without hitting an obstacle. The *Defence* landed in several spots, but failed to find traces of the previous two expeditions at any of them. Finally, after several days of these fruitless explorations, they took to the air again and with the cloud cover having cleared, spotted Mount Maxwell. The Colonel decided that this might be where Collingswood would have chosen to put down and immediately set a course for the mountain.

A few hours before their arrival, the expedition's pilot noticed that the ship was unable to gain altitude and was, in fact, slowly losing it. By the time the flyer had made landfall near the foot of the mountain, it was too late. The liftwood had lost so much of its lifting ability that just like the *Minotaur* and *Shannon* before her, the *Defence* was unable to take off again. The expedition soon ran afoul of the dinosaurs, and while the Gatlings made quick work of them, Colonel Ditherby-Stoat decided that they would have to find a more defensible position. When the expedition members, after a short debate, started to head for Mount Maxwell, Venus' terrain was nearly their undoing. The Gatlings soon bogged down in the soft, spongy soil, and the expedition had to abandon first one, then the other. The screw gun was designed to be broken down into loads suitable for portage by one man however, and the expedition managed to get it completely up the mountain. After trekking several days up the increasingly steep slope of Mount Maxwell, the expedition finally came to the *Victoria Plateau* and was amazed to find a Lizard-man who greeted them in English.

This Lizard-man introduced himself as Samock. His real name had been unpronounceable by the survivors of the Collingswood expedition, so they gave him this name instead. He was part of a Lizard-men tribe that had helped the Englishmen survive on Venus. Samock led Ditherby-Stoat and his men to Collingswood, where they were exuberantly greeted. Shortly after, the two parties decided to join forces and live together on the plateau. For this, the screw gun was especially welcomed, for despite the presence of Samock and others of his kind, the humans were still subject to periodic attacks by bands of hostile Lizard-men.





A few weeks after their arrival, they sent out a party to recover the Gatling guns. They only succeeded in bringing one back and that by dismantling it and carrying the individual pieces on their backs. The second gun had been swallowed by the swamp forever.

## Heidelberg Expedition of 1878

By contrast to the earlier British expeditions, the Heidelberg party of 1878 could be called almost lackluster. Unable to secure liftwood because of their lack of a viable Martian colony, the Germans were forced to make use of lighter-than-air gases for their ether flyers, much as Edison's original flyer used a hydrogen balloon for lift. In the case of the German machines, an army officer named Ferdinand von Zeppelin, inspired by Edison's achievement, invented a rigid airship which was originally called the *Aeroboat* by British writers, but soon came to be known as the *Zeppelin airship* or *Zeppelin* for short after its inventor.

The Heidelberg expedition left Earth aboard the SMS *Heimdall* on March 17th, 1878, and was led by the Frigate Captain Ruprecht von Heidelberg of the Imperial German Navy. In addition to his distinguished career in the navy, von Heidelberg had been awarded a doctorate in anthropology and was deemed the best man for this dangerous assignment. The expedition arrived on Venus and, like *The Times* expedition two years earlier, did not at first spot Mount Maxwell. So the *Heimdall* too only reached the *Victoria Plateau* by chance when her crew spotted Mount Maxwell on a second orbit around the planet looking for striking landmarks. When at last the Germans landed on the *Victoria Plateau*, they soon located the bedraggled survivors of the previous expeditions and took them aboard their ship.

Much to the chagrin of the British, who were eager to return to Earth, Doctor von Heidelberg insisted on remaining on Venus for several months, where he carried out a thorough survey of the mountain range. He did not however, find any trace of the lost Armstrong expedition.

As happy as the British were to see their rescuers, they were less than happy when on their return to Earth, von Heidelberg published a set of Venus maps in which he named the mountain range around Mount Maxwell, the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains*. Especially Sir Edward Barton Collingswood who saw himself as the actual discoverer of this area. Collingswood has expressed his gratitude for von Heidelberg's rescue on several occasions, but it is said that he has harbored a mild dislike of his rescuer since those maps were published.

## The History of Venus

*"The Venusians don't have a history, you see. They only have folk tales! But with these I think they have done a very reasonable job."*

**Professor Alexander Igolkin, lecturer on cultural anthropology at the University of Königsberg**

Despite of what this chapter's title might seem to promise, it is very difficult to collect historical facts for Venus because the Venusians do not have any historiography. The civilized peoples on Earth as well as those of Mars kept written records of their history over long periods. The Lizard-men though are not able to do that because none of the known tribes have yet developed a written culture, which is why their history is passed on only

orally. Traditions seldom reach farther back than four or five generations and quickly become highly contorted in the telling. So for example, two tribes can have memories of a war between them taking place at the time of their grandparents, but the history of the war is told in totally different ways in both tribes.

Additionally, Venusians have a strongly animist view of the world full of ghosts, magic powers, and mysteries, which is reflected in their tales. For scholars from Earth, it is very difficult to pin down the concrete facts behind the legends of the Lizard-men because of all the magic powers, fabled creatures, and ghostly prophecies in them. There are many scholars who dismiss Venusian tales as nonsense right from the start. Only few people on Earth have done any serious work on the historiography of the Venusians and these are all literary studies or anthropology specialists that concentrate on Venusian history in the light of fairy-tale and myth research.

Interestingly, the Venusians consider their world to be very young. Venus was not created a long time ago, but is instead being created by the Great Spirits right at this very moment. To them, the process of their world being created has already been going on for many generations and will continue for many generations to come. According to the Venusians, the spirits peel the world from the fog. Areas of Venus that are not very foggy – like the highlands – are 'more finished' than highly foggy areas. Some Venusians outside the colonies think that the humans too have been recently created by the spirits because they appeared out of the fog so suddenly. It is puzzling to them why humans do not share this belief.

Another problem with the Venusians' historiography is the Lizard-men's strange concept of time. On Earth and Mars, even the most primitive cultures have some sort of calendar. The Venusians simply do not have the means to develop anything like that. The Morning Star is a world without seasons, without phases of the moon, and without stars in the sky. So the Lizard-men know neither years nor months. Their only means by which they can measure time is the day.

The most primitive tribes on Venus live in a world of perpetual present. The more advanced tribes know about the existence of past and future, but they do not measure time in any exact way. Things longer than twenty Venus days past are 'long ago' things that have happened at the time of their own parents and grandparents have passed 'into the ancestors' time', and things before that are part of the mythical past. If Venusian give some kind of 'historical' measurement of time, it is usually very abstract and may be meaningless, like for example 'when the opanos were still green...' or 'when the spirits of the bogs still danced on mushrooms'. This kind of time measurement (or rather: non-measurement) poses a host of problems of its own for the colonial administrations on Venus. Earth's calendar system with its weekdays, weeks, and months is much too complicated for most Venusians – those that try become overwhelmed by its complexities.

The lack of calendar on Venus also makes one question highly controversial, not to say difficult to answer. What is the lifespan of the average Lizard-man? For the Venusians, a life lasts as long as it lasts. None of them can state exactly how old he or she is. The only known age categories are 'little', 'adult', and 'rather old'. After many tests and examinations, medics and biologists now act on the assumption that Lizard-men can reach an age of up to 60 Earth years in their natural environment. Given that the environments they live in are dangerous, that their hygiene as well as their medical knowledge and capability are poor, medics and biologists have expressed the opinion that it is a wonder that they live as long as they do. That said, Lizard-men on average

\*No one has ever seen a green opano. Opanos are normally colored a greenish brown.



live longer than inhabitants from Earth. Humans under similar circumstances would probably live for 30 or 40 years.

### A Note on Place Names

German colonists have retained many of the British place names as a means of honoring those first gallant explorers of Venus, though in most cases they have been translated into German. For instance, Mount Maxwell is called *Maxwellberg* by the Germans. In the years since the von Heidelberg expedition returned to Earth, thus demonstrating a safer way of landing on Venus, several nations besides Germany have sent exploratory expeditions to the planet – most notably the Russian and Italian expeditions of 1881 and 1883, respectively. This has led to a greater diversity of place names than on Mars, including German, English, Russian, Latin, and Greek – these last two because the commander of the Italian expedition was of a classical inclination.

To anyone fluent in German, the names of native villages have become a source of amusement. In many cases, the Lizard-men name for a village cannot be pronounced, let alone spelled, while in other cases, the Lizard-men simply do not have a name for their village other than ‘home’. Neat German bookkeeping requires that there be name for everything, so some cartographers have demonstrated their sense of humor with names like *Urschleim* (*Primordial Soup*), *Grünhausen* (*Green Village*), *Sumpfstadt* (*Swamptown*), or *Schuppenheim* (*Scale Village*).

## Venusian Geography

Strictly speaking, the prefix ‘geo-’ properly refers to Earth and Earth alone. Nevertheless, the phrase ‘Venusian geography’ is much more convenient, and more easily pronounced, than such words as Cytherography, Aphroditography, or Venography, and the latter terms are used only by the most primly fastidious of scholars.

Venus presents certain unique problems to explorers. It cannot be mapped from orbit because of the perpetual cloud cover. Additionally, the magnetic field of Venus interferes with compasses, so they are of no use on the planet. The only way to take a navigational fix is to stick to landmarks or lift high enough above the clouds to be able to see the sun or the stars – depending on the time of day. Therefore, only a fraction of the planet has been properly mapped, and the accuracy of this mapping leaves much to be desired, especially for the less well frequented areas.

However, a few locations in the highlands, for example *Mount Maxwell*, have been mapped and measured with some exactitude because here the sun is visible well enough to shoot a fix directly from the ground. Scientists from Earth assume that a quarter of the planet is covered with oceans or shallow seas. There are two main oceans, the *North Ocean* and the *South Ocean*. Both are relatively shallow for the most part, especially

by comparison with the oceans of Earth. The higher altitudes of Venus are covered with dense jungles, the lower altitudes are mostly marsh or bog. There are a few mountain ranges and upland plateaus which is where most of the human settlement has occurred.

## Major Landforms

Venus is a younger world than Earth and still in an early, chaotic stage of its development. Its landforms, like its life forms, are therefore not as varied as those of Earth and can be broken down into the following broad categories:

### Mountains

The mountains of Venus are believed to be of relatively recent origin geologically. This surmise is necessary in order to account for the fact that the mountains have not yet eroded away under the almost perpetual rainfall. Some of the mountains on Venus are volcanic in origin, including the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains*. *Mount Maxwell* is a monumental sight with a height of 35,400 feet. It is thought to have been active as recently as 5000 years ago, but there do not seem to have been any eruptions since then. The *Aphrodite Mountains*, on the other hand, seem to have resulted from some form of geological uplift similar to that which produced most mountains on the Earth. In the mountains, it is not uncommon to find outcroppings of the native bedrock, especially in areas where the slope is extreme and the native plants can find no purchase. Humans often exploit these outcroppings for building material.

### The Highlands

The upper altitudes of Venus receive more light from the sun, and the plant life of the highland jungles tends to resemble that of Earth in similar locations. Tree-like plants are encountered more frequently than in the lower altitudes (although most of the giant ferns and cycads of the lower forests can be found higher up as well), and the layer of soil is thinner – less than 7 feet over most of the *Victoria Plateau*, for instance.

### The Lowlands

The lower altitudes of Venus receive less light and tend to produce plants with less energetic requirements than those of the higher altitudes. There are very few flowering plants; cycads and ferns tend to be the most common. The ‘soil’ of the bogs consists of a thick paste of organic material through which the plants of the bog send shoots and tendrils seeking nutrients. The bogs of Venus are very much like the peat bogs found in northern Europe, consisting of a thick sponge of organic matter of mostly decaying bogweed and water. In some cases the upper layer of plant material is solid enough to walk on; in others a person will sink out of sight in seconds – bogs 60 feet or more in depth are not uncommon in the lowlands.

Humans on Venus took a leaf from the Lizard-men’s book and devised a type of footgear called the bogshoe. Bogshoes are broad, flat, circular contraptions – similar to snowshoes, usually made of an open mesh to permit water to drain off. They spread the wearer’s weight over a wider area and make it possible to walk atop the bogs with little danger of sinking. Bogshoes require a little practice before the wearer can move about safely, let alone run, but are not difficult to master within a day or two.

So-called quaking bogs are commonly encountered, and they present a considerable hazard to the unwary traveler. Quaking



bogs are areas where a dense layer of bogweed lies atop a pool of less dense muck. When walked upon, the ground begins to resonate with each step, like a trampoline. If the person walking on the surface tries to go too fast, the resonation is amplified until the surface of the bogweed splits open, swallows the unfortunate victim, and closes over again, leaving an almost imperceptible seam. Quick action is necessary lest the unfortunate victim perish. Within hours, the rupture will repair itself and will be as strong as before. Experienced travelers on Venus soon learn to recognize these quaking bogs. Boots with pointed toes or thin heels are not recommended. The bogs of Venus hold water like a sponge and release it gradually to trickle downhill to the oceans. For this reason, there are no small streams and few rivers on Venus, and those that do exist tend to shift position at irregular intervals, appearing and vanishing within a few weeks.

### The Marshes and Shallow Seas

The plant material of the bogs thins gradually, until the bog turns into a marsh. The main difference between a Venusian marsh and a Venusian bog is that the bog consists primarily of solid matter, whereas a marsh contains mostly water. The marshes of Venus resemble the Everglades of the Confederate American state of Florida, consisting of large expanses of slow-moving shallow water interspersed with temporary islands where eddies and currents deposit mounds of muck. Some of these islands grow their own colonies of ferns and cycads and become permanent fixtures of the marsh; others are washed away again within a few months of their creation.

The marshes of Venus fade gradually into shallow seas less than a few hundred yards in depth, but still permeated with growths of plant material resembling terrestrial seaweed, which extends from the bottom to the surface in some areas. The growth of this weed is rumored to be thick enough to interfere with the passage of seagoing craft in some places, though no such patch of weed has ever been discovered. These areas are sometimes nicknamed 'Sargassos', after the Sargasso Sea on Earth.

### The Oceans

Venus has two vast oceans, the *North Ocean* and the *South Ocean*. Except for the cloud cover, these are quite like the oceans of Earth and would seem familiar to almost any mariner. Surface travel is quite rare however, because of the difficulties of navigation and the hazards presented by the monstrous creatures which inhabit the depths of these oceans.

### The Weather

The climate and weather on Venus can be summed up very easily – hot and wet. On Venus, it is always either raining or about to rain, regardless of location; and a good thing it is, because it helps to keep the temperature down. Lightning often accompanies the heavier storms, but high winds are rare. Temperatures are lowest in the high mountain plateaus (where they around 90°F or 30°C) and highest in the lowland areas and the surface of the seas (where the temperature averages over 110°F or 40°C). Humidity is always between 95% to 100%, regardless of altitude. In the lowlands and on the seas, visibility ranges from less than 10 feet up to a few hundred yards, depending on local weather conditions. Higher up, the fog is often thinner, but intervening terrain features usually limit visibility to about the same distance. On the upper slopes of *Mount Maxwell* however, visibility is often in excess of a mile, that is, airships can be spotted at this distance – there are no other mountains near *Mount Maxwell* to be seen.

## Visitors on Venus

Visitors to Venus will find a number of interesting, and for mischievous minds, amusing aspects to the world. Their clothing – leather goods in particular – will grow a thin coating of green slime unless sprayed with carbolic acid every day or so. Though rubberized clothing is resistant to the climate, it is also quite heavy and hot, while most conventional clothing soon rots and is reduced to rags. Iron and steel, when not properly cared for, will soon turn to useless lumps of rust. Wood must be treated with creosote, carbolic acid, or some other chemical preservative or it will rot away within weeks.

The humidity will turn the even stiffest of starched collars to a sodden rag within minutes – the new celluloid collars made by 'Abercrombie' are a must for any gentleman on Venus. Anyone who ventures outside must decide whether it is worse to be drenched in the open air or remain dry but hot inside a rubberized canvas sou'wester. Travel is mostly by airship, and long-distance journeys are usually made above the cloud layer to reduce navigational difficulties. Travelers on foot will need special footgear in the bogs. Weapons are essential. Travelers in the lowlands must be prepared to defend themselves from the attacks of giant dinosaurs, and travelers outside settlements must be prepared for the attacks of hostile Lizard-men.

## Flora and Fauna of Venus

*"Bronto steaks, Hadrosaur tenderloin, or Lagula joints, there are quite a few tasty tidbits to be found here. I don't take any pleasure in the Bacon-worm though."*

**Henry Fortenberry III., hunter and cook**

In general, life on Venus is more primitive and less developed than on Earth. Higher forms like modern birds or mammals apparently do not exist, flowering plants are only rarely found. The plant life of Venus resembles that of primeval times on Earth, which is why humans find most of it tantalizingly familiar, albeit somewhat primitive. There is a greater variety of the more primitive plants such as ferns and cycads than is present on Earth and they can grow to extraordinary heights in the climate of Venus.

Flora and fauna seem to be spread equally about the whole planet. Many dinosaurs are nomadic in nature or sometimes change their prey and hunting grounds. The inhabitants of the oceans are dispersed among the vast expanses of water and can be discovered in many different regions of the planet. In spite of the primitivity of Venusian life, it is striking that the planet has already developed intelligent life – even though the level of intelligence of the Lizard-men has been subject of controversial discussions among scientists from Earth.

## Venusian Animals

*"There. THERE! SWAMP TERMITES. Catch them. Fast! Swamp termites. Splendid! Wonderful! What a feast."*

**James MacKenzie's first words to his rescuers, 1884**

The fauna of Venus is as primeval as the culture of the Lizard-men. The dominant land animals on Venus are collectively referred to as dinosaurs because of their close resemblance to the extinct terrestrial life form of the same name. Since the dino-



sauers of Earth are extinct, it is impossible to determine the exact relationship, if any, between the dinosaurs of Venus and those of Earth, or if it is an astounding case of convergent evolution. Many of the larger dinosaurs are very difficult to kill with weapons smaller than light artillery. Hundreds of varieties have been catalogued, and many more are waiting for their discovery in the mists of the Morning Star. One of the few types that has been domesticated by humans is the pacyosaurus which is used as a mount as well as a pack animal for heavy loads. The Lizard-men also use pacyosaurus for this purpose.

The sea life on the planet is of a similarly primeval nature. There are many bone fish, primitive sharks, and coelacanth to be found in the waters of the Morning Star, but the giant lizards too have conquered the maritime habitat of Venus, so there are quite a few sea monsters to be found.

Besides the large inhabitants of the Morning Star, there are also some insect species that more or less plague humans and Lizard-men. Among the settlers, the *mineur*, a bug that lays its eggs under the skin of living creatures, is reviled and hunted down on sight. Removal of the *mineur*'s eggs from under the skin often leaves scars which are known as 'Kolonialschmisse' or 'colonial scars' amongst the German population. The biggest insect on Venus is a dragonfly with a wing-span of about one and a half feet.

## Land Animals

### Apatosaurus

The marshes and bogs of the Benton Peninsula are home to the largest sauropod yet discovered on the planet, *Apatosaurus bentoni*. The creature is known only from incomplete specimens – the logistical difficulties in bringing back so large a creature from so remote a locale are huge, but reliable accounts of eyewitnesses place its length in excess of 115 to 145 feet from the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail. The technical problem of transporting such a giant to one of the colonies or to Earth itself has not been solved yet, which is why the Hagenbeck Zoo has recently promised a reward of 200,000 Marks to anyone who would be able to transport a newborn living apatosaurus back to Earth.

### Apatosaurus

|                              |      |                  |        |           |
|------------------------------|------|------------------|--------|-----------|
| Animal Companion 5           |      |                  |        |           |
| Archetype: Dinosaur          |      | Health: 30       |        |           |
| Primary Attributes           |      |                  |        |           |
| Body: 13                     |      | Charisma: 0      |        |           |
| Dexterity: 3                 |      | Intelligence: 0  |        |           |
| Strength: 14                 |      | Willpower: 6     |        |           |
| Secondary Attributes         |      |                  |        |           |
| Size: 9                      |      | Initiative: 3    |        |           |
| Move: 17 (34)*               |      | Defense: 7 (9)** |        |           |
| Perception: 8                |      | Stun: 13         |        |           |
| Skills                       | Base | Levels           | Rating | (Average) |
| Brawl                        | 14   | 2                | 18     | (9)       |
| Stealth                      | 3    | 4                | 0***   | (0)       |
| Survival                     | 0    | 4                | 6      | (3)       |
| Talents                      |      |                  |        |           |
| Alertness 1 (Perception +2)  |      |                  |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Survival +2) |      |                  |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)    |      |                  |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Stealth +2)  |      |                  |        |           |
| Robust 1 (Health +2)         |      |                  |        |           |

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 9 N    | -9   | 18 N   | (9) N     |
| Kick    | 9 N    | -9   | 18 N   | (9) N     |
| Tail    | 11 N   | -9   | 20 N   | (10) N    |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.

\*\*Apatosaurs have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense.

\*\*\*Apatosaurs suffer a -7 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

### Hadrosaurs

These bipedal herbivores are the preferred hunting trophy of both settlers and natives. Their small size – six to 10 tons – makes them easier to kill than most other dinosaurs, which is why, along with the succulent flavor of their meat, these animals are hunted so often. This is one reason why the number of hunting expeditions continues to grow each year, the other being because hadrosaurs make for magnificent trophies. There are innumerable different species of this herbivore, each with a unique combination of colorful scale patterns and horns. Trophies taken from hadrosaurs look magnificent in a chief's hut or above the fireplace.

### Hadrosaurs

|                              |        |                 |        |           |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------|
| Animal Companion 2           |        |                 |        |           |
| Archetype: Dinosaur          |        | Health: 12      |        |           |
| Primary Attributes           |        |                 |        |           |
| Body: 6                      |        | Charisma: 0     |        |           |
| Dexterity: 2                 |        | Intelligence: 0 |        |           |
| Strength: 6                  |        | Willpower: 4    |        |           |
| Secondary Attributes         |        |                 |        |           |
| Size: 2                      |        | Initiative: 2   |        |           |
| Move: 8                      |        | Defense: 6 (8)* |        |           |
| Perception: 6                |        | Stun: 6         |        |           |
| Skills                       | Base   | Levels          | Rating | (Average) |
| Brawl                        | 6      | 2               | 8      | (4)       |
| Stealth                      | 2      | 4               | 4**    | (2)       |
| Survival                     | 0      | 4               | 6      | (3)       |
| Talents                      |        |                 |        |           |
| Alertness 1 (Perception +2)  |        |                 |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Survival +2) |        |                 |        |           |
| Weapons                      | Rating | Size            | Attack | (Average) |
| Bite                         | 2 N    | -2              | 8 N    | (4) N     |
| Headbutt                     | 4 N    | -2              | 10 N   | (5) N     |

\*Hadrosaurs have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense.

\*\*Hadrosaurs suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

### Hoplites

The broad plains and forests of the area north and northwest of the *Aphrodite Mountains* are home to a peaceful species of herbivorous dinosaur known to the natives as *Kala Lamapora* or 'walking boulders'. Labeled *Hoplitosaurus mendeleyevensis* by taxonomists and called *hoplita* or 'hoplites' by the Italians, these creatures are covered by overlapping bone plates, possess a large, club-like tail, and travel in herds of 12 or more. They are not such a nuisance as opanos and are not dangerous except when their offspring are menaced. When threatened, hoplites are



reported to form a large circle, with the younger animals inside and all adults around them facing inward. The creatures then thrash about with their club-like tails, presenting a formidable barrier to any attacker, including most predators.

## Hoplites

**Animal Companion 3**

**Archetype: Dinosaur**      **Health: 15**

### Primary Attributes

**Body: 8**      **Charisma: 0**  
**Dexterity: 4**      **Intelligence: 0**  
**Strength: 8**      **Willpower: 4**

### Secondary Attributes

**Size: 3**      **Initiative: 4**  
**Move: 12 (24)\***      **Defense: 9 (11)\*\***  
**Perception: 4**      **Stun: 8**

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 8    | 4      | 14     | (7)       |
| Stealth  | 4    | 2      | 3***   | (1+)      |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

### Talents

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)**

| Weapons     | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|-------------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite        | 3 N    | -3   | 14 N   | (7) N     |
| Spiked Tail | 5 N    | -3   | 16 N   | (8) N     |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.

\*\*Hoplites have a thick hide, reinforced with bone plates, that provides a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense.

\*\*\*Hoplites suffer a -3 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Marsh Devil

The marshes and wetlands of Venus are not without danger, of which the marsh devil, or *Diabolus campestris*, presents the greatest hazard to unwary travelers. Resembling a terrestrial primeval crocodile in shape, the marsh devil waits in ambush, lying just below the surface of the marsh. Only the creature's eyes and nostrils are exposed, and these are almost the same color as the myriad clumps of bogweed which dot the surface of the creature's habitat. The marsh devil's jaws are almost 2 feet across and possess rows of sharp teeth capable of severing a limb with lightning speed. Marsh devils are a major danger to travelers anywhere in the coastal marshes of the settled north, but they seem particularly prevalent in the coastal region west of Lake Heidelberg.

## Marsh Devil

**Animal Companion 2**

**Archetype: Animal**      **Health: 16**

### Primary Attributes

**Body: 8**      **Charisma: 0**  
**Dexterity: 4**      **Intelligence: 0**  
**Strength: 8**      **Willpower: 4**

### Secondary Attributes

**Size: 4**      **Initiative: 4**  
**Move: 12 (6)\***      **Defense: 8 (10)\*\***  
**Perception: 6**      **Stun: 8**

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 8    | 2      | 12     | (6)       |
| Stealth  | 4    | 4      | 4***   | (2)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

### Talents

**Alertness 1 (Perception +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)**

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 4 T    | -4   | 12 T   | (6) T     |
| Tail    | 4 N    | -4   | 12 N   | (6) N     |

\*Marsh devils use their full Move rating for swimming, and half their Move rating when on land.

\*\*Marsh devils have thick back plates that provide a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense against attacks from above or behind. Attacks from the front, the sides or against the unprotected underside ignore this bonus.

\*\*\*Marsh devils suffer a -4 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Opano

The largest herbivorous dinosaur on the *Ishtar Highlands* is the Ceratopsian called the opano by both the natives and many of the colonists. The opano or '*Monoclonius ishtarensis*' inhabits the forests along the edge of the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains*. Both colonists and settled Lizard-men hate them for their habit to wander onto plantations and cause severe crop failures. Their large size and heavily armored skulls, coupled with their tendency to travel in herds, make them extremely difficult to deal with. Native tales attest their very malicious character, a trait that the colonists can only confirm. German colonists call them *Baumdrängler* or 'tree-crushers' because they often huddle together under trees near a plantation, where they seem to wait for the right moment when they can cause the most damage.

## Opano

**Animal Companion 2**

**Archetype: Dinosaur**      **Health: 12**

### Primary Attributes

**Body: 6**      **Charisma: 0**  
**Dexterity: 2**      **Intelligence: 0**  
**Strength: 6**      **Willpower: 4**

### Secondary Attributes

**Size: 2**      **Initiative: 2**  
**Move: 8 (16)\***      **Defense: 6 (8)\*\***  
**Perception: 6**      **Stun: 6**

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 6    | 4      | 12     | (6)       |
| Stealth  | 2    | 2      | 2***   | (1)       |
| Survival | 0    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |

### Talents

**Alertness 1 (Perception +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)**

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Horns   | 4 T    | -4   | 12 T   | (6) T     |
| Trample | 4 N    | -2   | 14 N   | (7) N     |
| Bite    | 2 T    | -2   | 12 T   | (6) T     |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.

\*\*Opanos get a +2 Defense bonus thanks to their armored skull plate. Attacks from the sides, behind or against their exposed underside ignore this bonus.

\*\*\*Opanos suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.



## Sailback

This large reptile, '*Dimetre-don gulensis*', looks like an oversized lizard thanks to the large ridge on its back, which has earned it the name 'sailback'.

Its precise habits and relationships have yet to be established, but the creature is known to be carnivorous, and its large size – about 16 feet in length, makes it a nasty customer.

They seem to mostly inhabit the lowlands south and southwest of the *Gula Highlands* on the *Eisila Peninsula*.



## Sailback

### Animal Companion 2

#### Archetype: Dinosaur

Health: 9

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 4

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 6

Intelligence: 0

Strength: 5

Willpower: 3

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2

Initiative: 6

Move: 11 (22)\*

Defense: 8

Perception: 5

Stun: 4

| Skills     | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|------------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl      | 5    | 4      | 9      | (4+)      |
| Stealth    | 6    | 3      | 7**    | (3+)      |
| Survival 0 | 5    | 7      | (3+)   |           |

#### Talents

Alertness 1 (Perception +2)

Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Claw    | 3 T    | -2   | 10 T   | (+5) T    |
| Bite    | 3 T    | -2   | 10 T   | (+5) T    |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.

\*\*Sailbacks suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Stegosaurus

This relatively small, 10-ton, herbivorous dinosaur is distinguished by the row of upright plates or spikes down its spine and the cluster of spikes on the tip of its tail. The stegosaurus is a very common species of which there exist several minor varieties, differing both from each other and from Earth stegosaurus in small details. Stegosaurus are solitary creatures and respond to threats by facing away from their enemy and thrashing with their deadly spiked tail.

## Stegosaurus

### Animal Companion 2

#### Archetype: Dinosaur

Health: 12

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 6

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 0

Strength: 6

Willpower: 4

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 2

Initiative: 2

Move: 8 (16)\*

Defense: 6 (8)\*\*

Perception: 6

Stun: 6

| Skills     | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|------------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl      | 6    | 4      | 10     | (5)       |
| Stealth    | 2    | 2      | 2***   | (1)       |
| Survival 0 | 4    | 6      | (3)    |           |

#### Talents

Alertness 1 (Perception +2)

Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 T    | -2   | 10 T   | (5) T     |
| Tail    | 4 T    | -2   | 12 T   | (6) T     |

\*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running.

\*\*Stegosaurus have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense.

\*\*\*Stegosaurus suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Steller's Dragon

'*Megalosaurus stelleri*' or Steller's dragon is one of the exceptions to the general rule that large dinosaurs cannot live in the relatively cooler climate of the highlands. Although it is not the largest carnivorous dinosaur on Venus, it is a formidable enemy, the largest specimens weighing a total of 25 tons. For the unfortunate, it is possible to encounter a Steller's dragon anywhere in



the whole of the *Ishtar Highland* area, although they are most common in the western and southern reaches of the British colony. To fend off this constant threat, the British administration has just offered a £40 reward to everyone who kills a Steller's dragon and returns with proof.

## Steller's Dragon

**Animal Companion 5**

**Archetype: Dinosaur**

**Health: 21**

**Primary Attributes**

**Body: 7**

**Charisma: 0**

**Dexterity: 8**

**Intelligence: 0**

**Strength: 8**

**Willpower: 4**

**Secondary Attributes**

**Size: 6**

**Initiative: 8**

**Move: 16**

**Defense: 9**

**Perception: 6**

**Stun: 7**

**Skills**

**Base**

**Levels**

**Rating**

**(Average)**

**Brawl**

8

6

16

(8)

**Stealth**

8

5

7\*

(3+)

**Survival**

0

4

6

(3)

**Talents**

**Alertness 1 (Perception +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)**

**Robust 2 (Health +4)**

**Weapons**

**Rating**

**Size**

**Attack**

**(Average)**

**Claw**

7 T

-8

15 T

(+7) T

**Bite**

7 T

-8

15 T

(+7) T

**Tail**

6 T

-8

14 T

(7) T

\*Steller's dragons suffer a -6 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Tyrannosaurus

The lowland bogs and jungles are inhabited by much larger creatures than those of the highlands. There are innumerable beasts that have not yet been discovered, but the largest found to date is the *Tyrannosaurus giganticus*, weighing in at 40 tons. These monsters are more than two heads taller than Earth's prehistoric *Tyrannosaurus rex* and are thought to be the largest of the carnivorous dinosaurs on Venus. They present a considerable danger to parties seeking the Cytherian orchid, whose range overlaps that of the fierce meat eater. For the most part, the tyrannosaurs ignore human sized prey, but in times of hunger they also content themselves with smaller bites. For many native tribes of the lowlands it is a sign of pure luck to be chosen as a tyrannosaurus's prey, because for them it is the incarnation of Homas, the Great Spirit. Few if any of the colonists share this belief though.

## Tyrannosaurus

**Animal Companion 4**

**Archetype: Dinosaur**

**Health: 19**

**Primary Attributes**

**Body: 8**

**Charisma: 0**

**Dexterity: 5**

**Intelligence: 0**

**Strength: 10**

**Willpower: 4**

**Secondary Attributes**

**Size: 7**

**Initiative: 5**

**Move: 15**

**Defense: 6 (8)\***

**Perception: 6**

**Stun: 8**

**Skills**

**Base**

**Levels**

**Rating**

**(Average)**

**Brawl**

10

7

17

(8+)

**Stealth**

5

4

2\*\*

(1)

**Survival 0**

4

6

(3)





## Talents

**Alertness 1 (Perception +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)**

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Claw    | 5 T    | -7   | 15 T   | (+7) T    |
| Bite    | 7 T    | -7   | 17 T   | (+8) T    |
| Stomp   | 7 N    | -7   | 17 N   | (+8) N    |

\*Tyrannosaurs have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense.

\*\*Tyrannosaurs suffer a -7 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Aquatic Life

Being covered with many large expanses of water, Venus possesses a rich maritime fauna that includes many dinosaurs, as well as numerous species of prehistoric fish and reptiles.

## Ichthyosaurs

On the first glance, one could mistake these creatures of the Venusan oceans for fish – but instead, ichthyosaurs are air-breathing reptiles. In this respect, they are a bit similar to the whales and dolphins of Earth's oceans. The largest ichthyosaurus (*Ichthyosaurus mangedeius*) measures 33 feet in length and is known to sometimes attack boats and small ships.

## Ichthyosaurus

**Animal Companion 2**

**Archetype: Animal** **Health: 6**

**Primary Attributes**

**Body: 2** **Charisma: 0**

**Dexterity: 4** **Intelligence: 0**

**Strength: 2** **Willpower: 4**

**Secondary Attributes**

**Size: 0** **Initiative: 4**

**Move: 12 (0)\*** **Defense: 6**

**Perception: 4 (8)\*\*** **Stun: 2**

| Skills     | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|------------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl      | 2    | 4      | 6      | (3)       |
| Stealth    | 4    | 2      | 6      | (3)       |
| Survival 0 | 4    | 6      | (3)    |           |

**Talents**

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 T    | 0    | 8 T    | (4) T     |
| Tail    | 0 N    | 0    | 6 N    | (3) N     |

\*Ichthyosaurs double their Move rating when swimming, but cannot move outside of the water.

\*\*Keen Senses (+4 bonus on all sight-based Perception rolls)

## MacKenzie's Leviathan

This plesiosaur, first discovered by James MacKenzie, really lives up to its biblical name. Several sightings prove that truly gigantic leviathans live in the oceans of Venus. Bones washed up on the shore suggest that sizes up to 170 feet in length are

possible! These creatures are immensely dangerous to Venusan seafaring and almost impossible to defeat with standard weaponry. The skeletons of several smaller examples have been brought to England and have been on display in the Natural History Museum in London since 1885.

## MacKenzie's Leviathan

**Animal Companion 5**

**Archetype: Animal** **Health: 33**

**Primary Attributes**

**Body: 10** **Charisma: 0**

**Dexterity: 8** **Intelligence: 0**

**Strength: 10** **Willpower: 5**

**Secondary Attributes**

**Size: 16** **Initiative: 8**

**Move: 36 (0)\*** **Defense: 2 (4)\*\***

**Perception: 7** **Stun: 10**

| Skills     | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|------------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl      | 10   | 7      | 19     | (9+)      |
| Stealth    | 8    | 6      | 0      | (0)       |
| Survival 0 | 2    | 4      | (2)    |           |

**Talents**

**Alertness 1 (Perception +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)**

**Skill Aptitude (Stealth +2)**

**Robust 1 (Health +2)**

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 16 T   | -16  | 19 T   | (9+) T    |
| Tail    | 16 N   | -16  | 19 N   | (9+) N    |

\*MacKenzie's leviathan doubles its Move rating when swimming, but cannot move outside of the water.

\*\*MacKenzie's leviathan has a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus on its Passive Defense.

\*\*\*MacKenzie's leviathan suffers a -16 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## White-Headed Sea Turtle

The shallow waters northeast of MacKenzie's Island are home to *Chelonia laticephala*, the White-headed sea turtle. These seven-foot-long, 1000-pound beasts are air-breathers, but their metabolism is so low that they are capable of spending hours submerged in the shallows awaiting their prey, which consists mainly of the man-sized herbivores which feed on marsh weeds in the shallow water. Parties travelling through the marsh are easily mistaken for dinner. The occasional devouring of Venusians is paid back in kind by the seafaring tribes of MacKenzie's Island; amongst the natives the White-Headed Sea Turtle is known as a delicacy for true warriors.

## White-Headed Sea Turtle

**Tiergeführte 2**

**Archetype: Animal** **Health: 10**

**Primary Attributes**

**Body: 6** **Charisma: 0**

**Dexterity: 4** **Intelligence: 0**

**Strength: 5** **Willpower: 3**

**Secondary Attributes**

**Size: 1** **Initiative: 4**

**Move: 9 (5)\*** **Defense: 9 (11)\*\***

**Perception: 3** **Stun: 6**



| Skills                       | Base   | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl                        | 5      | 4      | 11     | (5+)      |
| Stealth                      | 4      | 2      | 5***   | (2+)      |
| Survival 0                   | 4      | 6      | (3)    |           |
| Talents                      |        |        |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Survival +2) |        |        |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)    |        |        |        |           |
| Weapons                      | Rating | Size   | Attack | (Average) |
| Bite                         | 1 T    | -1     | 11 T   | (5+) T    |

\*White-headed sea turtles use their full Move rating for swimming, and half their Move rating when on land.

\*\*White-headed sea turtles have a thick carapace that provides a +2 bonus on their Passive Defense.

\*\*\*White-headed sea turtles suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Aerial Life

### Butcher-Bird

Von Heidelberg's expedition collected a number of specimens of a large flying reptile which he named Würger or 'butcher-bird'. This pterosaur was later classified *Truciornis raptor* and is the largest known flyer on the world, with a wingspan of 9 feet and a weight of about 35 pounds. The Butcher-Bird has a projecting back of the head and a sharp beak. Leathery wing membranes allow it to fly very gracefully. The slightly unappreciative name 'Venusische Riesen-Würgatzel', which would translate as 'Venusian giant butcher-bird', which von Heidelberg gave it, originally derives from the Australian butcher-bird, because its hunting habits are very similar. The butcher-bird 'spears' its prey onto branches to tear them into mouth-sized pieces afterwards. This monstrous name could not prevail in general usage though, so the German colonists usually call it the 'Würger' and the British simply refer to it as the 'butcher-bird'.

### Butcher-Bird

#### Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0

Strength: 5 Willpower: 4

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 4

Move: 9 (5)\* Defense: 8

Perception: 6 Stun: 5

| Skills                       | Base   | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl                        | 5      | 4      | 9      | (4+)      |
| Stealth                      | 4      | 3      | 6**    | (3)       |
| Survival 0                   | 3      | 5      | (2+)   |           |
| Talents                      |        |        |        |           |
| Alertness 1 (Perception +2)  |        |        |        |           |
| Skill Aptitude (Survival +2) |        |        |        |           |
| Weapons                      | Rating | Size   | Attack | (Average) |
| Bite                         | 1 T    | -1     | 9 T    | (4+) T    |
| Claw                         | 1 T    | -1     | 9 T    | (4+) T    |

\*Butcher-birds use their full Move rating for flying, and half their Move rating when on land.

\*\*Butcher-birds suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls.

## Venusian Plants

### Cytherian Orchid

Famed for its beautiful colors and surprisingly delicate fragrance, the Cytherian orchid is also quite scarce. Many travelers have perished in search of this rare blossom, which has not proven amenable to cultivation. Collectors from both Mars and Earth are willing to pay a fortune not only for intact, living plants, but also for well-preserved, dried blossoms. Besides its unbelievable beauty, the Cytherian orchid is known among the Lizard-men for having curative powers. Shamans use their blossoms for the treatment of woodlouse fever and mossfungus disease, but because of the lack of research data, these effects are still being debated among physicians from Earth. Until now, the Cytherian orchid could only be found in the rough terrain of the lowlands south of *Mount Maxwell*. It is to date unknown if it possibly thrives in other, more remote places of Venus.

### Devil's Onion

Among the diverse Venusian plants are many that can be made into intoxicants. The most popular among these is the devil's onion, a crimson bulb-like plant. It takes only very small amounts of it for Lizard-men to develop hallucinations, which is why shamans use the plant for their rituals. For humans the effects are different. When consuming small amounts, they get suffer the effects of a mild euphoria and feel 'cooler'. Only with an overdose do they experience hallucinations combined with severe, aggressive behavior, sometimes culminating in bloodlust. While a single dose does not necessarily represent a danger to the user, prolonged use of the devil's onion can be. Over time, the active ingredients of devil's onion can accumulate in the body and cause delusions and insanity. Withdrawal symptoms may also lead to uncontrollable aggression in the addict. There are already several documented occasions on which the abuse of the devil's onion caused acts of violence. In spite of its consumption being prohibited in the colonies, to date none of the colonial administrations have managed to stamp out its use or trafficking on and off Venus. Indeed, this alien intoxicant can by now even be found in the opium dens of Limehouse in London's East End.

### Empress Auguste's Puffball

At first glance, it seems like an affront to call a grey fungus blotched with watery, suppurative warts after the wife of the German Emperor, but the appalling appearance of these fist-sized bulbs, called *Mug Mugu* by the Lizard-men, hides not only an edible, but exquisite, exceptionally aromatic mushroom. The human colonists would probably have overlooked it if it were not for one German colonial official, who was forced to try the puffball on a visit to a native village. He returned to Venusstadt in an excited mood with a whole bag of puffballs. Since then, the Empress Auguste's Puffball has been a popular addition the traditional Sunday roast on Venus. On Earth too, gourmet chefs have discovered the mushroom, but try to conceal its appearance by coating it in breadcrumbs. In the best restaurants of Berlin, London, and Rome the Venus mushroom has become popular accompaniment to lobster – Parisian restaurants refuse to have the 'German fungus' on their menus and have been known to throw customer who ask for it onto the streets with a sneer of disgust. On Venus, the mushroom is fairly common, so it is possible for not so well off colonists to have it on their tables on Sundays, but transport to Earth makes it an expensive luxury. Care needs to be taken to harvest only young puffballs, because the spores of older examples cause bad respiratory tract irritation in humans.



### Oma Jolima (Mother-of-Weapons)

This extraordinary miracle of nature is discussed in detail elsewhere (see p. 115). The plant has been found throughout the explored areas of Venus. Six different species have been identified, but these are of interest only to botanists.

### Prototaxites

In some especially damp shore areas almost 17 feet high cone-shaped giant mushrooms can be found – the so-called ‘Prototaxites’. It was discovered, almost by accident, that the flesh of these giant mushrooms can bring about a degree of rejuvenation in humans. After consuming the mushroom, skin tightens, and wrinkles and age spots disappear as if by magic. The effect of a prototaxite meal lasts up to four weeks. Consumers of Prototaxites tend to look up to 20 years younger than they actually are, depending on the age and quality of the mushroom. Such is the demand for the flesh of this mushroom, that fortunes are paid on Earth for real – and all too often, fake - prototaxite concoctions. The consumption of the mushroom does not really cause a rejuvenating effect though, in spite of all the praise as a ‘source of eternal youth’ the European newspapers have heaped upon it. The actual life span of a person is not affected; all that the consumption of Prototaxite can do is tighten the skin. This does not affect demand though, and neither does the fact that some humans are allergic to this wondrous Venusian mushroom and die after consuming it.

## Lizard-men

The first humans to arrive on Venus gave its aboriginal inhabitants the name ‘Lizard-men’ (German: *Eidechsenmenschen* or simply *Echsenmenschen*) because of the creatures’ reptilian appearance. Although the first groups encountered were uniformly hostile, it was soon discovered that there were many tribes of Lizard-men who could be friendly to the new-arrivals from Earth. Indeed, in 1887 James MacKenzie, the lone survivor of the 1873 expedition, was discovered living with a friendly remote tribe, having gone completely native. In fact, it was he who revealed the translation of the Lizard-men’s name for humans – ‘Bolu Popimayama’ –which translates as ‘pale as a dead fish’.



## Legendary Animals

Only a small part of the damp forests of the Morning Star have yet been discovered, and some people even doubt that it could be possible to ever unravel all the secrets from the trackless foggy swamps of Venus. There are lots of stories, rumors and legends about fantastic animals that are thought to inhabit the wilderness of Venus. Here is a summary of the most interesting rumors:

- Lizard-men have repeatedly reported giant, carnivorous plants deep in the jungle that are said to be able to swallow human-sized beings whole. Meat-eating plants of smaller size are known to exist, and there is no theoretical reason that a species of similar flora could not exist somewhere on the planet. Until a specimen can be acquired for study however, this legend must remain the subject of speculation.
- On his Venus odyssey, MacKenzie repeatedly observed giant sea snakes and a kraken-like creature of awe-inspiring size. The latter killed two of his companions when it dragged them from their drifting conveyor and swallowed them. So far, MacKenzie’s reports are the only evidence for the existence of these creatures.
- While MacKenzie was living among the Lizard-men of his island namesake, in an ancient temple cave he discovered the skull of a huge flying creature he named the ‘Venusian Roc’. The natives called it *Opeme u Mola*, which means ‘sky screamer’. Local legends tell of offerings of unlucky Lizard-men that were made to the *Opeme u Mola*. It is unclear if the ‘sky screamer’ species still exists or has become extinct by now.
- Several matching reports of settlers and natives tell of giant turtles nearly a 100 feet long. The *Nomele Palelinnu*, ‘those who knock over rafts’, are believed to be carnivorous. Of at least one tribe of seafaring Lizard-men it is told that it had tamed *Nomele Palelinnu* to build huts on their backs and use them as living ships.

## Physical Description

The Lizard-men of Venus are upright bipeds, although when speed is desired, they will often slither along on their bellies in a manner similar to a terrestrial otter sliding down a riverbank. Their feet are broad, flat, three-toed appendages, with a thick webbing between their toes, which serves as a secondary means of propulsion in the water and prevents them from sinking into the muck when they walk on the land. Their tail is their primary propulsive organ when swimming and also serves as a portable support when they stand upright. In a strange way, this habit makes them appear much like Australian kangaroos, and their broad bellies and narrow chests accentuate this resemblance even more, especially when they stand upright. Their arms are thin and spindly, but surprisingly strong, and end in hands which are quite human-like but for miss-



ing a digit – what a human would call the little finger. When sliding or swimming, these arms are held flat against the sides and are used in steering or braking. The head of a Lizard-man bears some resemblance to that of a terrestrial monitor lizard, but with large, batrachian eyes which presumably evolved due to the world's dim light. Thick brow ridges create the optical illusion that makes the eyes seem to protrude slightly from the face. There are two sets of eyelids, a transparent inner lid, which is closed to protect the eyes when swimming in relatively clear water, and a thicker outer lid, which is closed when burrowing through the mires and bogs of the Venusian lowlands. Compared to humans, Venusians are quite short-sighted; they do however, perceive a wider color range enabling them to see five prime colors and not just three as humans do. These colors have been identified as 'Uol' or Infra-red and 'Ponu' or Ultra-violet. Male Lizard-men have a small horn-like projection on the nose, which they do not seem to use as a weapon except in their ritual mate selection duels. The nostrils are relatively large, but can be closed by means of a sphincter muscle when burrowing through the muck. By flicking their tongues in and out of their mouths, they are able to 'smell' underwater, locating prey or others of their species. As an additional means of subsurface navigation they rely on their hearing, using it for echo location.

Venusians were at first thought to possess gills, but dissections have proven this erroneous. Lizard-men breathe using lungs, as terrestrial reptiles do, but recent investigations have revealed a hitherto unsuspected ability; much like terrestrial batrachians, Lizard-men can supplement their lungs underwater by absorbing oxygen and respiring carbon dioxide through their belly skin – the skin in their back is too thick for this process. The oxygen absorbed through their skin is not enough to keep them alive, but it can extend their time underwater by a sizable margin and makes it possible for them to be submerged for up to an hour.

Like humans, Lizard-men are omnivores. However, they never cook their food since fire is unknown to them. There are some animals and plants that Venusians can eat, but which are inedible for humans, and *vice versa*. For example, Venusians get nauseous after eating any food that contains even the slightest amount of milk.

### Skin

Lizard-men shed their skin as they grow, with the interval increasing as they age. Evidently Lizard-men never really stop growing,

but their rate of growth slows as they get older. The skin of a Lizard-man is thick and warty on their back and the upper surfaces, and thickens with age. Their belly skin is softer and thinner, although still very tough and leathery. Their back skin is usually a dark green or gray-brown in color, often so dark as to be almost black, although lighter shades are not unknown. The belly is usually a paler version of the back color and almost always oddly patterned in a light yellow or yellow-green. These intricate patterns are unique to each individual and are considered to contain auguries of an individual's future life. In the more developed tribes of Lizard-men, there are shamans who 'read' each individual's belly patterns at the time of hatching, predicting their future life and their time of mating. Warriors mount their most recently shed skin

on their shield as a semi-heraldic escutcheon, especially if they wear body armor which covers the belly skin, obscuring the pattern.

## Cultures and Societies

Most Lizard-men live in an appallingly primitive state, wandering the lowlands or swimming in the shallow seas, in nomadic, small family and clan groups, carrying their meager possessions in net bags woven from vines and creepers. Some Lizard-men however, have begun to ascend the path to civilization, although they are still savage primitives in most respects.

Even before the coming of humanity, there were a few tribes of Lizard-men which had developed a primitive agriculture or aquaculture – since they are equally at home on land and in water, and were beginning to lead a more

sedentary lifestyle than their nomadic neighbors. Family and clan groups coalesced under a chief or council of elders into a village, and soon villages began to combine into tribes. Agricultural surpluses accumulated, and for the first time in Venusian history this wealth permitted specialized occupations such as warriors, farmers, shamans, priests, potters, and so on.

With the arrival of humans, some of these tribes were absorbed into the colonies. Here, they work on the giant plantations of the jungle-covered plateaus, tending plants and protecting them from the local animal life in return for food and protection from the elements, from dinosaurs, and from the deprivations of their marauding brethren. Other tribes near the settled plateaus have prospered greatly from trade with the colonies. The Lizard-men, who are acclimatized to the hot, wet lowlands, gather the plants and other materials which humans find valuable. These they trade for various useful goods at hundreds of small human trade stations located throughout the lowlands.





## Tools, Trade Goods, and Weapons

The Lizard-men do not know the use of fire, which is not surprising given their wet habitat. At present, they remain in a stone age, making their tools from rock, bone, and plant materials. Iron and steel soon become worthless piles of rust in the Venusian climate, but corrosion-resistant tools are much in demand. The most common trade goods are knives, axe heads, spearheads, and other items of brass, which corrodes more slowly than most other metals. Pots, jars, and other containers of ceramic or glass are highly prized. Other items which are traded are rubberized canvas bags and strips of rubberized cloth that can be used as belts, bags, and clothes; cut-glass prisms and pendants of all colors; and gold-covered medallions. Generally, Lizard-men are thrilled by anything which shines or sparkles and does not corrode, even polished buttons have already been successfully traded in return for several pounds of valuable plants and fungi.

The weapons of the Lizard-men are constructed from the *Oma Jolima*, the 'Mother of Weapons' *Oma Jolima* is a reed-like plant found in the Venusian lowlands. Although relatively supple when alive, the plant hardens quickly after harvesting. The stem becomes extremely tough, approximating ebony in hardness, but with the lightness and flexibility of horn. The Lizard-men make most of their weapons by shaping the plant immediately after harvesting and allowing it to harden. Young shoots are used for arrows; slightly older shoots are used for javelins, harpoons, and spears. War clubs, axes, and maces can be made by braiding together lengths of the supple shoots and allowing them to harden. Sharp bits of bone or chipped stone, or more recently, broken glass obtained from human merchants are often woven into the ends of these weapons, making them quite deadly. Helmets, shields, breastplates, and other armor can also be constructed from the plant by weaving the thin shoots into the shape desired, like wicker. Since the plant hardens within an hour of harvest, great speed and dexterity are needed in order to complete the more complicated items. Under normal circumstances, items made from *Oma Jolima* can withstand the action of the Venusian elements and putrefactive bacteria for years – provided they are maintained properly.

Before the arrival of humans, missiles such as arrows, javelins, harpoons, and spears were quite light and had little penetrative power. The Lizard-men therefore usually painted the weapon's tips with deadly poison from one of the numerous toxins that could be extracted from a plant or animal. Fortunately, these poisons have proven somewhat less lethal to human metabolisms than to native creatures. They generally cause severe fever in humans, but seldom death. Metal points obtained from human traders give such missile weapons more weight and sufficient penetration to be deadly, making the use of poison unnecessary. The warriors of the tribes close to human settlement have given up the practice, but the more remote savages retain it.

## Religion

Religion is one of the few things that all groups of Lizard-men have in common. While there are individual variations, of course, all Lizard-men share the same basic animistic religion, which holds that the world is full of spirits called *Timu*. Each class of inanimate object has its own spirit, and each individual living thing likewise. *Timu* are relatively weak spirits compared to the more powerful spirits called *Natimu*, which are personifications of the forces of nature, such as the wind or lightning. Greatest of the *Natimu* is *Homa*, the spirit of life and death. *Homa* grants the belly pattern, sets the course of each native's

life, and determines when death shall come. Lizard-men do not worship spirits as such; nevertheless, there are simply a bewildering number of ceremonies which must be performed. Each tribe has its own ceremonies and its own shamans to perform them and pass them on to their successors.

The belief in *Homa*, who is worshipped by many tribes in an almost monotheistic way, makes it easier for Christian missionaries to accomplish their work on Venus than it is on Mars where the natives have complex religions and elaborated theologies of their own. By now, there are quite a lot of baptized Lizard-men in the colonies. However, they often incorporate elements of the old animistic religion, much like the religious beliefs of South America and Voodoo did on Earth. God is identified with *Homa*, while the *Natimu* are represented as angels. Only the devil had to be added since the Lizard-men originally did not know any spirits who were solely evil.

Other tribes have some sort of proto-polytheism, with *Homa* still being the most important of the Great Spirits, but as a part of a quite varying pantheon of other mighty spirits.

## The Gods Were Astronauts

It often occurs that Lizard-men, never having seen humans before, mistake them for idols or ghosts. Being considered a supernatural being may seem strange and absurd to humans. In the eyes of Lizard-men however, it is only logical that creatures, who can fly, create bright, burning light, and kill animals at distance without using arrow or spear, must be gods. In the colonies, this erroneous belief has been wiped out, of course. After all, one of the self-declared aims for humans on Venus was to bring civilization to the simple-minded Venusians rather than pushing them even further into the mists of superstition. At least, this is the official version that is sold to the press on Earth – of greater importance however, is the fact that the colonial administrators would lose every public support on Earth if they would let themselves be worshiped as gods on Venus. Despite all of the progress to date, the average person of the late 19th century is still quite pious, and taking advantage of the Venusians' naiveté in such a manner would be damned by the public opinion as hubristic, blasphemous, and barbaric. Besides, Christian missionaries on Venus also have a word to say in this matter. Thus, only the most malicious villains would go so far as to let naive Lizard-men believe them to be a god.

## Subcultures

To the untrained eye of the visitor from Earth, the Lizard-men might at first seem identical. In reality, there are many subtle differences and distinctions in their culture, society, religion, and lifestyle. It is important to note that all the tribal groupings discussed below are human classifications. The natives have no notion of any political or social entity other than their own village or, in some cases, their own tribe.



## Western Ishtar Tribes

These tribal groups make up a sizable minority of the native population of the German colony, and a small percentage of the British colony. The semi-nomadic western Ishtar tribes had developed a primitive form of agriculture before the arrival of humans, and have adapted well to work on human plantations. Currently, several new Ishtar villages have been established throughout the German colony, mostly to house plantation workers.

The basic unit of life is the village, ruled by a council of 'esteemed elders' called *Nupapa Kumama*. These elders are tribe members whom their peers hold in respect, and they may be warriors, shamans, craftsmen, or very rarely, a native whose belly skin augurs leadership. The elders adjudicate disputes, set customs and taboos, lead in time of war, and administer the day-to-day life of the village. Often, one elder will be acknowledged as supreme, usually labeled the 'chief' by humans.

Each village has a shaman, a keeper of the mystic secrets and ceremonies of the race, who occupies a centrally located hut in each village. The shaman's hut is the central meeting point of the village, and also the sacred place where the rituals and ceremonies of the natives are performed. Chief among these rituals is the *Tonumutola*, the augury from the belly skin.

Surrounding the shaman's hut are the huts of the village craftsmen. The nomadic villages have as many as twelve craftsmen, making the weapons, tools, and other items required for daily life. In the plantation villages, there are fewer of these, as the native workers obtain tools from humans. The Western Ishtar Tribes have also developed a primitive system of barter used to distribute these goods throughout the village.

The huts of the more sedentary tribes are solidly built, and often raised on stilts to lift them above the surface of the muck and mire. Stout reeds, saplings, and strips of wood from local trees are woven and tied together to form a shelter, roofed with vegetation in a manner almost identical to thatching.

## Highland Tribes

The highland tribes of the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains* form the second major group of Lizard-men, accounting for half the aboriginal population of the German colony and about 5% of the British colony. The villages of this group tend to be less permanent than those of the Western Ishtar group. Their huts are usually smaller, more ramshackle, and not as well built. "If one collapses," the inhabitants say, "it is a few hours' work to build another, and we will probably move on before it is built." If working plantations, members of the Highland Tribes have had little trouble adapting to the sedentary lifestyle. The bulk of them however, are unsettled wanderers, earning their living by hunting and gathering. During their travels, they collect wild plants and other items, which they trade to humans for tools and trinkets at the numerous trading posts scattered throughout the colonies.

The main cultural distinction of the hill tribes is their burial customs. The religion of the hill tribes varies in certain details, but generally they all believe in an afterlife. Their paradise is located in caves deep in the bedrock of the planet, and the deceased must disincorporate – a process which takes no more than a few days in the Venusian climate – and journey to paradise by swimming through the bedrock of the planet. The dead are sealed in a subsurface chamber along with tools, weapons, and trade goods sufficient to allow them a good life upon their arrival. These tombs are often looted by unbelievers from the

lowland nomadic tribes, a process which causes some friction between the lowland and highland Lizard-men.

## Eastern Ishtar Tribes

The tribes of the eastern Ishtar Highlands comprise the bulk of the Lizard-men population of the British colony and are characterized by their extremely nomadic lifestyle. They have fewer and less complicated religious ceremonies, and are more primitive than the natives of the other regions. They have not adapted to plantation life very well, and for this reason they are less reliable than their western brethren – they tend to leave the fields quite soon after it has been assigned to them. This is why British plantations are generally smaller than the German ones. The border tribes of the eastern Ishtar group are less affected by the civilizing influence of the human presence, and they tend to turn to banditry quite often.

## Coastal Tribes

Lizard-men are very much adapted to a semiaquatic lifestyle, and those living in coastal regions are often as highly developed as the most civilized groups of the western Ishtar Highlands. The tribes of the western MacKenzie Sea are primarily seagoing cultures, and their village groupings are permanent features of the MacKenzie Sea's coastal region. Access to the humans' metal tools has enabled them to build radically larger craft, and they are currently a culture in transition as they range farther out to sea on longer and more profitable trading voyages. They are quickly becoming the wealthiest Lizard-men on the planet, and many Earth men call them the 'Phoenicians of Venus'.

## Aphrodite Coast Tribes

Little is known about the tribes of the coastal area north of the Aphrodite Mountains. They are primarily seafaring people, who build their huts on large rafts which they anchor in the shallows to form temporary villages. When the time comes to move on, the inhabitants of these 'houseboats' simply pull anchor and unfurl their sails. They have not had the same access to human tools as those tribes closer to the British and German colonies, and consequently are not as capable of sophisticated marine construction as their western counterparts.

## Gula Tribes

The Lizard-men of the Gula mountain range on the Eisila Peninsula are among the most primitive discovered thus far. They have no village structure and no noticeable religion, except belief in a few animistic nature spirits. However, they do have a primitive tool-manufacturing technology. Despite their 'best' attempts, the Italians have been largely unable to exploit them in the cultivation of cotton trees. The Gula tribes do trade with the trading posts in the area though, mainly in the rare flora of the region and in a multicolored and strikingly beautiful leather made from the skins of a species unknown to humans.

## Sappho Tribes

Much as the western Ishtar tribes, the Lizard-men of the Sappho plateau had managed to develop a primitive agrarian economy before the arrival of humans. They presently make up 90% of the native population of the Italian colony of *Colonia di Veneri*. The Sappho tribes have adapted well to plantation life, and large tracts of jungle have been converted to cotton tree production.



## Aphrodite Mountain Tribes

The nomadic highland tribes of the Western Aphrodite Mountains have been at war with the more agricultural tribes of the eastern plateau for generations. Neither side was able to gain an advantage until the arrival of the Russians, who upset the balance of power by trading edged weapons of metal for local products. Several plantations have been started using captured eastern tribesmen as laborers and western tribesmen as overseers.

## Diana Culture

There are vague clues hinting to the existence of a high culture living in the remote Diana Highlands, which may have developed even further than the western Ishtar tribes. Nomads have traded some artifacts to humans that suggest the Diana culture to have very skilled craftsmen who are even capable of processing gold taken from streams and rivers. The complex cuneiform symbols engraved on the artifacts could be some sort of primitive writing system. If the reports of these nomads are to be believed, this Lizard-men culture knows how to make and use fire, builds massive, spiral stone cones and live in large villages of mud huts, and is ruled over by a high priest or a god king. As astonishing as these reports are, they have been dismissed as the ramblings of primitive, some say insane, nomads, though this has not stopped a number of expeditions from being mounted into the Diana Highlands in search of a Lizard-men high culture. None have yet returned, but all hoped to make what could be the discovery of the decade!

## Language of the Lizard-men

*"Gentlemen, I'm asking you; could there be a more splendid proof for the development of all languages from just one proto-language than the Lizard-man?"*

**Professor Joseph Maria Czagek, University of Prague**

The language of the Lizard-men is another of this race's curiosities. Remarkably, all tribes that have yet been discovered speak the same language, except for some minor deviations in dialect. The language of the Lizard-men therefore has no name of its own; the natives simply call it 'Buaio', meaning 'language' or 'speaking'. Earth men refer to this language as 'Venusian'. It was not until they first met humans that Venusians learned there were other languages completely different to their own.

The Venusian language is what linguists call 'agglutinative', that is, its grammar resembles that of languages such as Japanese or Turkish. Venusians often sum up whole sentences into seemingly endless words. When it comes to animals and plants, Venusian provides a rich vocabulary, recognizing 98 different words for 'leave' and almost 30 different expressions for 'mire', but not a single word for 'fire'. Those Lizard-men, who have come to know fire, term the phenomenon as 'Nhuahoagaaohaiha-ha-Aha' or 'Billowing red leave that makes pain'.

There are many theories circulating on Earth on the origin of the language's uniformity; however, none of them has yet been verified. Many linguists assume that the primitive Venusian is still in the premature state of a 'proto-language'.

## Settlements and Colonies on Venus

*"...[W]hile my dinosaur was sinking into the bog and it desperately tried to cling with his forelegs, I stemmed my hands on his head, swung my legs up in the air, turning a somersault above the head of this poor creature which was pressed into the mud immediately by the pressure. I reached firm ground, but it drifted instantly, already sinking, I gained a foothold again and got back on my feet, I sank and I got up, I stumbled and I fell. I found ground anyway, I was pulled down and I went forward once again and I still didn't go down, I couldn't hear anything, I couldn't feel anything, I couldn't see anything except for these three men down there below the giant ferns, two of them awaiting me with rifled guns..."*

**Karl May, In the Swamps of the Morning Star**

The exploration and colonization of Venus has lagged behind that of Mars. This is of course due to the fact that expeditions to this planet were made much later and the establishment of settlements did not start until about eleven years ago. There are however, several thriving colonial establishments on Venus, subsisting mainly on farming local plants or trading with native people.

## The German Protectorate

Over the last few years, the German empire has thoroughly made use of the technical edge the airship technology had given them, and it is now the most important colonial power on the jungle planet. From the early beginnings it was recognized that the exploitation of Venus might provide an economic upturn for the German chemical industry which was already among the largest in Europe. Besides these economic reasons, there also seem to be other motives for the planet's development by Germany, which until now have been concealed from the public. A major factor which contributed to the promotion of the colonization of Venus certainly has been Bismarck's hope that it would give the peoples of the German empire a common aim, and in doing so, distract everyone from the country's internal dissent and serve as a focus for the nascent German nationalism. In the meantime, it became apparent that the potential revenues to be made from Venus are enormous, and if the duties that could be levied on imports from Venus could be matched, then the Venusian influence on the German economy would be more than enough to lift the heavy burden resting on the shoulders of the ordinary German tax payer.

Unfortunately, the German 'man on the street' is not particularly interested in his country's exploits on Venus – just as he has little time to get enthusiastic about any of Germany's colonies, on foreign soil or foreign planets. The government is optimistic though, that the successful establishment of a German colony on Mars will raise the interest of the 'man on the street' for further colonial efforts.

The German colony or to give its official name, 'Schutzgebiet' on Venus occupies the western slopes of the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains* and has a population of about 8,000 humans and an estimated 200,000 Lizard-men. The area claimed by the colony amounts to just under 140,000 square miles, but only a small percentage of this area has been settled by humans. Most of the population resides in the five major cities – Venusstadt, Heidelberg, Badenburger, Eiderberg, and Neu-Regensburg, and



in a dozen or so small trading posts and the villages that have grown up about them. The capital and seat of government of the German Venus-Kolonie is the city of Venusstadt. The governor and his staff reside here, serving as the highest ranking civil servants in charge of the colonial administration.

The protection of the colony is provided by the 'Schutztruppen', a Germany Army infantry regiment with a military strength of 2,350 officers, NCOs, and troops. In addition, the Germans have raised a number of Lizard-men battalions, each commanded by human officers and NCOs. However, the governor does not completely trust these units and insists that none of them be allowed inside the capital.

Venusstadt and the other cities of the 'Schutzgebiet' are protected from marauding dinosaurs by natural terrain features, as they all five are situated atop steep slopes and cliffs. Most of the plantations and outlying trading posts must rely on man-made fortifications and weapons for their defense against the monstrous dinosaurs. Those settlements lying at the edge of the protectorate must also defend themselves against the occasional bands of raiding Lizard-men who manage to evade the over-worked Schutztruppen patrols.

The German plantations are the largest and most efficient on Venus. It takes a relatively small number of humans to supervise the local workers. This is not necessarily an accomplishment of the efficient administration by the colonial rulers, despite what they might claim, but rather due to the fact that the protectorate is populated largely by the more agriculturally sophisticated Western Ishtar tribes. In any case, a typical German plantation is at least three times larger than a typical British or Italian one, usually measuring up to several hundred miles across. Typically, they cultivate the plants that serve as the raw materials for the ever growing chemical and pharmaceutical industry in Germany.

Several companies from Earth have established facilities in or close to some of the settlements in order to explore and develop new raw materials on site. The rapid pace at which these factories and laboratories were and continue to be set up is the envy of the other colonial powers on Venus. The largest research institute is currently headed by the chemist Moritz Honigmann.

## Venusstadt

*"...[T]his lovely treasure, which German diligence and German efficiency wrested from the Morning Star..."*

*From a speech held by Otto von Bismarck  
in front of the Reichstag*

The 'capital' of the German protectorate on Venus, Venusstadt is the largest and oldest settlement on the second planet of the Solar System. It has 3,500 inhabitants and celebrated its ten year anniversary in 1888. The administration of the German Venus Colony is headed by a *Reichskommissar*, a post which is currently held by Gerhart von Racknitz.

The beginning of the settlement goes back to the von Heidelberg expedition of 1878, which having rescued the survivors of the failed British expeditions of the 1870s needed to get them back to Earth. In order to do so, they had to leave freight weight on Venus, which amounted to a dozen men. The entire crew of the *Heimdall* volunteered and so they were chosen by lot. The 'Dozen on Venus' set up camp atop a large cliff that was surrounded on three sides by 200 feet deep chasms. The camp was further isolated by means of controlled demolitions that left a narrow rock belt as the only access to the rest of the mountain. Essentially what once had been a cliff top was transformed into an island plateau.

The men expected that a ship would come after a few months to take them home. Instead came several ships filled with settlers that set out to establish the colony. Since then, settler filled ships land at Venusstadt on a regular basis.

Today, Venusstadt is a city in constant change. The city is ever growing, and her inhabitants too, are on the move. Many come to find their fortune, whether by establishing their own plantations or by setting out into the wilds of Venus in search of the planet's hidden treasures. Few of them succeed in fulfilling their dreams. Those that survive Venus' dangers usually return to Venusstadt after a fruitless search or having lost their money and are stranded there, trying to make a living as a dogsbody or a day laborer in order to save up money for their return flight to Earth.

Visitors to the city will find an odd mixture of semi-finished and half collapsed buildings and structures. Almost as fast as building designs come off the drawing board, construction begins and there are numerous buildings in the city that are still under construction. Once finished though, these buildings tend to rot away within a few months – the climate causes wood to age very fast, a process which can only be delayed by constantly coating it with preservative lacquers. As a consequence, the structural components of every building have to be replaced regularly, and no building in Venusstadt has doors or front walls older than five years.

This also has an effect on the construction methods on Venus. Buildings are mostly made of stone, and only where this is not possible due to a shortage of time or money, houses are built with low foundation walls and support pillars made of stone, supplemented by wooden partition wall as well as large windows strung with fly screens. These windows are only shut during heavy rain fall, and combined with openings in the roof provide for a constant air circulation within the building.

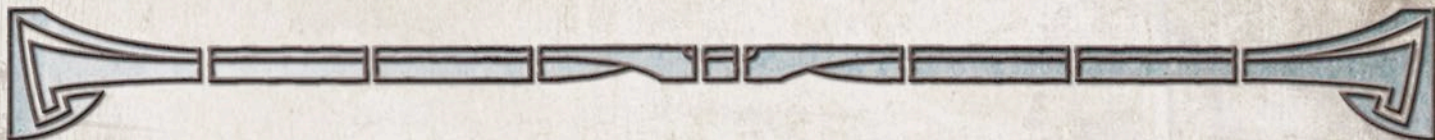
The streets of Venusstadt are dead straight and meet at a right angle. They are unpaved, for they were cut right into the rock. Deep gutters run along the edge of streets, draining the near constant rain water into the chasms that surround the plateau upon which the settlement stands. The streets have typical German names – aside from the Bismarckplatz there is also a Goethestraße and a Heidelbergweg, but the main thoroughfare through Venusstadt is Kaiser-Wilhelm-Allee.

Although situated on another planet, Venusstadt is at its very core a German country town. By day, a citizen might have to negotiate with Lizard-men for the right price in shards of glass in exchange for twenty dinosaur hides, but by night he will stop by his favorite pub to rehearse with his choir. The settlement has a volunteer fire brigade with a marching band, various athletics clubs, a veterans association, and even a local branch of the SDAP (Social Democratic Workers' Party) which holds secret meetings. Aside from cultivating social bonds, such activities also serve to maintain the attachment to the old homeland.

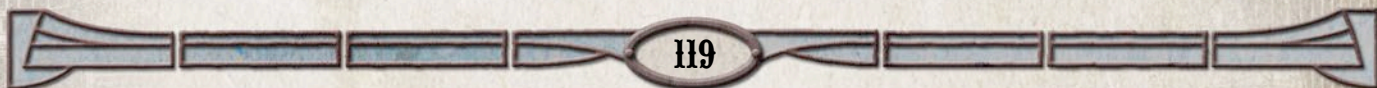
This attachment is also expressed in the holidays that the colonists brought with them from their native country. At Christmas, every citizen decorates a giant fern, in February they celebrate Carnival, in early summer there is Schützenfest – a traditional festival involving a shooting contest, and on the Kaiser's birthday – January 27<sup>th</sup>, all of the inhabitants line the length of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Allee, cheering the military parade.

Each place and site listed in the city map with a number will be presented below with a short description:





Venus





## 1 - Bismarckplatz

At the heart of the city stands a small statue of the Chancellor, showing him in a worthy, statesmanlike posture. Surrounding the place are the buildings of the colonial administration, the largest of which is the **Government House** with its famous **Ice Palace**. On the opposite side stands the modest **City Hall** and the **Luther Church**. On the western side of the square stands Venusstadt Law Courts, where the highest legal authority within the colony resides, while opposite the Law Courts, stands the **Headquarters of the Gendarmerie**, the colony's paramilitary police service.

## 2 - Government House

The Government House is home to the Reichskommissar, or governor, and his family who reside in the special wing called *Der Eispalast*, or 'Ice Palace'. Besides the governor's private living quarters, it also contains the colonial administrative offices for the German settlements as well as the central exchange for the capital's telephonic communications system and the main station in the German telegraph system, which is currently under construction and is supposed to be further developed.

The administrative staff is constantly overworked, the needs of the settlers, the administration, and the development of new territories all requiring their full attention. At the moment, there are still vacant posts for aspiring civil servants willing to help improve the administration of the new colony.

Much to the dismay of the governor, some of the offices in Government House have been commandeered by agents of the top secret Abteilung Z (Unit Z). The members of this intelligence service take their orders directly from Berlin and rebuff all attempts at oversight into their activities.

## 3 - Government Warehouse

This large and well-guarded storage building houses 'goods of particular value or importance' to the colonial government. Wild rumors as to the exact nature of these goods constantly change and circulate throughout the city.

## 4 - Count Zeppelin Etherport

On the city's northwest edge overlooking the chasm stands Venusstadt's landing port which is renowned for its slightly pompous name. It consists of a large field with several anchor poles surrounded by several hangers that provide protection for the fragile ether craft during the planet's infrequent storms. Several burnt out metal wrecks lie at the bottom of the adjacent chasm serve as a reminder that the fierce downdraft into the chasm make any approach to the edge of the plateau quite dangerous.

## 5 - Fort Bismarck

This is the main military base for the German Army on Venus. The two regiments of the 17th Infantry alternate

duty on a monthly basis – one regiment patrols the colony's border while the other one keeps order in Venusstadt.

## 6 - Harbormaster's Office

This building is the headquarters for the various authorities that operate the Venusstadt port facility and regulate air traffic.

## 7 - Speicherstadt (Warehouse District)

Stretching out from the east end of Count Zeppelin Etherport is the Warehouse District. Here can be found the offices and warehouses of the merchant houses that trade with the colony. Goods of all sorts can be bought and sold here, as can laborers being made to work under often bad conditions.

## 8 - Pension Venus

North of the Bismarck Platz, at the Schlossallee, stands the largest and most luxurious hotel on Venus. The Pension has recently concluded an agreement with Mr. Joseph Martin to equip two of its largest suites using machinery like that found in the Ice Palace. Once the cooling machinery is installed, the hotel management plans to charge a premium rate for these rooms.

## 9 - Heidelbergstraße

Often called the 'Diplomats' Avenue', this large street starts at the Fort Bismarck and leads eastwards through the city. Situated along the street are the spacious villas of Venusstadt's citizens of note as well as the consulates of the colonial powers represented on Venus.

## 10 - Venusbank

Venusbank, the largest bank of Venus offers its services under the logo of the garden of the Hesperides, the nymphs associated with the Morning Star. A subsidiary of the *Commerz- und Disconto Bank*, Venusbank handles three quarters of the mercantile trade on Venus.

Since bank notes in the Venusian climate tend to rot easily and coins made of cheap metal would corrode for the same reason, gold is the main currency in Venusstadt and beyond. Consequently, gold is stored in immense quantities in the bank's cellar.

## 11 - The Exchange

Every large trading company present on Venus has its representatives in the Exchange building. Here purchasers inspect new raw materials brought in from the jungle, and many a fortune hunter dreams of getting rich here. It is also here that the plantation owners bring their harvests to sell.

## 12 - Hotel Brandenburg

The second largest hotel in the city, the Hotel Brandenburg is less expensive than the Pension Venus, but it does



own the largest brewery of the planet and makes considerable profit from the trade in beers and ales. Besides from the famed *Brandenburg Bräu*, the hotel takes great pride in its employment of Lizard-men as staff and the quality of the training that they are given. Two Lizard-men in white livery welcome the guests at the entrance and hold open the doors for them.

### 13 - Martin's Ice Factory

This building is still under construction, but once the factory and the insulated cool store are finished, Mr. Josephus Martin has every hope that he will make a fortune with the production of ice and the storage of perishable goods. The so-called Ice Barons of the CSA and USA are already brooding about how they can prevent the ending of their monopoly.

### 14 - Merchants' District

Situated south of the warehouse district are the various shops and stores from where the city's inhabitants purchase their daily goods. Various trading houses maintain establishments in this district from where they conduct business between the various colonies.

### 15 - The Prison

East of the Bismarckplatz lies an old warehouse which now serves as a prison. It is actually far too large for such a small city, which is why the building lies empty most of the time. The only guests housed here from time to time are the crew members of ether flyers who having landed in Venusstadt have celebrated their shore leave a little too exuberantly.

### 16 - Kammersdorf (Griefville)

Venusstadt's 'shanty town' consists of shabby buildings constructed from old wood and the wreckage taken from crashed air ships. Located in the city's southeast, the buildings here were originally intended as temporary lodgings for new arrived settlers, over time this district has fallen into a state of disrepair and become shelter for the city's poor and destitute.

### 17 - The Church of St. Nikolai

Venusstadt's Catholic Church is located in the city's east end. Consecrated in 1884, the Church of St. Nikolai is ministered by Father Karl Heinrich Schwarz, a jovial Bavarian with a reputation for being somewhat lax when it comes to the care of his flock. The presence of the church

in Venusstadt, which is part of the diocese of Venus and administered by the bishop in Nuova Firenze, is a bone of contention with the city's Protestants. The more vocal of the city's Protestants have been known to question where Father Schwarz's true loyalties lie.

### 18 - Luther Church

The Protestant church stands adjacent to Venusstadt's city hall at Bismarckplatz. Dean Wilhelm Ohlendorff, a sullen grouch from Mecklenburg, ministers to the majority of the Christians in the city while also serving as the *de facto* voice of all of the Protestants in the German colony. His efforts to promote morals and decency by founding an abstinence union were even less successful than his attempts to proselytize the Lizard-men.

### 19 - School

Much to the annoyance of the local children, a small school was established in 1887. It is a simple public school where schoolmaster Ernst Hempel teaches reading, writing, and arithmetic. His field trips are always... interesting. In addition to the offspring of the city, the school also teaches the children from the more remote plantations who live in an affiliated boarding house. As of yet, there are no secondary schools, but the city's administration is already discussing the establishment of a grammar school.

### 20 - 'Zum kühnen Husaren'

Located across the street from Fort Bismarck's main gate, the sign over this public house depicts an obviously drunken hussar astride his horse. The most popular of the city's drinking establishments catering to its soldiery, the ambience is rough, but cordial. Civilians will soon realize that they are not welcome here.

### 21 - 'Zum goldenen Apfel'

This perfect replica of a German *Gemütlichkeit* is located in the merchants' district. It is popular with Venusstadt's honorable citizens who like to get together and enjoy a pleasant evening and enjoy a reminder of home. It has its own bowling alley and runs a league for its regulars. The local choir meets here every Saturday.

### 22 - The Church of the Second Paradise

A nascent group of religious fanatics, who consider Venus to be the very paradise that Adam and Eve were banished from. The Lizard-men however, are believed to be the descendants of the 'corrupted snake'.



## The British Enclave

The British on Venus have not expanded much beyond the territories discovered during their early exploration efforts. The majority of their possessions are located on Victoria Plateau and incorporate several small plantations and a number of trading stations. The slopes leading up to the Victoria Plateau are steep enough to keep out the largest and most dangerous dinosaurs, but the British have nevertheless stationed military forces on Venus for the protection of its remote outposts. These consist of two battalions of Marines, including about 600 officers, NCOs, and troops.

For the most part, British plantations and trading posts are each self-governing as much as possible, but the civilian magistrate at Fort Collingswood is considered to be in overall charge. A command post at the fort handles the administrative and operational needs for the Marine contingent. Officially, these two bureaucracies are separate from and nominally independent of each other, but in practice, the magistrate and the ranking British officer cooperate in all important matters.

The British colony has a larger proportion of nomadic Lizard-men than the other colonies. Their plantations therefore tend to be significantly smaller than the German ones, usually containing only six or seven native villages. Unlike the German plantations, each village has two or three humans permanently assigned for its administration. A greater proportion of the British colony however, consists of unfarmed territory with trading posts scattered throughout.

## The Russian Colony

Czar Alexander III has never been overly enamored of colonial ventures, but since his father, Alexander II, sponsored expeditions to Venus in 1880 and in 1883, the new czar finally decided to also lay claim to some territories on this planet in the name of the Russian empire. The Russians have discovered a number of plants of economic significance, including the cotton tree and the aephodilia. The military defense of these territories is secured by a fleet of six balloon fortresses, Russia's primitive, but nonetheless, heavily armed and armored version of the German airship technology.

Russian Colonization efforts have been primarily focused on the establishment of small, yet heavily fortified trading posts in the Aphrodite Mountain region. In recent times however, the Russians have established a growing number of plantations that primarily rely on the use of captive labor. When the first Russian colonists landed on Venus, it was in the middle of a longstanding feud between two rival tribes of Lizard-men – the eastern and western Aphrodite tribal groupings, and they were quick to exploit the situation to their profit. Each of the established plantations is under the administration of a semi-military governor and is supported by a small, but well-trained group of supervisors, which seems more like a paramilitary unit than a civilian body. The plantations are worked by captive eastern natives, under the supervision of native overseers from the western tribes. It is a situation that is likely to be stable over the short term, as the Russian support creates a power balance that makes any acts of war practically impossible. Neutral observers see the maintaining of this balance as a risky and dangerous policy; it could easily tip one way or the other, the result in either case being rapid and violent change.

## The Italian Holdings

The Italian plantations are fairly new, having been established almost exclusively for cultivation of the Venusian cotton tree. These

plantations are closer to the British model than to the German. Italian colonization efforts have been directed primarily at the establishment of trading posts in their enclave where they can trade with the relatively docile Lizard-men of the Sappho Plateau.

The Italian expedition, which stayed on Venus from 1880 until 1881, was unable to make any useful botanical or zoological discoveries, but it did manage to map an unexplored portion of the equatorial region of Venus and to claim it in the name of their home country.

The Kingdom of Italy maintains a military presence on Venus, comprised of three infantry regiments with a total force of about 300 officers, NCOs, and troops, which serve primarily to assert the Italian claim to several territories on the Sappho Plateau.

## The American Presence

On Venus, the Americans – both the USA and the CSA – have concentrated their efforts on developing mercantile posts and have not made any major territorial claims so far. Since establishing their trading posts several years ago, they have actively campaigned for an 'open door' trading policy, their aim being to conclude free trade agreements with all of the inhabitants of Venus in spite of the colonization efforts of other countries.

American merchants on Venus have managed to develop a near-monopoly on the import of one luxury item – they are the exclusive suppliers of ice. Frozen water commands a high price on Venus for obvious reasons, making it even profitable to ship the ice in insulated holds and to store it in sealed warehouses under several feet of insulating sawdust. Whenever the price drops, the merchants simply reduce the supply available, artificially driving the price back up, since the human inhabitants on Venus will gladly pay any price for a little cool refreshment. A common claim amongst these merchants, collectively known as the 'Ice Barons' is that it is more lucrative to transport ice to Venus than to Calcutta.

For this reason, many Ice Barons perceive Josephus Martin's plans to build an ice factory for the Germans as a great threat to the American monopoly and even suspect him of possible treason. The inventor will have to get used to repeatedly receiving menaces from the so called Ice Barons; but the fact that he is under the protection of the German Reichskommissar has until now prevented his opponents from taking more radical measures.

Aside from this monopoly, the Americans have established another economic mainstay on Venus – interplanetary ether flyers of American registry carry the larger part of civilian cargo to and from Venus, especially on behalf of the Italian and Russian colonists whose home countries possess only a few ether flyers. The Americans maintain no troops on Venus, but it is general knowledge that their merchant parties customarily travel about heavily armed.

## Human Settlements and Outposts Plantations

Venusian plantations are grouped around a central settlement in which the human supervisors live and work. This is the place where the depots and machines are stored used for the diverse



## The Ice Palace

One small wing of the Government House in Venusstadt is called *Der Eispalast* or the 'Ice Palace'. It owes its name to a most interesting mechanical air-cooling system that prevents the Venusian heat from intruding. Aside from several offices, the wing contains the quarters for the governor and his family. These include a well-equipped library, a comfortable sitting room, an ostentatiously furnished parlor, and a small private dining room. The offices are kept in constant communication with all parts of the German capital by means of the recently installed telephone system, which relieves the governor of the necessity to leave the comfort of his quarters except for important occasions.

The Ice Palace is completely sealed off from the outside. Air is forced into the wing by means of huge blowers, but is first chilled by being passed over the coils of a gigantic Linde ammonia refrigeration apparatus. The reduction in temperature causes moisture to condense on the coils. This moisture is collected and purified before being pumped into the living quarters to allow the house guests to refresh themselves. Despite the nearly unbearable temperature and humidity of the outside atmosphere, the governor and his family are kept cool and dry because of this apparatus – and are the only ones on Venus of whom this can be said.

The machinery was installed in 1888, by Josephus Martin, an American inventor and engineer who had previously made use of similar machinery in the construction of a number of artificial ice factories in America. Mr. Martin is said to have been inspired by a similar arrangement used to ease the suffering of the American President Garfield after an assassin's bullet struck him down some years ago.

agricultural crops which come in from the outposts and are afterwards shipped off to other destinations.

Scattered across the plantation are the native villages, who are usually expected to be self-sufficient – which primarily means that they have to provide food for themselves. In addition, they have to deliver a certain proportion of their agricultural production to their colonial masters in exchange for protection and other 'benefits of civilization'. To be able to handle the requested level of production, the villagers normally specialize in one particular type crop to ensure that they have enough to pay to their 'masters'. However, this usually means that they have relatively little knowledge on cultivating other crops, leaving many villages struggling to provide enough food to for their own survival. There is rarely any surplus, so trading with other villages is usually not an option.

The relationships between the settlements are controlled by the plantation overseers, who travel from one to another and give instructions concerning the methods of cultivation. Their main task however, is to make sure that the settlers meet the required production level and that every plantation produces a variety of agricultural products.

## Settlements and Trading Posts

Venus is an incredibly fertile world. Throughout the colonies there are vast areas unsuitable for cultivation, but which produce natural products of considerable value on Earth. Native tribes wander these areas leading a nomadic life as hunters and gatherers. Many of them trade what they hunt and what they gather with humans in return for objects from Earth. The natives' main contact points are the trading posts that have been established almost everywhere across the areas of Venus that have been explored by mankind.

Although a trading post of one nation will vary from the trading post of another, they all share a similar nature, being semi-permanent communities established for the sole purpose of conducting trade with the Lizard-men. Such settlements are often located far from the nearest big town and are normally home to only a handful of humans and about a hundred natives. The traders exchange tools, and mostly useless trinkets, for valuable natural products, usually at very unprofitable conditions for the natives. The delivered goods typically comprise fruit, vegetables, a variety of natural fibers, and occasionally lizard meat.

The largest building in every trading post is the fortified warehouse, which also serves as home for the human residents. Depending on the success of the post, the warehouse may even have a second or even third story. Of course, buildings as large as this attract thieves of all kinds which is why these posts are usually heavily fortified and sometimes even guarded by mercenaries. Besides these general basics, every trading post is built according to the taste of its owner or operator, and in fact they vary tremendously.

## The Venusian Telegraph Station

The cities, trading posts, and the larger outlying plantations of the *Kaiser Wilhelm Mountains* – including the British settlements on *Mount Maxwell*, have recently been connected to each other by telegraph. The system was constructed by a civilian company and initially financed by contributions from private investors, mainly the plantation owners. The British and German colonial governments have also agreed to partially subsidize the operation of the system, as they consider it a matter of military necessity to maintain contact with their outposts.

In the higher areas, the wires could be strung from poles in a conventional manner, but in the vast jungles and swamps there was hardly any ground solid enough to permanently anchor the poles. The solution lay in the use of a heavily insulated cable, similar to that used in submarine telegraphic systems on Earth. The cable could simply be laid upon the ground, where it soon sank out of sight in most places.

The natives do not seem to comprehend the significance of the telegraphic cables, for they make no effort to sever them – except by accident, even if they manage to stumble across them. They evidently believe them to be some peculiar sort of human vine and usually pay no attention to them after determining that they are not edible.

The telegraphic system has already saved several lives, as it has permitted at least two outlying communities to call for help when attacked by savages rather than send runners, the previous practice, which would reach their destination much too late, if ever, to be of help. One hears that more projects to further connect the people on Venus are planned for the near future.



# Treasures of Venus

## Metals and Minerals

Until now, only small deposits of metal have been detected on Venus. Due to the geography and environment however, the exploration and exploitation of mining areas is difficult. Heavy machinery has to be transported in several stages by air or water. In addition, transporting ore to Earth is not profitable, so the ore would have to be smelted first.

## Fauna

In addition to the trophies that big game hunters bring home for the decoration of their trophy rooms or tea salons at home, it is mostly leather and furs that are being exported in larger numbers. The processing and conservation methods are still being optimized though; some of the thicker dinosaur leather has potential as a valuable resource, but to date, the conservation of this leather by common tanning methods has not yet produced any satisfying results.

## Flora

Besides the Venusian cotton tree, which is harvested by almost all nations, it is mainly Germany that makes a profit out of the planet's rich flora. The chemical industry in particular profits immensely from the influx of raw materials, such as pure oils, lubricating grease, and dyestuffs. A substance similar to 'caoutchouc' makes it possible to produce thin, tough, rubber-like coatings, which are being successfully used in top secret research labs to fabricate self-sealing coatings for the outer layers of zeppelins.

The chemical industry is not the only one to benefit from the substances harvested on Venus. Medical researchers have already discovered a number of promising, anti-inflammatory remedies and hopes are high that more medications can be developed from discoveries on Venus. It is even hoped that a cure for cancer and other severe illnesses will be found on the Morning Star, perhaps even one that will win the battle against the aging process.

In addition to plants that offer healing properties, Venus is home to many plants that are intoxicants. The stimulant *Lobal-long*, as it is known among the natives, makes cocaine look like snuff, and its use is highly addictive amongst humans. Rumor has it that there are several drugs, stimulants, and even hallucinogens on Venus that are capable of evoking the memory of previous lives.

Many plants have multiple uses. The crushed shells of the *Jopapo* husks, for example, can be used as filling or insulating material, their hulls as bases for embellishments and basic commodities, while the savory pulp can be eaten raw or dried, and oil can be extracted from its seeds. There is also an aesthetic side to it. The beautiful, exotic orchids of Venus receive premium prices at the auction houses on Earth and some adventurers can make a fortune simply by returning such beauty to Earth and selling it.

Venus is a botanic collector's dream. Many are drawn to the Morning Star by the lure of her exotic flora. Some to make monies from their finds, others for the glory of being the first to discover a new plant, but both will jealously guard the origins of any discoveries they make on Venus. So little of the planet has been explored, so there remains decades' full of exciting discoveries to be made. Only then will an overview of the overwhelming variety of Venusian flora be said to have been won and cataloged.





# Mercury

## Mercury - Planet Facts

Diameter: 3,032 miles

Circumference: 9,525 km

Length of year: 88 Earth days

Length of day: – (no light/dark phases)

Gravity: 40% of Earth's gravity

center of this region flows the World River, a massive stream that encircles the entire planet, its banks home to a wide variety of bizarre and exotic plants. Some of them remind explorers of the early days of Earth; others, like the sky reaching trees, are a product of Mercury's low gravity. Further away, in the transition zones to the light and dark sides of the planet, grows a variety of mosses and lichen. Lakes in all kinds of strange colours and larger crystalline formations are a major feature of these outer parts of the Twilight Zone. Beyond the Twilight Zone, the only forms of life to be found are exotic, especially adapted to their environment, and incapable of surviving anywhere else.

Mercury has abundant natural resources, among them lead and tin on the Hot Side and dry ice and ammonia in the frozen wastes of the Dark Side. Much to the dismay of the powers of Earth though, it is nearly impossible to exploit these valuable assets. For instance, no one found a way yet to extract sufficient molten tin from a 300°C (572°F) hot lake without dying from inflammation in the process. The work on the Hot Side is extremely dangerous, sunburn or blindness are typical injuries suffered by explorers and workers in the Hot Side.

The extraction of dry ice and ammonia snow in the freezing blackness of the Dark Side has proved no less difficult. Digging in the -120°C (-184°F) cold frozen ground is extremely hard and there has been more than one worker, whose lifeless remains – looking like bizarre ice-sculptures – gives proof of the failure of such endeavours.

While Mars has been extensively surveyed over the last twenty years and with a lot of effort, even the settlement and cultivation of Venus has advanced at great pace, the explora-

## A Survey of the Planet

Mercury, the innermost planet of the Solar System, is a world of extremes. It is the smallest of the inner planets – only about 40% larger than Luna, the Earth's moon – and the massive gravitational pull of the Sun has locked the planet into an orbit in which it keeps one side perpetually facing the glaring orb.

For this reason, Mercury is divided into two hemispheres that could not be more different; the Hot Side, which sees constant daylight, and the Dark Side, frozen in everlasting night. In a thin strip between these extreme landscapes lies the Twilight Zone, a blooming paradise, which makes a remarkable contrast to the seemingly lifeless wastelands of the rest of the planet. Down the





tion of Mercury is still in its infancy. Many a pioneer and many a financier has realized the opportunities offered by the planet and the economic exploitation of Mercury's many resources has grown with every passing year.

## The Exploration of Mercury

Unsurprisingly, the first ether pioneers set their sights on those planets which were closest to the Earth – Mars, Venus, and Luna. It was not until 1876, that the British Royal Society gave its attention to Mercury when they underwrote Sir Basil Throckmorton's expedition with his ether ship *HMS Achilles*. He arrived the same year and, as the 'discoverer' of the planet, placed the British flag on Mercurian 'soil' in the name of queen and country. Throckmorton was also the first person from Earth to explore the 10,000-mile-long World River which completely encircles the planet in the temperate Twilight Zone. However, he did not yet dare venture into the two extreme hemispheres for lack of special equipment.

In the subsequent years, three additional expeditions were undertaken and the exploration of the planet began in earnest. Throckmorton himself returned to 'his' planet in 1877, again in command of the *Achilles*. This time he was prepared and drove deep into the Forbidding Desert aboard a specially insulated Mercurian exploratory aerial flyer, claiming vast tracts of land along the equator for the British Empire. He studied the Boiling Wastelands and even some of the lakes that are made of molten metal. This was followed in 1878 by a German expedition under the command of Kapitänleutnant Friedrich von Asseburg, one of the foremost aerial commanders of his time. Asseburg's

Zeppelin, the *SMS Odin*, spent six months following the World River and mapped its length with typical German efficiency. The resulting Asseburg-Maps are still among the most accurate maps of the World River.

The last big expedition to the planet was once again undertaken by Mercury-pioneer Sir Basil Throckmorton aboard his *HMS Achilles*. He circumnavigated the whole planet, while following, as Asseburg had earlier, the course of the World River. In an attempt to outdo the German expedition, he also undertook several side trips into the fridity of the Dark Side. The members of his expedition were the first people from Earth to witness the glaciers and bizarre formations of frozen ammonia in the Dry Ice Zone.

The resulting reports from all three expeditions were received with great interest by the Royal Society in London and the Academy of Sciences in Berlin. Despite the fascinating nature of the planet, the interest in Mercury soon diminished in comparison to Mars and Venus, and as a result, the planet closest to the Sun has been more or less ignored by most explorers.

## The Hot Side

Mercury's Hot Side is forever under the steady rays of the Sun. According to a still valid definition by Throckmorton it starts at the line where the average temperature never drops below 40°C (100° F). Immediately beyond the Twilight Zone it mainly consists of a vast desert, but the further one ventures into the Hot Side, the temperature steadily increases. As a rule of thumb, Throckmorton estimated that the temperature rises by about 1°C





(2°F) every three miles ventured into the Hot Side. The Hot Side is roughly divided into four zones, the Forbidding Desert, the Boiling Wasteland, the Tin Zone, and the Lead Zone.

## The Forbidding Desert

This region extends from the edge of the Twilight Zone out to the point at which water boils, that is, an average temperature of 100°C (212°F). The zone is about 300 miles deep.

Although it might sound like a region where humans could barely survive, courageous explorers discovered that in some parts of the Forbidding Desert the temperatures are much lower, in the shaded sides of various hills and the shadows of great rock formations projecting from the ground. These 'oases', never in the light of the Sun due to the ever continuous position of the planet towards its star, are warmed only by the air around them, and are much cooler than the surrounding territories. Many expeditions have used these shadow islands to venture deep into the Forbidding Desert by dashing through the unremitting heat of the Sun from one shaded land to another.

Ultimately however, these shadow oases can cut the heat by only so much. Beyond the boundary of the Forbidding Desert, the shadows become shorter and shorter with each passing mile.

## The Boiling Wasteland

Extending from the border of the Forbidding Desert out to the point where tin melts, this zone is about 600 miles deep. The temperatures can reach up to 230°C (450°F), which means certain death for a human without special heat protection.

The Boiling Wasteland mainly consists of barren, burned soil without major landmarks. Probably the only features interrupting this solitude are the occasional hot springs. In these spots, underground water channels broach the desert surface, whereupon their water instantly bursts into steam, which forms drifting clouds in the atmosphere, before being blown away by the wind.

## The Tin Zone

Named for the shallow surface pools of molten tin which speckle its surface, this zone is about 600 miles deep and has temperatures ranging from 232°C (450°F) at the edge of the Wasteland to 355°C (670°F) at the edge of the Lead Zone. Over geologic eons, the heat of the Sun has raised the surface temperature of the entire Tin Zone up to an average of 290°C (550°F). As a result, basic elemental metals have been liquefied by the extreme heat and have flowed, like water elsewhere, to low-lying areas.

The predominant metal in these lakes is tin, but a variety of other elements are also present as contaminants. The liquid metal accumulates in many scattered pools, which are covered with crusts of slag after short time. Slight temperature variations – caused by the movement of the atmosphere, by solar fluctuations, or by actions within the planetary crust – shift these pools which allow some of the metals to vaporize and then condense on mountain peaks or crystallize on chance rock outcroppings. In some regions, the rocks are plated with tin, covered with accumulations of tin crystals, or soldered together by natural action.

## The Lead Zone

The Lead Zone, a nearly circular area with a radius of approximately 60 miles, is the hottest part of Mercury. The Sun always

stands directly overhead in this region and shines down on the burned land without mercy. The average temperature in this area is so high that even lead melts, which forms the major part of the lakes of molten metal in this part of the planet.

Apart from this, the landscape mostly resembles that of the Tin Zone, but a vapour of molten tin fills the air, covering nearly all objects within the molten cloud. In the slightly cooler shadows casted by overhanging lumps of rock, the vapours and liquid metals solidify again because of the lower temperature, forming bizarre and erratic sheets of various metals.

## The Dark Side

Mercury's Dark Side lies forever in the planet's own shadow and never sees the warming rays of the Sun. Its border was defined by Thockmorton as the point where water freezes – which happens below 0°C (32°F). From there on in, Throckmorton estimated that the temperature gradually drops by about 1°C (2°F) every 5 miles ventured into the Dark Side, down to a minimum of -185°C (-300°F).

One of the highest peaks on the Dark Side is Mount Edison, under whose ice crust Thockmorton believed he thought he saw artificial structures. Like the Hot Side, the Dark Side is divided into different zones based on temperature – the Ice Sheath, the Dry Ice Zone, and Kelvin's Land.

## The Ice Sheath

The first part of the Dark Side, the Ice Sheath extends from the Twilight Zone for some 300 miles into the darkness. Virtually all atmospheric water coming as clouds from the World River and passing through this region precipitates as freezing rain or snow. The temperature drops down to -74°C (-100°F), while the ground under foot changes from muddy soil to rock solid permafrost ground at the edge of the Ice Sheath.

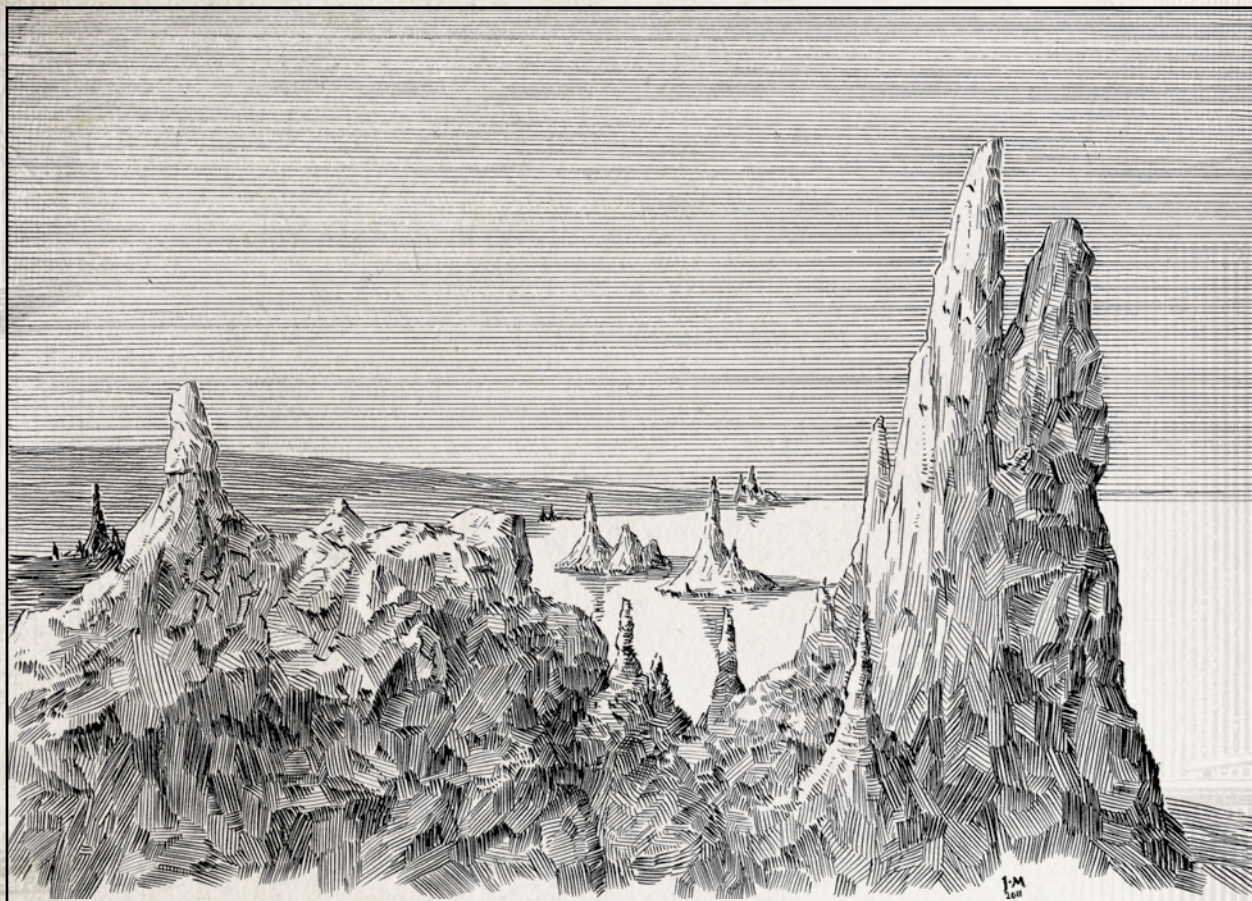
## The Dry Ice Zone

Beyond the Ice Sheath is the Dry Ice Zone, another band about 300 miles deep in which atmospheric ammonia and carbon dioxide have fallen as their own peculiar type of snow and ice. Long glaciers and huge snow drifts dominate this part of the Dark Side, constantly disappearing and forming up again. With an average temperature of up to -130°C (-202°C), a human without artificial heat sources or powerful insulation will freeze to death within a very short time.

## Kelvin's Land

The remainder of the Dark Side, a circular area about 1,800 miles in radius, reaches temperatures as low as -185°C (-300°F). This is not low enough to condense out the basic atmospheric components such as oxygen, nitrogen, and hydrogen, but is certainly low enough to kill virtually all life known on Earth. Nobody ever ventured into Kelvin's Land, therefore all information about this forever frozen area is pure speculation or based on the observations of ether flyers, but even those are fragmentary at best, for lack of precise navigation in the atmosphere and the constant darkness in Kelvin's Land.





### The Hot Side

| Area                  | Temperature (Celsius) | (Fahrenheit) | Size             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| The Lead Zone         | 328° to 500°          | 670° to 900° | 600 miles radius |
| The Tin Zone          | 232° to 328°          | 450° to 670° | 600 miles deep   |
| The Boiling Wasteland | 100° to 232°          | 212° to 450° | 600 miles deep   |
| The Forbidding Desert | 40° to 100°           | 100° to 212° | 300 miles deep   |

### The Twilight Zone

| Area            | Temperature (Celsius) | (Fahrenheit) | Size              |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| The Left Bank   | 10° to 40°            | 50° to 100°  | 150 miles wide    |
| The World River | 10°                   | 50°          | up to 1 mile wide |
| The Right Bank  | 0° to 10°             | 32° to 50°   | 150 miles wide    |

### The Dark Side

| Area             | Temperature (Celsius) | (Fahrenheit)   | Size               |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| The Ice Sheath   | -74° to 0°            | -100° to 32°   | 300 miles deep     |
| The Dry Ice Zone | -130 to -74°          | -200° to -100° | 300 miles deep     |
| Kelvin's Land    | -185° to -130°        | -300° to -200° | 1,800 miles radius |



## The Twilight Zone

The small strip of the Twilight Zone is the only inhabitable part of Mercury. Compared with the hostile neighbouring areas, it seems like paradise – and with its rampant liveliness it is also a true treasure trove of nature's bounty.

The Twilight Zone is bordered on one side by the Ice Sheath and on the other side by the Forbidden Desert. Between these two extremes there lies a narrow strip of roughly 300 miles wide, which is habitable and teems with wild, untamed life. While the horizon towards the Hot Side is plunged into constant light, there is total darkness on the other side. Within the Twilight Zone, the light intensity decreases towards the Dark Side. Elevated objects like hills or mountains cast long shadows in the Twilight Zone.

Humans that stay in the Twilight Zone for an extended period of time suffer from the loss of the day-and-night-cycle. Sleep disorder or even depression are the consequences common to long stays in the Twilight Zone.

## The World River

Right in the middle of the Twilight Zone lies the World River, which encircles the whole planet and constitutes its central life-line. The World River gets its water mainly through rainfall, but it also gets it from the glaciers of the Dark Side. In places, the river flows close to the Dark Side and undercuts a glacier, causing it to split and to crash into the river. The broken off ice shelf then flows down the World River as a slowly melting iceberg.

The river flows in one direction – whoever stands in the middle of the stream and looks down stream has the slowly cooling area towards the Dark Side on his right, while the primeval forest that finally merges into the Forbidden Desert is on his left. For purpose of navigation, the terms 'streamwards', 'backwards', 'coolwards', and 'heatwards' have come into use. Where the World River gets close to the Dark Side, navigating by stars is also possible.

The character of the World River varies along its length. At some points, the river expands to a width of about a mile, sometimes even forming huge lakes several miles in diameter. At other places, it becomes a torrential stream, cutting through deep canyons and forming waterfalls and cataracts, before feeding vast swamps a dozen miles further on. A mathematician on Kapitänleutnant von Asseburg's expedition calculated that the river needs 133 days for a complete circle of Mercury. This was later confirmed by Throckmorton's second expedition.

## The Climate

The extreme differences in temperature cause permanent strong wind circulations between the two sides of Mercury. A perpetual cyclone of titanic dimensions rages on the Hot Side, blowing dust and ash into the atmosphere. This causes the sky on the sun-facing side to have a swirling crimson colour. The everlasting storm, which has formed the overheated landscape into bizarre forms, reaches wind speeds that cannot be measured in earthly scales. On the Dark Side however, air stands almost still at ground level. Although the whole planet is plagued by storms, apart from the Hot Side these take place – for reasons unknown – only in the upper layers of the atmosphere. Because of these weather phenomena, landing on Mercury is a feat which can only be accomplished by the most experienced ether pilots without causing serious damage to the ship.

When Mercury comes close to the Sun on his orbit, the storms of the Hot Side sweep over to the habitable Twilight Zone. During this time, sudden and forceful tornados ravage the primeval forests along the World River.

Some areas of the Twilight Zone are protected against those violent storms by mountain ranges. The British Princess Christiana Station lies in such a calm area and only experiences the summer storms as a gentle breeze. Nevertheless there are doomsayers that predict a swift and stormy end for this research station.

## Flora and Fauna of Mercury

The left bank of the World River, that is, the land between the stream and the Forbidden Desert, is covered by a vast tropical primeval forest that stretches for miles after miles along the banks of the World River. Interspersed in the long swathes of jungle are low-lying areas that are either swamps towards the river or further inland, or drier moors. With its dense vegetation, the left bank of the World River resembles the South American jungles.

The right bank however, which stretches towards the Ice Sheath, is a rather temperate zone with forests and grassy plains, resembling North American landscapes at first glance. The plants of these grasslands are not comparable to those of Earth though, for they are primeval and alien. The trees are mostly singular, slender trunks, reaching extreme heights due to the low gravity. They can grow up to 150 feet high and sprout many short, triangular shaped branches. The ground plants are dominated by the bamboo-like stems of the Mercurian snake grass, which can grow from about the size of grass up to 60 feet high. Some of them sport exotic colors, so that a wanderer can pass forests painted in hues of yellow, red, and dark blue.

The primary flowering plant is the monophyllos, which grows in various shapes, some of which are the size of a daisy and others as tall as a man. Its single leaf grows directly out of the soil, collecting dew and nutrients. There are two varieties that can catch prey by curling up as fast as lightning, the largest of which has been nicknamed the 'Mercurian Mancatcher'. The streamfloater is a non-stationary plant species that forms a huge conglomerate of interlocked aquatic plants that float all around the World River. Some experiments point towards the fact that the plants might share a common cognitive system with one another.

A traveller on Mercury will inevitably stumble across a variety of bizarre life forms, both plants and animals. The native life on Mercury is in many ways very primitive, roughly comparable to the developmental stage of the Palaeozoic Age on Earth. As in that period on Earth, life on Mercury is dominated by a great number of amphibious and waterbound animals, while only few creatures made their way onto the land.

The World River is mainly inhabited by gigantic sea creatures – among them fish, tentacle swimmers that resemble the kraken of Earth legend, as well as snapping turtles, gigantic sea serpents, exotic jellyfish, and trilobites. However, the restricted width of the World River has caused many of these creatures to develop some means to climb onto the banks of the river, enabling them to roam the swamps, moors, forests, and grassy plains that lie beyond the river's depths. Nevertheless, most species native to Mercury prefers life in the river and even the animals that spend most of their time on land will make a dash for the safety of the World River when facing danger.

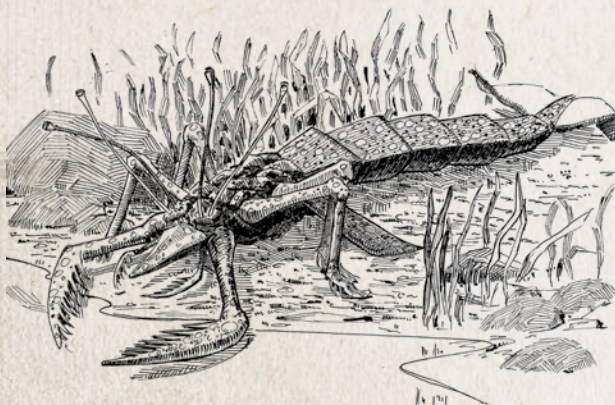


The singular living conditions on Mercury have caused some animals to evolve in ways that seem quite strange to the eyes of human visitors. Web-winged, air-breathing fish fly through the forests, while short-legged alligator-like fish crawl across the river's beaches or lie in the low water, waiting for prey to pass by. Huge, ten-legged squids, whose poisonous bite can kill a man, hunt the forests and steppes alike, while gigantic centipedes climb through the treetops. Other creatures are unlike any life on Earth. A filigree balloon-creature has been spotted in the atmosphere, living close to the edges of the huge cyclone of the Hot Side, only to be swept away from time to time by sudden storms. Many people observing these fascinating creatures had to learn the hard way that they not only look bizarre, but can be quiet dangerous too.

## Mercurian Animals

There are a great number of exotic creatures dwelling in the three different habitats of Mercury. The following three animals exemplify the diversion of the Mercurian wildlife.

### Swamp Lurker



Resembling an insect in its physical appearance, the Swamp Lurker is actually an amphibian. It lurks on the banks of the World River or in the mire between the large trees, working its whole body into the mud until only its tiny telescope eyes are detectable, peering out of the mud. Grown swamp lurkers can reach a body length of up to 3 feet and hunt alone, while the young swamp lurkers hunt in hordes of up to a dozen individuals. Whether alone or in packs, a swamp lurker pounces up out of the mud to grab its prey with its mandibles and then bites with a razor sharp beak that it extends out of its mouth.

### Swamp Lurker

#### Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal

Health: 5

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 3

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 3

Intelligence: 0

Strength: 4

Willpower: 2

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 3

Move: 7 (4)\*

Defense: 6

Perception: 2

Stun: 3

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 4    | 3      | 7      | (3+)      |
| Stealth  | 3    | 4      | 7      | (3+)      |
| Survival | 0    | 3      | 3      | (1+)      |

#### Talents

Assassin (if unnoticed: Makes a surprise attack with a Stealth roll instead of Brawl against the passive Defense of its victim)

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 2 L    | 0    | 9 L    | (4+) L    |

\*Swamp lurkers use their full Move rating for swimming and half their Move rating when on land.

### Jotun Ice-worm

Expeditions to the Dark Side of Mercury made a remarkable discovery: They found a profoundly alien form of life that has a metabolism based on ammonia instead of water. These ice-dwelling, worm-like creatures are generally the length of an arm and rather shy.

The Jotun ice-worm however, reaches a length of up to 60 feet and shows a high level of aggression. It is not only its immense strength and size which make it dangerous, but also its high intelligence. Jotun ice-worms even seem capable of coordinating hunts in groups. The existence of such large predators on the Dark Side implies the existence of sufficiently big prey, though to date, no expedition to the Dark Side has observed such a creature.

The incompatibility of terrestrial and Dark Side Mercury biologies means that creatures from Earth are highly poisonous to creatures of the Dark Side. Nevertheless, this has not stopped Jotun ice-worms from hunting and attacking passing explorers and such attacks typically result in horrible injuries suffered by the explorers until the Jotun ice-worms realize that their meal is inedible to them.

### Jotun Ice-worm

#### Animal Companion 4

Archetype: Animal

Health: 15

#### Primary Attributes

Body: 8

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 7

Intelligence: 1

Strength: 8

Willpower: 3

#### Secondary Attributes

Size: 4

Initiative: 8

Move: 15 (30)\*

Defense: 11

Perception: 6

Stun: 8

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 8    | 6      | 16     | (8)       |
| Stealth  | 7    | 6      | 9**    | (4+)      |
| Survival | 1    | 3      | 6      | (3)       |

#### Talents

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Skill Aptitude (Brawl +2)

Skill Aptitude (Survival +2)

Dig (double Move rating when digging)

#### Flaw

Ammonia-based metabolism: Eating the meat of creatures from Earth causes 4 L damage to the Jotun Ice-worm from poison, although this only applies if it has already swallowed its victim completely.

| Weapons | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|---------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Bite    | 4 L    | -4   | 16 L   | (8) L     |

\*Burrowing animals dig up to their Move rating in feet per hour. Jotun ice-worms double their move rating when digging.

\*\*Jotun ice-worms suffer a -4 Size penalty on all Stealth rolls



## Black Stinger

Just as there are bizarre creatures on the Dark Side adapted to the climate, the Hot Side is home to a unique, strange ecosystem. According to the latest research, the creatures on the Hot Side are not based on carbon, but on silicon, and are not even remotely similar to Earth life forms. Most of the silicon creatures on the Dark Side are filigree crystal plants or crystal-containing gel clots resembling slime molds.

By far the most dangerous creature of the Hot Side is the 'black stinger', an amorphous mass measuring about three feet in diameter which consists of reddish jelly and a number of arm-long, black crystal needles with points sharp as a razor. The black stinger uses these needles to pierce the body of its victim and suck out its essential minerals and salts. The creature hunts its prey by attempting to roll over it and stabbing it with its needles. After a successful kill, it sits atop the cadaver for quite a while in order to grow on it like a plant. If it has currently no prey to thrive on, it is capable of attacking anything that moves within its reach with mindless, if frightening agility. The creature's behavior seems to be based on reflexes solely. Once it has stabbed its victim, it stays put, calmly extracting its food and will not even exhibit any kind of survival instinct if attacked.

## Black Stinger

### Animal Companion 1

**Archetype:** Animal **Health:** 5

### Primary Attributes

**Body:** 3 **Charisma:** 0  
**Dexterity:** 4 **Intelligence:** 0  
**Strength:** 3 **Willpower:** 2

### Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 0 **Initiative:** 6  
**Move:** 7 **Defense:** 7  
**Perception:** 4 **Stun:** 3

| Skills   | Base | Levels | Rating | (Average) |
|----------|------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Brawl    | 3    | 4      | 7      | (3+)      |
| Stealth  | 4    | 3      | 7      | (3+)      |
| Survival | 0    | 3      | 3      | (1+)      |

### Talents

**Alertness (+2 Perception rating)**

**Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative)**

| Weapons        | Rating | Size | Attack | (Average) |
|----------------|--------|------|--------|-----------|
| Crystal Needle | 2 L    | 0    | 9 L    | (4+) L    |
| Overrun        | 1 N    | 0    | 8 N    | (4) N     |

## Princess Christiana Station

The Princess Christiana Station is the only permanent settlement on Mercury. This predominantly scientific outpost was founded by members of the British Royal Society in 1880. Its scientists study mainly the Sun, but they also mount expeditions to explore the hostile environments of Mercury. With these endeavours they try to advance the exploration of the Dark and Hot Side alike – with variable success. Such expeditions are highly dangerous and whomever ventures into these life-threatening environments risks falling prey to the Mercurian forces of nature.

The station is an ever growing compound of small buildings, located in a park-like area on the right bank of the World River. There are currently thirty-five bungalows built as quarters for

the permanent crew spread across this green meadow. Gravel roads connect the buildings and to make the compound reminiscent of home, the station staff have cut some of the native trees down to sizes and shapes more familiar to them.

Not all buildings are actually inhabited. Whenever an explorer gets lost during an expedition, the community takes care of his home until he returns. Every missing person is still counted as inhabitant of the station, even when somebody asks for the number of people living in the station. The people of the Princess Christiana Station say that this enables a returnee to come back to a familiar environment after a hard time. In addition to the bungalows, there are approximately ten more buildings, which are used by the local administration or as laboratories.

Most buildings are decorated with stucco, but some of the bigger ones are red brick built to remind visitors to, and inhabitants of, the station of their British homeland. Mounted above the front entrance of the main administrative building is a large clock much like that could be found adorning the front of a Royal Post Office. The clock is meant to give the inhabitants at least some measurement of time – an urgent need in the constant twilight of Mercury.

Close to the station is a cleared field on which the occasional ether flyer can land. It is kept well-trimmed, though landings are infrequent. The only regular visitor is the supply ship that delivers equipment, provisions, and mail every six months. Ether ships of the Royal Navy pay irregular visits to the station to ensure that everything is in working order. Three small aerial steam launches, used for occasional flights across the wilderness of Mercury, are kept tethered alongside the landing field as well.

The small community currently consists of twenty scientists and fifty workers and attendants, not counting the missing people. In addition, an administrator and five assistants run the station on a day-to-day basis. A captain commands a detachment of thirty Royal Marine Light Infantry troopers garrisoned at the station. They crew the three aerial steam launches and protect the station. Their commanding officer reports to the station administrator.

Aside from the scientific enthusiasm, which grips more than one researcher, when visiting the innermost planet of the Solar System, Mercury can also inspire by its inimitable nature. The extraordinary beauty of the area surrounding the station, but not least the view from the watchtower of the main administrative building, were featured in an enthusiastic article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in October 1883. In the words of the author, "Now there can finally be no doubt, that the sun never sets over the British Empire!"

There are no other official settlements on Mercury, but the British Royal Society has supported a number of expeditions that came to the planet for either scientific or economic reasons. None of the expeditions ventured further away than 1,000 miles from the station, though future expeditions may venture further.

## The Riches of Mercury

### Metals and Minerals

There has been a permanent settlement on Mercury for only nine years. Since then, only a small portion of the planet has been explored, which leads to the conclusion that, in addition to the wares named below, there have to be a lot more resources to be found.



The Hot Side has lakes of molten metals, some of them in a pure state, like tin and lead. On the Dark Side economic interest is aroused by the frozen gases that have rained down as snow and ice. Sadly, the extreme temperatures on both sides stand in the way of easy exploitation. Some inventors, most notably Sir Charles Plunkett Drax Moreton, are considering using land-juggernauts or other machinery to reach the rich deposits and exploit them. Until this succeeds, there are a lot of technical issues to solve.

The search for glow crystals, recently discovered in the swamps along the World River, is easier, but not quite without danger. Their origin is unknown, but they have proved to be quite useful for a variety of technical applications, since they can absorb solar energy and convert it into electrical energy. Most crystals found are of value only as curios or jewelry, but bigger crystals of up to nine pounds of weight can cost, depending on quality, between £500 and £3,000 to purchase in London.

## Fauna

One of the big and dangerous crab species of the World River is hunted for its gland, which is valuable for the perfume industry. The walnut-sized gland can be found under the shell of the creature and has to be conserved in ice until it is properly prepared to keep its musky smell. One prepared gland can sell for between £100 and £600.

When the silvery shell of the treetop-living *Hollington* Centipede is ground, the result is a kind of nacre that can be processed further in any desired manner. The mandibles can be used as exotic jewellery and have become popular with the ladies.

More popular with settlers and explorers is a species of jellyfish that self-illuminates when immersed in salty water. Since the light is very faint, it will probably not have wide success as a new source of illumination, but it may prove useful as a source of light where open flames should be avoided or where oxygen is rare.

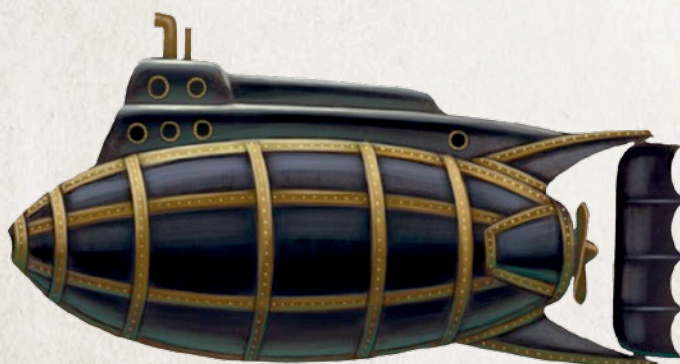
## Flora

Most of Mercury's plant life has not been investigated so far, so there remain innumerable opportunities to find something that can be exploited from among the planet's abundant flora. One plant that is currently being examined by the botanist at Princess Christiana Station is a kind of fern, whose fibres can be made into extremely thin, but tear-resistant ropes.

## Exploring Mercury

Mercury has a marginal position among the planets of the Solar System. There will be no regular othership traffic there until the economic use of the planetary resources has been proven. Therefore, the exploitation of the riches of Mercury is currently an arduous undertaking, though one that can pay out for those who are daring enough. A group of player characters could try to find valuable resources on Mercury, coping with the murderous climate, exotic predators, criminals among their own ranks, or unscrupulous rivals – and even the British government which wants its tax share of everything.

All the player characters need to outfit such an expedition is a financier, a capable engineer – who is probably not accepted anywhere else for being a woman, an energetic headman who knows how to 'handle the workers', a big-game hunter as 'security chief', and a diplomat for interacting with rivals and officials alike. Once in hand, the player characters have everything they need for a hopefully profitable endeavour.





# The Ether

*"Whatever difficulties we may have in forming a consistent idea of the constitution of the aether, there can be no doubt that the interplanetary and interstellar spaces are not empty, but are occupied by a material substance or body, which is certainly the largest, and probably the most uniform body of which we have any knowledge."*

**James Clerk Maxwell, Scottish Physicist (1831-1879)**

A vacuum isolates against heat and cold, because without air, there is no way for them to move across the intervening space. How is it possible then that light and gravity remain tangible in the empty space? From very early on, various scientists posited the theory that there had to be a special substance – the Ether – filling the entirety of space, even in those areas where ordinary matter was already in place.

Without the Ether, gravity would be unable to maintain the different celestial bodies in their fixed orbits, and the entire solar system would drift apart. Without the Ether, light could not travel through space, and we would not be able to see the stars in the sky at night. The Ether is the medium through which light and gravity are transmitted, just as air functions as a transportation medium for sound.

## Scientific Theories

*"Today's physics is about to ask the question, whether or not everything, that is, is made of the aether."*

**Heinrich Rudolf Hertz, German Physicist (1857-1894)**

## The Origins of the Ether Theory

Until the end of the 16th century, scientist's understanding of the world was rudimentary and based on superficial knowledge and prejudices. They thought of light as an accumulation of small energy particles that expelled from a flame or a star. The concept of gravity, the attraction between objects, was entirely unknown as of yet.

A few ancient philosophers made the assertion that there had to be an intangible substance that propelled the planets in their orbits and that created the domes of heavens. They already used the term 'Ether' to describe that substance, but their knowledge was nowhere near sufficient as to really explain the underlying concept behind their assertion to any scientific purpose.

## First Insights into the Nature of the Ether

In 1638, René Descartes proposed the idea of an all-pervasive Ether. He reasoned that light was not made up of particles, but of waves, which emanated from a source. The Sun shines on the Earth, but for its light and warmth to reach Earth at all, there needs to be a medium through which the waves are transmitted at high speed. Descartes also called this intangible substance Ether, following the theories of the philosophers of old. Accord-

ing to Descartes, we see the Sun in its brilliance because it emits waves, which press upon the eye of the viewer with incredible speed and force.

In his writings from 1667, Robert Hooke mostly followed this theory, but also developed it further. If light was not just understood as the pressure of a wave, but as a vibrating motion of the Ether itself, it would be possible to explain why humans can detect different colors – every variation of this vibration should lead to a subtly different impression in the viewer's eye. When in 1675 Danish Ole Rømer observed Jupiter's moon Io, he discovered that light did not have an instantaneous velocity, but in fact moved at a high, yet finite and measurable speed. Despite these discoveries, Descartes' Ether theory remained fundamentally sound.

From 1672 onwards, Sir Isaac Newton addressed these observations himself and considered several alternative explanations, but was not convinced by any of them. Among other things, he theorized that light actually consisted of particles which moved through the Ether. His famous Inverse Square Law was phrased to explain some effects of the Ether, and his investigations into gravity laid the foundations for modern mathematics. While Newton himself never published a conclusive study on gravity and the Ether, many of his followers consequently assumed that the Ether not only was a medium for light, but for gravity as well.

## The 18th Century

Intensive philosophical investigations into the nature of light and the Ether quite often disregarded scientific facts, producing several detours on the road of truth in the following century. New observations regarding the speed of light challenged Newton's particle theory, realizing that such behavior was typical of waves, but not of particles. By the end of the 18th century, Newton's particle interpretation of light was generally considered disproven, and the understanding of light moving through the Ether as waves gained new ground.

## The 19th Century

In 1800, Thomas Young conducted experiments with soap bubbles attempting to explain their iridescent variety of colors. He discovered that the colors depended on the wave lengths of the light hitting the bubbles. By 1815, Augustin Fresnel finally described the phenomena of interference and light diffraction, which were the very cause of these color shifts. By 1816, the two men worked together to prove that light really did travel through the Ether as a wave.

Young went even further though. Originally, scientists assumed that the Ether was a tenuous fluid – even less 'palpable' than air. The English physicist instead presumed that the Ether was actually a solid, which was nevertheless permeable and could transmit the transverse waves such as light, gravity, electricity, and magnetism. The Ether therefore must be a remarkable substance full of contradictions – it was rigid and yet intangible, hardly perceptible and yet impervious to vacuum and matter.



It was long disputed among leading scientists whether there was only one grand Ether through which all energy flowed, or whether there were different substances for each energy type. In 1820 however, Hans Ørsted made a sensational discovery in realizing that an electric current could produce a magnetic field. In 1832, Michael Faraday produced electricity by moving a magnetic rod through coiled wire. Everything pointed to the fact that each form of energy could be conveyed to any other. Finally, in 1856 James Maxwell proved this speculation and confirmed that all electromagnetic and optical phenomena were explainable in terms of stresses in a single Ether which pervaded the universe.

## Moreau's Studies of the Ether

In 1860, Etienne Moreau hypothesized that the Ether was in fact not evenly distributed throughout the universe, but occurred in different densities. Depending on the size and weight of the object moving through the Ether, it might be distributed in vortices, thin patches, and even compact clumps. He assumed that there had to be alternating areas with high and low Ether density, and that one could only speak of an average density in certain areas.

Ultimately, Moreau believed that the hypothetical interaction of matter, energy, and Ether indicated it was possible for each to be used to manipulate the other. Under the right circumstances, matter could be moved through the Ether like a ship through the ocean. Similarly, different energy forms could be used to manipulate the Ether.

## Edison - Proving the Theories

Enthralled by Etienne Moreau's theories, Thomas Alva Edison contacted the man, and the two scientists met in 1862 to discuss the possibilities of constructing a space ship that would move forward by manipulating the Ether.

Their first prototypes did not work however, and the two men were unable to explain why. It was not until 1865, that Moreau suggested that perhaps the Earth's atmosphere had an adverse effect on the flow of the Ether. Experiments with small models actually showed that only at an altitude of 24,000 feet or higher the interference with the air became low enough for the ether propeller to function properly. Against the opposition from the academic world, Edison pursued this idea. He got the better of all the skeptics when on November 27th, 1868 he sent an unmanned prototype of his Ether vessel into space.

Humanity was ready for a new adventure – the journey to faraway planets.

## Traveling through Space

"Our ancestors did not believe that a ship could cross the massive waves of the Atlantic Ocean, and yet it was done. The Ether, too, can be traversed. The right ship is all we need to brave this element!"

*Etienne Moreau, French physicist*

## The Ether - A New Challenge

Thomas Alva Edison was the first man to find a way to cross the Ether. On November 27th, 1868 he proved that his ether propeller worked – in front of dozens of invited guests and under the

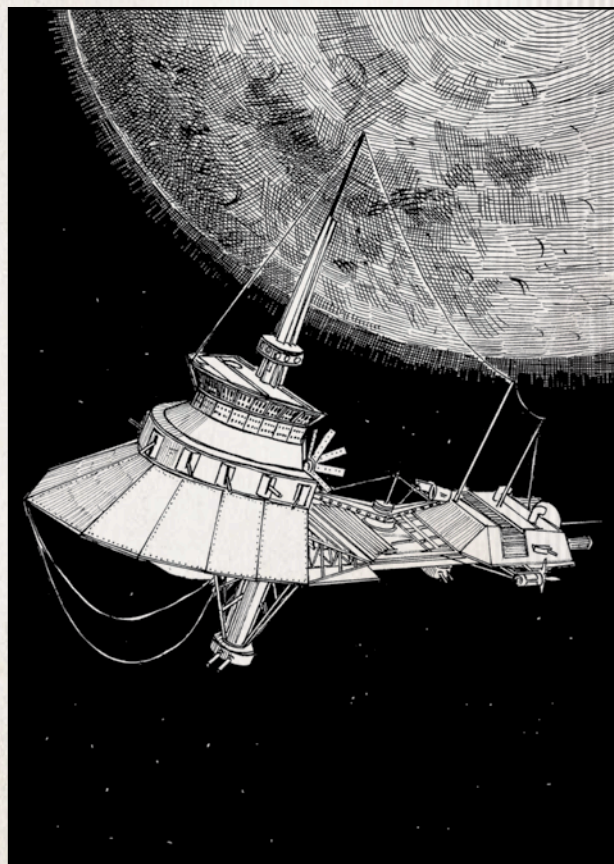
supervision of an astronomer, who wished to track the flight of the prototype with a telescope.

This comparatively primitive aircraft was to shatter on the Moon, where it would set off a magnesium explosive charge that it carried. The next morning, a sudden flash of light could be seen for a few minutes in the *Mare Tranquillitatus* until the magnesium was consumed, proving to all skeptics that Thomas Alva Edison's supposed crazy idea did work after all and on December 3rd, 1868 the inventor was finally granted the patent for his ether propeller. This day marked the beginning of the age of space travel.

Yet although the entirely unknown Etheric Ocean of space has some resemblance to the oceans of Earth, there are also fundamental differences. The people on the first research missions that explored the depths of space soon realized the unprecedented challenges they had to overcome. The first explorations of space brought the full force of Victorian science to bear on unique problems heretofore never encountered in the history of Earth. They included:

- Sealing Ether Flyers hulls against the threats of vacuum
- Protecting Ether Flyer hulls and especially cabin windows and portholes against meteor strikes
- Providing a power source which could work without air
- Computing the orbits of the planets and other celestial bodies
- Finding a method of leaving a planet's atmosphere, but also of entering it again and landing safely on the surface

The challenges that faced the ancient mariners can hardly be compared to those which Victorian astronauts had to confront, but the heroism and sacrifice of the early pioneers cleared the way for an entire fleet of modern spacecraft and rang in the age of ether flyers, which today range the entire solar system. The fact that these immense problems could be solved rather





quickly, led to an even still stronger trust in the possibilities of technology and its dominance through the superior intellect of a civilized humanity.

## Interplanetary Travel

*"Settle? Dear God, how long had I not known this word, and I was restless. – Further – further towards the setting sun."*

**Friedrich Gerstäcker, German adventurer and writer (1816-1872)**

Travelling between the planets is far from being commonplace in the 19th century, but in the short time since 1870, when Edison and Armstrong first journeyed to Mars, the number of journeys has increased rapidly. Today, at the beginning of the third decade of interplanetary travel, mankind stands poised on the brink of a new era.

### Ether Flyers

Space travel, while not an everyday matter, has become an accepted part of life in 1889. There are more than a hundred ships, carrying cargo and passengers through the Ether, enabling the establishment of colonies on Mars and Venus, supporting scientific missions on Mercury, and undertaking the occasional exploration of Luna. Short journeys between the Earth and Luna or the heliograph stations typically last no more than a few days and are made by small, battery-powered vessels. Space journeys between the worlds made by interplanetary vessels are costly and last about a month or more. Although such vessels have batteries, they are powered by solar boilers. A reflective heliostat deflects the sunlight onto the boiler's water chamber thus producing steam and energy without combustion – space vessels do not carry enough oxygen to burn coal over several weeks of time.

As the vessel ventures further from the Sun, the power of its rays decreases, until eventually the heat from these rays is no longer sufficient to bring the water to boil. The boilers that most ships are fitted with lose their effectiveness beyond 300 million miles from the Sun – although this range is still more than adequate to reach the Asteroid Belt.

The difficulties that arise in the processing of large quantities of molten glass and in the even cooling of large lenses impose limitations on the ability to improve on this performance, making a significant increase in the travel distance of the vessels very unlikely for the next few years. However, this does not mean that engineers have already given up in their efforts to develop better means of harnessing the Sun's rays. Only recently, HMS *Theseus*, equipped with a Swiss Guldemarque lens in a newly constructed gimbal mounting, managed to reach a distance from the Sun slightly in excess of 400 million miles before the boiler lost power. *Theseus* then had to switch to battery power and return to 'warmer' regions of the solar system.

This is of course, still well short of the range needed to investigate even Jupiter, by far the closest of the trans-astroidal planets. In recent years however, scientists have managed to perform all kinds of miracles, and they will surely find a solution to this challenge in time.

Another difficulty of space travel is the oxygen supply, which was solved by placing large greenhouses on ether flyers, where in the plants would regenerate the consumed air. An Ether Flyer is a zero gravity environment. This affects the furnishing on

board, since everything has to be fastened in place to prevent it from floating away. Passengers and crew members are required to wear special shoes fitted with magnetic soles to secure their foothold on the metallic floors. Women favor hoop skirts, since their frames keep the cloth from flying about, thus providing improper glimpses on the ankles or even thighs. Floor-length dresses with magnets sewn into their hemlines serve a similar purpose. However, regulations concerning the use of protective goggles, which are to ward off loose objects, are usually ignored by most passengers for 'aesthetic reasons'.

### Travelling in Style

The lack of gravity on board an ether flyer has its ramifications, leading to inconveniences and limitations for travelers. A cucumber sandwich may drift away just as easily as the cards of a bridge game. Tea at teatime or after-dinner cognac is served not in cups and glasses, but in closed containers.

For those players and Game Masters who would rather drink their tea from cups and not worry about the consequences of the zero-gravity environment there is an optional rule:

While operating, the ether propeller creates a curved gravity field as a side effect that roughly corresponds to Earth's gravity. Its vector and range have of course been calibrated so that the bottom deck is actually on the 'bottom' of the ship.

However, it must be kept in mind that gravity is lost as soon as the ether propeller is deactivated. A malfunction of the propeller has the same effect as a manual shut-down. The artificial gravity on board is lost, so that crew and passengers will float freely through the air. There is no more top or bottom.

### Distances between Planets

As Ether Flyers' are solar-powered, theoretically there is no limitation to their range, as long as they do not venture too far away from the Sun. Therefore the principal issue in planning an interplanetary journey is calculating its length, which in turn determines the amount of supplies needed on board. This time span is of course a function of the distance traveled and the speed of the spacecraft. The description of the Solar System (p. 9) gives the distance from the Sun of the various planets, but since the planets themselves move in different orbits around the Sun, the distances between the planets is constantly changing. The largest distance between two planets is reached when they are positioned on opposite sides of the Sun; this figure can be calculated by adding together both planets' distances to the Sun. When they are both currently on the same side of the Sun, they are at closest approach, calculated by subtracting the smaller of the two distances to the Sun from the larger one.

To simplify these calculations, we have listed below the most important distances in the following table.



| Planets       | average distance* | greatest distance* | shortest distance* |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Earth-Mars    | 142               | 234                | 48                 |
| Earth-Venus   | 93                | 160                | 26                 |
| Earth-Mercury | 93                | 129                | 130                |
| Earth-Luna    | 237               | -                  | -                  |
| Mars-Mercury  | 142               | 177                | 105                |
| Mars-Venus    | 142               | 208                | 74                 |
| Venus-Mercury | 67                | 103                | 31                 |

\*) distance is in millions of miles

## Booking a Passage

It is quite likely that the characters will not have an Ether Flyer of their own. In this case, they will have to obtain passage on one of the commercial vessels that travel the space between the worlds of the Solar System. Usually, these passenger ships only run between Earth and the colonies on Mars and Venus. There are no scheduled flights to Mercury, Luna or the asteroids.

Journeys to Venus are mostly conducted by German or American cargo vessels, while journeys to Mars are generally taken on British vessels. However, there are exceptions to this rule, if one is patient enough to wait longer for the next available passage. Passage aboard cargo vessels is of course cheaper, and while a passenger may have the benefit of one of the few state-rooms on board, he will not have access to all of the amenities and entertainments typically provided aboard a passenger liner.

The difference between the ships, apart from the facilities on board, is mainly one of speed and price. The following table may serve as a general guideline.

| Velocity        |          |             |
|-----------------|----------|-------------|
| Ship type       | Velocity | basic price |
| Passenger liner | 2.5      | £ 60        |
| Cargo ship      | 2.0      | £ 40        |

The **velocity** of an Ether Flyer is expressed in millions of miles per day, while the travel distance is expressed in millions of miles. Divide the travel distance by the speed of the Ether Flyer to determine the length of the voyage in days.

*Example:* To travel the distance of 201.3 million miles on an Ether Flyer with the presumed speed of 3.2 million miles per day would take roughly 63 days.

The **basic price** of a journey is constant, independent of the distance travelled or the duration in days. It pays for a common twin cabin. Travelling on the between-deck costs half, while passengers booking first-class pay double – this basically means they get a twin cabin to themselves.

The quality and luxury class of the ship in question may additionally influence the price.

## Hazards of Space Travel

Those who venture out into space naturally expose themselves to all the dangers of this new environment. Apart from possible hostile ether flyers or privateers these mostly consist of ether turbulence and meteorite showers, which can cause serious damage to an Ether Flyer.

Each time that an Ether Flyer crosses the orbit of a celestial body, it passes through an area of ether turbulence. Ether turbulence does not directly damage the hull or structure of the vessel, but it does affect the ether propeller, so they can pose a significant risk after all. When the propeller is lost, the vessel will continue at the same speed and roughly on the same course vector, but the crew would most likely no longer be in control. In this case, ether currents could influence the course of the vessel and change it to the disadvantage of its passengers.

## Navigation

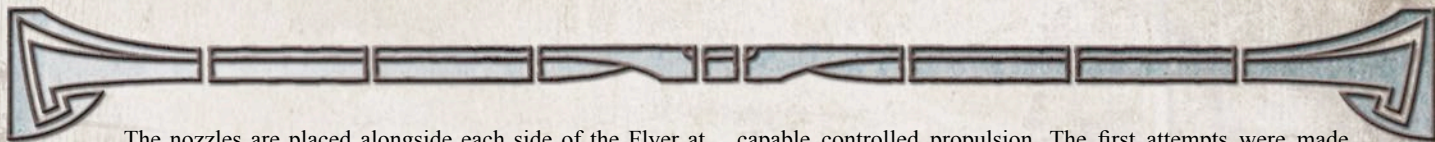
Apart from charting a course, avoiding meteorite showers, ether eddies and vortices, navigation with ether propulsion is rather simple. However, its use is limited when approaching planets and moons.

### Close-Range Maneuvers

Edison's ether propeller – suitable as it may be to overcome great distances – has in practice turned out to be entirely useless or even dangerous when navigating close to a space station, another Ether Flyer, or a small celestial body, like the moons of Mars. The acceleration of an ether propeller is hard to regulate in the lower power range. In the early days of space travel, this led to fatal collisions. In 1875, the French lost two of their early ether frigates when they collided in space and broke apart as one of them tried to go alongside its sister ship. After that, the early spacefarers of all nations finally realized that the impact with which a vessel powered by an ether propeller hits a more or less static obstacle was just too great to take that risk. Hence, other ways had to be found to cover small distances in space or to navigate and maneuver at close range.

There have been experiments with rockets and smaller ether propellers, but neither yielded in any satisfactory results. German engineer Paul Haenlein finally came up with the idea to conduct steam from the Ether Flyer's sun boiler through movable nozzles, and to use its high pressure for propulsion. Today, Haenlein nozzles are regarded the most modern way of navigating a Flyer in situations where the ether propeller cannot be used because the Ether Flyer only needs to move or travel a short distance to its destination.





The nozzles are placed alongside each side of the Flyer at a distance of 30 feet. The movable brackets are operated from inside by one crew member each, who get their orders through a system of communication tubes that run all the way through the hull.

Since there are still many Flyers – particularly those of older design – without such steam nozzles. When the Ether Flyer needs to dock, most orbital stations operate small and maneuverable Haenlein tugs fitted with powerful Haenlein nozzles that can tow those Flyers within easily accessible proximity of the station. Many captains gladly call on the experienced navigators of tugs to make sure that the difficult docking maneuver will not cause any problems.

American inventor Cyrus Grant is currently working on an Ether Propeller that will allow for maneuvering in the ether even at low speed; however, a test flight is yet to be done.

### **Flying in an Atmosphere**

There are only few exclusive Ether Flyers – that is, vessels that never have to land on a planet. Most spacecraft are built to land on planets as well. The ether propeller however, is of no help there, since it only functions outside the atmosphere.

Consequently, several methods have been developed in the last few years which enable a ship to hover in the air or rise up into space. Edison conducted his first experiments with a hydrogen-filled balloon which would lift his prototype to the necessary height. For some time, this seemed to be the only feasible technology for Ether Flyers, after several attempts with hot-air balloons had failed spectacularly due to low temperatures at great heights including a Russian testing ship equipped with a hot-air balloon which crashed from great height, causing the death of the entire crew.

The first genuine alternative emerged when the British discovered liftwood and its properties on Mars, and seeing its potential as a material in Ether Flyer construction, imported it to Earth. At the same time, German designer Ferdinand Graf von Zeppelin also developed his airships of the same name, which offered a technologically advanced alternative to the British liftwood vessels. Other pioneers of space travel, such as Russian Konstantin Eduardovich Tsiolkovsky, have also tried to build alternative constructions. Thus in 1889, interested parties could choose between several different types of vessels capable of landing on a planet.

The same was true with the available means of propulsion. The early prototypes were able to climb or sink, but were not

capable controlled propulsion. The first attempts were made with sails, but they could not be attached to the regular masts, since usually the buoyancy bodies are located directly above the ships. The best results were achieved by using sideward protruding gaff-rigs and combining them with movable spinnakers.

Along with the prevalence of sun boilers and steam engines, separate air propellers are increasingly used as an additional means of propulsion, as a complement to the ether propeller. Unfortunately, due to the low power level of the Haenlein nozzles, maneuvering within the atmosphere of a planet is impossible. Steering an ether flyer within the atmosphere also poses a problem for engineers. It would be extremely difficult to control a ship with sails and propellers alone, which is why most atmosphere-compliant flyers today are fitted with at least rudimentary height and side empennages, as well as ailerons, which have solved many of the issues mentioned above.

Of course, these are not perfect solutions and aeronautical engineers and scientists continue to work on a better means of maneuvering in an atmosphere. Expectations are high as to which developments will improve Ether Flyer designs and thus herald a new era of discovery.

### **Flying without an Atmosphere**

Celestial bodies without atmosphere, such as Luna or the moons of Mars, pose a special challenge to Ether Flyers. Theoretically, a ship built of liftwood could make full use of its strengths here, since it can climb or sink regardless of the atmospheric conditions. However, the interaction of liftwood with the, in some cases absent, magnetic field of the various celestial bodies can heavily effect its lifting capacities. Zeppelins or balloons are completely powerless, since their means of propulsion only works within a regular atmosphere; on a celestial body without atmosphere they would plummet helplessly.

Further issues include the propulsion and steering of the vessels. The usual means such as propellers, sails, and empennages again only work in a gaseous medium. The problem with using Haenlein nozzles has been previously described. In 1887, an attempt to land on Luna using a regular ether propeller made by a British expedition resulted in the loss of their ship and the entire crew.

So far, scientists and engineers can conclude that ships meant to land on celestial bodies without an atmosphere would have to be constructed with a special means of propulsion. Though to date, no one has any idea what such a means of propulsion might be, or how it would work. Here, too, the aforementioned invention by Cyrus Grant might help.





# Secrets between the Stars

## Note for the Gamemaster

In the years since mankind first left the Earth to explore the planets of the Solar System, many a secret has been discovered. Yet there are still plenty of things waiting to be found. Some of these secrets are presented below.

*The following text is thus intended for the Gamemaster's eyes only!*

## Phaeton

Scientists from Earth assume that the Asteroid Belt consists of the remnants of a planet that was circling the Sun in this exact orbit eons ago – and they are right to do so.

Phaeton (sometimes erroneously called Vulcan, see p. 242 for further information) was once the home planet to a technologically advanced humanoid people. They were capable of building technologies far ahead of those known in the year 1889, among them interstellar travel. About 300 Million years ago, Phaeton was destroyed. Whatever caused the destruction of the planet – the impact was so sudden that only few Phaetonians managed to escape their doomed world, and what traces they left in their wake have long since been lost between the stars.

Nevertheless, relics of lost Phaeton can still be found today, mostly in the Asteroid Belt. On other planets, geological upheavals and the ravages of time destroyed the remains of their culture almost entirely. It is only a matter of time before mankind's exploration of the Ether results in its coming across the secrets of the Phaetonians. American inventor Cyrus Grant will describe symbols found in the Asteroid Belt and on Luna as resembling hieroglyphs.

Descended from a group of Phaetonians that managed to leap forward in time into their distant future – a time when the first humans began to develop a significant culture – the Moon Men are the last remnants of the Phaetonians (see below).

## Luna

### Moon Men

The time-travelling Phaetonians bridged nearly 300 Million years. In their new future, they settled on the Earth's moon, Luna, on which their people had already installed a station from where they planned to explore the Earth. Although they preserved the knowledge about their technology, they lacked the resources and the production techniques to maintain their civilization. Their 'City of Light and Science' deep inside of Luna still retains the vestiges of the technological miracles of ancient Phaeton, but only very few Moon Men are capable of operating them today, let alone repairing them.

Before they retreated into their 'City of Light and Science', the Phaetonians had left traces of their explorations on Earth as well as contact with at least one ancient human people that would benefit from the Phaetonians' advanced technology. The legend of Atlantis sees its roots in this contact, as do several oral traditions such as the Indian epic, The Mahabharata, which also

testifies the internal conflicts of the Phaetonians and their wars. Today the Moon Men lead a withdrawn life in a cavern inside Luna. This gigantic spherical chamber with a diameter of almost 300 Miles can only be reached through a series of underground water tunnels. These are very hard to enter as there are few deep crevices that reach from the Luna surface to the river passageways far below and some of the connecting caverns are flooded by the underground water. Another means of accessing these tunnels is via the cold water streams that lie behind 'the glow' and which connect to the Great Canyon. However, many of these entry ways are guarded by the insectoid Selenites whose vigilance makes it quite difficult to get past them unnoticed.

The Moon Men are roughly human-sized and slender. Their coarse skin is almost translucent which allows their veins and muscles to shine through. Their mighty skull might give them quite a primitive appearance, but their alert and intelligent big eyes more than make up for that.

## Selenites

Luna is also home to another species that was influenced by the Phaetonians – the Selenites, a race of sentient humanoid insects that were enslaved by the Phaetonians and trained to operate their machines.

Today, the Selenites are a rather primitive people inhabiting the numerous tunnels, caves, and caverns that traverse the moon. The society of these hermaphroditic creatures is organized like an insect state, its members being divided into drones, custodians, and specialists.

Their bug-like appearance makes them quite repulsive to the human eye, and only very few would suppose them to be intelligent people. Their round head has a vertical mouth with two mandible-like grinding organs, topped by two saucer-sized multifaceted eyes. They stand about five feet tall when erect, but only two feet when down on all of their six limbs. Each of these limbs has three joints and a hand with three fingers.

## Mercury

Even on Mercury, there can be found intelligent life forms, such as the Ice Dwellers. The fact that Earth scientists are yet to discover this primitive species is hardly surprising given that their habitat lies within the Dry Ice Zone.

With their pure white body, these creatures appear to be a mixture of a crab and a spider. They walk on four legs and have two arms with manipulating hands, enabling them to manufacture and use simple tools. Like all living beings of the Dry Ice Zone, their metabolism is based on ammonia, and they can only feed on plants and animals that possess the same metabolism. They are attracted by warmth, although heat harms them.

Currently, Ice dweller development is hindered by the lack of raw materials such as metals and they only maintain a Stone Age culture. They are capable of verbal communication and even possess a primitive language, but even so, communicating with them will not be easy. Humans will need to convince the Ice dwellers that they are themselves alive and sentient beings so as not to be classified as a strange, heat-emitting environmental phenomenon.



# Characters

Characters are the driving force behind Space: 1889 and it is their goals and motivations that move the story along. As a player, your job is to create a character through which you will interact with the game world and take an active part in the story. You assume your character's role every time you play, and you get to watch him grow and develop over time. With luck, your character will become a great hero who suffers setbacks and performs amazing feats – just as film and literary characters do.

Character generation is a relatively simple process that you can easily do on your own. However, it is best for players to create their characters all together under the supervision of the Game Master so he can answer questions and guide you through the creation process.

The character generation process begins with choosing your character Archetype and Motivation, then translating those into the traits and statistics used in the game. You have a certain number of character points with which to purchase your character's basic traits – Attributes, Skills, Talents, and Resources. You will get to determine your character's relative strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas. You also get to make up your character's background – his or her life story up until the game begins. Once the character generation process is complete, you should have a good feel for who your character is, what he wants, and how to play him during the game.

The Rule Overview on p. 194 gives you a first impression of which ratings are needed during a game.

## Character Generation Overview

### Step One: Archetype (p. 141ff.)

Choose an Archetype or make up one of your own. Your Archetype represents your character's role and is used as a guide for character creation.

### Step Two: Motivation (p. 144f.)

Choose a Motivation or make up one of your own. Your Motivation represents your character's driving goal and gives him a reason to be in the game.

### Step Three: Primary Attributes (p. 146f.)

Choose Attributes. You have 15 Attribute points to buy Primary Attributes ratings, which are purchased on a one-for-one basis. You must put at least one point, but no more than six points, in each of the six Attributes.

### Step Four: Secondary Attributes (p. 147ff.)

Calculate Secondary Attributes. Your Secondary Attribute ratings are calculated based on your Primary Attributes:

- Size** = 0 (Average Human)
- Move** = Strength + Dexterity
- Perception** = Intelligence + Willpower
- Initiative** = Dexterity + Intelligence
- Defense** = Body + Dexterity – Size
- Stun** = Body
- Health** = Body + Willpower + Size

### Step Five: Skills (p. 149ff.)

Choose Skills. You have 15 Skill points to purchase Skill Levels, which you can distribute freely at your own discretion. However, you cannot purchase more than five levels in any one Skill at character creation.

**Skill Specializations (Optional):** You might want to have your character specialize in a particular aspect of a Skill. Every time your Specialization applies to an action, you receive a +1 bonus to your Skill roll. Skill Specializations cost a half-point each, and you must have at least one Skill Level in a Skill to purchase a Specialization for it. You can only have one Specialization in any one Skill at character creation. Advanced Skill Specializations can be purchased with Experience Points during play.

### Step Six: Talents and Resources (p. 159ff., 169ff.)

Choose two Talents or Resources. Talents represent your character's special abilities while Resources represent his power, wealth, and influence. Talents are never lost, but Resources can be gained or lost during play.

### Step Seven: Flaws (optional) (p. 174ff.)

Choose a Flaw. Flaws represent your character's physical, mental, or social shortcomings. If your character is hurt or hindered by his Flaw during play, you earn Style points that can later be spent for bonus dice on a roll. Taking a Flaw at character creation gives your character one starting Style point. If you wish to represent the strict societal structures of the Victorian Age as well as the particularities of the Space: 1889 setting and include them in the rule system, you might consider taking the Flaw Underprivileged for characters of lower classes, aliens, non-Europeans, or female characters.

### Step Eight: Experience (p. 177)

Spend starting Experience Points. Your character starts play with a certain amount of life experience. You have 15 Experience Points to spend on Primary Attributes, Skill Levels, Skill Specializations, or additional Talents and Resources. Unspent Experience Points may be carried into play with Gamemaster approval.

| Trait Experience Point Cost         |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Trait                               | Experience Point Cost          |
| Primary Attribute                   | New Attribute Level × 5 points |
| Skill                               | New Skill Level × 2 points     |
| Skill Specialization                | 3 points                       |
| Talent                              | 15 points                      |
| Resource                            | 15 points                      |
| Resource Level 0                    | 7                              |
| Upgrade Resource Level 0 to Level 1 | 8                              |

**Note:** If a player is creating a new character who will be joining an existing party, he can be given additional starting Experience Points so as not to lag behind the other characters.



## Step Nine: Finishing Touches

Now that you have determined your character's skills and abilities, it is time to fill in the rest of the details. Name your character and write a physical description. Make up a character background and pick out his gear. Your character is almost ready to play!

## Step Ten: Style (p. 177)

Calculate starting Style points. If you took a Flaw during character creation, you start play with one Style point.

## Example of Character Creation

Frank wants to play an action-oriented character who is good with firearms. After talking to the Gamemaster and the other players, he narrows his choices down to the Explorer and Officer Archetypes. He does not like the idea of being part of a strict hierarchy, however. He prefers to play an impulsive and stubborn character searching for thrill and adventure. So he chooses the Discoverer as his Archetype.

Frank then looks for a Motivation that would fit his character. After reading the Motivation descriptions and talking to the Gamemaster, he narrows down his choices to Fame, Greed, and Truth. All three Motivations would work for a Discoverer, but he decides that his character's primary reason for traveling to the

## Variation on the Starting Points

The rules explained in this chapter are intended for ordinary human, Martian, or Venusian characters living at the end of the 19th century. They are average people that can manage quite well who will in the course of their adventures face some difficulties, but when the going gets tough, happen to have one or two aces up their sleeves.

However, this may not be enough, depending on the preferred way of playing. Maybe the Gamemaster wants the characters to start play as 'ordinary people' to give them the possibility to develop freely. On the other hand, he could prefer a more heroic and movie-like style, with characters saving a Martian princess with one hand and fighting off half a dozen thugs with the other.

Depending on upon the preferences of the Gamemaster and his players, the number of points that a player has to assign to his character's Attributes, Skills, Talents, and Resources can be varied. We recommend the following classifications:

### Unlucky Fellow

A simple human or Martian who might be underprivileged, has had bad luck in the past, or has not yet made full use of his potential.

**Attribute points: 9 (rank max. 4)**  
**Talents and Resources: 1 Resource level 0**  
**Skill points: 9 (rank max. 3)**  
**Starting experience: 5**

### Everyman

A fairly average inhabitant of Earth, Mars, or Venus.

**Attribute points: 12 (rank max. 5)**  
**Talents and Resources: 1 Resource or 1 Talent**  
**Skill points: 12 (rank max. 4)**  
**Starting experience: 10**

### Promising

These are the 'normal' starting characters for Space: 1889 – ordinary humans, Martians, or Venusians who

are one or two steps ahead of the average person. The archetype character examples are created on this basis.

**Attribute points: 15 (rank max. 6)**  
**Talents and Resources: 2 Resources and/or Talents**  
**Skill points: 15 (rank max. 5)**  
**Starting experience: 15**

### Veteran

A character who is very experienced, has traveled a lot, or is just gifted by nature.

**Attribute points: 18 (rank max. 7)**  
**Talents and Resources: 4 Resources and/or Talents**  
**Skill points: 18 (rank max. 6)**  
**Starting experience: 20**

### World leading

This character is a leading figure in his field – a celebrated athlete, a true genius, or a martial artist.

**Attribute points: 21 (rank max. 8)**  
**Talents and Resources: 6 Resources and/or Talents**  
**Skill points: 21 (rank max. 7)**  
**Starting experience: 25**

### Herculean

The skills and abilities of this character are verging on the incredible.

**Attribute points: 24 (rank max. 9)**  
**Talents and Resources: 8 Resources and/or Talents**  
**Skill points: 24 (rank max. 8)**  
**Starting experience: 30**

If you want to play one of the example characters (p. 178ff.) with different starting points you can easily adapt his ratings by adding the difference between the character class you wish to choose and the 'Promising' class.

If you are playing with varied starting points you should also adjust the ratings of certain Resources like 'Followers' or 'Mentors' to ensure comparability.



planets of the Solar System is to be the first one to reach foreign parts and once there make new discoveries. Therefore, he selects Truth as his character's Motivation.

Frank is now ready to buy Primary Attributes for his character. He has fifteen points to spend; he immediately puts five points into Dexterity because it is the basis for the Firearms Skill. Unfortunately, this leaves him with ten points – just enough to buy a rating of 2 in each of the other five Attributes. Frank does not want his character to be average everywhere else and he is unwilling to drop any of the other five Attributes down to a 1. Reluctantly, he drops his character's Dexterity rating to 4, giving him one extra point to spend. After looking over the remaining Attributes, he decides to put the extra point into Willpower. He wants his character to be able to stand his ground in the face of a charging steppe tiger without losing his cool while aiming for that perfect shot.

With all of his Character's Primary Attributes selected, Frank calculates the Secondary Attributes. His character is an average human, so he is automatically Size 0. He calculates the rest of the Secondary Attributes and comes up with Move 6, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 2, and Health 5. He has a fast, perceptive character with good defense. Frank is pleased with how his character is turning out so far.

Frank has fifteen points to spend on Skills for his character. He looks over the Skill list and promptly picks out Athletics, Firearms, and Survival; these Skills seem essential to a Discoverer. Frank also wants his character to be able to do more than just shoot a gun, so he chooses Brawl, Intimidate, and Melee. His character could have picked up a language or two in his travels, so he also selects Linguistics.

With fifteen points to spend, Frank could buy two Skill Levels in each Skill and still have a point left over. Unfortunately, this doesn't make Frank's character as skilled in Firearms and Survival as he wants him to be, so he has to cut something. He decides that the Linguistics skill is not as critical to his character concept, and scratches it off the list. This gives Frank two more points to spend, so he puts one each in Firearms and Survival. With his remaining point Frank buys two Specializations: Firearms (Rifles) and Survival (Tracking). That is more like it!

Frank gets to choose one Talent or Resource for his character for free. This one is easy for him. He scans the list, and zeroes in on the 'Alertness' Talent, which gives him a +2 to his Perception rating.

Although it is not required, Frank decides to take a Flaw for his character. He is getting a clear picture in his head of an impetuous young man burning for action – he is the kind of guy who will not lose time with making plans and will instead rush into every fight or climb down into unexplored ruins without hesitating. Frank decides to take the 'Impulsive' Flaw because it sounds like fun, and it will help him earn Style points during play. It also enables Frank to select a second Talent. He chooses 'Charismatic', which gives his character +1 Charisma rating which affect his Charisma rolls and all Charisma-based Skills. It also factors into his Secondary Attributes and raises his maximum Charisma rating by one point. Unlike the Alertness Talent, Frank can only purchase the Charisma Talent during character creation.

Now it is time for Frank to spend his character's starting Experience Points. He could raise some of his character's Skills, or maybe buy another Talent. Instead, he goes back to the Attribute list and raises his character's constitution rating to a total of 3. He presumes that his impulsive character will probably find himself in one or two scrapes and suffer a bruise or two.

Frank's character now has the following Secondary Attribute ratings – Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 6, Defense 7, Stun 3,

and Health 6. Frank is nearly done creating his character. Now he just has to fill in the rest of the details by writing a character background, picking out starting equipment, and calculating his starting Style points.

## Characters from Foreign Worlds

The Ubiquity system sees humans, Martians, and Venusians as equals. None of these species is stronger, smarter, or otherwise privileged over the others. Accordingly, character creation follows the same rules.

It is important however, to keep in mind your character's background while creating him, and to reflect the effects this might have in game terms. For example, a Lizardman from a stone-age culture might have the Flaw 'Primitive', just as an Aboriginal would have. You will find more information about the background of alien characters on p. 78ff. (Martians) and p. 113ff. (Lizardmen).

There are some diseases or poisons that have differing effects on each species, which are denoted in their description. Lizardmen do not suffer any suffocation damage from drowning, since they are able to breathe underwater. Furthermore, they can smell underwater and their vision has a broader color spectrum.

## Character Creation Description Archetypes

The first step in character creation is choosing an Archetype to play. Archetypes represent classic roles and iconic character types for you to portray. Think of them as concepts and stereotypes for you to build upon, not as templates of skills and abilities.

Choose the Archetype that most appeals to you – or that will fit best with the other characters – and put your own spin on it. What kind of doctor is your character – a country doctor from the backwoods or a big city doctor? In what way is your character unique or different? Answering this question will help guide you as you create your very own character.

There are many different Archetypes; the ones most common to Space: 1889 are listed below. Feel free to come up with one of your own if none of these suit you, but make sure to get your Gamemaster's approval first.

For female characters from Earth, there are some limitations as to which Archetype would represent an adequate career, for example, the Academic. The decision is up to you and your Gamemaster, whether the choice of the Archetype fits the background of your character.

### Academic

Academics are bookish and smart, pursuing knowledge for its own sake. They are often students or college professors who spend their time researching or teaching a particular subject



matter (for example, history, anthropology, or linguistics). As such, they are founts of useful information and very helpful to any expedition. Not all Academics spend their lives confined to the library. Many of them thrive and excel in the field.

**Examples:** Cultural Anthropologist, Famous Historian, Ancient Language Specialist

**Typical Motivation:** Truth, Faith

## Adventurer

Adventurers are always on the move in an endless quest for danger and excitement. They are typically well traveled and often have a useful skill, such as piloting a cloudship, which makes them an asset to any expedition. They are experienced at getting into and out of tight spots and can fight when the situation calls for it. Adventurers are fiercely independent and tend to do things for their own reasons.

**Examples:** Daredevil, Soldier of Fortune, Smuggler

**Typical Motivations:** Escape, Greed

## Celebrity

Celebrities are famous for their talent, their looks, their wealth, or for performing an amazing or outrageous ability. They often have some useful skill or ability and can bring attention – for good or ill – to any expedition they join. Some Celebrities have tired of the spotlight, or care more for their craft than the notoriety that comes with it. These individuals will go to any lengths to either find inspiration or simply to get away from it all.

**Examples:** Stage Starlet, Composer, Novelist, Playwright

**Typical Motivations:** Love, Fame

## Criminal

Criminals have broken the law or been framed for a crime, and are usually on the run from the authorities. They are seen as untrustworthy and most of them will try to keep their past a secret. Criminals bring many useful things to an expedition, including money and connections, but can be a liability if their crimes or reputation follow them.

**Examples:** Con Man, Innocent Fugitive, Gangster

**Typical Motivations:** Duty, Escape, Greed

## Doctor

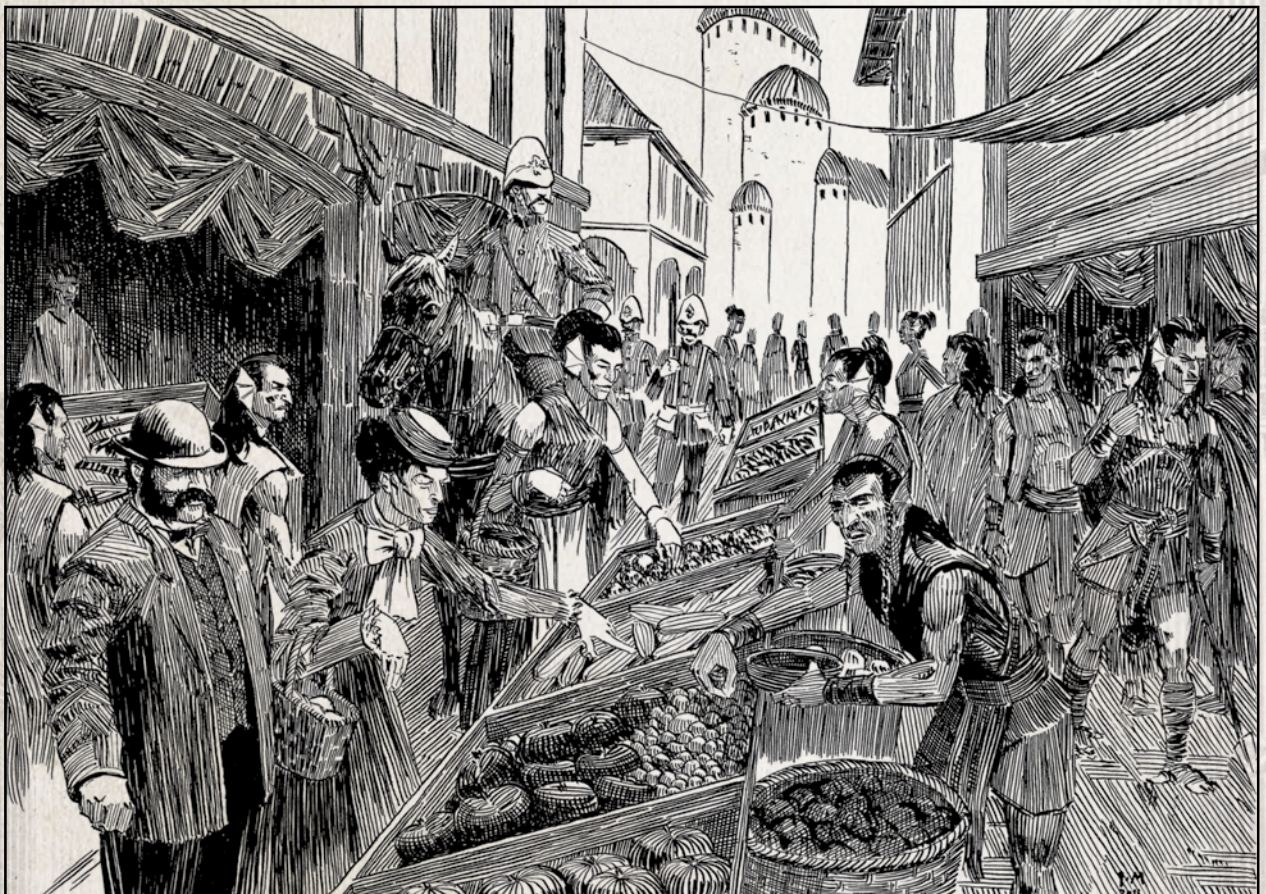
Doctors are highly educated medical professionals who bandage wounds, treat diseases, and dispense medicine. They fill a vital role in any expedition, as having a skilled doctor along can make the difference between life and death for explorers. Unfortunately, finding qualified doctors willing to go exploring is difficult, so some expeditions have to make do with under-trained or unlicensed doctors.

**Examples:** Country Doctor, Ship Surgeon, Veterinarian

**Typical Motivations:** Duty, Survival

## Engineer

Engineers are skilled at building and repairing items and equipment. They usually specialize in a specific craft such as carpentry or blacksmithing. They do not mind getting their hands dirty and they love to figure out how things work. When an expedition's success depends on a vehicle or piece of machinery working properly, there had better be a good Engineer in the party!





**Examples:** Blacksmith, Civil Engineer, Ship Mechanic

**Typical Motivations:** Truth, Greed

## Explorer

Explorers are obsessed with going where no one has gone before and returning to a hero's welcome. They are often expedition leaders who push themselves and their followers to the limits of human endurance to reach a goal. Explorers spend long periods away from civilization and tend to be solitary and laconic individuals, though some are dynamic and charismatic leaders.

**Examples:** Cartographer, Fearless Leader, National Hero

**Typical Motivations:** Love, Fame

## Hunter

Hunters are expert scouts and trackers, hunting animals for food and/or sport. They also track people, which is useful for bounty hunting or search-and-rescue operations. They are often deadly with ranged weapons, but they may seek to challenge themselves by using less effective weapons. With their ability to protect and provide for other people, they are a huge benefit to any expedition they join.

**Examples:** Big Game Hunter, Native Guide, Tracker

**Typical Motivations:** Revenge, Survival

## Missionary

Missionaries are men of the cloth called to spread the word of God. They are usually educated, well traveled, and willing to go into the deepest, darkest wilderness to save souls. Some Missionaries are learned scholars who joined the church just for the education. They make excellent additions to an expedition, as they tend to be gifted diplomats and often have minor medical training.

**Examples:** Evangelist, Jesuit Priest, Theologian

**Typical Motivations:** Faith

## Moneyman

Moneymen are wealthy and influential people who can afford to finance pet projects and invest in wild schemes. They almost always want something in return for their patronage, usually more wealth, power, or prestige. Some Moneymen will choose to join an expedition to protect their investment; others go to great lengths for philanthropic causes. Despite the name, Moneymen are women as often as not.

**Examples:** Eccentric Tycoon, Financier, Ship Magnate

**Typical Motivations:** Greed, Power

## Reporter

Reporters are always trying to get the scoop on a story or an exclusive interview with an important person. They are creative and persistent individuals committed to getting the full story, either because they want front-page material or because 'people have a right to know'. Reporters often cover expeditions from the field in order to provide their first-hand account of the experience.

**Examples:** Biographer, Investigative Reporter, Photographer

**Typical Motivations:** Truth, Love, Fame

## Scientist

Scientists are committed to the experimental investigation of the natural world. They tend to focus on life sciences such as botany or zoology, or hard sciences such as geology or physics. Scientists are highly intelligent and extremely knowledgeable in their particular field, making them ideal expedition members. They are usually calm and logical, but there is often a fine line between genius and madness.

**Examples:** Eccentric Inventor, Naturalist, Theoretical Physicist

**Typical Motivations:** Truth, Power, Revenge

## Soldier

Soldiers are professional warriors trained to fight in a variety of environments and situations. Whether they are battle-hardened members – or ex-members – of the armed forces or just hired muscle, they tend to think that any problem can be solved with the appropriate use of force. Soldiers operate under orders from either a commanding officer or an employer who hired them to protect the expedition.

**Examples:** Government Agent, Ex-Foreign Legionnaire, Mercenary

**Typical Motivations:** Duty

## Survivor

Survivors have escaped some kind of disaster or personal catastrophe. They may be victims of a shipwreck or an air ship crash, or they may be fleeing religious or ethnic persecution. They could be stranded and desperately trying to find a way home, or refugees looking for a new place to call home. Survivors typically join expeditions as a way to escape their current predicament.

**Examples:** Castaway, Political Refugee, Stranded Traveler

**Typical Motivations:** Escape, Revenge, Survival

## Drama, Conflict, and Motivation

Drama pulls us into a story and makes us care how it turns out. It occurs when the good guys meet the bad guys, making us wonder what will happen next. In essence, drama is created when characters with conflicting goals meet each other. We do not know what is going to happen, but we are sure that it is going to be exciting! Characters' opposing Motivations create conflict, which in turn creates drama and engages us in the story. Therefore, it is important to think about your character's Motivation and how it relates to the other characters in the party. Be aware of which other character will be the main cause of conflict with your character. To create an interesting and engaging game, the Gamemaster needs to ensure that the villains' Motivations also conflict with the player characters' Motivations, and *vice versa*.



## Motivations

After selecting an Archetype, the next step is to choose your character's Motivation. A Motivation represents your character's driving goal or greatest desire. Of course, characters are complex personalities, like real people, but there is one thing that they want above all else, and it drives nearly all of their actions.

Identifying your character's primary Motivation is particularly important in Space: 1889 because very few people will travel to the ends of the Solar System just to see what it looks like. Fewer still will chase a myth to see if it is true, or have the faith to believe in something that is openly ridiculed by others. Understanding why your character is seeking other planets gives him a real, solid reason to be there and invests him in the game.

Motivation not only helps you roleplay your character, it also has a direct impact upon play. In game terms, pursuing your character's Motivation earns you Style points that can be exchanged for bonus dice whenever you need them. Roleplaying your character's Motivation is not only fun, it makes him stronger and more versatile, too!

Check with the Gamemaster to see which Motivations are best suited for the game, as he may have selected certain Motivations as the central theme of his campaign. These represent conflicts and issues that will crop up again and again over the course of the story. Taking a theme as your character's Motivation will get him more involved in the game, and give you more opportunities to earn Style points.

In addition, choose a Motivation that appeals to you and works well with the other characters. Heroes and villains with differing motivations create conflict and drama, but player characters with mismatched Motivations can be problematic. Work with your fellow players to choose Motivations that work for everyone.

There are many different Motivations to consider for your character, but the ones most common to Space: 1889 are listed below. Feel free to make up new Motivations or create your own interpretations of those listed here, but be sure to get your Gamemaster's approval first.

### Atonement

Your character has committed a terrible crime in his past, or he made a tragic mistake, and this deed weighs heavily upon his conscience. Perhaps he betrayed his family or he caused the death of a dear friend. It does not matter whether he is really responsible for this incident as long as he feels guilty. However, he hopes to put things straight one day, and he will do anything to accomplish that mission.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character rights the wrong, or he convinces someone to forgive him for his misdeeds.

**Possessed by:** Missionaries, Soldiers, Criminals

### Duty

Your character has a strong sense of duty and obligation. He always does what is right and always keeps his word, even if it puts him on the wrong side of the law. He might be traveling to Mars or Venus because he was ordered to do so, or he may be honor-bound to accompany someone. Whatever the reason, he will do whatever is required to fulfill his responsibilities.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character acts responsibly or convinces someone to keep their word.

**Possessed by:** Doctors, Soldiers, Criminals

## Escape

Your character is fleeing from religious or political persecution – or maybe even an arranged marriage. Maybe she wants nothing more than avoiding going back home. Perhaps the reason for her escape is something so horrible that she will go to the ends of the Solar System to get away from it. It could be a painful memory, or she might be on the run from the law. She is desperate enough to want escape her circumstances, whatever they may be.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character escapes from danger or helps someone run from her past.

**Possessed by:** Adventurers, Criminals, Survivors

## Faith

Your character is a true believer. He is devoted to a higher power or motivated by other strongly held beliefs. Alternately, your character might have his faith rooted in the conviction that the planets of Mars or Venus are in fact the lost Garden of Eden – or a manifestation of the 'Beyond' where earthly souls are reborn in alien bodies! Perhaps he has received an order of his church to proselytize the godless natives on the other planets. He may also take the discovery of non-terrestrial life forms as an apocalyptic sign, and now he is on a quest to fight the evil bred on Mars and Venus – or to find salvation among these innocent souls who have been spared by the biblical Fall of Man.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character's viewpoint is supported by indications or real proof, or he converts someone to his beliefs.

**Possessed by:** Academics, Missionaries, Survivors

## Fame

Your character craves attention and loves the spotlight. She may be famous for being talented and beautiful, or for performing some great deed. She may still be waiting for her big break. Regardless, she wants everyone to know her name. Grand adventures like exploring Mars or Venus are a great way to garner favorable press – and she will do anything to get her name in print.

**Style points:** You earn Style points whenever your character does something noteworthy or increases her reputation.

**Possessed by:** Celebrities, Explorers, Reporters

## Greed

Your character is always looking for a quick buck or dreaming of the next big score. He may want to plunder the treasures of the ancient Mars ruins to sell its artifacts to the highest bidder, or he may join the expedition simply because he is being well paid. All he cares about is money and he is willing to do whatever it takes to get it.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character gets his hands on something particularly valuable or makes a lot of money.

**Possessed by:** Adventurers, Criminals, Money men

## Hope

Your character is boundlessly optimistic and has a firm belief that everything is going to be alright. He is friendly, condescending, and always tries to see the best in every man. He never gives up – especially not on people – as long as there is even the slightest chance of success, and he will never accept that a



situation is as desperate as his comrades say it is. He is not naïve however, and does not simply ignore the circumstances, but he refuses to accept unpleasant situations.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character's optimism proves to be just, or he can convince someone not to give up.

**Possessed by:** Adventurers, Average people, Survivors

## Justice

Your character has a detailed picture of what is right and what is wrong, and he believes in natural justice. He defends those in need and protects the underprivileged. He will not accept injustice, but will fight it no matter what, be it by registering a complaint, publishing an exposing newspaper article, or fighting an oppressor with furtive methods. He chooses his methods of fighting with great care and he knows exactly what it takes to strike at the cause of the injustice.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character can end injustice, or he convinces someone to do the right thing.

**Possessed by:** Men of the Law, Reporters, Soldiers

## Love

Your character will do anything for love, even volunteer for an exotic expedition to prove her devotion, or vow to find a loved one who has gone missing. Her feelings may or may not be returned by the other person, but that hardly matters; she is pursuing her heart's desire and will follow wherever it leads.

**Style points:** You earn Style points whenever your character does something romantic or persuades someone to follow his heart.

**Possessed by:** Celebrities, Explorers, Reporters

## Power

Your character craves power above all else. Whether it takes the form of immortality, controlling others, or defeating his enemies, power is his solution any problem. He will go to any lengths – even into the depth of space – to get what he is after. It is his destiny, and he will destroy anything or anyone that gets in his way.

**Style points:** You earn Style points whenever your character acts selfishly or persuades someone to use their power for personal gain.

**Possessed by:** Celebrities, Moneymen, Scientists

## Revenge

Your character has been wronged and cannot rest until she gets revenge on her enemies. She might want vigilante justice, or just to make the offender stand trial for his crimes – perhaps to clear her own name. On the other hand, she might have been ridiculed for her crackpot theories and has sworn to prove her detractors all wrong.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character settles a score or encourages someone to seek vengeance.

**Possessed by:** Hunters, Scientists, Survivors

## Secrecy

His belief in privacy, security, and the unfathomability of the universe are elementary principles of your character. He does

not like for others to meddle in his affairs. He is not a defender of ignorance however, he just believes that knowledge and power in the wrong hands can be used as a serious threat to others and therefore should be strictly controlled. Some secrets should be kept until the time is right to reveal them, and until that day comes, nobody is supposed to stick his nose into things that the world is not yet ready for.

**Style points:** You earn Style points whenever your character manages to prevent a secret from being uncovered, or keeps someone from finding out the truth.

**Possessed by:** Missionaries, Spies

## Survival

Your character will do anything to stay alive – eat insects, tree bark, or his dead companions if it comes to it. He might be stranded, or seeking out survival situations to test his mettle. Alternatively, he may be more concerned with the well-being of others more than he is with his own existence.

**Style points:** You earn Style points when your character defies death or saves someone's life while risking his own.

**Possessed by:** Doctors, Hunters, Survivors

## Truth

Your character is obsessed with knowledge, discovery, and truth. She feels a sense of joy when she unravels a mystery or discovers something new. She wants to share what she knows with the world. People have a right to know what is going on and she is going to make sure they get all the facts.

**Style points:** You earn Style points whenever your character makes a remarkable discovery or persuades someone to share a secret.

**Possessed by:** Academics, Reporters, Scientists

## Attributes

Humanoid beings have the natural ability to think, move, and act. However, everyone possesses these abilities to different degrees. Some people are just tougher, smarter, or more persuasive than others. We may not think about it much, but our natural abilities affect how we interact with the world around us. Your character is no different. Each character has Attributes that represent his or her natural abilities. In game terms, Attributes are the basis for all of your character's Skills and special abilities. Virtually every die roll that you make in the game will involve one of your character's Attributes.

Attributes are separated into two categories, Primary Attributes and Secondary Attributes.

Primary Attributes represent your character's inherent physical, mental, and social prowess. Primary Attributes are also used to calculate Secondary Attributes, which represent your character's size, movement speed, perception, and combat abilities.

Primary Attributes are rated from one to five, but exceptional characters can have higher ratings. Secondary Attributes are typically rated between one and ten. Player characters cannot have ratings of zero in any Attribute – except for Size, as that indicates a complete lack of ability in an area. However, non-player characters (NPCs) and animals can have ratings of zero in their Attribute.



| Primary Attribute Rating | Ability   | Secondary Attribute Rating |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| 0                        | Abysmal   | 0 – 1                      |
| 1                        | Poor      | 2 – 3                      |
| 2                        | Average   | 4 – 5                      |
| 3                        | Good      | 6 – 7                      |
| 4                        | Great     | 8 – 9                      |
| 5                        | Excellent | 10 – 11                    |
| 6 or more                | Amazing   | 12 or more                 |

## Attribute Rolls

An Attribute is rolled if there is no Skill applicable to a given situation, such as when a character is trying to recall a bit of information, keep his balance, or lift something with brute strength. In these cases, the dice pool is equal to double the appropriate Attribute rating. Examples of Attribute rolls are included with each Attribute description.

## Primary Attributes

### Body

Body represents your character's constitution and toughness. It determines how much damage your character can take and how resistant he is to injury. It also determines how long he can go without food and water. Characters with high Body ratings are rugged and tough, while characters with low Body ratings are frail and sickly.

**Note:** Your character's Size rating modifies his maximum Body Attribute. A Size 1 character has a maximum Body rating of 6; a Size -1 character has a maximum Body rating of 4.

#### Body Rolls

Body is rolled when your character attempts to fight off a disease, resist the effects of a drug or poison, and to determine how long your character can hold his breath.

#### Resistance

**Dice Pool:** Body rating  $\times$  2

**Type:** Reflexive Action

Make a Body roll when your character is poisoned or exposed to a contagious disease. The Difficulty of the roll depends on the potency of the toxin or disease. Failing the roll means that your character is poisoned, or has contracted the illness and will suffer its effects (see Diseases, p. 213f. and Poisons and Drugs, p. 217f.).

| Disease/Toxin       | Difficulty |
|---------------------|------------|
| Mild food poisoning | 1          |
| Common cold         | 2          |
| Malaria             | 3          |
| Snake venom         | 4          |
| Cyanide             | 5          |

## Dexterity

Dexterity represents your character's speed, coordination, and agility. It determines your character's ability to avoid damage, and how quickly he reacts to danger. It is also the basis for a character's ranged combat, stealth, and piloting skills. Characters with high Dexterity ratings are quick and graceful, while characters with low Dexterity ratings are slow and clumsy.

#### Dexterity Rolls

Dexterity is rolled when your character tries to catch something before it falls or snatch something before someone else does. It also determines how well your character keeps his balance under hazardous conditions.

#### Balance

**Dice Pool:** Dexterity  $\times$  2\*

**Type:** Reflexive Action

Make a Dexterity roll when your character is in danger of losing his balance. The number of successes you roll must equal or exceed the Difficulty of the task being attempted in order for your character to keep his footing. Failing to roll enough successes means that your character loses his balance and falls (see Falling, p. 216).

| Balance                      | Difficulty |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Walking on uneven ground     | 1          |
| Walking across a log         | 2          |
| Hopping from stone to stone  | 3          |
| Walking along a narrow ledge | 4          |
| Walking a tightrope          | 5          |

\*Characters with the Athletics or Acrobatics Skill can substitute either Skill rating for this roll.

## Strength

Strength represents your character's vigor and muscle power. It determines how much damage your character does in close combat, and how much weight she can carry. It is the basis for a character's close combat and athletic skills. Characters with high Strength ratings are strong and powerful, while characters with low Strength ratings are weak and lethargic.

**Note:** Your character's Size rating modifies his Strength Attribute. A Size 1 character has a maximum Strength rating of 6; a Size -1 character has a maximum Strength rating of 4.

#### Strength Rolls

Strength is rolled any time your character tries to lift or break an object through brute force. It also includes shoving another character, or taking an item away from someone.

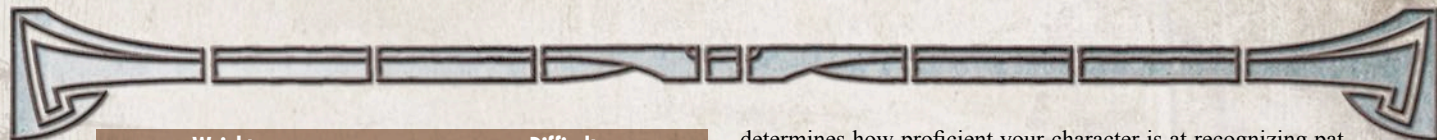
#### Feats of Strength

**Dice Pool:** Strength  $\times$  2\*

**Type:** Standard Action

Make a Strength roll when your character attempts to pick up an item. The Difficulty of the task depends upon the weight of the object. Failing to roll enough successes means that your character did not pick up the item, or only managed to partially lift it.





| Weight   | Difficulty |
|----------|------------|
| 50 lbs.  | 1          |
| 100 lbs. | 2          |
| 250 lbs. | 3          |
| 500 lbs. | 4          |
| 750 lbs. | 5          |

*\*Characters with the Athletics Skill can substitute that Skill rating for this roll.*

## Charisma

Charisma represents your character's confidence and personality. It also determines how persuasive and attractive your character is to others. It is the base for interpersonal and performance skills. Characters with high Charisma ratings are charming and magnetic, while characters with low Charisma ratings are rude and unattractive.

### Charisma Rolls

Charisma is rolled whenever your character tries to charm or ingratiate himself to someone else. It also represents your character's ability to befriend animals.

### Influence

**Dice Pool:** Charisma  $\times$  2\*

**Type:** Standard Action

Make a Charisma roll whenever your character tries to influence a non-player character (NPC). The Difficulty of the task is equal to the NPC's Willpower rating. Allies loyal to you are easier to sway, so you receive a +2 bonus to your Charisma roll. Conversely, sworn enemies are harder to influence, so you suffer a -2 penalty to your Charisma roll.

The Gamemaster determines the NPC's initial attitude toward your character and each success rolled in excess of their Willpower rating improves their attitude by one step. Failing to roll enough successes degrades the NPC's opinion of your character by one step for each success less than the required number.

| Attitude           |
|--------------------|
| Loyal (+2 bonus)   |
| Helpful            |
| Friendly           |
| Neutral            |
| Unfriendly         |
| Hostile            |
| Enemy (-2 penalty) |

*\*Characters with the Diplomacy Skill can substitute that Skill rating for this roll.*

## Intelligence

Intelligence represents your character's reason and intellect. It determines how well your character senses the world around him and how quickly he reacts to danger. It is the basis for all knowledge and craft skills. Characters with high Intelligence ratings are clever and observant, while characters with low Intelligence ratings are dim-witted and inattentive.

### Intelligence Rolls

Intelligence is rolled whenever your character tries to recall a piece of information or commit something to memory. It also

determines how proficient your character is at recognizing patterns and putting information together.

### Reason

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence  $\times$  2\*

**Type:** Reflexive Action

Make an Intelligence roll when your character tries to make sense of a piece of information or understand the reasons behind a series of events. The difficulty of the roll depends on the complexity of the information or situation. Failing this roll means that your character is unable to figure it out, or only figures out part of what is going on.

| Reason               | Difficulty |
|----------------------|------------|
| Clear directions     | 1          |
| Complex instructions | 2          |
| Bizarre situations   | 3          |
| Esoteric information | 4          |
| Arcane mysteries     | 5          |

*\*Characters with the Investigation Skill can substitute that Skill rating for this roll.*

## Willpower

Willpower represents your character's courage and resolve. It determines how hard it is for others to manipulate your character. It also represents your character's will to live, and determines how much damage he can take in combat. Characters with high Willpower ratings are courageous and determined, while characters with low Willpower ratings are craven and gullible.

### Willpower Rolls

Willpower is rolled when someone tries to manipulate your character or when her life is in danger. It also represents her resistance to pain and torture.

### Courage

**Dice Pool:** Willpower  $\times$  2

**Type:** Reflexive Action

Make a Willpower roll whenever your character is in a life-threatening situation. The difficulty of the roll depends on how threatening the situation is. Failing this roll means that your character is shaken and will try to remove herself from the situation as soon as possible.

| Threat                            | Difficulty |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Facing danger                     | 1          |
| Being hurt or wounded             | 2          |
| Being maimed or disfigured        | 3          |
| Facing certain death              | 4          |
| Facing a slow and agonizing death | 5          |

## Secondary Attributes

### Size

Size represents your character's height, weight, and bulk. Unlike other Secondary Attributes, Size is not calculated, it is set at zero for average human characters. Larger and smaller Sizes are generally for children, animals, and non-human characters.





Your character's Size rating modifies his Defense, Health, and maximum Body and Strength ratings. It is also subtracted from his Stealth and attack rolls. Larger characters are easier to hit, but they are stronger and take more damage to kill. Conversely, smaller characters are harder to hit, but are weaker and take less damage to kill.

For example, a Size 1 character, being both bigger and stronger than average, can have maximum Body and Strength ratings of 6. He also receives a +1 bonus to his Health rating. Unfortunately, his size makes him a larger target and makes it more difficult for him to hit smaller creatures. Therefore, he suffers a -1 penalty to his attack and Defense rolls. See p. 209 for more information on how Size affects combat.

## Move

Move represents how fast your character moves during combat and while walking or running.

Your character's Move rating is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Move} = \text{Strength} + \text{Dexterity}^*$$

*\*Characters with the Athletics Skill can substitute that Skill rating for their Move rating.*

Characters with high Move ratings are strong and fast, while characters with low Move ratings are slow and easily tired. A character's Move rating is used to calculate how fast he can walk, run, swim, climb, and jump. See the chart below to convert Move ratings to distance.

## Perception

Perception represents your character's ability to notice and interpret her surroundings. It also represents her ability to focus her attention and remain vigilant over long periods of time. The more successes you roll, the more observant your character will be. In some cases, your roll will be opposed by another character's Stealth roll. Failing to roll enough successes means that your character misses something or overlooks a vital piece of information.

Your character's Perception rating is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Perception} = \text{Intelligence} + \text{Willpower}$$

Characters with high Perception ratings are insightful and observant, while characters with low Perception ratings are oblivious and unaware.

## Initiative

Initiative represents how quickly your character reacts to danger. It also determines when he acts during a combat round. The more successes you roll for Initiative, the earlier your character acts during combat.

Your character's Initiative rating is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Initiative} = \text{Dexterity} + \text{Intelligence}$$

Characters with high Initiative ratings are quick and vigilant; characters with low Initiative ratings are slow and often surprised.

| Size | Attack/Defense | Health | Max. Body/Strength | Height/Length | Weight          | Example      |
|------|----------------|--------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 8    | -8             | +8     | 14                 | 50-100 ft.    | 50-100 tons     | Apatosaurus  |
| 4    | -4             | +4     | 10                 | 25-50 ft.     | 10-50 tons      | T. Rex       |
| 2    | -2             | +2     | 8                  | 15-25 ft.     | 1-10 tons       | Elephant     |
| 1    | -1             | +1     | 6                  | 7-15 ft.      | 500 lbs. -1 ton | Steppe Tiger |
| 0    | 0              | 0      | 5                  | 5-7 ft.       | 100-500 lbs.    | Human        |
| -1   | +1             | -1     | 4                  | 2-5 ft.       | 10-100 lbs.     | Dog          |
| -2   | +2             | -2     | 3                  | 1-2 ft.       | 1-10 lbs.       | Monkey       |
| -4   | +4             | -4     | 1                  | 6 in.-1 ft.   | ½-1 lb.         | Toad         |
| -8   | +8             | -8     | 0                  | 6 in. or less | ½ lb. or less   | Insect       |

| Move | Combat (turn) | Swimming (turn)<br>Climbing (turn)<br>Horizontal Jump* | Vertical Jump* | Walk (hour) | Run (hour) |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| 1    | 5 ft.         | 2.5 ft.                                                | 1 ft.          | ½ mile      | 1 mile     |
| 2    | 10 ft.        | 5 ft.                                                  | 2 ft.          | 1 mile      | 2 miles    |
| 3    | 15 ft.        | 5 ft.                                                  | 3 ft.          | 1.5 miles   | 3 miles    |
| 4    | 20 ft.        | 10 ft.                                                 | 4 ft.          | 2 miles     | 4 miles    |
| 5    | 25 ft.        | 10 ft.                                                 | 5 ft.          | 2.5 miles   | 5 miles    |
| 6    | 30 ft.        | 15 ft.                                                 | 6 ft.          | 3 miles     | 6 miles    |
| 7    | 35 ft.        | 15 ft.                                                 | 7 ft.          | 3.5 miles   | 7 miles    |
| 8    | 40 ft.        | 20 ft.                                                 | 8 ft.          | 4 miles     | 8 miles    |
| 9    | 45 ft.        | 20 ft.                                                 | 9 ft.          | 4.5 miles   | 9 miles    |
| 10   | 50 ft.        | 25 ft.                                                 | 10 ft.         | 5 miles     | 10 miles   |

*\*If your character does not have a running start, his jumping distance is halved.*



## Defense

Defense represents your character's toughness and ability to evade attacks. This includes avoiding an attack and protecting vulnerable areas. An attacker must roll more successes than your character's Defense rating to hurt her. If the attacker rolls fewer successes, the attack misses, but if he rolls more successes than your Defense rating, your character takes that much damage. See p. 208 and 211 for more detail on Defense and damage.

Your character's Defense ratings are calculated as follows:

**Defense** = Passive Defense + Active Defense – Size

**Passive Defense** = Body rating

**Active Defense** = Dexterity rating

Characters with a high Defense rating are tough and hard to wound, while characters with low Defense ratings are weak and easily hurt.

Sometimes your character will only get to use her Active Defense rating or her Passive Defense rating. This normally occurs when your character is unable to evade an attack or when her attacker is only trying to touch her. Some bonuses and penalties will only apply to your Active or Passive Defense ratings. Some modifications only account for the Active or the Passive Defense rating.

## Stun

Stun represents your character's ability to shrug off damage and keep fighting. If your character takes more damage than his Stun rating in a single blow, he is stunned and loses his next action. If your character takes more damage than twice his Stun rating in a single blow, he is knocked out for a number of minutes equal to the amount of excess damage he took.

Your character's Stun rating is calculated as follows:

**Stun** = Body rating

Characters with high Stun ratings are resilient and determined fighters, while characters with low Stun ratings are weak and easily dispatched.

## Health

Health represents your character's vitality and capacity to take damage. This covers both Lethal and Nonlethal damage. Your character can take up to her Health rating in damage without suffering any ill effects. When your character's current Health rating drops below zero, she falls unconscious. When it reaches –5 Health, she dies. See p. 211ff. for more information about healing and damage.

Your character's Health rating is calculated as follows:

**Health** = Body + Willpower + Size

Characters with high Health ratings are robust and resistant to wounds; characters with low Health ratings are weak and fragile.

## Negative Health

Small characters tend to be weak and fragile creatures. As such, they receive a penalty to their Health and maximum Body ratings. This can result in a small character starting with a negative Health rating, so technically he would be constantly unconscious. This will be ignored, however, at the start of play. It is not until the character takes his first wound that the new Health rating takes effect. This usually results in the character falling unconscious; however, a character with a starting Health of –4 or lower will die as soon as he takes his first wound.

## Skills

Skills represent your character's training and education over the course of his life. They cover a wide variety of topics and activities – everything from negotiating a business deal in a foreign language to performing acrobatic stunts on the in the rigging of a sky-galleon. The specific Skills you choose for your character will reflect his personality and background. Professors and mercenaries, for example, will have very different areas of expertise. Use your character's Archetype as a guide when selecting Skills.

## Base Attribute

Each Skill is based on an Attribute that represents your character's natural ability with a particular Skill. Even if your character has no training, he may still have some proficiency. To be a real expert however, he needs to invest time and energy into mastering a Skill.

## Skill Levels

Skill Levels represent the amount of effort your character has put into learning a Skill, either through formal education or hands-on experience. Your character's Skill rating is calculated by adding a number of Skill Levels to the appropriate Base Attribute rating.

| Skill Level | Skill Rating      |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 0           | Base Attribute –2 |
| 1           | Base Attribute +1 |
| 2           | Base Attribute +2 |
| 3           | Base Attribute +3 |
| 4           | Base Attribute +4 |
| 5           | Base Attribute +5 |

You cannot purchase more than five Skill Levels in any one Skill during character creation, but additional Skill Levels can be purchased with Experience Points during play. (If you are playing by the additional rules with *Variations on the Starting Feats*, the maximum Skill level can vary according to the statistics as listed on p. 140)

## Skill Ratings

Skill ratings represent your character's overall expertise with a particular topic or activity. More importantly, they determine the



number of dice you use when making a Skill roll. Typical Skill ratings are between zero and ten, though exceptional characters can have higher ratings.

| Skill Rating | Ability   |
|--------------|-----------|
| 0 – 1        | Abysmal   |
| 2 – 3        | Poor      |
| 4 – 5        | Average   |
| 6 – 7        | Good      |
| 8 – 9        | Great     |
| 10 – 11      | Excellent |
| 12 or more   | Amazing   |

## Skill Specializations

Skills cover a broad range of topics and activities, but you can choose to have your character specialize in a specific aspect of a Skill. A Skill Specialization represents a specific topic, activity, or item that your character is particularly familiar with. For example, your character might be better with pistols or rifles than with other firearms. Whenever your character's Specialization applies to the action being taken, you receive a bonus die to your Skill roll.

You must have at least one Skill Level in a Skill to specialize in it, and you cannot purchase more than one Specialization in a particular Skill during character creation. There are countless different Skill Specializations for each Skill; the ones most common to Space: 1889 are listed below. Feel free to come up with your own Specializations, but be sure to get your Gamemaster's approval first.

## Advanced Skill Specializations

You can use your experience points during play to purchase additional Specializations in a Skill. In fact, you can even choose to purchase the same Skill Specialization more than once, giving your character a greater expertise in a specified area. If your character has an advanced Skill Specialization, you will receive additional bonus dice (up to a maximum of five) each time that Specialization is called into play. For example, if your character already has a Skill Specialization in Rifles, purchasing Rifles again would give your character Rifles +2. Every time he uses a rifle in combat, he will get two bonus dice to his Firearms roll.

## Attribute Rolls

If there is no Skill applicable to a task being attempted, for example when a character is trying to remember a certain piece of information, when he has to maintain his balance, or when he wants to lift something by mere brute force, he makes an Attribute roll. In these cases, the amount of dice in your dice pool is twice your character's corresponding Attribute rating. You can find examples for this kind of rolls in the description of each Attribute.

## Untrained Skill Rolls

You can normally make a Skill roll even if your character has no Skill Levels in a particular Skill. Your character's untrained Skill rating is equal to the associated Base Attribute with a -2 penalty, plus or minus any conditional modifiers. If this lowers your dice pool to zero or less, you will automatically fail the roll unless you get some help, take more time, or spend Style points on the roll. Though most Skills can be rolled untrained, a Specialized Skill such as Academics, Art, Craft, Pilot, or Science, cannot be rolled without at least one Skill Level in that Skill.

## Zero Level Skills

Depending on the time and place where characters grow up, they will be exposed to different Skills as part of their daily life. When certain cultures depend on a Skill for survival, or it is considered commonplace, it does not always make sense that a character would have no expertise in that Skill unless they put points into it.

As an optional rule, the Gamemaster may provide a list of zero level Skills that everyone from the culture or era has some minimal familiarity with. When using these skills untrained, these characters are able to roll their base Attribute rating without the usual -2 penalty.

In the world of Space: 1889, some common Skills everyone would have some familiarity with include:

- Athletics
- Brawl
- Empathy
- Stealth

Characters that grew up in a rural environment or even in the wilderness might have Ride or Survival as a Skill. Gamemasters should allow players to swap out Skills based on their specific character background. The asthmatic son of two professors might replace Athletics with an Academics Skill while a wealthy debutante might replace Brawl with Diplomacy.

Improving a Skill from 0 to 1 at character creation costs a half point. Improving it during play costs 1 Experience point. After the first Skill level is acquired, Experience cost reverts to normal.

## Specialized Skills

Some Skills are so broad or complex that you are required to focus on a single discipline. Each discipline is treated as a separate Skill, and must be purchased individually at the normal cost for Skill Levels. (Specializations for these disciplines can be purchased at normal cost with the Gamemaster's approval.) Example: Clay is selecting Skills for his Academic character and wants to buy three general Skill Levels in Science. The Gamemaster explains that Clay cannot do this because Science is a Specialized Skill, so he must choose a specific discipline to purchase instead. After thinking it over, Clay decides to purchase three Skill Levels in the Geology discipline. If Clay wanted to purchase the Chemistry discipline as well, he would have to buy it as its own Skill.

Because of their broad scope, Specialized Skills cannot be rolled untrained unless you have at least one Skill Level in a related discipline. If your character has one or more Skill Levels in Mechanics, for example, he could make an untrained Electronics roll using his Mechanics rating with a -2 penalty.



## Skill Synergy

Whenever your character has one or more Skills applicable to a given situation, you receive bonus dice to your Skill roll. Always use the highest appropriate Skill rating for the roll, but gain +2 bonus dice for each applicable Skill with a rating of 4 or higher (maximum of +10 bonus dice). Skill ratings lower than 4 do not provide any bonus. For example, if your character is trying to communicate with a native, and your character has Linguistics 6 and Anthropology 4, you would roll 8 dice for your Skill roll (6 dice for your character's Linguistics rating with +2 bonus dice for his Anthropology rating).

## Teamwork

In some situations, characters can work together to complete a project. Each character must have an applicable Skill rating of 4 or higher. The character with the highest Skill rating makes the roll with +2 bonus dice for each person assisting him (maximum of +10 bonus dice). If three characters are trying to fix a damaged air ship, and your character has Mechanics 5 and the other two characters have Mechanics 4, you would roll 9 dice for your Skill roll (5 dice for your Mechanics rating with +4 dice for your two assistants).

| Skill           | Attribute    | Specializations and Disciplines                                                       |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Academics*      | Intelligence | History, Law, Literature, Philosophy, Religion                                        |
| Acrobatics      | Dexterity    | Balance, Breakfall, Contortion, Juggling, Tumbling                                    |
| Animal Handling | Charisma     | Birds, Cats, Dogs, Horses, Reptiles                                                   |
| Archery         | Dexterity    | Blowguns, Bows, Crossbows, Nets, Slings                                               |
| Art*            | Intelligence | Music, Painting, Photography, Sculpture, Writing                                      |
| Athletics       | Strength     | Climbing, Jumping, Running, Swimming, Throwing                                        |
| Brawl           | Strength     | Dirty Tricks, Grappling, Kicking, Punching, Throws                                    |
| Bureaucracy     | Intelligence | Academia, Business, Government, Legal, Military                                       |
| Con             | Charisma     | Bluff, Fast Talk, Lies, Tricks, Seduction                                             |
| Craft*          | Intelligence | Blacksmithing, Carpentry, Electronics, Mechanics, Pharmacy                            |
| Demolitions     | Intelligence | Defusing, Dynamite, Gunpowder, Improvised, Incendiary                                 |
| Diplomacy       | Charisma     | Etiquette, Leadership, Negotiation, Persuasion, Politics                              |
| Drive           | Dexterity    | Automobile, Bicycle, Carriage, Locomotive, Tracked vehicle                            |
| Empathy         | Intelligence | Body Language, Emotions, Intuition, Lies, Motives                                     |
| Firearms        | Dexterity    | Archaic, Pistols, Rifles, Shotguns                                                    |
| Gambling        | Intelligence | Cheating, Bridge, Craps, Poker, Roulette                                              |
| Gunnery         | Intelligence | Artillery, Bombs, Cannons, Machine Guns, Rockets                                      |
| Intimidation    | Charisma     | Interrogation, Orders, Stare-down, Threats, Torture                                   |
| Investigation   | Intelligence | Crimes, Enigmas, Interview, Research, Search                                          |
| Larceny         | Dexterity    | Lockpicking, Pickpocketing, Safecracking, Security, Sleight of Hand                   |
| Linguistics     | Intelligence | Codes, Deciphering, Gestures, Lip Reading, Translation                                |
| Medicine        | Intelligence | Diagnosis, Diseases, First Aid, Surgery, Veterinary                                   |
| Melee           | Strength     | Axes, Clubs, Knives, Spears, Swords                                                   |
| Performance     | Charisma     | Acting, Dancing, Musical Instrument, Oratory, Singing                                 |
| Pilot*          | Dexterity    | Air ships, Balloons, Drilling Machines, Ether Flyers, Ships, Submarines, Tripods etc. |
| Ride            | Dexterity    | Bulls, Camels, Elephants, Gashants, Horses, Mules, Pacyoraurus, Skrill                |
| Science*        | Intelligence | Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, Geology, Physics                                     |
| Stealth         | Dexterity    | Camouflage, Disguise, Hiding, Shadowing, Sneaking                                     |
| Streetwise      | Charisma     | Black Market, Carousing, Haggling, Rumors, Scrounging                                 |
| Survival        | Intelligence | Foraging, Hunting, Navigation, Shelter, Tracking                                      |

\* Specialized Skill

## Skill Descriptions

### Academics

#### Specialized Skill

#### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Academics represents general knowledge of the Humanities and Liberal Arts, acquired through formal education or intensive self-study. Your character has spent time studying a particular subject, such as history, philosophy, or religion, and can discuss this topic at length.

| Skill   | Rating Description               |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 0 – 1   | Uneducated in this field         |
| 2 – 3   | Knows a little about this field  |
| 4 – 5   | Well-versed in this field        |
| 6 – 7   | Advanced knowledge of this field |
| 8 – 9   | Recognized expert in this field  |
| 10 – 11 | World-famous in this field       |



**Your character must focus on a specific discipline:**

- History (Earth): The study of human history from pre-historic to modern times
- History (Mars): The study of Martian history from pre-historic to modern times
- Law: The study of law and the understanding of various legal practices
- Literature: The study of literature, and familiarity with writers and their works
- Philosophy: The study of logic, thought, and the meaning of life
- Religion: The study of theology, and familiarity with various religious beliefs

## Acrobatics

**Base Attribute: Dexterity**

Acrobatics represents experience and training in performing highly demanding physical feats such as contortion, juggling, and tumbling. This skill is often performed before an audience, but has more practical uses as well, such as balancing on a narrow ledge or breaking a fall. Characters with this Skill can substitute their Acrobatics rating for Dexterity rolls.

| Skill Rating | Description                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | No acrobatic ability                    |
| 2 – 3        | Amateur juggler or contortionist        |
| 4 – 5        | Skilled gymnast or escape artist        |
| 6 – 7        | Gifted and talented acrobat             |
| 8 – 9        | Able to escape from virtually any bonds |
| 10 – 11      | World-class circus performer            |

**Your character can specialize in the following activities:**

- Balance: The ability to keep balance in risky and dangerous situations
- Breakfall: The ability to break a fall and take less damage
- Contortion: Your character's ability to contort her body into unusual shapes
- Juggling: The ability to juggle multiple objects simultaneously
- Tumbling: The ability to roll, flip, and jump with grace and style

## Animal Handling

**Base Attribute: Charisma**

Animal Handling represents the ability to train and care for animals. This covers befriending or domesticating an animal, working with it, and teaching it basic commands. Not all animals are capable of learning tricks, and wild animals are unlikely to obey commands until your character has earned their trust.

| Skill Rating | Description                           |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Little to no rapport with animals     |
| 2 – 3        | Can befriend domesticated animals     |
| 4 – 5        | Can teach domesticated animals tricks |
| 6 – 7        | Can train animals for specific jobs   |
| 8 – 9        | Can teach wild animals tricks         |
| 10 – 11      | Can make wild animals obey commands   |

**Your character can specialize in the following animals:**

- Cats: The ability to work with cats, tigers, and other large felines



- Dogs: The ability to work with dogs, wolves, and other canines
- Horses: The ability to work with horses, mules, and donkeys
- Birds: The ability to work with carrier pigeons, falcons, and other birds
- Reptiles: The ability to work with lizards, snakes, and other reptiles

## Archery

**Base Attribute: Dexterity**

Archery represents proficiency with primitive ranged weapons, including bows, crossbows, and slings. It also covers the use of more exotic weapons such as blowguns, nets, and bolas. This skill is more common among primitive peoples and those who have spent time living among them.

| Skill Rating | Description                        |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | No experience with archery weapons |
| 2 – 3        | Has shot a bow once or twice       |
| 4 – 5        | Generally hits the target          |
| 6 – 7        | Skilled hunter                     |
| 8 – 9        | Expert marksman                    |
| 10 – 11      | Deadly at any distance             |

**Your character can specialize in the following weapons:**

- Blowguns: Proficiency with blowguns and other breath-powered weapon
- Bows: Proficiency with short bows, longbows, and various arrows types
- Crossbows: Proficiency with different crossbows and types of bolt
- Nets: Proficiency with nets and other ranged entanglement weapons
- Slings: Proficiency with slings and various projectile types



## Art

### Specialized Skill

#### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Art represents experience and training in a specific art form. It covers a wide range of artistic disciplines such as painting, sculpting, and writing. Characters with this skill are able to create, design, or critique art within their chosen field.

| Skill Rating | Description                      |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Little creativity or originality |
| 2 – 3        | Amateur or hobbyist              |
| 4 – 5        | Competent artist                 |
| 6 – 7        | Gifted and talented artist       |
| 8 – 9        | Well-respected expert            |
| 10 – 11      | World-renowned master            |

#### Your character must focus on a specific discipline:

- Music: The ability to write and compose songs and musical scores
- Painting: The ability to draw, illustrate, and paint images
- Photography: The ability to take photographs and develop pictures and film
- Sculpture: The ability to carve and sculpt both busts and statues
- Writing: The ability to write poetry, novels, and short stories

## Athletics

### Base Attribute: Strength

Athletics represents a talent for performing common physical activities such as running, jumping, and swimming. It also covers climbing and throwing – including throwing weapons in combat. Characters with this Skill can substitute their Athletics rating for both their Move rating and Strength rolls.

| Skill Rating | Description                 |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | No athletic ability         |
| 2 – 3        | Amateur athlete             |
| 4 – 5        | Capable athlete             |
| 6 – 7        | Gifted and talented athlete |
| 8 – 9        | Recognized sports star      |
| 10 – 11      | World-class athlete         |

#### Your character can specialize in the following abilities:

- Climbing: The ability to scale trees, walls, and other obstacles
- Jumping: The ability to leap horizontally or vertically into the air
- Running: The ability to run over short and long distances
- Swimming: The ability to swim across rivers, lakes, and other bodies of water
- Throwing: The ability to throw objects accurately and over a great distance

## Brawl

### Base Attribute: Strength

Brawl represents your character's ability to fight with his bare hands. It covers everything from disciplined martial arts maneuvers to clawing and biting. Characters with this skill are not only adept at hand-to-hand combat, they are able to easily knock-down, incapacitate, or throw their opponents.

| Skill Rating | Description                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Never been in a fight before              |
| 2 – 3        | Ineffective fighter                       |
| 4 – 5        | Competent brawler                         |
| 6 – 7        | Skilled at martial arts                   |
| 8 – 9        | Expert at hand-to-hand combat             |
| 10 – 11      | Your character's hands are deadly weapons |

#### Your character can specialize in the following attacks:

- Dirty Tricks: The ability to do whatever it takes to hurt an opponent
- Grappling: The ability to grapple and immobilize an opponent
- Kicking: The ability to use knees and feet to hurt an opponent
- Punching: The ability to use hands and elbows to hurt an opponent
- Throws: The ability to flip an opponent or knock him to the ground

## Bureaucracy

### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Bureaucracy represents knowledge and understanding of administration and organization. It also includes familiarity with different kinds of power structures such as business enterprises, academic institutions, and various levels of government. Characters with this skill know how to manipulate the system to get what they want.

| Skill Rating | Description                              |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Knows nothing about bureaucracy          |
| 2 – 3        | Knows a bit about how organizations work |
| 4 – 5        | Competent administrator                  |
| 6 – 7        | Successful businessperson                |
| 8 – 9        | Authority on government regulations      |
| 10 – 11      | World-renowned bureaucrat                |

#### Your character can specialize in the following organizations:

- Academia: Knowledge and understanding of university policies
- Business: The ability to manage and run a business enterprise
- Government: Knowledge and understanding of governmental regulations
- Legal: The ability to understand and navigate the legal system
- Military: Knowledge and understanding of military protocol

## Con

### Base Attribute: Charisma

Con represents a talent for lies and deception. It covers bluffing, fast-talking, seduction, and tricking others. Characters with this skill may get what they want, but they are mistrusted and may have to quickly move on before the marks realize they have been duped.

| Skill Rating | Description                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Cannot tell a lie                         |
| 2 – 3        | Can tell little white lies                |
| 4 – 5        | Fools some of the people some of the time |
| 6 – 7        | Professional con man or swindler          |
| 8 – 9        | Consummate pick-up artist                 |
| 10 – 11      | Can talk anyone into doing anything       |



Your character can specialize in the following deceptions:

- Bluff: Your character's ability to appear stronger or weaker than she really is
- Fast Talk: Your character's ability to get what she wants by fast-talking someone
- Lying: The ability to lie convincingly and with sincerity
- Tricks: Your character's ability to trick someone into doing what she wants
- Seduction: The ability to seduce someone with charm and wit

## Craft

**Specialized Skill**

**Base Attribute: Intelligence**

Craft represents experience and training in a specific profession or trade. It covers a wide range of technical and craftsman skills, such as carpentry, electronics, and mechanics. Characters with this skill are able to build, repair, or modify items in their chosen craft.

| Skill Rating | Description                     |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | No idea what tool to use        |
| 2 – 3        | Amateur or hobbyist             |
| 4 – 5        | Journeyman                      |
| 6 – 7        | Skilled craftsman               |
| 8 – 9        | Respected artisan               |
| 10 – 11      | World-renowned master craftsman |

Your character must focus on a specific discipline:

- Carpentry: The ability to build and repair wooden structures and furniture
- Electronics: The ability to build and repair electronic devices
- Mechanics: The ability to build and repair mechanical devices such as engines
- Pharmacy: The ability to prepare and create various tonics and medicines

## Demolitions

**Base Attribute: Intelligence**

Demolitions represents an ability to set and defuse bombs and explosives. This includes the handling of dynamite, gunpowder, and TNT. It also includes making homemade and improvised explosive devices. Characters with this skill are able to create tunnels and mines, as well as raze buildings and structures.

| Skill Rating | Description                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Should never be allowed near explosives |
| 2 – 3        | Can set off fireworks                   |
| 4 – 5        | Trained to handle high explosives       |
| 6 – 7        | Professional miner or sapper            |
| 8 – 9        | Well-known demolitions expert           |
| 10 – 11      | Can make a bomb out of almost anything  |

Your character can specialize in the following explosives:

- Defusing: The ability to disarm and dispose of explosive devices
- Dynamite: The ability to work with dynamite and nitroglycerin
- Gunpowder: The ability to work with black powder Explosives
- Improvised: The ability to work with homemade explosives
- Incendiary: The ability to work with napalm and Greek fire

## Diplomacy

**Base Attribute: Charisma**

Diplomacy represents experience and training in handling various social situations. This covers leadership, etiquette, and politics. It also covers negotiation and swaying others to a particular point of view. Your character is inspiring and has the ability to motivate others. Characters with this skill can substitute their Diplomacy rating for Charisma rolls.

| Skill   | Rating Description                      |
|---------|-----------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1   | Usually says the wrong thing            |
| 2 – 3   | Awkward in social situations            |
| 4 – 5   | Good social skills                      |
| 6 – 7   | Inspiring leader                        |
| 8 – 9   | Respected diplomat or ambassador        |
| 10 – 11 | Can defuse nearly any hostile situation |

Your character can specialize in the following fields:

- Etiquette: The ability to act appropriately in a variety of situations
- Leadership: The ability to motivate and inspire others
- Negotiation: The ability to bargain with someone and make a deal
- Persuasion: The ability to sway others to a particular point of view
- Politics: The ability to obtain and hold on to political power

## Drive

**Base Attribute: Dexterity**

Drive represents the ability to drive a variety of land vehicles. This covers not only automobiles, and carriages, bicycles, but also tracked vehicles. Characters with this skill are able to drive with speed and precision, perform dangerous stunts, and maneuver with ease.

| Skill Rating | Description                           |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Dangerous and unsafe driver           |
| 2 – 3        | Inexperienced driver                  |
| 4 – 5        | Professional carriage driver          |
| 6 – 7        | Racing driver                         |
| 8 – 9        | Daredevil or stunt driver             |
| 10 – 11      | Can make a vehicle do almost anything |

Your character can specialize in the following vehicles:

- Automobile: The ability to drive engine-powered vehicles
- Cycle: The ability to ride unmotorized vehicles (bicycles, unicycles, and penny-farthings)
- Tracked vehicle: The ability to drive all vehicles that are – at least partially – tracked rather than wheeled; especially experimental vehicles
- Carriage: The ability to drive a carriage (sulkies, droschies, Hansom cabs, etc.)
- Locomotive: The ability to drive all vehicles running on rails.

## Empathy

**Base Attribute: Intelligence**

Empathy represents the ability to read people and understand their feelings and motivations. This includes interpreting body language and detecting lies, as well as general intuition and gut



feelings about a situation. Characters with this skill have very good instincts and are hard to fool.

| Skill Rating | Description                                        |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | <b>Gullible and easily manipulated</b>             |
| 2 – 3        | <b>Can pick up on obvious emotions</b>             |
| 4 – 5        | <b>Sensitive to other people's emotions</b>        |
| 6 – 7        | <b>Very good at reading people</b>                 |
| 8 – 9        | <b>Highly intuitive and perceptive</b>             |
| 10 – 11      | <b>No one can keep secrets from your character</b> |

Your character can specialize in the following areas:

- Body Language: The ability to accurately read another's body language
- Emotions: The ability to correctly identify someone's emotional state
- Intuition: The ability to get the feel of an ambiguous situation
- Lies: The ability to detect when someone is lying
- Motives: The ability to figure out someone's true motivation

## Firearms

**Base Attribute: Dexterity**

Firearms represents proficiency with guns and firearms. This includes pistols, rifles, shotguns, and archaic black powder weapons. Characters with this skill are able to shoot and maintain all manner of firearms with skill and accuracy.

| Skill Rating | Description                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | <b>Never used a gun</b>                 |
| 2 – 3        | <b>Shot a gun once or twice</b>         |
| 4 – 5        | <b>Generally familiar with firearms</b> |
| 6 – 7        | <b>Skilled marksman</b>                 |
| 8 – 9        | <b>Expert sharpshooter</b>              |
| 10 – 11      | <b>Deadly at any range</b>              |

Your character can specialize in the following weapons:

- Archaic: Proficiency with black powder pistols and rifles
- Pistol: Proficiency with all calibers of pistols and revolvers
- Rifle: Proficiency with all calibers of rifles and carbines
- Shotgun: Proficiency with all gauges of shotguns

## Gambling

**Base Attribute: Intelligence**

Gambling represents expertise at games of skill and chance. It covers classic games such as poker, bridge, craps, and roulette. It also includes chess and more exotic games. Characters with this skill have better than average luck and usually walk away from the gaming table with more money than they started with.

| Skill Rating | Description                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | <b>Easy mark</b>                              |
| 2 – 3        | <b>Loses more than he wins</b>                |
| 4 – 5        | <b>Familiar with most games</b>               |
| 6 – 7        | <b>Wins more often than he loses</b>          |
| 8 – 9        | <b>Makes living as a professional gambler</b> |
| 10 – 11      | <b>World-renowned gambler</b>                 |

Your character can specialize in the following games:

- Cheating: The ability to cheat at a variety of games of chance
- Bridge: Skill at playing bridge, and knowledge of its variant rules
- Craps: Skill at playing craps, and knowledge of its variant rules
- Poker: Skill at playing poker, and knowledge of its variant rules
- Roulette: Skill at playing roulette, and knowledge of its variant rules

## Gunnery

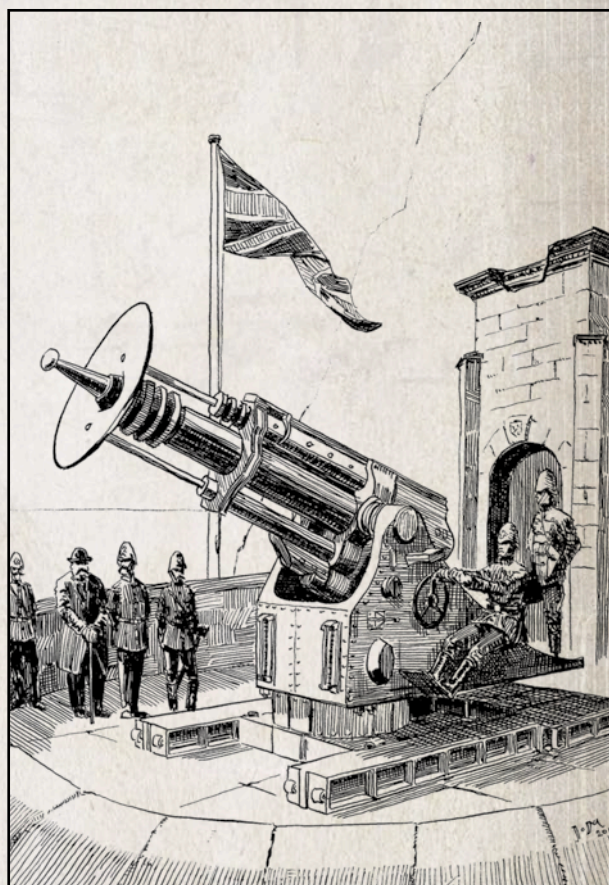
**Base Attribute: Intelligence**

Gunnery represents skill and accuracy with emplaced and vehicle-mounted weapons. It covers artillery, bombs, cannons, and more exotic weapons such as rockets and torpedoes. Characters with this skill are able to destroy enemies with various types of heavy weapons.

| Skill   | Rating Description                       |
|---------|------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1   | <b>Danger to himself and others</b>      |
| 2 – 3   | <b>Inexperienced with large guns</b>     |
| 4 – 5   | <b>Qualified to use heavy weapons</b>    |
| 6 – 7   | <b>Skilled bombardier or tank gunner</b> |
| 8 – 9   | <b>Expert Gunnery marksman</b>           |
| 10 – 11 | <b>Rarely, if ever, misses a target</b>  |

Your character can specialize in the following weapons:

- Artillery: Skill with mortars, field guns, and other indirect fire weapons
- Bombs: Skill with bombs, depth charges, and other unguided weapons
- Cannons: Skill with cannons, tank guns, and other direct fire weapons





- Machineguns: Skill with automatic and non-automatic machineguns, Mitrailleuruses
- Rockets: Rockets, torpedoes, and other guided weapons

## Intimidation

### Base Attribute: Charisma

Intimidation represents the ability to browbeat and frighten people. It includes making threats, barking orders, and interrogation. If the situation calls for it, your character can even torture someone to get what he wants. Characters with this skill are imposing, and generally given a wide berth.

| Skill Rating | Description                     |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Does not scare anyone           |
| 2 – 3        | Not very scary or assertive     |
| 4 – 5        | Knows how to threaten someone   |
| 6 – 7        | Intimidating drill sergeant     |
| 8 – 9        | Expert interrogator or torturer |
| 10 – 11      | Has a palpable aura of menace   |

### Your character can specialize in the following activities:

- Interrogation: The ability to get information out of someone verbally
- Orders: The ability to get someone to obey direct orders
- Stare-down: The ability to get someone to back down by staring at them
- Threats: Your character's ability to scare someone into giving him what he wants
- Torture: Your character's ability to physically or psychologically torture someone to get what he wants

## Investigation

### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Investigation represents the ability to search for clues and uncover evidence. It also includes researching information and piecing together the clues that your character discovers. Your character is able to interview someone to get their story or get his questions answered. Characters with this skill are able to unravel virtually any mystery. Characters with this skill can substitute their Investigation rating for Intelligence rolls.

| Skill Rating | Description                                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Often jumps to the wrong conclusion         |
| 2 – 3        | Amateur detective or mystery buff           |
| 4 – 5        | Policeman or trained investigator           |
| 6 – 7        | Private detective or investigative reporter |
| 8 – 9        | Government agent or forensic investigator   |
| 10 – 11      | World-famous crime solver                   |

### Your character can specialize in the following activities:

- Crimes: The ability to investigate crime scenes and look for clues
- Enigmas: The ability to unravel mysteries and solve enigmas and riddles
- Interview: The ability to interview someone and get answers to questions
- Research: The ability to do legwork and research to find answers
- Search: The ability to search an area for clues and hiding places

## Larceny

### Base Attribute: Dexterity

Larceny represents an aptitude for stealing and robbing. It covers everything from petty theft such as picking someone's pocket, to disabling an alarm system and cracking a safe. Characters with this skill are able to steal anything that catches their eye, no matter how tricky the security.

| Skill Rating | Description                              |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Often caught red-handed                  |
| 2 – 3        | Can perform crude magic tricks           |
| 4 – 5        | Skilled thief or burglar                 |
| 6 – 7        | Talented magician or pickpocket          |
| 8 – 9        | Veteran safecracker or security expert   |
| 10 – 11      | Can steal virtually anything at any time |

### Your character can specialize in the following activities:

- Lockpicking: The ability to pick a lock using any available tools
- Pickpocketing: The ability to pick someone's pocket without anyone noticing
- Safecracking: The ability to crack a safe using a variety of methods
- Security: The ability to set up or bypass security systems and alarms
- Sleight of Hand: The ability to palm small items and perform magic tricks

## Linguistics

### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Linguistics represents knowledge and understanding of language structure. It covers encrypting written messages, translating spoken languages, reading lips, and understanding gestures. It also represents the number of additional languages your character speaks. Characters with this skill are proficient translators and usually fluent in many different languages.

| Skill Rating | Description                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Fluency in no additional languages      |
| 2 – 3        | Fluency in one additional language      |
| 4 – 5        | Fluency in two additional languages     |
| 6 – 7        | Fluency in four additional languages    |
| 8 – 9        | Fluency in eight additional languages   |
| 10 – 11      | Fluency in sixteen additional languages |

### Your character can specialize in the following areas:

- Codes: The ability to encrypt languages and break secret codes
- Deciphering: The ability to decipher texts, carvings, or tablets
- Gestures: The ability to communicate through the use of expressive gestures
- Lip Reading: The ability to understand someone by reading their lips
- Translation: The ability to translate spoken words from one language to another

## Medicine

### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Medicine represents medical training and experience. It covers the diagnosis and treatment of diseases for both humans and an-



imals. It also includes bandaging wounds and performing surgery. Characters with this skill are able to treat illnesses, tend to wounds, and save people's lives.

| Skill Rating | Description                    |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Does more harm than good       |
| 2 – 3        | Knows one or two folk remedies |
| 4 – 5        | Nurse or medic                 |
| 6 – 7        | General practitioner           |
| 8 – 9        | Respected surgeon              |
| 10 – 11      | World-famous doctor            |

Your character can specialize in the following fields:

- **Diagnosis:** The ability to diagnose an illness by observing the patient's symptoms
- **Diseases:** The ability to prevent and treat a disease with the proper medication
- **First Aid:** The ability to bandage wounds, stop bleeding, and revive a patient
- **Surgery:** The ability to perform necessary surgery to correct a medical condition
- **Veterinary:** The ability to examine and treat animal maladies

## Melee

**Base Attribute:** Strength

Melee represents proficiency with a variety of handheld weapons. It includes common weapons such as clubs and knives, as well as more archaic weapons such as bayonets, axes, swords, and spears. Characters with this skill are deadly with virtually any hand-held weapon.

| Skill Rating | Description                            |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Has to be careful not to cut herself   |
| 2 – 3        | Has swung an axe once or twice         |
| 4 – 5        | Has taken some fencing classes         |
| 6 – 7        | Dangerous knife-fighter                |
| 8 – 9        | Expert swordsman                       |
| 10 – 11      | Can turn anything into a deadly weapon |

Your character can specialize in the following weapons:

- **Axes:** Proficiency with axes, polearms, and other chopping weapons
- **Clubs:** Proficiency with maces, clubs, and other blunt weapons
- **Knives:** Proficiency with knives and other small bladed weapons
- **Spears:** Proficiency with spears, lances, and other extended weapons
- **Swords:** Proficiency with swords, rapiers, and other bladed weapons

## Performance

**Base Attribute:** Charisma

Performance represents the talent for entertaining people through performance arts such as acting, dancing, or singing. It also covers playing musical instruments and delivering a rousing speech. Characters with this skill are fun and interesting, entertaining, and can often move their audience to laughter or tears.

| Skill Rating | Description                      |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Appalling performer              |
| 2 – 3        | Novice or amateur performer      |
| 4 – 5        | Competent and reliable performer |
| 6 – 7        | Gifted and talented performer    |
| 8 – 9        | Popular and acclaimed performer  |
| 10 – 11      | World-renowned performer         |

Your character can specialize in the following performance arts:

- **Acting:** The ability to play the part of a character or impersonate a specific person
- **Dancing:** The ability to jump and dance with style and grace
- **Musical Instrument:** The ability to play a particular musical instrument with precision and flair
- **Oratory:** The ability to deliver a persuasive and motivational speech
- **Singing:** The ability to sing with power and subtlety, with or without music

## Pilot

**Specialized Skill**

**Base Attribute:** Dexterity

Pilot represents your character's ability to pilot complex and unusual vehicles. It covers the operation of aircraft, ships, sailboats, and more exotic vehicles such as drilling machines and submarines. Characters with this skill are able to pilot a specific vehicle with skill and expertise.

| Skill Rating | Description                           |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Accident waiting to happen            |
| 2 – 3        | Inexperienced pilot                   |
| 4 – 5        | Qualified pilot or helmsman           |
| 6 – 7        | Commercial pilot or ship's captain    |
| 8 – 9        | Daredevil or stunt pilot              |
| 10 – 11      | Can make a vehicle do almost anything |

Your character must focus on a specific discipline:

- **Aeroplanes:** The ability to pilot air planes and ornithopters
- **Aircraft:** The ability to pilot motor-powered air craft
- **Air ships:** The ability to pilot zeppelins and comparable vessels
- **Balloons:** The ability to pilot balloons of all shapes and sizes
- **Cloud ships:** The ability to pilot wind-powered air craft
- **Drilling Machines:** The ability to pilot tunneling or drilling machines
- **Ether Flyers**
- **Motor ships:** The ability to pilot motor-powered ships of all shapes and sizes
- **Sailing Ships:** The ability to pilot wind-powered ships of all shapes and sizes
- **Submarines:** The ability to pilot a submarine or submersible vessel
- **Tripods:** three-legged tanks

## Ride

**Base Attribute:** Dexterity

Riding represents your character's aptitude for riding expertly and control a mount in combat. Possible mounts include horses, mules, and camels, but also species from other planets such as pacyosaurus and gashants.



| Skill Rating | Description                         |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Likely to get thrown from the mount |
| 2 – 3        | Little experience riding animals    |
| 4 – 5        | Has taken riding lessons            |
| 6 – 7        | Skilled horseman                    |
| 8 – 9        | Famous jockey or horse racer        |
| 10 – 11      | World-renowned horseman             |

Your character can specialize in the following mounts:

- Bulls
- Camels
- Elephants
- Gashants
- Horses
- Mules
- Pacyosaurus
- Ruumet Breehr
- Skril



## Science

### Specialized Skill

#### Base Attribute: Intelligence

Science represents your character's education and training in the physical or life sciences. It covers biology, chemistry, geology, engineering, and physics. It also covers mathematics and experimental methods for these disciplines. Characters with this skill are trained in a specific science and can experiment in their chosen field.

| Skill Rating | Description                      |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Uneducated in this field         |
| 2 – 3        | Knows a little about this field  |
| 4 – 5        | Well-versed in this field        |
| 6 – 7        | Advanced knowledge of this field |
| 8 – 9        | Recognized expert in this field  |
| 10 – 11      | World-famous in this field       |

Your character must focus on a specific discipline:

- Biology: Knowledge of botany, zoology, and experimental methodology
- Chemistry: Knowledge of chemical compounds and experimental methodology
- Engineering: Knowledge of engineering principles and design methodology
- Geology: Knowledge of minerals and natural resources, and their composition
- Physics: Knowledge of forces, motion, and experimental methodology, including the investigation of the Ether.

## Stealth

### Base Attribute: Dexterity

Stealth represents the ability to avoid detection in a variety of circumstances. It covers shadowing someone, hiding, and sneaking about. It also includes your character's affinity for disguising herself and others. Characters with this skill leave no trace of where they have been and are hard to detect.

**Note:** Your character's Size rating modifies your Stealth rolls. It is harder for larger characters to go unnoticed, while smaller characters are more difficult to spot.

| Skill Rating | Description                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Clumsy and obvious                           |
| 2 – 3        | Played hide and seek as a child              |
| 4 – 5        | Knows how to cover her tracks                |
| 6 – 7        | Hunter or private detective                  |
| 8 – 9        | Elite spy or saboteur                        |
| 10 – 11      | Can walk on rice paper and not leave a trace |

Your character can specialize in the following activities:

- Camouflage: The ability to hide objects or people by blending them into the surroundings
- Disguise: Your character's ability to disguise herself
- Hiding: The ability to hide by blending into the surroundings
- Shadowing: The ability to follow someone without being spotted
- Sneaking: The ability to move without being seen or heard

## Streetwise

### Base Attribute: Charisma

Streetwise represents the ability to get information and items from the criminal underworld. It includes buying and selling items on the black market, haggling over prices, and scrounging for used items. It also covers carousing, gathering information, and rumor-mongering. Characters with this skill are well informed and able to get their hands on virtually any item.



| Skill Rating | Description                                |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | Sticks out like a sore thumb               |
| 2 – 3        | Spent a little time on the streets         |
| 4 – 5        | Knows how to handle himself on the streets |
| 6 – 7        | Criminal, mobster, or gang member          |
| 8 – 9        | Gang leader or mob boss                    |
| 10 – 11      | The head of an international crime ring    |

Your character can specialize in the following areas:

- **Black Market:** A talent for buying and selling items on the black market
- **Carousing:** A talent for getting into nightclubs and having a good time
- **Haggling:** A talent for getting items and services for lower prices
- **Rumors:** A talent for gathering information and spreading rumors
- **Scrounging:** A talent for tracking down used or discarded items

## Survival

**Base Attribute:** Intelligence

Survival represents your character's ability to find food and shelter in the wild. It also covers navigation, and hunting and tracking game. Characters with this skill are at home in the wilderness and can not only take care of themselves, they can also feed and guide others.

| Skill Rating | Description                        |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| 0 – 1        | A babe in the woods                |
| 2 – 3        | Has gone hiking once or twice      |
| 4 – 5        | Goes camping regularly             |
| 6 – 7        | Skilled hunter or outdoorsman      |
| 8 – 9        | Expert tracker or scout            |
| 10 – 11      | Can live off the land indefinitely |

Your character can specialize in the following activities:

- **Foraging:** The ability to gather edible plants and find sources of fresh water
- **Hunting:** The ability to find, trap, and kill animals for food or clothing
- **Navigation:** The ability to determine general location and direction of travel
- **Shelter:** The ability to build or locate suitable shelter from the elements
- **Tracking:** The ability to follow the tracks of people and animals

## Talents

Talents reflect your character's aptitudes and special abilities. They cover a wide range of activities and give your character a new ability or improve one he already has. Talents also let you 'break the rules' by ignoring certain penalties, or by doing something normally not allowed. There are two types of Talents – standard and unique. Unique Talents can only be taken once, while standard Talents can be taken multiple times. A Talent is available to any character that meets the prerequisites, if any. While most Talents can be purchased at any time, some are only available during character creation.

## Advanced Talents

Standard Talents can be purchased more than once – representing an even greater expertise or ability – to provide your character with an increased benefit. Advanced Talents can be purchased a specified number of times, limiting their maximum benefit. See the individual Talent descriptions for more information.

## Talent Descriptions

To purchase a Talent, all of the prerequisites listed below must be met. For Attributes this concerns the Attribute level, and for Skills the Skill level.

### Accuracy

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character can attack with pinpoint accuracy, picking her target out of a crowd, hitting him behind cover, and aiming for his vulnerable spots.

**Benefit:** Normally, when making a called shot to hit a specific target, your character suffers a penalty between –1 and –8 depending on the size of the target area, how much armor an opponent is wearing, or the amount of cover he has. With the Accuracy Talent, your character makes called shots at a reduced penalty. She can ignore up to a –2 penalty for targeting a specific location. This Talent also reduces penalties for attacking opponents smaller than your character.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to four times. Your character can ignore an additional –2 called shot penalty per level.

### Agile

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally graceful, limber, and coordinated. Her speed and agility far exceed that of the average person.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Dexterity rating. This bonus affects her Dexterity rolls and all Dexterity-based Skills. It also factors into her Secondary Attributes and raises her maximum Dexterity rating by one point.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

### Alertness

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is remarkably attentive to his surroundings. He is vigilant and rarely lets his guard down.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +2 Perception rating.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent twice, gaining your character an additional +2 Perception rating for a total of +4.

### Animal Affinity

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character has a way with animals and intuitively knows how to handle them. As a result, animals like her and tend to react more positively when she is around.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Charisma rating when dealing with animals. This bonus affects her Charisma rolls and all Charisma-based Skills when interacting with animals.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times, gaining your character an additional +1 Charisma rating per level.

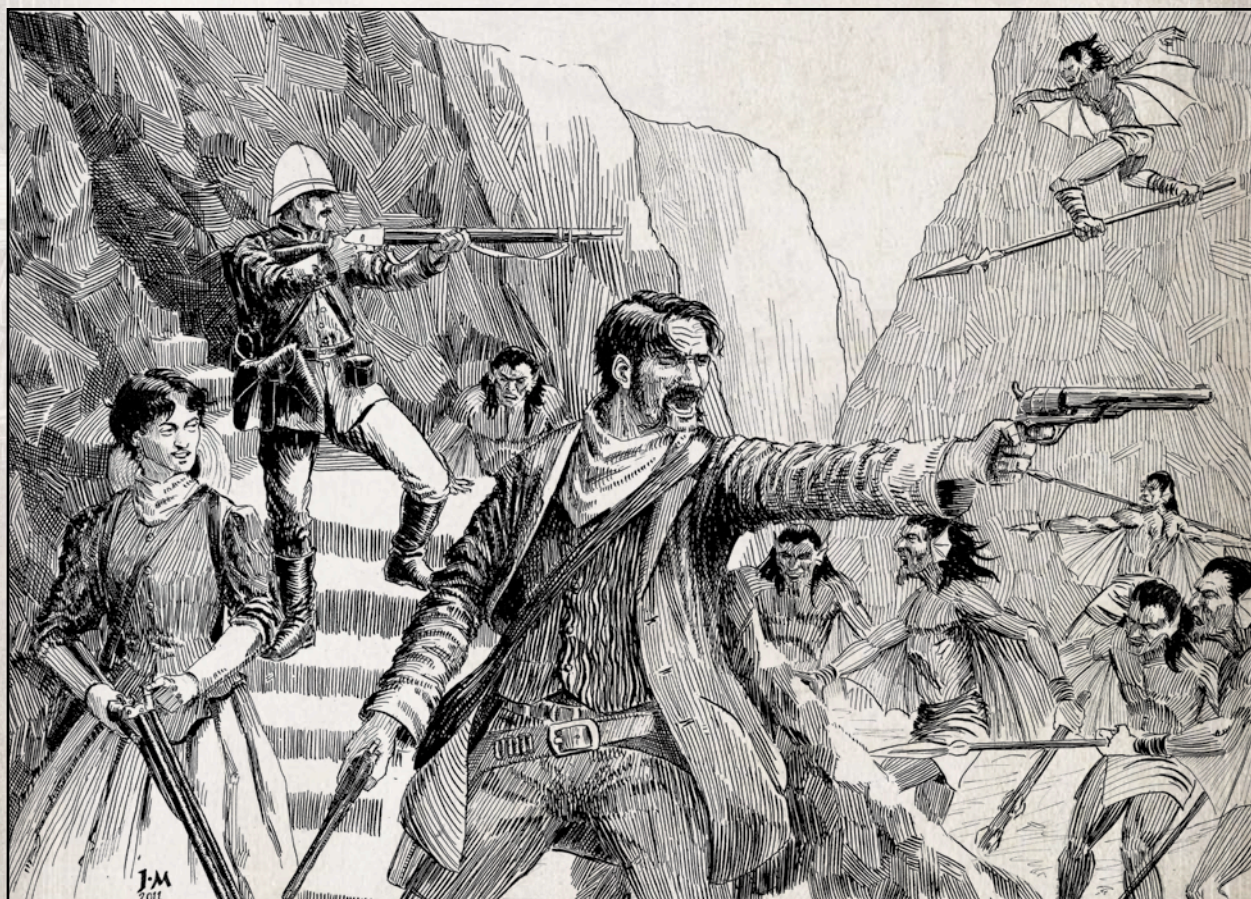


| Talent              | Prerequisite   | max. level  | Benefit                                             |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Accuracy            | —              | 4           | Reduced called shot penalties                       |
| Agile               | —              | Unique      | +1 Dexterity rating                                 |
| Alertness           | —              | 2           | +2 Perception rating                                |
| Animal Affinity     | —              | 3           | +1 Charisma bonus dealing with animals              |
| Attractive          | —              | 3           | +1 Charisma bonus dealing with people               |
| Autofire            | Firearms 4     |             | Improved autofire attack                            |
| Blind Fight         | —              | 4           | Reduced penalty for poor visibility                 |
| Block               | Brawl 4        | 3           | Perform block as a reflexive action                 |
| Blunt Strike        | Melee 4        | 2           | Do nonlethal damage with lethal weapons             |
| Bold Attack         | Charisma 3     | 1 each      | Use Charisma with a specific combat Skill           |
| Bold Defense        | Charisma 3     | Unique      | Use Charisma for Defense rating                     |
| Calculated Attack   | Intelligence 3 | 1 each      | Use Intelligence with a specific combat Skill       |
| Calculated Defense  | Intelligence 3 | once        | Use Intelligence for Defense rating                 |
| Captivate           | Performance 4  | 3           | Temporarily entrance targets                        |
| Charismatic         | —              | Unique      | +1 Charisma rating                                  |
| Climb               | —              | Unique      | Improved climbing speed                             |
| Combat Aptitude     | Intelligence 3 | Unique      | Exchange attack and Defense dice                    |
| Combat Skill        | Skill 4        | 2 each      | +2 Defense with specific non-combat Skill           |
| Danger Sense        | —              | Unique      | Reduced surprise penalty                            |
| Diehard             | —              | 3           | Improved death threshold                            |
| Direction Sense     | —              | Unique      | Always know the direction                           |
| Dodge               | Athletics 4    | 3           | Perform dodge as reflexive action                   |
| Dual Wield          | Dexterity 3    | 3           | Reduced penalty for two-weapon attacks              |
| Fearsome            | Intimidate 4   | 3           | Temporarily frighten opponents                      |
| Finesse Attack      | Dexterity 3    | 1 each      | Use Dexterity with a specific combat Skill          |
| Flurry              | Dexterity 3    | 2           | Reduced penalty for multiple strikes                |
| Focused Attack      | Willpower 3    | 1 per Skill | Use Willpower with a specific combat Skill          |
| Focused Defense     | Willpower 3    | Unique      | Use Willpower for Defense rating                    |
| Giant*              | —              | Unique      | +1 Size rating                                      |
| Gravity Adaptation  | —              | Unique      | No penalty for a specific gravity environment       |
| Gravity Experience  | —              | 4           | Reduced penalty for unfamiliar gravity environments |
| Guardian            | Intelligence 3 | 2           | Provide Defense bonus to allies                     |
| Headstrong          | Willpower 3    | Unique      | Use Willpower for Stun rating                       |
| High Pain Tolerance | —              |             | Reduced penalty for wounds                          |
| Inspire             | Diplomacy 4    | 2           | Provide Skill bonus to allies                       |
| Instant Reload      | —              | Unique      | Reload weapon as reflexive action                   |
| Intelligent         | —              | Unique      | +1 Intelligence rating                              |
| Iron Jaw            | —              | 4           | +1 Stun rating                                      |
| Iron Will           | —              | Unique      | +1 Willpower rating                                 |
| Jack of All Trades  | Intelligence 3 | 3           | Reduced penalty for untrained Skill rolls           |
| Jump                | —              | Unique      | Improved jumping distance                           |
| Keen Sense          | —              | 1 per sense | +4 Perception rating with a specific sense          |
| Kip Up              | —              | Unique      | Stand up as reflexive action                        |
| Knockout Blow       | Brawl 4        | 4           | Improved knockout ability                           |
| Lethal Blow         | Brawl 4        | 3           | Do lethal damage with Brawl attacks                 |
| Lifesaver           | Medicine 4     | Unique      | Improved healing ability                            |
| Long Shot           | —              | Unique      | Double weapon ranges                                |
| Lucky               | —              | 5           | +2 bonus to any one roll per game session           |
| Mobile Attack       | Dexterity 3    | 2           | Move and attack simultaneously                      |
| Natural Leader      | Charisma 3     | Unique      | Recruit temporary allies                            |
| Parry               | Melee 4        | 3           | Perform parry as reflexive action                   |



| Talent           | Prerequisite   | max. level  | Benefit                                      |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Provoke          | Con 4          | 3           | Temporarily provoke opponents                |
| Quick Draw       | —              | Unique      | Draw weapon as reflexive action              |
| Quick Healer     | Body 3         | Unique      | Double the normal healing rate               |
| Quick Reflexes   | —              | 2           | +2 Initiative rating                         |
| Rapid Shot       | Dexterity 3    | 2           | Reduced penalty for multiple shots           |
| Robust           | —              | 2           | +2 Health rating                             |
| Run              | —              | Unique      | Improved running speed                       |
| Skill Aptitude   | —              | 1 per Skill | +2 Skill rating to a specific Skill          |
| Skill Mastery    | Intelligence 3 | 1 per Skill | General expertise with one Specialized Skill |
| Staggering Blow  | Brawl 4        | 4           | Improved knockback ability                   |
| Strafe           | Firearms 4     | 4           | Improved strafing ability                    |
| Strong Attack    | Strength 3     | 1 per Skill | Use Strength with a specific combat Skill    |
| Strong Defense   | Strength 3     | Unique      | Use Strength for Defense rating              |
| Strong           | —              | Unique      | +1 Strength rating                           |
| Swift            | —              | 2           | +2 Move rating                               |
| Swim             | —              | Unique      | Improved swimming speed                      |
| Time Sense       | —              | Unique      | Always know time                             |
| Tinker           | Craft 4        | 3           | Reduced penalty for using improvised tools   |
| Total Defense    | Dexterity 3    | 3           | Improved Defense ability                     |
| Total Recall     | —              | Unique      | Never forget anything                        |
| Tough Attack     | Body 3         | 1 per Skill | Use Body with a specific combat Skill        |
| Tough            | —              | Unique      | +1 Body rating                               |
| Vigorous Defense | Dexterity 3    | 4           | Reduced penalty for multiple attackers       |

\* This Talent is only available during character creation



Characters



## Attractive

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is sexier and more attractive than the average person. People tend to like him, and are more easily influenced when he is around.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Charisma rating when dealing with people – human or alien – who find his physique at least to some extent appealing. This bonus affects his Charisma rolls and all Charisma-based Skills.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times, gaining your character an additional +1 Charisma rating per level.

## Autofire

### Prerequisites: Firearms 4

Your character is highly proficient at shooting fully automatic weapons, and she knows how to use them to their full, deadly potential.

**Benefit:** Your character receives a +1 bonus on all autofire attacks. This bonus stacks with the normal autofire bonuses (See Autofire p. 205).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent twice, gaining your character an additional +1 autofire bonus, for a total bonus of +2. This bonus again stacks with the normal autofire bonuses.

## Blind Fight

### Prerequisites: None

Your character can target opponents without having to see them. He might hear them breathing, catch their scent, or feel their presence, but he always seems to know where they are.

**Benefit:** Normally, a character would suffer up to a –8 penalty when making an attack in the dark (see p. 208). A character with the Blind Fight Talent can ignore up to a –2 penalty due to poor visibility, for example, fighting in partial darkness or with blurred vision.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to four times. Your character can ignore an additional –2 visibility penalty per level.

## Block

### Prerequisites: Brawl 4

Your character is adept at defending herself in hand-to-hand combat. She instinctively blocks blows and deflects strikes without having to go on the defensive.

**Benefit:** Your character performs the Block maneuver as a reflexive action (See Block, p. 205). Any Defense bonuses provide a bonus to the Block maneuver as well. If your character loses her Active Defense, she loses her Block ability as well.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times, each time gaining your character an additional +1 Defense bonus against Brawl attacks.

## Blunt Strike

### Prerequisites: Melee 4

Your character knows how to use weapons to incapacitate opponents without killing them, pummeling them into submission with the flat of a blade or the haft of an axe.

**Benefit:** Normally, you would suffer a –2 penalty to your attack roll whenever your character tries to do nonlethal – instead of lethal – damage with a melee weapon. If your character possesses the Blunt Strike Talent he can do nonlethal damage with lethal weapons at no penalty. If wielding a nonlethal weapon, such as a club or staff, your character gains a +2 Melee bonus to his attack instead.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent twice, gaining your character an additional +2 Melee bonus when aiming for a Blunt Strike.

## Bold Attack

### Prerequisites: Charisma 3

Your character is daring and courageous, and knows how to use her grace as a weapon. She unnerves opponents with her unshakable confidence.

**Benefit:** Your character uses her Charisma rating as the Base Attribute for a specific combat Skill, such as Archery, Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Melee (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Bold Defense

### Prerequisites: Charisma 3

Your character is fearless and confident, using the strength of his presence to defend himself. He scares his opponents into making feeble attacks.

**Benefit:** Your character uses his Charisma instead of Dexterity when calculating his Active Defense and Defense ratings.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

**Special:** You cannot buy this Talent if your character already has the Calculated Defense Talent.

## Calculated Attack

### Prerequisites: Intelligence 3

Your character is wily and clever, able to use her intellect as a weapon. She knows how to take advantage of an opponent's mistakes and exploit weaknesses in defenses.

**Benefit:** Your character uses her Intelligence rating as the Base Attribute for a specific combat Skill, such as Archery, Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Melee (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Calculated Defense

### Prerequisites: Intelligence 3

Your character is shrewd and smart, anticipating his opponent's attacks and expertly defending against them.

**Benefit:** Your character uses his Intelligence instead of Dexterity when calculating his Active Defense and Defense ratings.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

**Special:** You cannot buy this Talent if your character already has the Bold Defense Talent.



## Captivate

### Prerequisites: Performance 4

Your character is a magnetic and attractive performer. She is able to capture attention with her performance abilities and the sheer force of her personality.

**Benefit:** As an attack action, your character can attempt to enthrance her opponents during combat. Make a Performance roll against all opponents within 10 feet of your character. If you roll more successes than an opponent's Willpower rating, he is beguiled by your character and unable to attack for a number of turns equal to the number of extra successes you rolled. An entranced opponent can defend himself normally, but the spell is broken if he is attacked during this time.

If you roll more than twice an opponent's Willpower rating, he is completely enthralled and loses his Active Defense rating for a number of turns equal to the total number of extra successes you rolled.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times, gaining your character a +2 Performance bonus for each additional level purchased.

## Charismatic

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is exceptionally charming and persuasive. His ability to influence people far exceeds that of the average person.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Charisma rating. This bonus affects his Charisma rolls and all Charisma-based Skills. It also factors into his Secondary Attributes and raises his maximum Charisma rating by one point.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Climb

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is naturally skilled at climbing trees and scaling walls. She can climb with surprising speed and agility.

**Benefit:** Your character's climbing speed is doubled (see Move, p. 148).

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Combat Aptitude

### Prerequisites: Intelligence 3

Your character has a gift for combat; he knows how to use his expertise for both offense and defense.

**Benefit:** Every character is able to fight defensively, which means he suffers a -4 penalty to his attack roll in order to gain a +2 Defense bonus. A character with Combat Aptitude is more versatile; as a reflexive action on your character's turn, you can take up to a -4 penalty on his Defense rating to add an equal amount of bonus dice to his attack rating, or *vice versa*. You cannot reduce either rating to zero in this manner. These modifiers remain in effect until your character's next action, when you can reallocate dice once again.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.



## Combat Skill

### Prerequisites: Non-combat Skill 4

Your character is adept at keeping himself out of harm's way when using a non-combat Skill, such as Medicine, Photography, or Diplomacy, during combat.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +2 Defense bonus whenever he uses a specific non-combat Skill in combat (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent twice for any one Skill, gaining your character an additional +2 Defense bonus when using that Skill in combat.

## Danger Sense

### Prerequisites: None

Your character can sense unseen threats, such as sneak attacks and ambushes. Because she is constantly alert to danger, she is never caught with her guard down.

**Benefit:** Normally, a character loses her Active Defense rating when surprised or ambushed.

If your character possesses the Danger Sense Talent she retains her full Defense rating when surprised or ambushed. This includes attacks she cannot see coming, such as backstab attempts and sniper attacks. Sometimes the Gamemaster will make an Empathy roll on your behalf to see if your character gets an unbidden premonition or a bad feeling about a situation.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.



## Diehard

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is hard to kill! He can continue fighting even after taking enough damage to kill an ordinary person.

**Benefit:** Your character does not fall unconscious, and automatically stabilizes, when reduced to negative Health. He can continue to act, but will suffer wound penalties on all actions equal to his current Health. In addition, his death threshold is increased to -7 Health.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times. Each additional level increases your character's death threshold by two points (up to -11 Health).

## Direction Sense

### Prerequisites: None

Your character does not need a compass. She has an innate sense of direction and rarely gets lost. She knows which way is north even when she cannot see the Sun.

**Benefit:** Normally, you must make a navigation roll (difficulty 2) for your character to determine her direction of travel. If your character possesses the Direction Sense Talent, even in adverse conditions, she automatically knows which direction she is heading in without having to make a roll. This Talent also gives you a +2 bonus to all navigation rolls.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Dodge

### Prerequisites: Athletics 4

Your character has an innate ability to avoid ranged combat attacks. She expertly ducks and weaves, making herself harder to hit.

**Benefit:** Your character performs the Dodge maneuver as a reflexive action (see Dodge, p. 206). Any Defense bonuses provide a bonus to the Dodge maneuver as well. If your character loses her Active Defense, she loses her Dodge ability as well.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times, each time gaining your character an additional +1 Defense bonus against ranged combat attacks.

## Dual Wield

### Prerequisites: Dexterity 3

Your character can wield a weapon in each hand, doubling the amount of damage he can inflict on his enemies.

**Benefit:** Your character can attack without penalty when using a weapon in his off-hand. Alternately, he can attack two times – using one weapon in each hand – by making a Total Attack with a -4 penalty on each attack roll. These attacks can be made at different targets.

Normally, attacking with a weapon in your character's off-hand results in a -2 penalty, the penalty for making a Total Attack is even higher (see Total Attack, p. 207).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times. Each additional level reduces the Total Attack penalty by 2.

## Fearsome

### Prerequisites: Intimidate 4

Your character knows how to use fear and intimidation as a weapon. He can unnerve his enemies and even cause them to turn tail and run.

**Benefit:** Anyone can make an Intimidation roll against a single opponent in an attempt to scare him, but only a Fearsome character will provoke some impressive effects. As an attack action, your character can attempt to scare his opponents. Make an Intimidation roll against all opponents within 10 feet of your character. If you roll more successes than an opponent's Willpower ratings, she suffers a -2 penalty to her attack and Skill rolls for a number of turns equal to the number of extra successes you rolled. If you roll more successes than twice your opponent's Willpower, she flees in terror for a number of turns equal to the total number of extra successes you rolled.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times, gaining your character a +2 Intimidation bonus per level.

## Finesse Attack

### Prerequisites: Dexterity 3

Your character is quick and agile and knows how to use speed as a weapon, slipping her attacks past an opponent's defenses.

**Benefit:** Your character uses her Dexterity rating as the Base Attribute for a specific combat Skill, such as Athletics, Brawl, or Melee (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Flurry

### Prerequisites: Dexterity 3

Your character can attack the same opponent twice in quick succession, doubling the amount of damage he inflicts on enemies in close combat.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character can attack the same opponent twice by making a Total Attack with a -4 penalty on each attack roll (see Total Attack, p. 207). If your character possesses the Flurry Talent, he can attack the same opponent twice by making a Total Attack with a -2 penalty on each attack roll. Both attacks must be made with the same weapon or with a weapon and an unarmed attack.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent two times, allowing your character to attack the same opponent twice without penalty.

## Focused Attack

### Prerequisites: Willpower 3

Your character is dogged and relentless, able to use his discipline as a weapon. She focuses his attacks to wear down an opponent's defenses.

**Benefit:** Your character uses his Willpower rating as the Base Attribute for a specific combat Skill, such as Archery, Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Melee (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.



## Focused Defense

### Prerequisites: Willpower 3

Your character is stubborn and unyielding. She focuses her will to defend herself, shrugging off blows and never letting her guard down.

**Benefit:** Your character uses her Willpower instead of Body when calculating her Passive Defense and Defense ratings.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

**Special:** You cannot buy this Talent if your character already has the Strong Defense Talent.

## Giant

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is over seven feet tall and weighs more than three hundred pounds. He towers over normal people and is bigger, stronger, and tougher than they are. He is so large, in fact, that he has to have his clothes specially tailored.

**Benefit:** Your character receives a +1 Size bonus. This bonus affects Health and maximum Body and Strength ratings. Your character's Size will also penalize Attack and Defense ratings (see Size p. 209).

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique and can only be purchased during character creation.

## Gravity Adaptation

### Prerequisites: see rules on p. 216

**Benefit:** After spending at least 8 Earth weeks in a foreign gravity field without interruption, your character can treat it as an additional 'home gravity field'.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but it has to be applied to a different gravity field each time.

## Gravity Experience

### Prerequisites: None

Your character has traveled to faraway places and has learned to adapt instinctively to the local gravity environment, as different as it may be.

**Benefit:** Your character can reduce the penalty he suffers from unfamiliar gravity by 1. He can also reduce the time needed for acclimatization from 12 to 6 earth hours.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to four times. Your character can ignore twice as much penalty per level and reduce the acclimatization time by half.

## Guardian

### Prerequisites: Intelligence 3

Your character is gifted at looking out for others and protecting them from injury. She shouts warnings, deflects blows, and pulls people out of harm's way.

**Benefit:** As an attack action, your character can grant a +2 Defense bonus to all allies within 10 feet of her. She must be able to see and speak to her allies in order to grant this bonus.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent twice, allowing your character to provide an additional +2 Defense bonus to her allies.

## Headstrong

### Prerequisites: Willpower 3

Your character is steadfast and unshakable, and uses his indomitable will to shake off even the most powerful blows. He can literally will himself to keep fighting, even when his body aches to collapse.

**Benefit:** Your character uses his Willpower instead of his Body when calculating his Stun rating.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## High Pain Tolerance

### Prerequisites: None

Your character can ignore grievous, nasty wounds. She still feels pain, but it does not slow her down the way it would other people.

**Benefit:** Your character does not automatically fall unconscious when reduced to negative Health. She remains conscious and ignores wound penalties until reaching -3 Health, at which point she falls unconscious as normal. You still have to make a stabilization roll or your character will continue to lose Health each turn.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent twice, allowing your character to remain conscious and ignore wound penalties until she reaches -5 Health (at which point she falls over dead). If your character also has the Diehard Talent, you can take the High Pain Tolerance Talent one additional time for each level of Diehard that she possesses. Each level increase allows your character to ignore two additional wound penalties.

## Inspire

### Prerequisites: Diplomacy 4

Your character is skilled at motivating others. He can infect people with his confidence and enthusiasm, and drive them to perform better than they thought possible.

**Benefit:** As an attack action, your character can grant a +2 Skill bonus to all allies within 10 feet of him. He must be able to see and speak to his allies in order to grant this bonus.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent twice, allowing your character to provide an additional +2 Skill bonus to allies.

## Instant Reload

### Prerequisites: None

Your character can reload weapons with amazing speed. She is so fast it seems as though she never runs out of ammo.

**Benefit:** Reloading a weapon generally takes an attack action, some weapons take even longer, forcing a character to wait until her next turn to fire a weapon after reloading it. If your character possesses the Instant Reload Talent, she can reload a weapon as a reflexive action, allowing her to reload and fire in the same turn. Weapons that normally take longer than a combat turn to reload will only take your character an attack action to reload.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Intelligent

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is exceptionally bright and clever. His intellect far exceeds that of the average person.



**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Intelligence rating. This bonus affects his Intelligence rolls and all Intelligence-based Skills. It also factors into his Secondary Attributes and raises his maximum Intelligence rating by one point.

## Iron Jaw

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally sturdy and solid. He is extremely hard to daze and can take quite a beating before losing consciousness.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Stun rating.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to four times. Each additional level grants your character an extra +1 Stun rating.

## Iron Will

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally courageous and driven. Her resolve and determination far exceed that of the average person.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Willpower rating. This bonus affects her Willpower rolls and any Willpower-based Skills. It also factors into her Secondary Attributes and raises her maximum Willpower rating by one point.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Jack of All Trades

**Prerequisites:** Intelligence 3

Your character has a fairly good basic knowledge in a great variety of different tasks. He could be a handyman or a tramp doing all kinds of jobs, whichever one is offered to him. He knows a bit of everything without ever having had any formal training in a field.

**Benefit:** Your character can ignore the penalty on all untrained Skill rolls (see p. 150). He can also make untrained Skill rolls for Skill Specializations that he does not have – in this case, however, he does suffer the –2 penalty on untrained Skill rolls.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times, gaining your character an additional +1 bonus to untrained Skill rolls per level.

## Jump

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is naturally gifted at jumping and leaping. He is capable of jumping surprisingly large distances, both vertically and horizontally.

**Benefit:** Your character's jumping distance is doubled (see Move, p. 148).

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Keen Sense

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character has a particularly acute sense, such as vision, hearing, or smell. She has amazing sensitivity and rarely misses anything.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +4 Perception bonus when using a particular sense, such as vision, hearing, touch, taste, or smell (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent multiple times, but the benefit will be applied to a different sense each time.

## Kip Up

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character can get back on his feet with amazing speed and grace. When knocked to the ground, he immediately bounces up again.

**Benefit:** Normally, standing up takes an attack action. If your character possesses the Kip Up Talent he stands up as a reflexive action, allowing him to get up and attack in the same turn.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Knockout Blow

**Prerequisites:** Brawl 4

Your character is a master of nonlethal combat. She knows exactly where to hit an opponent to daze him without hurting him very much.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character's unmodified damage is compared to your opponent's Stun rating. If she inflicts more damage than her target's Stun rating, her opponent will be stunned for one turn per additional success. If she inflicts more damage than twice her opponent's Stun rating, her opponent will be knocked out for one minute per additional success. If your character possesses the Knockout Blow Talent she gains a +1 damage bonus to stun or knockout her opponent (see below).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to four times. Each level grants your character an additional +1 damage bonus to stun her opponent.

## Lethal Blow

**Prerequisites:** Brawl 4

Your character's hands are deadly weapons. He knows exactly how and where to hit an opponent to do the most damage. He is not trying to incapacitate his opponent – he is going for the kill.

**Benefit:** Your character's Brawl attacks do lethal damage. Every two points of nonlethal damage inflicted does one point of lethal damage instead. Leftover points do nonlethal damage, as normal.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times. Each level grants your character an additional +2 Brawl bonus when making a lethal attack.

## Lifesaver

**Prerequisites:** Medicine 4

Your character is a gifted healer. Her touch is soothing and she has an amazing ability to treat wounds. People under her care heal much quicker and cleaner than normal.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character heals one lethal or two nonlethal wounds per two successes rolled on your Medicine roll (see Healing p. 212). If your character possesses the Lifesaver Talent she heals one lethal or two nonlethal wounds per one success rolled on your Medicine roll.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Long Shot

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is skilled at attacking distant targets. He intuitively adjusts for the range, and can hit his target accurately over very long distances.



**Benefit:** Your character's weapon ranges are doubled, allowing him to shoot or throw at distant targets with a reduced penalty.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Lucky

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally lucky and somehow manages to get out of dangerous situations and pull off tricky maneuvers.

**Benefit:** Once per game session you receive a +2 luck bonus to any dice roll.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to five times. Each additional level grants your character an extra +2 luck bonus per game session. These bonuses can either be used separately or added to the same roll multiple times.

## Mobile Attack

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 3

Your character excels at fancy footwork, and can make accurate and powerful attacks even while moving.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character can move and attack, or attack and then move, but he cannot do both at the same time. If your character possesses the Mobile Attack Bonus he can attack without stopping his movement (up to his total Move rating).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent twice, granting your character the ability to simultaneously run and attack.

## Natural Leader

**Prerequisites:** Charisma 3

Your character makes friends easily and inspires people to help her achieve her goals. When necessary, she can call up old friends or recruit new people to join her cause.

**Benefit:** Your character may recruit a temporary Ally. The cost of the new Resource is equivalent to boosting a Talent (see "Boosting Talents", p. 200). Your character gains a new Ally equal to the number of boosted levels (see Allies, p. 170f.). The boosted Resource lasts for the remainder of the scene, at which point the new companion departs.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Parry

**Prerequisites:** Melee 4

Your character is adept at parrying armed combat attacks. She automatically deflects cuts and thrusts without having to go on the defensive.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character performs the Parry maneuver as an attack action (see Parry, p. 206). If your character possesses the Parry Talent, she performs the Parry maneuver as a reflexive action. Any Defense bonuses provide a bonus to the Parry maneuver as well. If your character loses her Active Defense, she loses the Parry ability as well.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times, each time gaining your character an additional +1 Defense bonus against melee attacks.

## Provoke

**Prerequisites:** Con 4

Your character is gifted at taunts and insults. He can draw attention to himself, and away from his friends and allies.

**Benefit:** As an attack action, your character can attempt to provoke his opponents into attacking him. Make a Con roll against all opponents within 10 feet of your character. If you roll more successes than an opponent's Willpower rating, she will attempt to attack your character for a number of turns equal to the number of excess successes rolled, or until she is attacked by someone else. If you roll more successes than twice an opponent's Willpower, she will continue to attack your character even if someone else attacks her.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times, gaining your character an additional +2 Con bonus per level.

## Quick Draw

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is able to draw weapons with amazing speed. He is so fast that his weapons seem to just suddenly appear in his hands.

**Benefit:** Drawing a weapon generally takes an attack action, some weapons take even longer – depending on how it is carried – forcing your character to wait until his next turn to fire a weapon after drawing it. If your character possesses the Quick Draw Talent he draws weapons as a reflexive action, allowing him to ready a weapon and attack in the same turn. Weapons that normally take longer than a turn to ready only take an attack action to draw.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Quick Healer

**Prerequisites:** Body 3

Your character heals at a remarkable rate. Even life threatening wounds cannot keep her down for long and she gets back on her feet again in no time!

**Benefit:** Normally, your character heals one nonlethal wound per day, or one lethal wound per seven days of rest. Exerting herself during this time makes her heal twice as slowly. If your character possesses the Quick Healer Talent she heals at twice the normal rate, that is, two nonlethal wounds per day, or one lethal wound per three days of rest. Exerting herself during this time makes her heal twice as slowly.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Quick Reflexes

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character reacts to danger much faster than the average person, allowing him to take action well before they do.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +2 Initiative rating.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent twice, gaining your character an additional +2 Initiative rating per level.

## Rapid Shot

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 3

Your character can attack the same opponent two times in quick succession, doubling the amount of damage she inflicts on enemies in ranged combat.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character can attack the same opponent twice by making a Total Attack with a -4 penalty on each attack roll (see Total Attack, p. 207). If your character possesses the Rapid Shot Talent he can attack the same opponent twice by



making a Total Attack with a -2 penalty on each attack roll. Both attacks must be made with the same weapon, and naturally, this weapon must be capable of attacking twice in the same turn.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent two times, allowing your character to attack the same opponent twice without penalty.

## Robust

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally hale and hearty. His physical fitness is far superior to that of the average person. As a result, he is able to soak up a lot more damage before losing consciousness.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +2 Health rating.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent twice, gaining your character an additional +2 Health rating per level.

## Run

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is swift and fleet of foot. She runs much faster than the average person and can even keep up her amazing speed over long distances.

**Benefit:** Your character's running speed is doubled. (see Move, p. 148).

## Skill Aptitude

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character has a natural affinity for a particular activity or subject matter and is considered a prodigy or expert in her field.

**Benefit:** Your character gains +2 Skill rating to a specific Skill (designate one when you take this Talent). This is a general bonus and does not give your character any free Skill Levels.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Skill Mastery

**Prerequisites:** Intelligence 3

Your character is a genius in a particular field with expertise in all of its various disciplines. He may be a master craftsman, general scientific expert, or hotshot pilot.

**Benefit:** Your character can take one Specialized Skill – Academics, Art, Craft, Pilot, or Science (designate one when you take this Talent) – as a general Skill, granting him general expertise in all of its disciplines.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Staggering Blow

**Prerequisites:** Brawl 4

Your character's unarmed blows are extremely powerful; she can stagger an opponent or even knock him off his feet.

**Benefit:** Normally, your character's unmodified damage is compared to her opponent's Strength rating. If she inflicts more damage than her target's Strength rating, her opponent is knocked back five feet per additional success. If she inflicts more damage than twice her opponent's Strength rating, her opponent is knocked clean off his feet. If your character possesses the Staggering Blow Talent she gains a +1 damage bonus to knockback

her opponent. No additional damage is done, but the bonus makes it possible for your character to stagger or knockdown her opponent.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to four times. Each level grants your character an additional +1 damage bonus to knockback your opponent.

## Strafe

**Prerequisites:** Firearms 4

Your character is highly proficient with automatic weapons and knows how to attack multiple targets with maximum efficiency.

**Benefit:** When your character makes an autofire attack you can ignore up to a -2 penalty for strafing between targets, such as when two opponents are standing next to each other. If your character strafes over a greater distance, reduce the strafing penalty by 2.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to four times. Each additional level allows your character to ignore a further -2 strafing penalty.

## Strong

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally muscular and well built. Her might and vigor far exceed that of the average person.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Strength rating. This bonus affects her Strength rolls and all Strength based Skills. It also factors into her Secondary Attributes and raises her maximum Strength rating by one point.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Strong Attack

**Prerequisites:** Strength 3

Your character is strong and powerful and can use his energy and vigor to augment virtually any weapon, smashing through his opponent's defenses.

**Benefit:** Your character uses his Strength rating as the Base Attribute for a specific combat Skill, such as Archery or Firearms (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Strong Defense

**Prerequisites:** Strength 3

Your character is stalwart and vigorous. She uses her powerful build to defend herself and resist damage.

**Benefit:** Your character uses her Strength rating instead of Body when calculating her Passive Defense and Defense ratings.

**Special:** You cannot buy this Talent if your character already has the Focused Defense Talent.

## Swift

**Prerequisites:** None

Your character is exceptionally fast. His speed far exceeds that of the average person.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +2 Move rating.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent twice, gaining your character an additional +2 Move rating per level.



## Swim

### Prerequisites: None

Your character swims with surprising speed. She is a natural in water and it hardly slows her down at all.

**Benefit:** Your character's swimming speed is doubled (see Move, p. 148).

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Time Sense

### Prerequisites: None

Your character does not need a watch. He has a highly accurate internal clock and always knows what time it is or how much time has passed.

**Benefit:** Normally, you must make an Intelligence or Survival roll (difficulty 2) for your character to determine the approximate time of day. If your character possesses the Time Sense Talent he always knows what time it is without having to make a roll. He can even tell how much time has passed while sleeping, and wake up at a predetermined time.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Tinker

### Prerequisites: Craft (any) 4

Your character always has the right tool at hand – and if he does not, he can improvise one using everyday items around him.

**Benefit:** Normally, a character suffers a –2 penalty on all Skill rolls when using improvised tools on a task that cannot be done without the right equipment. A character with the Tinker Talent can ignore this penalty since he is used to collecting and improvising the necessary tools.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to three times. Your character can ignore an additional –2 penalty per level for using improvised tools.

## Total Defense

### Prerequisites: Dexterity 3

Your character is adept at defending herself and never lets her guard down. She can defend herself even while making an aggressive, reckless assault.

**Benefit:** Under certain circumstances, a character can only use her Active or Passive Defense rating when defending herself. However, if your character possesses the Total Defense Talent she always retains her full Defense rating.

**Advanced:** You can purchase this Talent up to three times, gaining your character an additional +2 Defense bonus per level. This bonus also stacks with all other Defense modifiers and increases the benefit of the Total Defense maneuver (see Total Defense, p. 207).

## Total Recall

### Prerequisites: None

Your character never forgets anything. He has a photographic memory and remembers each detail of everything he has ever seen, heard, or read.

**Benefit:** Normally, you must make a successful Intelligence roll (with a difficulty determined by the Gamemaster) for your character to recall a particular piece of information. If your character possesses the Total Recall Talent he always remembers details without having to make an Intelligence roll. (Taking notes during play is a good aid for roleplaying this ability.)

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Tough

### Prerequisites: None

Your character is exceptionally hardy and robust. Her stamina and endurance far exceed that of the average person.

**Benefit:** Your character gains a +1 Body rating. This bonus affects her Body rolls and any Body-based Skills. It also factors into her Secondary Attributes and raises her maximum Body rating by one point.

**Advanced:** This Talent is Unique.

## Tough Attack

### Prerequisites: Body 3

Your character is tough and resilient and can use his fortitude as a weapon, shrugging off lesser blows and plowing through his opponent's defenses.

**Benefit:** Your character uses his Body rating as the Base Attribute for a specific combat Skill, such as Archery, Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Melee (designate one when you take this Talent).

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent multiple times, but the benefit is applied to a different Skill each time.

## Vigorous Defense

### Prerequisites: Dexterity 3

Your character keeps up an active defense – always moving and turning to keep his opponents at bay. Even multiple opponents have difficulty wearing him down!

**Benefit:** If attacked more than once during the same combat turn, a character normally suffers a –2 penalty to his Defense rating for each additional attack. If your character possesses the Vigorous Defense Talent he can be attacked twice in the same combat turn without penalty. Additional attacks penalize his Defense rating as normal.

**Advanced:** You can buy this Talent up to four times. Your character can defend against an extra attack per combat turn without penalty for each additional level. In other words, the initial purchase lets your character defend against one additional attack without penalty, the second allows two additional attacks, and so on.

## Resources

Resources represent the friends, influence, and wealth at your character's disposal. Characters without any Resources are neither destitute nor outcasts. They have enough to get by on, but when the going gets tough, they have to fend for themselves. Characters with Resources get to call on contacts and allies for favors and information. They have followers to help them and enough personal clout to get things done. They may even be in possession of items with unusual properties.



## Zero Level Resources

Friends, influence, and wealth usually result from a long personal development and are seldom a question of all or nothing. This is why you can also purchase a Resource at level 0. These are typical for a young character who has very limited access to resources, but very little in terms of expenses either. At character creation you can buy two Resources at level 0 instead of one Resource at level 1.

As an optional rule, the Gamemaster may also consider allowing starting characters to begin with one free Resource at level 0.

## Basic Resources

Some Resources do not have to be boosted at great expense. It is assumed that a character has some basic resources at his disposal – an average income, somewhere to live – a small apartment or a room, and a reputation which is neither especially good nor bad. **Therefore, each character starts play with all Basic Resources at level 0.**

Basic Resources are Unique insofar as they can have negative levels as well – for example, a character with a particularly bad reputation or who is destitute and homeless. This is the case when a character loses his fortune, or his house burns down, and soon on.

A player can voluntarily ‘buy’ negative Resources when he starts play. For each level lower than 0, your character receives 1 additional Resource point he can spend freely on other Resources.

The Basic Resources are *Fame*, *Refuge*, *Status*, and *Wealth*.

## Gaining and Losing Resources

Resources are not innate abilities, so they can be easily gained or lost during play. Therefore, your character should guard his Resources and use them wisely, so as not to lose them. That is not to say that your character should be too conservative with his Resources; calling upon them at the right moment could literally save the day.

Some Resources are interconnected; a character with friends and influence can help himself in almost every situation. If a character loses a Resource for no fault of his own, the Gamemaster may allow him to replace it or to receive another Resource of an equivalent level which should be associated with the one he lost. For example, if the character’s beloved uncle (a Mentor 2) gets killed on the orders of an arch rogue whom he has managed to track down, the character could inherit his uncle’s stately mansion (Refuge 2).

## Bonus Resources

Many Resources give your character Bonus Resources at higher levels. This represents how the different Resources are interconnected with each other. A character who has many Contacts may be able to borrow an important Artifact, gain a temporary Ally, or find Refuge somewhere for a short time.

A Bonus Resource can be used to buy a temporary level in any other Resource (or two new Resources at level 0). It may even be used to improve the Resource that provided the bonus in the first place. Each Bonus Resource can be used once per story, and the temporary Resource lasts for the duration of one scene.

For example, a character who knows many people (Contacts 4, gaining him two Bonus Resources) may once per session bor-

row an enhanced weapon (Artifact 2) for the duration of one scene – after that, he has to return it.

Or a lieutenant (Rank 2, 1 Bonus Resource), who has earned some fame (Fame 1) over time, and who also has a powerful patron (Mentor 3, 1 Bonus Resource) wants to get himself invited to a high society party. He asks his patron to pull some strings and suggests that both his rank as a lieutenant and his renown should help persuade the host of the party to issue an invitation. He uses both Bonus Resources to boost his ‘Fame’, giving him a total level of Fame 3 for the duration of that scene. This is enough to bring him and his exploits to the attention of high society and the party’s host issues him an invitation. However, he has to wait until the next episode of the GM’s campaign to attempt another *coup* of that kind.

## Resource Descriptions

| Resource  | Description                                                                          |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Allies    | Close friends and relatives that can be counted on for help                          |
| Artifact  | Unique and powerful items in your character’s possession                             |
| Contacts  | Network of associates that can be called on for items and information                |
| Fame      | Reputation, notoriety, and influence due to your character’s popularity and exploits |
| Followers | Faithful friends and retainers that accompany your character                         |
| Mentor    | A powerful patron, teacher, or protector who looks out for your character            |
| Rank      | Rank and membership in a secret or exclusive organization                            |
| Refuge    | A safe and comfortable home, private retreat, or secret laboratory                   |
| Status    | Social status and income due to your character’s profession or birthright            |
| Wealth    | Income and assets, plus amount of money available to invest                          |

### Allies

Allies represent friends and family that your character can always count on. They have their own lives though, so their assistance only be counted on up to a point. Still, they are more than happy to do favors for your character or back him up when he needs help. Allies often have useful skill as well as Talents and Resources of their own. The more times you purchase this Resource, the more numerous and powerful your character’s Allies become.

Allies start out loyal to your character, making them easier for you to influence and harder for your enemies to sway (see Influence, p. 147). While you get to define the nature of your character’s relationship with his Allies, the Gamemaster ultimately controls these NPCs, and determines what they will or will not do. Abusing or taking advantage of your Allies will negatively affect their attitude toward your character, and if it comes to worst, they will even refuse to help your character when he most needs him. Getting back into their good graces may take an adventure or two!

Purchasing additional levels of this Resource gets your character a new Ally, or improves an existing Ally.



| Level* | Description   | Attribute | Skills    | Talents/Resources |
|--------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| 0      | Simple        | 9 Points  | 5 Points  | 0                 |
| 1      | Moderate      | 12 Points | 10 Points | 1                 |
| 2      | Gifted        | 15 Points | 15 Points | 2                 |
| 3      | Influential   | 18 Points | 20 Points | 3                 |
| 4      | Powerful      | 21 Points | 25 Points | 4                 |
| 5      | Very Powerful | 24 Points | 30 Points | 5                 |

## Artifact

Artifacts represent unique, powerful items or vehicles in your character's possession. It can be something that she invented, inherited, or had entrusted to her for safekeeping. It could also be something that she found or ran off with! Your character might not even be aware of the full potential of the artifact.

Artifacts come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and uses. A simple Artifact might be a nutrition substitute, a pill that makes food intake no longer necessary for the person taking it. A more advanced Artifact might be a handy astrogation calculator making navigation in space easier, or a heat ray which can be used as a weapon. Submarines fitted for deep sea explorations or a relic of ancient Martian technology represent some of the largest and most powerful Artifacts of all.

The more times you purchase this Resource, the bigger and more powerful the Artifact becomes or you might get another simple artifact. Of course, the usefulness of an artifact can vary between campaigns. For example, a gill mask might be of little use when travelling through the ether, but so is a rocket powered backpack on Venus. The final decision should therefore always be with the Gamemaster.

| Level | Example                                     | Description                                   |
|-------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 0     | Food pills, pocket batteries                | (a special item)                              |
| 1     | Narcotic gas, Space suit                    | (a useful artifact)                           |
| 2     | Hertz-wave communicator, Infrared telescope | (a rare and highly useful artifact)           |
| 3     | diving suit with in-built air conditioning  | (incredibly useful artifact)                  |
| 4     | Air ship, Submarine                         | (a one-of-a-kind and very powerful artifact)  |
| 5     | Ether flyer, some High Martian Artifacts    | (a legendary and extremely powerful artifact) |

*Example: Alex wants for his character to obtain an Artifact 1, a modified rifle based on the design of the Lee-Netford-rifle. This rifle is supposed to have a greater caliber and more precision than the original weapon (The Gamemaster decides that the newly designed rifle gains a +1 Damage rating and its basic range is increased by 15 feet). Later, Alex wishes to extend the possibilities of 'his' Lee-Netford, so he buys another Artifact level. After consulting the Gamemaster, he decides to upgrade his weapon with the 'Long Shot' Talent to double its range by fitting a well-made Swiss scope. The useful Artifact has now become a rare and highly useful Artifact.*

## Contacts

Contacts represent your character's network of acquaintances and associates. They are not particularly loyal to him and will only help if it is worth their while or clearly in their best interest. Nonetheless, having a network of contacts enables your charac-

ter to call on them to find out information or useful items. Taking this Resource gives your character contacts in a particular sphere of influence such as academia, the criminal underworld, or the police. Any time that your character seeks equipment or information from someone within his area of interest, you receive a bonus on a related Skill roll. For every two levels you can also purchase one Bonus resource.

Buying this Resource more than once gives your character a new sphere of influence or increases his pull with his current contacts.

| Level | Example     | Bonus                               |
|-------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0     | Rogue       | +1 Bonus die                        |
| 1     | Bandit      | +2 Bonus dice                       |
| 2     | Conman      | +2 Bonus dice and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 3     | Gang leader | +4 Bonus dice and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 4     | Racketeer   | +4 Bonus dice and 2 Bonus Resources |
| 5     | Don         | +8 Bonus dice and 2 Bonus Resources |

*Example: Alice's character investigates the theft of an important object from a museum. He has Contact 2 in the underground and therefore gets two Bonus dice when talking to criminals. Furthermore, he can purchase a Bonus resource through his contacts. The Gamemaster agrees for Alice's character to gain a temporary Ally 1 by collecting a favor of someone who owes him. From now on, he is assisted by a gang member named Vincent who helps him searching for the stolen goods.*

## Fame (Basic Resource)

Fame is a measure of your character's reputation and notoriety. It also represents how well known her name and face is. Being recognized as a celebrity has its benefits: people will often do special favors for your character just because she's famous. On the other hand, being famous can have its downside—it is hard to keep a low profile when your profile is easily recognizable.

Your character may be an actress, daredevil, or criminal. When someone recognizes your character, you receive a bonus to all social rolls related to that person. For every two levels purchased in Fame you can also get a Bonus Resource from one of your admirers.

Buying this Resource more than once increases your character's fame and reputation.

Your character can also have Negative Fame, representing his infamy and bad reputation, for example a deserter, rookie, or a wanted criminal. Characters with negative fame suffer penalties on related Skill rolls, and if recognized, can get into serious trouble.

| Level | Example                   | Bonus                               |
|-------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| -3    | wanted criminal           | -4 penalty                          |
| -2    | well-known petty criminal | -2 penalty                          |
| -1    | unreliable deserter       | -1 penalty                          |
| 0     | average person            | none                                |
| 1     | local celebrity           | +1 Bonus die                        |
| 2     | Member of Town Council    | +2 Bonus dice                       |
| 3     | respected actor           | +2 Bonus dice and 1 Bonus resource  |
| 4     | National hero             | +4 Bonus dice and 1 Bonus resource  |
| 5     | world-renowned star       | +6 Bonus dice and 2 Bonus resources |



**Example:** Cathy's character is an actress at the beginning of a brilliant career, giving dazzling performances at some of London's best theatres. To make her character even more famous, Cathy buys her an additional level to give her a total of Fame 3. As a consequence, her reputation spreads beyond the limits of the capital, and people come from across the country just to see her on stage. Whenever she is recognized, Cathy gets two Bonus dice for all social Skill rolls, and she can also use her notoriety to obtain a temporary Bonus Resource. Cathy chooses Wealth 1 – after so many years spent as a penniless actress, the tills are finally ringing.

## Followers

Followers represent your character's faithful friends, retainers, and animal companions. Followers are not always very skilled or influential, but they are fiercely loyal and will accompany your character wherever he goes. Followers are tremendously helpful and will take care of everyday tasks, but your character is responsible for paying their expenses while they are working for him.

Followers start out loyal to your character, making them easier for you to influence and harder for your enemies to sway (see Influence, p. 147). While you get to define the nature of your character's relationship with his Followers, the Gamemaster ultimately controls these NPCs, and determines what they will or will not do. Abusing or taking advantage of Followers will negatively affect their attitude toward your character. Buying this Resource more than once either increases the number of Followers your character has, or improves their experience level. You can gain two inexperienced Followers, one skilled Follower, or improve two Followers each time you purchase this Resource.

| Level* | Max. Number of Followers |
|--------|--------------------------|
| 0      | 1                        |
| 1      | 2                        |
| 2      | 4                        |
| 3      | 8                        |
| 4      | 10                       |

| Level* | Attribute | Skill     | Talents/Resources |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| 0      | 9 Points  | 5 Points  | 0                 |
| 1      | 12 Points | 10 Points | 1                 |
| 2      | 15 Points | 15 Points | 2                 |
| 3      | 18 Points | 20 Points | 3                 |
| 4      | 21 Points | 25 Points | 4                 |
| 5      | 24 Points | 30 Points | 5                 |

\* Instead of improving one Follower you can also purchase several low level Followers. When buying this Resource you must choose whether to purchase an additional Follower or to enhance the Attribute and Skill levels of your existing ones.

**Example:** Michael decides that his character should have Follower 1, which he defines as being two loyal dogs (each one level 0) that he rescued from some risky situation. However, they are not that powerful (having only 9 Attribute points and 5 Skill points), and he fears that something might happen to them. He decides then to buy another Follower level, and either get two additional dogs or enhance the ratings of the existing ones. In this case, each dog would have a total of 12 Attribute points and 10 Skill points as well as one Talent or one Resource.

## Mentor

A Mentor represents your character's patron, teacher, or protector. He is often a powerful and influential person who is connected to your character in some important way. He might be a blood relative, a senior member of the same organization, or a mysterious stranger who shows up to provide much-needed information. Although there is a lot that a Mentor can do for your character, loyalty is not a given; your character will occasionally have to complete tasks to stay in his good graces.

A Mentor acts in the background and considers it the character's job to face the dangers and hazards of the outside world so that he does not have to. A Mentor's help might still be of great use, as he can offer education, training, or financial support. He does not even have to be present to do so. He can forward information to your character by mail, telegram, through a riddle, or even a dream or a flashback.

A Mentor can provide Bonus dice to certain Skill rolls (to do so, a Mentor must possess the related Skill on level 4+, see Teamwork p. 151), provided that your character is able to refer to the Mentor's help in a given situation.

Furthermore, for every two levels purchased, a character can borrow a Talent or a Resource from his Mentor. However, he simply cannot choose any Talent or Resource as he is limited to that that his Mentor possesses.

A Mentor will help your character, but his reasons for doing so may be a complete mystery. While you get to define the nature of your character's relationship with her Mentor, the Gamemaster ultimately controls this NPC and decides exactly what he wants and what he is willing to do for you. Harassing your Mentor or taking him for granted will negatively affect his attitude toward your character, and then he might let your character down when he most needs him.

Buying this Resource more than once increases the Mentor's power and influence, or gives your character an additional Mentor.

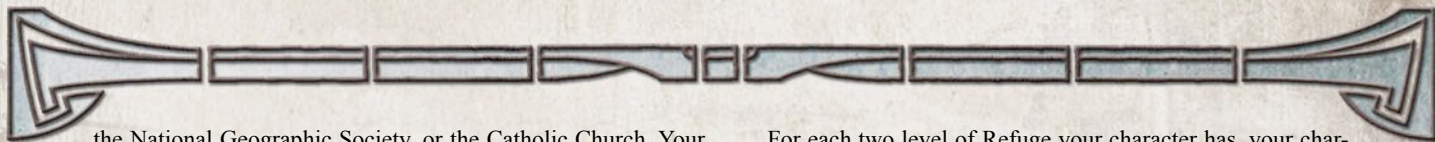
| Level | Attributes | Skills    | Talents/Resources | Bonus                               |
|-------|------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0     | 12 Points  | 10 Points | 1                 | +1 Bonus die                        |
| 1     | 15 Points  | 15 Points | 2                 | +2 Bonus dice                       |
| 2     | 18 Points  | 20 Points | 3                 | +2 Bonus dice and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 3     | 21 Points  | 25 Points | 4                 | +4 Bonus dice and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 4     | 24 Points  | 30 Points | 5                 | +4 Bonus dice and 2 Bonus Resources |
| 5     | 27 Points  | 35 Points | 6                 | +8 Bonus dice and 2 Bonus Resources |

**Example:** Mark's character has a Mentor 2, a respected and skilled doctor. One of Mark's comrades was badly injured in battle. Luckily, one of these modern telephones is available to him so he can call his Mentor. Under the doctor's calm oral instructions he starts treating his friend's wounds, receiving 2 Bonus dice for his Medicine roll. Since his Mentor has a profound knowledge in treating the particular type of injuries, he can also rely on his Mentor's 'Lifesaver' Talent which significantly facilitates the treatment.

## Rank

Rank represents your character's military rank or membership in an exclusive (or secret) organization, for example the Army,





the National Geographic Society, or the Catholic Church. Your character has more authority when dealing with other members of his organization, and may be eligible to receive aid or resources. He might even be able to give orders to junior members of the same organization, just as he has to obey the orders of those above him.

Holding a position of authority grants your character respect even from those outside his organization. You receive a bonus on social Skill rolls anytime your character wields his authority or acts in the name of his organization. Official members of an organization can also requisition other Resources. For each two levels of Rank your character has, he can either temporarily acquire another Resource or boost one he already has (subject to Gamemaster approval). This temporary boost lasts until the requisitioned Resources are returned to the organization, at which point new Resources may be requisitioned.

While a high rank comes with many a privilege, abusing his authority, squandering resources, or breaking rules might result in your character being demoted or discharged from his organization.

Buying this Resource more than once gives your character more power, influence, and a higher rank in his organization, or grants him the membership in another organization.

| Level | Example    | Bonus                               |
|-------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0     | Sergeant   | +1 Bonus Die                        |
| 1     | Lieutenant | +2 Bonus Dice                       |
| 2     | Captain    | +2 Bonus Dice and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 3     | Major      | +4 Bonus Dice and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 4     | Colonel    | +4 Bonus Dice and 2 Bonus Resources |
| 5     | General    | +8 Bonus Dice and 2 Bonus Resources |

**Example:** As a deacon in the Catholic Church, Mark's character has Rank 0. After he has gone on several adventures, Mark decides that his character is now ready to take his vows and become a priest. He buys Rank 1 which means that whenever he acts as an official representative of the Church, he receives a +2 Bonus on all social Skill rolls.

Some time later, he buys another level to represent his elevation to the position of Dean. He gets an additional +2 Bonus he acts as an official representative of the Church, and can now also requisition Bonus Resources. Since his character is about to spend a lot of time with lay people, he chooses as his Bonus Resources Status 1. His status as a priest will now grant him a +2 Bonus even when he is not on an official mission in the name of the Church.

## Refuge

Refuge represents your character's home, private retreat, or secret laboratory. She either owns it free and clear or shares it with other members of her organization. Whatever the circumstances, this is a place where she feels safe and productive. When taking a Refuge you can choose one of the following specialties (determine when you buy this Resource):

**Equipment:** Special equipment grants each character within the Refuge a Bonus for a particular Skill (determine when you choose this specialty).

**Size:** With greater size a refuge either is more spacious on the inside or comes with a very large estate. Without this extra, the refuge is the size of a small apartment or a large workshop.

**Security:** If your refuge is well protected, every character trying to intrude or spy on it will suffer a penalty on his Skill rolls.

For each two level of Refuge your character has, your character can also purchase a Bonus Resource related to his refuge. For example, he could get a butler to join him on his travels, or an artifact in accordance to his workshop's trade.

Taking this Resource more than once increases your character's refuge, or gives him another one. With the Gamemaster's approval, characters can pool their Resources together into a larger and more impressive Refuge. In this case, each character has limited ownership and access to the location.

A Negative Resource means that your character lives in modest surroundings or is even homeless. A poor home is ill-secured, giving intruders a Bonus on their Skill rolls when trying to break in.

| Level | Equipment         | Size            | Security                      |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| -2    | none              | homeless        | no security                   |
| -1    | none              | poor den        | +1 Bonus                      |
| 0     | none              | small apartment | unmodified                    |
| 1     | +1 Bonus          | house           | -1 penalty                    |
| 2     | +2 Bonus          | Villa           | -2 penalty                    |
| 3     | +1 Bonus Resource |                 |                               |
| 4     | +4 Bonus          | estate          | -4 penalty                    |
| 5     | +6 Bonus          | big estate      | +6 penalty, +2 Bonus Resource |

**Example:** Mary's character has Refuge 2 with the specialty Size, so he owns a respectable villa. Her character is the only owner of the villa and he does not have to worry about mortgage payments or the like. In the course of his first adventures he makes some enemies and now fears that someone will try to break into his villa and seek revenge. For this reason, Mary buys another Refuge level with the specialty Size, granting her a Bonus Resource. At first, she thinks about placing watchmen or dogs into her villa, but then decides otherwise for she does not want to take care of another character. Instead, she chooses Refuge 1 with Security as her Bonus Resource, representing her character equipping her villa with security systems, changing the locks, and removing the construction plans of the building which were previously freely available.

## Status

Status represents your character's social status. This can result from success within a respected profession – for example, doctors, lawyers, and professors – being a member of a wealthy aristocratic family, or working for infamous organizations like the mafia or underworld. In any case, your character's position grants him respect, and he can impress his fellow people and sometimes even make them do him a special favor. Any time that your character's social status or reputation applies to a situation, you receive a bonus to any related social rolls. For every two levels of Status your character has, he can purchase a Bonus Resource related to his friends and relations. Buying this Resource more than once grants your character additional respect and social opportunities.

If your character is of low social status, for example from a working class family or even a member of a minority, such as gypsy or a disliked nationality (which will vary from country to country), he suffers a penalty on all social skills when interacting with people of another class or nationality.





| Level | Example       | Bonus                          |
|-------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| -2    | Minority      | -2 penalty                     |
| -1    | Working class | -1 penalty                     |
| 0     | Middle class  | none                           |
| 1     | Lord          | +1 Bonus                       |
| 2     | Baron         | +2 Bonus                       |
| 3     | Earl          | +2 Bonus and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 4     | Marquis       | +4 Bonus and 1 Bonus Resource  |
| 5     | Duke          | +6 Bonus and 2 Bonus Resources |

*Example:* Steven's character is a gangster in newly burgeoning Mafia in the U.S.A. He has Status 2, making him a respected member of the family and granting him a +2 Bonus each time he can yield his influence. After some successful adventures, Steven decides to buy another Status level, representing his character's spreading reputation as a capo. At Status 3 he gets a Bonus Resource, and since he finds the opportunities as a Mafia gangster quite useful he uses it to take another Status level. From now on, he gets a +4 Bonus on all social rolls whenever he can yield his influence.

## Wealth (Basic Resource)

Wealth represents your character's income and assets. It covers the amount of cash she has on hand and money she has to invest. Wealth does not automatically accord a character respect or authority, but a rich character can buy almost anything that she wants.

Your character starts play with her monthly income in cash. Wealthy characters can invest their money in other Resources. For each two levels of Wealth your character has, she can lose one level to temporarily acquire another Resource – for herself or for another character (subject to Gamemaster approval). The boosted character becomes more influential or able to build a bigger and better Artifact. This temporary boost lasts until that wealth is invested in another area, for example to buy another Resource.

Buying this Resource more than once grants your character additional income.

Negative wealth means that your character has low income or is even destitute.

| Level | Example        | Monthly income |
|-------|----------------|----------------|
| -3    | Beggar         | none           |
| -2    | Lower classes  | £1 10S         |
| -1    | Working class  | £3             |
| 0     | Middle class   | £6             |
| 1     | Wealthy        | £12            |
| 2     | Upper class    | £30            |
| 3     | Industrialist  | £150           |
| 4     | Luxury         | £400           |
| 5     | Fairytale rich | £10,000        |

*Example:* Anne's character is preparing an expedition. He has Wealth 2, giving him £30 at his disposal to buy suitable equipment. However, Anne could also decide to spend one Wealth level in order to buy or boost another Resource. At first, she thinks about getting a personal butler as her character's Ally, but eventually decides to invest into the Artifact of another character, granting her character a future share in all profit made through this Artifact.

## Money

Instead of having to manage every penny you can also determine that your character can buy anything which does not exceed a tenth of his monthly income. By investing a level of his Wealth he can also spend the total sum of its income. The reduced Wealth level will last until the beginning of the next month, or the beginning of the next adventure – whichever one comes first. After that, the former Wealth level is restored.

| Level* | Money  |
|--------|--------|
| -3     | none   |
| -2     | 3S     |
| -1     | 6S     |
| 0      | 11S    |
| 1      | £1 3S  |
| 2      | £3     |
| 3      | £15    |
| 4      | £40    |
| 5      | £1,000 |

## Flaws

Flaws represent your character's physical, mental, or social shortcomings. Whenever your character is hurt or hindered by his Flaw during play, you earn Style points that can be spent for bonus dice when you need them (see Style Points p. 200f.). Therefore, the more you roleplay your character's Flaw, the stronger and more versatile your character will be. There is however, a natural limit to this rule, as your character's Flaw will lose potency if overused. For this reason, the Gamemaster may limit the number of Style points earned through Flaws to one per game session.

You get one Style point if you take a Flaw during character creation. We recommend for characters to start play with only one Flaw, but with the Gamemaster's permission, you can add, change, or remove one during play. Following are descriptions of some common Flaws. Feel free to create your own, but be sure to get the Gamemaster's approval first.

## Flaw Descriptions

### Physical Flaws

|                 |                                                    |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Blind           | Automatically fails sight rolls                    |
| Deaf            | Automatically fails hearing rolls                  |
| Dwarf           | Not as big or strong as others                     |
| Dying           | Has an incurable disease and may soon die          |
| Hard of Hearing | Poor hearing and may misunderstand speech          |
| Lame            | Has a bad leg or foot and moves slower than others |
| Mute            | Cannot speak and must write or gesture instead     |
| One Arm         | Missing an arm and has trouble doing work          |
| One Eye         | Missing an eye and has poor depth perception       |
| Poor Vision     | Bad eyesight and has trouble identifying things    |



### Mental Flaws

|                      |                                                         |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Absent-Minded</b> | <b>Often forgets or overlooks important details</b>     |
| <b>Addiction</b>     | <b>Hooked on a specific substance or activity</b>       |
| <b>Amnesia</b>       | <b>Has lost his memory and may have flashbacks</b>      |
| <b>Coward</b>        | <b>Afraid of conflict and may run from a fight</b>      |
| <b>Illiterate</b>    | <b>Dyslexic or uneducated and cannot read or write</b>  |
| <b>Impulsive</b>     | <b>Impatient and reckless and often gets in trouble</b> |
| <b>Obsession</b>     | <b>A compulsion to perform a particular activity</b>    |
| <b>Overconfident</b> | <b>Foolhardy and sometimes gets in over his head</b>    |
| <b>Paranoia</b>      | <b>Anxious and distrusts everyone around him</b>        |
| <b>Phobia</b>        | <b>Scared of a particular thing and will avoid it</b>   |

### Social Flaws

|                          |                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Callous</b>           | <b>Selfish, uncaring, and insensitive of others</b>       |
| <b>Condescending</b>     | <b>He believes himself better than everyone else</b>      |
| <b>Criminal</b>          | <b>Believed to have committed a serious crime</b>         |
| <b>Disfigured</b>        | <b>Ugly, unattractive, and repulsive to others</b>        |
| <b>Pacifist</b>          | <b>Opposed to violence and war for any reason</b>         |
| <b>Reformer</b>          | <b>Wants to improve the rights of the underprivileged</b> |
| <b>Secret</b>            | <b>Has an embarrassing or shameful secret</b>             |
| <b>Shy</b>               | <b>Dislikes social situations and tries to avoid them</b> |
| <b>Speech Impediment</b> | <b>Trouble speaking and may be misunderstood</b>          |
| <b>Superstitious</b>     | <b>Goes out of her way to follow her unusual beliefs</b>  |

### Misc. Flaws

|                      |                                                     |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Danger Magnet</b> | <b>Attracts trouble through no fault of her own</b> |
| <b>Primitive</b>     | <b>Unfamiliar with modern technology</b>            |
| <b>Unlucky</b>       | <b>Cursed, jinxed, or otherwise unlucky</b>         |

## Physical Flaws

**Blind:** Your character cannot see and is forced to rely upon her other senses to get around. She might have suffered an accident or been born that way, but she is completely blind. You automatically fail any roll that requires your character to see. You earn a Style point whenever a severe blunder or misunderstanding occurs because of your character's blindness.

**Deaf:** Your character cannot hear and may have to learn to read lips in order to communicate. He might have suffered an accident or been born that way, but he is completely deaf. You automatically fail any roll that requires your character to hear. You earn a Style point whenever a severe problem or misunderstanding occurs because of your character's deafness.

**Dwarf:** Your character is Size -1, causing her both physical and social problems. She is often looked down upon for not being as big or strong as others. You earn a Style point when your character's size causes her severe difficulty or when she is rejected because of it. You cannot take this Flaw if you have the Giant Talent.

**Dying:** Your character is terminally ill and will die soon. He might have cancer or some other kind of incurable disease, but he has not yet given up on finding a cure. You suffer a -2 penalty to all rolls whenever your character's disease acts up. You earn a Style point if your character is incapacitated by sickness or forced to confront his mortality.

**Hard of Hearing:** Your character has poor hearing. She might be deaf in one ear or just have trouble hearing normally.

Either way, you suffer a -2 penalty on any roll when hearing is a factor. You earn a Style point whenever your character's poor hearing gets her into trouble or causes a critical misunderstanding.

**Lame:** Your character has a bad leg or foot that slows him down. He might have been in an accident or just been born that way. Either way, your character suffers a -2 penalty to his Move rating. You earn a Style point if your character is unable to outrun danger, or if his bad leg gets him into trouble.

**Mute:** Your character cannot speak and is only able to communicate through hand gestures or writing. She might have a problem with her vocal chords, or had her tongue cut out, but it makes speaking nearly impossible. You automatically fail any roll that requires your character to speak. You earn a Style point whenever a severe problem or misunderstanding occurs because of your character's inability to speak.

**One Arm:** Your character is missing an arm. He cannot wield two-handed weapons and his lifting capacity is halved. If your character attempts to perform an action that normally requires two hands, you suffer a -2 penalty on the roll. You earn a Style point when your character drops something or makes a critical blunder because of his missing arm. You cannot take the Dual Wield Talent if you have this Flaw.

**One Eye:** Your character is missing an eye, but might have a fake eye or wear an eye patch to cover it. As a result, your character has poor depth perception and you suffer a -2 penalty on any Drive, Pilot, or ranged attack rolls. You earn a Style point if your character critically misjudges distance or is blindsided by someone.

**Poor Vision:** Your character has bad eyesight. She might be nearsighted, farsighted, or just have dim vision. If your character is not wearing her glasses, you suffer a -2 penalty on any roll where sight is a factor. You earn a Style point when your character's poor vision gets her into trouble or causes her to make a critical mistake.

## Mental Flaws

**Absent-Minded:** Your character is forgetful and distracted. Whether he is a daydreamer or just preoccupied with more important things, he tends to be unaware of what is going on around him. As a result, you suffer a -2 penalty on all Perception rolls. You earn a Style point whenever your character overlooks a critical detail or forgets something important.

**Addiction:** Your character is physically or mentally addicted to a specific substance or activity and will do anything to satisfy her need. If she overindulges or goes too long without getting a fix, you suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls until she sobers up or overcomes her addiction. You earn a Style point whenever your character's addiction hurts her or someone she cares about.

**Amnesia:** Your character has suffered some sort of trauma that caused him to lose his memory. He might recover part of his memory over time, but it is exceptionally disorienting when it happens, so you suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls until the episode is over. You earn a Style point when your character suffers a traumatic flashback, or when something from his past comes back to haunt him.

**Coward:** Your character is afraid of conflict and will not stand up for herself. She will run from a fight, or surrender if unable to flee. You suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls when she is threatened with physical violence. You earn a Style point if your character gives up without a fight or abandons her friends to save her own skin.



**Illiterate:** Your character is dyslexic, or maybe he just never learned his letters. Either way, he cannot read or write. This includes any additional languages learned through the Linguistics Skill. You automatically fail any task that requires your character to read. You earn a Style point whenever your character's illiteracy causes him severe difficulty or embarrassment.

**Impulsive:** Your character is impatient and reckless. She detests waiting around and will take action without taking time to plan. As a result, she is often unprepared for trouble and forced to improvise. She will jump into dangerous situations without thinking twice. You earn a Style point whenever your character's impulsiveness gets her or her companions into serious trouble.

**Obsession:** Your character is fixated on a particular activity such as keeping himself clean, organizing his possessions, or wooing the woman of his dreams. If your character cannot indulge his obsession regularly, you suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls until he is able to satisfy his compulsion. You earn a Style point when your character's obsession causes him to do something dangerous or endanger someone else's life.

**Overconfident:** Your character has a very high opinion of herself – perhaps too high. She believes there is nothing she cannot do better than anyone else. Her foolhardy attitude can get her into trouble from time to time. You earn a Style point when your character is forced to ask for help or when her bravado gets her in over her head.

**Paranoia:** Your character is excessively concerned with his well-being. He is wary and distrustful of everyone, including close family and friends. He might even have a persecution complex and believe there is a vast conspiracy against him. You earn a Style point whenever your character pushes a friend away or actually catches someone working against him.

**Phobia:** Your character is scared of a particular situation, object, or type of person. She will actively avoid the object of her phobia, and flee if confronted with it. If she cannot escape, you suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls until your character is able to get away. You earn a Style point whenever your character's fear gets the better of her.

## Social Flaws

**Callous:** Your character is selfish, uncaring, and insensitive to the suffering of others. He is hardhearted and will not go out of his way to help anyone. Pleas for mercy fall on deaf ears. You earn a Style point when your character does something particularly selfish or refuses to help someone in dire need.

**Condescending:** Your character thinks she is better than everyone else. It does not matter if she is actually superior or not – she knows she is always right; anyone that disagrees with her is clearly mistaken and must be put in their place. You earn a Style point whenever your character proves someone else wrong or establishes her own superiority.

**Criminal:** Your character is believed to have committed a serious crime, regardless of whether he actually did it. He may be a fugitive on the run or he could have done time for his misdeeds. Regardless, people distrust him and may turn him in to the authorities if given the chance. You earn a Style point whenever your character is hurt by his negative reputation.

**Disfigured:** Your character has a nasty scar, birthmark, or deformity that repulses other people. As a result, he is considered ugly and unattractive. You suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls where your character's appearance is a factor. You earn a Style point whenever your character is rejected because of his appearance.

**Pacifist:** Your character is opposed to violence and war under any circumstances. He believes that aggression and use of force are morally wrong and he always tries to find peaceful ways of settling disputes. You earn a Style point whenever your character is able to prevent violence or resolve a dispute peaceably.

**Reformer:** Your character is obsessed by the thought that a group of underprivileged people – women, black people, Martians, and so on – has to gain at any cost the same rights as they are granted to every white male adult. Your character will take every opportunity to enunciate his radical opinions and to actively fight for the rights of each member of said minority group, even if it could put him in danger. You earn a Style point whenever your character's commitment to fight for the designated group causes trouble for him or his companions, or when he succeeds to enforce an essential right for this group.

**Secret:** Your character has some sort of shameful secret that would be extremely embarrassing if it came to light. As a result, she will do everything possible to keep her secret hidden. You earn a Style point if your character is confronted with the truth or goes out of the way to protect her secret.

**Shy:** Your character is uncomfortable in social situations and tries to avoid them as much as possible. He dislikes being the center of attention and prefers to let others take center stage. You earn a Style point if your character misses out on getting recognition or a reward for his actions because he will not assert himself.

**Speech Impediment:** Your character has trouble speaking clearly. He might have a stutter, lisp, or some sort of disfigurement that makes understanding him difficult. This can cause important information to be misunderstood or delivered too slowly. You earn a Style point whenever a severe problem or misunderstanding occurs because of your character's speech impediment.

**Superstitious:** Your character is extremely superstitious and will go out of her way to follow her unusual beliefs. She will avoid performing any activity that is considered 'bad luck' and will never miss an opportunity to do something that will give her good fortune. You earn a Style point when your character's eccentricities cause her trouble, or if one of her beliefs turns out to be true.

## Miscellaneous Flaws

**Danger Magnet:** Your character attracts trouble and often ends up in dangerous situations. For some reason, she is always the one picked to be the human sacrifice, the sole survivor of the shipwreck, or the one that the giant ape falls in love with. You earn a Style point when your character ends up in danger through no fault of her own.

**Primitive:** Your character either comes from a primitive culture or was raised far from civilization. As a result, modern technology is foreign to him. You suffer a -2 penalty on any Skill roll related to modern technology, such as Drive, Firearms, and Science. You earn a Style point whenever your character's primitive nature hampers him or causes trouble.

**Unlucky:** Your character is cursed, jinxed, or just has chronic bad luck. Whenever anything is left to chance, circumstances will almost always conspire against her. Once per game session, you suffer a -2 penalty on any one dice roll. You earn a Style point if this causes your character's action to fail, or if you roll a Critical Failure.



## Starting Experience Points

Each character starts with 15 Experience Points, representing all of the experience and training that he or she has accumulated prior to the start of the game. The Gamemaster may vary the number of starting Experience Points depending on the power level of the game he is running. If a player is creating a new character ready to join an existing party, she may be given additional starting Experience Points.

Starting Experience Points can be spent in the following manner:

| Trait                    | Experience Point Cost                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Primary Attribute        | New Attribute Level $\times$ 5 points |
| Skill                    | New Skill Level $\times$ 2 points     |
| Skill Specialization     | 3 points                              |
| Talent                   | 15 points                             |
| Resource                 | 15 points                             |
| Resource 0               | 7 points                              |
| Resource 0 to Resource 1 | 8 points                              |

## Finishing Touches

Now that you have finished selecting your character's skills and abilities, it is time to fill in the rest of the details.

- What is your character's name? Your character's name can tell a lot about him and where he comes from. For example, we can tell just by their names that Mick Hardigan and Sir Edward Humbleworth III are very different characters.
- Where did your character come from? Your character's background does not have to be anything elaborate, but there are a few general questions you should answer. What is his general history? Where did he develop his skills and abilities? How

did he end up where he is at the beginning of the game? Be sure to use your character's Motivation as a guide when developing his background.

- What does your character look like? You do not have to go into elaborate detail, but you should note your character's defining physical characteristics. What color hair does she have? Is she tall or short, thin or stocky? Does she have piercing eyes or a winning smile? You should use your character's Attribute ratings as a guide for determining her physical description.
- What gear is your character carrying? It does not have to be an exhaustive list, but you should pick out the necessary tools and equipment for your character. You do not want him to run out of ammunition or medical supplies on the vast Steppes of Mars, or lack the right tools for the job when the gimbal that focuses the Sun's rays on the boiler on your Ether Flyer jams. Use your character's Skills, Talents, and Resources as a guide when picking out equipment.

**Note:** The Gamemaster may give your character weapons or items for free based on his background, or she may give you a certain amount of money to spend based on his Resources. For further reference, see 'Money' on p. 174.

## Starting Style Points

You can start play with up to five Style points. However, you have to do some extra work to earn them. Starting Style points can be earned in a variety of ways, though always at the discretion of your Gamemaster.

- Taking a Flaw at character generation: 1 point
- Writing a character background: 1–3 points
- Creating a plot hook (for example, a rival or dependent, a missing relative, an aim or obsession) for your character: 1 point each





# Martian Butler

Archetype: Fraudster

Motivation: Survival

Style: 3

Health: 5

## Primary Attributes

Body: 3

Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 3

Intelligence: 2

Strength: 2

Willpower: 2

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 5

Move: 5

Defense: 6

Perception: 4

Stun: 3

| Skills          | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|-----------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Diplomacy       | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| (Etiquette)     |      |        | 6      | (3)     |
| Larceny         | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)     |
| (Pickpocketing) |      |        | 7      | (3+)    |
| Linguistics     | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| Medicine        | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| Melee           | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Stealth         | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)     |
| Streetwise      | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |

## Talents

Danger Sense, Die Hard

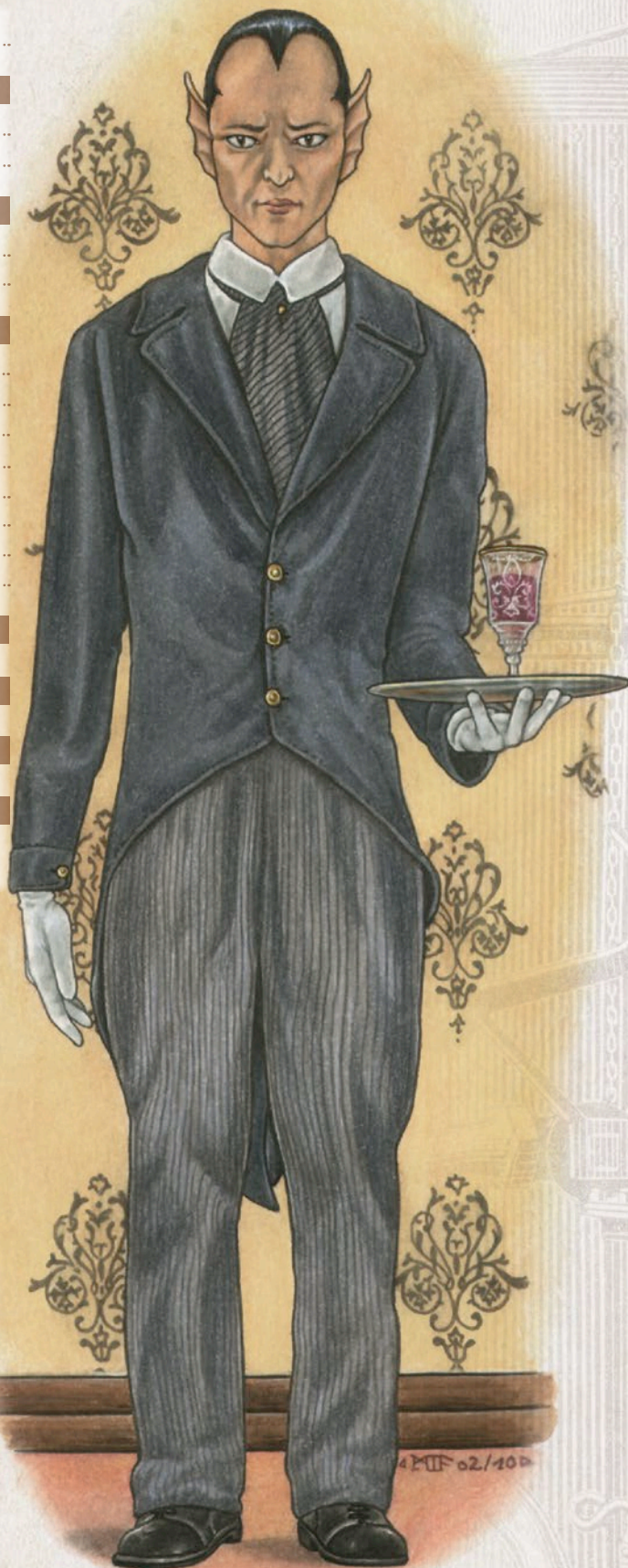
## Resources

Mentor 1

## Flaw

Underprivileged

| Weapons     | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|-------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| Punch       | 0 N    | 0    | 0 N    | (0) N   |
| Switchblade | 1 L    | 0    | 5 L    | (2+) L  |



Martian Butler



# Martian Butler

*“Sir, this gentleman exhibits a certain antipathy towards you! He just called you a ‘Quaamtlan’, and I fear my education prohibits me to translate such rude expletives into the English language.”*

## Character Background

Be careful when you go up into the salon. His lordship is in a very bad mood. This morning, some rascals tricked him in the bazar by selling him an ‘antique Martian codex’. It turned out to be a set of what the men of Earth I believe call ‘cheap dime novels’. As you know, his Lordship does not understand a word of Parhooni, but loves our antique relics more than anything. And so he fell for the frauds.

When I enlightened him on this matter this noon he was aghast. It is a shame I was not there with him, I would have shown them what’s what! But what can you do? The Earl is a perfect victim to fraudsters. It takes me a lot of effort to keep him from near constant harm. In the old days, in Meepsor, I would have been chuffed to have a ‘client’ such as his Lordship. Don’t tell anyone... but I was a criminal myself once. Don’t laugh! I haven’t always worn a fine, earthly suit like this, serving Sherry and introducing all manner of guests to his Lordship. In those days in Meepsor, I was the quickest pickpocket on the left canal bank, that is until I had to leave Meepsor due to a gang war, and so I eventually made my way to Syrtis Mayor. In the harbor, someone from the city guard asked me for my occupation, so I told him I was a servant. You can hardly tell a policeman straight to his face that “I am a professional petty criminal.”

So this is how I started my career in domestic service. At first, working as a servant put me off, I admit – with my first position, I even thought about robbing my master and making off with all his jewelry. However, I didn’t do it in the end and I was quite right to do so. I have learnt a lot since then, and I know every way there is in the Solar System to make tea, I am a master of good manners, and the flat-iron is my specialty. I must have become quite a talented servant since – otherwise I would hardly be a butler and thus master of the minor servants.

As a butler, I make much more money than I could ever have stolen and I am even a respected person among the Earthmen of the lower classes. If I had stayed a pickpocket I would still be wearing rags today! Fortunately, there is hardly anyone today who would believe that I come from the gutter. However, my origins have proved to be quite useful sometimes. I can well remember the tricks and ropes I used to work with, and I usually recognize a former colleague when I see him. I’m telling you, my former occupation has proven perfectly useful when it comes to ironing out any trouble. And maybe it is also thanks to my background that I devour any crime novel I can get hold of. While we’re at it: Do we still have the last issue of the Strand Magazine in the house? I haven’t had the time yet to read the sequel of the new Sherlock Holmes novel.

## Roleplaying

As a distinguished butler, you wear a shirt and collar, waistcoat, and a fine tail coat these days. In reality, you grew up as a pickpocket in the gutters of a decayed Martian city. You know your own people just as well as that of the humans and are thus a mediating link between two worlds.

Amongst your fellows you were nobody; now you carry out the duties of a butler, and have thus a high rank among the servants of your household. This may feel strange at times, and occasionally you have to be careful not to relapse into your old ways.

Not only do you have a mastery of housekeeping and polite manners, both English and Martian, but also many body guard techniques, for it is your duty of course to protect your master from any harm. In this matter you benefit from your personal history, because with your knowledge of fraud, robbery, and scam you not only make for a good thief – you are also a criminalist who can smell thieves and thugs a mile off.



# Diplomat

Archetype: Civil Servant

Style: 3

Motivation: Duty

Health: 5

## Primary Attributes

Body: 2

Dexterity: 2

Strength: 2

Charisma: 3

Intelligence: 3

Willpower: 3

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Move: 4

Perception: 6

Initiative: 5

Defense: 4

Stun: 2

| Skills                         | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|--------------------------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Academics<br>(Martian History) | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Bureaucracy                    | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Con                            | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Diplomacy                      | 3    | 4      | 7      | (3+)    |
| Empathy                        | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Firearms                       | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| Gambling                       | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Investigation                  | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Linguistics                    | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |

## Talents

Inspire

## Resources

Status 2

## Flaw

Dogmatic

| Weapons           | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|-------------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| Derringer, Double | 2 L    | 0    | 5 L    | (2+) L  |
| Punch             | 0 N    | 0    | 0 N    | (0) N   |



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Diplomat



# Diplomat

*"Show me this telegram, please. Sounds a bit too polite for my taste. Almost obsequious. That's quite unlike him. I wonder what the canal prince is really up to..."*

## Character Background

Indeed, this steak and kidney pie is exactly what I wanted. Every now and again I need some plain home cooking. It soothes my nerves in situations like this one. I get enough of these exquisite delicacies and *hors d'oeuvre* at the embassy's receptions. You won't believe how soon you can get tired of these things. Tell me, what do you think about these most peculiar developments in Gorklimsk? As far as we know, both the canal prince and the priests supporting the throne have great sympathy for the Oenotrian Empire. So why are they smarming over a British emissary all of a sudden? I wonder what's behind this action? Considered by itself, this development would be excellent for our cause. The more trading partners the Oenotrians lose the better for us, but I don't like the look of it. My young colleague, you will learn sooner or later that nothing in international politics happens without a hidden agenda – even if it is a stupid agenda. Remind me to consult our doughty spies among the canal sailors and interrogate them thoroughly about Gorklimsk. Don't look so dismayed. As a diplomat you will of course have to deal occasionally with the affairs of the secret services. It can't hurt to talk with trustworthy contacts in person, too, so you better prepare yourself, mentally and morally, to also participate in this sort of business.

Of course, no diplomat would ever admit in public that he refers to such sources of information. This is just good manners. Also, it won't hurt to engage yourself with the customs and habits of non-European peoples; although I think, considering how well you did last night at the reception, I don't have to tell you that. I had a hard time learning that lesson in the beginning.

You know, they teach you a lot of things at the university, but the most difficult ones you will only learn in practice. I remember well how, at the beginning of my career, I once almost caused a minor debacle on a trip through Japan. We were invited to one of those traditional tea ceremonies, joined by a representative of the Japanese foreign ministry, to whom, by the way, I am still in good contact with. We have been playing a game of correspondence checkers via mail for a few years now. During that ceremony I was eager to discuss some pressing political matters – not knowing that it is considered a terrible *faux pas* to talk about politics during a tea ceremony. Had my Japanese colleague not rescued me back then, I would have disgraced myself. I suppose this is why I'm letting him win now...

## Roleplaying

Some people claim that there is no social mobility within the European society, but you are the living proof that there is! You may be from a poor family from the lower classes, but you have managed to climb your way up the social ladder through public service. Your parents could only barely afford to pay for your school fees, but fortunately your diligence and your alert mind brought you to the attention of a wealthy patron who sponsored your entry into university. Once there, you studied hard and passed your exams with zeal and top marks.

You have always been keen on settling disputes and solving problems through dialogue. Having your skills you could have started an easy career back in London, perhaps as a crusading barrister or even as a young and upcoming Member of Parliament, but you were drawn by the prospect of journeying to far-off lands. The Foreign Office offered you the possibility to see the world and to do good deeds at the same time, for you are of course a convinced patriot. Your profession also entails that you are used to the interaction with foreign cultures, and you will not let yourself be perturbed, not even by the strangest of customs. You have a certain reputation among your fellow countrymen of being a bit snooty since you like to point at your brilliant achievements – a habit you gained during your years at the university, where you always had to work a little harder than your fellow students due to your low class origins.



# Reporter

Archetype: Reporter

Style: 3

Motivation: Justice

Health: 5

## Primary Attributes

Body: 2

Charisma: 3

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 3

Strength: 2

Willpower: 3

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 5

Move: 4

Defense: 4

Perception: 6

Stun: 2

| Skills                    | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|---------------------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Art (Photography)         | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Art (Writing)             | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Con                       | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Con (Fast Talk)           | 3    | 2      | 6      | (3)     |
| Empathy                   | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Firearms                  | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| Investigation             | 3    | 4      | 7      | (3+)    |
| Investigation (Interview) | 3    | 5      | 8      | (4)     |
| Linguistics               | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Streetwise                | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Streetwise (Rumors)       |      |        | 6      | (3)     |

## Talents

Total Recall

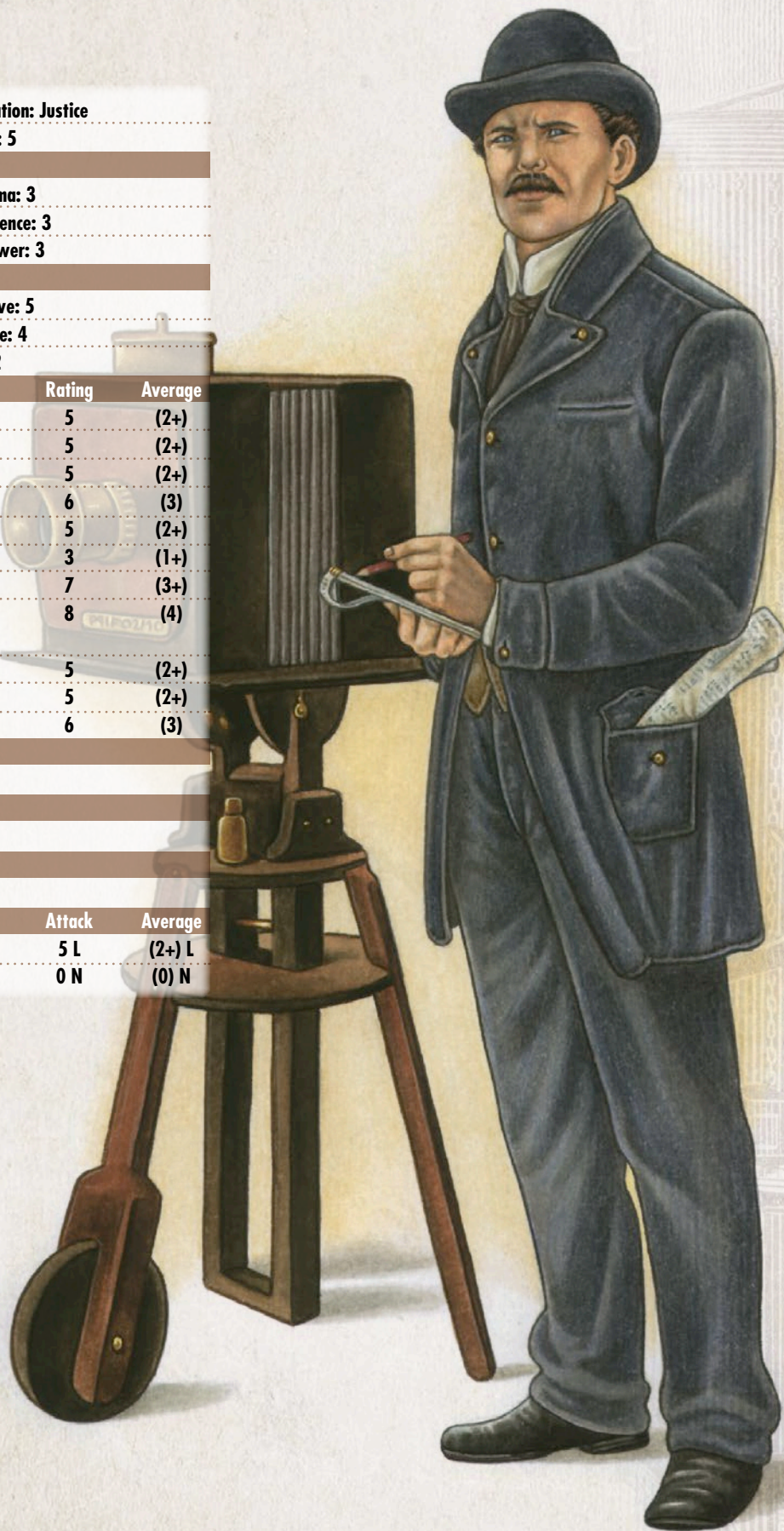
## Resources

Relations 1

## Flaw

Curious

| Weapons         | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|-----------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| Pocket Revolver | 2 L    | 0    | 5 L    | (2+) L  |
| Punch           | 0 N    | 0    | 0 N    | (0) N   |





## Reporter

*“So you found out that this new remedy causes addiction? What? The patient may even die of an overdose? Good grief – the public MUST hear of this!”*

## Character Background

Everything you need for a good editorial is good instincts and some skill. And I have more than enough of both. Adding a little bit of luck and you can turn a small world upside down! Four months ago, for example, when this embezzlement scandal at the Boston Gasworks hit the headlines everywhere – that as me! Of course, it wasn't that easy to sneak the financial offices of the Boston Gasworks disguised as an accountant. Before that, I had tried it as a gas lamp mechanic – all the way with a worker's overall, baseball cap, and a genuine lower class accent, but I realized quickly that I wouldn't get through to the important people this way. So I shaved, changed my hair style, and mingled with the office workers. There I kept my ears tuned, and *voilà* – I caught this rascal right in the act!

Times are changing. The people of our *métier* are starting to realize that the old saying ‘A pen is more powerful than a sword’ is not just idle talk. If you write well, you can make a difference. And dammit, I wanna make a difference! Truth and justice have always been things that are important to me as a true New Yorker. I've seen too many people in my life that got away with crime and corruption – be it gang bosses from my home country or cruel colonial officials in Indo-China. If I can make sure that a stop is put to their game, then I swear to God I will! You see, if you always write your articles in the same way that every ‘serious’ journalist would do, which is asking questions at press conferences and politely wait for an answer, then the result will always be the usual wish-wash. If you really want to enthrall your readers, than you have to be where the action is on. I never flinch to risk something for a good story, like with this little ‘spy mission’ I learnt this as a young beginner from an old hand to the business who had seen the big clash with the Rebels in the south as a war correspondent. On his advice I joined this expedition to Honduras that was searching for the ‘South American pygmy rhinoceros’. A strange animal, one that I still don't believe really exists, but it was still worth it. Of course we didn't find this doubtful rhinoceros, but we did discover an unknown native tribe which had been living in perfect isolation until then – and that in Honduras, a land which was thought to be relatively well explored! I did an exclusive report on them and took the first photographs of these natives. This is the kind of journalism that excites the people!

## Roleplaying

You belong to a new genre of journalism, a reporter who practices so-called ‘investigative journalism’. Past generations of journalists just wrote down information that was dictated to them, but you truly get to the bottom of things. You are one of the feared ‘muckrakers’ who wield a sharp pen fighting against crime, corruption, and favoritism. This means obviously, that you use completely new methods in order to get information, and you are also willing to get your hands dirty. If a story requires you to join an expedition to Mercury or to infiltrate a drug smuggling ring disguised as an Irish immigrant, you'll do it. For the truth, and for your readers, you will go any distance and use any trick in the book. Of course, you would never cross the line and commit a serious crime yourself. Your incredible persistence, your loose tongue, and your almost pathological curiosity are quite useful in your crusade against injustice. You have your camera equipment with you, since modern photojournalism is also part of your business. Your readers are grateful for your untiring commitment and thank you in their enthusiastic letters to the editor. Your ‘victims’ often thank you by trying to sew you up!

Reporter



# Inventor

Archetype: Technician

Style: 3

Motivation: Truth

Health: 5

## Primary Attributes

Body: 2

Charisma: 2

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 6

Strength: 1

Willpower: 3

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 8

Move: 3

Defense: 4

Perception: 9

Stun: 2

| Skills                 | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|------------------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Academics (Philosophy) | 6    | 2      | 8      | (4)     |
| Craft (Mechanics)      | 6    | 3      | 9      | (4+)    |
| Demolitions            | 6    | 1      | 7      | (3+)    |
| Firearms               | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| Investigation          | 6    | 1      | 7      | (3+)    |
| Linguistics            | 6    | 1      | 7      | (3+)    |
| Medicine               | 6    | 1      | 7      | (3+)    |
| Science                | 6    | 5      | 11     | (5+)    |

## Talents

Tinker, Intelligent, Skill Mastery (Science)

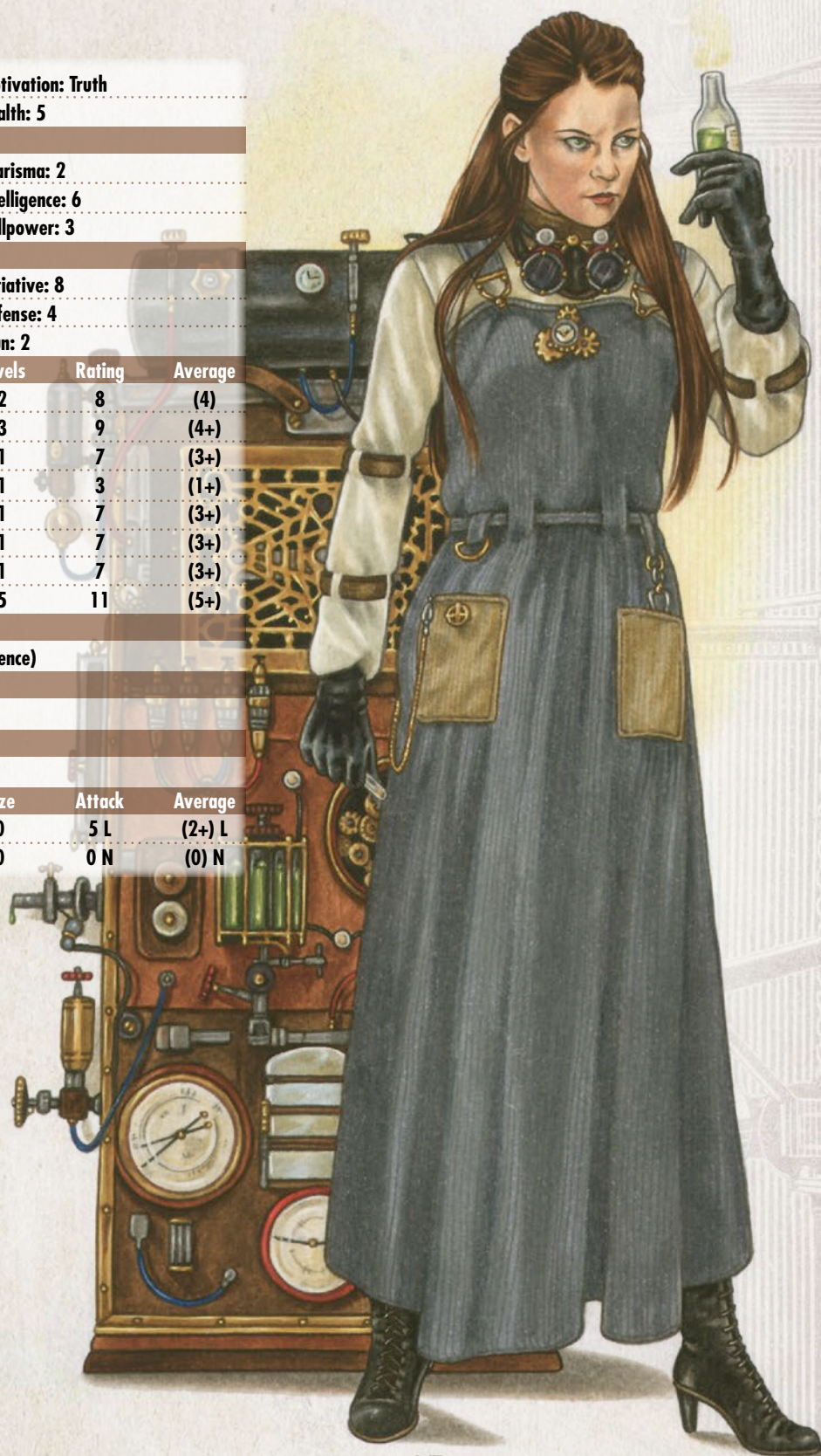
## Resources

-

## Flaws

Underprivileged

| Weapons   | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|-----------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| Derringer | 2 L    | 0    | 5 L    | (2+) L  |
| Punch     | 0 N    | 0    | 0 N    | (0) N   |



◀ MTF 04/10 ▶

Inventor



# Inventor

*"The electrical circuit that operates the whole thing is quite simple. Brilliant! If only my father could see this!"*

## Character Background

The first machine I developed all by myself was an electrical device for roasting white bread. I was fifteen years old, and my father helped me on weekends to construct the apparatus according to my designs. The device took up half the kitchen table, and almost set the table cloth on fire, but I was still proud of my work. The joy of thoroughly understanding a scientific principle or the workings of a device, and of developing new devices was instilled into me by my father. My mother died early and my father, a somewhat grumpy if good-hearted engineer, didn't quite know how to raise a girl. So he raised me more as a boy.

My aunts surely would have preferred that my father make a proper young lady out of me, and they always tried to talk him into raising me so. My father though didn't care to give me a ladylike education, and so instead of wearing pink dresses and playing with sappy dolls, I enjoyed myself roaming the little forest behind the house or taking things apart and putting them together in our work shop. All in all, I can say my childhood was very happy.

The problems started at the polytechnic school, where I had to learn for the first time that women are not taken seriously in the engineering profession. That's why my good degree is just a useless piece of paper. I lead a frugal life and finance my projects with the money that my father, God bless him, left me.

My aunts are still trying to make a lady out of me. Lately, they have been making plans to marry me off. Almost every week they present me with a new suitor-to-be. I'd prefer to choose my future husband by myself, but I seem to scare men off with my love for science and technology.

So with no husband to support me, or indeed stop my work, I try to stay financially independent. Every now and then I even make some money with my inventions! Have you seen the machine at the main post office, the one which sorts the packages automatically according to their weight? I designed that – and the screw-glider with an electric engine that the postal service wants to use as an express courier! Someday, I believe, flying machines like this will be in wide use. For the time being however, the glider suffers from the fact that the energy in the accumulator only lasts for two flight hours, but I think I accidentally found the solution to this problem only last week. I read in an article in the magazine *Wonders of the Solar System* that the ancient Martians knew a method to generate power which would supersede accumulators completely. As far as I understood they used specific semiconductors that generate electrical power when exposed to temperature differences by means of the Seebeck effect. And in a quantity which could never be achieved with our knowledge of thermoelectrics! If I could only analyze such a Martian artifact, the age of steam engines would be over once and for all! Those blind bats at the polytechnic school refuse to see that, of course, and talk of 'Martian fairy tales'.

## Roleplaying

You learned a lot from your father, a famous engineer, but since you are a woman you are only rarely taken serious by other inventors. To them, you are nothing but the 'the daughter of the late professor'. Many refuse to see that your skills do not fall short of those of your beloved father, the fossilized old colleagues of your deceased father just as much as the old ladies in the salons of your hometown, which think your behavior is not "ladylike" enough. You're going to prove them all wrong! The fact that no one is taking you seriously only spurs your ambition further on! In order to prove your worth as a scientist you are absolutely willing to venture forth across new frontiers that others would not even dare to think of crossing. You are willing to test run new flying machines yourself, to explore old Martian ruins in search for forgotten technologies, or to try out scientific theories that all of your colleagues would consider too exotic. Of course, you are always looking for the active support of kindred spirits, because you are not the kind of inventor who locks herself in a lonely laboratory.



# Officer

Archetype: Soldier

Motivation: Honor

Style: 3

Health: 7

## Primary Attributes

Body: 3

Charisma: 2

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 2

Strength: 3

Willpower: 4

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0

Initiative: 5

Move: 5

Defense: 5

Perception: 6

Stun: 3

| Skills       | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|--------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Athletics    | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Brawl        | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Diplomacy    | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| (Leadership) | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Firearms     | 2    | 4      | 6      | (3)     |
| Intimidation | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| (Orders)     | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Melee        | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Ride         | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Survival     | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |

## Talents

Headstrong

## Resources

Rank 2 (Military)

## Flaw

Dogmatic

| Weapons              | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|----------------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| Punch                | 0 N    | 0    | 4 N    | (2) N   |
| Saber                | 3 L    | 0    | 8 L    | (4) L   |
| Webley Mk I Revolver | 3 L    | 0    | 9 L    | (4+) L  |



Officer



# Officer

*"Of course, these lizards are a bit primitive, but they are also honest, loyal, and brave. This is why you should try to treat them as men, not as imbeciles."*

## Character Background

Whenever I read these newspapers from home I sometimes get furious. Look at these satiric drawings! The one with the negro wearing a banana skirt? I wonder if the illustrator has ever met an African in person. I have. These people are anything but the half-civilized savages like they think of them at home. Back then in Africa, I fought side by side with the warriors of the Fante tribe against the Ashanti. Those were soldiers, I'm telling you. Some of our infantrymen could learn a thing or two from them.

Forget all these stories about the cowardice of the 'native troops' who run off at the first opportunity. Sure, these things happen, but in most cases our allies are loyal as long as you treat them as humans. I had this experience all over our Empire – and I have practically been everywhere where wars were fought in the name of queen and country. India, Africa, Mars, Venus... even in Ireland!

Call me a naïve dreamer, but I have always tried to live up to the ideals they thumped into us at Sandhurst – sincerity, courage, loyalty, honor, and skill. Those are the things that made the Empire great! Values like that are sacred to me and I respect them whenever I meet them. Even if the person who lives them is a scaled 'savage' from Venus. I firmly believe that it doesn't matter in the end if someone has white skin, black skin, or a reptile's carapace. All that counts are deeds, spirit, and attitude. I only fear that my opinion is going out of fashion.

But enough of my personal views. Let's raise our gin and tonics to things to come. According to our marching orders we're supposed to reinforce the understaffed garrison at Moeris Lacus. Things could get serious down there quite soon – this upstart prince in the neighboring Shapstash betrayed the Empire ignominiously and is now co-operating with the Oenotrians. If the worst comes to the worst, they are soon going to be knocking on the city gates of Moeris Lacus, in their usual friendly manner. I think I'm going to make a little side trip into the steppes when we arrive. The Hill Martian nomads living there might look wild, but they are decent and honorable lot. During my last journey to Mars I was able to meet some of them in person. As far as I know, they don't fancy the Oenotrians either. And you know – a feast becomes even merrier when you bring friends. A strong alliance with the steppe riders not only would grant us more fighting strength, but also give us a clear locational advantage.

## Roleplaying

The ladies know you as a chivalrous gentleman, your inferiors as a strict but just superior. You are a proud officer of your country. Courage and honor are most important to you, and you are always willing to fight for the 'good cause'. You had to fight many battles in the name of the Empire and you know from experience how to use a weapon. You are used to suffering deprivation, whether on or off the battle field, but in spite of your military background you are not a belligerent idiot. You would like nothing more than a world at peace, but the world is not perfect. Sometimes you are forced to fight. You are imperturbably loyal towards your companions; after all, you are a man of honor. Even though you might enforce discipline and order among your unit you are quite popular with the simple soldiers – since those who play by the rules will always get along with you just fine!

Some might think you are a chauvinist because the uniform you wear represents a colonial empire, but in reality, you have great respect for the indigenous peoples in the colonies. You have already fought side by side some of these 'primitives' and you know them well. You know that many of those 'primitive savages' out there have more honor in their little fingers than others have in their whole body.



# Martian Princess

**Archetype:** Adventurer  
**Style:** 3

**Motivation:** Honor  
**Health:** 4

## Primary Attributes

**Body:** 2  
**Dexterity:** 4  
**Strength:** 2  
**Charisma:** 3  
**Intelligence:** 2  
**Willpower:** 2

## Secondary Attributes

**Size:** 0  
**Move:** 6  
**Perception:** 4  
**Initiative:** 6  
**Defense:** 6  
**Stun:** 2

| Skills            | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|-------------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Academics         | 2    | 1      | 3      | (1+)    |
| (Martian History) |      |        |        |         |
| Acrobatics        | 4    | 1      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Archery           | 4    | 2      | 6      | (3)     |
| Athletics         | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Diplomacy         | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Melee             | 2    | 3      | 5      | (2+)    |
| Ride              | 4    | 2      | 6      | (3)     |
| Stealth           | 4    | 1      | 5      | (2+)    |

## Talents

**Attractive**

## Resources

**Status** 1, **Artifact** 1 (Ancestors' Sword)

**Ancestors' Sword\*:**

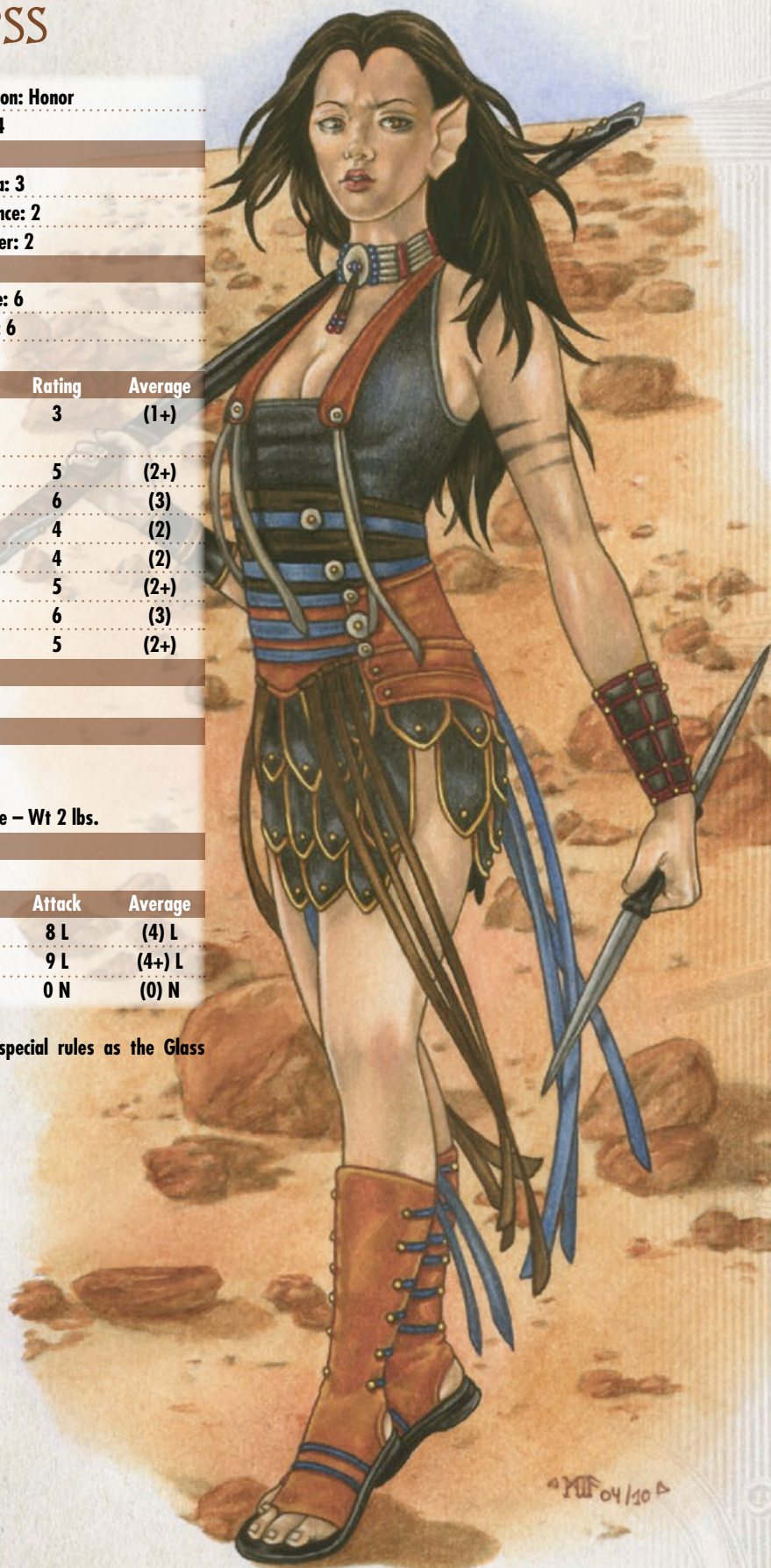
Dmg 3 L – Str 1 – Sp A – Cost invaluable – Wt 2 lbs.

## Flaw

**Underprivileged**

| Weapons          | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|------------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| Ancestors' Sword | 3 L    | 0    | 8 L    | (4) L   |
| Crossbow         | 3 L    | 0    | 9 L    | (4+) L  |
| Punch            | 0 N    | 0    | 0 N    | (0) N   |

\* The Ancestor's Sword has the same special rules as the Glass Dagger, see p. 226





# Martian Princess

*"Welcome, strangers. For what reason are you visiting the tents of my tribe? Will you choose the sword of strife or the tea of hostility?"*

## Character Background

My heart is full of joy that you chose the tea. The old ones have foretold that you have come to us with peace in your heart, and I am gladly willing to trust you. Sit down by the fire and warm yourselves. The nights out here are not as warm as they are in the forests near the great canal where our squeamish cousins live. I am the daughter of our second clan chief and I am the sword master of our tribe. Are you confused now? Oh, of course. As I hear it, the women of the Red People are not occupied with fighting and mostly stay at their homes in the city. You are strange people, strange indeed. Things are different with us – we live a free life here in the vast steppes and we are not imprisoned in the great cities of the elders.

This free life can be exhausting by times because the whole tribe has to be alert for trouble at any time – raiding enemies or greedy beasts attacking our gashants. Over the last few years however, my tribe has led a fairly good life. The ghosts have granted our warriors much hunting luck, the grass has been green and made our gashants grow strong, and the peoples of the steppes have lived in peace – besides from the fencing bout at the burial mound two moons ago. The hunters from our neighbor tribe were obviously looking for trouble – steal our dried meat and then even try to make excuses about it!

At the moment though, our council of eldest fears that the time of peace could be ending soon. In the south, one can already hear the rattling sound from the weaponry, as the peoples of the canal people are preparing for war again, but you will certainly know more about this than we do. As they say, this war is meant for you. Soon they will come to our land again, with their polished guns and their colorful standards. Once again our cousins will treat us as incapable children, and once again they will demand tributes they have no rights to. They take us for talking animals. Although in fact our tribe was much more faithful to the emperor of the ancient times than the city dwellers from the south. The sword I'm wearing was been granted to my ancestor by the emperor himself – because our tribe had fought so bravely in his service! Yet once again we will show them who the true lords of the steppes are. The warriors of the Canal people may have mighty canons, but they neither know how to ride like true steppe people, nor how to shoot like them! Before we can fight, we have to learn more about what is going on at the canals. This is why I will join you when you leave our tribe. The council of the eldest has decided and I will follow its command gladly, because I am eager to see the lands at the canals myself. I'm willing to learn much about the world there. Tell me, does the water really fall from the sky in the land of the red faces, or is it just a tale?

## Roleplaying

Your tribe is of an ancient and noble lineage that has lived here since before the canals were built. Since all your older siblings are dead it is now up to you to carry the sword the great emperor once awarded your ancestors for their loyal service. Quite too often, foreigners penetrated your land and caused trouble. This is why you mistrust travelers in general. If they come in peace and respect the good customs you gladly make friends with them, as you did with these red strangers from the stars. Through them and through the tales of the elders you have learnt a lot about the world beyond the steppe. Adventurous as you are, you want to see all these fantastic things the stories talk about with your own eyes. Until now, you only know the customs of the steppe people. The strange habits and practices of the canal people and the red men amaze you like a child. You will still have to learn to handle them correctly. As a proud daughter of the steppes you are always honest and polite as the good habits of the ancestors demand of you. Yet you also have a violent temper and quite often you are looking for a fight too easily. You are still young though and the elders say traveling will give you wisdom, a wisdom you will need when you will return to your tribe one day to be its leader.



# Explorer

Archetype: Adventurer  
Style: 3

Motivation: Discovery  
Health: 6

## Primary Attributes

Body: 3  
Dexterity: 4  
Strength: 2

Charisma: 2  
Intelligence: 2  
Willpower: 3

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0  
Move: 6  
Perception: 7

Initiative: 6  
Defense: 7  
Stun: 3

| Skills       | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|--------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Athletics    | 4    | 2      | 6      | (3)     |
| Brawl        | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Firearms     | 4    | 3      | 7      | (3+)    |
| (Rifles)     | 4    | 4      | 8      | (4)     |
| Intimidation | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Melee        | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Survival     | 2    | 3      | 5      | (2+)    |
| (Navigation) | 2    | 4      | 6      | (3)     |

## Talents

Alertness

## Resources

Wealth 1

## Flaw

Impulsive

| Weapons                  | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|--------------------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| .30-06 Bolt-Action-Rifle | 3 L    | 0    | 11 L   | (5+) L  |
| Folding Spate            | 2 N    | 0    | 6 N    | (3) N   |
| Punch                    | 0 N    | 0    | 4 N    | (2) N   |



Explorer



# Explorer

*"Why I want to go to this place? That's easy, my young friend; because no white man has ever been there before!"*

## Character Background

My family always said that I made trouble when I was a little boy. Back then, in the early 70s, my family did not have the brewing empire it has today. It started with a little brewery in the city that father built up and today, everyone across central Europe drinks our beer. He and the family expected me to learn the ropes of our family business, so I did. In order for me to one day make an adequate heir, I suppose, but as you see, I was more eager to set out to see the world.

As a child, I devoured the travel reports of explorers such as Humboldt and Livingstone. The thought of spending my whole life seeing to the family business in the northern province of Germany abhorred me, to put it mildly. I dreamt of travelling down the Amazonas, visiting the legendary Timbuktu, or climbing the mountain massifs of Afghanistan. One day, so I imagined, my name would be written in the books of history, alongside those of my famous idols – Humboldt, Livingstone, Stanley, and Finsch. I continued to make trouble when I got to university. Instead of studying economics as my family wished me to, I instead studied the subjects that interested me – geography, botany, zoology, and cultural anthropology. Of course, I didn't graduate in any of them. I did however, join all kinds of expeditions as a student, some of which taking me to Central Asia and one even as far as Mars. There I shot a steppe tiger, it's the stuffed beast you can see back there. Good work, don't you think? I scared the wits out of our servants when I had it put up. After my days as a student were over, I kept on travelling. Most of my relatives thought this was just a waste of money. A young man has to occupy himself with serious matters and not roam the jungle of Honduras – at that time, I was searching for the legendary Latin American pygmy rhinoceros. It would have made a great mascot for our brewery don't you think?

A few years ago, my father almost cut me out of his will because of my lifestyle. Today he supports me financially because he understands that when his son hits the headlines as a cosmopolitan, bold adventurer, it promotes the family beer! Most of the articles you read about me are a bit exaggerated though. For example, I didn't abduct the daughter of the sultan of Brunei. She chose to join me – of course, I had to beat up the palace guard anyway when they refused to let her go; and to be honest I wasn't the first one to discover the Valley of Bones on Venus either. I was just the first one to return and to live to report about it! Right now I'm making plans on my next trip. I have a special method for this. You see the maps at the wall and these dart arrows? I hope I won't hit Mecklenburg-Vorpommern again...

## Roleplaying

Ever since your childhood you have been fascinated with discoverers like Alexander von Humboldt, Magellan, or David Livingstone. You devoured every book on foreign countries you could get hold of and to the dismay of your parents you cared more about old maps than about your Latin lessons. You knew very early that you wanted to step into the footsteps of your idols. Being the son of a rich industrial family you don't have to worry about money and so now you do anything to make your childhood dreams come true. The early dawn of the Age of Ether truly does not lack for places waiting to be discovered. When a place is far-off and unexplored you are drawn to it. You have been on innumerable expeditions which have taken you to every corner of the Solar System. Much to the chagrin of the scientists who often accompany you on your journeys, you are an adventurer in the classical mode. Your approach often is more impulsive and less scientific. And that's no surprise, since you actually travel for the sake of the adventure. It is also your love of adventure that gets you into precarious situations again and again.



# Missionary

Archetype: Missionary  
Style: 3

Motivation: Faith  
Health: 5

## Primary Attributes

Body: 2  
Dexterity: 2  
Strength: 2  
Charisma: 3  
Intelligence: 3  
Willpower: 3

## Secondary Attributes

Size: 0  
Move: 4  
Perception: 6  
Initiative: 5  
Defense: 4  
Stun: 2

| Skills       | Base | Levels | Rating | Average |
|--------------|------|--------|--------|---------|
| Academics    | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)     |
| Bureaucracy  | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Diplomacy    | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| (Persuasion) | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)     |
| Empathy      | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Firearms     | 2    | 2      | 4      | (2)     |
| Linguistics  | 3    | 1      | 4      | (2)     |
| Medicine     | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |
| (First Aid)  | 3    | 3      | 6      | (3)     |
| Survival     | 3    | 2      | 5      | (2+)    |

## Talents

Jack of All Trades, Skill Mastery (Academics)

## Resources

Rank 1 (Church)

## Flaw

Underprivileged

| Weapons               | Rating | Size | Attack | Average |
|-----------------------|--------|------|--------|---------|
| .22 Bolt-Action Rifle | 2 L    | 0    | 6 L    | (3) L   |
| Punch                 | 0 N    | 0    | 0 N    | (0) N   |



Missionary



# Missionary

*"Alright – everybody now: ABIDE WITH ME ... Hey there, at the back, you too!"*

## Character Background

Beware of the bushes over there. The berries are quite delicious but the leaves have nettles. My protégées here have scales and don't feel them, but we do. You could get a nasty rash later. The Lord created man with only very limited suitability for life on Venus, you know? But the Morning Star isn't as bad as everybody says. If you come to know your way you will eventually see that the creation here, too, is overwhelmingly beautiful. Of course the local fungi that accumulates everywhere is a little annoying. Lately, it ate away my harmonium because I forgot to inject the wood with carbolic. Well, never mind, I still got my harmonica, which the Lizardmen prefer anyway. They like its sound! Many of them come listening to my sermons only because we sing. Lizardmen love music and song, you know? They sure told you the Venusians in this place were already Christians. This is indeed partly true. To this particular tribe, their highest god Homa and our Lord are one and the same. The carving you mistook for a pagan idol earlier depicts St. Peter, for example. You wouldn't think so at first sight, would you? But these villagers still know very little about the Christian belief. Or about reading and writing. The people from the colonial administration always talk about implementing compulsory school attendance for Venusians also, but then they don't do it anyway, these dam... er ... pardon me. As a missionary I shouldn't be swearing. However, this is why our endowment here is also responsible for the natives' schooling, just as for the medical care. That's why I'm more like a nurse and a village teacher in personal union than a preacher.

You know, my work here not only comprises preaching and telling the villagers something about Jesus Christ. Most people believe that missionaries like me are only concerned with drumming our belief into the pagans. There is much more to the work of a missionary though. It is about helping these poor souls, and when this help consists of treating wounds, teaching children, and collecting berries, then that's how I will help them. Alright, and now I'm going to try to hunt down a roast. For what is berry sauce without a proper roast? Why don't you just pick up your hunting rifle and follow me!

## Roleplaying

You grew up in a peaceful small town, and as a child you were what is usually called a good girl. You were always the best student in elementary as well as Sunday school, and you collected good marks as other children collected trading cards from chocolate boxes. You never caused any sorrow with your parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles. You were always friendly, helpful and deeply religious. Everyone thought that you would one day lead a boring life with a boring husband, but it was just your Christian attitude and your readiness to help others that led you onto a venturesome path. When you were only 19 you shocked your parents with your decision to fly into space for a missionary endowment in order to bring the aliens humanitarian help and the Christian faith. You have been working as a missionary for a few years now, and have learned more about the culture of your 'children' this way than is written in any book. Plus you have also done more good for your protégées than the disinterested colonial administration with which you seem to be perpetually feuding. You are not only an expert in the field of Christian theology, but also for alien customs and for life in the wild. Your field work has made you an extraordinary pragmatic. You are well aware of the fact that your protégées benefit more from medical care and school education than mere preaching. Even though you are very religious yourself, you are generally opposed to religious fanaticism. True Christian conviction reflects in good deeds and in screaming verses from the Bible with rolling eyes and foam at the mouth.

Missionary



# Rules

A roleplaying game is about people getting together and telling stories. Each participant takes on a specific persona or 'character' and interacts with the game world through this role and the aims and goals that have been defined for the character. In doing so, the aims and goals of the character you play drive along the plot, engage both yourself and your fellow players in the story and make them curious to see how it all turns out. What happens though, when two characters aim for different goals, or when their desires and intentions conflict? Who decides who wins and who loses? This is where the rules come into play.

Rules are the foundation of every game, and they ensure that everyone is playing fairly. If something applies to one character, it also applies to another. If two characters perform the same Action, the only difference between them lies in how skilled and how lucky they are. The Difficulty Rating of the action, and the rules for resolving it, remain the same. Based on this the Gamemaster can interpret the rules as strictly or flexibly as he wants.

Some players like to describe the outcome of an action based on the circumstances without referring to the game mechanisms; others prefer to resolve actions by rolling the dice, letting chance and the rules influence the development of the story. Both approaches to roleplaying are equally valid. It is all just a matter of personal preference.

Most players fall somewhere between these two extremes. The story flows nicely when things happen fast and without disruption, but when things are getting dangerous, such as when a hungry steppe tiger attacks your character, it is time to refer to the rules and see what your options are.

The Ubiquity roleplaying game system was developed for fast, cinematic game play. While speed and simplicity are more important than gritty realism, each player still has the possibility to influence his character's chance of success by making tactical decisions. The goal is to spend less time rolling dice and more time telling a story. This does not mean however, that rolling the dice is not an important part of the game. To the contrary, rolling the dice is a critical part of determining whether an action succeeds or not. Unnecessary dice rolls are eliminated however – such as when a character is performing a routine task.

The Ubiquity rules are designed to be accessible to all kinds of players. Even those who have never played a roleplaying game before, or someone who is not good at mathematics, will be able to learn the rules quickly. Most of the calculations have already been done for you and all you have to worry about is rolling dice and telling a story. If you enjoy rolling dice, you can ignore the shortcuts without upsetting the game balance. The provided rules are flexible and powerful tools that let you tell the story that you want to tell without getting in the way.

## Dice

The Ubiquity system uses dice to resolve challenges and to determine the success or failure of an important action. This is done by rolling a number of dice and counting how many of them show an even result. Every die that rolls an even number is considered a success. The more successes rolled, the better the outcome of the action.

*Example: Laura throws five six-sided dice and gets the following numbers: 1, 3, 4, 4, and 6. Counting only the dice that rolled even numbers, she rolled three successes.*

The Ubiquity system does not require special dice to play; you can just use any dice you already own. Each player should have about ten dice to hand. Any dice that have the same quantity of even and odd-numbered sides will work – you can even mix and match different kinds of dice without the flow of the game or the rules being affected.

*Example: Alex rolls six dice: a 4-sided, a 6-sided, an 8-sided, a 10-sided, a 12-sided, and a 20-sided. He rolls a 1, 3, 5, 9, 12, and 18. Counting only the dice that show even numbers, he rolled two successes.*

**Note:** To keep it simple, we assume that even numbered dice count as successes. Players could just as easily count all odd-numbered dice as successes without changing the probability. With the Gamemaster's permission, players may be allowed to call "even" or "odd" before rolling and count only those dice that show as such as successes.

## Rules Overview

### Step One: Declare Action (p. 195f.)

Describe what your character wants to do and determine if it is a Standard, Extended, Opposed, or Reflexive Action. Also determine the Skill or Attribute roll required to resolve the action and its type (Standard, Extended, Opposed, or Reflexive Action).

### Step Two: Determine Difficulty (p. 196f.)

The Gamemaster determines the Difficulty Rating of your character's action, that is how many successes you need to succeed at the task, based on the task being attempted and the Skill or Attribute involved.

### Step Three: Calculate Dice Pool (p. 197f.)

Calculate your Dice Pool, that is the number of dice you are allowed to roll, based on the appropriate Skill or Attribute ratings and add or subtract any modifiers.

### Step Four: Take the Average (p. 198f.)

Compare the average of the (modified) Skill or Attribute rating with the number of successes required to determine if you have to roll the dice at all. If your average number of successes equal or exceed the Difficulty Rating, you can claim an automatic success and your character succeeds without rolling any dice. If you do, go on with Step Six.

### Step Five: Roll Dice (p. 199)

Roll your Dice Pool you have determined in Step Three and count the number of successes.



## Step Six: Resolve Action (p. 199)

Compare the number of successes with the Difficulty Rating of the task. If the number of successes equals or exceeds the difficulty, then the action succeeds. If the number of successes is less than the difficulty, the action fails.

## Step Seven: Try Again (p. 200)

If your character's action failed, the Gamemaster may give permission for him to try again. However, trying again reduces your Dice Pool by 2. Return to Step Five.

### Ubiquity Dice

While the Ubiquity system does not require any special kind of dice, Ubiquity dice are recommended to speed up gameplay. These specially designed 8-sided dice dramatically simplify play, allowing you to roll up to one-third fewer dice and just add up the total.

Each Ubiquity die has a different value and is color-coded for easy identification. Instead of rolling six regular dice, for example, you could roll two d3s, three d2s, or six d1s. You can mix and match Ubiquity dice any way you want as long as the total value remains the same. The probability of rolling a success remains the same as with regular dice.

Using Ubiquity dice with the Ubiquity system is recommended. Rolling fewer dice, less often, lets you focus on roleplaying without missing out on the gaming aspect. It is the best of both worlds.

single combat turn, since every character involved is trying to do something in a short timeframe.

**Scene:** The standard increment of time, a scene generally encompasses a single event in one specific location. A scene may be comprised of several combat turns, run in real time, or even jump back and forth between the two. The Gamemaster can even fast-forward through parts of the scene, but changing locations or starting a new event generally signals the beginning of a new scene. When in doubt, the Gamemaster determines where one scene ends and another begins.

**Game Session:** A Game Session begins when the players sit down and ends when they pack up to leave. Thereby a Game Session is a unit of real-time set aside to tell a story. The Gamemaster should have a plan of what will happen during the Game Session, including how to move the story forward and how to provide challenges and rewards for the players. At the end of an ideal Game Session, the players will leave with a sense of accomplishment or a sense of anticipation if the Session ended on a cliffhanger and so will be looking forward to the next session.

**Story:** A Story is one complete tale. Some stories only take one game session, others might take several sessions to be completed, but when they end, that plot is concluded and the conflict resolved. The characters' adventures however, are by no means over and more stories are waiting for them.

**Downtime:** Unimportant events may be skimmed over during play. When these events are transferred to some time in between game sessions, it is called Downtime. Normally, this occurs between stories, giving characters a chance to grow and develop. When nothing important occurs, there is no need to roleplay it, but characters may spend Experience Points during Downtime. The next game session resumes the story with the next interesting event, sometimes heralding a new story.

**Campaign:** A Campaign is a series of stories, linked to each other by a common thread, such as recurring characters, a common theme, or an overarching plot. As the Campaign continues, the Gamemaster and players weave the storylines together into an epic saga.

## Time

Time is relative in a roleplaying game, much like in a book or movie. During a game session it can fly, crawl, or even jump around. Only one thing is certain – game time will rarely, if ever, pass by in real time.

How the Gamemaster handles time affects the pace of the story. He can gloss over unimportant details or slow it down to slow-motion in critical situations. During combat, for example, it may take several minutes of real time to resolve events that only take a few seconds of game time.

Several weeks of game time, on the other hand, may be covered in just a few real minutes, assuming that nothing noteworthy happens during that time.

There are six basic increments of game time. They represent everything from a few seconds to an entire lifetime (or longer). By combining these units of game time, the Gamemaster can set the pace of the story in a way that makes sense to everyone involved.

**Combat Turn:** The shortest increment of time is the combat turn, approximately six seconds long. It represents the amount of time it takes a character to move a short distance and perform a standard action (see *Actions*, below). A lot may happen in a

## Actions

There are four basic types of actions. Some of the things characters try to accomplish can be done fairly quickly, while other tasks may take more time. Sometimes an action can happen in the blink of an eye and take no time at all. However, time is not the only criterion that distinguishes different actions. Perhaps there is somebody who actively tries to prevent a character from completing her task. Each type of action is resolved in its own way, the rules for each are explained below.

### Standard Actions

Standard Actions are straightforward and can be resolved relatively quickly without any opposition. Shooting a gun, jumping across a chasm, and picking a lock are all examples of Standard Actions. Basically anything that can be resolved in a single dice roll during a combat turn is considered a Standard Action.

Standard Actions require a standard Skill or Attribute roll. If the number of successes rolled equals or exceeds the difficulty, the action is successful. If the player rolled fewer successes, the action fails. It's as simple as that.

*Example: Stephen's character is trying to pinpoint his location on an ancient map. Because the map is old and incomplete,*



*the Gamemaster determines that the action requires a Survival roll with a Difficulty Rating of 4. Stephen rolls the dice and only gets two successes. His character cannot make heads or tails out of the map.*

## Extended Actions

Not every action can be resolved immediately. Some tasks take considerably longer to complete, such as deciphering an ancient book, repairing a vehicle, or climbing a mountain. These tasks are called Extended Actions. In general, anything that requires more than one dice roll to accomplish or takes more than one combat turn is considered an Extended Action.

Extended Actions are resolved with extended Skill or Attribute rolls. The Gamemaster determines the total number of successes required to complete an Extended Action. The number of required successes depends on the complexity of the task – typically between five and ten. He also determines the time span each dice roll represents.

Just like a standard action, an Extended Action has a Difficulty Rating. Only those successes that exceed the Difficulty Rating count toward the total needed to complete the task. If fewer successes are rolled than the Difficulty Rating, the difference is subtracted from the number of already accumulated successes. This illustrates that some tasks are more complex, and thus take more time and expertise than others.

If the average of the required Skill exceeds the Difficulty Rating of the task – see Taking the Average, below – the Extended Action will automatically be completed after a certain amount of time.

Once the required number of successes has been accumulated, the task is completed. Up to that point, the player must keep rolling dice or abandon the task.

Depending on the nature of the task, the Gamemaster may allow the player to keep the number of successes accumulated if she is disrupted during her action.

*Example: Michael's character is trying to decipher an ancient text. It is fairly long, so it is going to take no little time. The Gamemaster determines that this task requires an Extended Action roll using the Linguistics skill with a Difficulty Rating of 3 because the text is written in an almost forgotten language. Each roll represents one hour of concentrated work and Michael has to accumulate at least 10 successes in order for his character to complete the translation.*

*Michael makes an extended Linguistics roll and gets four successes. Subtracting the Difficulty Rating of 3, he only accumulates one success. On his next roll, he only gets three successes, which means that his character has not made any progress during that hour of work. He retains the one success from his first roll, though. On his third roll, Michael gets five successes, which accumulates two more successes, a grand total of three successes. After three hours of work, Michael's character has deciphered approximately one-third of the text.*

## Opposed Actions

Occasionally, two characters compete for the same task, or one may actively try to prevent the other from completing the task at all. For example, two characters may be reaching for the same weapon, or one might be trying to punch the other. In these cases, opposed rolls are made to determine who

prevails. Both standard and extended actions can be Opposed Actions.

To resolve Opposed Actions, two characters make a Skill or Attribute roll and compare the number of successes. The one with the most successes wins. If both characters roll the same number of successes, it is considered a draw. For example, if they were both trying to grab the same weapon, both have reached it and must now attempt to wrest it away from each other.

In situations where one character is clearly the defender, for example, when one character is trying not to get hit, a tied roll means that the attacker hit the defender, but without enough force to cause any damage. These correspond to the classic near miss from film scenes where a bullet or knife passes through a piece of clothing or only nicks the character.

If two or more characters are racing each other to the same goal, such as climbing to the top of a mountain, the first player to roll the required number of successes wins. If two or more characters exceed the required number at the same time, then the one with the most successes wins. If there is still a tie, both characters reach the goal at the same time.

*Example: Alex's character is trying to wrest a weapon away from a High Martian. He and the Gamemaster make opposed Strength rolls and they each roll three successes. As the defender, the High Martian barely holds on to the weapon, but the Gamemaster decides that he cannot attack with his weapon this round.*

## Reflexive Actions

Some actions do not take any time at all to resolve, but happen instantaneously and on an instinctive level without the character having to think about them. Typical cases of Reflexive Actions are grabbing a handhold before falling, or resisting the effects of a poison. Since Reflexive Actions take neither time, nor the attention of the character, there are usually no penalties for multiple actions. They also do not count toward a character's actions for a given turn.

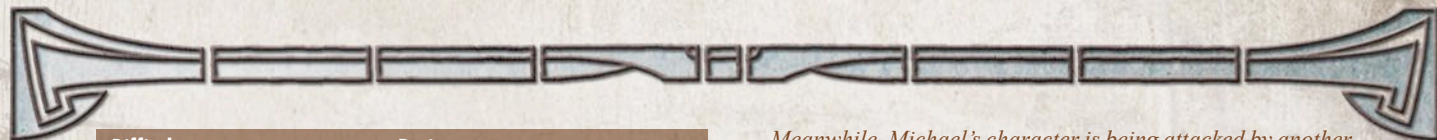
Reflexive Actions are variants of opposed actions. Resisting another character who is trying to make your character do something unpleasant is a Reflexive Action. Reflexive Actions are resolved with a reflexive Skill or Attribute roll. If the number of successes rolled meets or exceeds the Difficulty Rating, the action succeeds. If the reflexive roll is opposed, the character with the higher number of successes wins; if there is a tie, the defending character wins.

*Example: A Martian princess is trying to seduce Stephen's character. She makes a Con skill test and rolls three successes. Stephen makes a reflexive Willpower roll and gets four successes. His character is not swayed by the Princess's advances and politely bids his farewell.*

## Difficulty

The Difficulty Rating of an action is determined by the Gamemaster and represents how hard the task is to perform. The Difficulty Rating is the number of successes required to complete the action. Any successes exceeding this number represent a higher degree of success. Usually, Difficulty Ratings range from one to five, but exceptionally difficult tasks may have higher ratings.





| Difficulty      | Rating |
|-----------------|--------|
| Easy            | 1      |
| Average         | 2      |
| Tough           | 3      |
| Hard            | 4      |
| Very Hard       | 5      |
| Nigh Impossible | 6+     |

**Example:** Mia's character is trying to repair the pitch elevator of her airship. Because the ship was severely damaged in an emergency landing, the Gamemaster determines that the task requires a Mechanics roll with a Difficulty Rating of 3. Mia has to roll at least three successes to make any progress in repairing the pitch elevator.

## Dice Pool

The number of dice you are allowed to use for an action is called a Dice Pool. It is based on the rating of the appropriate Skill or Attribute for the task being attempted. Therefore, the size of the Dice Pool will vary from character to character and action to action.

## Skill and Attribute Ratings

Virtually every dice roll you make in the game will be based on a specific Skill or Attribute rating. The first step in calculating the size of the Dice Pool is to determine the appropriate Skill or Attribute rating.

Skills cover almost any action that a character will attempt. If a character possesses the appropriate Skill for the task, the Dice Pool is equal to the Skill rating. If he does not, the Dice Pool is equal to the Skill's Base Attribute -2 (see Untrained Skill rolls, p. 150).

**Example:** Alex's and Michael's characters are being threatened by hostile Martians. Alex's character decides to fight his way through them. His character has a Brawl rating of 4, so Alex can roll 4 dice for his attempt to attack one of the Martians.

Michael's character does not have the Brawl Skill, so he has to use the corresponding Base Attribute -2. His Strength rating is 2, giving him a Dice Pool of zero. He is not going to be much help in the fight.

Skill Specializations that apply to a particular action increase the Skill rating used to calculate the Dice Pool.

**Example:** Laura's character is being menaced by a steppe tiger and she decides to take the creature out using her shotgun. Her character has Firearms 7 with a Skill Specialization in Shotguns, so in this case her Firearms rating would be 8.

For any action not covered by a Skill, an Attribute roll is made (such as when a character tries to remember a certain detail or is trying to resist the effects of a poison). The Dice Pool is either equal to the rating of a suitable Secondary Attribute, or double the rating of the corresponding Primary Attribute. See the specific Attribute descriptions for examples of Attribute rolls.

**Example:** Alex's character and the Martian he is fighting with are both trying to grab the same pistol. Since this is a question of sheer speed, the Gamemaster has both characters make opposed Dexterity rolls. The Dexterity rating of Alex's character is 4, so he has a Dice Pool of 8 for the action.

Meanwhile, Michael's character is being attacked by another enemy. His Defense rating (a Secondary Attribute) is 4, so his Dice Pool to defend himself is 4.

Once you have determined the base Dice Pool for an action, it can be modified to represent equipment or other influencing factors. These modifiers can be positive or negative.

## Modifiers

There are countless situational modifiers that can influence the success of an action. These modifiers translate into Bonus and Penalty dice, with bonus dice being added and penalty dice being subtracted from the corresponding Dice Pool. A maximum of ten dice may be added or subtracted from the base Dice Pool, not counting equipment bonuses. If the character's Dice Pool reduces to zero or less, the action is considered a failure.

| Modifier         | Example                             | Bonus/Penalty |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Superior bonus   | A team of highly trained assistants | +8            |
| Major Bonus      | Taking extra time                   | +4            |
| Moderate bonus   | A good set of tools                 | +2            |
| Minor bonus      | Had some practice                   | +1            |
| No Modifier      | Normal conditions                   | 0             |
| Minor penalty    | Slightly obscured vision            | -1            |
| Moderate penalty | Improvised tools                    | -2            |
| Major penalty    | Crippling wounds                    | -4            |
| Severe penalty   | Total darkness                      | -8            |

## Equipment

Using the proper tools and material for a task gains a character bonus dice for the corresponding Dice Pool. Using the wrong equipment or improvised tools imposes a penalty to the Dice Pool. Additionally, high quality tools and equipment will provide further bonuses, just as low quality equipment will impose further penalties.

**Example:** Stephen's character is using a grappling hook to scale a wall. His Athletics rating is 6 and the hook gives him a +2 bonus to climbing rolls, adding up to a total Dice Pool of 8.

The most common type of equipment bonus is a weapon bonus. Each weapon has a Damage Rating that is added to the Skill rating to determine the Dice Pool for an attack roll.

**Example:** Laura's character is firing her shotgun at a charging Steppe Tiger. Her Firearms rating with a shotgun is 8, the weapon's Damage Rating is 4, so her Dice Pool for the attack is 12.

**Note:** Weapon and equipment bonuses do not count toward the maximum number of dice that may be added to a Dice Pool.

## Circumstances

There are countless factors that can have an effect on your character's actions. Perhaps your character is injured, his sight is impaired, or he has some other sort of disadvantage. Some circumstances can make a task easier, some can make it harder. It is the responsibility and decision of the Gamemaster to decide which circumstances have an impact on the task and how many dice are added or subtracted from the Dice Pool.

**Example:** Laura's character is badly wounded and trying to pick the lock of a medicine cabinet. Her Larceny rating is 5 and





the lockpicks provide a +2 bonus. Unfortunately, her current Health is -3, so her Dice Pool is not 7, but reduced to 4.

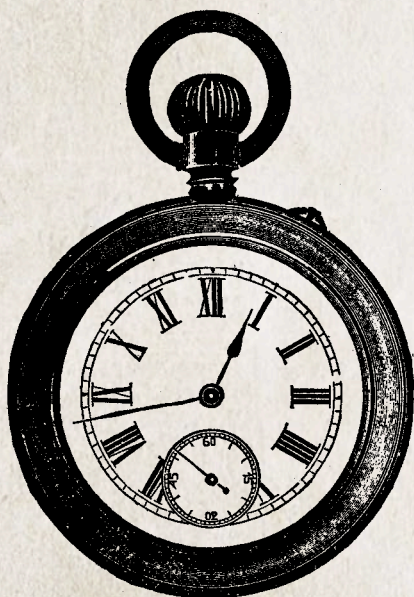
## Time

Some tasks take longer than others. Shooting a gun takes no more than a few seconds, fixing a Benz Patent-Motorwagen might take an hour, while the translation of an exotic text might take a day or more. Sometimes the quality of the result is more important than the time required to perform the task. Sometimes time is of the essence and getting the job done is more important than doing it well. In general, a player gets bonus dice if he takes his time, while rushing evokes a penalty and means that he has dice deducted from his Dice Pool.

| Time                | Dice Pool |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Ten times slower    | +8        |
| Five times slower   | +4        |
| Two times slower    | +2        |
| Normal speed        | 0         |
| Two times as fast   | -4        |
| Three times as fast | -8        |

**Example:** Michael's character is trapped in an ancient Martian tomb with the walls closing in. He has to decipher the inscription on the door in order to find out how to escape before he is crushed to death. The Gamemaster tells Michael that deciphering the inscription will take five combat turns (30 seconds), but that the walls will close in on him in only three combat turns (18 seconds). Michael's character will have to work twice as fast to survive disturbing the peace of the dead.

Michael's character has Linguistics 6, but suffers a -4 penalty for having to work twice as fast, leaving him with a Dice Pool of 2. He is in a tight spot indeed, but if he succeeds, he will escape from the trap just in the nick of time.



## Skill Synergy

If your character has more than one Skill applicable to the task he is about to perform, he receives bonus dice to his Dice Pool (see Skill Synergy, p. 151).

## Teamwork

If your character has a skilled assistant helping him accomplishing a task, he receives bonus dice to his Dice Pool (see Teamwork, p. 151).

## Taking the Average

It is important to keep the story moving and not get bogged down by constantly rolling dice. Nothing can slow a game down, or take the drama out of a story faster than rolling dice for every straightforward or routine task.

The Ubiquity rules address this problem in an easy and quick way – Taking the Average. The probability that a die roll will come up a success is 50/50, just like flipping a coin. This makes it very easy to calculate the average number of successes for each dice roll by simply dividing your Dice Pool by 2. The result is the number of successes you will roll on average. While it is possible to roll more or fewer successes, the average represents the degree of skill your character exhibits when he is not making an effort. If you have a Dice Pool of six, you will get 3 successes on average. This means that your character can even handle relatively tough situations without breaking a sweat.

If the average number of successes is equal to or exceeds the Difficulty Rating of a task, after counting in all modifiers, your character can be assumed to have succeeded with minimal effort – all without rolling the dice. This allows the Gamemaster to move the story along without slowing down each time a character is performing a relatively simple task. As a result, you only roll dice in critical situations or when the outcome of an action is uncertain.

**Example:** Alex's character has a Stealth rating of 6. If he is taking the average, he will get 3 automatic successes. He therefore does not have to roll any dice for Stealth tasks with a Difficulty Rating of 3 or less.

## Taking the Average of Odd Numbers

If the number of dice in the Dice Pool is an odd number, calculating the average is done a little differently. The Dice Pool is divided in half, rounded down, and a "+" sign is added to indicate the odd die. For example, if your Dice Pool is 7, the average will be 3+. On average you should roll more than three successes, but not always four. To be precise, you have about equal chance of rolling 3 or 4. Therefore, if you want to Take the Average and it is important whether you have the lower or the higher number of successes, you roll one die. If the die comes up a success, you take the higher number of successes (in the example above, this would be 4). If not, use the lower number (3 in the example).

Just as with even numbers, the task is a success if the average of the Dice Pool equals or exceeds the Difficulty Rating.

**Example:** Alex's character has a Survival rating of 5, so the average is 2+. For each task that has a Difficulty Rating of 2, he can take the average without rolling any dice. For tasks with a Difficulty Rating of 3, he will have to roll one die: if it is a success, the task is completed. If it does not, he only has two successes and the action fails.



## Modifiers and Taking the Average

Since Taking the Average is intended to speed up the game, it makes sense to pre-calculate the number of average successes for a Skill roll. However, Dice Pools can be modified (a bonus for high quality tools, for example) and the average will change accordingly. Each bonus die moves the average up one step; each penalty die reduces the average one step. For example, if the average is 3+ and the Gamemaster grants a bonus die, the player can take an average of 4 without rolling any dice. On the other hand, he will only have an average of 3 if the Gamemaster imposes a penalty of one die. By the same logic, if the modified average results in a “+”, you may roll a die to determine whether you gain the additional success, or not.

For example, if you have an average of 2+ and you are granted 2 bonus dice to your Dice Pool, the first bonus die raises the average to 3 and the second bonus die to 3+. Assuming that there were no other modifiers, you would roll one die to determine whether your character scores 3 or 4 successes in total.

*Example: As mentioned above, Alex's character has a Survival rating of 5, which gives him an average of 2+ successes. If he were to gain a bonus die because of favorable conditions, his average would rise to 3. If the conditions are against him, his average would fall back to 2. Additional modifiers increase or decrease average successes accordingly.*

## Resolving Actions

With the exception of some particular tasks, it is rarely in doubt whether an action succeeds or not. Usually, you do not have to roll dice to determine the outcome of ordinary, everyday actions like walking across a room. But when there is danger or a significant chance that the action might fail, there needs to be a method to determine the outcome. In some instances, the player might also need to know the degree of success or failure of his character's action. Did he succeed spectacularly or just squeak by?

### Rolling Dice

Rolling dice determines the success or failure of an action. The number of dice you roll depends on the corresponding Skill or Attribute rating and might be modified according to the situation. The modified Dice Pool is rolled and each die that shows an even number is counted as a success. The total number of successes rolled determines the outcome of the character's action and its degree of success: the more successes rolled, the better the outcome of the action.

### Optional: Rolling Large Dice Pools

Anything over ten dice is considered a large Dice Pool. A roll with so many dice might be problematic, as you may not have enough dice or are unable to roll them all at once. To avoid this problem, you can take the average for the first ten dice (five successes) and then roll the remainder. The rolled successes are then added to the average successes to determine the outcome of the action.

*Example: Alex's character is shooting his rifle at a steppe tiger. After counting in all modifiers, he has a Dice Pool of 14 for his Attack roll. Instead of rolling all the dice, he takes the average on the first ten (5 successes) and only rolls the remaining four dice. He rolls 3 successes, giving him a total of 8 successes on his attack.*

## Degree of Success

Compare the number of successes achieved (gained by rolling dice or taking the average) to the Difficulty Rating for the action being attempted. The difference between these two numbers is called the Degree of Success. If the number of successes is at least as high as the Difficulty Rating, the action is successful and the number of additional successes determines how masterfully the action is accomplished. On the other hand, if the number of successes is lower than the Difficulty Rating, then the action fails and the difference between the two numbers determines how severely the action fails.

| Successes vs. Difficulty | Degree of Success or Failure |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| +5 or more               | Amazing success              |
| +4                       | Exceptional success          |
| +3                       | Major success                |
| +2                       | Complete success             |
| +1                       | Simple success               |
| 0                        | Minor success                |
| -1                       | Simple failure               |
| -2                       | Complete failure             |
| -3                       | Pitiful failure              |
| -4                       | Dreadful failure             |
| -5 or more               | Abysmal failure              |

Usually, the Degree of Success is roleplayed. With a high Degree of Success, for example, the character might get more information than he otherwise would have, or his task is completed in less time than expected. Alternately, a higher Degree of Failure is even more spectacular than only a simple failure, such as getting slightly misleading information or ruining your equipment so that retrying the action is impossible.

In combat, the result is even clearer. Each extra success in an attack roll raises the inflicted damage, while a higher degree of failure represents a more distinct miss of the target. The Difficulty Rating of an attack takes into account the opponent's reflexes and toughness. Therefore, not all misses are clean misses. Sometimes, a simple failure is enough to damage the target's armor, slash his clothes, or represents a hit that just does not land hard enough to cause an injury. This is the case when the attacker rolls exactly the number of successes as his opponent's Defense roll. The blow lands, but is only a scratch or a near miss. An attacker must exceed the target's Defense roll to cause actual damage. See the Combat chapter for more details.

*Example: Mia's character tries to repair the engine of a cloudship. The Difficulty Rating is 3. She calculates her modified Dice Pool and rolls the dice, but gets only 2 successes – not enough to fix the engine. Since she only rolled one success less than needed, the Gamemaster decides that Mia's character has at least figured out where the problem lies and allows her to try again immediately.*

### Critical Failure

If your character fails to roll even one success on any of his dice, he suffers a critical failure and something bad happens to him: he falls down, his weapon jams, or he stumbles right into his opponent's attack. In general, the higher the Difficulty Rating of the task that is being attempted, the worse is the outcome of the critical failure. Therefore, a critical failure on a simple task



is not as severe as one made while attempting a very hard task, which is often associated with a higher risk.

**Example:** *Laura's character is trying to pick the lock of a medicine cabinet. Her Larceny roll only shows odd numbers – a critical failure. Since picking the lock has a Difficulty Rating of 3, her failure is quite serious. The Gamemaster decides that her character's lock pick gets stuck in the lock and even breaks while she is trying to get it out. Therefore, Laura's character cannot try to pick the lock again until she has found a suitable new tool.*

## Trying Again

If your character fails a task, she may try again depending on the circumstances, and whether the Gamemaster allows it. Whenever your character is Trying Again, you suffer a –2 penalty to your Dice Pool.

Tasks that can be tried again are usually those where a failure does not have immediate consequences. For example, trying to hit someone, missing, and trying to hit him again does not count as Trying Again, but as a new attack and therefore a new action. Additionally, the separate dice rolls of extended actions do not count as Trying Again, as each roll is still part of the same action. Actions such as climbing a tree or building a shelter, on the other hand, count as trying again if your character fails the first time.

**Example:** *Stephen's character failed to find a lost temple with the help of an ancient map. After one hour of wandering about, he is trying to make sense of the map again. The Difficulty Rating for finding the temple is 3, but receives a –2 penalty on his Survival roll for Trying Again. He rolls his modified Dice Pool and gets 3 successes. After another hour of wandering, his character figures out what he did wrong and finally locates the lost temple.*

## Style Points

Arguably the most important resource in the game, Style points can be used to give your character a boost, thus allowing him to perform extraordinary feats. With Style points you can buy bonus dice, reduce damage, or boost your character's talents. They may also be spent to support your character's friends and allies. Style points are used to reward players for the kind of roleplaying that makes the game more fun for everyone. The more things you do to benefit the game, the more effective your character will become, and the more fun it will be for all involved.

### Earning Style Points

The Gamemaster may award Style points as he sees fit. In general, they are a reward for good roleplaying and other activities that benefit the game. Style points are usually awarded during play right after the action through which they were earned, but the Gamemaster might also decide to give them out at the end of a game session just like Experience Points.

Style points may be awarded for a variety of reasons:

- Pursuing your character's Motivation: 1 Style point.
- Giving in to your character's Flaw: 1 Style point.
- Good roleplaying (staying in character): 1 Style point.

There is no limit to the number of Style points that you can earn during play; however, the Gamemaster may decide to award no more than 5 points per character per game session, in order to keep things from getting out of hand.

**Note:** Style points can be noted down on the character sheet just like Health or Experience Points. Because Style points tend to come and go much more frequently than any other trait however, it is recommended to track them with poker chips or another set of physical objects.

## Spending Style Points

Players may spend Style points for a variety of benefits.

**Bonus dice:** Most Style points are spent for gaining bonus dice to a specific roll. You receive one bonus die for every Style point spent. These bonus dice can be used only once and are gone after the roll has been made. If you want to add bonus dice to another roll, you have to spend more Style points. Furthermore, bonus dice can be used to temporarily raise the average of a skill (see Taking the Average, p. 198). You may not purchase more than ten bonus dice for any one task.

**Example:** *Michael's character is fighting a High Martian on an out of control and burning cloudship. Because he is the only one left on board able to fly the ship, he has to defeat his opponent quickly, race to the steering wheel of the ship, stabilize it, and bring it down safely enough for him and the other passengers to survive the experience. His modified Attack Dice Pool is only 4. That will probably not be sufficient, so he decides to raise his chances by spending 4 Style points. He now has an Attack Dice Pool of 8. Michael could take the average of 4, but knowing that he will need more successes for this to work, he rolls all 8 dice. This is going to be a close one!*

**Boosting Talents:** Style points may also be used to temporarily boost a Talent. Every two Style points spent improve the boosted Talent by one level. This improvement lasts for the duration of an entire combat or, an entire scene if it is a non-combat Talent. Afterwards the Talent reverts back to its normal level.

Your character must have a Talent in order to boost it. You cannot boost a unique Talent your character does not have or improve a standard Talent beyond its maximum level.

**Example:** *Alex's character is in deep trouble. He was separated from his companions and is now facing a hungry Tyrannosaurus Giganticus, the largest land predator on Venus. If he wants to survive this encounter, he has to make every shot count by hitting the beast where it really hurts. Called shots to hit vital areas penalize the attacker's Dice Pool. Fortunately, Alex's character has the Accuracy Talent, which reduces this penalty. Alex wants to reduce this penalty as much as possible, so he boosts his Talent. He spends an impressive 6 Style points to boost his Accuracy to its maximum level, which allows him to ignore up to –8 penalties for called shots for the duration of the combat. If he can do enough damage to the giant beast before it gets to him, he just might have chance of surviving.*

**Damage Reduction:** Damage inflicted on your character can be reduced with Style points. Every two Style points spent reduce the damage suffered by one point. This represents the character's special status as a player character. Thus, even an absent-minded professor can blunder through combat with nary a scratch. Major villains may also have Style points, making them just as hard to kill as player characters.

Style points may only be spent to reduce damage when it is inflicted. If the Gamemaster allows it, however, you may spend Style points for damage reduction later, representing a less severe wound or exceptionally fast healing.

**Example:** *Laura's character shot and killed the steppe tiger that was attacking her. Unfortunately, the animal had not been alone and its hunting partner attacked her from behind while*



*she was preoccupied. With its powerful jaws it inflicted seven points of lethal damage, more than enough to incapacitate her; so Laura decides to spend Style points to reduce the damage. Laura spends all of her four Style points to reduce the damage by two. The remaining damage of five is enough to stun her, but not knock her unconscious.*

**Other:** The Gamemaster may allow you to spend Style points for other benefits, such as slightly altering the plot of an adventure, or making a seemingly random event turn out in favor for your character.

**Note:** Spending Style points is considered a reflexive action.

### Style Point Options

The Gamemaster may alter the value of Style points to suit the style of play he wishes to run:

- **Legendary:** Two bonus dice per Style point
- **High Adventure:** no spending cap.
- **Pulp Adventure:** One bonus die per Style point.
- **Low Adventure:** One bonus die per Style point.
- **Gritty Realism:** No Style points.

In addition, the Gamemaster may also wish to limit the sharing of Style points with other characters:

- **Shared:** One bonus die per Style point
- **Limited:** One bonus die per two Style points
- **Individual:** Characters cannot share Style points

### Sharing Style Points

Style points are connected to the character who earned them. They cannot be given away or traded to another character – with one exception. Each player is allowed to spend Style points to support other characters, such as an Ally, a Follower, or another player character.

Your character however, has to do something to explain the expenditure. He could say some words of encouragement or give the recipient a helping hand. For example, a shove or shouted warning is often enough to give another character some bonus dice for a Defense roll.

**Example:** *Stephen's character is trying to prevent a hapless scientist from being abducted by High Martians. The scientist's Defense rating is 4 and he is being attacked by a Martian with a club. Stephen thinks that the scientist does not stand much of a chance, so he decides to help him. He declares that his character shoves the scientist out of the way and spends two Style points to boost the scientist's Defense by two, giving him a total of six dice. As a result, the Martian's attack misses. Stephen's character steps in front of the scientist and glowers at the brute.*

### Chance Dice

Style points are limited, so what to do if you are in a critical situation and you have run out of Style points? Desperate times call for desperate measures. This is where Chance dice come into play.

When the odds are against you, you have to take a bigger risk in order to succeed. To gain bonus dice without spending Style points, you can always ask the Gamemaster for Chance dice. You may do this at any time, even if your character has Style points left. In fact, you can even combine Style points with Chance dice.

For every two bonus dice the Difficulty Rating of the task being attempted is raised by one. You can get a maximum of ten Chance dice for a single roll, raising the difficulty by five.

Chance dice are added to your Dice Pool the same way as other bonus dice. While you get to roll more dice however, you also need to roll more successes in order to succeed. Essentially, you are gambling that you will roll more successes with the bonus dice than you added to the Difficulty Rating by asking for them. The higher Difficulty Rating also increases the severity of the failure if you do not roll enough successes. The higher risk involved with Chance dice is only worth it if you are in real trouble.

**Note:** Make sure you have enough dice in your Dice Pool to cover the number of successes you will need in order for your character to succeed in his task. In general, you will want your Dice Pool to be higher than the Difficulty Rating of the Action. Furthermore, you may not Take the Average when using Chance dice.

**Example:** *Laura's character is trying to make a crash landing. She is an experienced pilot, but the cloudship has already taken serious damage. She has Pilot (Cloudship) 4, but suffers a -4 penalty for the damage to the ship. This leaves her with a Dice Pool of zero to crash land the ship without killing herself and the passengers. To make matters worse, she has already spent all her Style points, so she has to resort to extreme measures.*

*Laura asks the Gamemaster for 6 Chance dice, which also raises the Difficulty Rating by 3. Normally, the landing has a Difficulty Rating of 2, now raised to 5 for the Chance dice Laura took. This leaves her with only a slim chance, which is still better than none at all.*

*Laura rolls 4 successes, which is not enough to beat the Difficulty Rating of 5, but it could have been worse. Because it is only a simple failure, the Gamemaster decides that the cloudship hits the ground hard, battering and bruising everyone on board, but no one is killed and the ship might even be repaired – thanks to the heroic attempts of its pilot.*

### Experience Points

Just like real people, characters learn and grow over time: they hone their skills, develop their talents, and expand their knowledge. Most of what characters learn however, lies beyond the pages of a rulebook. They learn from their failures, but learning not to make mistakes in the first place requires common sense, which cannot be found on a character sheet. Growing older and wiser should be role-played, not purchased.

In game terms, characters change in more measurable ways – they gain Experience Points that represent all of the things that they learn over time. These Experience Points can be spent to improve a character's Attributes, Skills, and Talents – raising his power and versatility.

### Gaining Experience Points

The Gamemaster awards Experience Points to each character at the end of a game session. Players note down how many points



their character has earned on the character sheet and may spend them between game sessions to improve their character's abilities.

The Gamemaster may award between one and five Experience Points per game session to each character. On average, the number of Experience Points should lie at around three points per game session. Characters may however, earn more points for especially dramatic or eventful game sessions. No matter what, characters should always earn at least one experience point, because even the most dismal failure can be a learning experience.

Characters acquire Experience Points in a variety of ways:

- **Automatic:** Characters gain one experience point just for being part of a game session.
- **Danger:** Characters gain one experience point whenever they face mortal danger and manage to survive.
- **Roleplaying:** Characters gain one experience point whenever their players portray them exceptionally well.
- **Success:** Characters gain one experience point whenever they further the plot or make progress toward their goal.
- **Wisdom:** Characters gain one experience point whenever they learn something critically important.

The Gamemaster may decide to award extra Experience Points at the end of a story. These should be only a couple of extra points, usually as a bonus for successfully completing an adventure.

## Spending Experience Points

Experience Points may be spent to improve your character's Attributes, Skills, and Talents. Resources are usually gained or lost as part of the story and through good roleplaying, but may be purchased with Experience Points (subject to Gamemaster approval).

Players should aim to spend Experience Points on traits that reflect what their character has learned during the last few game sessions. As always, the Gamemaster is the final authority on how, when, and where Experience Points may be spent. He may also ask for justification for any Experience Point expenditure.

Experience Points may be spent in the following manner:

| Trait                      | Experience Point Cost   |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Primary Attribute          | New Attribute level x 5 |
| Skill                      | New Skill level x 2     |
| Skill specialization       | 3                       |
| Talent                     | 15                      |
| Resource                   | 15                      |
| Resource on level 0        | 7                       |
| Resource from level 0 to 1 | 8                       |

**Note:** No Trait may be raised more than one point at a time. Significant changes in skills and abilities take time and effort to accomplish, and this rule reflects that limitation.

**Example:** *Laura's character has been saving Experience Points for many game sessions. Her character has been taking a lot of damage, so she decides to raise Body from 2 to 3, costing her 15 Experience Points (the new level is 3, multiplied by 5 to make the total cost).*

## Awarding Experience Points

The Gamemaster should be careful when awarding Experience Points. It can be difficult to strike the right balance between giving out too much experience and not enough. The Gamemaster can unbalance the game by giving away too many, but conversely, can cause just as many problems by giving away too few. In practice, awarding three Experience Points (give or take a point) per game session sets a good pace for character advancement.

In addition, the Gamemaster is encouraged to give the same amount of Experience Points to each character. Giving more experience to only some of the characters may look like he is playing favorites, and runs the risk of unbalancing the game.

Players who put forth extra effort and get involved with the story should not go unrewarded, however. Style points are there to compensate individual player characters without upsetting game balance or the speed of character advancement.





# Combat, Damage, and Healing

## Combat Rules

Many adventures in Space: 1889 take place on uncivilized worlds, where characters are likely to face predators and dangerous foes alike. Whether the characters are on the steppes of Mars, in the swamps of Venus, or down the alleys of Whitechapel, these places all have 'predators' of their own. When faced with such predators, combat is quite often impossible to avoid, thus we need rules to handle such situations. The rules below are designed to be quick and easy while still being fun and cinematic.

## Combat Overview

### Step One: Roll Initiative (p. 203)

Roll Initiative to determine when your character's actions are resolved during the combat turn. The character with the most successes takes the first action and the character with the fewest successes goes last.

### Step Two: Combat Actions (p. 204)

Your character can attack, defend, and move each turn. Declare your character's Attack action and determine the Skill or Attribute roll required to resolve it. Defense actions are reflexive and do not need to be declared. Move actions must be declared, but do not require a dice roll to resolve.

### Step Three: Attack (p. 207f.)

The first attacker calculates his Attack rating, including appropriate modifiers, then rolls his modified dice pool.

### Step Four: Defense (p. 208f.)

The defender calculates his Defense rating, including any appropriate modifiers. She rolls her modified dice pool and compares the number of successes rolled to her opponent's Attack roll.

### Step Five: Damage (p. 211)

If the attacker rolls more successes than his opponent, his attack is successful. Each extra success inflicts one point of damage. If the attacker rolls fewer successes than the defender, his attack has missed. If both characters roll the same number of successes, the attacker narrowly misses or strikes the defender without enough force to do any damage.

### Step Six: Health (p. 211ff.)

If the attack inflicts damage, mark off the appropriate number of Health levels and resolve any additional damage effects, such as stun or knockback. If your character is reduced to negative Health, he falls unconscious. If he is reduced to -5 Health, he

dies. After damage is resolved, return to Step Three and go on to the next character in the initiative order.

## Combat Turns

Combat can be very confusing. There is often a lot going on and keeping everything straight can be difficult, especially when there are many different characters involved. To simplify things, combat is divided into six-second combat turns, making it easier for the Gamemaster to keep track of all the characters and resolve all their actions in order.

Each combat starts with an Initiative phase that determines when each character acts during the turn. This ensures that each character has a chance to attempt to accomplish his chosen task during the combat turn.

## Initiative

At the beginning of combat, every character involved rolls their Initiative rating to determine when they get to act in each combat turn. The number of successes rolled determines the order of Initiative, with the character that scored the most successes taking the first action and the character with the fewest successes going last. In the case of a tie, the character with the highest Initiative rating goes first. If two characters have the same Initiative rating, the character with the highest Initiative rating goes first. If two characters have the same initiative rating, the character with the highest Dexterity rating goes first. If there is still a tie, then both characters actions are resolved at the same time. Once a character's Initiative has been determined, it remains the same for the duration of the entire combat, but there are ways to alter it.

## Holding Actions

Sometimes a character will want to hold her action until another character does something in particular. For example, she may want to hold her attack until her opponent goes for his gun or shows his head form around the corner. In this case, the held action is resolved before the action that triggered it. Usually, only a character with a higher Initiative can hold an action, but even a character with a low Initiative can hold her action. In this case, she gives up her action in the current turn in order to trigger an action in a later turn. This is one of the few ways a slower character can improve her Initiative, even if only temporarily.

## Surprise

Occasionally a character will be caught unawares by an attack. Usually this is due to an ambush or an unforeseen accident. When a character is caught by surprise he does not get to act in the first turn of combat. He still rolls Initiative however, and can take reflexive actions and defend himself normally.



## Continuous Combat

Instead of running combat in a round-robin style, the Gamemaster may opt to run combat in more fluid, continuous combat fashion. In this option, combat is broken into phases, with ten phases equaling one combat turn. A character's actions occur at a frequency called the Initiative Rating, which is determined by adding action speed factors and subtracting the number of successes on the character's initiative roll.

*Initiative Rating = 10 - (Initiative pool successes) + (Action Speed Factor)*

| Speed Factor                  | Speed Modifier |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Weapon speed is 'F' (fast)    | -1             |
| Weapon speed is 'A' (average) | 0              |
| Weapon speed is 'S' (slow)    | +1             |
| Weapon rate of fire = 1/2     | +10            |
| Weapon rate of fire = 1/3     | +20            |
| Non-attack maneuver           | 0              |
| Brawl Attack                  | -1             |

The final result represents the phase during which the character's action is resolved. Subsequent actions are calculated in the same way, and then added to the previous total for an ongoing count.

For example, if you roll two successes on Initiative and your character is attacking with a dagger (-1 weapon speed), she attacks on phase 7. She would attack again on phase 14, 21, and so on. If, after the third attack, she wants to switch to a pistol, she would need to spend one round drawing the weapon (at initiative rate = 10 + 0), and would thus complete her draw on round 31. Thereafter, she might use the pistol every 8 phases (Initiative Rating = 10 - 2).

The Gamemaster would count up from one, for each character responsible for chiming in when the count reaches one of her actions. Using the continuous combat option makes using weaker, faster weapons more attractive because a character with a high initiative and a fast weapon may get to strike more frequently than an opponent using something slower and deadlier.

Effects which take one combat turn (such as suffering from continuous poison damage or needing to roll to stabilize while dying) occur every ten phases. For example, a character that was stunned on phase 56 will get to attack again on phase 66.

## Combat Actions

There are three different types of actions your character can take in combat: Attack, Defense, and Move actions. Your character may perform one of each type of action every combat turn without penalty. For example, your character can move, attack, and defend all in the same combat turn.

Your character does not have to perform all three types of combat actions, if he does not want to; however giving up one action does not allow him to perform two of another type. If he wants to give up his Defense action in order to make two Attack actions in the same combat turn, he would have to perform the Total Attack maneuver. (see Total Attack, p. 207).

Each type of combat action is described below.

### Attack Action

Attack actions are used to attempt to hurt an opponent. Depending on the type of weapon being used, the most common attack actions are Melee, Brawl, and Ranged attacks. Each Attack action uses a different combat Skill to resolve the action (see Attack, p. 207).

In addition to attacking an opponent, your character can also use his Attack action to perform a particular combat maneuver (see below).

### Defense Action

Defense actions are a special type of reflexive actions that are used to prevent damage from an attack. Your character's Defense rating represents her ability to both evade attacks and resist damage. Your character does not have to bother thinking about defending herself. She does it instinctively. As a result, you do not have to worry about taking a defense action. You simply make a Defense roll in response to an opponent's attack action every time your character is attacked.

### Move Action

A Move action allows a character to move a certain distance based on his Move rating. Your character may perform a Move action in addition to attacking and defending himself. You do not have to roll any dice to resolve a Move action; your character simply moves the appropriate distance based on his Move rating.

## Combat Manoeuvres

In lieu of taking a standard Attack action, your character can perform a variety of different combat manoeuvres. Combat manoeuvres may provide bonuses and penalties to attack opponents or allow your character to do other useful things.

### Aim

Aiming improves your character's accuracy and damage with a ranged weapon. Automatic weapons, however, cannot be aimed effectively because of their recoil.

For each full turn that your character spends aiming at her target, you gain a +2 aim bonus on your Attack roll, up to a maximum +4 bonus.

**Special:** Aiming takes your character's full attention and she cannot move or actively defend herself. If she is attacked, you



only get to roll your character's Passive Defense rating (plus any applicable defense modifiers) for her Defense roll. Your character may continue aiming as long as she does not take any damage. Alternately, your character may choose to stop aiming when attacked to defend herself using her full Defense rating, but will forfeit her accumulated aim bonus in doing so.

## Autofire

Most firearms can be fired accurately only once or twice per combat turn. Automatic weapons, on the other hand, are capable of firing a steady stream of bullets at an opponent, and what they lack in accuracy, they more than make up for in firepower.

When firing an automatic weapon, your character can make either a burst fire, a full autofire, or a strafing attack.

**Burst Fire:** Your character fires three bullets at a single target and gains a +1 autofire bonus to his Attack roll.

**Full Autofire:** Your character fires twenty or more bullets at a single target and gains a +3 autofire bonus to his Attack roll.

**Strafing:** Your character may strafe his fire across multiple targets when making a full autofire attack, but suffers a -2 penalty for each five-foot distance between targets. For example, if your character makes a full autofire attack at two targets standing ten feet apart, he receives a +3 bonus for the full autofire attack and a -4 penalty for the distance between the targets. The end result is a single autofire attack against both opponents with a -1 penalty on the Attack roll.

**Special:** When making a full autofire or strafing attack, your character cannot actively defend himself. If he is attacked, you only get to roll your character's Passive Defense rating, plus any applicable defense modifiers, for his Defense roll.

## Block

Instead of making an attack, your character attempts to block all Brawl attacks made against her during the turn. If she is attacked, make an opposed Brawl roll against her opponent, including any appropriate Defense modifiers. If you roll more successes than her opponent, the blow is blocked and does no damage. If he rolls more successes than you, your character takes damage equal to the number of extra successes he rolled.

Normally, only Brawl attacks may be blocked. If your character wants to block a Melee attack, she suffers a -2 on the attempt.

**Special:** Because your character is actively trying to block Brawl attacks, her normal Defense rating does not apply. She retains her normal Defense rating against other kinds of attacks, however.

## Called Shot

Sometimes your character will want to strike a specific target location, such as an object held in an opponent's hand, or a weak spot. Conversely, your character may want to avoid hitting something – such as a friend grappling with her opponent. Both scenarios require a called shot, and the Attack roll suffers a number of dice equal to the opponent's Defense rating or the Size rating of the object being attacked.

**Vital Area:** If your character really wants to hurt his opponent, he can make a called shot to hit a vital area. He suffers a penalty on his Attack roll equal to his opponent's full Defense rating (including armor and other Defense modifiers), but successes rolled automatically inflict damage on the target. If your modified dice pool is 0 or less, your character's attack automatically misses.

**Held Object:** If your character wants to hit a handheld object, you suffer a penalty equal to the object's Size rating (see Attacking Objects, p. 213). If the person holding the item is trying to prevent it from being struck, you use the base Defense rating of the person holding it or the object's Defense rating (whichever is greater). Any successes in excess of the Defense roll do damage as normal.

**Shooting into Combat:** If your character attempts to shoot around a friend to hit an opponent, he makes a called shot with a penalty equal to the amount of cover his target has (see Cover, p. 209). Obviously, a critical failure on this roll would be disastrous for your character's friend.

**Specific Location:** If your character wants to hit a specific target location on an opponent, refer to the following chart:

| Target Area | Attack Modifier |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Torso       | -1              |
| Limb        | -2              |
| Hand        | -4              |
| Head        | -4              |
| Eye         | -8              |

The result of hitting a specific location is up to the Gamemaster to interpret based on the specific circumstances, but it can be anything from forcing someone to drop a weapon to blinding your opponent.

## Cautious Attack

Your character can elect to make a cautious attack, focusing more on his defense than on harming his opponent. Your character suffers a -4 penalty on his Attack roll, but gains a +2 bonus on his Defense roll for the remainder of the round.

## Charge

When charging an opponent, your character makes a reckless, headlong assault using either a Brawl or a Melee attack. Charging grants a +2 charge bonus to your Attack roll. Your character may move up to her normal Move rating before making the attack, but cannot move again afterward.

**Shove:** Instead of making a standard charge attack, your character can attempt to shove her opponent rather than damage him. In this case, she makes a touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.) against her opponent. If successful, she does no damage. Instead, compare her opponent's Strength rating with the amount of damage your character would have done. If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, she moves him back five feet for each success in excess of his Strength rating.

If the damage you rolled is less than or equal to your opponent's Strength rating, your character's shove attempt failed and she ends her movement standing directly in front of him.

**Special:** When making a charge attack, your character cannot actively defend herself. If she is attacked, you only get to roll your character's Passive Defense rating (plus any applicable defense modifiers) for her Defense roll.

## Disarm

Your character can attempt to disarm his opponent by knocking his weapon from his hand with a melee weapon, or by stealing his weapon using a hand-to-hand attack.



Make an opposed Melee (or Brawl) roll against the opponent, but you suffer a -2 penalty for striking at his weapon. In addition, your opponent receives a +2 bonus if he is holding his weapon with both hands. If you roll less than or equal to the number of successes rolled by the opponent, your character fails to disarm him. If you roll more successes than the opponent, your character knocks the weapon from his grasp, flinging it five feet away per extra success rolled. Or, if your character was attempting to steal the weapon with a Brawl attack, he now has the weapon in his hands.

## Dodge

Instead of making an attack, your character attempts to dodge all ranged attacks made against her during the turn. If she is attacked, make an opposed Athletics roll versus her opponent's ranged Attack roll, including any appropriate Defense modifiers. If you roll more successes than him, the shot is dodged and does no damage. If he rolls more successes than you, your character takes damage equal to the number of extra successes he rolled.

**Special:** Because your character is actively trying to evade ranged attacks, her normal Defense rating does not apply. She retains her normal Defense rating against other types of attacks, however.

**Note:** If your character has the Acrobatics Skill, she may use that Skill in place of Athletics when dodging ranged attacks.

## Grapple

When your character attempts to immobilize his opponent without harming her, make a Brawl touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.) with a penalty equal to the Size rating of his opponent. If successful, you do no damage. Instead, compare the opponent's Strength rating with the amount of damage your character would have done.

If you roll more damage than her Strength rating, your character grabs her. On her next turn, the grappled character cannot attack and must succeed in an opposed Strength roll in order to free herself.

If you roll more damage than twice the opponent's Strength rating, your character pins her, and she only gets to use her Passive Defense rating for Defense rolls.

If the damage you rolled is less than or equal to your opponent's Strength rating, your character's grapple attempt fails.

## Parry

Instead of making an attack, your character attempts to parry all Melee attacks made against him. He must have a shield or be holding an appropriate weapon in order to perform this maneuver. If he is attacked, make an opposed Melee roll against his opponent, including any shield or weapon bonuses, and any appropriate Defense modifiers. If you roll more success than she does, the strike is parried and does no damage. If she rolls more successes than you, your character takes damage equal to the number of extra successes she rolled.

Normally, only Melee attacks can be parried. If your character wishes to parry a Brawl attack, he may do so, and will inflict damage on his attacker if you roll more successes on your Defense roll.

**Special:** Because your character is actively trying to parry Melee attacks, his normal Defense rating does not apply. Your character retains his normal Defense rating for other types of attacks, however.

## Optional: Block, Dodge, and Parry as an Active Defense

Many characters have a Defense rating exceeding their Skill ratings in Athletics (Dodge), Brawl (Block), or Melee (Parry), making the corresponding Defense maneuver seem useless. To avoid this issue you can redefine the rules in the following way. Whenever your character attempts a block, dodge, or parry maneuver, you only replace your character's Active Defense rating (=Dexterity) with the corresponding Skill rating, so his total Defense rating is now calculated as Passive Defense (Constitution) + Active Defense (Athletics, Brawl, or Melee) = Defense.

## Ready Weapon

Your character draws a weapon and readies it for combat. Most weapons only take a single action to ready, but some weapons may take longer to ready based on how complicated they are and how they are being carried.

## Reload Weapon

Your character reloads a firearm or similar ranged weapon by replacing the clip or magazine with a fresh one. Primitive and archaic weapons such as bows and crossbows, already have their reload time factored into their rate of fire and do not have to be reloaded. If reloading a weapon that has a cylinder or internal magazine, your character can insert a number of rounds equal to his Dexterity rating each time he performs this maneuver.

## Run

Instead of making an attack, your character doubles her Move rating to determine the distance she runs during the combat turn. She can defend herself normally, but is unable to perform any other actions while running.

## Sprint

Instead of making an attack, your character quadruples his Move rating to determine the distance he sprints during the combat turn. He can keep up his speed for a number of turns equal to his Body rating.

After this time, he may exert himself to continue sprinting for another turn, but he suffers a nonlethal wound in doing so. If he wishes, he can continue sprinting until he collapses from exhaustion.

After your character stops sprinting, he must rest for a number of turns equal to his Body rating before he can sprint again (if he has sprinted more turns than his Body rating during this combat).

## Stand Up

Falling down is easy; it is getting up that is hard. Your character can fall prone as a reflexive action, but standing up requires him to give up an attack action. Your character can move and defend normally after getting to his feet.

## Throw

Your character attempts to throw her opponent to the ground with a Brawl attack. Make a Brawl touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.) against the opponent. Your character suffers a penalty equal to the Size rating of her opponent. If successful, your character does no damage. Instead, compare the opponent's Strength rating with the amount of damage your character would have done. If the damage you rolled is less than or equal



to the opponent's Strength rating, your character fails to throw her opponent.

If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, your character throws him five feet per success in excess of his Strength rating. If this causes the opponent to strike an object and he cannot move further, he suffers a point of nonlethal damage for each five feet he still needs to move. Additional damage may be done depending on where the opponent lands.

## Total Attack

When all that matters is taking an opponent down, your character may go entirely on the offensive – disregarding her own safety – and gain a +2 bonus to her Attack roll. Instead of making a standard total attack, your character may make two attacks in the same combat turn.

**Dual Wield:** Your character can make two attacks, using one weapon in each hand. She may make two Melee attacks, two Ranged attacks, or one of each. She does not even have to attack the same target. However, attacking with two weapons is difficult; you give up the normal total attack bonus and suffer a -4 penalty to attack with the weapon in her primary hand and a -6 penalty to attack with the weapon in her off-hand.

**Flurry:** Your character attacks the same target twice, in quick succession, using either a melee weapon or her bare hands. You give up the normal total attack bonus and suffer a -4 penalty to both attacks when making a flurry attack.

**Rapid Fire:** Your character attacks the same target twice, in quick succession, with a ranged weapon capable of attacking more than once in the same round. You give up the normal total attack bonus and suffer a -4 penalty to both attacks when making a rapid fire attack.

**Special:** When making a total attack, your character cannot actively defend herself. If she is attacked, you only get to roll

your character's Passive Defense rating (plus any applicable Defense modifiers) for her Defense roll.

## Total Defense

In dire circumstances, your character may focus entirely on her defense – blocking blows, parrying strikes, and dodging ranged attacks all at the same time. By giving up her attack action, your character gains a +4 bonus to her Defense rating until her next turn.

## Trip

When your character attempts to trip her opponent and knock him down, make a Brawl touch attack against the opponent (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). Your character suffers a -2 penalty to her trip attack if her opponent has four or more legs. If successful, your character does no damage. Instead, compare the opponent's Strength rating to the amount of damage your character would have done. If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, your character knocks him down. If the damage you rolled is less than or equal to your opponent's Strength rating, your character fails to knock her opponent down.

## Use Item

Instead of making an attack, your character can use an item or operate a simple piece of machinery. He can press buttons, pull levers, or other similar tasks as long as it does not require a Skill roll to accomplish.

## Use Skill

Instead of making an attack, your character performs a Skill in combat, such as Diplomacy, Medicine, or Photography.

## Attack

An attack represents a character's ability to strike and damage her opponent. It not only determines if your character hits her opponent, but more importantly, how much damage she does to him. An attack covers both the power and accuracy of a blow, so it is resolved with a single dice roll.

## Attack Rating

A character's Attack rating represents how powerful and damaging the attack is. Very powerful, but inaccurate attacks and weaker, but highly accurate attacks may end up with the same attack ratings. One attack uses power to blow through an opponent's defense, while the other targets his weak spots – both are equally a damaging to the opponent.

Your character's base Attack rating is equal to his appropriate combat Skill rating:

**Ranged Attack:** Archery, Athletics, Firearms, or Gunnery rating

**Brawl Attack:** Brawl rating

**Melee Attack:** Melee rating

## Attack Modifiers

There are numerous factors that can modify your character's Attack rating. The weapon being used, the size and range to the target, visibility conditions, and any wound penalties he has, all can affect the outcome of an attack.





## Weapon

Each weapon has a Damage rating depending on how powerful and accurate it is. Typically, the larger the weapon, the more bonus dice it adds to the attack rating. This is an abstract concept however, which means that powerful but awkward weapons may do just as much damage as lighter, more accurate weapons. Weapons also determine the type of damage being inflicted, either lethal or nonlethal.

## Size

Even though the Solar System is filled with giant, rampaging beasts and tiny but dangerous insects, human-sized characters are the norm. Therefore, everything in Space: 1889 is scaled for attacking and defending against Size 0 creatures. Average-sized humans receive no Size modifier to their Attack ratings, but larger and smaller creatures do. Larger creatures receive a penalty to their Attack rating, representing how hard it is for them to hit humans. Smaller creatures receive a bonus to their Attack rating, representing how easy it is for them to hit a relatively larger target.

| Size | Attack Modifier |
|------|-----------------|
| 8    | -8              |
| 4    | -4              |
| 2    | -2              |
| 1    | -1              |
| 0    | 0               |
| -1   | +1              |
| -2   | +2              |
| -4   | +4              |
| -8   | +8              |

**Note:** Human-sized characters do not have any modifiers to attack larger or smaller creatures, as the difficulty of being hit by a Size 0 attacker is already factored into their Defense rating (see Defense, p. 208f.).

## Range

When attacking with a ranged weapon, your character's distance from her target modifies her Attack rating. However, different weapons have different ranges where they are most effective. You can hit a distant target more accurately with a rifle than with a thrown spear, for example. The distance that a weapon may be used to attack a target is its effective range. Attacking a target farther than this imposes a penalty on the Attack rating.

| Range       | Distance                  | Modifier |
|-------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Point Blank | Less than 5 feet          | *        |
| Short       | Weapon Range              | 0        |
| Medium      | Weapon Range x2           | -2       |
| Long        | Weapon Range x4           | -4       |
| Extreme     | More than Weapon Range x4 | -8       |

\* Pistols provide an additional bonus die when used at point blank range. Rifles are designed for long distance and suffer a penalty die to use them up close. Shotguns have no modifier at point blank range as their damage rating already takes their effective range into account.

## Visibility

It is hard to attack effectively, when you are unable to see clearly. Very dim light or very bright light shining directly into your character's eyes, can modify his Attack rating.

| Visibility        | Example              | Modifier |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Blinding light    | Direct sunlight      | -8       |
| Bright light      | Spotlight            | -4       |
| Glare             | Reflected Sunlight   | -2       |
| Well-lit          | Diffused light       | 0        |
| Dim light         | Candle or torchlight | -2       |
| Near darkness     | Moonless night       | -4       |
| Complete darkness | Underground cave     | -8       |

## Wound Penalties

When your character is seriously wounded, he suffers wound penalties to his Attack rating equal to his negative Health rating. In addition, his ability to act is limited (see Health, p. 211ff.).

## Attack Roll

The dice pool for your Attack roll is equal to your character's Attack rating plus or minus any circumstantial modifiers. If your modified dice pool is 0 or less, your character's attack automatically misses.

Roll your modified dice pool and compare your number of successes to the opponent's Defense roll. If you roll more successes than the opponent, your character has injured him. Each extra success inflicts one point of damage and may have additional effects (see Damage, p. 211).

If you roll fewer successes than the opponent, your character's attack is a clean miss. If you both roll the same number of successes, your character's attack narrowly misses or strikes his target without enough force to do any damage. This is similar to the close calls in television and movies where bullets and knives get caught in clothing, are barely deflected by armor, or only graze a character.

## Defense

While an Attack roll represents a character's ability to strike her opponent, her Defense rating represents her ability to both evade an attack and soak up any damage. Since Defense covers both a character's agility and toughness, it is resolved with a single dice roll.

## Defense Rating

A character's Defense rating represents how hard he is to hit and how resistant he is to damage. Therefore, frail but agile characters and slow but tough characters may have the same Defense rating. One defender relies on his natural toughness to shrug off blows while the other relies on not getting hit in the first place. Both characters are equally resistant to damage; however, there are situations that require a character to use only one aspect of his Defense rating.

Your character's Defense rating is calculated as follows:



Defense = Passive Defense + Active Defense – Size

Passive Defense = Body rating

Active Defense = Dexterity rating

Your character may be limited to using only his Active or Passive Defense ratings against certain attacks, such as Touch Attacks and Area of Effect attacks (see below).

## Defense Modifiers

Several factors can modify your character's Defense rating. Your character's Size and armor (if any) are the most common modifiers. Cover, wound penalties, and even the number of attackers your character faces also affect how effective his defense is.

### Size

In Space: 1889, combat is scaled around human-sized characters. Average-sized characters receive no modifier to their Defense, but larger and smaller ones do. Larger opponents are easier to hit, while smaller creatures are harder to strike. Consequently, larger creatures suffer a penalty to their Defense rating while smaller creatures receive a bonus. To make up for this, larger and smaller creatures also receive a modifier to their Health rating. Although larger creatures may be easier to hit, they are also harder to kill. Conversely, smaller creatures may be harder to hit, but they are also easier to kill because they cannot take as much damage. For more information on the Size of creatures see p. 148.

| Size | Defense Modifier |
|------|------------------|
| 8    | -8               |
| 4    | -4               |
| 2    | -2               |
| 1    | -1               |
| 0    | 0                |
| -1   | +1               |
| -2   | +2               |
| -4   | +4               |
| -8   | +8               |

### Armor

Armor, whether natural or worn as clothing, deflects incoming attacks and prevents blows from doing as much damage as they would without the protection. To represent this, bonus dice from shields and armor are applied to a character's Defense rating. Armor is heavy and restrictive, though, and may also impose penalties on the character wearing it. See the Equipment chapter on p. 220ff. for specific stats on shields and armor.

### Cover

Taking cover is an excellent way to defend against attacks, especially against ranged attacks. The more cover your character has, the harder it is for attacks to harm her. In game terms, cover provides a bonus to your Defense rating. The more cover your character has, the greater the bonus you receive. Be aware that missed attacks are likely to hit the object being used as cover, so think twice before hiding behind a steam engine.

| Cover         | Modifier |
|---------------|----------|
| No cover      | 0        |
| Partial cover | +1       |
| Half cover    | +2       |
| Major cover   | +4       |
| Full cover    | +8       |

**Partial cover:** Most of your character is visible to the opponent, such as when hiding behind a small box.

**Half-cover:** Half of your character is visible to the opponent, such as when firing from behind a tree.

**Major cover:** Very little of your character is visible to the opponent, such as when peering around a corner.

**Full cover:** No part of your character is visible to the opponent, such as when hiding behind a huge boulder.

## Multiple Attackers

As in real life, it is hard to defend against multiple attackers. Groups of opponents can easily out manoeuvre and overpower your character; defending against one attacker leaves him open to another. Likewise, multiple attacks from a single attacker are similarly challenging to defend against.

Your character can only use his full Defense rating against one attack per combat turn. He suffers a -2 penalty to his Defense rating for each additional attack made against him during the same combat turn.

For example, if your character is attacked three times during the same turn, you roll your full Defense against the first attack; suffer a -2 penalty against the second attack; and a -4 penalty against the third attack. This represents how hard it is to defend oneself when beset on all sides. Even very tough characters may be brought down by groups of weaker assailants.

**Size Bonus:** Large creatures are able to handle multiple attackers more easily than smaller ones. For every two levels in Size, a creature may use its full Defense rating against one additional attack per turn. Therefore, a Size 2 creature does not suffer any penalties for being attacked twice during the same combat turn and a Size 4 creature does not suffer any penalties for being attacked three times. A Size 8 creature can defend itself up to five times per turn using its full Defense rating!

This bonus only applies when attacked by human-sized (or smaller) creatures. A larger creature will suffer normal penalties for multiple attacks by creatures of its own size.

## Wound Penalties

When your character is seriously wounded, but remains conscious, he suffers wound penalties to his Defense rating equal to his negative Health rating. In addition, his ability to act is limited (see Health, p. 211ff.).

## Touch Attacks

Sometimes you only need to determine if an opponent touches your character, such as when she is trying to grapple him or burn him with a torch. Since grapple attacks are not concerned with doing damage to your character, you do not get to use your character's Passive Defense rating for your Defense roll. Likewise, when facing an opponent wielding a torch or some other highly damaging weapon, you only get to use your character's Active Defense rating for your Defense roll.



With touch attacks, your character's size, cover, and wound penalties still factor into your Defense roll. Armor does not normally factor in unless your character is being attacked with a dangerous weapon (or when skin to skin contact is important).

**Note:** Touch attacks rarely do damage in and off themselves. Often the amount of damage that would have been done is compared to one of your character's Attributes to determine another effect, such as with a grapple attack. Touch attacks that result in damage (for example, being attacked with a burning torch) do a specified amount of damage if successful. Extra successes on the touch attack do not increase the amount of damage inflicted.

## Area of Effect Attacks

Some attacks, such as explosions, damage everything within a given radius. Since they do widespread damage, there is not any effective way to dodge such an attack. Characters caught in the radius of an area effect attack only get to use their Passive Defense rating for their Defense roll. Creature size and wound penalties (if any) are not factors when defending against area effect attacks, but any cover your character has or armor he is wearing will grant him some protection.

Area effect attacks made with fire, acid, or some other caustic material (see table, p. 215) ignore your character's Active Defense and Passive Defense. The only modifiers that factor into your Defense roll are armor and cover.

**Note:** While area of effect attacks are very powerful, only the weapon's damage rating is used for the Attack roll. An opponent's Skill rating is not a factor, except when it comes to placing or throwing the weapon into a particular location. This does not normally require a roll on his part, except when accuracy is important – such as when tossing a grenade into a T. Rex's open mouth.

## Defense and Taking the Average

To speed up combat, the Gamemaster may opt to have each character Take the Average of his Defense rating. The result becomes the threshold number of successes that must be exceeded in order to damage that character. Basically, it turns the opposed attack versus Defense roll into a simple Attack roll with a difficulty equal to the average Defense of the target. It sounds complicated, but it is really very simple. If you roll more successes than the opponent's average Defense, your character does that much damage to him.

While Taking the Average of Defense ratings greatly reduces the number of dice rolls in combat, most players like rolling dice to defend themselves – even if it means fewer successes than when they Take the Average. Therefore, the Gamemaster may want to use this method only for NPCs and less important characters in order to speed up combat and keep the focus on the player characters.

## Defense Roll

The dice pool for your Defense roll is equal to your character's Defense rating plus or minus any circumstantial modifiers. If your modified dice pool is 0 or less, then your character is defenseless and any successful attacks will inflict full damage.

Roll your modified dice pool and compare the number of successes to the opponent's Attack roll. If you roll more successes than your opponent, his attack is a clean miss. If you both roll the same number of successes, then is attack narrowly misses or strikes your character without enough force to do any damage. The blow may have been just a graze or was deflected by armor, for example.

If you roll fewer successes than your opponent, your character has been hit and suffers damage. Each extra success your opponent rolled inflicts one point of damage and may also have additional effects (see Damage, p. 211).

## Move

Movement does not require a dice roll to resolve. Your character simply moves the distance allowed by his Move rating for the type of movement he is making.

## Move Rating

Your character's Move rating is a combination of his speed and vigor. Strong and agile characters are fast, while weak and clumsy characters are slow. Your character's Move rating is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Move} = \text{Strength} + \text{Dexterity}^*$$

\* Characters with the Athletics Skill may substitute that Skill rating for their Move rating

How far your character moves per combat turn is based upon your character's Move rating and the type of movement he is making:

| Move | Combat (turn) | Swimming<br>Climbing (turn) | Horizontal<br>Jump* | Vertical<br>Jump* |
|------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1    | 5ft.          | 2.5 ft.                     | 2.5 ft.             | 1 ft.             |
| 2    | 10 ft.        | 5 ft.                       | 5 ft.               | 2 ft.             |
| 3    | 15 ft.        | 5 ft.                       | 5 ft.               | 3 ft.             |
| 4    | 20 ft.        | 10 ft.                      | 10 ft.              | 4 ft.             |
| 5    | 25 ft.        | 10 ft.                      | 10 ft.              | 5 ft.             |
| 6    | 30 ft.        | 15 ft.                      | 15 ft.              | 6 ft.             |
| 7    | 35 ft.        | 15 ft.                      | 15 ft.              | 7 ft.             |
| 8    | 40 ft.        | 20 ft.                      | 20 ft.              | 8 ft.             |
| 9    | 45 ft.        | 20 ft.                      | 20 ft.              | 9 ft.             |
| 10   | 50 ft.        | 25 ft.                      | 25 ft.              | 10 ft.            |

\* If your character does not have a running start, his jumping distance is halved.

## Wounds

Wound penalties reduce your character's effective Strength rating for the purposes of determining her movement and the amount of weight she can carry (see Encumbrance, below). For example, a character with Move 5 and Strength 3 is currently at -2 Health, reducing his Move rating to 3 and his effective Strength rating to 1 for determining how much weight he can carry.

## Encumbrance

Carrying too much weight can severely impede your character's movement. While it can be tempting to lug around all your character's gear and ammunition, there are limits. Carrying around



more weight will either slow your character down or tire him out fairly quickly. Both cases can be potentially fatal on the planets of the Solar System, where dangerous predators lure around every corner and one never knows when it will be necessary to make an expeditious retreat.

The amount of weight your character can carry without penalty is based upon his Strength rating.

| Strength | Light Load | Medium Load  | Heavy Load   |
|----------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1        | 0-10 lbs.  | 10-25 lbs.   | 25-50 lbs.   |
| 2        | 0-25 lbs.  | 25-50 lbs.   | 50-100 lbs.  |
| 3        | 0-50 lbs.  | 50-100 lbs.  | 100-250 lbs. |
| 4        | 0-100 lbs. | 100-250 lbs. | 250-500 lbs. |
| 5        | 0-250 lbs. | 250-500 lbs. | 500-750 lbs. |

The total weight your character is carrying determines his encumbrance category and the associated penalty (if any).

**Light Load:** Your character moves and performs actions without penalty.

**Medium Load:** Your character is encumbered and suffers a -1 penalty to his Dexterity and Move ratings.

**Heavy Load:** Your character is heavily encumbered and suffers a -2 penalty to his Dexterity and Move ratings.

**Maximum Load:** Your character can attempt to carry up to double his Heavy Load weight, but he suffers a -4 penalty to his Dexterity and Move ratings. If this reduces his Move rating to 0 or less, he can pick up the load, but not carry it. Each turn your character carries a maximum load he must exert himself.

**Exerting:** If your character is encumbered, he may exert himself – and suffer a nonlethal wound – to move and act normally for a single combat turn, or one hour of game time outside of combat.

## Damage

There are two types of damage, lethal and nonlethal. Most damage is lethal, which means that you will die if you take enough of this type of damage. Nonlethal damage, on the other hand, will only make you fall unconscious if you take enough of it. Massive amounts of nonlethal damage can become lethal however, so it is possible to die if you take enough damage.

**Lethal:** Cutting, slashing, stabbing, burning, and other major trauma that is highly damaging and will quickly kill someone. Most weapons do lethal damage.

**Nonlethal:** Bruising, fatigue, illness, shock, and other such minor traumas which are not immediately life-threatening. Only a few weapons do nonlethal damage – it is often caused by environmental conditions.

## Effects of Damage

**Stunned:** If your character takes more damage in one blow than his Stun rating, he is stunned and loses his next action. However, he may still perform reflexive actions and defend himself normally.

**Knocked Out:** If your character takes more damage in one blow than double his Stun rating, he is knocked out for one minute per point of damage in excess of his doubled Stun rating. He is defenseless and helpless during this time.

**Knockback:** If your character takes more damage in one blow than his Strength rating, he is knocked backward five feet

per point of damage in excess of his Strength rating. He may take additional damage depending on what is behind him.

**Knockdown:** If your character takes more damage in one blow than double his Strength rating, he is knocked down in addition to being knocked back, and must stand up on his next action.

**Continuous Damage:** Some attacks will continue to inflict damage over time. Both fire and poison damage, for example, often inflict damage each combat turn until the fire is put out or the poison wears off. Starvation or exposure to the elements will inflict damage over a longer period of time.

**Killing Blow:** Helpless, unconscious, or dying characters could potentially be dispatched with a single killing blow. The attacker ignores the victim's Defense, inflicting damage with every success rolled on his Attack roll.

## Small Creatures

Small creatures cannot take as much damage as larger ones. They are harder to hit, but have a lower Health rating.

Because of their size, in fact, small creatures could even have a negative starting Health rating. This does not mean that small characters are automatically dying or suffer from wound penalties. The negative Health rating is ignored until the small character suffers a wound, and then the new Health rating takes full effect. This represents how devastating even a single wound is to a small creature.

## Health

Your character's Health rating represents how much damage she can take before falling unconscious, suffering wound penalties, and dying. When your character's Health falls below 0, she suffers penalty dice equal to her negative Health rating to all actions – if she remains conscious at all.

There are two types of damage, lethal and nonlethal. As their names imply, they represent different kinds of wounds and have very different effects on characters.

**Lethal damage** represents wounds that are immediately life-threatening, such as broken bones, lacerations, punctures, etc. If your character's Health reaches 0 due to lethal wounds, she is disabled and is only capable of taking limited action. If her Health falls below 0, she falls unconscious and begins to die. If her health reaches -5 due to lethal wounds, she dies.

**Nonlethal damage** represents wounds that are not life-threatening, such as bruises, fatigue, shock, etc. If your character's Health reaches 0 due to nonlethal wounds, she is exhausted, and is only capable of taking limited action. If her Health falls below 0, she falls unconscious. If her Health reaches -5, any additional damage converts her nonlethal damage to lethal damage on a point-for-point basis.

Whenever a character takes damage, lethal damage is subtracted first from her Health, and nonlethal damage is subtracted second. The remaining Health total is used to determine if the character falls unconscious or suffers any wound penalties.



For example, a character with a base Health of 4 suffers two lethal and two nonlethal wounds, making her current Health 0. She is badly beaten and exhausted, but still on her feet. Unfortunately, she suffers two more lethal wounds, making her current Health -2. Instead of falling unconscious and dying however, she is only unconscious because it is the two nonlethal wounds that reduced her Health to -2. Without them, she would have a current Health of 0 and be merely disabled. If she suffers any more lethal damage, she will start dying. She will be in big trouble unless she receives medical attention soon.

## States of Being

**Exhausted:** If your character takes enough nonlethal damage to reduce his Health to 0, he is exhausted and only capable of taking limited action. Instead of attacking, defending, and moving all in the same combat turn, he can only perform one of these actions each turn. If he wishes, he can exert himself and perform all three actions normally, but suffers a nonlethal wound immediately afterward, causing him to fall unconscious.

**Disabled:** If your character takes enough lethal damage to reduce his Health to 0, he is disabled and only capable of taking limited action. Instead of attacking, defending, and moving all in the same combat turn, he may perform only one of these actions each turn. If he wishes, he may exert himself and perform all three actions normally, but suffers a lethal wound immediately afterward, causing him to fall unconscious and begin dying.

**Unconscious:** If your character takes enough nonlethal damage to reduce his Health below 0, then he falls unconscious. He will remain unconscious for one minute per point of damage below 0. If your character takes enough damage to reduce his Health to -1, he will regain consciousness in one minute.

**Dying:** If your character takes enough lethal damage to reduce his Health below 0, he falls unconscious and begins dying. He will continue to take one lethal wound per round until he receives medical attention or stabilizes on his own.

**Dead:** If your character takes enough lethal damage to reduce his Health to -5, he is dead, but may be resuscitated if he receives immediate medical attention.

**Remaining Conscious:** If your character takes enough damage to knock him unconscious, he may try to remain conscious through sheer willpower. Make a reflexive Willpower roll with a difficulty rating of 2. Your character suffers a penalty to his Willpower roll equal to his negative Health rating.

If you roll fewer than two successes, your character falls unconscious as normal. If you roll two or more successes, your character remains conscious, but is considered exhausted (or disabled of suffering from lethal wounds) and suffers a penalty to all actions equal to his negative Health rating. If he takes any additional damage, he must make another roll to remain conscious using the new penalty.

***Example:** Michael's character takes three lethal wounds, reducing his Health to -3. Michael wants his character to try to remain conscious, but his character's Willpower rating is 2, giving him a modified dice pool of 1. His character automatically falls unconscious because he cannot possibly roll two successes with one die.*

**Stabilizing:** If your character is dying, he can attempt to stabilize himself each combat turn. Make a reflexive Body roll with a difficulty rating of 2. Your character suffers a penalty to his Body roll equal to his negative Health rating.

If you roll fewer than two successes, your character continues to die as above, but may attempt to stabilize again next

combat turn using the new penalty. If you roll two or more successes, your character stabilizes and does not lose any additional Health. When he wakes up, he is considered disabled and suffers a penalty to all actions equal to his negative Health rating.

***Example:** Michael's character has been reduced to Health -3 and is dying. On his turn, he makes a stabilization roll. His character's Body rating is 3 and he suffers three penalty dice on the roll, so his final dice pool to stabilize is three. He rolls the dice and scores two successes. His character stabilizes before he loses any more Health, but he is still unconscious and will be disabled when he wakes up.*

**Note:** A skilled doctor or medical professional can attempt to stabilize a dying character. Make a Medicine roll with a difficulty rating of 2. The doctor attempting to stabilize the dying character suffers a penalty equal to the injured character's negative Health rating. If he rolls two or more successes, the dying character is stabilized as normal. If he rolls fewer than two successes, the dying character is not stabilized, but he may try again next turn.

## Healing

The Solar System is a dangerous place, and characters will get hurt. They might eat something poisonous, run afoul of a dangerous alien creature, or have a fight with an enemy. Player characters lead dangerous and exciting lives, and that means they are going to need medical attention from time to time if they want to live to tell the tale.

## Healing Rate

Characters normally heal one nonlethal wound per day and one lethal wound per week.

## First Aid

First aid can literally be a lifesaver. When properly administered, first aid can reduce the severity of an injury or even bring someone back from the brink of death.

The most life-threatening aspect of a wound is the shock and trauma that go along with it. Treating an injured person for this can actually reduce the severity of his wound. Make a Medicine roll to treat a wounded character. Each rolled success heals one point of nonlethal damage, or converts a point of lethal damage to nonlethal. Nonlethal damage is always healed before lethal, representing easing the shock and trauma of the wounded person.

First aid takes one minute to perform and must be administered within one hour after injury to have any benefit. After the hour is up, the damage becomes permanent and the wound must heal naturally. First aid may be administered each time a character is wounded, but it cannot heal more than the most recent damage.

***Example:** Laura's character is in bad shape. She suffered eight points of lethal damage, reducing her Health to -3. Molly's character performs first aid on her. Molly makes a Medicine roll and scores three successes. The first success converts a point of lethal damage into nonlethal, and the second success heals the nonlethal wound completely. The remaining success converts another point of lethal damage into nonlethal, leaving Laura's character with six points of lethal damage and one point of nonlethal. She is still badly hurt, but better off than she was before.*



## Medical Care

Healing takes time, but can be aided with medical attention. Normally, nonlethal damage heals at the rate of one point per day, and lethal damage heals at the rate of one point per week. Under the care of a skilled medical professional, a character heals much faster. The number of successes rolled by the character treating the patient decreases the amount of time it takes to heal a wound. For example, a character with one lethal and two nonlethal wounds receives medical assistance. The doctor looking after him rolls three successes, meaning that he will heal three times faster. Therefore, the two nonlethal wounds will heal the first day and the lethal wound two days later.

## Trying Again

If a character wishes to treat an injured person again, hoping to get a better result, she may do so, but each successive attempt imposes a cumulative -2 penalty on the Medicine roll. The new result, for better or for worse, replaces the previous result.

## Medical Supplies

Whether performing first aid, surgery, or long-term medical care, each Medicine roll uses one unit of medical supplies. If a character runs out of medical supplies, he can improvise with torn bandages and hard alcohol (or the like), but he suffers a -2 penalty on his Medicine roll. Making more medical supplies requires a Craft roll. One unit of medical supplies requires the appropriate amount of raw materials and has a difficulty rating of 2. Each extra success on the Craft roll produces one additional unit of medical supplies.

## Attacking Objects

Sometimes a character will want to break an object, such as smashing in a door or breaking a lock. Objects take damage much like people do, but the amount of damage they can take depends on the size of the object and its durability. A small object made of metal will be harder to break than a large one made of glass.

## Defense

The type of material the item is made out of determines its Defense rating. In this case, the Defense rating of the item represents how resistant it is to damage. Attacking an object is subject to the same modifiers for size and range as attacking an opponent. All successes rolled in excess of the object's Defense rating damage the item.

| Material | Defense |
|----------|---------|
| Glass    | 2       |
| Wood     | 4       |
| Stone    | 6       |
| Metal    | 8       |

## Structure

The amount of damage that an item can take depends upon the item's size and quality of construction. To calculate an object's Structure, add the Size modifier below to the object's Defense rating. However, the Size modifier cannot drop an object's base Structure below zero. Also, unlike humans, an object will break as soon as its Structure drops below 0. If its Structure reaches -5, it is utterly destroyed and can never be repaired.

| Size | Structure |
|------|-----------|
| +8   | +8        |
| +4   | +4        |
| +2   | +2        |
| +1   | +1        |
| 0    | 0         |
| -1   | -1        |
| -2   | -2        |
| -4   | -4        |
| -8   | -8        |

## Attacking a Hand Held Object

When attacking an item held in an opponent's hand, the character must make a called shot to hit the object, using the base Defense of the person holding it or the object's Defense (whichever is greater). Any successes in excess of the object's Defense roll do damage as normal.

## Environment

Environmental damage comes in many forms. Your character could have an accident, contract an illness, or suffer from exposure to the elements. Depending on the nature of the situation, environmental damage can be either lethal or nonlethal.

## Deprivation

The exploration of unknown worlds is a dangerous business, and one of the greatest dangers is running out of supplies. Whether due to an accident, miscalculation, or outright treachery, going without food or water for an extended period of time is bad for your health.

Unlike other environmental sources of damage, your character's Body rating has little to do with how long he can go without food and water before he starts weakening. Instead, it factors into his Health rating that determines how long he can withstand deprivation before expiring.

**Dehydration:** Your character suffers a lethal wound each day he goes without water. He will continue to take lethal damage until he once again has a steady supply of water.

**Starvation:** Your character suffers a lethal wound each day he goes without food. He will continue to take lethal damage until he once again has a steady supply of food.

**Note:** If your character goes without both food and water, he suffers damage from lacking both. Also – as if effects of deprivation were not bad enough – dehydrated or starving characters lack the energy to heal their wounds. All healing stops until the character regains regular access to food and water.

## Disease

The Earth is not the only place where diseases are spread. Diseases also exist in other parts of the Solar System. Becoming infected by a disease or infecting is a risk an explorer has to take.

Different diseases pose different problems. Whether battling the common cold or a more debilitating disease, a character is likely to take damage over time, and possibly suffer more serious effects if the malady is left untreated.

Most diseases and illnesses have an Infection rating, which represents how hard it is to avoid contracting the disease or fight



off the illness. Make a Body roll whenever your character is exposed to an illness (see Resistance, p. 146) and compare the number of successes to the Infection rating.

If you roll at least as many successes as the disease's Infection rating, your character avoids contracting the disease; however, he can become infected later if he is exposed to it again.

If you roll fewer successes than the Infection rating, your character contracts the disease and suffers its effects. To recover from a disease, make an extended Body roll against the Infection rating of the disease. Typically, each roll represents one day of sickness; you will need to accumulate between five and ten successes to fully recover from the disease. If being tended by a doctor, she may substitute her Medicine rating for your character's Body roll.

## Sample Diseases

### Smallpox

Smallpox is a very serious and sometimes fatal disease that is only transmitted by humans. The name is derived from the Latin word for 'spotted' and refers to the raised bumps that appear on the skin of an infected person. Infection usually occurs by inhaling the virus, which can remain on clothing, bedding, and other surfaces for up to one week. As such, the disease usually starts in the lungs, invades the bloodstream, and eventually spreads to the rest of the body.

**Symptoms:** At first, the infected character suffers from a high fever, lack of energy, aches and pains, and sometimes vomiting. Later, sores form in the character's mouth and a rash spreads all over her body, eventually becoming raised bumps. By this point, the character is usually too sick to perform normal activities.

**Infection:** 2 (3 if in direct contact with bodily fluids). Direct, prolonged, face-to-face contact – or contact with infected bodily fluids – is typically required to catch Smallpox.

An infected character usually feels fine for the first week, and displays no symptoms. She gradually begins to suffer symptoms over the second week, at which point the disease has taken hold. After the first week, the character takes a lethal wound per day until she recovers or succumbs to the disease. Characters infected with Smallpox suffer a -1 penalty to all actions due to the lethargy.

**Recovery:** 2 (10 successes are required to recover from the disease). Each Body roll represents one day of illness, starting from the day Smallpox is contracted. Long-term medical attention has almost no effect on Smallpox. However, if the Smallpox vaccine is administered to the diseased character, she gains a +2 bonus to her Body roll for the purpose of recovery.

### Venusian Diseases

The biodiversity of Venusian microorganisms is breathtaking. As such, it is not surprising that there are some among them which can be annoying or outright dangerous to humans. Listed below is a small selection of the most famous Venusian diseases.

#### Woodlouse Fever

**Symptoms:** Woodlouse Fever is a fever similar to malaria. The name derives from the victim's feeling of thousands of woodlice crawling about under his skin. Patients are afflicted by acute fe-

ver attacks combined with itchiness and the mentioned 'woodlouse feeling' every four to five weeks. Sometimes patients fall into a delirium during these attacks. The illness as such is deadly only on rare occasions, the scratch wounds the victims inflict upon themselves during the fever attacks however, are quite an issue, because the Venusian climate facilitates the inflammation of those wounds.

**Infection:** The ways of transmission for the Woodlouse Fever are still unknown – and are left to the Gamemaster's discretion.

**Healing:** Humans still ignore that the Lizard-Men use the Cytherian Orchid for a cure. It is possible though, to alleviate the symptoms of the fever attacks to a bearable level by using skin ointments and depressants.

### Moss-Fungus Disease

**Symptoms:** The moss-fungus is a bizarre alien plant that feels very comfortable on human skin. Most people think of moss-fungus as an evil parasite, but according to Dr. August Hoffman, chief physician of the military hospital in Venus City, it is the exact opposite of a disease and a human's best friend on Venus.

**Infection:** The 'disease' is transmitted by spores. The moss-fungus slowly spreads across the entire skin of the infected and feeds on the sweat and tallow secretions of the skin, as well as on the ambient humidity. The thin fungus layer itches somewhat when it becomes too dry, but prevents the otherwise inevitable vermin infestation on Venus. Interestingly, the skin fungus releases substances that enhance the body's defenses against other diseases and help him to adapt to the morning star's greenhouse climate. Some colonists have been infested with the moss-fungus from head to toe and pace about with a distinctive, pastel green skin color. On Earth, the thought of being covered by a skin fungus is found to be ghastly, but on Venus, the 'victims' of the Moss-Fungus Disease have become accustomed to it.

**Healing:** At present, some remedies that were developed on Venus are being tested with varying results. Only the Cytherian Orchid shows promising results.

## Drowning and Suffocation

Under normal circumstances, your character can hold his breath for one minute per point of Body rating. In combat, your character holds his breath for one turn per success on a reflexive Body roll.

After this time passes, your character will be forced to take a breath and suffer the effects of whatever he breathes in. If he inhales water or thick smoke, for example, he will receive one nonlethal wound per turn until he is able to breathe normally. Your character cannot hold his breath again until he has had a chance to catch his breath.

For Suffocation under the effects of vacuum see p. 216.

## Electricity

Characters run the risk of getting electrocuted from a variety of sources, including being struck by lightning, touching a live wire, or being purposely shocked by an enemy.

If electrocuted, no Attack roll is made. Your character automatically takes damage based on the intensity of the shock. If



an opponent attacks your character with an electrified weapon, such as a live wire, a touch attack is made (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). Your character gets to roll his Active Defense rating against the attack, but loses any armor bonuses from metal or other conducting materials.

The amount of damage done by a shock depends on the power of the electrical charge. Note that electricity is caustic damage (see Caustic Damage, p. 215) and will have a reduced effect against larger creatures.

| Electrical Shock                  | Damage |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Minor (a strong shock)            | 1 L    |
| Major (an electric fence)         | 2 L    |
| Severe (an electric generator)    | 3 L    |
| Deadly (an industrial power line) | 4 L    |

Damage will continue as long as your character remains in contact with the electricity. If the electrical current is continuous, your character may not be able to escape. The electrical shock may cause his muscles to contract and prevent him from pulling away. You must make a Strength roll with a difficulty equal to the electricity's damage rating in order for your character to escape.

If your successes equal or exceed the electricity's damage rating, your character pulls away and will not continue to take damage. If you rolled fewer successes than the damage rating, your character continues to take damage but may attempt another escape on his next turn.

## Caustic Damage

Caustic Damage – most notably that caused by fire, electricity, acid, and poison – is scaled for human-sized characters, but would prove a greater or lesser threat depending on the victim's size. An electrical fence that can stop a horse could kill a dog, but would not do much to a T. Rex besides make him angry. To account for this, reduce caustic damage by one point for each two Size levels above zero, or increase it by one point for each two Size levels below zero. For Size 1 or –1 creatures, a '+' sign is added to the damage to indicate the possibility of taking an extra point of damage (see Taking the Average of Odd Numbers, p. 198). Larger creatures take no damage from caustic damage that is reduced to zero, but may still feel pain when they come in contact with it.

*Example: Michael's character is armed only with a torch, when he is attacked by a wolf. Against an average-sized human, the torch would do 1 point of lethal damage, but the wolf is Size –1, so the damage increases to 1+. As with Taking the Average, the '+' indicates a 50% chance of an extra point of damage. In this case, one die is rolled and it comes up a success, so the wolf takes 2 points of fire damage from the torch. Unfortunately, the next opponent Michael encounters is a triceratops, which is Size 2. The torch's damage is reduced to zero against the large dinosaur. Burning a dinosaur with a flame that size would probably startle and enrage it, but not injure it. If only he could use the torch to make a bigger fire...*

## Exposure

Extremely hot and cold conditions can be detrimental to your character's health. Prolonged exposure can even be fatal. Exposure to extreme temperatures does nonlethal damage every hour

that your character is without shelter. The amount of damage your character takes is determined by how extreme the conditions are.

| Temperature (Fahrenheit) | Temperature (Celsius) | Damage |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Over 120°                | Over 50°              | 4 N    |
| 113–120°                 | 45–50°                | 3 N    |
| 104–113°                 | 40–45°                | 2 N    |
| 95–104°                  | 35–40°                | 1 N    |
| 50–95°                   | 10–35°                | 0      |
| 40–50°                   | 5–10°                 | 1 N    |
| 30–40°                   | 0–5°                  | 2 N    |
| 0–30°                    | –15–0°                | 3 N    |
| Below 0°                 | Below –15°            | 4 N    |

Having adequate protection, such as warm furs, will keep your character from suffering from exposure. However, the Game-master will determine the level to which your character can afford protection. Even the thickest furs will not protect her long when the temperature is –30° Fahrenheit or –35° Celsius respectively. Also, weather conditions such as rain, wind, or high altitude may intensify the damaging effects of exposure.

## Fire

Fire is crucial to survival for most explorers, but it can also be one of the most dangerous hazards they face. Fire consumes nearly everything it touches, and can be an extremely potent weapon. Care should be taken, however, as a fire can easily get out of control and turn on the person who set it.

| Fire Intensity                    | Damage |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Molten rock or metal              | 4 L    |
| Chemical fire (third-degree burn) | 3 L    |
| Campfire (second-degree burn)     | 2 L    |
| Torch (first-degree burn)         | 1 L    |

If burned, your character automatically takes damage based on the intensity of the fire. If an opponent is attacking your character with a flaming weapon, such as swinging a torch, then a touch attack is made (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). Your character gets to roll his Active Defense rating against the attack, including armor bonuses, to avoid taking damage.

In general, the hotter the fire, the more damage it does. Note that fire is caustic damage (see Caustic Damage) and will have a reduced effect against larger creatures.

If your character is exposed to a flame for more than a turn, anything combustible he is wearing catches fire, and he will continue to take damage even if he escapes from the original blaze. Rolling on the ground or jumping into water will normally extinguish a fire and prevent your character from continuing to take damage. If there is no water available, you must make a Dexterity roll with a difficulty equal to the fire's damage rating in order to extinguish the fire by rolling on the ground. If your successes equal or exceed the fire's damage rating, your character puts the fire out and will not continue to take damage. If you roll fewer successes than the damage rating, your character continues to take damage, but may make another attempt to put out the fire on his next turn.



## Falling

Exploration is a dangerous business, and characters need to be on their toes all the time. In particular, they need to watch their handholds and footing or they may slip and fall. Whether they fall a few feet off a ladder or hundreds of feet off a cliff, landing is likely to hurt your character.

Most falling damage is nonlethal, unless your character lands on something sharp and pointed, such as jagged rocks. Your character takes one nonlethal wound per 10 feet he falls (rounded up).

**Terminal velocity:** Your character reaches terminal velocity once he falls 100 feet and will take no additional damage for falling farther. Once he has reached terminal velocity however, falling damage is lethal.

**Breaking a Fall:** If your character has the Acrobatics Skill, he can try to break his fall by grabbing objects to slow down, or by trying to land in a softer spot. The difficulty rating to break a fall is 2, but the Gamemaster may adjust it up or down based on circumstances. Make an Acrobatics roll to reduce your character's falling distance. For each success in excess of the difficulty, the character reduces his effective falling distance by three meters.

**Hard and Soft landings:** If your character happens to land in a soft spot, such as water or a snow bank, the Gamemaster may reduce the amount of damage for the fall, depending on how soft the landing area is. Conversely, if your character lands on a particularly hard surface, such as jagged rocks, the Gamemaster may increase the amount of damage he takes or convert it to lethal instead of nonlethal damage.

**Note:** These rules only apply to environments that have a similar gravity than Earth. When your character finds himself under different gravitational condition, the Gamemaster can simply modify the damage: When the gravity is only half that on Earth, your character suffers damage only every 20 feet, when it is twice as high he will suffer damage already at 5 feet.

## Gravity

Every character is familiar with the gravity of his home planet. On other planets however, gravity might be dramatically higher or lower, meaning that every movement, blow, or throw is different than on the character's home planet.

In rule terms this means that for every fifth of Earth's gravity that the gravity of the character's home differs from the gravity of his current position, the character suffers a -1 penalty on all combat rolls or other motion intensive actions that require precision or speed (for example, climbing, jumping, running, dancing, etc.). If the character has only been in the current gravity for a short time (less than 12 hours), he suffers an additional -1 penalty on the above dice rolls.

**Note:** For ranged attacks, these penalties are only applied when the firer is moving, for example when the character is firing a weapon while running. If the shooter is standing still, there are no penalties for unfamiliar gravity. This rule does also apply for other actions done from a rested position.

| Homeworld/<br>Environment | Earth | Mars | Mercury | Luna | Venus | Zero Gravity |
|---------------------------|-------|------|---------|------|-------|--------------|
| Earth                     | 0     | 0    | -3      | -4   | 0     | -5           |
| Mars                      | 0     | 0    | -3      | -4   | 0     | -5           |
| Mercury                   | -3    | -3   | 0       | -1   | -3    | -2           |
| Luna                      | -4    | -4   | -1      | 0    | -4    | -1           |
| Venus                     | 0     | 0    | 0       | -4   | 0     | -5           |
| Zero Gravity              | -5    | -5   | -2      | -1   | -5    | 0            |

## The Ether

When travelling across the Ether from one world to another, the characters may face many dangers. They might suffer an attack by pirates or a meteor strike, but primarily, they will face the environmental hazards of space. Zero gravity is the most obvious hazard, but when disaster strikes the characters will find themselves having to cope with the vacuum of space and the extremes of temperature.

## Space

The cold and vacuum of Space is harmful for every living creature. The crucial point is though how sudden and for how long somebody is exposed to these conditions. A small fissure in an ether suit, causing the loss of only a little air, can be handled according to the rules for Drowning and Suffocation (see p. 214).

A spontaneous encounter with vacuum – like leaving an ether ship without a proper suit – causes 3 L damage every turn. The Gamemaster has to decide according to the severity of the pressure loss and the duration of this condition. He should use the two extremes above as a reference point to determine the damage.





## Effect of Firearms

Assuming that it is possible to handle a firearm with the clunky gloves of an ether suit, its effect will be the same as if fired on Earth. Should the shooter not have sure footing in zero gravity however, the recoil will move him antipodal to the direction of the shot.

The shot as such does not pose any problem. The oxygen necessary for the ignition, or for the detonation of explosives, is contained in the gunpowder or the explosive itself.

## Fatigue

A character can do without rest or sleep for a short time, but he will eventually suffer ill effects. Your character suffers one non-lethal wound for each day he goes without sleep.

Your character can perform a strenuous activity, such as jogging or heavy manual labor, for a number of hours equal to his Body rating. After this limit, your character suffers a nonlethal wound for each additional increment of time based on his Body rating. The fatigue remains until the character rests or sleeps for eight hours plus the number of wounds he has suffered.

## Poisons and Drugs

Poisons and drugs can all be detrimental to your character's mental and physical well-being. They can also have a variety of different side effects, which usually translate into bonus or penalty dice on certain actions. Some poisons and drugs affect your character only once, while others affect her repeatedly over a period of time.

There are several different methods for ingesting a drug or poison. Depending on the specific toxin, your character may have to inhale it, ingest it, inject it, or simply touch it to suffer its effects.

There is little defense against ingesting or inhaling a drug or poison. Your character either has to detect the poison before eating it, or hold her breath to avoid inhaling it. In the case of an injection, your character can defend herself normally. If the poisoned weapon does damage to your character, she also has to resist the effects of the poison.

If an opponent is merely trying to touch your character with a poison, such as a cobra spitting venom, then a touch attack is made (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). Your character gets to roll her Active Defense rating against the attack (including armor bonuses) to avoid skin contact with the poison.

Most drugs and poisons have a Toxin rating, which represents the difficulty of resisting the effects of the substance. Make a Body roll whenever your character is poisoned (see Resistance, p. 146), and compare the number of successes to the Toxin rating.

If you roll at least as many successes as the Toxin rating, your character resists the effects of the poison. However, she may not be so lucky if she gets another dose.

If you roll fewer successes than the Toxin rating, your character suffers from the effects of the poison. If the poison inflicts damage immediately, your character takes an amount of damage based on the poison's potency.

If the poison does damage over time, the Toxin rating simply determines if the poison takes effect. The poison will then

do damage over time until your character accumulates enough successes on an extended Body roll to get the poison out of her system. Typically, each roll represents one hour and your character will need to accumulate between five to ten successes to fully clean the poison from her system. If being tended by a doctor, he may substitute his Medicine rating for your character's Body roll.

**Note:** Poison is considered caustic damage (see Caustic Damage, p. 215) and will have a reduced effect against larger creatures.

| Toxin                         | Damage |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Deadly toxin (cyanide)        | 4 L    |
| Dangerous toxin (snake venom) | 3 L    |
| Strong toxin (toxic spores)   | 2 L    |
| Weak toxin (food poisoning)   | 1 L    |

## Sample Drugs

### Alcohol

Your character can safely consume as many alcoholic drinks per hour as his Body rating. For each additional drink beyond that, he suffers a -1 penalty to all actions. However, alcohol can temporarily reduce the effects of pain and cold. Drinking alcohol increases your character's tolerance to cold for the remainder of the hour.

The effects of alcohol slowly fade at the rate of one penalty die per hour, until your character is completely sober again. However, if your character has more drinks than twice his Body rating, he will become violently ill and suffer a nonlethal wound. If he continues to drink beyond that, the Gamemaster may impose even harsher penalties.

### Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens can be taken in a variety of ways, but whether they are ingested, inhaled, or just touched, they disorient the drugged character and may make him act erratically and possibly see things that are not there. Depending on the strength of the hallucinogen, the character will suffer a penalty ranging from -1 to -4 to all actions. However, depending on the nature of the drug, the character may experience tremendous insights or visions of the future. The effects of a hallucinogen normally last for eight hours minus the character's Body rating.

## Sample Poisons

### Cyanide

**Toxin:** 5

**Damage:** 4 L

The effects of cyanide poisoning may include vomiting, convulsions, shortness of breath, loss of consciousness, and death. It is usually administered as a poison through inhalation or ingestion, such as the infamous 'suicide pills'.

### Venom

**Toxin:** 4

**Damage:** 1-4 L

There are a wide variety of venomous creatures, such as snakes,



spiders, and scorpions. However, there are many other kinds of poisonous creatures as well, and the Solar System has more than its share of poisonous plants and animals. The amount of damage done by a venomous creature is not necessarily determined by its size. Even very tiny creatures can be deadly to humans if their venom is potent enough. In addition, some venom can inflict additional side effects, such as paralysis, that will affect the character for a short time.

## Example of Play

Alex's character is a big game hunter named Ulrich Möller. He is an expert marksman who has hunted dangerous animals all over the world. Möller takes pride in his accomplishments and has a vast collection of trophies from his hunting expeditions. He believes no one in the world is a better hunter, and he is out to prove it. Unfortunately, he has run out of challenges, and is starting to get bored. Where is he going to find prey worthy of his skills?

This is when he caught wind of an expedition looking for an experienced guide and big game hunter. The chap leading the expedition was most insistent on seeing evidence of the hunter's skills. Of course, Möller was more than happy to show off his trophies. Each time the chap saw one, he would ask if Möller had ever killed anything bigger. Wherever this expedition was heading, Möller knew he had to go with them.

When the expedition leader finally let on that their destination would be the jungles of Venus, Möller was aquiver with anticipation. From what he had read of Venus, he knew that it was home to creatures he would never have the opportunity to hunt on Earth – dinosaurs! If he went on this expedition, he would be able to prove that he was the greatest huntsman on two worlds.

Now months later and weeks from the nearest station, Möller has only faced disappointment. Relegated to guiding the expedition through this humid, mist shrouded place, with the sun covered in a haze of dust making it nearly impossible to navigate, Möller has been forced to rely on visual markers instead. Most of the time, he cannot be sure if the expedition has been walking in circles or not.

Worst of all, the expedition leader has made them avoid big game, trying to keep the expedition out of harm's way. It has been more than Möller can bear, so when the expedition made camp this evening, he waited until the rest of the party fell asleep, then slipped away to go hunting.

Moving through the jungle carefully, looking for game, Möller has spotted the tracks of several herbivores – of the sort he has already killed for food. They were no challenge. No challenge at all.

Then he finds it. A huge track, nearly four feet long and six inches deep, sunk into the soft jungle soil. It is the footprint of a giant three-toed biped; a Tyrannosaurus Rex, he is sure of it. This is the challenge Möller has been looking for. Hunting and killing a T. Rex would be the ultimate challenge of his hunting skills! He cannot let this opportunity pass him by.

The Gamemaster warns Alex that a T. Rex is a very powerful creature and likely more than one character can handle. Alex reminds him that his character has the Overconfident Flaw and, as a Big Game Hunter, he cannot pass up the opportunity to take on the King of the Dinosaurs! The Gamemaster agrees that going after a T. Rex by himself qualifies as roleplaying Möller's Flaw – he will undoubtedly be in over his head – and awards Alex a

Style point. This gives Möller a total of six Style points and with that much in the bank, Alex is feeling pretty optimistic about his character's ability to take down the T. Rex.

Tracking down the T. Rex requires an extended Survival roll. The Gamemaster tells Alex that each roll represents fifteen minutes of tracking, and he will need to accumulate ten successes to find the dinosaur because the trail has gone cold. Fortunately, the T. Rex is easy to follow because of its large, distinctive tracks. The Gamemaster sets the difficulty rating for the Survival roll at 1. Each success rolled in excess of the difficulty counts towards the ten successes needed to find the creature.

Möller's Survival rating is 5, and he has a Skill Specialization in Tracking, giving him a dice pool of six. Taking the Average of his dice pool nets Alex three successes: more than enough to track the creature without having to make any dice rolls. Without pausing the story, the Gamemaster tells Alex that Möller has no trouble following the trail. He catches up to the Tyrannosaurus Rex in a clearing a little over an hour later.

The dinosaur is huge, well over 25 feet tall and not even fully grown yet, with a scaly hide and an enormous mouth full of dagger-like teeth. Deciding to be nice, the Gamemaster tells Alex that the Tyrannosaurus has not spotted Möller; it is busy devouring a small kill, so Möller can still chose to leave in safety.

Alex replies that Möller's whole life has been building to this moment, and he is not about to back out now. Instead, he is going to try to sneak into position where he can get a clean shot at the T. Rex.

Sneaking into position requires an opposed Stealth versus Perception roll. Alex will make a Stealth roll for Möller, and the Gamemaster will make a Perception roll for the T. Rex. The character with the most successes wins. If both characters have the same number of successes, the T. Rex will win because it is considered the defender.

Möller's Stealth rating is 6, plus he receives two bonus dice for all the tree cover around him, giving him a modified dice pool of eight. He rolls the dice and gets three successes.

Next, the Gamemaster makes a Perception roll for the Tyrannosaurus. It has a Perception rating of 6, so he rolls six dice and gets four successes. The T. Rex spots Möller! The giant carnivore jealously guards its kills and is always on the lookout for scavengers, so it turns to attack the hunter.

The Gamemaster signals the beginning of combat, and time switches to combat turns. The first step in combat is to roll Initiative for each character. The character with the most successes takes the first action, followed by the character with the next highest total, and so on. If two or more characters end up with the same number of successes, the character with the highest base Initiative rating goes first.

Alex rolls Möller's Initiative rating of 6 and gets three successes. The Gamemaster rolls the T. Rex's Initiative rating of 4 and gets two successes. With the highest Initiative, Möller gets to take the first action.

Alex's character is in deep trouble. He was hoping to surprise the T. Rex with his first shot and kill it before it had a chance to react. Unfortunately, the T. Rex spotted Möller before he could attack and now, if he is going to survive this encounter, he has to make every shot count.

Möller is going to have to hit the T. Rex where it hurts. Making a called shot to hit a vulnerable area penalises the attacker's dice pool, but Möller has the Accuracy Talent, which reduces this penalty. Alex wants to reduce this penalty as much as possi-



ble, so he decides to boost Möller's Accuracy Talent. He spends all six of his Style points to boost Möller's Accuracy Talent to its maximum level, which allows him to ignore up to a -8 called shot penalty for the duration of the combat. If he can do enough damage to the Tyrannosaurus before it gets to him, he just might get out of this alive.

Boosting Möller's Accuracy Talent is a reflexive action, so Alex still gets to attack this turn. He decides that Möller is going to stand his ground and try to kill the T. Rex, or at least hurt it enough to dissuade it from attacking him. He would love to be able to shoot the T. Rex more than once, but his rifle has only a rate of fire of one shot per combat turn.

Instead, he declares that Möller is making a called shot to hit a vital area. This means he suffers a penalty to his dice pool equal to the target's Defense rating, but any successes rolled automatically do damage. The T. Rex's Defense is 8 (modified for Size), which means that Alex suffers a -8 penalty on his Attack roll, but because of his boosted talent however, Alex gets to ignore this penalty and attack the T. Rex with his full dice pool.

Alex's modified dice pool to attack the T. Rex is 14. Möller's Firearms rating is 9, plus he has a Skill Specialization in Rifles and he gets four bonus dice for his modified rifle. The Tyrannosaurus is 15 meters away, so there are no range penalties on the Attack roll. Alex gets to ignore the called shot penalty, so he has a final dice pool of 14 to shoot the T. Rex.

Alex would love to buy some bonus dice, but he spent all of his Style points boosting Möller's Accuracy Talent and there are no other characters around to help him. So, Alex makes his Attack roll and hopes for the best. If he can manage to stun the T. Rex, it will lose its next attack and buy him some more time.

Alex rolls the dice and gets a whopping eight successes! The Gamemaster does not make a Defense roll for the T. Rex because of the called shot, so the dinosaur takes the full eight points of lethal damage, reducing its Health from 16 to 8. The shot hits the dinosaur in a soft spot near its heart. It is a devastating blow, but unfortunately, the T. Rex's Stun rating is eight, which means that it is not enough damage to stun the creature.

Now it is the T. Rex's turn. The enraged reptile charges Möller. The T. Rex has a Move of 12, which means that it can move 60 feet per combat turn with a normal move. This is more than enough to move it into melee range with Möller and still be able to attack. The T. Rex charges across the clearing, roaring, the ground trembling beneath its feet. It opens its huge maw, filled with gleaming teeth, and snaps at Möller.

The Tyrannosaurus attempts to bite Möller. Its Brawl rating is 14, plus it gets four bonus dice for its bite attack, but because of its size however, the T. Rex suffers a penalty to attack targets smaller than itself. The T. Rex's Size rating is 4 and Möller's Size rating is 0, so the huge predator suffers four penalty dice on its Attack roll, giving it a final dice pool of 14 to bite Möller.

The Gamemaster rolls the dice and gets seven successes. Alex rolls Möller's Defense rating of six and only gets two successes. Möller gets five points of lethal damage. Once again, Alex wishes he still had some Style points left, so that he could reduce the damage; alas, he does not, and his character takes the full damage. The T. Rex chomps down on Möller's upper torso, picking him up off the ground and shaking him like a rag doll.

Alex marks off five lethal wounds on his character sheet, reducing Möller's Health from 5 to 0. He is not dying, but that is not the worst of it. He has taken more damage than double his Stun rating, which means that even though he has not dying, he has been knocked out. He will remain unconscious and defenseless for one minute per point of damage inflicted in excess of his doubled Stun rating. His Stun rating is 2 and he took five points of damage, so unless the T. Rex eats him before then, Möller will regain consciousness in one minute.

Will the T. Rex consume his unconscious victim? Has Möller's foolhardiness cost him his life? Alex is dying to know the answers to these questions, but the Gamemaster decides to keep him in suspense and leave it as a cliffhanger. The Gamemaster switches the focus back to the rest of the characters who wake some time later to find Möller missing from the camp. How long have they been asleep? Will they be able to help him – assuming that they can even find him? Venus is always a dangerous place, but it is even more perilous without a guide...



Combat, Damage, and Healing



# Equipment and Inventions

Having the right piece of equipment can be the deciding factor between the success and failure of an expedition. For explorers it can also mean the difference between life and death. Nobody wants to be stranded on a foreign planet without the means to get home, or to run out of ammunition at the wrong moment. The following items and means of transportation are generally available in 1889 and represent some of the useful things an explorer might want to take along on his journeys.

## Exchange Rates in the Year 1889

The following exchange rates might be of help as a reference for currency translations of the prices given in this chapter's tables. All figures are rounded to avoid unwieldy odd numbers.

|     |                       |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 1 £ | 20 S                  |
| 1 £ | 20 Mark               |
| 1 S | 1 Mark                |
| 1 £ | 5 US \$               |
| 1 S | 0.25 US \$            |
| 1 £ | 10 Austrian Guilders  |
| 1 S | 0.5 Austrian Guilders |
| 1 £ | 25 Francs             |
| 1 S | 1.25 Francs           |
| 1 £ | 12 Dutch Guilders     |
| 1 S | 0.6 Dutch Guilders    |
| 1 £ | 25 Italian Lira       |
| 1 S | 1.25 Italian Lira     |
| 1 £ | 6.3 Russian Roubles   |
| 1 S | 0.3 Russian Roubles   |

## Weapons

Few explorers will venture forth into unknown territory without some kind of weapon. This section describes a number of ranged and melee weapons, from simple clubs to cannons.

**Damage (Dmg):** The number of bonus dice added to your attack roll when using the weapon. It also indicates the kind of damage it inflicts: lethal (L) and non-lethal (N).

**Strength (Str):** The minimum Strength rating needed to wield the weapon effectively. A character with a lower strength suffers a penalty of -2 to his attack roll for each point of Strength

he has under the required minimum. Using a two-handed weapon with only one hand increases the minimum Strength required by 1.

**Capacity (Cap):** The amount of ammunition a weapon can carry. It indicates how many times a weapon can be fired before it has to be reloaded. It also indicates its type of storage: belt (b), clip (c), internal (i), magazine (m), or revolver (r). The difference between a clip and a magazine is that a magazine has a feeding mechanism and a clip does not. Weapons with a clip are bolt-action rifles, meaning that the bolt has to be operated manually after each shot to place a new cartridge into the breech.

**Range (Rng):** The effective distance in feet that the weapon can be used without penalties. Each increment exceeding the given range imposes a -2 penalty to the attack roll. (Example: if a weapon's range is 20 feet and the target is 20-40 feet away the firer suffers a -2 penalty, for targets between 40-60 feet away the penalty will be -4, and so on).

**Rate (Rate):** A weapon's rate of fire indicates how many times it can be fired each combat turn. Weapons with a rate of fire of 1 can only be shot once per combat turn, while weapons with a rate of fire less than 1 have to be reloaded after each shot (Example: Rate ½ means that the weapon can only be fired once every two combat turns). Semiautomatic (M) and Automatic (A) firearms can be used to make multiple attacks in the same combat round (see Total Attack, p. 207).

**Speed (Spd):** The speed of a weapon indicates how often it can be used in combat: Fast (F), Average (A), Slow (S). Weapon speeds are used in the optional rules for Continuous Combats

**Cost:** The price of the item in British pounds (£) in the year 1889. Lower prices are given in shillings (S). One pound is equal to 20 shillings, which in turn are worth 12 pence each. The price may vary depending on supply and demand.

**Weight (Wt):** The weight of the weapon or item in pounds (lbs.). Characters carrying too much weight cannot move as fast and get exhausted more easily.

## Melee Weapons

Although firearms are the preferred weapons of choice for most characters, there will be moments when a knife or a sword is far more useful.

Through the thorough exploration of the world and her people, your characters will sometimes find strange and exotic weapons – and want to use them. Explorers who spend a lot of time among foreign cultures might learn how. Some of the primitive cultures do not know anything about firearms – they hunt and wage war using axes, bows, and spears. Explorers should not underestimate the effectiveness of these simple weapons, especially when raging hordes are approaching and ammunition is running low.

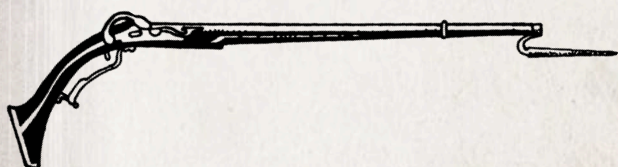


| Melee Weapons      | Dmg  | Str | Spd | Cost   | Wt       |
|--------------------|------|-----|-----|--------|----------|
| Axe, Hand          | 2 L  | 2   | a   | \$4    | 3 lbs.   |
| Axe, Two-Handed    | 3 L  | 2   | a   | \$8    | 4 lbs.   |
| Bayonet (Fixed)    | 2 L  | 2   | a   | \$8    | 1 lb.    |
| Brass Knuckles     | 1 N* | 1   | f   | \$4    | 0.5 lbs. |
| Chain              | 1 N* | 2   | a   | \$4    | 6 lbs.   |
| Cleaver            | 2 L  | 2   | a   | \$5    | 2 lbs.   |
| Club               | 2 N  | 2   | a   | -      | 3 lbs.   |
| Club, Two-Handed   | 3 N  | 2   | a   | -      | 8 lbs.   |
| Cutlass            | 3 L  | 2   | a   | £1 \$4 | 4 lbs.   |
| Dagger             | 1 L  | 1   | f   | \$4    | 1 lb.    |
| Entrenching Tool   | 2 N* | 2   | a   | \$10   | 2.5 lbs. |
| Hammer             | 2 N  | 2   | a   | \$4    | 2 lbs.   |
| Hammer, Two-Handed | 3 N  | 2   | a   | \$6    | 7 lbs.   |
| Katana             | 3 L  | 2   | a   | £9     | 3 lbs.   |
| Kukri              | 2 L  | 2   | a   | £1 \$4 | 3 lbs.   |
| Machete            | 2 L  | 2   | a   | \$6    | 2 lbs.   |
| Pocket Knife       | 0 L  | 1   | f   | \$2    | -        |
| Pickaxe            | 3 L  | 2   | a   | \$6    | 6 lbs.   |
| Pistol Butt        | 1 N  | 1   | a   | -      | -        |
| Polearm            | 4 L  | 2   | s   | £2     | 10 lbs.  |
| Rapier             | 2 L  | 2   | f   | £2 \$8 | 2.5 lbs. |
| Rifle Butt         | 2 N  | 2   | a   | -      | -        |
| Sabre              | 3 L  | 2   | a   | £3     | 3 lbs.   |
| Scimitar           | 3 L  | 2   | a   | £2+    | 3 lbs.   |
| Spear              | 3 L  | 2   | a   | -      | 9 lbs.   |
| Straight Razor     | 0 L  | 1   | f   | \$3    | -        |
| Switchblade        | 1 L  | 1   | f   | \$5    | 0.5 lbs. |
| Sword, Cane        | 2 L  | 2   | f   | £2     | 3 lbs.   |
| Sword, Long        | 3 L  | 2   | a   | £3+    | 3 lbs.   |
| Sword, Short       | 2 L  | 2   | a   | \$18   | 2 lbs.   |
| Sword, Two-Handed  | 4 L  | 3   | s   | £4+    | 8 lbs.   |
| Torch, Burning     | 1 L* | 2   | a   | -      | 1 lb.    |

\*see description for special rules

## Special Rules and Comments

**Bayonet (fixed):** A bayonet attached to the end of a rifle is an effective melee weapon, especially when performing or resisting a charge attack. Most military rifles are designed to accept a bayonet.



**Brass Knuckles:** Your character uses his Brawl rating when using brass knuckles.

**Chain:** Chains make excellent weapons, as they can entangle limbs, strangle opponents, or just bludgeon an opponent. Used as a ranged weapon, a chain has a range of 10 feet. Chains longer than 10 feet cannot be used effectively as a weapon. To con-

strain a victim, make a Melee touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). If your character's attack is successful, no damage is done. Instead, compare the amount of damage you would have dealt versus the opponent's Strength rating. If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, the opponent is constrained. He has to succeed in a Strength roll in order to break free on his next turn. If the damage is more than twice as high as the opponent's Strength rating, he is helpless and can be either disarmed or thrown to the ground.

**Entrenching Tool:** Explorers value entrenching tools for their functionality as well as their usefulness as an emergency weapon. If your character wants to inflict lethal damage with it – by hitting someone with the blade of the entrenching tool, he suffers a –2 penalty on his attack roll.

**Pistol and Rifle Butts:** Most rifles and pistols are sturdy enough to be used as a melee weapon. Many older weapons have specially reinforced grips and butts for this purpose.

**Sword Cane:** A favorite of noblemen and gentrified masterminds around the world, sword canes hold rapier-like blade inside the shaft of a cane. It is extremely difficult to determine from a cursory glance that a cane contains a sword.

**Torch, burning:** A burning torch is little more than a club that has been lit. As such it can be used to hit or to burn an opponent. To burn an opponent, make a Melee touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). If your character's attack succeeds, she inflicts one point of lethal damage. If her opponent is wearing something combustible, like clothing drenched in lamp oil, he is set on fire and will continue to take fire damage each turn until the flames are extinguished (see Fire, p. 215).

## Ranged Weapons

Below you will find descriptions of a variety of ranged weapons. They are divided into primitive and modern weapons. Primitive weapons are mostly, but not always, found in the hands of less civilized human and alien people.

| Ranged weapons | Dmg  | Str | Rng     | Rate  | Spd | Cost    | Wt       |
|----------------|------|-----|---------|-------|-----|---------|----------|
| Blowgun        | 0 L* | 1   | 25 ft.  | 1**   | a   | \$3     | 1 lb.    |
| Bolas          | *    | 1   | 25 ft.  | 1     | a   | -       | 2 lbs.   |
| Boomerang      | 1 N  | 1   | 25 ft.  | 1     | a   | \$3     | 2 lbs.   |
| Bow            | 2 L  | 2   | 30 ft.  | 1**   | a   | £1      | 3 lbs.   |
| Crossbow       | 3 L  | 2   | 100 ft. | 1/2** | a   | £1 \$16 | 7 lbs.   |
| Javelin        | 1 L  | 2   | 25 ft.  | 1     | a   | \$2     | 2 lbs.   |
| Longbow        | 3 L  | 3   | 100 ft. | 1**   | a   | £2 \$8  | 3 lbs.   |
| Net            | *    | 2   | 10 ft.  | 1     | s   | £1      | 20 lbs.  |
| Sling          | 1 N  | 1   | 50 ft.  | 1**   | a   | -       | 0.5 lbs. |
| Whip           | 0 N* | 1   | 10 ft.  | 1     | a   | \$8     | 2 lbs.   |

\*see weapon description for special rules

\*\*characters with the Instant Reload Talent double this weapon's rate of fire

## Special Rules and Comments

**Blowgun:** Primitive jungle-dwelling people use blowguns mainly for hunting small game. They have a short range and deal minimal damage, but the darts of these weapons are commonly coated with some form of toxin – the dart need only break the skin for this poison to work. Make an Archery attack roll as



normal. If your character's attack succeeds, he inflicts normal damage and his opponent must resist the effects of the poison on the dart (see Poisons and Drugs, p. 217).

**Bolas:** Bolas are small weights attached to two or three long slender cords. They are rapidly twirled and thrown at the target, who if hit, becomes entangled as the weights whip around his limbs. To entangle an opponent, make an Archery touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). If your character's attack is successful, no damage is done. Instead, compare the amount of damage your character would have done versus the opponent's Strength rating. If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, the opponent is entangled and he must spend a turn to free himself from the bolas. If you rolled more damage than twice the opponent's Strength rating, he is trapped and cannot escape until someone frees him.

**Boomerang:** A curved stick that is thrown at an opponent. If the boomerang misses the target, it will loop back in the direction of the user. Boomerangs are relatively easy to make for those who know how, and are excellent for hunting small game. If your character misses his target, but you rolled at least two successes on your Archery roll, the boomerang returns to your character and may be thrown again. Boomerangs normally inflict nonlethal damage, but metal ones may do lethal damage and require a special glove in order to catch them.

**Net:** Primarily used for either fishing or trapping game, nets are found in the hands of those wanting to capture their prey alive. A net that can be carried and thrown by a single person is ten-feet-long by ten-feet-wide (large enough to catch a size 0 creature) and includes a trailing rope used to pull the captured victim back. To entangle an opponent, make an Archery touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). If your character's attack is successful, no damage is done. Instead, compare the amount of damage your character would have done with the opponent's Strength rating. If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, your opponent is entangled and must spend a turn to free himself. If you rolled more damage than twice the opponent's Strength rating, he is trapped and cannot escape until someone frees him.

**Whip:** Whips can entangle limbs, wrap around throats, or safely swing an explorer over to another cloudship during a boarding action. Whips do little actual damage, but inflict very painful wounds and produce a loud crack that can intimidate lesser foes. To entangle an opponent, make a Melee touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). If your character's attack is successful, no damage is done. Instead, compare the amount of damage your character would have done with the opponent's Strength rating. If you rolled more damage than his Strength rating, the opponent is entangled and must succeed in a Strength roll in order to break free on his next turn. If you rolled more damage than twice the opponent's Strength rating, he is entangled and may be either disarmed or knocked to the ground.

## Muzzle Loaders

Muzzle loaders, though obsolete, are still in wide use today, especially among Canal Martians where this kind of weapon is quite common. The gunpowder used in all muzzle loaders causes a clearly visible cloud of smoke when fired, usually revealing the position of the firer.

**Note:** The term Flintlock is only used for simplicity; these rules do not distinguish between matchlocks, flintlocks, percussion-caps, and so on.

| Firearm           | Dmg | Str | Rng     | Cap   | Rate | Spd | Cost    | Wt       |
|-------------------|-----|-----|---------|-------|------|-----|---------|----------|
| Blunderbuss       | 4L* | 3   | 25 ft.  | 1 (i) | ½**  | A   | £10+    | 6 lbs.   |
| Pistol, Flintlock | 3L  | 2   | 50 ft.  | 1 (i) | ½**  | A   | £3 \$15 | 1.5 lbs. |
| Rifle, Flintlock  | 3L  | 2   | 100 ft. | 1 (i) | ½**  | A   | £4+     | 5.5 lbs. |

\*See description for special rules

\*\*Characters with the Instant Reload Talent double the weapon's Rate

**Blunderbuss:** Blunderbusses are blackpowder weapons with large, flaring barrels that project gouts of shot in a wide cone. Each ten-foot range increment spreads the cone by five feet (diameter) and imposes a -1 penalty on your attack roll, allowing the wielder to attack multiple opponents with one shot.

*Example: If your character is firing a blunderbuss at a target twenty feet away, you suffer a -2 penalty to your dice pool, but he can hit the target and anyone standing in within a five feet radius (ten feet diameter) around him.*

## Modern Ranged Weapons

Even though muzzle loaders and more primitive weapons are still in broad use for sending enemies to the beyond all across the Solar System, modern firearms are becoming increasingly common.

The most important improvement of the last decade was the invention of smokeless gunpowder by Paul Vieille in 1884. In use for hundreds of years, gunpowder has many disadvantages. Primarily, the burning of the powder leaves combustion residues which foul the weapon, but the thick smoke leaving the barrel results in a clearly visible muzzle flash that gives away the gun's position, and in turn, impairs the firer's vision. Thus for centuries, battlefields were shrouded in a thick fog after a few salvos.

Modern gunpowder, based on cellulose nitrate, known as 'flash cotton' or 'guncotton', exhibits the above effects, but to a much lesser degree and provides considerably more energy, making automatic weapons feasible. Recent rifle and cannon designs use smokeless powder, while most of the older weapons are still using gunpowder.

Military weaponry is currently changing from breach loaders to bolt action rifles with internal magazines. By 1889, most of the British infantry have exchanged their Martini-Henry breach loaders for the 8-shot magazine Lee-Metford bolt action rifles. Artillery has mostly converted to breach loaders, often relying on the deadly Hotchkiss Revolving Cannon for short ranges – a kind of Gatling gun firing blasting cartridges. The latest rapid fire guns, like the British 4.7" naval gun however, promise even more firepower.

The first machinegun, the Union Repeating Gun, was introduced in 1861, followed by the famous Gatling gun in 1866. Although still in use, newer versions of manually operated machineguns, like the Gardner, the Nordenfelt, and the Montigny mitrailleuse, have mostly displaced the Gatling. All of these weapons need a cannoneer to operate a crank or lever for reloading the multiple barrels of the gun. In 1889, the British begin purchasing their first Maxim machine guns, self-loading weapons that fire as long as the firer holds down the trigger.

The next big step in weapon development will be a self-loading firearm with a magazine, at least according to armorers and weapon specialists. Up to now, these firearms only exist as prototypes, however.

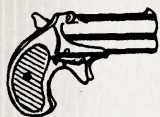


## Modern Pistols

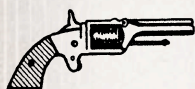
The Colt Peacemaker and Webley are examples of heavy revolvers, the Pocket Revolver an example for a light revolver.



**Colt Peacemaker:** This single action revolver can mostly be found in the hands of those in the Wild West or in backwater regions. It fires powerful .45 caliber rounds.



**Derringer and Double Derringer:** Although there are dozens of different companies producing such tiny holdout pistols, the Derringer is easily the most famous and pervasive. It is a concealable weapon that fires .32 caliber rounds. The Derringer holds a single shot, while the Double Derringer holds two, with separate barrels and triggers.



**Pocket Revolver:** The name for a huge variety of brands that make essentially the same weapon. A pocket revolver is a .32 caliber weapon designed more for concealment than firepower.



**Webley Mk I Revolver:** This 6-shot double action revolver uses .445 caliber Webley rounds and was introduced to the British Army and Royal Navy in 1887. The weapon is a top-break, self-extracting revolver, meaning that the user must open up the frame to reload, which automatically ejects the spent cartridges. The revolver is commonly worn with a lanyard attached to the butt to ensure that it does not fall far from the user's grasp.

## Modern Longarms

Although gunpowder weapons are still common in many places across the Solar System, most modern longarms use smokeless powder cartridge rounds. Few explorers would head out on an expedition without a rifle, shotgun, or other powerful weapon for hunting or protection.



**.22 Bolt-Action Rifle:** There are many companies that produce these simple weapons. They are effective for hunting small game and for target shooting, and are far more likely to be found in the possession of farmers than soldiers.



**.30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle:** A popular hunting firearm, sometimes fitted with a scope for maximum accuracy.



**Buffalo Rifle:** The weapon of choice for big-game hunters everywhere, this monstrous rifle fires .50 caliber rounds and is meant to bring down the largest game, including elephants, crocodiles, and, of course, buffalo. It is a single-shot weapon that requires loading after each shot.



**Lee-Metford Rifle:** The British Army's new combat rifle, it started to replace the Martini-Henry Rifle in 1888. Unlike its precursor, it has an 8-round clip and is bolt-action operated.



**Martini-Henry Rifle:** Introduced in 1871, this was the first British rifle designed for metal cartridges. It fires .577/450 caliber rounds. Its gun sight area can be set to up to 4,000 feet, though the effective combat range is only 1200 feet. This breech-loader is still the standard rifle of the British Army.

**Shotgun, 20 Gauge:** Used primarily for hunting ducks, geese, and other waterfowl, these come in either five-round repeating action or double-barreled models.



**Shotgun, 12 Gauge:** The most common type of shotgun used by hunters, farmers, and trap shooters. It comes in either five-round repeating action or double-barreled models.

**Shotgun, 10 Gauge:** The ten-gauge shotgun is the most powerful of its type, used for hunting large game.



**Shotgun, Sawed-Off:** Sawing off the barrel of a shotgun (typically a twelve or ten-gauge) makes this weapon easier to use in close combat, spraying the shot in a greater cone, but drastically reducing the range. Each ten-foot range increment spreads the cone by five feet (diameter), allowing the wielder to attack multiple opponents with one shot, but imposing a -1 penalty to your attack roll.

*Example: If your character fires a sawed-off shotgun at a target twenty feet away, you suffer a -2 penalty on your attack roll, but will target the opponent and anyone standing in a ten-foot diameter around him.*

**Winchester Repeating Rifle:** This famous lever-action rifle was introduced in 1866 and is colloquially known as 'The Gun that won the West', but also made a name for itself in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877.

| Modern Pistol     | Dmg | Str | Rng    | Cap  | Rate | Spd | Cost    | Wt     |
|-------------------|-----|-----|--------|------|------|-----|---------|--------|
| Colt Peacemaker   | 3L  | 3   | 50 ft. | 6(r) | M    | A   | £10     | 3 lbs. |
| Derringer         | 2L  | 1   | 10 ft. | 1(i) | 1    | A   | \$16    | 1 lb.  |
| Derringer, Double | 2L  | 1   | 10 ft. | 2(i) | 1    | A   | £1 \$12 | 1 lb.  |
| Pocket Revolver   | 2L  | 2   | 50 ft. | 6(r) | M    | A   | £3      | 1 lb.  |
| Webley Mk I       | 3L  | 3   | 50 ft. | 6(r) | M    | A   | £2      | 3 lbs. |

| Modern Longarm           | Dmg | Str | Rng     | Cap  | Rate | Spd | Cost    | Wt       |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|---------|------|------|-----|---------|----------|
| .22 Bolt-Action Rifle    | 2L  | 2   | 100 ft. | 6(i) | M    | A   | £2 \$12 | 7.5 lbs. |
| .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle | 3L  | 2   | 100 ft. | 5(i) | M    | A   | £15     | 9 lbs.   |
| Buffalo Rifle            | 4L  | 3   | 100 ft. | 1(i) | ½    | A   | £20     | 24 lbs.  |
| Lee-Metford Rifle        | 3L  | 2   | 100 ft. | 8(c) | M    | A   | £10     | 9 lbs.   |
| Martini-Henry Rifle      | 3L  | 1   | 100 ft. | 1(i) | 1    | A   | £2      | 8.5 lbs. |
| Shotgun, 20 gauge        | 2L  | 2   | 25 ft.  | 5(i) | M    | A   | £7      | 6 lbs.   |
| Shotgun, 12 gauge        | 3L  | 2   | 25 ft.  | 5(i) | M    | A   | £10     | 8 lbs.   |
| Shotgun, 10 gauge        | 4L  | 3   | 25 ft.  | 5(i) | M    | A   | £12     | 10 ft.   |
| Shotgun, Sawed-Off       | 4L  | 2   | 10 ft.  | 2(i) | M    | A   | £4      | 5 lbs.   |
| Winchester               | 3L  | 2   | 100 ft. | 8(i) | M    | A   | £15     | 7 lbs.   |



## Ammunition

In 1889, ammunition is not standardized and most weapons fire different calibers and munitions. The prices below can be used as a guideline.

| Ammunition           | Price |
|----------------------|-------|
| Standard (25)        | \$4   |
| Birdshot (20)        | \$4   |
| Rock Salt (10)       | \$3   |
| Arrows, Bow (20)     | \$8   |
| Bolts, Crossbow (20) | \$16  |
| Flare (1)            | \$2   |
| Flintlock Shot (25)  | \$12  |

## Special Rules and Comments

**Shotgun Ammunition:** One appeal of shotguns is that they can be used to fire several different types of shot. Described below are some popular options.

**Buckshot:** The most common shell, buckshot fires relatively large pieces of shot for maximum damage – used for hunting deer, elk, or sometimes, humans. Buckshot produces the damage listed for each shotgun.

**Birdshot:** This shot is considerably smaller in size and is used for shooting down birds without completely pulverizing them in the process. It is still lethal, but deals much less damage than buckshot. Birdshot suffers a -1 penalty to weapon damage.

**Slugs:** This is a solid slug of lead that deals massive damage. It is used for hunting large, dangerous game such as buffalo or bear. However, it can only hit a single target instead of all targets in a spray. Slugs gain +1 bonus to weapon damage.

**Rock Salt:** Shells can have their buckshot or birdshot removed and replaced with rock salt. Although still capable of inflicting damage at point blank range, it merely deals an incredibly painful sting from a distance as the salt burrows into flesh. Damage from rock salt retains the number of dice damage, but is changed from lethal to nonlethal damage.

## Heavy Weapons

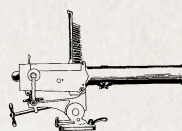
In this section you will find the really large calibers, useful if your characters want to go up against Dinosaurs or are marching to war. In 1889, the armies of the industrial nations have at their disposal an armory of creative as well as effective means to exterminate their opponents. Manually operated machineguns, like the famous Gatling gun, are very popular since the 1860s. Over the last few decades, a series of other machineguns have

appeared alongside the Gatling, most notably the weapons of Nordenfelt, Gardner, and Montigny. All these weapons need a cannoneer operating a crank or lever to fire them. All attempts to operate the cranks with electric motors worked effectively on the gun range, but not out in the field. Only the new and innovative British Maxim machinegun does not need a crank anymore, but fires as long as the cannoneer holds down the trigger. Another new British invention is the ingenious and deadly Hotchkiss Revolving Cannon, a kind of Gatling gun firing blasting cartridges.

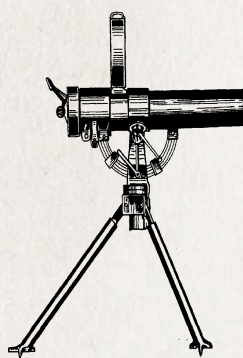
## Special Rules and Comments

Except for the Swivel gun, each of these weapons can use Autofire (see Autofire, p. 205).

**Flaw:** The automatic weapons of this era are prone to jamming. Whenever the firing character decides that his gun jams in a dangerous situation, he receives one Style point.



**Gardner Gun (5 barrels):** Because the US government decided to buy the Gatling gun, American inventor William Gardner produced this gun, patented in 1881, in Britain, selling most of them to the Royal Navy. Five parallel barrels fire up to 812 rounds of .45 caliber per minute. To reduce weight the construction uses mostly brass instead of iron. A five man crew is necessary to serve the gun, although two are sufficient at a pinch – one gunner and one man to work the crank.



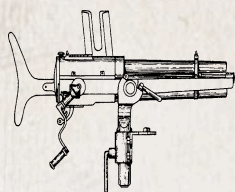
**Gatling Gun:** The first Gatling guns were used during the American Civil War, albeit just in field tests. The weapon is fired by rotating multiple barrels with a crank. The 1874 model of the Gatling is also known by the name Camel gun as it has a special frame for camel saddles, and is being built by the American Colt Factory. It fires up to 1000 rounds of .47-70 caliber from ten rotating barrels. In contrast to its forerunners, the designers tried to minimize the gun's weight. Engineers and scientists are currently trying to use clockwork motors, steam-power, or electricity to increase the rate of fire or replace the four man crew needed to operate the gun.

| Heavy Weapon            | Dmg | Str | Rng       | Cap    | Rate | Spd | Price | Wt         |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----------|--------|------|-----|-------|------------|
| Gardner gun (5 barrels) | 5L  | *   | 800 ft.   | 100(m) | A    | A   | £50   | 290 lbs.   |
| Gatling Gun             | 4L  | *   | 700 ft.   | 400(m) | A    | S   | £40   | 200 lbs.   |
| Hotchkiss cannon        | 6L  | *   | 1,300 ft. | 10(m)  | A    | S   | £160  | 440 lbs.   |
| Maxim machinegun        | 4L  | *   | 330 ft.   | 250(b) | A    | A   | £150  | 60 lbs.    |
| Montigny Mitraillease   | 4L  | *   | 1,150 ft. | 37(m)  | A    | S   | £60   | 2,000 lbs. |
| Nordenfelt (5 Barrels)  | 5L  | *   | 1,000 ft. | 40(m)  | A    | S   | £100  | 530 lbs.   |
| Swivel gun              | 4L  | *   | 100 ft.   | 1(i)   | ¼**  | S   | £20   | 110 lbs.   |

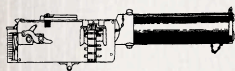
\*In order to fire, these weapons have to be mounted on their carriage, or on a vehicle or cloudship.

\*\*Characters with the Instant Reload Talent double the weapon's Rate of fire



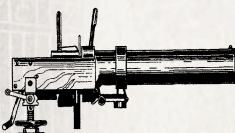


**Hotchkiss Revolving Cannon:** Five rotating barrels fire up to 80 rounds of 37mm caliber (that is 1.5 inch) per minute. In contrast to the Gatling, only the barrels rotate and the weapon has only one breechblock. Thus the design allows for a more massive and heavier breechblock, making the weapon more robust. The crew consists of the chief gunner, the man handling the crank, and a loader.



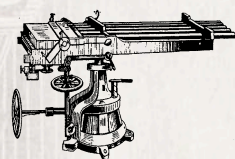
**Maxim Machinegun:** The first fully automatic machinegun. In contrast to contemporary machineguns using a crank or lever to feed the ammunition into the barrels, the Maxim uses the energy of the recoil to continuously feed rounds into the firing mechanism. The weapon is new to the British Army's arsenal and has barely seen battle, yet. A fire rate of up to 600 rounds a minute seems promising, though.

Although a four man crew is ideal for its operation, one man is sufficient to fire the gun.

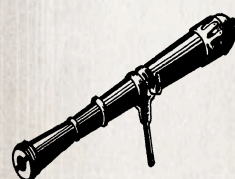


**Montigny Mitrailleur:** A cast iron muzzle with 37 barrels in it, this Belgian designed weapon is a manually loaded volley gun firing .433 rounds. The magazine is fastened with a rear crank, while the weapon is fired with a sideways crank, giving the gun the nickname of 'moulin à café' or coffee mill.

A crew of six is necessary to properly serve the gun, while two are sufficient to fire it – one for aiming and one for firing.



**Nordenfelt Gun:** Designed for defense against torpedo boats, this five-barreled gun fires 1" caliber rounds. The barrels are fired consecutively and are automatically reloaded by a loading-cone. Because of the gun's design, even a jammed barrel does not hinder the weapon to continue fire from its remaining barrels. Five man usually form the crew of the weapon: one man operates different cranks to align it with the target, the second works the side-acting lever to fire, a third man changes the loading-cones, and the remaining two refill them incessantly.



**Swivel gun:** A small muzzle-loading gun with a caliber of up to 2 inches. It can be loaded with round shot, but it is more commonly loaded with rough shot – typically small metal parts enclosed in clay balls – that is fired against 'soft' targets. A swivel

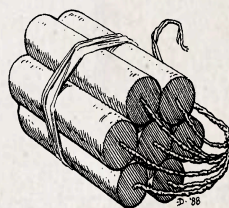
gun is usually mounted on a moveable pivot pin on the rail of a ship. This simple cannon can be served by one man only without difficulty. On Earth, it only serves as an emergency weapon on merchantmen or on pirate ships in the Orient. On Mars, however, it is in wide use on cloudships and canal barges.

## Explosives and Oddities

This section includes explosives and other weapons that do not fall into any other category.

| Explosive       | Dmg | Str | Rng    | Cap  | Rate | Spd | Price | Wt           |
|-----------------|-----|-----|--------|------|------|-----|-------|--------------|
| Dynamite, Stick | 4L* | 2   | 10 ft. | -    | 1    | A   | \$1   | 1 lb./stick  |
| Flare Gun       | 2L* | 2   | 50 ft. | 1(i) | ½    | A   | \$4+  | 2 lbs.       |
| Gunpowder       | 2L* | 1   | 10 ft. | -    | 1    | A   | \$10  | 6 lbs./keg   |
| Nitroglycerin   | 2L  | 1   | 10 ft. | -    | 1    | A   | \$1   | 2 oz./bottle |
| Petrol Bomb     | 2 L | 2   | 10 ft. | -    | 1    | A   | -     | 1 lb.        |

## Special Rules and Comments



**Dynamite, Stick:** Explorers often carry dynamite on an expedition, primarily for mundane tasks, but sometimes as an improvised weapon. When a dynamite stick explodes, it damages everything within a five-foot radius (see Area of Effect Attacks, p. 210).

Dynamite is typically sold in bundles of twelve sticks and requires fuses cut to specific length (one inch of fuse burns in about one second). Wiring multiple sticks of dynamite together grants a +2 damage bonus and increases the explosion radius by five feet for each additional stick (maximum of six sticks). The listed damage, price, and weight are for one stick.

**Flare Gun:** Flare guns are intended for use as a signaling device, but can be utilized as a weapon in real emergencies. If shot in the air, the flare releases an incredibly bright light that illuminates a 50-foot radius; this effect lasts for thirty seconds. To use a flare as a weapon, make a Firearms touch attack (see Touch Attacks, p. 209f.). If your character's attack succeeds, he inflicts one point of lethal damage. If the opponent is wearing something combustible – such as loose clothing or has been doused with a flammable liquid – he is set on fire and will continue to take fire damage until the flames are extinguished.

**Gunpowder:** Although outdated by human standards as an explosive, it is still widely used as an ammunition propellant. Gunpowder usually comes in six-pound kegs, but may be divided into one-pound charges with the use of cloth bags or small tins. The given price is for a six-pound keg, the Damage rating for a one-pound sack. When a pound of gunpowder explodes, it damages everything within a five-foot radius (see Area of Effect Attacks, p. 210). Every additional pound of gunpowder increases the explosion radius by five feet and the damage by +1 (maximum of six pounds).



**Nitroglycerin:** Nitroglycerin is a very powerful and dangerously unstable explosive. It usually comes in two-ounce bottles, with 20 bottles to a case. The case is internally divided with a separate compartment for each bottle, which is usually cooled with ice in order to keep the nitro stable.

When a bottle of Nitroglycerin explodes, it damages everything within a five foot radius (see Area of Effect Attacks, p. 210). Every additional bottle of Nitro increases the explosion radius by five feet and grants a +1 damage bonus (maximum of ten bottles). The given damage, price, and weight are for a two-ounce bottle.

**Petrol Bomb:** A Petrol Bomb (admittedly an anachronistic reference) is a simple explosive made from gasoline mixed with a small bit of oil in a breakable bottle. The top is corked off with a greasy bit of cloth or rag. When lit and thrown, the bottle shatters, showering a five-foot radius with burning fuel (see Area of Effect Attacks, p. 210). An opponent inside the area of effect takes two points of lethal damage and immediately catches fire. He continues to take fire damage each round until the flames are extinguished (see Fire, p. 215).

## Martian Weapons

Similar to humans on Earth, Martians have built a vast number of weapons to complicate their enemies' lives. As a result of the Martians' humanoid physique and their comparable way of thinking, many of these weapons resemble Earth constructions. A Martian musket is nearly identical to an Earth musket – except for the alien ornamentation on the barrel. There are some weapons however, that do not have equivalents on Earth. Some of these weapons are presented below.



**Glass Dagger:** The knowledge of how to manufacture glass daggers has been lost, but previous cultures have left so many of these weapons that they can be found even today. It is said that a glass dagger can kill anything and pierce through every kind of armor. The blade, sometimes even the hilt, of a glass dagger is made of a transparent, glass-like substance that is unbreakable. Its edge is sharper than any razor and does not have to be sharpened, ever. Furthermore it seems that the substance that the daggers are made of is poisonous. Wounds caused by a glass dagger heal very slowly, because the blood-clotting is severely delayed. In many city-states the possession of this weapon is reserved for the nobility, in some it is even punishable by death. Antique glass daggers are worth a fortune and forgeries made from ordinary, and thus very fragile, glass are common.

Genuine glass daggers reduce any Armor bonus by –2. In addition, the wounded person is affected by a poison (Toxin rating 4) that prevents blood clotting until the character has defeated it. Once a day, you may make a Body roll with you character's double Body rating or the Medicine rating of the attending doctor; strict bed rest grants the character another roll after 6 hours. As soon as the number of successes rolled equal or exceed the Toxin rating (4), the effects of poison are withstood.

## Special Rules and Comments

**Dynamite Crossbow, Tossian:** Dynamite and its many applications have been known to the Canal Martians for millennia. The Tossian Empire made attempts to use the destructive force of this explosive substance in ranged combat. These efforts resulted in the dynamite crossbow, a weapon resembling Earth crossbows. Specially made dynamite bolts can be shot as far as 650 feet. The bolts are detonated either by fuse cords or mechanical percussion fuses. This works better in theory than it does in practice, and only two-thirds of all bolts explode as planned. Some of the bolts detonate prematurely and kill the

| Martian weapon               | Dmg | Str | Rng    | Cap  | Rate | Spd | Price      | Wt      |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|--------|------|------|-----|------------|---------|
| Dynamite Ballista*           | 3L  | 2   | 80 ft. | 1(i) | ½**  | A   | £2         | 11 lbs. |
| Glass Dagger*                | 3L  | 1   | -      | -    | -    | F   | £1000+**** | 5 oz.   |
| Loonsoor                     | 4L  | 2   | -      | -    | -    | S   | \$10+      | 6 lbs.  |
| Shield Gun*                  | 3L  | 2   | 25 ft. | 1(i) | 1    | A   | £20***     | 17 lbs. |
| Shuupoong                    | 4S  | 3   | -      | -    | -    | S   | \$15+      | 33 lbs. |
| Ammunition:                  |     |     |        |      |      |     |            |         |
| Dynamite Projectile (1)      |     |     |        |      |      |     | £5***      | 1 lb.   |
| Steel Bolts, Shield Gun (10) |     |     |        |      |      |     | £1***      | 2 lbs.  |

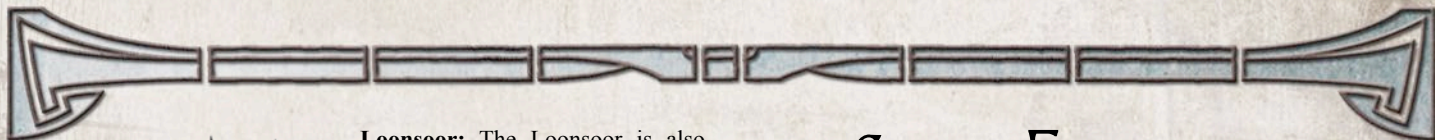
\*See weapon descriptions for special rules

\*\*Characters with the Instant Reload Talent double the weapon's Rate of fire

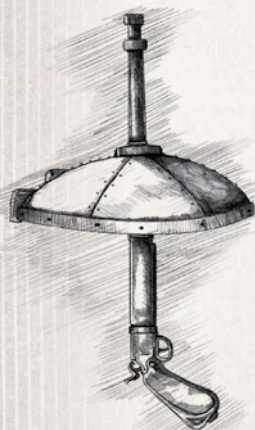
\*\*\*Prices listed are for the Martian market. Hardened Oenotrian stainless steel, as well as Tossian dynamite are much more expensive than comparable materials on Earth.

\*\*\*\*This is the collector's value and indicates the price a glass dagger would cost at an auction or in an antiques shop. Glass daggers are invaluable artifacts.





**Loonsoor:** The Loonsoor is also called the 'Martian halberd'. It probably originates from the nomads of the Nepenthes Thoth steppe, but nowadays it can be found all over Mars. A Loonsoor consists of a long wooden shaft with an angular, sharp-edged blade on top that looks like a flattened trident. Originally a weapon of gashant cavalrymen, the Loonsoor has recently been used by infantry soldiers who handle it like Japanese soldiers lead their Naginatas. Traditionally, nomads engrave the shafts of their Loonsoors with phrases of apology to appease the spirits of their killed enemies. This custom is rather unusual with Canal Martians.



**Shield Gun:** The Oenotrian shield gun is the pinnacle of modern Martian weapon technology. It is the only breech-loading rifle built on Mars in the modern age. The shield gun is similar to an Earth shotgun and can fire lead shot or a solid steel pin, though the latter is rather expensive. The weapon's name derives from the steel buckler fastened to the barrel of the gun, protecting the firer from enemy bullets. A small viewing slot in the buckler allows the firer to aim. In addition to the shield, Oenotrian shock troops usually wear full plate armor. They were considered to be invulnerable for a long time, because it was nearly impossible to punch through the armor with Martian musket balls or arrows. Modern Earth firearms however, can punch through the shield and the plate armor of the Oenotrians, spoiling the aura of their shock troops. Nevertheless, the shield gun gives a +2 passive Defense bonus.



**Shuupoong:** Probably the most bizarre Martian weapon, the Shuupoong is used as a ritual weapon in Dioscurian arbitration fights. It is a hollow cylinder made of hardwood, about three feet long and one foot in diameter, and is wielded with two hands like a primitive club. Each Shuupoong is unique and richly decorated with brass bells, colored ribbons, and carvings, often engraved with blessings of peace and justice. If not used as a weapon, a Shuupoong is utilized as a prayer wheel or butter churn to make consecrated butter, which plays an important role in Dioscurian popular belief.

## General Equipment

Explorers who set off on a journey should always remember to pack the right survival gear. Listed below are items of clothing, armor, gear, and tools that might come in handy during the course of an adventure.

**Price:** The price of the weapon or item in Pounds Sterling. This number can vary according to supply and demand.

**Weight (Wt):** The weight of the weapon or item in pounds (lbs.). Characters carrying too much weight cannot move as fast and will suffer from exhaustion sooner.

## Armor

Armor and shields are rarely used anymore, mostly where modern firearms are unknown or rare – may it be in the Namib Desert or the plains of Mars. The impact and accuracy of most modern firearms make them basically useless.

**Defense:** The Defense bonus provided by a piece of armor.

**Strength:** The minimum Strength rating needed to wear the armor. A character with a lower Strength rating suffers -2 penalty on his attack rolls for each Strength point below the minimum.

**Dexterity:** The penalty on Dexterity due to the restrictive nature of wearing armor. This penalty affects all Dexterity-related Skills and abilities.

| Armor         | Def | Str | Dex | Price | Wt      |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|---------|
| Chainmail     | +2  | 2   | -   | £10   | 25 lbs. |
| Leather armor | +1  | 1   | -   | £5    | 17 lbs. |
| Plate armor   | +4  | 3   | -1  | £20   | 50 lbs. |
| Shield, steel | +2  | 3   | -   | £5    | 10 lbs. |
| Shield, wood  | +1  | 2   | -   | £2    | 5 lbs.  |

## Clothing

Clothing makes the man. Rather than describing each item of clothing individually, we assume that clothing is purchased in outfits including trousers (skirt/dress for women), shirt, coat, underwear, and shoes. At the beginning of the game, every character is assumed to own at least one average outfit appropriate to his class and background, additional outfits must be acquired.

| Clothing         | Price   | Weight  |
|------------------|---------|---------|
| Outfit, Worker   | £1 \$10 | 2 lbs.  |
| Outfit, Arctic   | £10     | 10 lbs. |
| Outfit, Poor     | £1      | 2 lbs.  |
| Outfit, Average  | £2      | 2 lbs.  |
| Outfit, Explorer | £4      | 2 lbs.  |
| Outfit, Luxury   | £10+    | 2 lbs.  |
| Outfit, Desert   | £4      | 2 lbs.  |
| Space Suit       | £20     | 30 lbs. |
| Diving Suit, Dry | £20     | 30 lbs. |
| Uniform          | £2      | 2 lbs.  |

**Space Suit:** This closed suit made of leather and rubber, combined with a brass-helmet not unlike that of a dry-diving suit, enables the wearer to survive in a vacuum. The air supply lasts

Equipment and Inventions





for 2 hours. There are a variety of different suppliers, and new models are constantly being released onto the market with one improvement or another.

## Outdoor and Survival Gear

Explorers who are setting off into unknown territory should make sure to carry the necessary gear to safely make their way there and back.

| Survival Equipment                   | Price   | Weight   |
|--------------------------------------|---------|----------|
| Backpack                             | £1      | 4 lbs.   |
| Binoculars                           | £6      | 2 lbs.   |
| Blanket Survival                     | \$8     | 1 lb.    |
| Camp Cot, Portable                   | £1 \$4  | 15 lbs.  |
| Candles (12)                         | \$1     | 1 lb.    |
| Canteen                              | \$8     | 0.2 kg   |
| Compass                              | \$6     | -        |
| Crampon                              | £1      | 2 lbs.   |
| Emergency rations                    | \$2     | 1 lbs.   |
| First Aid Kit                        | \$10    | 1 lb.    |
| Goggles, Ice                         | \$8     | -        |
| Grappling Hook                       | \$12    | 2 lbs.   |
| Lantern, Battery-Powered             | \$2     | 2 lbs.   |
| Magnesium torch (1)                  | \$2     | 0.5 lbs. |
| Miner's lamp                         | £1 \$4  | 1 lb.    |
| Mosquito Netting                     | \$8     | 1 lb.    |
| Pitons, Climbing (6)                 | \$2     | 1 lbs.   |
| Raincoat                             | £1      | 2 lbs.   |
| Rope, 50-ft.                         | \$6     | 4 lbs.   |
| Rühmkorff-Lamp                       | £3      | 13 lbs.  |
| Sleeping bag                         | £1 \$2  | 2 kg     |
| Sleeping Bag                         | \$16    | 5 lbs.   |
| Swamp Shoes                          | £1.5    | 5 lbs.   |
| Tarpaulin (canvas), 20-ft. by 20-ft. | £2      | 5 lbs.   |
| Telescope                            | £10     | 1 lb.    |
| Tent, 1-person                       | £1 \$16 | 5 lbs.   |
| Tent, 2-persons                      | £2 \$8  | 1 lb.    |
| Tent, 4-persons                      | £5      | 20 lbs.  |
| Toilet bag                           | \$4     | -        |
| Torch                                | \$12    | 1 lb.    |

**Rühmkorff-Lamp:** The 'Rühmkorff-apparatus' consists of an electrical gas discharge lamp, which is served by a special accumulator with crank-elicitor. Rühmkorff-lamps are large and bulky, but robust. Experienced miners claim that a Rühmkorff-lamp is so reliable that one could possibly dig through to the center of the Earth without the lamp failing. The ingenious combination of accumulator and crank-elicitor ensures that the lamp literally never runs out of energy. The battery can be recharged anytime by simply turning the crank.

**Swamp Shoes:** These shoes, most frequently used on Venus, resemble snow shoes from Earth. They consist of a round woven wicker-frame, over which a net of plant-fibers is stretched. Attached to the feet they enable the wearer to walk on mud-

dy ground without sinking in on every other step. Walking in swamp shoes needs practice, but it can be learned over one or two days. Wearing swamp shoes you move 25% slower, and both running and jumping are impossible.

After a successful Skill roll (difficulty rating 2) in a matching Craft or Survival skill you can produce the swamp shoes yourself.

## Professional Equipment

Professional equipment includes any gear that requires a certain Skill (for example Larceny or Medicine) to be used effectively.

| Professional Equipment | Price   | Weight  |
|------------------------|---------|---------|
| Disguise Kit           | £1 \$12 | 1 lb.   |
| Doctor's Bag           | £3      | 15 lbs. |
| Lockpicking Kit        | £6      | 1 lb.   |
| Surgeon's Kit          | £3      | 3 lbs.  |

**Disguise Kit:** A portable box containing make-up, fake noses, moustaches, mastic, and other materials necessary to create an effective disguise. This kit provides a +2 bonus on Disguise rolls, and is good for five uses.

**Doctor's Bag:** A doctor's bag contains all the important supplies for treating wounds. This includes scalpels, bandages, disinfectant, a pint of ether, gauze and other medical supplies. This grants a +1 bonus on Medicine rolls, and is good for ten uses.

**Lockpicking Kit:** This kit contains specially shaped tools, tongs, tweezers, skeleton keys, and other implements needed to open locks. The toolkit provides a +2 bonus for Larceny (Lockpicking) rolls.

**Surgeon's Kit:** A Surgeon's kit contains everything necessary to perform emergency surgeries in the field. This includes scalpels, forceps, bandages, disinfectant, a pint of ether, gauze, and other specialized medical equipment. This grants a +2 bonus on all Medicine rolls, and is good for ten uses.

## Cameras

The development of photography, especially the invention of the dry plate made of gelatine, supplies the travelling explorer with the necessary gear to create a snapshot for the loved ones at home. Experienced photographers use folding cameras supplied with 50 gelatine-plates, which are included in the price and weight as is a tripod.

Of special interest for the adventurer are also spy's or investigator's cameras, which are surprisingly widespread. A popular model is Dr. Krügener's pocket-book camera, with which 24 exposures can be made.

The Kodak No. 1, produced by the Eastman Company in New York, enjoys growing popularity. This apparatus is a simple wooden box, fitted with a new type of roll-film for 100 exposures. When the roll of film is full the customer sends the complete apparatus to the company, where the exposed film is developed, a new film put into the camera and the whole item then sent back to the customer. This procedure costs \$10 (£2) and takes about four weeks for customers in North America, or much longer if the photographer is on Mars.



| Camera Equipment                                                | Price   | Weight   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------|
| Dry Plates (100)                                                | \$5     | 1 lb.    |
| Folding Camera                                                  | £4      | 10 lbs.  |
| Kodak film-developing service<br>(over 4 weeks processing time) | 2£      | -        |
| Photo Development Kit                                           | £3      | 8 lbs.   |
| Photo Lab*                                                      | £3      | 100 lbs. |
| Roll-film Camera Kodak No. 1                                    | £5      | 2 lbs.   |
| Spy Camera                                                      | £3      | 2 lbs.   |
| Tripod                                                          | £1 \$12 | 10 lbs.  |

\*Includes worktable, chemicals, and electric light.

**Photo Development Kit:** This includes all of the necessary equipment and chemicals that are needed to develop 100 exposures. Basic developing kits will only develop photographic plates. Developing roll-films made of paper or celluloid requires special equipment, which might not be available everywhere.

## Tools

The tools described here are typically grouped into 'sets' of several types of tools and equipment, commonly used by craftsmen, mechanics, and artisans. Unique tools, or those usually used alone, receive their own description.

| Tool                  | Price | Weight   |
|-----------------------|-------|----------|
| Bolt Cutters          | \$14  | 5 lbs.   |
| Crowbar               | \$8   | 2 lbs.   |
| Glasscutter           | \$3   | -        |
| Handsaw               | \$10  | 1 lb.    |
| Metal saw             | \$3   | 1 lb.    |
| Pickaxe               | \$6   | 6 lbs.   |
| Shovel                | \$6   | 5 lbs.   |
| Toolkit, Blacksmith's | £20   | 100 lbs. |
| Toolkit, Carpenter's  | £2    | 50 lbs.  |
| Toolkit, Mechanic's   | £3    | 35 lbs.  |
| Toolkit, Watchmaker's | £6    | -        |
| Wire Cutters          | \$5   | -        |

**Bolt Cutters:** Bolt cutters grant a +2 bonus to Strength rolls when cutting through metal, such as door locks.

**Crowbar:** A crowbar grants a +2 bonus to Strength rolls when breaking open chests, prying walls apart, or performing other feats of brute strength. It can also be used as a club.

**Metal Saw:** A small saw used to cut through metal. A character can cut through one inch of metal every ten minutes.



**Shovel:** An essential tool for explorers performing excavations and archaeological tasks. If used as a weapon, treat as a two-handed club. If your character wishes to do lethal damage (by striking with the edge of the blade), you suffer a -2 penalty on your Attack roll.

## Miscellaneous Equipment

| Miscellaneous Equipment                  | Price  | Weight   |
|------------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Alarm Clock                              | \$12   | 0.5 lbs. |
| Ammunition Belt                          | \$4    | 2 lbs.   |
| Conklin's Atlas of the Worlds            | \$1    | 0.5 lbs. |
| Edison's Encyclopedia of Natural Science | \$5    | 1 lbs.   |
| Fuse, 10-ft.                             | \$8    | 0.5 lbs. |
| Gun Cleaning Kit                         | \$16   | 0.5 lbs. |
| Handcuffs                                | \$10   | -        |
| Holster, Belt                            | \$12   | 2 lbs.   |
| Holster, Shoulder                        | \$16   | 1 lb.    |
| Lighter                                  | \$1    | -        |
| Phonograph                               | £10    | 10 lbs.  |
| Suitcase                                 | £1 \$4 | 5 lbs.   |
| Telescopic Sight                         | £6     | 1 lb.    |
| Typewriter                               | £7     | 10 lbs.  |
| Watch, Pocket or Wrist                   | £1+    | -        |

**Conklin's Atlas of the Worlds:** This handy reference book contains vital statistics and other basic information about the four inner planets, their astronomical, geographical, and geological data, and details of their flora and fauna (as far as has been explored yet.)

The book even contains two chapters written in Koline and Venusian, which include the most important phrases and words. As of now the manual is available in English, German, and French. Japanese Publisher Chuokoron-Shinsha is currently negotiating the rights to a Japanese translation.

**Edison's Encyclopaedia of General Information:** The Encyclopaedia a font of useful information about technical matters, written by the inventor of the ether flyer. No inventor or scientist can be without this compact volume. It contains the main facts, data, and formulae – written down and annotated by the inventor of the Ether-propulsion engine.

Even accomplished scientists value this compact volume, which can accompany them on excursions and help answer questions and queries whenever and wherever access to a large scientific library cannot be obtained.

**Telescopic Sight:** Telescopic sights are rare and made to order. With them the effective range of a weapon may be doubled. To use a telescopic sight the shooter must make a Total Attack to acquire his target in the lens. (see Total Attack, p. 207) Without taking time to aim, the weapon's range is normal.

## Transportation

It is remarkable that in the 1880s there are hardly any mechanical vehicles that can be used by a single person alone. The development of the automobile is still in its early stages. In the cities, the transportation of choice is the Hackney Cab.

Journeys to the countryside are usually made by train, pulled by coal-powered steam engines. In those areas not connected to the railways, coaches and carriages are still in use, and in underdeveloped areas one travels on horseback or on foot. This situation is further aggravated by the bad condition of the roads, which are often unpaved outside of the cities.



On the water, sailing-ships are still used for the slower, but cheaper transport of goods that do not have to reach their destination quickly. Most cargo and passengers are transported by steam-ships. With the application of improved propulsion-systems and pressure tanks, it is expected that steam vehicle design will make tremendous advances in terms of power and efficiency. In England, Charles Parsons builds his first working steam-turbine in 1884, a promising invention that has the potential to make the use of steam energy even more efficient in the foreseeable future.

## Vehicles

Described below are not only vehicles that really existed in 1889, but also some more unusual means of transport designed in the style of Victorian science fiction.

**Size:** The relative size of the vehicle as compared to an average human (size 0.) Vehicle Size modifies its Defense and Structure and factors into the number of passengers it can carry.

**Defence (Def):** Level of difficulty to hit and damage a vehicle.

**Structure (Strc):** The amount of damage a vehicle can suffer before it is inoperable. Vehicles will continue to run until their structure is reduced to 0 or less.

**Speed (Spd):** The speed at which a vehicle moves in miles per hour. If driven in combat, a vehicle moves five times its speed rating in feet. (Example: an automobile moves 10 Miles per hour; in combat it will move 50 feet per turn.) The driver may also make a double move with his vehicle (see **Move** p. 210.)

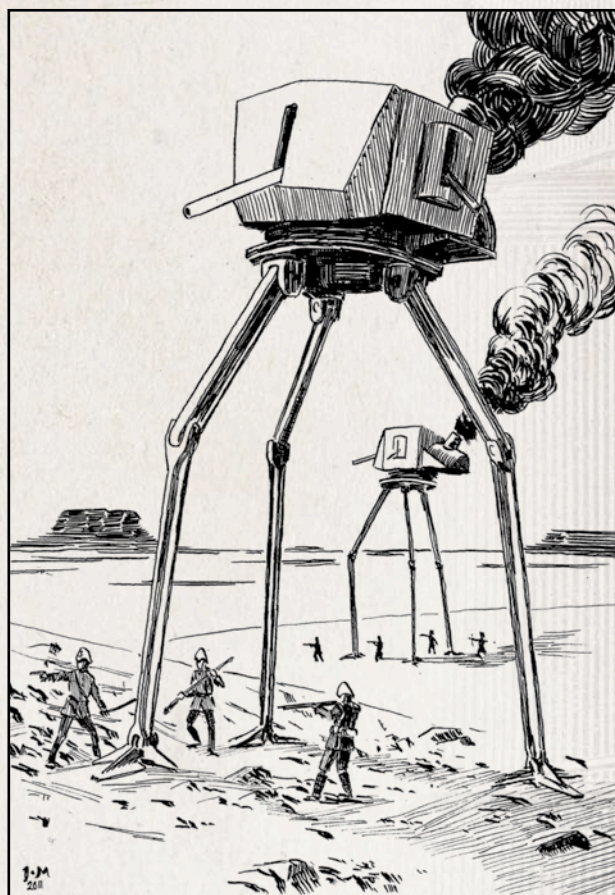
**Handling (Han):** Describes how maneuverable a vehicle is and how easy it is to operate. Handling modifies the operator's Drive and Pilot rolls.

**Crew:** The number of persons required to operate a vehicle.

**Passengers (Pass):** The number of passengers a vehicle can carry.

## Land Vehicles

**Automobile:** Automobiles of the year 1889 can best be described as 'motorized carriages'. These novel and rare vehicles have not yet advanced quite beyond the experimental stage and are only available as unique handcrafted designs. The petrol-powered combustion engine has not yet been established as standard for automobiles, which is why there are also a number of other propulsion methods available, including electric motors and steam engines.



**Carriages:** Horse-drawn carriages are the main method of transport on Earth, save for walking. They exist in a variety of designs and sizes. For simplicity, listed below are the statistics for a two-wheeled chaise of the kind probably found in all cities of the western world, and for a four-wheeled carriage, as might be used as a stage coach or a goods cart.

**Land Juggernaut:** A very large, armed, and armored version of the heavy tractor (see below). The eight-man crew includes a commander, a driver, two mechanics, and four gunmen. The standard weaponry includes a Hotchkiss revolving cannon and two Gardner machine guns, but this may vary accordingly. The land juggernaut consumes 3 tons of coal every eight hours.

**Heavy Tractor:** A heavy steam-powered land vehicle that is capable of crossing most terrain types on its endless steel treads. It consumes about ½ ton of coal every eight hours.

| Vehicle             | Size | Def | Strc | Spd      | Han | Crew | Pass | Price   | Wt       |
|---------------------|------|-----|------|----------|-----|------|------|---------|----------|
| Automobile          | 2    | 6   | 8    | 10       | +2  | 1    | 4-8  | £500+   | 1t+      |
| Bicycle             | 0    | 6   | 4    | Str x 10 | +2  | 1    | 0    | £5      | 25 lbs.  |
| Chaise, 2-wheeled   | 1    | 3   | 5    | 5-15     | -1  | 1    | 3    | £8      | 600 lbs. |
| Carriage, 4-wheeled | 2    | 4   | 7    | 5-10     | -2  | 1    | 6    | £12     | 900 lbs. |
| Land Juggernaut     | 6    | 8   | 12   | 5        | -2  | 8    | 5    | £15,000 | 30t      |
| Heavy Tractor       | 3    | 5   | 10   | 5        | -1  | 1    | 4    | £500    | 5t       |
| Walking Tripod      | 4    | 5   | 8    | 10       | 0   | 2    | 0    | £1000   | 2t       |

| Water Vehicle | Size | Def | Strc | Spd  | Han | Crew | Pass | Price | Wt      |
|---------------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-------|---------|
| Rowboat       | 1    | 4   | 6    | Str  | 0   | 1    | 2    | £5    | 70 lbs. |
| Sailboat      | 2    | 4   | 8    | 5-10 | -2  | 2-4  | 6    | £8    | 10t     |
| Tramp Steamer | 8    | 6   | 24   | 25   | -2  | 8-12 | 6-12 | £1000 | 50t     |
| Yacht         | 4    | 4   | 14   | 25   | -2  | 4-6  | 6-10 | £2000 | 50t     |



**Walking Tripod:** This vehicle moves on three hydraulically operated legs. It is capable of crossing just about any terrain type and can even wade in up to 20 feet of water. An exceptional example of German engineering, this vehicle is usually lightly armored and armed with a machine-gun. Its steam-engine consumes ½ ton of coal every eight hours.

## Water Vehicles

Described below are several types of water-based vehicles aboard which explorers may find themselves on or which could be developed by inventors.

**Row Boat:** A small boat powered by oars. This category also includes rafts and lifeboats found on larger ships.

**Sailboat:** This includes any wind-powered vessel operated by a crew of up to four members. Most sailboats of this size are used for recreational purposes, although some are also used for fishing.

**Tramp Steamer:** A small to medium-size steamer with large cargo capacity – and little comfort with regards to either entertainment or accommodation – which follows certain routes on demand. Explorers often find themselves on tramp steamers headed to distant and exotic places, as most captains of such vessels ask few questions of their passengers, as long as they provide cash up front.

**Yacht:** Status-symbols of the rich and powerful, yachts are large, steam-powered ships with spacious and luxurious accommodation.

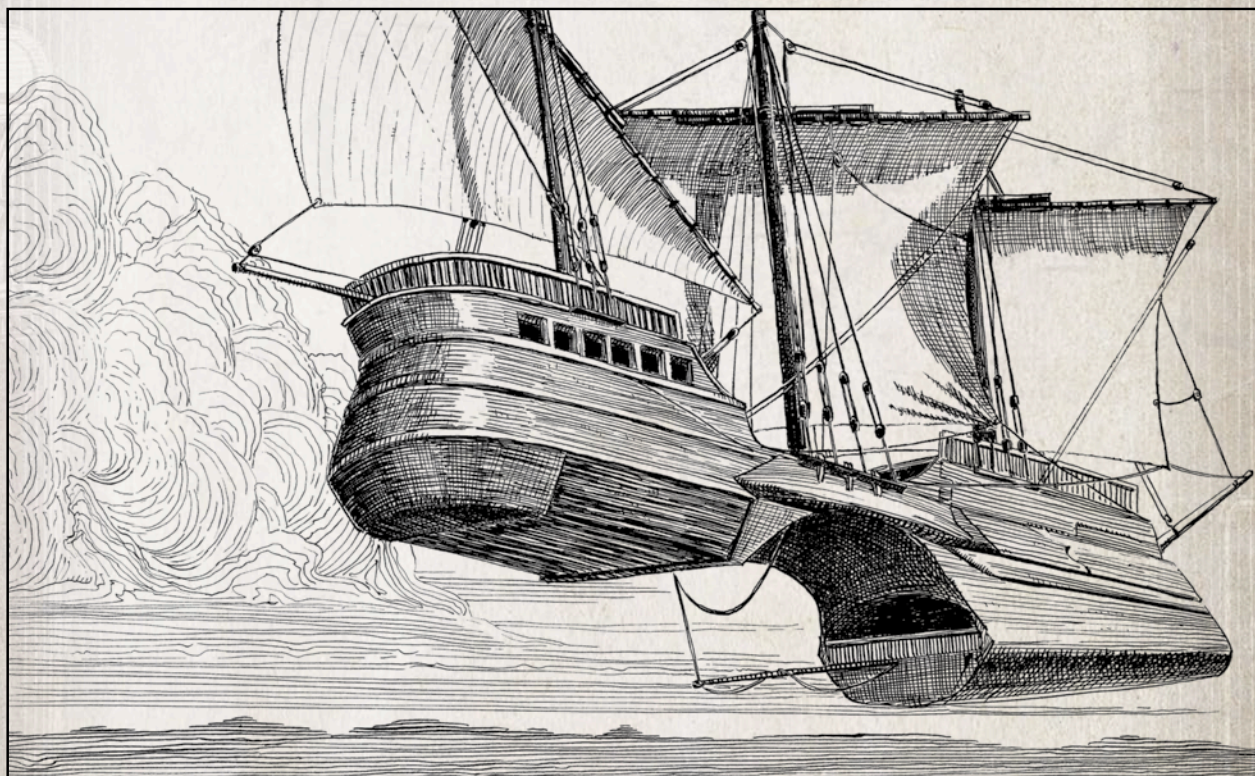
## Travel Times and Expenses

| Vehicle                 | Miles/Day | Price/Day |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Zeppelin                | 300       | \$10      |
| Cloudship (Steam Flyer) | 300       | \$10      |
| Cloudship (Kite)        | 200-400   | \$6       |
| Screw galley            | 200-400   | \$4       |

## Steamship Travel

Despite the advent of hydrogen dirigibles and lift-wood flyers, steamships remain the most common means of long-distance travel on Earth. A measure of their importance to world commerce can be gathered by examining the numbers of ships in the service of the six greatest mercantile nations of the world and the annual volume of trade carried. Given the excellent state of American transcontinental railroads and regular steamship service, it is now possible for a traveler to leave London, circumnavigate the globe, and arrive back at London in 85 days – not far off the 80 days considered a nearly-impossible feat only a few years ago. The major parts of this voyage consist of a 71-day steamer voyage from London to San Francisco by way of the Suez Canal, a six-day transcontinental train trip from San Francisco to New York, and an eight-day steamer voyage from New York to London. The steamer passage for the first leg of this voyage will cost approximately £120, the train fare will be \$200 (£40), and the steamship fare from New York to London will be £20, for a total of less than £200.

One of the most recent innovations in international shipping has been the construction of the Tehuantepec Ship Railroad (p. 48). It carries ocean-going vessels via railroad across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and presents a significant shortcut on the journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.





## Air Vehicles

The most visible difference between the universe of Space: 1889 and the historical Victorian Era is the widespread use of aerial travel. Edison's discovery of liftwood on Mars in the year 1870 and its implementation meant an enormous boost for aerial engineering. In 1874, Ferdinand Count von Zeppelin developed an efficient, rigid hydrogen airship powered by a lightly built steam engine. In 1880, he started to construct airships equipped with the more efficient Daimler combustion engines which are in widespread use by now.

In addition to the various aerial vessels constructed with liftwood, several hybrid vessels have been designed using a combination of zeppelin and liftwood technology, but these are rare. Today, the Earth powers have less than 100 military airships in service between them. This is in addition to those in commercial service or operated by privateers.

Martians have been using cloudships for a long time, which are either wind-powered or man-powered crafts driven by a large air screw.

Described below are several aerial vehicles which may be used by explorers on their expeditions.

| Air Vehicle                  | Crew | Pass | Price     | Weight     |
|------------------------------|------|------|-----------|------------|
| Balloon                      | 1    | 2    | £23       | 1,800 lbs. |
| Steam Launch                 | 4    | 4    | £4,800    | 50 t       |
| Aerial Gunboat (Aphid Class) | 15   | *    | £23,000** | 160 t      |
| Passenger Zeppelin           | 18   | 20   | £20,000** | 20         |

| Martian Air Vehicle | Crew    | Pass | Price      | Weight  |
|---------------------|---------|------|------------|---------|
| Screw Galley, Small | app. 20 | *    | £10,000+** | 140t    |
| Screw Galley, Large | app. 60 | *    | £50,000**  | 700t    |
| War Kite, Small     | 10      | *    | £8,000**   | 10t     |
| War Kite, Large     | 40      | *    | £60,000**  | 700t    |
| Merchant Kite       | app. 50 | 20   | £100,000   | 2,000t+ |

\*Not for passenger transport

\*\*Not available on the open market

**British Steam Launch:** A small vehicle, approximately 45 feet in length, popular with exploratory missions. It offers accommodation for eight persons – helmsman, trimsmen, engineer, gunner, and four passengers, and space for 5 tons of cargo as well as 20 tons of coal (which corresponds to 40 days endurance at regular cruising speed). Its armament consists of a five-barreled Nordenfelt machine gun mounted in the bow.

**Aerial Gunboat (Aphid Class):** This is among the smallest of aerial gunboats, approximately 85 feet in length, in British service. It is also the most common, with a total of four ships in service and two more in production at Syrtis Major. Each of these vessels carries a crew of 15 and has an endurance of 20 days steaming. It is armed with a 4-inch barreled gun, two Hotchkiss 1-pounder rotating cannons, and two five-barrel Nordenfelts.

**Zeppelin:** Developed by the Germans, but widely sold to friendly powers which do not have reliable access to a supply of liftwood, the Zeppelin is a rigid airship held aloft by (highly flammable) hydrogen. A modern zeppelin of German manufacture has 20 days of endurance, but burns only gasoline in its engines, and thus it can only refuel where it is available.

**Martian Screw Galley, Small:** Various small dispatch vessels and gunboats are used by Martian principalities; the *Small Bird* class, approximately 55 feet in length, is a typical example.

It has a crew of 20, but carries a substantial complement of weapons considering its size. Unarmed small screw galleys are generally faster than the *Small Bird*. Screw galleys do not have an engine in the modern sense of the word. The screws are operated by slaves, or in the aerial fleets of more liberal city-states, by a special crew called 'turncranks'. An intricate gear transmission between the cranks and the screws provides for the necessary speed.

**Martian Screw Galley, Large:** Typical of this type and size is the Oenotrian *Hullcutter* class screw galley, which is approximately 118 feet in length. It has a crew of 60, and is equipped with a ram bow and armed with several cannons.

**Martian War Kite, Small:** Approximately 57 feet in length, the *Bloodrunner* class is typical of these small aerial sailing vessels. They carry a crew of 10 and are only lightly armed.

**Martian War Kite, Large:** These powerful sailing vessels go by the name *Whisperdeath*, are approximately 116 feet in length, and weigh up to 700 tons. They carry a crew of 40 and are equipped with a ram bow and heavy ordnance.

**Martian Merchant Kite:** Merchant kites of the *Warm Winds* class are quite large, approximately 137 feet in length and usually weighing over 2,000 tons. The operation of this vessel's complicated rigging requires a crew of up to 50. They can typically carry between 1,000 and 2,000 tons of cargo.

**Ether vehicles:** From solid, but uncomfortable cargo vessels to comfortable, if cramped emigrant ships, and from the luxurious vessels of the White Star Line to the German ether zeppelins and the monumental ether battleships of the British *Duke of York* class, there are numerous ways to travel the ether. You will find more on this topic in the chapter Interplanetary Travel on page 135ff.

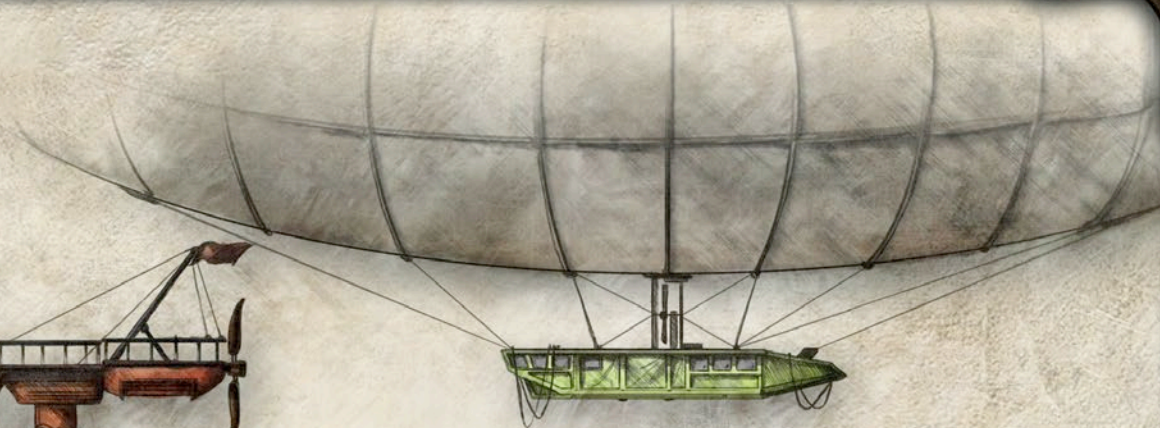
## Liftwood

Liftwood is known as a rare and costly resource. The liftwood tree itself is relatively common, even though it does not develop its antigravity qualities in every type of soil. The amount of liftwood harvested is sufficient to allow the city-states of Mars to construct and maintain their cloudship fleets. Unfortunately, the production of liftwood does not satisfy the current demand. To keep a ship airborne new liftwood is needed at regular intervals, as the material loses its antigravity effect over time. The maintenance of Martian cloudships thus swallows the largest part of liftwood supplies. Since the city-states depend on the faultless operation of cloudships, be it for military or economic reasons, liftwood is expensive, in high demand, and only rarely exported. The city-state princes ultimately have to decide whether to sell liftwood to the Earthmen, and thus make an immense profit, or to use it for their own fleets. Many of them choose the latter, making sure that the export of liftwood does not happen at the expense of their own city fleets. Although technologically superior, Earthlings cannot requisition all liftwood on Mars, and thus they have to bow to these conditions. This is also true for the city-states under human rule. The colonial administrations face the same questions as the native rulers: "Do we use the liftwood for the wellbeing and the defense of our colony, or is the profit gained with its export more important?"

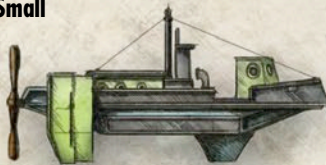




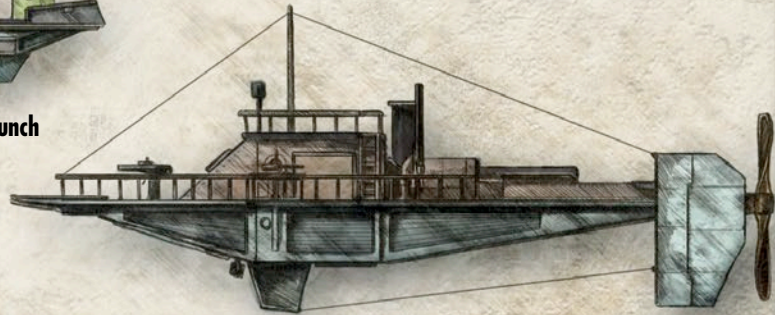
**Martian Screw Galley, Small**



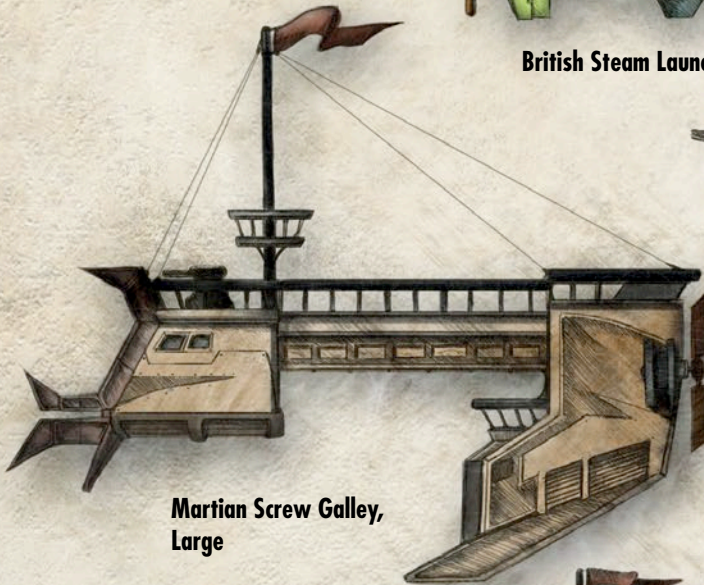
**Zeppelin**



**British Steam Launch**



**Aerial Gunboat (Aphid Class)**



**Martian Screw Galley, Large**



**Martian War Kite, Small**



**Martian War Kite, Large**



**Martian Merchant Kite**



## Riding Animals

Unfortunately, trains or ships cannot run everywhere, but luckily travelers can ride mounts on all three planets. The travel distances and prices listed below are for a well-trained animal equipped with saddle and bridle. Pack animals are cheaper, but also slower.

| Animal       | Planet | Miles/<br>Day | Selling Price | Fodder/<br>Day | Rent/<br>Day |
|--------------|--------|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Horse        | Earth  | 35            | £10           | d1             | \$2          |
| Camel        | Earth  | 35            | £12           | d1             | \$2          |
| Elephant     | Earth  | 25            | £40           | £1             | \$8          |
| Gashant      | Mars   | 50            | £7            | d1             | \$¼          |
| Ruumet Brehr | Mars   | 15            | £20           | £1             | \$4          |
| Pacyosaurus  | Venus  | 30            | £10           | d2             | \$2          |

## Triumph of Science

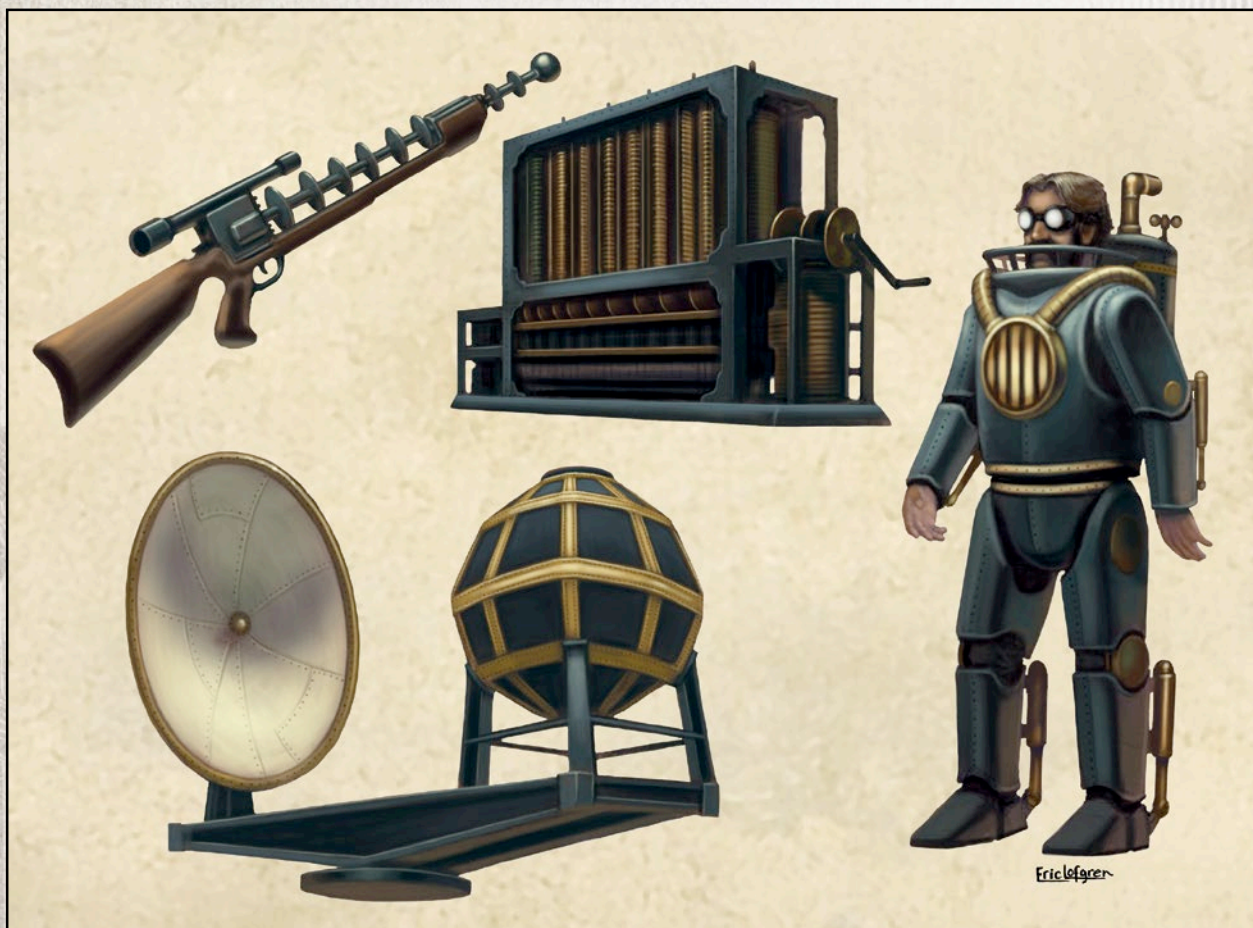
In no age before, has it ever been this obvious that the world is in a constant state of progress. On a nearly daily basis, the world's newspapers report new, bizarre, fantastic, even ridiculous inventions. The last decade of the 19th century seems set to become a golden age for the brave scientists, inventors, dreamers, and visionaries everywhere. However, just because the 19th century is considered to be the 'Age of Steam', not every invention in Space: 1889 is limited to steam-technology. Far from it, progress is made in all directions. Be it mechanics, electrical engineering,

chemistry, or medicine, research continues apace at an incredible pace – sometimes blinded by ambition. This is a time when science is not only progressive, but also free of 'restrictions'. Developers, scientists, and physicians with inquisitive minds direct their attention towards those things that 'cannot be'. Some of them have the greater good of humanity in mind; others act out of revenge, greed, or simply want to see what is possible. This is why in Space: 1889 scientists experiment in areas that appear fantastical and absurd to us today. Since the science in Space: 1889 is based on the science-fiction of the 19th century the inventions presented below sometimes take on peculiar forms. Flying steel-fortresses and special diving spheres are just as possible as chemical compounds that cause giant growth, electrical paleoscopes which allow the viewer to peer into the past, ether resonance-detectors, or paint that makes objects invisible. Above all, the fantastical inventions of the year 1889 do not necessarily have to correspond to the actual laws of nature as we know them in the real world.

Most of the inventions described below cannot be easily obtained. To get them characters will have to track down an inventor who has built such a device and is also willing to sell it for a price. Alternatively, a player character may decide to invent and build one of these devices with his own hands. If so, the necessary parts will cost 25% of the listed price.

## Inventions

The wondrous 'science', which creates all of the remarkable and curious inventions that 19th century science fiction is known for, does not always result in inventions that are taken up by a manufacturer and enter production. In most cases, inventions remain





no more than special and unique artifacts, often with flaws that preclude their use by the public at large or whose singular properties attract the attention of some rather unpleasant persons.

The section below lists a few examples of such artifacts. Some devices are small and easily transported, while others are massive and stationary. The noted artifact level is for the described device – so an analytical engine that fits into a cylinder would be a level 5 artifact.

### Analytical Engine (Artifact 1)

The modern mechanical computing and calculating machine contains gears, stepped reckoners, and transmissions and is programmed by punchcards. Many machines are produced commercially, with the primary manufacturers, Imperial Babbage Machines and the Difference Engine Corporation, releasing new models each year, often to great fanfare. Their research departments, plus those of various universities, are all working on miniaturizing analytical engines and fitting them into various technical applications.

Weight: 1 ton, price: £1,000.

### Etherometer (Artifact 2)

This device measures the density of the Ether in deep space and thus makes it possible to avoid ether turbulence.

Weight: 20 lbs. Price: £20.

### Electric Rifle (Artifact 3)

This devilish little device could turn out to become the terror of the future battlefield. The electric rifle is absolutely smokeless and noiseless. It propels metal projectiles via electromagnetism to double the speed of regular bullets and can fire all 40 ‘bullets’ its magazine at the speed of a Maxim MG. Its accumulators also last for 40 shots. While changing the magazine only takes a few seconds, recharging the rifle takes approximately one hour.

| Artifact       | Dmg | Str | Rng | Cap   | Rate | Spd | Price | Weight  |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|---------|
| Electric Rifle | 3L  | 2   | 25  | 40(m) | A    | A   | £200  | 15 lbs. |

### Steam Armor (artifact 3)

The military high commands of various industrial powers are currently experimenting with suits of steam powered armor. So far none of them have been used in combat. These solid, bullet-proof suits of armor also provide the wearer with enormous strength, though this comes at the cost of limited speed and mobility. All of the models tested by the military high commands have been fitted with one or more weapon mounts to which heavy weapons, like the Gatling Gun, can be attached.

| Artifact    | Size | Def | Str | Dex | Mov | Misc. | Price   | Weight            |
|-------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|---------|-------------------|
| Steam armor | +1   | +6  | +2  | -1  | -2  | mount | £10,000 | 5t                |
|             |      |     |     |     |     |       |         | for heavy weapons |

### Gill Mask (Artifact 1)

The diving suits of the late 19th century are heavy, bulky, and require quite a bit of maintenance. Even when equipped with oxygen tanks, divers cannot move that far. A solution to this issue could be the wondrous gill mask. This small, mask-like device is simply pulled over mouth and nose and allows its wearer to breathe under water like a fish. This is possible because the gill mask draws oxygen from the water, just like the gills of a fish,

and passes it on to the wearer. This scientific wonder is made possible by specially bred slime molds of Venusian origin that coat the inner lining of the gill-slits. In fresh water, the gill mask can be used without any time limit. Saltwater attacks and slowly kills the slime-molds in the gill-slits of the mask. Submerged in saltwater, the slime-molds die and render the gill mask useless after no more than nine hours.

Weight: 7 oz., prize: £50.

### Invisibility Device (Artifact 5)

This device bends light rays around its field without absorbing or reflecting them, thus rendering the objects inside the field theoretically invisible. What may instead be visible to the attentive observer is a slight visual distortion that looks like heat waves. The field has a diameter of 15 feet. Unfortunately, the apparatus has a slight flaw. Whoever is inside the field cannot see out and is practically blind. They must therefore rely on hearing for orientation.

Weight: 500 lbs., price: £10,000.

### Mechanical Man (Artifact 5)

A complex machine resembling a human being. It can be programmed using punchcards to carry out a number of simple tasks, and its built-in telephonic speaker and ‘ear’ that enable it to understand and communicate a very limited number of words and phrases. Powered by flywheels and clockwork, it is very strong, but quite slow.

Weight: 1,000 lbs., price £2,000.

### Mineral Detector (Artifact 3)

The mineral detector sends its rays into the ground and registers the resounding signals. A loudspeaker then produces an oscillating, nerve-wrecking beeping sound. Since every metal creates its own sound the user of the mineral detector can use the level and vibration of the sound to confirm the type of metal located far below underground. The mineral detector can track down metal deposits at depths of up to 50 feet.

Weight: 100 lbs., prize: £250.

### Mole Drill (Artifact 4)

An enclosed vehicle equipped with a large drill at the bow. It can bore into depths of up to 30 Miles per day, without leaving a hollow tunnel, but instead pressing the excavated material behind itself. It uses five tons of coal per day. Navigating underground is difficult. Usually the Mole Drill is used to explore the crust of a planet or to search for mineral resources, but inventive explorers might certainly find other creative uses for it.

Weight: 30 tons, price: £ 20,000.

### Monowheel (Artifact 3)

This vehicle consists of a single wheel with a diameter of 4 to 6 feet. With seat and motor gimbal mounted at the center of the wheel, the rider thus sits inside the hub of the monowheel. Steering is done by adjusting the rider’s weight. The rider cannot see what is directly in front of the wheel. The monowheel is powered by a combustion engine; the tank contains fuel for one hour. Maximum speed: 10 Miles per hour.

Weight: 220 lbs., price £200.



## Personal Conveyor (Artifact 1)

Vehicles of this type can be seen more and more often flying over the cities of Mars. Basically, they are flying bicycles that use liftwood for flight, and muscle-power to drive a propeller for propulsion. Steering is managed through a system of flaps and wings. Two-passenger conveyors already exist and larger versions are also conceivable. A typical personal conveyor designed for one passenger can lift 240 lbs.

Weight: 26 lbs., price £50.

## Rocketpack (artifact 2)

In the zero gravity environment of the vacuum, a human body is barely able to move in a calculated way. So far, this problem has been solved by safety ropes and magnetic boots, but the new invention of the 'rocketpack' promises unrestricted freedom of movement. Unlike drawings shown in magazines, the rocketpack is not a fire-spitting monstrosity, but a fuel gas tank with several adjustable jets. By operating two small levers, strength and direction of the emanating gas can be adjusted. This device allows for precise maneuvering through the emptiness of space. Of course, the rocketpack is only constructed for use in zero gravity environments. At normal gravity, the pressure of the emanating gas is not sufficient to lift a person or an object.

| Artifact   | Size | Def | Str | Speed | Man | Crew | Pass | Price | Weight  |
|------------|------|-----|-----|-------|-----|------|------|-------|---------|
| Rocketpack | -1   | 4   | 5   | 100   | -2  | 1    | 0    | £100  | 80 lbs. |

## Submarine (Artifact 4)

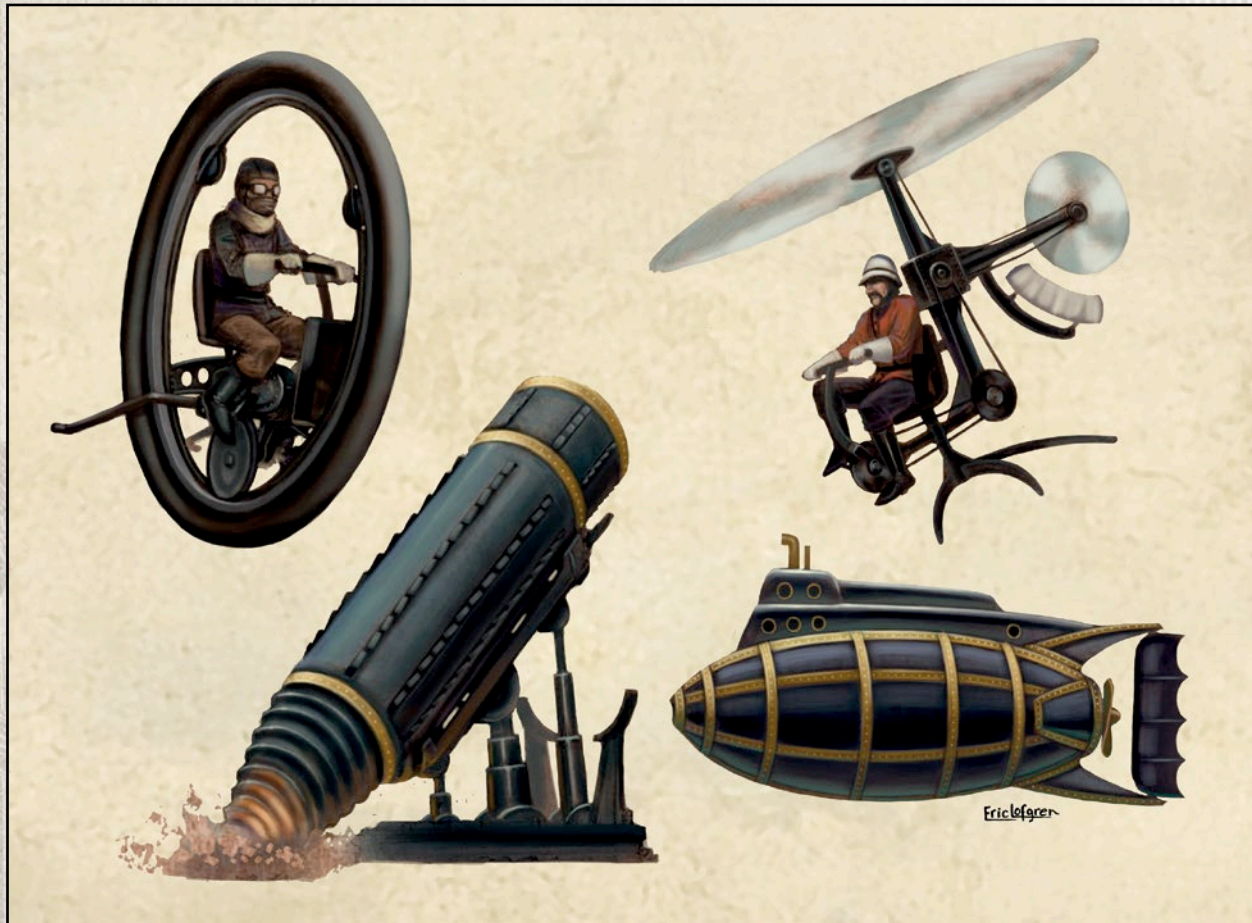
Over the centuries, there have been many attempts on Earth to construct ships that can operate below the waterline. The 19th century has seen several quite successful prototypes, such as Fulton's *Nautilus*, Bauer's *Brandtaucher*, or the *Sub Marine Explorer* designed by Julius Kröhl. In 1889, several industrial nations are working as quickly as they can to design, construct, and manufacture fully operable military submarines on a large scale. Listed below are possible statistics of a newly designed exploratory submarine.

| Artifact  | Size | Def | Str | Speed | Man | Crew | Pass | Price   | Weight |
|-----------|------|-----|-----|-------|-----|------|------|---------|--------|
| Submarine | 4    | 4   | 12  | 6     | -1  | 2-4  | 4    | £20,000 | 20t    |

## Volcanic Control Device (Artifact 5)

This device sends vibrations into the ground and can trigger eruptions in any dormant volcano within the range of 200 Miles. This process takes about one month. It is the method of choice for aspiring world dominators!

Weight: 50 tons, price: £25,000.





## The Fantastic Technology of Ancient Mars

Hidden in the sand of the Red Planet one can find evidence of a civilization, whose technology was far ahead of the Earth's. It is safe to assume that the ancient Martians were true masters of light and optical technology. It is presumed that large mirrors, reflectors, and lenses were used to melt the canals into the ground. Some of the crystals incorporated into Martian devices also have electrical properties that enable them to store electrical energy or transform it into other forms of energy.

Unlike dynamos from Earth, Martian generators appear to be based on thermoelectric phenomena. Semiconductor tiles transform heat into electrical energy. Though this process has been known to Earth's scientists as the 'Seebeck effect' since 1821, thermogenerators on Earth have to date proved incapable of achieving the effectiveness of ancient Martian machines. Since they do not contain any movable parts, Mars-generators run for thousands of years without any maintenance. They can still generate energy today and as soon as they are exposed to a source of sufficient heat, they will begin working.

Some achievements of the ancient people of Mars have been successfully deciphered by engineers from Earth. Some of the strange devices Martians used to generate energy are quite exotic, but this does not mean that their workings and operation are incomprehensible to mankind. The mechanical functionality of the geothermal automated canal pumps is clearly evident to scientists from Earth.

Nevertheless, many products of Martian science remain an enigma to the Earth's experts, since no known technology offers any kind of explanation for how they function. Apparently, the industry of the ancient Martian civilization worked on the basis of a technology completely alien to that of Earth. So far it must be assumed that ancient Martian artifacts can only be discovered, but not reconstructed. Hence, genuine Martian artifacts sell for astronomical prices. Selling a fully functioning Martian artifact will purportedly earn enough to set a man up for life, or at least earn him a knighthood.

### Photographic Crystals (Artifact 1)

These polished lenses, spheres, or tiles were probably the Martian equivalent to terrestrial photographic cameras. The lenses are about the size of a hand, and can preserve images reflected in them. This effect is triggered by breathing on the crystal with some force. Unlike terrestrial photographs the images are colored, but transparent. They say that the lens-polishers of Syrtis Major are still able to manufacture photographic crystals, but so far, nobody has been to prove or disprove this claim. Nevertheless, photographic crystals regularly appear on the black market, and they appear to be 'relatively' new. They can be purchased for £150 each.

### Holographic Ring Mirror (Artifact 3)

Only very few of these remarkable gadgets exist in an operational state, but excavations confirm that they must have been widespread once. A ring mirror consists of an array of rotating gold-colored rings that slot into each other. Crystal discs are set into the rings at regular intervals. When the rings are made to rotate at high speed, which experiments have shown occurs when they are hit or slapped hard, a three-dimensional photographic image appears in the center of the rings. What this projections shows varies from ring-mirror to ring-mirror. The famous Gorklimsk ring-mirror in the Ethnographic Museum of Hamburg creates the colorful but static image of a sovereign, which is generally believed to be Seldon II. The ring-mirror in the throne room of the Prince of Syrtis Major creates a projection, in flickering moving images and a monochrome green tint, of what is currently happening in front of the main gate of the palace. The largest known ring-mirror machine belongs to the Emperor of the Tossian Empire. This machine is mounted on a tower above the central assembly area of the imperial capital and has a ring diameter of 65 feet. During important religious celebrations, the emperor's image is projected through the ring, and a separate sound transmitter makes the potentate's voice sound throughout the whole city at shattering volume. Operational ring-mirrors cost over £5000.

### Talking Glass (Artifact 2-4)

The ancient Martians were able to preserve sound waves in glass tubes about twelve inches in length. When hung up and softly struck with a mallet, these glass tubes will repeat the recorded sounds. No one knows how the sounds were recorded. Apparently, the reproduction quality of talking glass decreases with increasing age. Glass tubes that playback clear voices or music are extremely rare, most of those found today reproduce nothing but incomprehensible and distorted mumbling. Superstitious Martians believe the effect of talking glass to be caused by ghosts caught in the glass tubes. Depending on the sound quality, talking glass may fetch prices between £1000 and £20,000 at antique auctions.

### Transforming Lenses (Artifact 2)

One of the most remarkable effects the ancient Martians were able to create by means of crystals was the transformation of any wave into visible light. In a deserted district of Parhoon, archaeologists found a crystal disk which allows to see through the bones of a person all the way through skin and flesh. The assassins of Mepsoor are said to wear ancient eyeglasses with which they can track their victims even in complete darkness as they can see their body heat. British police forces were able to confirm this rumor when they found a pair of crystal goggles with a captured assassin. Whoever asks the right man on the black markets of Mars may procure transforming lenses for £2000 per lens.



# Inspiration

"Books are wonderful company. When you enter a room full of books, even without removing them from their shelves, they seem to speak to you. Welcome you."

**William Gladstone, British Prime-minister**

Books, films, or comics that describe a world congruent to that of Space: 1889 are rare. Still, there are sources of inspiration, which may bring the Victorian age to life in the reader's mind or inspire in the reader a feeling for steampunk and the fantastic. We present a selection of these works below.

## Books - Fiction

The following recommendations are roughly divided into two categories, fantastic literature and Victorian literature. Together, they should help the reader gain a general feeling for the period and give a glimpse into the world of steampunk.

### Works of Steampunk & the Fantastic

**Baker, Kage**

*The Women of Nell Gwynne's* stand their ground in the male-dominated world of the 19th century. Nell Gwynne's is far more than just an exclusive Whitehall brothel – it gathers intelligence for the shadowy Gentlemen's Speculative Society. The ladies of the establishment employ both their feminine wiles and special gadgets in their missions.

**Bennett, Rhina and Guinan, Paul**

Both *Boilerplate: History's Mechanical Marvel* and *Frank Reade: Adventures in the Age of Invention* are set in an adventurous and fantastic Earth at the end of the 19th century and follow in the tradition of classic Victorian Age steampunk.

**Brackett, Leigh**

Just as in Space: 1889, the stories of the adventurers Matt Carse and Eric John Stark take place in a dry and fantastic Mars inhabited by ancient cultures that peaked ages ago and are unwilling to unveil the secrets of their past. The Venus in Leigh Brackett's Solar System is also similar in geography to the version presented in Space: 1889.

**Bradbury, Ray**

*The Martian Chronicles* give a wonderful impression of the Red Planet – even though they are not set in Victorian times.

**Burroughs, Edgar Rice**

On Mars (*A Princess of Mars*) as on Venus (*Pirates of Venus*), both series offer classic pulp adventures over several installments. *A Princess of Mars* was adapted for the big screen as *John Carter* in 2012.

**Dahlquist, Gordon**

The three main characters (a young lady, a professional hitman, and the personal physician of a Mecklenburg prince) discover a conspiracy in *The Glass Books of the Dream Eaters*. The novel sees its sequel in *The Dark Volume*.

**Gibson, William / Sterling, Bruce**

*The Difference Engine* depicts a Victorian England radically changed by technological and scientific progress, in particular Babbage's steam-powered computing machines. The novel is regarded as a seminal work in the steampunk genre.

**Greenland, Colin**

*Harm's Way* describes a British Empire that has expanded all the way into space – and the difficulties of a woman trying to find her way in the world. This novel's background is very close to the world of Space: 1889.

**Jeter, K.W.**

In *Infernal Devices* clumsy George Dower is set to continue the watchmaker's business of his father and thus comes into contact with the senior's former customers. The novel combines strange automatons, unknown districts of London, secret societies, and fish-creatures in the spirit of H.P. Lovecraft.

**Mann, George**

In *The Affinity Bridge* Sir Maurice Newbury and his assistant Veronica Hobbes must save the British Empire. This though, is not the Empire as we know it – the dead rise from their graves, airships cross the skies, and Queen Victoria rules her empire of steam and magic as a humanoid machine. Other entries in the series include *The Osiris Ritual*, *The Immortality Engine*, *The Executioner's Heart*, and *The Casebook of Newbury & Hobbes*.

**Moorcock, Michael**

The trilogy *A Nomad of the Time Streams* – *The Warlord of the Air*, *The Land Leviathan*, and *The Steel Tsar* – tells of the adventures of Captain Oswald Bastable as he travels through various steampunk worlds.

**Palma, Felix J.**

Told various narrative perspectives, *The Map of Time* brings together H.G. Wells and Jack the Ripper, science fiction and romance in a cunning mix of the real and the fictitious.

**Priest, Christopher**

*The Prestige* follows the rivalry of two stage magicians, their bid to outdo each other eventually involving fantastic technology and Nikolai Tesla! Spellbinding throughout, the novel was masterfully adapted as a film by Christopher Nolan.



## Serviss, Garrett Putman

*Edison's Conquest of Mars* is an unofficial sequel to H. G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* in which Thomas Alva Edison, after the Martian invasion has failed, invents a space ship which allows the Earthmen to set out for revenge, and eventually colonize space. (An ebook version of this novel is available for free)

## Simmons, Dan

*The Terror* gives a much darker reason for the failure of the Franklin expedition to find the North-West passage. *Drood* on the other hand tells of Charles Dickens' last and unfinished novel.

## Wooding, Chris

*Tales of the Ketty Jay* has pirates on airships. Captain Darien Frey is commissioned to relieve the *Ace of Skulls* of its valuable cargo, but the whole operation turns out to be far more difficult Frey imagined. To date, the series consists of *Retribution Falls*, *The Black Lung Captain*, *The Iron Jackal*, and *Ace of Skulls*.

## Verne, Jules

Anything by the hand of the father of science fiction is worth reading, but we can especially recommend *From the Earth to the Moon*, *Around the Moon*, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*, *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Robur the Conqueror*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* as well as *Off on a Comet*.

## Wells, HG.

*The First Men on the Moon* is a classic of Science Fiction in which the first visitors to the moon discover that it is far from being uninhabited. We also recommend *The Invisible Man*, *The Time-Machine*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, and *The War of the Worlds*.

## eBooks

### Space: 1889 & Beyond

Untreed Reads Publishing published several series of eBooks under the label of Space: 1889 & Beyond. The alternative world presented there takes place in the same setting as the RPG, although developing it separately.

## Works of the Victorian and Wilhelminian Age

### Chesterton, G.K.

In *The Man Who Was Thursday: A Nightmare*, the hunt is on for Sunday, the leader of a group of anarchists, whose members are named after the days of the week. A detective novel by the creator of Father Brown.

### Doyle, Arthur Conan

The creator of *Sherlock Holmes* hardly needs any introduction. Besides Holmes, Conan Doyle's Professor Challenger stories – *The Lost World*, *The Poison Belt*, and *The Land of Mist* – are suitable inspiration for Space: 1889.

## Fraser, George MacDonald

Harry Flashman, of *Tom Brown's School Days* fame, is a decorated soldier and a hero of the Victorian age who deserves neither fame nor military honours. A coward, a cad, arrogant and narrow-minded, Flashman preserves through luck and cowardice, serving in the greatest military campaigns and meeting some of the greatest men of the age – including Bismarck! Great fun and highly entertaining fiction set in a historical period. *Royal Flash* was made into a film and the BBC has adapted *Flash for Freedom* and *Flashman At The Charge* for radio.

## Frost, Mark

Frost is best known for working with David Lynch on the television series, *Twin Peaks*. In *The List of Seven* he presents the early adventures of Arthur Conan Doyle as he uncovers uncanny secret societies in the city of London in 1884. *The Six Messiahs* is the sequel.

## Haggard, Henry Rider

The adventures and discoveries of big game hunter and trader Allan Quatermain are detailed in the series by Haggard, beginning with *King Solomon's Mines*. Worthy inspiration for adventures on the Dark Continent.

## Hope, Anthony

*The Prisoner of Zenda* is the great adventure novel of the 19th century. Young Englishman Rudolf Rassendyll travels to the fictitious kingdom of Ruritania to witness the coronation of the king, but becomes involved in a conspiracy to overthrow the sovereign. It led to the Ruritanian Romance as a genre. *Rupert of Hentzau* is the sequel.

## Kipling, Rudyard

For most of his life, Kipling lived in the British colonies, which is why his novels are also a testimony to his times. His most famous works include *The Jungle Book*, *Kim*, and some short stories in *The Phantom Rickshaw* and other *Eerie Tales*.

## Leblanc, Maurice

Arsène Lupin is the best-known master-thief of France, a man of unimagined genius who may even rival Herlock Sholmes (no misprint, but copyright issues.) The series starts with *Arsène Lupin*, *Gentleman Burglar*.

## May, Karl

Karl May is probably the best known German author of adventure stories, many of them set in the Wild West. He also created works that deal with other topics, including *Das Buschgespenst*, a crime-story involving murder and the bitter poverty in the Erzgebirge, and *Schloss Rodriganda* (and its sequels) tells an adventure set throughout Germany, Spain, and Mexico.

## Perry, Anne

The detective stories around Thomas and Charlotte Pitt give quite a good picture of the Victorian society. The first volume is entitled *The Cater Street Hangman*.

## Philip Pullmann

The Sally Lockhart Series – *The Ruby in the Smoke*, *The Shadow in the North*, *The Tiger in the Well*, and *The Tin Princess* – is



about an emancipated woman who, thanks to her investigative skills, experiences various adventures in Victorian London.

### Stevenson, Robert Louis

*The Strange Tale of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Treasure Island* were penned by Stevenson. Especially the first one gives a 'fantastic' picture of the Victorian society.

## Books - Non-Fiction

### Ackroyd, Peter

*London, The Biography* shows the changing development of this gigantic city. Ackroyd also wrote a biography on the Thames.

### Baedeker, Karl

*Baedeker's Great Britain 1890: A Handbook for Travellers* and *Baedeker's London and its Environs 1900: A Handbook for Travellers* are reprints of the guidebooks for Great Britain and London from 1890 and 1900 respectively. Both volumes live up to their reputation for the well-known Baedeker quality.

### Bryson, Bill

*A Short History of Nearly Everything* describes in an exceptionally entertaining way nearly everything from the area of natural sciences and scientific history. The presented anecdotes on various scientists are remarkable. *At Home: A Short History of Private Life* on the other hand describes the mysteries of every-day life.

### Mortimer, Fawell Lee

*The Clumsiest People in Europe, or, Mrs. Mortimer's bad tempered guide to the Victorian World* is a travel-guide from the year 1850. The successful author Mrs. Mortimer informs her faithful readers about which countries it is best to avoid. The fascinating fact about this guide is that Mrs. Mortimer's travels never took her beyond Edinburgh and Brussels. A pessimistic treasure of travel literature.

### Picard, Liza

*Victorian London* describes the life at the time of Queen Victoria. The book is divided into different topics including food, streets, amusements, and the life of the upper class.

### Roole, Daniel

*What Jane Austen ate and Charles Dickens knew* describes everyday life in Victorian times and gives hints towards correct conduct in refined society.

### Van Dulken, Stephen

*Inventing the 20th Century* gives a comprehensive overview of important inventions of the 20th century that still resonate today.

### Weinreb, Ben / Hibbert, Christopher

*The London Encyclopaedia* is the ultimate reference to London. Every place, every street, and every important person is presented in short. If you have a question on London you should check this book first.

## Comics

### Derrien, Jean-Christophe

*Miss Endicott* has inherited the house of her late mother in London. When the young lady becomes aware of her mother's double-life as mediator for the poor she follows in her footsteps.

### Edginton, Ian

Edginton has adapted *H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds* and penned two sequels, *Scarlet Traces* and *The Great Game*, in which the British Empire adapts Martian technology and takes the war back to Mars. He has also adapted Conan Doyle's four Sherlock Holmes novels – *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Sign of Four*, and *The Valley of Fear*.

### Filippi, Denis-Pierre

*Ethan Ringler* sets off as a young man from London to America. There he hires himself out as a bodyguard and searches for his true background, getting caught between the forces of justice and crime in the process of his adventures which also deal with the ongoing mechanization of the world.

### Henderson, Jason / Salvaggio, Tony

*Clockwerx* is a nice steampunk comic, in which giant robots, or clocks, are used as war-machines. Besides huge robots there are also many atmospheric descriptions of London.

### Moore, Alan

*From Hell* is the excellent rendition of the Jack the Ripper murders, understandably a lot more complex than the film adaptation. *The League of Exceptional Gentlemen* mixes literary characters and presents them in a steampunk-style environment. Here too, the film is a lot less satisfactory than the original.

### Vehlemann, Fabien

*Green Manor* is a special club where many dreadful stories have taken place. These stories are related by Thomas Bellow, who has worked in the club all his life, and so the reader learns about new and incredible crimes.

### Wulbur / Conrad

*Raj* tells of the adventures of a young agent of the Indian Political Service in India. The stories also depict historical events in the British colony rather than fantastical events.

## Films and TV

There only exists a very few steampunk movies. Good steampunk movies are even rarer still, and films that have airships and space-travel as their topic as does *Space: 1889* are basically non-existent. The following films should at least encourage a feeling for the era and for the fantastical and adventurous elements that define *Space: 1889*.

- Arsène Lupin (2004)
- The Adventures of Brisco County jr. (Television series, 1993-1994)



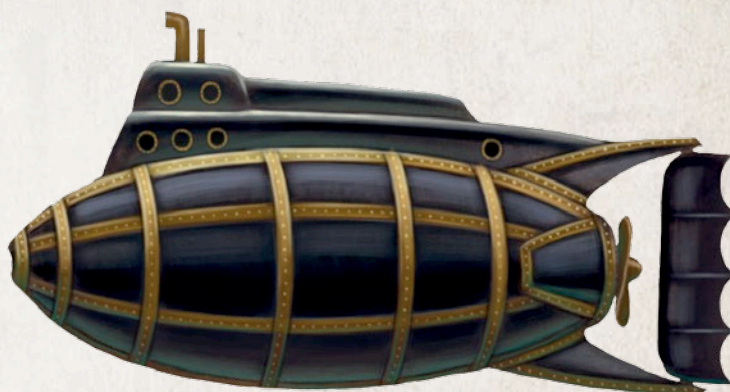
- City of Ember (2008)
- The Elephant Man (1980)
- The Illusionist (2006)
- The Man who would be King (1975)
- The Ruby in the Smoke (2006)
- The Shadow in the North (2008)
- Treasure Planet (2002)
- The Invisible Man (1933)
- The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (2003)
- The Lost World (1925)
- The Four Feathers (1939/2002)
- The Time Machine (1960/2002)
- Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1931)
- From Hell (2001)
- Around the World in 80 Days (1989)
- Jack the Ripper (1988)
- John Carter (2012)
- Khartoum (1966)
- Kim (1950)
- King Kong (1933/2005)
- King Solomon's Mines (1950)
- The Last Samurai (2003)
- The Assassination Bureau (1969)
- Nadia - The Secret of Blue Water (1990)

- The Prestige (2006)
- Sherlock Holmes (especially the 1984-1994 television series with Jeremy Brett and the 1939-1946 series of films with Basil Rathbone)
- Steamboy (2004)
- The Mysterious Geographical Explorations of Jasper Morello (2005)
- Wild Wild West (1999)
- The Wild, Wild, West (Television series, 1965-1969)

## Radio Drama

Many of Jules Verne's stories and all of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories – and more, have been adapted for the radio or as audio dramas. In particular, the BBC adaptations with Clive Merrison as Holmes (1989-1998), the only actor to have played the role in every Conan Doyle Holmes novel and story, are highly recommended.

Between 2005 and 2006, Noise Monster Productions released four exist four audio-dramas within the Space: 1889 universe. The Mars Trilogy consists of *Red Devil*, *The Steppes of Thoth*, *The Siege of Alchlyon*, and *The Lunar Inheritance*, while *The Lunar Inheritance* is a stand-alone tale.





# Glossary

**Abteilung Z** – The German intelligence service was founded as a special section of the army's general command. Authorized to act under its autonomy, it is an extremely small unit that reports only to Berlin and only takes direct orders from Berlin. It is believed to be currently conducting operations on Venus, but what its aims are there, is known only to a few insiders.

**AIP** – Association Internationale des Planètes, represents the interests of Leopold II, King of the Belgians on Mars. They rely mostly on mercenaries, terrestrial as well as Martian.

**Crimean War** – The Crimean War began in 1853 with an attack by Russia on the weak Ottoman Empire to obtain land in the Balkans. The Tsar was forced to retreat when Great Britain and France entered the war on the Turkish side to secure the *status quo*. The war mainly took place on the Russian Peninsula of Crimea in the Black Sea, and ended in 1856 with a severe defeat for the Russians, which meant a significant draw back for their ambitions in South-East Europe.

**Fabian** – Member of the Fabian Society. The Fabian Society is a union of left-wing liberal British intellectuals, who strive towards a socialist society through peaceful reform.

**Fenians** – Political movement for an independent Irish republic which accepts the armed struggle for its cause.

**Great Game, The** – As the British expanded north-west from India and the Russians south-east from the Caspian Sea, the two European powers clashed in the Hindu Kush. Both saw the area as a gateway to their territory and it was here that the Great Game unfolded, the Russians attempting to expand eastwards, the British trying to prevent an invasion of India, each side sending out envoys and individuals to survey and map the land in readiness for military operations, to make contact with the native population, and to put a spoke in the opponent's wheels at every occasion. It could not be clearly defined whether such parties, which occasionally even worked together, would have called themselves explorers or secret agents. Caught between the two powers are the people of the Hindu Kush – freedom-loving and war-prone tribes. Although neither side will go to war over the issue, they continue to vie for control of central Asia as they have for decades.

**Hussar** – Member of the light cavalry, whose uniform is derived from the Hungarian national dress. Typical weapons are a sabre, one or two pistols, and a carbine.

**Izzat** – A Hindi word that describes the terms honour and status, but especially the nimbus of infinite invincibility that serves as one of the pillars of British rule in India.

**Jingoism** – Flag-waving patriotism – after a popular English song.

**Juárez, Benito** – Rightful president of Mexico from 1861 until the French invasion. He later became leader of the Northern rebels' army.

**Liftwood** – The product of a tree that grows in certain areas of the Martian highlands and which produces a complex organic compound that defies gravity. Experiments to recreate this compound artificially have failed so far, and the trees grow nowhere else, except within certain regions on Mars. This has limited the supply of liftwood, a cause of many conflicts on Mars.

**Meteor** – Luminous effect created by the entry of a meteorite into an atmosphere.

**Meteorite** – Solid body moving through the Ether.

**Phaeton** – The mysterious planet that orbited the Sun between Mars and Jupiter several million years ago and has since then been destroyed. The remains of Phaeton form what is today known as the Asteroid Belt.

**The Porte** – Government of the Ottoman Empire.

**Public school** – Today somewhat misleading, the term 'public school' derives from the fact that these English education establishments are not under the control of the church, but are 'open for everyone', especially those whose parents are able to afford the sometimes breathtakingly expensive tuition fees.

**Raj** – From the Hindi for 'Rule', it denotes the British rule over India.

**Red Devils** – To the gold-skinned Canal Martians the skin color of Europeans looks somewhat reddish, thus this became one of the most common terms for Earthmen. The expression might also have been inspired by the red uniforms of the British troops.

**Sepoy** – Indigenous soldier of the British army in India. It particularly refers to foot-soldiers, but is often used to include the cavalry as well, although the proper term for them is 'Sawar'. The term gained fame through the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.

**Sinkiang** – Actually Xinjiang. The westernmost areas of China, primarily shaped by the Gobi desert and high mountains. Mainly inhabited by Turkic peoples of Islamic faith.

**Splendid Isolation** – Term describing the reserve of the British government to enter into alliances. Securely situated by comparison due to its position as an island, Great Britain has a habit of playing the other powers of Europe off against each other in order to keep them all equally weak. In view of the fast progress in military technology it can be assumed that this will change in the near future.

**Temperance Movement** – Movement that promotes abstinence from alcohol to preserve public moral and general health. Many members of the temperance movement demand that alcohol be forbidden under the law.

**Uhlan** – Light cavalry, armed with lances. Units of this type exist in various European armies and are feared opponents on the battlefield.

**Yellow Press** – Named after their cheap yellowed paper, these are sensationalist newspapers which found wide distribution due to the declining level of illiteracy around the year 1880. They soon became instruments of manipulation, and scrupulous news-tycoons could easily fan public opinion in any direction.

**Vulcan** – Hypothetical planet between the Sun and Mercury. Astronomers use the 'Vulcan Theory' to explain the peculiar orbit of Mercury. In spite of significant efforts, the existence of the planet Vulcan could not be proved so far, since the planet is so close to the Sun that it cannot be observed with the usual methods. Should Vulcan exist it is probably a rather hostile environment. American media often confuse Vulcan and Phaeton.



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### Attack

Attack Modifiers  
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### Attributes

Attribute roll  
Body  
Charisma  
Defense  
Dexterity  
Health  
Initiative  
Intelligence  
Move  
Negative Health  
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Primary Attribute  
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Size  
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# SPACE

1889

Name .....

Player .....

Archetype .....

Motivation .....

## Primary Attributes

Body ..... Charisma .....

Dexterity..... Intelligence .....

Strength..... Willpower .....

## Secondary Attributes

Size..... Initiative .....

Move ..... Defense.....

Perception ..... Stun.....

## Skills

| Skill | Base  | + | Levels | = | Rating | (Average) |
|-------|-------|---|--------|---|--------|-----------|
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |

## Skills

| Skill | Base  | + | Levels | = | Rating | (Average) |
|-------|-------|---|--------|---|--------|-----------|
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |
| _____ | _____ | + | _____  | = | _____  | ( _____ ) |



## Combat



| Weapon     | Damage   | Modifier | Attack Rating | (Average) |
|------------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| _____      | _____    | _____    | _____         | _____     |
| Range      | Capacity | Rate     | Speed         | Weight    |
| _____      | _____    | _____    | _____         | _____     |
| Ammunition | Notes    | _____    |               |           |

| Weapon     | Damage   | Modifier | Attack Rating | (Average) |
|------------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| _____      | _____    | _____    | _____         | _____     |
| Range      | Capacity | Rate     | Speed         | Weight    |
| _____      | _____    | _____    | _____         | _____     |
| Ammunition | Notes    | _____    |               |           |

| Weapon     | Damage   | Modifier | Attack Rating | (Average) |
|------------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| _____      | _____    | _____    | _____         | _____     |
| Range      | Capacity | Rate     | Speed         | Weight    |
| _____      | _____    | _____    | _____         | _____     |
| Ammunition | Notes    | _____    |               |           |

| Armor  | Defense Bonus | Modifier | Dex Penalty | Weight |
|--------|---------------|----------|-------------|--------|
| _____  | _____         | _____    | _____       | _____  |
| Shield | Defense Bonus | Modifier | Dex Penalty | Weight |
| _____  | _____         | _____    | _____       | _____  |

## Talents

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## Resources

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## Flaws

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Primary Attributes: 15 pts. | Size = 0 |  
Move = Dexterity + Strength | Perception =  
Intelligence + Willpower | Initiative = Dexterity  
+ Intelligence | Defense = Body + Dexterity |  
Health = Body + Willpower | Stun = Body |  
Skills: 15 pts. | Choose 2 Talents or Resources,  
or 1 each | Choose a Flaw (Optional)



1889

## Campaign

## Experience Points

Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Gender \_\_\_\_\_  
Height \_\_\_\_\_  
Eyes \_\_\_\_\_  
Hair \_\_\_\_\_  
Skin \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





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Everything Jules Verne could have written.  
Everything H. G. Wells should have written.  
Everything Arthur Conan Doyle thought of,  
but never published - because it was too fantastic.

# SPACE

## 1889

In the year 1870, American inventor Thomas Edison paved the way to the stars!

He reached Mars with the prototype of an ether flyer and was the first man to set foot on the red sand of a foreign world. He was the first of many to come who would gaze in astonishment at the wonders of Mars and its inhabitants—the canals of the Red Planet, built many millennia ago; cities that were already old when on Earth, the Sumerians stacked clay bricks to build the first settlements; and relics of old technologies the functionality of which has long been forgotten. Numerous other explorers have followed in Edison's footsteps, not only reaching the Red Planet, but pushing forward to the other planets.

The misty swamps, seas, and jungles of Venus offer fantastic raw materials and bizarre creatures—most of them dinosaurs. Plantations and settlements are built at great expense, defying all adversities.

Mercury too has many precious resources to offer, and it too is inhabited by primeval life forms. In the twilight zone between a hot and a cold side, daring explorers will find the foundation for their future fame and fortune.

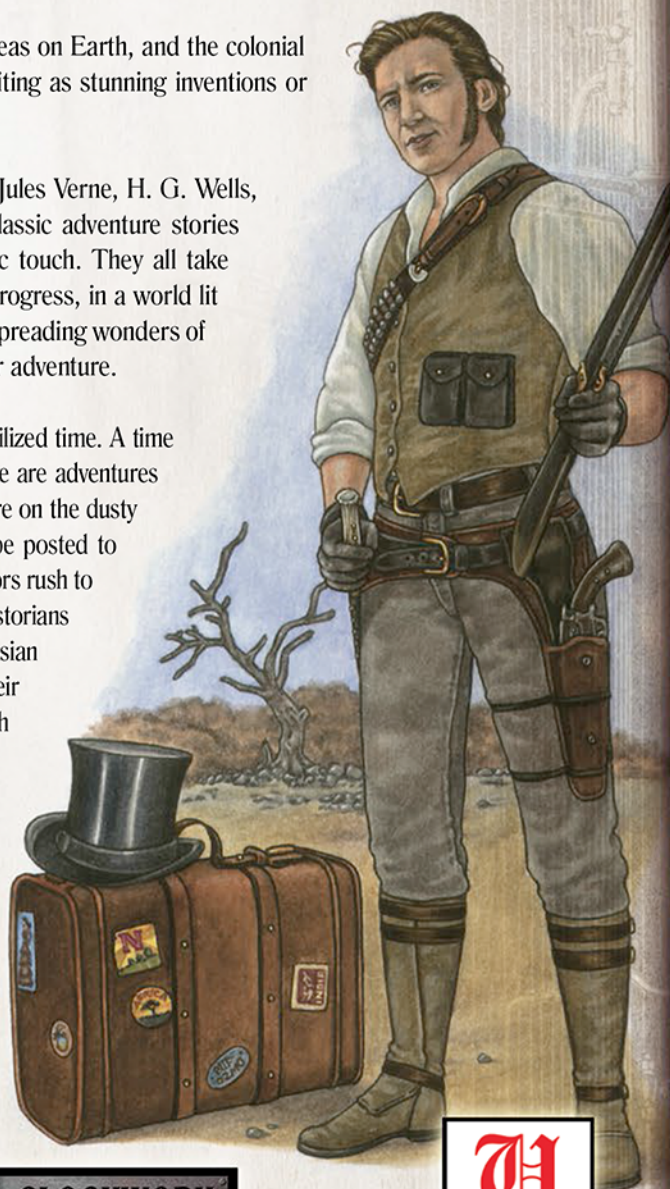
But adventure can also be found in the remote, uncharted areas on Earth, and the colonial powers' struggle for power and influence can be just as exciting as stunning inventions or encounters with famous people.

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At the core of this roleplaying system are the innovative, easy to learn Ubiquity rules that emphasize storytelling and cinematic action.

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