

In the Year 2889  
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by Jules Verne

Editor's Notes by Blake Linton Wilfong

In 1885, James Gordon Bennett, Jr., owner of the New York Herald (the same man who sent Stanley to Africa to find Livingstone) asked

Jules

Verne to write a short story about life in the United States a thousand years hence. Ironically, the resulting tale was not printed until 1889--and not in the New York Herald.

It is an unusual work in every way. Verne wrote few short stories,

and no others first published in English. In contrast to his conservative,

plodding SF novels, "In the Year 2889" dashes wildly from one fanciful extrapolation to another. Experts believe Jules' son Michel may have authored part of the story.

Many of the predictions for the year 2889 have already come true. Verne's dystopian concept of one man brought to vast power and wealth through widely distributed intellectual property brings to mind names

like

Samuel Newhouse and Bill Gates. There are also glimmerings of later science fiction themes, including suspended animation and turning the moon

around a la Arthur C. Clarke's Childhood's End (1953).

Of course Verne also made mistakes, and some of his predictions simply have not come to pass. But give them time: there are nearly nine centuries left before the year 2889.

Little though they seem to think of it, the people of this 29th century live continually in fairyland. Surrounded with marvels, they are indifferent to marvels. To them all seems natural. Could they but appreciate the refinements of

civilization in our day; could they but compare the present with the past, and

recognize the advances we have made! How much fairer they would find our modern

towns, with populations exceeding 10,000,000 souls; streets 300 feet wide, houses

100 feet high; with a constant temperature in all seasons; and lines of aerial

locomotion crossing the sky in all directions! If they could but imagine the state of things that once existed, when through muddy streets rumbling boxes on

wheels, drawn by horses--yes, horses!--were the only means of conveyance.

Think

of the railroads of old, and you will appreciate the pneumatic tubes through which today we travel at 100 miles an hour. Would not our contemporaries prize

the telephone and telephote more, had they not forgotten the telegraph?

Surprisingly, all these transformations rest on principles perfectly familiar to

our remote ancestors, which they disregarded. Heat, for instance, is as ancient

as man himself; electricity was known 3000 years ago, and steam 1100. Nay, so early as 10 centuries ago it was known that the differences between the

several  
chemical and physical forces depend on the mode of vibration of etheric particles, which is for each specifically different. When at last the kinship of all these forces was discovered, it is simply astounding that 500 years still elapsed before men could analyze and describe the distinct modes of vibration that constitute these differences. Above all, it is amazing that the method of reproducing these forces directly from one another, and of reproducing one without the others, should have remained undiscovered till less than a century ago. Nevertheless, such was the course of events, for it was not till the year 1792 that the famous Oswald Nier made this discovery. Truly was he a great benefactor of the human race. His admirable discovery led to many others. Hence is sprung a pleiad of inventors, its brightest star our great Joseph Jackson. To Jackson we are indebted those wonderful instruments--the new accumulators. Some of these absorb and condense the living force contained in the sun's rays; others, the electricity stored in our globe; others again, energy from whatever source: waterfalls, streams, wind, etc. He, too, invented the transformer, a more wonderful contrivance still, which takes the living force from the accumulator, and, at the touch of a button, returns it to space in any form desired, whether as heat, light, electricity, or mechanical force, after having first obtained from it the work required. From the day these two instruments were contrived should be dated the era of true progress. They have put into the hands of man almost infinite power. As for their applications, they are numberless. Mitigating the rigors of winter, by giving back to the atmosphere the surplus heat stored up during the summer, they have revolutionized agriculture. Supplying motive power for aerial navigation, they have given to commerce a mighty impetus. To them we are indebted for the continuous production of electricity without batteries or dynamos, of light without combustion or incandescence, and for an unfailing supply of mechanical energy for the needs of industry. Yes, the accumulator and the transformer have wrought all these wonders. And can we not to them also trace, indirectly, this latest wonder of all, the great "Earth Chronicle" building on 253rd Avenue, which was dedicated the other day? If George Washington Smith, founder of the Manhattan "Chronicle", should come back to life today, what would he think when told that this place of marble and gold belongs to his remote descendant, Fritz Napoleon Smith, who, after 30 generations, is owner of the same newspaper that his ancestor established! For George Washington Smith's newspaper has lived generation after generation, now passing out of the family, anon coming back to it. When, 200 years ago, the political center of the United States was transferred from Washington to Centropolis, the newspaper followed the government and assumed the name of

Earth

Chronicle. Unfortunately, it was unable to maintain itself at the high level of

its name. Pressed on all sides by more modern rival journals, it was continually

in danger of collapse. 20 years ago its subscription list contained but a few hundred thousand names, and then Mr. Fritz Napoleon bought it for a mere trifle,

and originated telephonic journalism.

Everyone is familiar with Fritz Napoleon Smith's system--a system made possible

by the enormous development of telephony during the last hundred years.

Instead

of being printed, the Earth Chronicle is every morning spoken to subscribers, who, from interesting conversations with reporters, statesmen and scientists, learn the news of the day. Furthermore, each subscriber owns a phonograph, and

to this instrument he leaves the task of gathering the news whenever he happens

not to be in a mood to listen directly himself. As for purchasers of single copies, they can at a nominal cost learn all that is in the paper of the day at

any of the innumerable phonographs set up nearly everywhere.

Fritz Napoleon Smith's innovation galvanized the old newspaper. In the course of

a few years the number of subscribers grew to 85,000,000 and Smith's wealth went

on growing, till now it reaches the almost unimaginable figure of \$10,000,000,000. This lucky hit has enabled him to erect his new building, a vast edifice with four facades, each 3250 feet in length, over which proudly floats the hundred-starred flag of the Union. Thanks to the same lucky hit, he

is today king of newspaperdom; indeed, he would be king of America, too, if Americans could ever accept a king. You do not believe it? Well, then, look at

the plenipotentiaries of all nations and our own ministers themselves crowding

about his door, entreating his counsels, begging for his approbation, imploring

the aid of his all-powerful organ. Add up the number of scientists and artists

he supports, of inventors under his pay.

Yes, a king is he. And in truth his is a royalty full of burdens. His labors are

incessant, and, doubtless, in earlier times any man would have succumbed under

the overpowering stress Mr. Smith endures. Fortunately for him, thanks to the progress of hygiene, which, abating all the old sources of disease, has lifted

human life expectancy from 37 up to 52 years, men have stronger constitutions now than heretofore. The discovery of nutritive air remains in the future, but

in the meantime men today consume food scientifically compounded and prepared,

and breathe an atmosphere free of the microorganisms that once swarmed in it; hence they live longer than their forefathers and know nothing of the innumerable ailments of olden times.

Nevertheless, Fritz Napoleon Smith's mode of life may well astonish one. His iron constitution is taxed to the utmost by the heavy strain upon it. Vain the

attempt to estimate the amount of labor he undergoes; only an example can give an idea of it. Let us go about with him for one day as he attends to his multifarious concerns. What day? That matters little; it is the same every day.

Let us take at random September 25th of this present year 2889.

This morning Mr. Fritz Napoleon Smith awakes in very bad humor. His wife left for France eight days ago; he feels disconsolate. Incredible though it seems, in

the 10 years since their marriage, this is the first time Mrs. Edith Smith, the

professional model, has been so long absent from home; two or three days usually

suffice for her frequent trips to Europe. The first thing Mr. Smith does is activate his phonotelephote, the wires of which communicate with his Paris mansion. The telephote! Here is another great triumph of modern science. The transmission of speech is an old story; the transmission of images by means of

sensitive mirrors connected by wires is a thing but of yesterday. A valuable invention indeed; Mr. Smith this morning is full of blessings for the inventor,

when by its aid he is able distinctly to see his wife despite her great distance.

Mrs. Smith, weary after the ball or the visit to the theater the preceding night, is still abed, though it is near noontime at Paris. She is asleep, her head sunk in the lace-covered pillows. What? She stirs? Her lips move. She dreams, perhaps? Yes. She is talking, pronouncing a name--his name--Fritz!

The

delightful vision gives a happier turn to Mr. Smith's thoughts. And now, at the

call of imperative duty, he lightheartedly springs from his bed and enters his

mechanical dresser.

Two minutes later the machine deposits him all dressed at the threshold of his

office. The round of journalistic work begins. First he enters the hall of novelists, a vast apartment crowned with an enormous transparent cupola. In one

corner is a telephone, through which a hundred Earth Chronicle litterateurs in

turn recount to the public in daily installments a hundred novels. Smith addresses one of these authors awaiting his turn: "Capital! Capital, my dear fellow, your last story. The scene where the village maid discusses interesting

philosophical problems with her lover shows your acute power of observation. Never have the ways of country folk been better portrayed. Keep on, my dear Archibald, keep on! Since yesterday, thanks to you, there is a gain of 5000 subscribers."

"Mr. John Last," he begins again, turning to a new arrival, "I am not as pleased

with your work. Your story is not a picture of life; it lacks the elements of truth. And why? Simply because you run straight on to the end; because you do not analyze. Your heroes do this thing or that from this or that motive, which

you assign without ever a thought of dissecting their mental and moral natures.

Our feelings, you must remember, are far more complex. In real life every act is

the result of a hundred thoughts that come and go, and these you must study, one

by one, if you would create a living character. 'But,' you will say, 'in order to note these fleeting thoughts one must know them, must be able to follow them in their capricious meanderings.' Why, any child can do that, as you know. Simply make use of hypnotism, electrical or human, which gives one a twofold being, setting free the witness-personality so it may see, understand and remember the reasons which determine the personality that acts. Just study yourself as you live from day to day, my dear Last. Imitate your associate who I

complimented a moment ago. Let yourself be hypnotized. What's that? You have tried it already? Not sufficiently, then, not sufficiently!"

Mr. Smith continues his round and enters the reporters' hall. Here 1500 reporters, in their respective places, facing an equal number of telephones, are

communicating to the subscribers the news of the world as gathered during the night. The organization of this matchless service has often been described. Besides his telephone, each reporter, as the reader is aware, has in front of him a set of commutators, which enable him to communicate with any desired telephotic line. Thus the subscribers not only hear the news but see the occurrences. When an incident is described that is already past, photographs of

its main features are transmitted with the narrative. And there is no confusion

withal. The reporters' items, just like the different stories and all the other

component parts of the journal, are classified automatically according to an ingenious system, and reach the hearer in due succession. Furthermore, the hearers are free to listen only to what interests them. They may at pleasure pay

attention to one editor and ignore another.

Mr. Smith next addresses one of the ten reporters in the astronomical department--a department still in the embryonic stage, but which will yet play

an important part in journalism.

"Well, Cash, what's the news?"

"We have phototelegrams from Mercury, Venus, and Mars."

"Are those from Mars of any interest?"

"Yes, indeed. There is a revolution in the Central Empire."

"And what of Jupiter?" asks Mr. Smith.

"Nothing as yet. We cannot quite understand their signals. Perhaps ours do not reach them."

"That's bad," exclaims Mr. Smith, as he hurries away, not in the best of humor,

toward the hall of scientific editors. Heads bent over their electric computers,

30 scientific men are absorbed in transcendental calculations. Mr. Smith's arrival is like the falling of a bomb among them.

"Well, gentlemen, what is this I hear? No answer from Jupiter? Is it always to

be thus? Come, Cooley, you have worked now 10 years on this problem, and yet--"

"True enough," replies the man addressed. "Our science of optics is still defective, and though our mile-and-three-quarter telescopes--"

"Listen to that, Peer," breaks in Mr. Smith, turning to a second scientist.

"Optical science defective! Optical science is your specialty. But," he continues, again addressing William Cooley, "failing with Jupiter, are we

getting any results from the moon?"

"The case is no better there."

"This time you cannot lay the blame on the science of optics. The moon is immeasurably closer than Mars, yet with Mars our communication is fully established. I presume you will not say you lack telescopes?"

"Telescopes? Oh no, the trouble here is about--inhabitants!"

"That's it," adds Peer.

"So, then, the moon is positively uninhabited?" asks Mr. Smith.

"At least," answers Cooley, "on the face which she presents to us. As for the opposite side, who knows?"

"Ah, the opposite side! You think, then," remarks Mr. Smith, musingly, "that if

one could but--"

"Could what?"

"Why, turn the moon about-face."

"Ah, there's something in that," cry the two men at once. And indeed, so confident is their air, they seem certain of the success of such an undertaking.

"Meanwhile," asks Mr. Smith, after a moment's silence, "have you no news of interest today?"

"Indeed we have," answers Cooley. "The elements of Olympus are definitely settled. That great planet gravitates beyond Neptune at a mean distance of 11,400,799,642 miles from the sun, and to traverse its vast orbit takes 1311 years, 294 days, 12 hours, 43 minutes, 9 seconds."

"Why didn't you tell me that sooner?" cries Mr. Smith. "Inform the reporters of

this straightway. You know how eager public curiosity is about these astronomical questions. That news must go into today's issue."

Then, the two men bowing to him, Mr. Smith passes into the next hall, an enormous gallery upward of 3200 feet long, devoted to atmospheric advertising.

Everyone has noticed those enormous advertisements reflected from the clouds, so

large they may be seen by the populations of whole cities or even entire countries. This, too, is one of Mr. Fritz Napoleon Smith's ideas, and in the Earth Chronicle building a thousand projectors are constantly engaged in displaying on the clouds these mammoth advertisements.

When Mr. Smith today enters the sky-advertising department, he finds the operators sitting with folded arms at their motionless projectors, and inquires

as to the cause of their inaction. In response, the man addressed simply points

to the sky, which is a pure blue. "Yes," mutters Mr. Smith, "a cloudless sky! That's too bad, but what's to be done? Shall we produce rain? That we might do,

but is it of any use? What we need is clouds, not rain. Go," says he, addressing

the head engineer, "go see Mr. Samuel Mark, of the meteorological division in the scientific department, and tell him for me to go to work in earnest on the

question of artificial clouds. It will never do for us to be always at the mercy

of cloudless skies!"

Mr. Smith's daily tour through the several departments of his newspaper is now

finished. Next, from the advertisement hall he passes to the reception chamber,

where the ambassadors accredited to the American government await a word of

counsel or advice from the all-powerful editor. A discussion is going on as he enters. "Your Excellency will pardon me," the French Ambassador is saying to the Russian, "but I see nothing in the map of Europe that requires change. 'The North for the Slavs?' Why, yes, of course; but the South for the Latins. Our common frontier, the Rhine, it seems to me, serves very well. Besides, my government, as you must know, will firmly oppose every movement, not only against Paris, our capital, or our two great prefectures, Rome and Madrid, but also against the kingdom of Jerusalem, the dominion of Saint Peter, of which France means to be the trusty defender."

"Well said!" exclaims Mr. Smith. "How is it," he asks, turning to the Russian ambassador, "that you Russians are not content with your vast empire, the most extensive in the world, stretching from the banks of the Rhine to the Celestial Mountains and the Kara-Korum, whose shores are washed by the Frozen Ocean, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean? And what use are threats? Is war possible in view of modern inventions--asphyxiating shells capable of being projected a distance of 60 miles, an electric spark of 90 miles, that can at one stroke annihilate a battalion; to say nothing of the plague, the cholera, the yellow fever, that the belligerents might spread among their antagonists mutually, and which would in a few days destroy the greatest armies?"

"True," answered the Russian, "but we Russians, pressed on our eastern frontier by the Chinese, must at any cost put forth our strength for an effort toward the west."

"Let's solve your problem at the source," said Mr. Smith. "I will speak to the Secretary of State about this. The attention of the Chinese government will be brought to the matter, and the situation corrected."

"Under these conditions, of course--" And the Russian ambassador declares himself satisfied.

"Ah, Sir John, what can I do for you?" asks Mr. Smith as he turns to the representative of the people of Great Britain, who till now has remained silent.

"A great deal," comes the reply. "If the Earth Chronicle would but open a campaign on our behalf--"

"And for what object?"

"Simply for the annulment of the Act of Congress annexing to the United States the British islands."

By a just turnabout, Great Britain has become a colony of the United States, but the English are not yet reconciled to their status. At regular intervals they are ever addressing to the American government vain complaints.

"A campaign against the annexation that has been an accomplished fact for 150 years!" exclaims Mr. Smith. "How can you believe I would do anything so unpatriotic?"

"We at home think your people must now be sated. The Monroe Doctrine is fully applied; the whole of America belongs to the Americans. What more do you want?"

Besides, we will pay for what we ask."

"Indeed!" answers Mr. Smith, without manifesting the slightest irritation.

"Well, you English will ever be the same. No, no, Sir John, don't count on me for help. Give up our fairest province, Britain? Why not ask France generously

to renounce possession of Africa, that magnificent colony the complete conquest

of which cost her the labor of 800 years? You will be well received!"

"You decline! All is over then!" the British agent murmurs sadly. "The United Kingdom falls to the share of the Americans; the Indies to that of--"

"The Russians," Mr. Smith completes the sentence.

"Australia--"

"Has an independent government."

"Then nothing at all remains for us!" sighs Sir John, downcast.

"Nothing?" asks Mr. Smith, laughing. "Well, now, there's Gibraltar!"

With this sally the audience ends. The clock is striking 12, the hour of breakfast. Mr. Smith returns to his chamber. Where the bed stood in the morning

a table all spread comes up through the floor. For Mr. Smith, being above all a

practical man, has reduced the problem of existence to its simplest terms.

For

him, instead of the endless suites of apartments of yesteryear, one room fitted

with ingenious mechanical contrivances is enough. Here he sleeps, takes his meals--in short, lives.

He seats himself. In the mirror of the phonotelephote is visible the same chamber at Paris which appeared in it this morning. A table furnished forth is

likewise in readiness here, for notwithstanding the difference in hours, Mr. Smith and his wife have arranged to take their meals simultaneously. It is delightful thus to breakfast tete-a-tete with someone 3000 miles or so away. Just now, Mrs. Smith's chamber has no occupant.

"She is late! Woman's punctuality! Progress everywhere except there!" mutters Mr. Smith as he turns the tap for the first dish. For like all wealthy folk in

our day, Mr. Smith has done away with the domestic kitchen and is a subscriber

to the Grand Alimentation Company, which sends through a vast network of tubes

to subscribers' residences all sorts of dishes, as a varied assortment is always

in readiness. A subscription costs money, to be sure, but the cuisine is of the

best, and the system has this advantage, that it does away with the pestering race of the cordons bleus. Mr. Smith receives and eats, all alone, the hors d'oeuvres, entrees, roast meat, and legumes that constitute the repast. He is just finishing the dessert when Mrs. Smith appears in the telephote mirror.

"Why, where have you been?" asks Mr. Smith through the telephone.

"What! You are already at the dessert? Then I am late," she exclaims, with winsome naivete. "Where have I been, you ask? Why, at my dressmaker's. The hats

are just lovely this season! I suppose I forgot to note the time, and so am a little late."

"Yes, a little," growls Mr. Smith; "so little that I have already quite finished

breakfast. Excuse me if I leave you now, but I must be going."

"Oh certainly, my dear; goodbye till evening."

Smith steps into his air-coach, which awaits him at a window. "Where do you wish



to go, sir?" inquires the coachman.

"Let me see; I have three hours," Mr. Smith muses. "Jack, take me to my accumulator works at Niagara."

For Mr. Smith has obtained a lease of the great falls of Niagara. For ages the

energy developed by the falls went unutilized. Smith, applying Jackson's invention, now collects this energy, and sells it. His visit to the works takes

longer than anticipated. It is four o'clock when he returns home, just in time

for the daily audience he grants to callers.

One readily understands how a man in Smith's situation must be beset with requests of all kinds. Now it is an inventor needing capital; then it is some visionary who comes to advocate a brilliant scheme which must surely yield millions in profits. A choice must be made between these projects, rejecting the

worthless, examining the questionable, accepting the meritorious. To this work

Mr. Smith devotes two full hours a day.

The callers are fewer today than usual--just 12. Of these, eight have only impracticable schemes to propose. In fact, one of them wants to revive painting,

an art fallen into desuetude owing to the progress made in color photography.

Another, a physician, boasts that he has discovered a cure for nasal catarrh!

These impracticalities are dismissed in short order. Of the four projects favorably received, the first is that of a young man whose broad forehead betokens his intellectual power.

"Sir, I am a chemist," he begins, "and as such I come to you."

"Well!"

"Once the elementary bodies," says the young chemist, "were held to be 62 in number; a century ago they were reduced to 10; now only three remain irresolvable, as you are aware."

"Yes, yes."

"Well, sir, these also I will show to be composite. In a few months, a few weeks, I shall have succeeded in solving the problem. Indeed, it may take only a

few days."

"And then?"

"Then, sir, I shall simply have determined the absolute. All I want is money enough to carry my research to a successful conclusion."

"Very well," says Mr. Smith. "And what will be the practical outcome of your discovery?"

"The practical outcome? Why, that we shall be able to produce easily all bodies

whatever--stone, wood, metal, fibers--"

"And flesh and blood?" interrupts Mr. Smith. "Do you pretend that you expect to

manufacture a human being out and out?"

"Why not?"

Mr. Smith advances \$100,000 to the young chemist, and engages his services for

the Earth Chronicle laboratory.

The second of the four successful applicants, starting from experiments made so

long ago as the 19th century and again and again repeated, has conceived the idea of moving an entire city all at once from one place to another. His particular interest is the city of Granton, situated, as everyone knows, some

15

miles inland. He proposes transporting the city on rails, turning it into a beachfront resort. The profit, of course, would be enormous. Mr. Smith,

captivated by the scheme, buys a half-interest in it.

"As you are aware, sir," begins applicant No. 3, "by the aid of our solar and terrestrial accumulators and transformers, we are able to make all the seasons

the same. I propose to do something better still. Transform into heat a portion

of the surplus energy at our disposal; send this heat to the poles; then the polar regions, relieved of their snowcaps, will become a vast territory available

for man's use. What think you of the scheme?"

"Leave your plans with me, and come back in a week. I will have them examined in

the meantime."

Finally, the fourth announces the imminent solution of a weighty scientific problem. Everyone remembers the bold experiment made 100 years ago by Dr.

Nathaniel Faithburn. The doctor, being a firm believer in human hibernation--in

other words, the possibility of our suspending our vital functions and of calling them into action again after a time--resolved to subject the theory to a

practical test. To this end, having first made his last will and pointed out the

proper method of awakening him; having also directed that his sleep was to continue a hundred years to a day from the date of his apparent death, he unhesitatingly put the theory to the proof in his own person. Reduced to the condition of a mummy, Dr. Faithburn was confined and laid in a tomb. Time went

on. September 25th, 2889 being the day set for his resurrection, it is proposed

that Mr. Smith permit the second part of the experiment to be performed at his

residence this evening.

"Agreed. Be here at 10 o'clock," answers Mr. Smith; and with that the day's audience is closed.

Left to himself, feeling tired, he lies down on an extension chair. Then, touching a knob, he establishes communication with the Central Concert Hall, whence our greatest maestros send out to subscribers their delightful successions of accords determined by recondite algebraic formulas. Night approaches. Entranced by the harmony, forgetful of the hour, Smith does not notice that it is growing dark. Indeed, it is quite dark when the sound of a door opening arouses him. "Who is there?" he asks, touching a commutator. Suddenly, in consequence of the vibrations produced, the air becomes luminous.

The room fills with light, and Smith recognizes his visitor.

"Ah! You, Doctor?"

"Yes," is the reply. "How are you?"

"I am feeling well."

"Good! Let me see your tongue. All right! Your pulse. Regular! And your appetite?"

"Only passably good."

"Yes, the stomach. There's the rub. You are overworked. If your stomach is out

of repair, it must be mended. That requires study. We must think about it."

"In the meantime," says Mr. Smith, "you will dine with me."

As in the morning, the table rises out of the floor. Again, as in the morning,

the food-pipes supply soup, roast, ragouts, and legumes. Toward the close of the

meal, phonotelephotic communication is made with Paris. Smith sees his wife, seated alone at the dinner table, looking anything but pleased at her

loneliness.

"Pardon me, my dear, for having left you alone," he says through the telephone.

"Dr. Wilkins is here."

"Ah, the good doctor!" remarks Mrs. Smith, her countenance lighting up.

"Yes. But, pray, when are you coming home?"

"This evening."

"Very well. Do you come by tube or by air-train?"

"Oh, by tube."

"Yes; and at what hour will you arrive?"

"About eleven, I suppose."

"Eleven by Centropolis time, you mean?"

"Yes."

"Goodbye, then, for a little while," says Mr. Smith as he severs communication with Paris.

Dinner over, Dr. Wilkins wishes to depart. "I shall expect you at ten," says Mr.

Smith. "Today, it seems, is the day for the return to life of the famous Dr. Faithburn. You did not think of it, I suppose. The awakening is to take place here in my house. You must come and see. I shall depend on your being here."

"I will return," answers Dr. Wilkins.

Left alone, Mr. Smith busies himself with examining his accounts--a task of vast

magnitude, the transactions involving a daily expenditure of over \$800,000. Fortunately, indeed, the stupendous progress of mechanic art in modern times makes it comparatively easy. Thanks to the Piano Electro-Reckoner, the most complex calculations can be made in a few seconds. In two hours Mr. Smith completes his task--and just in time. Scarcely has he turned the last page when

Dr. Wilkins arrives. After him comes Dr. Faithburn's body, escorted by a numerous company of men of science. They commence work at once. The casket is laid in the middle of the room, the telephote readied. The outer world, already

notified, is anxiously expectant, for the whole world will witness the performance. A reporter meanwhile, like the chorus in an ancient drama, explains

it all viva voce through the telephone.

"They are opening the casket," he explains. "Now they are taking Faithburn out--a veritable mummy, yellow, hard and dry. Strike the body and it resounds like a block of wood. They are now applying heat; now electricity. No result. These experiments are suspended for a moment while Dr. Wilkins makes an examination of the body. Dr. Wilkins, rising, declares the man to be dead. 'Dead!' exclaims everyone present. 'Yes,' answers Dr. Wilkins, 'dead!' 'And how

long has he been dead?' Dr. Wilkins makes another examination. 'A hundred years,' he replies."

So it is. Faithburn is dead, quite certainly dead! "Here is a method that needs

improvement," remarks Mr. Smith to Dr. Wilkins, as the scientific committee on

hibernation carries the casket out. "So much for that experiment. But if poor Faithburn is dead, at least he is sleeping," he continued. "I wish I could get

some sleep. I am tired out, Doctor, quite tired out! Don't you think a bath would refresh me?"

"Certainly. But you must wrap yourself up well before you go out into the hallway. You must not expose yourself to cold."

"Hallway? Why, Doctor, as you well know, everything is done by machinery here.

It is not for me to go to the bath; the bath will come to me. Just look!" He presses a button. After a few seconds a faint rumbling is heard, growing louder

and louder. Suddenly the door opens, and the tub appears.

Such, in the year 2889, is the history of one day in the life of the editor of

the Earth Chronicle. And the history of that one day is the history of 365 days

every year, except leap years, and then of 366 days--for as yet no means has been found of increasing the length of the terrestrial year.