

AIRSHIPS 1896 (1), CALIFORNIA

Sources (Most items from California State Library [www.libraryca.gov/calhist/newspaper.html]; libraries of California universities, a few public libraries, and Chronicling America, which also includes a master list of newspapers held in each state.)

Adin Argus (wkly)—no relevant dates
Alameda Daily Argus
Anaheim Gazette (weekly)
Antioch Weekly Ledger
Arcata Union
(Auburn) Placer Argus
(Auburn) Placer County Republican
(Auburn) Placer Herald (weekly)

Bakersfield Daily Californian
(Bieber) Big Valley Gazette
(Bishop) Inyo Register—0
Bridgeport Chronicle-Union

(Chico) Morning Chronicle-Record
(Chino) Chino Valley Champion—0
Colfax Sentinel
Daily Colusa Sun
Contra Costa Gazette
(Crescent City) Del Norte Record—0

Dixon Tribune
(Downieville) Mountain Messenger

(Escondido) Times Advocate—no relevant dates
(Eureka) Daily Humboldt Standard
(Eureka) Daily Humboldt Times
(Eureka) Western Watchman

Fairfield—see Suisan
Ferndale Semi-Weekly Enterprise
Folsom Weekly Telegraph
(Fresno) Daily Evening Expositor (no '96)
Fresno Morning Republican
Fresno Semi-Weekly Expositor
(Fresno) Weekly Republican—no '96
(Fullerton) Tribune

Galt Weekly Gazette
Georgetown Gazette
Gilroy Advocate
(Grass Valley) Daily Morning Union
Grass Valley Weekly Telegraph

Hanford Journal
Hayward Review
(Healdsburg) The Tribune
(Hollister) Free Lance
[Hollister—see also San Benito]

Ione Valley Echo

(Jackson) Amador Dispatch—'96, '97—0

(Lakeport) Lake County Bee
Livermore Echo
Livermore Herald—no relevant issues
Los Angeles Evening Express
Los Angeles Herald
(Los Angeles) Pacific Rural Press (farming)
Los Angeles Record
Los Angeles Times
(Los Gatos) Mail
Los Gatos News—0

Mariposa Gazette—'96, '97—0
Marysville Daily Appeal
Marysville Daily Democrat
Mendocino Beacon
Merced Express
(Merced) San Joaquin Valley Argus—no '96
Merced Star
Modesto Daily Evening News
(Modesto) Stanislaus County Weekly News
(Mokelumne Hill) Calaveras Chronicle
Mountain View Register—no relevant issues

Napa Daily Journal
Napa Register
Napa Weekly Journal (12/11 only)—0
National City News
Nevada City Daily Transcript
Newcastle News—0

Oakland Daily Enquirer
Oakland Times
Oakland Tribune
Ontario Record—0
Oroville Daily Register
Otay Press (no '96)

Pacific Grove Review
Daily Palo Alto (collegiate)—0
Petaluma Daily Courier
(Placerville) Mountain Democrat

(Quincy) Plumas National-Bulletin

Red Bluff Daily People's Cause
Red Bluff News (no issues published between 11/17 and 12/8 due to fire)
Redwood City Democrat
(Redwood City) Times-Gazette
Riverside Daily Enterprise
Riverside Daily Press
(Riverside) Press and Horticulturalist

Sacramento Bee
Sacramento Record-Union
St. Helena Star
Salinas Daily Index

Salinas Daily Journal (97—0)
Salinas Democrat
(San Andreas) Calaveras Prospector
San Benito Advance—0
(San Bernardino) Daily Sun
(San Bernardino) Daily Times-Index
(San Diego) Evening Tribune
San Diego Record
San Diego Sun
San Diego Union
San Francisco Bulletin
(San Francisco) Call
San Francisco Chronicle
(San Francisco) Evening Post
San Francisco Examiner
(San Francisco) Monitor (religious)—0
(San Francisco) Pacific Rural Press
(San Jose) Evening News (11/26 issue missing)
San Jose Daily Herald
San Jose Daily Mercury
(San Jose) Pioneer—0
San Leandro Reporter
San Luis Obispo Breeze
San Luis Obispo Tribune
San Mateo Leader (11/21, 12/12 only)—0
(San Rafael) Marin County Tocsin
(San Rafael) Marin Journal
Santa Ana Standard
Santa Ana Weekly Blade
Santa Barbara Daily Independent
(Santa Barbara) Morning Press
Santa Cruz Sentinel
Santa Cruz Surf
Santa Maria Times (no relevant dates)
(Santa Rosa) Daily Republican
(Santa Rosa) Sonoma Democrat
Sausalito News
Sebastopol Times (Dec. 9, 16 only)—0
(Selma) Fresno County Enterprise
Solano Republican
Sonoma Index-Tribune
(Sonora) Democratic Banner
(Sonora) Tuolumne Independent
(Sonora) Union-Democrat—0
Stockton Daily Independent
Stockton Daily Record
(Stockton) Daily Reporter
Stockton Evening Mail
(Suisan) Solano Republican
(Susanville) Lassen Advocate Standard

Ukiah Republican Press

Vacaville Reporter
Ventura Free Press
Ventura Independent
Visalia Daily Times
(Visalia) Tulare County News
(Visalia) Tulare County Times (weekly)

Weekly Visalia Delta

(Watsonville) Pajaronian

(Weaverville) Weekly Trinity Journal

Whittier Register

Winters Express

Woodland Daily Democrat

(Woodland) Home Alliance—0

The Mail of Woodland (daily edition of the Yolo Semi-Weekly Mail)

(Woodland) Yolo Semi-Weekly Mail

Yreka Journal

(Yreka) Siskiyou News

Yreka Union

(Yuba City) Sutter County Farmer

1896 September 23 (Wed.) San Francisco Call, p. 5.

MOUNT LOWE DISCOVERIES. / Dr. Lewis Swift Sights Two Wanderers of the Skies.

PASADENA, Cal., Sept. 22.—Dr. Lewis Swift, the astronomer in charge of Mount Lowe Observatory, has discovered two new comets. The larger and brighter he first sighted last Sunday night, but he got a better view last night, just before sunset, while the sun was hidden by the mountains. It was about one degree from the sun. [No other observer confirmed these observations.]

San Francisco Examiner, 7/23/5. Found a New Comet. / Another Important Discovery to the Credit of Dr. Lewis Swift of Mt. Lowe Observatory.

PASADENA, Sept. 22.—Dr. Lewis Swift of the Mt. Lowe Observatory has discovered another comet, the second discovered by him in the past few months. He first sighted it last Sunday evening, getting a better view last night, when there seemed to be another one faintly discernible nearby. It is only one degree from the sun.

1896 Oct. 23 (Fri.) (Grass Valley) Daily Morning Union, p. 3.

A Strange Meteor. (Nevada City and Mountain Towns).

Capt. Henry Richards and son, while coming into town from Gold Flat last evening, noticed a meteor or falling star passing through the northern heavens from west to east on a horizontal line, which was of such brilliancy as to attract considerable attention. The star or meteor seemed to be in three parts and the line of fire, resembling the tail of a comet, looked to the naked eye to be about 100 feet in length. The three parts were quite a distance apart and appeared to be as big as footballs. The strange meteor or whatever it was did not fell to the earth, but passed into space.

1896 October 23 (Fri.) Los Angeles Herald, p. 2.

A BIG METEOR. / Puzzles the People of Wheatland—Of a New Breed. /

WHEATLAND, Cal., Oct. 22.—A most remarkable meteor was seen a few minutes after 6 o'clock this evening. It appeared in the west as a star of the magnitude of the evening star and in close proximity to Jupiter. It increased in size until within twenty degrees east it gradually separated, first into one comet-shaped meteor, then into two and finally into three distinct comet-shaped meteors. Tandem it sped towards the east, parallel to the horizon forty degrees west [] suddenly appeared. Parties who witnessed this rare sight are at a loss to explain what it really was. In brilliancy it resembled ordinary meteors but in view of the fact that it moved steadily and slowly when compared to a meteor's flight and was not attracted to the earth but traveled parallel to it. It is believed to have been in space beyond the atmosphere of the earth. Its subdivision into three parts which resembled as a whole three comets joined one to another is unprecedented and beyond explanation.

1896 October 23 (Fri.) (Sacramento, CA) Record-Union, p. 3.

AN AERIAL VISITOR. / The Strange Looking Meteor Witnessed Last Evening.

Persons out of doors last evening witnessed a singular phenomenon in the northwestern sky. A ball of fire was seen to come from the west, headed in a northeasterly direction and well above the horizon.

Unlike most meteors, it did not descend toward the earth, but shot across the heavens on a straight line, with a long streak of fire in its wake. As it passed a point directly north of the city it seemed to divide into two parts, one below the other, and traveling at the same rate of speed.

Each line had several distinct balls of fire, or light, and those of the lower line were apparently connected with those of the upper one, making a very strange appearance, the foremost ball of each line being larger than those that followed.

The meteor, or whatever it was, quickly disappeared from sight in the northeast, and when last seen it still retained its flat trajectory. It was apparently not over a thousand feet above the earth, and seemed quite close, though it may have been a long way off, as meteors are very deceptive in that respect.

A few years ago a brilliant meteor descended at an angle over the city and seemed to explode almost directly over the town of Washington, but the next morning a telegram from Ukiah, Mendocino County, stated that it seemed to fall close to that place.

1896 October 23 (Fri.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 7.

A QUEER THING IN THE SKY. / Visitors at the Cliff House Witness a Novel Spectacle. / What Appeared to Be a Comet With Fiery Head and Tail Goes Whizzing Rapidly Eastward Over the Water.

Shortly after 6 o'clock last night a stray meteor or comet or something of that sort was seen from the vicinity of the Cliff House. The blazing body whizzed through the heavens about 10 miles out at sea, and was traveling eastward, as if it had important business on the other coast.

Mayor Sutro was returning home about the time the meteor performed; but as his Honor was stepping from a car he missed the startling spectacle. However, it was described to him by some men who happened to see the rushing streak of fire.

"As described to me the appearance of the comet, if such it was, on must have been grand," said the Mayor last night. "Half a dozen men who saw the phenomenon, which only lasted a few minutes, said they never before witnessed anything like it. At 6:15 o'clock the display was sighted. The men described it as a vividly bright object, moving with great rapidity and about 500 feet above the water. It traveled in a straight line horizontally and seemed to have a head. A long trail of fire extended behind the flying object, the color of the flame being similar to that of electric light. In a few minutes the display passed out of sight, but it illuminated the sea with a great light while it lasted.

"It is a very wonderful thing indeed. I never heard of or saw anything like it myself. The men were very much excited, as they could not understand the occurrence. It could hardly have been a meteor, as they always strike the earth or explode before coming down. Had it been a meteor the earth's attraction would have caused it to descend. My idea is that a small comet was seen by the men." /

THREE METEORS IN LINE.

Residents of Nevada, Cal., Witness a Thrilling Light in the Heavens.

NEVADA, October 22.—A triple connected meteor was observed in the northern heavens at ten minutes past six o'clock this evening. Three balls of fire all in a row and connected like a train of cars with a long fiery tail flashed in view just a few degrees above the western horizon and traveled in a direction a little north of east. In half a minute it disappeared from view high in the heavens, apparently somewhere over the great Dipper and North Star.

From all accounts this grand sight was not generally observed as the hour and time did not find many people on the streets. The sight was magnificent and awe-inspiring, and one long to be remembered as it did not appear to be over forty or fifty miles above the earth. A splendid view of the triple-connected meteor was taken by W.M. Richards.

1896 October 23 (Fri. morn.) Stockton (CA) Daily Independent, p. 1.

A TRIPLE METEOR. / It Dazzles the People of Yuba County. / Scientists Surprised at Its Erratic Course. / It Appears First As a Star, Then Like a Comet and Finally As Three Going Tandem. / Special to the Independent.

WHEATLAND, Oct. 22.—A most remarkable meteor was seen a few minutes after 6 o'clock this evening. It appeared in the west as a star of the magnitude of the evening star and in close proximity to

Jupiter.

It increased in size until within twenty degrees east it gradually separated, first into one comet-shaped meteor, then in two, and finally into three distinct comet-shaped meteors. Tandem it sped toward the east, parallel to the horizon and when forty degrees west it suddenly disappeared.

Parties who witnessed this rare sight are at a loss to explain what it really was. In brilliancy it resembled ordinary meteors, but in view of the fact that it moved very steadily and slowly when compared to a meteor's flight and was not attracted to the earth, but traveled parallel to it, it is believed to have been in space beyond the atmosphere of the earth.

Its subdivision into three parts, which resembled as a whole three comets joined one to another, is unprecedented and beyond explanation.

1896 October 23 (Fri.) Stockton Evening Mail, p. 5.

A WONDERFUL METEOR. / Three Balls of Fire With a Trail Pass Across the Northern Sky.

A wonderful meteor consisting of three parts connected by a fiery band was seen last evening at ten minutes past six o'clock.

"Four of us had as good a point of observation of the phenomenon as anybody, I suppose," remarked Dr. Foreman to a Mail reporter today. "There was myself, John Ahern, the night watchman at the Sacramento-street railway station, a policeman and a fourth party whose name has slipped my memory just at present. We were standing at the corner of Main and Sacramento streets. I happened to see it first. It appeared to start just a little north of west and to traverse space on a level, taking a course just a bit north of east. Three large balls of fire were strung together, the first appearing to be the largest. From the third a tail of fire extended apparently fifteen feet long, while the balls seemed to be ten feet apart. Of course, the distances were much greater than that, but that is how it appeared. It gradually faded from our view, going beyond the range of our vision I suppose. The Aurora mill obstructed our view of a portion of it for a moment.

"A rather singular thing in connection with it," continued the doctor, "was the inexplicable conduct of John Ahern's dog. You know the dog carries his master's lantern, and has never been known to drop it even when he sees a handsome lady dog that takes his eye. But as soon as the meteor disappeared the dog dropped the lantern and blew the light out. Ahern, who never saw such a phenomenon as a triple meteor before, thought that the end of the world was at hand, and when he witnessed the strange action of the canine he turned pale."

At Wheatland, Yuba county, about 75 miles north of Stockton, the meteor appeared in about the same quarter of the heavens as it did here. A telegram from there says: "It appeared in the west as a star of the magnitude of the evening star and in close proximity to Jupiter. It increased in size until it gradually separated first into one comet-shaped meteor, then in two, and finally into three distinct comet-shaped meteors. Tandem it sped toward the east, parallel to the horizon and when five degrees north of east it suddenly disappeared.

"Parties who witnessed this rare sight are at a loss to explain what it really was. In brilliancy it resembled ordinary meteors, but in view of the fact that it moved very steadily and slowly when compared with a meteor's flight and was not attracted to the earth, but traveled parallel to it, it is believed to have been in space beyond the atmosphere of the earth.

"Its sub-division into three parts, which resembled as a whole three comets joined one to another, is unprecedented and beyond explanation."

It is possible that the supposed meteor was really a group of asteroids which, in their journey around the sun, chanced to pass near the earth's orbit. In that case the light they shed was reflected sunlight.

1896 October 23 (Sat.) (Woodland, CA) The Mail of Woodland, p. 2.

A Beautiful Meteor.

A. W. Gable witnessed the fall of a meteor Thursday evening that was strikingly beautiful. It started in the northwest and disappeared in a northerly direction. It was unusually large and in the shape of a rainbow and soon divided into three large stars, joined together with chains of fire. It was five or six seconds passing into space and afforded a most beautiful sight.

1896 October 24 (Sat.) (Eureka, Calif.) Daily Humboldt Standard, p. 1.

The Latest from Blocksburg.

Editor Standard: At 6:30 p.m. Oct. 22nd, a meteor, consisting of a large star, closely followed by two others abreast of one another, and a long and brilliant tail, passed slowly across the heavens in a direct west to east line. It was comparatively low down, it having passed between two fir trees on a hill just above the house and not over them. It was the most beautiful sight we had ever seen. / ... / corresp. / Blocksburg, Oct. 23d.

1896 October 24 (Sat.) Oakland Tribune, p. 7.

Saw the Meteor. / It Looked as If Three Luminous Bodies Were Traveling.

The meteor which seems to have attracted so much attention near the Cliff House was noticed by a number of people living in this section and especially in Fruitvale.

One of the spectators was Court Recorder Whitton, who resides in the Poulson "castle" on Lynde street, a short distance from Fruitvale avenue. He states that at about 10 minutes past 6 o'clock last evening the meteor, comet or whatever it was, passed within view of himself and family. It consisted apparently of three large luminous bodies between each of which there was a cable of light like a connecting cord. There was quite a distance between the balls and to the last of the spheres was appended a line of light like the tail of a comet.

The strange celestial visitor traveled from southwest to northeast and must have been within vision for 15 seconds before it finally disappeared in the darkness.

1896 October 24 (Sat.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 4.

Brilliant Meteoric Display.

HIGHLAND SPRINGS, Oct. 23.—At 6:13 o'clock last night a meteoric display such as is seldom seen passed over here. It was composed of three large balls of fire moving from southwest to northeast. It looked as if the balls bursted over the mountain north of Clear Lake.

NOVEMBER

1896 November 4 (Wed.) (Woodland, CA) Yolo Semi-Weekly Mail, p. 3.

From Tuesday's Daily.

A remarkable phenomena occurred Sunday just at 12 M. A large, brilliant meteor made its appearance in the Western sky and pursued a course to the north, lighting the whole heavens with its brilliancy, even in broad daylight. The principal portion resembled a ball of fire, with chains of bluish light following in its wake. The phenomena lasted for at least a minute [time and date not the same as the triple-headed fireball (12 M=midday?)].

1896 November 6 (Fri.) Stockton Evening Mail, p. 1.

HAS THE EARTH AN ASTEROID? / The Singular Phenomenon Observed by an Astronomer. / And Its Possible Connection With the So-Called Meteor Seen Here Recently. /

Those who saw the three bright balls that, somewhat meteor-like, passed across the heavens on the evening of October 22d last, will be interested in an article which Lewis Swift, one of the astronomers at the Lowe observatory, at Echo mountain, in this State, has written. He, too, saw the three singular objects in the heavens, but it was not on October 22d but on September 20th.

It would be interesting to know whether the three luminous globes which he saw were the same ones that were seen here a little over a month later. The Mail in describing the supposed meteor of October 22d on the following day, stated that it did not fall to the ground, and that its passage through the heavens was too slow and too regular in speed for a meteor. It suggested that possibly the three objects seen were a group of asteroids that chanced to pass near the earth.

Asteroids are small bodies of matter varying in diameter from a few thousand feet to several

thousand miles, which circle around the sun as the earth does. The term has been restricted astronomically to those whose orbit is between Mars and Jupiter, the great asteroidal field, but it is used here in the more general sense to designate unusually large meteoroids traveling around the sun singly or in small groups in their own orbits. It is just possible that the three luminous globes seen on October 22d belonged to this class.

If the objects seen by Professor Lowe a month before that were the same ones, the inference would follow that the asteroids have been caught by the earth's attraction and are now whirling around it as the moon does, traveling in an ellipse of which the earth is one of the two foci. At times they would be near the earth and at other times farther from it, the extent of the difference between the perigean and apogean distances depending on the flatness of the ellipse. Their light, like the moon's, would be the reflected beams of the sun, and, being small objects, they could not be seen except when the sun was favorably situated. This would be at just about sunset, or a little afterwards, the time at which Lowe's phenomenon and the one seen here were both observed. Night would, of course, be the most favorable time, but on account of their proximity to the earth they would then be in its shadow and reflect no light. In the day time they could not be distinguished in the sky, so the only hour for seeing them would be at sunset, and the best period would be during their perigee—that is, when they are nearest to the earth. In apogee, or when farthest away, they might be so small as not to be visible at all.

Swift's account of the phenomenon shows that he knew the objects he saw could not be meteors, and he assumed that they must therefore be a comet, yet he could not see how they could be a comet either. His announcement reads as follows:

"At the setting of the sun on September 20th, chancing to look out of the window to watch its sinking behind a spur of the Sierra Madres, my eye instantly caught a very bright object, by estimation about a degree above the sun's upper limb. At that time about one-third of the sun had already set. Repairing quickly to the veranda of Echo Mountain house, from whose windows I had detected this stranger, I saw it with greater distinctness, and seizing an opera glass, my suspicion that it was a comet was confirmed, and also to my amazement, the glass revealed a much fainter one, the three bodies forming a right angle triangle. A second and much finer field glass, a very excellent one, was procured, which showed them in like manner as the first. About a dozen of the guests of the hotel saw both objects precisely as they appeared to me. The sun's light, by smoke near the horizon (for weeks huge fires have burned on the mountain north of us) was so weakened that the eye could look at it without discomfort, a condition which must have diminished the normal light of the comet also."

"The objects simultaneously set behind the mountain about four minutes after the disappearance of the upper limb of the sun. The brighter of the two must have been several times more brilliant than Venus, which was not visible for some time after the sun sank, and then only as a faint point of light.

"Now, if the bright one were a comet, and of course it was, then the other, to be a companion of it, was much out of the proper direction from the sun, and so the question arises, were they both comets?"

"The next night, arranging for it, with the great glass pointed to the place, I swept with the 4 1/2-inch comet-seeker from its station on the roof of a dark room close by, but saw nothing until half of the sun had set, when with difficulty I discerned one of the hunted bodies. If this which I now saw were the most brilliant one, its brightness must have diminished enormously, as it was no more conspicuous with the telescope than it had appeared with the opera glass on the night previous. After gazing at it for a few seconds I rushed to the 16-inch telescope for a view, if possible, but the eyepiece being beyond my reach, I hastily returned to the smaller glass only to find that both sun and comet were hopelessly gone behind the mountain. I have not seen them since. It was among the strangest of my experiences.

"I am greatly wondering why the brighter body, so conspicuous as it was, was not observed elsewhere."

Mar. 4, 1897, p. 5. THE MOONS OF MARS.

[article discusses a Popular Astronomy article about the Martian moons as captured asteroids, and the Mail claims credit for advancing the asteroid theory earlier, as an explanation for the airship.]

San Francisco Chronicle, 11/7/1. Mummy of 8-foot tall giant found in Kentucky.

San Francisco Examiner, 11/8/5. A Specter of the Sea (phantom ship).

1896 November 17 (Tues.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 3.

He Will Fly to California. / Claims of an Inventor of New York. / He Expects to Make the Trip Across the Continent in Two Days. / Special Dispatch to the "Chronicle."

New York, Nov. 16.—A man named Leon is building in Hoboken a flying machine which he told his friends he expects to cross the continent in two days. He began work two weeks ago. He expects to have the machine completed by Friday. He intends to make an ascension from a vacant lot adjoining the blacksmith shop, and five of his friends are reported to have accepted invitations to accompany him on his first trip, which will be made to California.

The machine consists of a wooden center piece 15 feet long, covered with a thin coating of brass. From the center piece extends spikes of wood three feet long over which are placed wooden rings six feet in diameter. Over the rings will be drawn rubber and canvas sails. In the front will be a rubber balloon large enough to hold five men and an electric battery, which is expected to furnish both light and propelling power. The steering apparatus will be in the rear.

Leon refuses to talk about himself or his machine. He would not even tell his Christian name, and he is afraid that if he talks someone will gain some inkling of his secret and rob him of the millions he expects to make from his machine. An acquaintance of Leon, however, said the man had already perfected the machine and had ascended to a height of 200 feet in Chicago.

1896 November 18 (Wed.) Sacramento Evening Bee, p. 1.

VOICES IN THE SKY. / People Declare They Heard Them and Saw a Light. / AERIAL SHIP, GHOST STORY, OR METEOR—AS YOU LIKE. / Anyway, the Light Was Seen, and It Acted Very Strangely—Carmen Told Cashier Lusk of What They Claimed to Have Heard and Seen—Nothing Heard Up to Date as to What the Object Is or Whence It Came.

Last evening between the hours of 6 and 7 o'clock, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and ninety-six, a most startling exhibition was seen in the sky in this city of Sacramento. People standing on the sidewalks at certain points in the city between the hours stated, saw coming through the sky over the housetops, what appeared to them to be merely an electric arc lamp propelled by some mysterious force. It came out of the East and sailed unevenly toward the southwest, dropping now nearer to the earth, and now suddenly rising into the air again as if the force that was whirling it through space was sensible of the dangers of collision with objects upon the earth.

That much hundreds of the people saw. That much caused consternation in this city last night among groups gathered to hear the tale. What follows some of the witnesses to the strange spectacle assert to be as true as the circumstances related.

VOICES IN THE SKY.

Startled citizens last night living at points of the city along a rough diagonal line, yet far distant from each other, declare that they not only saw the phenomenon, but they also heard voices issuing from it in midair—not the whispering of angels, not the sepulchral mutterings of evil spirits, but the intelligible words and the merry laughter of humans.

At those intervals where the glittering object, as if careless of its obligation to maintain a straightforward course, descended dangerously near the housetops, voices were heard in the sky saying: "Lift her up quick! You are making directly for that steeple!"

Then the light in the sky would be seen obeying some mystic touch and ascending to a considerable height, from which it would take up again its southwesterly course.

The light sailed along the line of K Street, so it appeared from those in the eastern part of the city, although it appears that after it had passed Fourteenth Street it was wafted far south of K.

Laughter and words sounding strange in the distance, though fairly intelligible, fell upon the ears of pedestrians along the course of the light who had paused to look up at the novelty.

COMING TO CALIFORNIA.

Last night's Bee contained a telegram from New York announcing that a man had perfected an air ship and would on Friday of this week, accompanied by one or two friends, ascend from a vacant lot in the metropolis and go directly to California, which he promised to reach in two days. The description furnished in the telegram included an apparatus which was electrical to supply light and power for the astonishing contrivance. It is not regarded as likely, in view of the announcement contained in the dispatch, that last night Sacramento was overswept by this aerial ship. But here is the incident—here the chronicle of words heard, of a strange spectacle witnessed. Whence the light, which was not a meteor all agree, came, whither it went, where it now is—these things it is not within the capacity of this article to deal with.

MR. LUSK'S STORY.

Charles Lusk, Cashier of the Central Electrical Street Railway Company, was at his home at Twenty-fourth and O Streets, last evening when, having stepped outside, he saw the remarkable

appearance in the sky. He went into the house and told the inmates of what he had seen.

This morning Mr. Lusk mentioned the incident to some of the carmen, and was amazed to learn from them that they had seen such a light as he described while they were in the neighborhood of East Park. More than that, they heard music and voices. One voice distinctly said:

"Well, we ought to get to San Francisco by to-morrow noon."

The carmen say they caught some faint idea of the shape of the object that was floating in the air. It was of balloon shape, and they concluded that it was a balloon.

THEY SAW IT.

Foreman Snider, of the Car Barn, Says It Was Not a Meteor.

This afternoon G.C. Snider, foreman of the car house of the Electric Car Company, gave the following to The Bee:

"I assure you there is no joke about this matter, so far as I am concerned. Last evening, about ten minutes before 7 o'clock, I saw a light, which was then above, approximately, Twenty-seventh and P Streets, sailing in a southwesterly direction. It rose and fell and swayed from right to left as if it were being propelled by some motor power. It was a white light, and was not a star or a meteor. I am certain of that.

"Mr. Lowry, who used to be connected with the car company, told me that he saw the thing when it was directly over head and that it had a wheel, which was going round.

"I don't think it was a balloon, for it was going in the southwest and a heavy wind was blowing from that direction. David Curl, a horse-trainer at the race track, told me that he heard voices in the balloon, or whatever it was.

"I learn that Michael Shelly, carman on car 103 on the J Street line, distinguished the shape of the affair."

Petaluma Daily Courier, Nov. 18, p. 4. New Style Airship. (Iowa inventor's cigar-shaped airship.)
Riverside Daily Press, 11/18/1. Telegraphic Brevities: A New Jersey man is building a machine with which he expects to fly to California in two days.

1896 November 18 (Wed.) (Sacramento, CA) Record Union (d), p. 4.

WHAT WAS IT? / An Apparition Wandering Through the Atmosphere.

Several persons last evening, between 6 and 7 o'clock, saw a big ball of fire, like an electric light, pass over the city going in a southwesterly direction. It moved slowly and was in sight for more than a half-hour, finally disappearing in the mist and darkness.

More than one person was heard to declare that he distinguished human voices engaged in song and mirth coming from above, but could discover no outline of a balloon—nothing but a large ball of light.

One man in the suburbs declares he heard a voice warning the man at the helm "to go higher, or they would collide with the church steeples, etc."

It is possible someone sent up an illuminated balloon, or that a stray meteor was hunting for the rest of the gang, but there really were persons who insisted that it was a new-fangled airship lighted by electricity and traveling direct for San Francisco from—somewhere.

1896 November 18 (Wed.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 3.

CLAIM THEY SAW A FLYING AIRSHIP / Strange Tale of Sacramento Men Not Addicted to Prevarication. / Viewed an Aerial Courser as It Passed Over the City at Night. / Declare They Heard Voices of Those Aboard Joined in Merry Chorus. /

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Nov. 17.—A vast amount of excitement was created among residents in the outskirts of the city to-night by the appearance of what they claim to have been an airship, which, seemingly under perfect control, passed over the city, going in the direction of San Francisco. The sky was obscured by heavy clouds and it was impossible to ascertain the shape and size of the aerial conveyance, presuming it to be such, but the onlookers followed its course by the lights displayed, which were about twice the brilliancy and size of an arc light.

In speaking of the appearance of the reputed airship, an eye-witness of undoubted veracity said: "When my attention was called to the travelling light it was, I should judge, about 1000 feet high, but as it approached the city limits it arose to probably an elevation of 2000 feet. When I first saw it it was approaching from a northeasterly direction, and on arriving at the city limits it bore off to the south until past the city, when it turned toward the southwest as if resuming its course toward San Francisco.

"When the airship passed over the streetcar company's barn, a crowd of the employes came out, and they claim that they distinctly heard people's voices singing in a chorus, a rattling song, which gradually died away in the distance. The lights of this mysterious visitant were visible for upward of thirty minutes, until they passed out of sight."

A lineman in the employ of the Postal Telegraph service claims to have seen the same visitant about 9 o'clock in the vicinity of Suisun on Sunday evening. The impression here seems to be that some one has solved the mystery of aerial navigation, and is conducting his experiments at night in order to escape impertinent curiosity.

Men in charge of East Park, which lies outside the city limits, state that as the airship passed over the park the voices of men, who seemed to be disputing as to whether they should cause their conveyance to rise higher, could be heard. The lights then rose rapidly into the air and passed on.

1896 November 19 (Th.) Oakland (Calif.) Tribune, p. 4.

That Bogie in the Air. /

Now that the season is over for the sea serpent, there comes the announcement of a mysterious air ship that has been floating over Sacramento. It is too early in the season for the appearance of this bogie. When the Legislature meets there may be a great many people up there who will see double, and others may have a wonderful obliquity of vision. The sea serpent never appeared off the Atlantic Coast when there was any dearth of whiskey. The air ship or jack'o lantern cannot be verified properly without a liberal use of stimulants. The conditions may be more favorable for such a view in Sacramento than anywhere else. It is not a matter of surprise that this spirit in the air should have been announced. The wonder is that it should have been so early in the season.

Petaluma Daily Courier, Nov. 19, p. 3b.

Sacramento is worked up over a strange light that appeared in the sky Tuesday night, and was supposed to be carried by a flying machine, and it is said that a number of persons heard the voices of the people who navigated the airship. The Sacramento Bee has a column of interviews with people who claim to have heard the occupants laugh and talk as the strange night bird flew by. It is astonishing how many persons are found on such occasions, who think they have had complimentary admission tickets to the show, and are anxious to be "quoted."

1896 November 19 (Th.) Sacramento Evening Bee, p. 1.

AIR SHIP, OR WHAT? / Various Views Expressed Respecting Tuesday Night's Queer Phenomenon. / ALL MEN LIARS? LOOKS THAT WAY! / But Then How Is That Fluctuating White Light in the Sky to be Accounted for? / BARWICK SAYS IT CAN'T BE A METEOR. / And If Barwick Doesn't Know, the People Who Give Their Ideas May Be Pardoned for Entertaining Rather Riotous Fancies on the Subject.

Nothing of a trustworthy character has been heard of the present whereabouts of the air ship, or the what -is-it, which swept over the housetops of Sacramento Tuesday evening, in sight of many citizens who have not served terms in the County Jail for drunkenness nor attained even local renown as romancers.

Meanwhile the sensation groweth apace. Last evening, after the publication of interviews with reputable parties in The Bee, the subject of the "voices in the sky" was the topic of conversation in the restaurants, hotels, and wherever people congregate. The general sentiment was that the light was either a meteor or an attachment to a balloon which had ascended from some point near the city, and the notion that it was part of an air ship was scouted as ridiculous. That such a light as was described in The Bee last night swept in a more or less diagonal line through Sacramento between 6 and 7 o'clock Tuesday evening is indisputable. That voices were heard traveling with the light certain persons assert with great solemnity. That the light was suspended under a contrivance of egg shape, with paddles whirring on the sides, one or two witnesses have been found with the hardihood to describe. That there is some mystery about the circumstance a great number of people believe. That the antics of the light, as in wobbling this way and that, and going up and down are embellishments to a grand hoax, the majority of citizens will probably agree.

On thing most of the witnesses to the phenomenon are positive about is that the light was white like that shed by an arc lamp. Weather Observer Barwick is at as much loss as anybody to account for the appearance in the sky. He says the color of a meteor would be affected by the density of the atmosphere through which it was darting and on an evening like that of Tuesday he believes the light of such an aerial

visitor would most likely be purplish, and in no event the extreme white of an arc lamp.

Various rumors are afloat but they can scarcely be given credence. One, published in this morning's Record-Union, is to the effect that an air ship has been in course of construction for some time at Oak Park, and that on Tuesday evening a trial trip of the conveyance was made through the city, and out to Arcade where it broke down and is now awaiting repairs.

The authority of Ex-Senator F.S. Sprague is given for the loss of a carpenter's hammer from a scaffolding surrounding the steeple of St. Paul's Church, left there a few hours before the passage of the alleged ship, but this incident is not substantiated.

A Dream Realized.

To the Editor of The Bee—Sir: This is truly an age of invention. I have thought for years that I would live to see the air navigated, and since reading in your valuable paper of last evening of the great air ship passing over this city on the night of Tuesday, I feel assured that I am to realize that hope of aerial navigation. In your issue of Monday or Tuesday a telegram was published saying that this air ship was to start from New York, and make the trip to San Francisco in 48 hours. However, it seems to have made it in less than half the scheduled time.

These navigators of the ethereal regions must have had an experience far more interesting than that of Dr. Nansen, in his search for the North Pole. What a cold strata they must have passed through, when they looked down upon the crest of Pike's Peak! What an altitude they must have attained when they hovered over the dizzy heights of the Rockies! What scenery must have delighted their vision as they looked down upon the waters of Lake Tahoe, and the summits of the high Sierras glittering with the scintillations of snows and glaciers that have been forming for a thousand Winters!

What a prospect must they have enjoyed, as the Mississippi, the "father of Waters," and the Missouri, the "great muddy," looked [like] rivulets, extending from Yellowstone Park on the one hand and Lake Itaska on the other to the Gulf of Mexico!

Imagine them at the dizzy elevation they must have gained in order to increase the length of vision, looking in on Cuba and seeing Weyler being chased by the Insurgents with their machetes and at the same time taking in everything from the Yukon on the north to Patagonia on the south, watching the progress of the Nicaragua and Panama canals, taking a look at the site of the New Monte Carlo at Juarez, the overflowed country in Washington and Oregon, and casually looking after the Schomburgk line in Venezuela.

How their hearts must have gladdened when, coming over the Sierras, they lowered their bird-like vehicle of passage, drank in the refreshing ozone of the pines just below the snow belt, then into the Sacramento Valley, the garden spot of earth, where they soared just above the tree tops, where the atmosphere was pregnant with the perfume of the magnolia and the chrysanthemum. As they passed over Sacramento they lowered their boat so as just to escape the church spires, threw out their illuminators, played guitars, hurraed for the Capital City and the Folsom electric power, and those with an acute sense of hearing say they could hear the beer corks pop, and the captain say they had provisions and liquor enough for a six days' passage.

Since the Portland Oregonian said that San Francisco was the tenderloin of America, they decided to stay out of its tainted atmosphere, and pass over Milpitas. By this time they have, doubtless, looked in upon Honolulu, passed over the islands once ruled by Queen Lil, and are now no doubt looking down upon the land of the Mikado.

They, perhaps, will look in upon Li Hung Chang, the man with the yellow jacket and three-eyed peacock feathers, pass over Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world, from which elevated position they can gaze upon famished India, walled-in China, plateaued Thibet, the Phillipine Islands, that are giving Spain so much trouble, and away off in the frozen north, immense Siberia, with its new 5000-mile railroad.

To-morrow they can look down upon Moscow and St. Petersburg and on Constantinople, and Athens, and Rome, and Paris, and London, and the next day they will cross the Atlantic!

Surely, as I said in the beginning, this is the age of invention, but who would have thought prior to the 3d of November that it was possible to go around the world in 80 hours? The wildest dreams of Jules Verne could not be more romantic, and the most exaggerating of the writings of Muchausen seem to pale into insignificance in comparison.

CONSTANT READER. /

Look Out for Squalls.

To the Editor of The Bee—Sir: The extraordinary astronomical phenomenon appearing to the citizens of Sacramento yesterday evening as published by you in your to-day's issue, is without doubt the most notable event of the century; and we must accept this visitation as a warning to look out for squalls. The theory of warships, balloons, meteors, atomized fire balloons, and other wild-cat notions, must be accepted with a large grain of salt and scientists must realize that we are hanging on the ragged edge of

evolution, and that we must stand ready to receive the revolution of a new creation. The researches of electricians have depleted the atmosphere of the electric fluid which is the life of the world. This subtle force has hitherto formed the equilibrium of the planets in their correct spheres, and maintained the gravitating force of our earth. The expanded force of human energy, the extraordinary excitement evolved during the Presidential campaign, the waste of breath by the millions who discussed the bimetallic question, the wreckage of the A.P.A. organization against the rocks of "hard cash," the payment of election bets by Trustee Devine, the passage of the pool room ordinance, and the deterioration in the quality of tomares, substituting hare for chicken, are the main factors of atmospheric disturbance. The phenomenon is merely an instance of cause arid effect.

The mere effort to discuss the visitation of this phenomenon intelligibly would be a labor of such colossal [sic] magnitude as to stop the rotation of the earth round its axis and increase the price of shrimps to such an extent that beef tea would be at a premium, and the California rancher be able to wear a clean shirt on Thanksgiving Day.

C.J. / Sacramento, November 18, 1896.

A Trial Trip, Maybe.

To the Editor of The Bee—Sir: I see by your paper that on last Tuesday evening a magnificent air ship appeared over the city of Sacramento, and, without pausing in its flight, sailed onward toward the west. I have long been expecting something of this kind to occur. A few years ago I received a tip from a friend in the East that Thos. A. Edison had in course of preparation a machine that would revolutionize warfare. In thinking the matter over I came to the conclusion that this new engine of destruction must be nothing more nor less than a flying man-of-war, fully armed and equipped with guns and dynamite.

All readers of the papers know that grave rumblings of war are being wafted across the Atlantic from the sunny shores of Spain, and that at the first gun crack half the nations of Europe might be drawn into the broil.

What time, therefore, could be more auspicious than the present for Edison to launch his machine?

I am convinced that in view of the threatening war clouds that have been lowering over our fair land that our Government has negotiated with Mr. Edison for the purchase of his ship, and that the splendid sight which appeared in the sky night before last was nothing more nor less than this ship making a trial trip, in charge of two or more army officers.

I saw a great deal of military life during the strike in this city two years ago and at that time I studied the habits of the soldiers, paying particular attention to their mode of speech, and I am confident that it was a soldier's voice that was heard apparently coming from the clouds night before last, giving the order "Shoot her up higher or you will hit that steeple."

If my theory is correct, and I am convinced that it is, the days of war will be forever held in leash, and the dove of peace will brood eternal silence o'er our land.

But the arrival of the air ship in Sacramento means even more than this, for a vessel that can carry guns and dynamite can carry merchandise, and there is no doubt that in a few years Sacramento will be the center of a score or more of atmospheric transportation lines.

I believe that aerial navigation has been successfully accomplished and that those who were fortunate enough to be gazing into the sky night before last saw that which will revolutionize the world. VERITAS. / Sacramento, November 19, 1896.

A Reported Apparition.

To the Editor of The Bee.—Sir: Kindly suppress my name, and I will explain how and when the remarkable sight of an air ship was first witnessed. On last Tuesday evening a little social affair was given at a cozy place on the eastern border of the town, by the Perpetual Jag Club, of which I have the honor to be a member. While seated around the table enjoying the solid comfort that accompanies plentiful libations of steam beer, one of our members, who had absented himself for a few minutes, rushed into our midst and declared that an immense, three-masted schooner was sailing through the sky and that the man at the helm was no more nor less than our late President, Handsome Brady, who was removed from office for having upset a glass of good liquor.

Mortified at the consequences of his rash act, our President had arisen from the table, and with a wave of his hand, announced that he would go, but would some day return in a manner that would startle the community.

So, when the announcement was made that Brady had returned, we all rushed to the door and there beheld a sight that I shall never forget. Less than 100 feet distant from the ground there was a magnificent schooner. Her bow was mounted with an immense serpent, out of whose eyes shot great flames of fire, and from the jack staff floated a pennant containing two demijohns rampant, and a canteen couchant. On the deck were piled cords upon cords of bottled whisky, and at the helm was our lamented President, who, the moment he saw us, gave us the horse laugh(,) and as the crew broke into a rollicking drinking song, the

ship disappeared in the distance.

This is all true, on the honor of one of the most bibulous frequenters of the cock-tail route, and a charter member of the Perpetual Jagers.

Please do not use my name, but allow me to sign myself,

B.U. THIRSTY.

Sacramento, November 19th.

Can This Be True?

To the Editor of The Bee—Sir: I wish you newspapers would furnish a key to your jokes, although what you see funny in such a thing as this airship story rather beats me. I do not believe a word of it. I have always had great respect for the newspaper fraternity, and have the distinction of being an honorary member of Newspaper Writers' Union, No. 3, of this city, as the beautiful certificate enclosed in an oak frame hanging in my office will show. At the time I had this honor thrust upon me I understood that it was the intention to establish a Bohemian resort where we could discuss tamales and beer and pass profitable evenings and I parted, with much satisfaction, with the \$5 asked.

Since I have not yet been handed my key to the Bohemian quarters, I am forced to believe that the active members of the Union have appropriated the money for banquet among themselves and that they were in the enjoyment of the after effects of this feed when they conceived the idea of this aerial ship and sprang it upon a suffering public.

CONSTANT READER.

Sacramento, November 19, 1896.

A Car Barn Conspiracy.

To the Editor of the Bee—Sir: A peculiar feature of this airship story, it appears to me, is the prominence in which the attaches of the Central Electric Railway Company figure in it. I read in this morning's paper, for example, that Carman So and So and Carman Somebody Else and Mr. So and So of the car barn, saw this and thus I am unwilling to think that these hardworking and sober citizens have suddenly become a race of merry liars, and I merely mention the matter as a singular circumstance.

X. Y. Z.

Sacramento, November 19, 1896.

Sensation Reaches Patterson.

To the Editor of The Bee—Sir: It has been rumored out here at Patterson's Station that an airship was seen passing over Sacramento propelled by two bicycle riders. Have you heard the story? If so, will you please let me know if there is any truth in it?

VOX POPULI.

Patterson's, November 19, 1896.

A Voice From Sutter.

To the Editor of The Bee—Sir: It is being currently reported here that certain Sacramento citizens who were in the neighborhood of a Twenty-eighth-Street brewery last night saw an airship carrying a minstrel show from New York to Sacramento. The story meets with little credence in this community, where we are all farmers. On Tuesday a fisherman living on the banks of Cat Fish Slough captured a sand hill crane, and after tying a Chinese lantern to one of its legs let it go. When last seen it was flying toward Sacramento at a speed of about fifty miles an hour, and must have passed over your city between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening. Please find out if any one who saw the airship saw the sand hill crane, and oblige. /

PRO BONO PUBLICO.

Nicolaus, Sutter County, Nov. 18th.

TRUCKEE HAS 'EM AGAIN.

A Correspondent Imagines That He Saw a Big Airship.

The following communication, if the writer was not under the influence of that terrible whiskey at Truckee should stop all speculation about the strange spectacle of last Tuesday night. It will prove to old toppers who gazed into the sky and saw the mysterious light moving over the city that they did not have the delirium tremens. It will prove to religious fanatics that the ball of fire was not a forerunner of the conflagration to come, and it should convince doubting Thomases that the wild dream of Darius Green has come true.

TRUCKEE, Nov. 18.—Considerable amusement was created here when the papers arrived and told of the consternation which prevailed in Sacramento over the flight of a ball of fire across that city. That supposed ball of fire was an immense glass globe lighted by electricity, and was really the "wheel house" of a great air ship.

About 4 o'clock Tuesday afternoon the people of this place were astonished to see a wonderful machine sailing through the air from an easterly direction. After hovering above the town for a few moments the machine circled around and gracefully descended to the earth, lighting in the Plaza alongside of the Ice Palace. In a short time it was surrounded by hundreds of men, women and children. The

Indians who saw the thing ran howling in fright towards the woods. On the sides of the affair were painted the words "Meteor" and while it resembled a ship, it had great wings similar to those of a bird. They are operated by means of machinery worked by an electric storage battery, and the entire apparatus, which is twenty-five feet in length, is constructed of aluminum. In the strange craft was the distinguished Phineas Fogg, who is attempting to beat his round-the-world record of eighty days. He was accompanied by three friends, who started with him from New York on Monday morning. They landed at this place to send a telegram to home friends, announcing that they had decided to avoid San Francisco. Mr. Fogg said he and his friends enjoyed themselves by day in gazing at the country, and at night they played poker for the drinks, after setting the screws of the machine to keep high enough up to escape church spires and mountain peaks. After remaining here for fifteen or twenty minutes, the aerial navigators stepped into the ship, a button was pressed, and the wonderful thing arose into the air, glided swiftly towards the west, and barely missed McGlashan's museum building which is perched up on the top of the big rocking stone.

1896 November 19 (Th.) (Sacramento, CA) Record-Union, p. 8.

THAT MYSTERIOUS LIGHT. / Was It an Air-Ship or a Will-o'-the-Wisp? / Stories That are Floating Around Concerning the Supposed Floating Visitor. /

Regarding the aerial visitor that passed over Sacramento Tuesday evening, and which was described at the time as being a pure white light of about double the power of an electric arc light, many queer stories are told.

Whether the light was a meteor, or attached to a balloon, or whether it was a genuine flying machine, is not positively known, though ninety-nine out of 100 men in the city regard the matter in the light of a huge hoax. The stories told by some of the parties who saw the light follow, and the reader can pay his money and take his choice:

R.L. Lowrey, who was formerly in the employ of the street railway company in this city, but who has been absent for some time and only recently returned, says he was near East Park and saw the apparatus when it was not more than fifty feet from the ground. He declared that the machine was cigar-shaped and was operated by four men, who sat aside the cigar and moved as though they were working their passage on a bicycle. He stated that the machine was fitted with wing-like propellers after the fashion of those of an ocean steamer.

T.P. De Long, whose residence is not mentioned in the city directory, said he saw the light and heard voices, but couldn't hear what was said.

Daniel Curl, a horse-trainer, is authority for the statement that he not only saw the light, but heard someone suggest that "they go up higher."

F.E. Briggs, a motorman on a G-street car, said he saw the light and called attention to it. His passengers requested him to stop, which he did. He heard singing which appeared to come from the direction of the lights, and seemed to be wafted down in gusts.

M.F. Shelley, a motorman on a J-street car, saw the light and heard a voice shouting orders.

C.H. Lusk, Secretary of the street-car company, noticed the light. He said it had an up-and-down and side-to-side motion.

G.C. Snider, foreman of the streetcar barn, saw the light, and gave it as his opinion that it was an aerial machine of some kind.

Frank A. Ross, Assistant Manager of the street railway company, said he had talked with many persons concerning the matter, and, having seen the light, is fully assured that it was some kind of a flying machine.

Thomas Allen stated very seriously that a flying machine, the invention of a citizen of Sacramento, actually did ascend from the vicinity of Oak Park, and that four men, among whom was Nat Liebling, ascended with it. The machine, he related, was fastened to the earth with a cable, which broke and let the aerial wonder float away. It would not, owing to a defect in the steering apparatus, be guided, and sailed around at random. First it made for Suisun, but after having accomplished half the journey veered around, once more passed over the city, and is now at a point near Arcade Station, ten miles northeast of this city.

It puzzles one to understand how the machine could have started from Oak Park, which is southeast of the city, and passed over from the northeast to the southwest, and it is also puzzling to know how Nat Liebling could have taken such a wild, wild ride, when he was seen near the Postoffice only two hours later.

There are other puzzling things also, so the average citizen will choose what he wishes, and the burning question still is, "What was it?"

Salinas Index, Nov. 19, p. 1: Pacific Coast News. / A machine is being constructed at Hoboken, N.J., in which the inventor proposes to fly overland to California in 48 hours. Hunters should make a note of it and not shoot it.

1896 November 19 (Th. Morn.) San Francisco Call, p. 1.

STRANGE CRAFT OF THE SKY / Sacramento Men Describe the Airship. / Claim They Saw Its Occupants and Heard Them in Conversation.

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Nov. 18.—The one topic of conversation in this city to-day has been the reported appearance of an airship over the eastern portion of Sacramento last night. While there are hundreds of people who, failing to catch a glimpse of this mysterious visitant, are extremely skeptical, there are hundreds of others who are positive in their declaration that they did see its brilliant searchlight traveling over the city, and who will also swear that they heard the voices of its occupants and distinguished their merry song and laughter. Then there are others who declare that these aerial travelers used the English tongue, and that they plainly distinguished the words used and commands uttered for the guidance and care of the air vessel.

In investigating this mysterious visitation the local representative of The Call obtained personal interviews with scores of reputable citizens who reside along the route passed over by the air craft. Many of them lived fully a mile or two distant from each other, but their accounts all agree.

As far as can be learned from eyewitnesses, the body of the craft was oblong and egg-shaped, with fan-like wheels on either side, whose rapid revolutions, beating the air, served to propel the vessel directly against the wind, and in so doing caused the vessel to sway from side to side with a wavering motion, similar to that of a boat being forced against the rapid current of a stream.

Midway of the vessel and suspended directly beneath it was a brilliant searchlight about twice the size of an arc light, evidently so placed that the occupants could ascertain when the vessel approached too near the earth and was in danger of collision with lofty objects. Above the egg-shaped body towered a tall, indistinguishable mass, whose shape it was impossible to ascertain, owing to the fact that the onlooker's [sic] eyes were blurred by the brilliancy of the searchlight.

Such is the description of the vessel given by R.L. Lowry, who also claims to have been able to distinguish four men, who were seemingly engaged in propelling the vessel by its fanlike wheels, much after the fashion of a bicyclist driving his wheel over a boulevard. It is also claimed that a bystander in the vicinity of Mr. Lowry shouted to the men in the aerial vessel and inquired their destination, and that they replied they were bound for San Francisco and intended arriving by 12 o'clock—midnight. This, however, could not be verified, as no one appeared to know the name of the reputed interrogator.

J.H. Vogel, who claimed to have been in the same locality, also states that the vessel was egg-shaped, and that he distinctly heard the voices of its occupants, but says that as the vessel was rapidly rising he was unable to distinguish any words, and that after a brief glimpse of the body of the airship it faded from view and all that was visible was the brilliant searchlight, which moved slowly away in a southwesterly direction, going toward San Francisco, and being visible for upward of thirty minutes, growing more and more dim, until it disappeared in the distance.

F. Wenzel, who is employed at Scheld's Brewery, verifies the stories of Vogel and Lowry as to the shape of the vessel, but claims that when it passed over him the occupants were troling a merry chorus which, though distant, sounded sweet and clear in the evening air.

The first person who, as far as can be learned, caught a glimpse of the reputed airship was David Carl, a horse-trainer at Agricultural Park. When he first caught sight of the craft it was within a short distance of the ground, and he states that he heard a voice saying:

"We are too low down here; send her up higher."

Then a discussion followed as to the advisability of attaining too great a height, as the occupants were evidently anxious to reach San Francisco before midnight. He stated that the vessel then started to rise, doing so on an incline and not going directly up as would be the case had ballast been cast from a balloon. He had no idea, however, that it was anything but a balloon and had never even thought of the possibility of an airship. He was positive in his declaration that it contained at least two occupants, as he could clearly distinguish two voices discussing the strata of air best adapted for rapid traveling.

[T.] P. de Long when interviewed said: "I could not distinguish the shape of the vessel. All I could see was a brilliant light moving seemingly against the wind, but I could plainly hear the voices of its occupants, who were singing, and it sounded to me like the noise produced by a phonograph. At this time I should judge the vessel was several hundred feet high."

Frank Ross, assistant superintendent of the electric streetcar system, when interviewed said: "I did

not see the form of the vessel nor did I hear the voices of its occupants, as I was not informed until it had passed my residence. All that I saw was a brilliant electric searchlight, apparently twice the size and power of an ordinary arc light, which was being propelled through the air by some mysterious force. From what I have learned from my employes—men of undoubted veracity—I am certain that this can by no possibility have been a 'fake', but that a genuine airship passed over the city last evening. I watched the light until it passed out of sight thirty minutes later. It was traveling unevenly toward the southwest, dropping now nearer to the earth and now suddenly rising into the air again as if the force that was whirling it through space was sensible of the danger of collision with objects upon the earth. I, of course, have no idea as to its destination or purpose. I can only say that I am fully convinced by what I have heard that it was something out of the ordinary."

G.C. Snyder, foreman of the streetcar barn, states: "I am fully convinced that an aerial vessel of some description passed over this building last night about 6:30 o'clock. At the time my attention was called to it the craft was at too great an elevation for me to distinguish its form, but I distinctly saw the searchlight, which was going directly into the wind, and from its movement judged that it was attached to a vessel of some description, which was laboring as a seagoing vessel will in a heavy sea and head wind. I also find that hundreds of residents in this portion of the city saw the light, and there are hundreds who claim that they heard the voices of the occupants of the visitor."

Charles Lusk, secretary of the company, also states that he saw the light traveling over the city.

Mayor Hubbard says that personally he failed to catch a glimpse of this aerial visitant, as he was engaged in his office downtown when it passed over, but he stated to The Call representative that upon arriving at his residence in the upper portion of the city his daughter told him that she had seen a brilliant white light, seemingly at a great elevation, which had come toward the city from the east and passed directly over it, moving in a southwesterly direction. She said it certainly was not a meteor, as it was a different shade of light and moved too slowly and unevenly, and she was at a loss to account for it.

F.E. Briggs, a motorman on one of the streetcars running to Oak Park, saw the light of the traveling airship, and at the request of the occupants of his crowded vehicle he stopped his car for a moment. He says that while they could not discern the form of the airship, yet the voices of the occupants were plainly heard. He had been informed by a man who resided in the vicinity of East Park, where the air vessel had been first seen, that it was a genuine airship, cigar or egg shaped, and that it had at least four occupants. When the vessel passed over his car he judged that the occupants were singing, but they were at such a height that neither he nor his passengers were enabled to distinguish the words or the tune, as they came in broken snatches, as though borne on gusts of the night wind.

When H.W. Marsh saw the traveling light it was at least five miles away. He thought that it was attached to some aerial vessel, owing to its wavering motion through the atmosphere.

E. Caverly saw the light, but refused to be interviewed on the subject, evidently deeming it to be uncanny.

M.T. Shelly, a gentleman of undoubted veracity, saw the airship's light, and at one time, when the craft careened somewhat so as to partially obscure the light, he caught sight of the vessel itself, which he declared to be a cigar-shaped receptacle, with what seemed to be a dark wall above it.

Hundreds of similar interviews could be obtained. In this connection the Evening Bee published the following account:

Startled citizens last night living at points of the city along a rough diagonal line, yet far distant from each other, declare that they not only saw the phenomenon but they also heard voices issuing from it in midair—not the whispering of angels, not the sepulchral mutterings of evil spirits, but the intelligible words and the merry laughter of humans. At those intervals where the glittering object, as if careless of its obligation to maintain a straightforward course, descended dangerously near the housetops voices were heard in the sky saying:

“Lift her up, quick; you are making directly for that steeple.”

"Then the light in the sky would be seen obeying some mystic touch and ascending to a considerable height, from which it would take up again its southwesterly course. The light sailed along the line of K street, so it appeared from those in the eastern part of the city, although it appears that after it had passed Fourteenth street it was wafted far south of K. Laughter and words sounding strange in the distance, though fairly intelligible, fell upon the ears of pedestrians along the course of the light who had paused to look up at the novelty.

"Last night's Bee contained a telegram from New York announcing that a man had perfected an airship and would on Friday of this week, accompanied by one or two friends, ascend from a vacant lot in the metropolis and go directly to California, which he promised to reach in two days. The description furnished in the telegram included an apparatus which was electrical, to supply light and power for the astonishing contrivance.

"It is not regarded as likely, in view of the announcement contained in the dispatch, that last night Sacramento was overswept by this aerial ship.

"But here is the incident—here the chronicle of words heard, of a strange spectacle witnessed. Whence the light, which was not a meteor all agree, came, whither it went, where it now is—these things it is not within the capacity of this article to deal with."

Then follow interviews similar to those obtained by The Call representative.

Among the eye-witnesses of last night's singular spectacle the wildest speculations are rife. As to the destination and object to be obtained by this night voyage of a reputed airship, one of those onlookers informed The Call representative that in his opinion it was the same invention which it is rumored Edison claimed to have perfected and offered to the Government at the time when the Venezuelan boundary question came up, and that now that relations were strained with Spain the Government has sent a party of engineers out in the airship to test its practicability, and that they were keeping away from populous localities, except during the night trips.

The opinion of the masses is, however, that some lucky inventor, having solved the mystery of aerial navigation, is, with his companions, testing his invention in secret, with no intent of allowing a curious public to view it until his rights are fully protected by letters patent. They presume that he is traveling by night and laying by in desert spots during the day. Be that as it may, there can be no possible doubt that an aerial vessel of some kind passed over Sacramento last night and hundreds of the residents of this city will so testify.

The residents of Oak Park claim to have a little mystery of their own which may [have] possible bearing of [sic] this subject. They state that yesterday afternoon an object was seen in the sky at such a great elevation as to be almost indistinguishable. It moved slowly in a circle, leaving a volume of smoke behind it. This phenomenon was seen by many, who are unable to account for it.

A rumor is afloat in the city to-night that the airship was constructed near this city and that a trial trip was attempted last evening, a cable being used to confine the machine to a certain elevation.

It is stated that the cable parted, and the vessel then drifted over the city and became observed of all observers. This rumor cannot be confirmed at this late hour, but it is claimed that T. Allen, who formerly conducted an employment office in this city, states that such is the case and that one of the men who had made the ascension had informed him that the trial was a success and the vessel worked well, except that it was impossible to fully control its movements. In consequence the inventors had, after going toward San Francisco a ways, returned and landed in a vacant field some distance from Arcade and about six miles from the city limits. This tale is not generally credited.

SEFN THREE WEEKS AGO. / Story Told by a Hunter Living on Bolinas Ridge.

On Sunday the first day of this month, a representative of The Call met on Bolinas Ridge, just to the west of Mount Tamalpais, an old hunter living there, named Brown. The old man was very nervous and started a conversation immediately by asking:

"Do I look like a crazy man?"

"Why certainly not, Mr. Brown. Why do you ask?"

"Well," he replied, "I don't expect anybody to believe me. To tell the truth I can hardly believe myself. But it's an honest fact that yesterday morning when the fog began to lift, I saw an airship right up there a couple of hundred feet over them pines.

"No, I can't tell you much what she looked like. She didn't show very plainly through the mist, but I saw a large, dark shape with something moving on it. Don't know whether I saw any people or not. It came on me so sudden I was almost stunned, and by the time I collected my senses she was out of sight.

"I have been kind of dazed ever since, and to have you tell me that I don't look crazy is a great relief. But I know that what I saw was an airship."

As the "superior" type of mirage is not uncommon to people living on the Marin hills it was thought that this was what the old man had seen, so no attention was paid to his story. The mirage effect of a large ocean vessel passing through the sky might appear to him like some new-fangled machine for navigating the air.

Perhaps the mirage is what he really saw, but in the face of the stories circulated in regard to the airship there is a probability that is what Mr. Brown really saw. Certainly he would have no object in telling such a story.

[Pic: The Airship That Passed Over Sacramento Tuesday Evening, as Described by Scores of Eye-Witnesses.]

[p. 4?] The Sacramento Story of an airship seen flying over the city at night is not wholly creditable, but it is the best explanation we have had of the complete disappearance of David Bennett Hill.

1896 November 19 (Th.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 5.

STRANGE TALE OF A FLYING MACHINE. / ROMANCE FROM SACRAMENTO / SAID TO HAVE BEEN SEEN BY MANY CITIZENS. / It Looks Like a Fake of Large Size—Mysterious Light Seen at the Capital City. / Special Dispatch to the "Chronicle."

SACRAMENTO, November 18.—What is probably one of the greatest hoaxes that has ever been sprung on any community has been started in this city, and yet were it not for the improbability of the thing there would be the very best of reasons for believing it true.

At an early hour last evening a very brilliant light passed over the southeastern part of the city, traveling in a southwesterly direction. This much must be accepted as a fact, as it was seen by a score or more of persons at different points, among whom are some of the most reputable citizens of Sacramento. One of these, Frank Ross, assistant superintendent of the streetcar company, who was on Twenty-eighth street at the time, describes the light as closely resembling an arc lamp, and declares that it was traveling diagonally across the direction of the wind.

Charles Lusk, assistant cashier of the street-car company, who also saw the light, declares that he was struck with the resemblance it bore to an arc lamp and was further astonished when he saw it rise and fall as though guided by some human agency.

The most remarkable story, however, is that told by R.L. Lowry, a carman who declares that he not only saw the light, but that he saw an air ship, and the men who were propelling it, and more than this, he heard the men talking. The description of the ship given by him is that the body was cigar-shaped and had a framework hanging below on which two men sat as they would on a bicycle. The lamp was suspended below the men and appeared to be inclosed in a globe. When he saw the affair it was not more than 100 feet from the earth, and he heard a voice say: "Throw her up higher or you will strike that steeple."

Lowry's story is borne out by Emil Wenzel, a barkeeper in the Sacramento Brewery, who also claims that he saw the ship and heard the voices, and Charles Boyles, a mechanic, and J.H. Vogel, a barkeeper, who also claim they saw the ship and heard the voices.

That a remarkable phenomenon appeared in the sky last night there can be no doubt, and although the general belief is that the airship story is a gigantic hoax, it is hard to account for the evident sincerity of those who claim they saw the machine and heard the voices.

1896 November 19 (Th.) Stockton Evening Mail, p. 1 (2?).

VOICES FROM THE UPPER AIR [story from Sacramento Bee]. /
A Note Dropped Here.

The same strange phenomenon was seen in Stockton last evening, among those who observed it being Dr. Foreman, John York, the well-known instructor, and Andrew Patterson, the Courthouse gardener.

From all indications it was the same mysterious light which was seen nearly two months ago by an astronomer in Southern California and a few weeks ago passed over this city eastward bound. The Mail started the theory that it was some large meteor that had been caught by the earth's attraction and was whirling around this globe as Jules Verne's car circled the moon.

This morning the following note, which solves the whole mystery, was picked up near the intersection of Park and California streets. The writing is in pencil and is on a lot of cigarette papers pasted together. It runs as follows:

"While up in a balloon September 17th we were caught by a large meteor, and are now ripping around the world on it. Provisions almost gone, and tobacco giving out. Southward bound to h--- and gone. Tried to jump off at the State Insane Asylum, but couldn't make the raffle.
"METE O. ROID." / "AL. LAFAKE."

NOVEMBER 20

1896 November 20 (Fri. morn) Marysville Daily Appeal, p. 1.

A SACRAMENTO JOKE / There Are Some People Who Still Take It Seriously./ A SUTTERITE'S SOLUTION. / Says That it Was a Lighted Chinese Lantern Attached to a Sandhill Crane—Other Deductions. /

Nothing of a trustworthy character has been heard of the present whereabouts of the air-ship, or the what is-it, which swept over the house tops of Sacramento Tuesday evenings, in sight of many citizens who have not served terms in the county jail for drunkenness nor attained even local renown as romancers, says the Bee of last night.

Meanwhile the sensation groweth apace. Last evening after the publication of interviews with reputable parties in The Bee, the subject of the "voices in the sky" was the topic of conversation in the restaurants, hotels, and wherever people congregated. The general sentiment was that the light was either a meteor or an attachment to a balloon which had ascended from some point near the city, and the notion that it was part of an air ship was scouted as ridiculous. That such a light as was described in The Bee last night swept in a more or less diagonal line through Sacramento between 6 and 7 o'clock Tuesday evening is indisputable. That voices were heard traveling with the light certain persons assert with great solemnity. That the light was suspended under a contrivance of egg shape, with paddles whirling on the side, one or two witnesses have been found with the hardihood to declare. That there is some mystery about the circumstance a great number of people believe. That the antics of the light as to wobbling this way and that, and going up and down are embellishments to a grand hoax, the majority of citizens will probably agree.

One thing most of the witnesses to the phenomenon are positive about is that the light was white, like that shed by an arc lamp. Weather Observer Barwick is at as much loss as anybody to account for the appearance in the sky. He says the color of a meteor would be affected by the density of the atmosphere through which it was darting, and on an evening like that of Tuesday he believes the light of such an aerial visitor would most likely be purplish, and in no event the extreme white of an arc lamp.

Various rumors are afloat, but they can scarcely be given credence. One, published in this morning's Record Union, is to the effect that an air ship has been in course of construction for some time at Oak Park, and that on Tuesday evening a trial trip of the conveyance was made through the city, and out to Arcade, where it broke down is now awaiting repairs.

The authority of Ex-Senator F.S. Sprague is given for the loss of a carpenter's hammer from a scaffolding surrounding the steeple of St. Paul's church, left there a few hours before the passage of the alleged ship, but this incident is not substantiated. / SOLVED BY A SUTTERITE.

To the Editor of the Bee—Sir: It is being currently reported here that certain Sacramento citizens who were in the neighborhood of a Twenty-eighth-street brewery last night saw an airship carrying a minstrel show from New York to Sacramento. The story meets with little credence in this community, where we are all farmers. On Tuesday a fisherman living on the banks of Cat Fish Slough captured a sand hill crane, and after tying a Chinese lantern to one of its legs let it go. When last seen it was flying toward Sacramento at a speed of about fifty miles an hour, and must have passed over your city between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening. Please find out if anyone who saw the airship saw the sand hill crane, and oblige, / PRO BONO PUBLICO, / Nicolaus, Sutter County, Nov. 18th.

Dixon Tribune, 11/20/3. Sacramento.

Napa Register, 11/20, p. 4. White Lady appeared in Berlin—phantom heralds death of a Hohenzollern.

1896 November 20 (Fri.) Petaluma Daily Courier, p. 1c.

The Mystery Solved.

Wednesday evening at 7:05 many citizens saw a supposed bright meteor in the eastern heavens. It descended seemingly close to the earth and seemed to stop suddenly in midair, when it exploded with a loud report, the numerous fragments being of various colors. Sam Carstens of the Metropolitan hotel, who was driving his bus from the late train, says that the spectacle was a brilliant one. After reading the city papers many thought that the strange visitor was the mysterious air ship alleged to have been seen by Sacramento people the same evening, and the matter excited considerable interest.

Today a Courier reporter solved the problem. Frank Elliott and Jean Oliver found a paper balloon which was left over from last Fourth of July and sent it heavenward. They are yet enjoying the good joke they played on the credulous citizens, and say that the flying machine proved a greater success than they expected.

Sacramento Bee, 11/20/5. Aerial Investigators. / Trying to Solve the Problem of How Soon Men Will Fly. p. 1. Can't Be True, They Say. / San Francisco Has Caught the Air Ship Fever Now. / Freemasonry of Liars Suggests Prof. Davidson. / Weather Observer Hammon Says an Object Like That Which Is Said to

Have Swept Over Town Had No Brighter Prospects Than a Leaden Coffin. / (From the San Francisco Chronicle, 11/20/13).

1896 November 20 (Fri.) (Sacramento, CA, d.) Record-Union, p. 3.

HAVE YOU SEEN IT? / That is the Question Now—The Latest News From the Aerial Mystery.

There is at least one man left in Sacramento who really believes that an air-ship passed over Sacramento early Tuesday evening, and he did not even see the light. Further than this no telegraphic news has been received showing that such a machine ever reached Suisun.

Rumor had it yesterday, however, that such a ship really did exist, but that the men who worked it, quadruped fashion, gave out when a short distance beyond Rio Vista, and the contrivance came down in one of the sloughs of that section of the country. A farmer who was out early trying to bag poachers on his preserves, saw the hole left in the water, and is positive the ship is at the bottom of it.

Another story goes that a Solano County hunter saw the craft and emptied both barrels of his No. 2 bore into it, breaking a wing. His dog brought it in and it is now on the Sacramento market, but looks too tough to swallow.

The question oftenest asked throughout the town is, "Have you seen it?" and the stereotyped reply comes back, "No; but I saw a man who saw a man who said he saw a man whose aunt's uncle's cousin saw two moons while going home, both of which were wabbling."

The man who is alleged to have heard the chorus while the machine was doing the "Corbett duck," has put his remembering tank to work, and recalls that one line was "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me," and he now goes about mournfully whistling, "It Never Came Back." Another who heard the music declares the words to have been, "Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone," and the refrain was, "I Gave That Young Man a Fill."

Several men have been heard of who took the strange light for a forerunner of dire disaster, and immediately spliced the main brace at numerous joints in order to meet their fate with resignation.

These are some of the stories floating about concerning the aerial mystery, and "there are others." Still the citizen pays his money and takes his choice, and, as this is a free country, has a right to his opinion. The lunacy commission is taking a vacation now, so the danger is reduced to a minimum. The question yesterday was not "What was it?" but "Have you seen it?"

1896 November 20 (Fri.) (Sacramento, CA) Record-Union, p. 2.

AIR FANCIES. /

Considerable amusement and no little speculation has pervaded the community for the last three days concerning a supposed flying machine, which it is alleged passed over the city on Tuesday night, operated by four men, whose voices, say several witnesses, could be heard. Hundreds of people agree that a strange, strong light was seen floating in the heavens for half an hour, rising and falling, and moving slowly. But there appears to be but two or three who hold that they saw the machine, and but one of these gives any rational description of it.

The story goes that the machine was built near the city, and broke from its moorings while being experimented with, and that the riders were unable to control the direction of its movements. We take no stock in any of these stories for two sufficient reasons, namely, that no such machine could be built here or near here, and the matter be kept a profound secret; secondly, if any such machine came from anywhere else the news-gatherers would have learned of it; besides there is no reason why any inventor should be particularly secretive about such a thing. The truth certainly is that a strange light was seen slowly floating above the city and pursuing a rather erratic course. Beyond that there is nothing definite, and a light in the sky as described is to be accounted for in several rational ways, disassociated from any flying machine. People are very apt to, by the repetition of tales, to permit them to grow out of all proportion to the truth.

There was, we believe, no flying machine in the business. The most skilled enthusiasts in aerial transportation have been at work upon flying machines and navigable balloons for a century. In 1884 a flight of eight miles was successfully made by a machine carrying several people who had it under perfect control, and made it rise and fall at will. Many other tests of ability to navigate the air have been made, and some of them with fair success, but mostly with ill and sometimes with fatal results to the experimenters.

In later days the experimenters have nearly all settled down upon the principle of the aeroplane,

abandoning the use of inflated spheres to sustain the weight of the navigators. They are nearly all agreed that if man is to be floated in the air it will be done on the principle upon which the birds proceed to mount.

It will not do to laugh at the idea of aerial navigation. It has been accomplished in a small way; it may be made practical in a large way. In this day and age we should smile at scarce any of the efforts of man to overcome the laws of gravitation. But that there has been anything new invented and operated for aerial navigation in or near this city and the people kept in profound ignorance of it is absurd. Balloon flights we have had in plenty, and in them there is nothing novel.

No one went flying through the air on Tuesday night on a machine with a powerful electric light. Nor were the voices of the navigators heard. Those who think they heard them were deceived. Viewing the light above them as it passed along they might very easily associate sounds of the human voice heard near the locality of the floating light, whether it was that of a hot-air balloon, or was indeed a gas balloon sent up by some one, and which is not uncommon as an amusement.

On the basis of what is known, the practical joker has probably built the fanciful stories which filled the air of rumor and have led one San Francisco paper to give a picture of what the so-called air ship looked like, and of the means used to propel [it]. The light was seen; all else is fancy or a joke, or imagination and a joke combined.

1896 November 20 (Fri.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 1.

THAT PECULIAR NIGHT VISITANT / Many of Sacramento's Best Citizens Certain It Was an Airship. / Brilliancy of Its Light Caused Residents to Rush to their Windows. / Many Theories Concerning the Strange Phenomenon, but the Mystery Is Yet to Be Solved. /

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Nov. 19.—There have been as yet no new developments of a trustworthy character in this locality in regard to the mysterious aerial visitant which swept over this city on Tuesday evening, with the exception that the number of persons who saw its brilliant searchlight are daily growing more numerous, or rather in light of what has been published have less fear of public censure and less hesitancy in making their identity known.

There are residents on the outskirts of the city who declare that they received notice of the passing of the airship by having their apartments illuminated by the brilliancy of its electrical light, and rushing to their windows under the impression that some neighboring residence was ablaze saw the brilliant light moving through the air overhead. In the meantime almost the sole subject of conversation is the mysterious visitant, and the leading greeting is: "Have you seen the airship?"

Those who failed to catch a glimpse of this brilliant light still persist in regarding it rather in the shape of a hoax, and numerous stories have been circulated of toy balloons, birds with Chinese lanterns attached and similar ridiculous explanations of this strange phenomenon, but those who were eye-witnesses—and their names are legion—are strenuous in their declarations that this can by no means be a myth, but was an aerial vessel of some description.

Among these eye-witnesses there were several who were practical electricians, and who claim that in their judgment this light was of an electrical character, and they also claim that to produce a light of this size and brilliancy it would require at least one horsepower, and that would mean a vessel capable of sustaining half a ton weight for the light alone, and the one thing most of the witnesses to the phenomenon are positive about is that the light was white, like that shed by an arc lamp.

Weather Observer Barwick is at as much loss any anybody to account for the appearance in the sky. He says the color of a meteor would be affected by the density of the atmosphere through which it was darting, and on an evening like that of Tuesday, he believes, the light of such an aerial visitor would most likely be purplish, and in no event the extreme white of an arc lamp.

At all events there can be no possible, room for doubt that something extremely mysterious passed over this city, and its passage was viewed by hundreds of Sacramento's best citizens. This no one denies, and yet there are hundreds who laugh the idea to scorn that the secret of aerial navigation has been solved, yet wait in fear and trembling lest some authentic news be received of the existence of a veritable airship, and they find that the laugh has been turned upon themselves. /

ONE BELIEVER IN OAKLAND. / John Grieser Says the Secret of Aerial Navigation Is Solved.

OAKLAND, Cal, Nov. 19.—The account of the flying-machine which was seen over Sacramento Tuesday night has been read with great interest by one man, at least, in this city. John Grieser of 374 Twelfth street has hammered tacks into his shoes and studied the possibilities of making a flying-machine for many years. He has not rested at studying the problem, but has put much of his time during spare hours to the work of constructing something along the line of an aerial ship. It was only the fore part of August that he made a very successful trial of his machine. When seen by a Call representative he said:

"I was much interested in the article in to-day's Call and the picture that illustrates it. The man who designed that machine has the true idea of aerial navigation I believe. One must have a balloon of sufficient carrying or lifting capacity to support at least half of the weight to be carried and then means to navigate the air to do the balance. I am a firm believer in the success of man to navigate the air and am ready to accept the news that some one has at last succeeded as told in the story from Sacramento.

"I have no doubt but that some one in the country has been at work on a machine and after getting one that would work had been out for a ride, when he got too low and was discovered.

"If I could have had an opportunity to get out and try my models I should have had a successful machine before this time. When I did make an experiment out in the street at an early morning hour I managed to move myself about, but striking the wires broke my machine. It has not since been repaired.

"I first took to working on a machine three years ago from reading an article which quoted an English scientific gentleman who said it was a possibility to be solved. I have never had the assistance of any man or of any money to develop my models, and, with the exception of a boy, I do not allow any one to see what work I have done. He went and made up a big story about what he was doing and told it to a reporter some time since."

1896 November 20 (Fri.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 13.

MORE OF A HOAX THAN AN AIRSHIP. / THE SACRAMENTO ENIGMA. / PROFESSOR DAVIDSON A STRONG SKEPTIC. / Some Think That a Clever Kite Flyer Was Having Fun. /

Are there up in the sky four jolly and intrepid human travelers, paying their respects to Mars, singing quartets to Venus, and saluting the planets generally within hailing distance, or are the people of Sacramento affected with the disease known in polite society as "illuminated staggers?"

That is the question.

The flying machine, with its wonderful arc-light attachment, has not yet paid its respects to San Francisco. Its occupants have either decided, like some strolling actors, that this is a jay town, anyhow, and too materialistic to be regarded with a sight of anything so uncommon, or they have made up their minds to drop in at Yokohama or Sydney for a few hours before steering for this locality.

These dispatches from Sacramento created intense interest here in the mystery, and it was the principal topic of conversation on the streets all day yesterday. No matter how important the subject under discussion, business men would glance furtively at the sky every few moments and try to make their friends believe that they were simply looking at the weather. But the black oval speck with outstretched wings and mysterious wheels that they expected to see failed to show up above the horizon.

The police, who, when their duties become monotonous in the late night watches, are generally supposed to gaze steadily skyward, saw nothing in the nature of a moving light or a quarter-speed meteor yesterday morning. Up at headquarters they smiled disdainfully at the story and characterized it as a "sweet little fake," but nevertheless, when the night squads went out at 5:30 p.m., every man had about made up his mind to do a little amateur astronomy in addition to his other duties. They were not the only people infected with the fever, either. A smart peddler, who keeps strictly up to date, paraded Market street all afternoon with a bundle of cheap telescopes and a sign, "Watch out for the great New York air ship." He was sold out before nightfall.

Professor George Davidson is righteously indignant. When these wild-eyed stories confine themselves to mundane affairs he doesn't mind, but when they invade the heavens and interfere with the order of the stars he considers the affair a personal insult. "What do I think about it?" he said yesterday. "I think it's the outcome of a sort of freemasonry of liars. Half a dozen fellows have got together, sent up a balloon with some sort of an electric light attachment, and imagination has done the rest. It is a pure fake. Why, if I were to get up on top of the Chronicle tower and sing "Yankee Doodle" or the "Marseillaise," do you think anybody down on the street could hear me?"

"Just look at the story from that statement about the singing alone; it's enough to explode it. Then again, these illusionists declare that the machine had propellers on the sides. It was finally decided about ten years ago by expert aeronauts that no side mechanism of that kind could possibly help an air ship, but would, if anything, retard its progress. I expect a couple of thousand fools will be craning their necks and wearying their eyeballs to-night, looking through every kind of telescope and binocular that they can lay their hands on. I can tell you one thing, though, I am not going to be one of them."

Weather Observer Hammon thinks that the whole affair is a practical joke, played by some clever kite-flyer, who has attached a lantern with a powerful reflector to his kite, and dragged it over Sacramento. Hammon says that Maxim and Langley have long ago exploded the theory that anything but an aeroplane will fly, and he doesn't believe that an object such as has been described to be hovering over Sacramento

would have any more chance to keep itself above the ground than a leaden coffin.

1896 November 20 (Fri.) (San Jose) Evening News, p. 2.

NEWSPAPER ROMANCERS. /

A cock-and-bull story has been telegraphed from Sacramento and published in some of the San Francisco papers, regarding a flying machine, which, it was asserted was seen flying over that city last Tuesday night. It is related that quite a number of people saw this strange object, among them being a number of employes of street car lines, who happened to be out late. One San Francisco paper covers the item at great length and presents a picture of an air ship flying over the city of Sacramento.

The story doubtless originated in the brain of some ingenious newspaper reporter in Sacramento who has prepared the narrative with considerable care, going so far as to secure the co-operation of alleged witnesses, a comparatively easy matter, as there are many people who would "stand in" to support an improbable yarn of that kind, considering it a huge joke.

This fake is on a par with that attempted in this city several years ago by an enterprising reporter who wanted to manufacture news. His scheme was to have a suit of clothes, together with the complete outfit of a man's apparel, found upon the street, at an early hour in the morning, by the police. The wearing apparel was to be placed on the street by the reporter. The police would naturally pick up the garments and take them to the Police Office.

The reporter would then describe the finding of the clothes and call attention to the peculiar fact that the garments were in a condition with everything buttoned up, just as they would be if the wearer had suddenly evaporated. The romancer was then to go on and set forth a number of alleged scientific facts, and try to show that the wearer of the clothes had suddenly evaporated—vanished in the air. The scheme, however, was almost too elaborate to be feasible and was abandoned.

(Selma) Fresno County Enterprise, 20,4. Sacramento.

1896 November 20 (Fri.) (Woodland, CA) The Mail of Woodland, p. 2.

THAT SACRAMENTO FAKE. (ed.) /

The citizens of our neighboring city, Sacramento, are sorely perplexed and [us]ing their heads in vain endeavor to account for a strange aerial visitor that some of them, having unquestioned reputations for veracity and level-headedness, declare on their Bibles they saw plainly and heard distinctly among the clouds the other night. They aver and send abroad on the wires that some air motor sailed 2000 feet high over their city, with human voices aboard in high glee talking to each other while others played sweet music on stringed instruments. Its course was toward San Francisco, a city noted for its saintly inhabitants and a pure newspaper press. Thereupon the San Francisco artist emblazons the leading page of his paper with a real picture of the [fad] the Sacramentans played off on it. The scientists explain soberly that the unknown visitor was in reality a real air motor loaded with passengers and that it appeared on its trial trip in the night only for fear some scheming competitor for an exclusive heavenly right of way might catch onto the combination and appropriate all benefits.

All in all it is about the thinnest fake yet set afloat. The staid citizens of Woodland know better. Here it is no mystery or apparition, but well known to be either the second coming of the Messiah, or the promised visit of the angel Gabriel or Elijah of old returning from his trip to the skies. No, gentlemen fakirs of Sacramento, you may impose on the unsuspecting bay city people, but you can't fool the Woodland patriarchs.

NOVEMBER 21

1896 November 21 (Sat.) (Eureka, Calif.) Western Watchman, p. 3.

Singular Phenomenon. /

A curious light was seen over the entrance Thursday night at about half past six o'clock and was just over the bar. It lasted about 35 minutes. When first seen it was quite well up in the sky, and descending slowly, so slowly that at first the observers could scarcely tell if it moved. It settled slowly to nearly the water [lend], then ascended, then settled again and went behind a bank of fog, showing the silvery sheen

of light on the vapor as it passed out of sight. Those who saw the object say that it was evidently under control, moving up, down and side ways, or standing still apparently at will. The object did not move like one propelled by air currents and subject to them, but seemed to be perfectly controlled. The observers who saw it at South Park say that its size, compared with the light at Table Bluff was five or six times as large, and greater in volume, and when it went behind the fog bank it cast a light like that of the moon, so great was its power and volume. The whole matter is a mystery and no solution has yet been offered.

1896 November 21 (Sat.) Weekly Galt (Calif.) Gazette, p. 3.

IGNUS FATUUS, OR WHAT? / A Flying Dutchman or Some Other Phantom of Delight? /

Sacramento is mildly excited over a story of a Flying Dutchman or some other phantom vessel alleged to have been sailing the air last Tuesday evening. There are numbers of people, held to be reputable, who claim that they saw a moving body, lighted as if by electricity from a globe about twice the size of the ordinary arc globe, which glided through the air as if guided by human hands, and that they could hear singing and conversation of human voices and even distinguish the words. These folks aver that they are willing to swear to their statements on a stack of bibles as high as the shot tower at Hangtown Crossing. Whatever the appearance might have been—phantom, illusion, meteor, will o'the wisp—it is more or less credited in Sacramento and there are many theories in connection with it. The main talk is that it was a newly-invented flying machine, or air ship, out for a trial trip; though there are some who are so skeptical as to say that the letter "f" ought to be cut off from the word "flying." Certainly something unusual was seen, as the evidence is corroborative. Perhaps the apparition may have been a specimen of the genus *Anser Luminosis*, or phosphorescent goose, described in books on ornithology and which can be found in the Lodi public library, and the sounds heard may have been the quacking of the stray feathered aerial traveler, or it may have been a Lodi watermelon, inflated with natural gas and with a Jack o'Lantern tied to its tail. Some credulous people theorize that it was a fire balloon. There is a wag in Sacramento who is given to the habit of sending up these illuminated messengers and, on account of the haziness of the atmosphere, the illusion of an air ship was created in the minds of the spectators. Anyhow, the circumstance is refreshing, as it gives the good people of the Capitol City something to talk about other than the late election.

Petaluma Daily Courier, Nov. 21, p. 2c.

Some mischievous kid up in our mosquito-infested capital city turned loose a kite with a lantern attachment, last week, and the Sacramento Bee and San Francisco Call were scared into a panicky condition, and wrote up columns about the airships that pass in the night.

1896 November 21 (Sat.) Sacramento Bee, p. 4.

HOW THE AIR-SHIP STORY WAS RECEIVED. /

The Sacramento "voices in the sky" are probably the delayed echoes of those who "talked through their hats" during the campaign.—Stockton Independent. /

The Sacramento air-ship may have been an illusion, but all the same the air ship is coming.—San Francisco Call.

If the resident Sacramentan can see an air ship on a quiet night, what sort of sights will the legislator see when he strikes the town? —San Francisco Call. /

Now that the season is over for the sea serpent, there comes the announcement of a mysterious air ship that has been floating over Sacramento. It is too early in the season for the appearance of this bogle. When the Legislature meets, there may be a great many people up there who will see double, and others may have a wonderful obliquity of vision. The sea serpent never appeared off the Atlantic coast when there was any dearth of whiskey. The air ship or jack-o'-lantern cannot be verified properly without a liberal use of stimulant. The conditions may be more favorable for such a view in Sacramento than anywhere wise. It is not a matter of surprise that this spirit in the air should have been announced. The wonder is that it should have been seen so early in the season.—Oakland Tribune.

All in all, it is about the thinnest fake yet set afloat. The staid citizens of Woodland know better. Here it is no mystery or apparition, but well known to be either the second coming of the Messiah or the promised visit of the angel Gabriel or Elijah of old returning from his trip to the skies. No, gentlemen fakirs of Sacramento, you may impose on the unsuspecting bay city people, but you can't fool the Woodland patriarchs.—Woodland Mail.

The Sacramento and San Francisco dailies are giving up much space to accounts of that aerial craft said to have passed over Sacramento a few nights ago. Maybe it was the "advance agent of prosperity," so much talked of by Republican papers but invisible to all others. Anyhow, they both seem to have been of a decidedly mystical nature.--Napa Journal. /

We have always been told that constant use of Sacramento spirits would produce almost anything to a vivid imagination. That they should seize several hundred people on the same night and in the same way and evolve an air ship calls for an investigation of the recent distillery methods.—Marysville Appeal.

1896 November 21 (Sat.) (Sacramento, CA, d.) Record-Union, p. 4.

That Bogie in the Air.

The following appears in an exchange and attempts to throw ridicule on the airship that several Sacramentans claim to have seen:

Now that the season is over for the sea serpent, there comes the announcement of a mysterious airship that has been floating over Sacramento. It is too early in the season for the appearance of this bogie. When the Legislature meets there may be a great many people up there who will see double, and others may have a wonderful obliquity of vision. The sea serpent never appeared off the Atlantic coast when there was any dearth of whisky. The airship or jack o'lantern cannot be verified properly without a liberal use of stimulants. The conditions may be more favorable for such a view in Sacramento than anywhere else. It is not a matter of surprise that this spirit in the air should have been announced. The wonder is that it should have been seen so early in the season.

1896 November 21 (Sat.) (San Andreas, Calif.) Calaveras Prospector, p. 3.

It Was Seen Here.

The mysterious air ship which created such a sensation in Sacramento by sailing over that city last Tuesday night, was also seen high up in the air, but far to the north of San Andreas, by Misses Hannah Harney and Ella Potter on Sunday evening, the 15th. The two young ladies were standing out at the front gate when a large bright light appeared in the northern sky. The light which at first seemed about the size of a saucer, was watched about ten minutes. It moved toward the east and kept growing smaller and smaller, as if receding, till it finally disappeared entirely. They mentioned the fact to different people and found others who had also seen the strange phenomenon, which could not be accounted for until the appearance of the articles in the city papers. This must have been the searchlight from the same aerial vessel that passed over Sacramento.

1896 November 21 (Sat.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 3.

THAT AIRSHIP AGAIN. / Sacramento People Once More See Mysterious Lights Passing Over the City.

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Nov. 20.—Unless scores of residents in the eastern portion of the city have gone suddenly daft the mysterious aerial visitant which passed over the city Tuesday night is still haunting this locality, and people here are becoming more and more convinced that it is an airship of some kind, which is making nightly trial trips through the surrounding heavens.

Men whose veracity cannot be doubted declare that the mysterious electrical light repassed the city far to the northward, going in a northeasterly direction, as though to the point from which it first came. This evening several persons declare that they plainly saw the mysterious lights moving through the air at a great distance from the earth, and they declare that from their movement they must have been attached to some aircraft. They at one time moved directly into the wind and again started off at various tangents.

To-night's reports have as yet not been verified, but that the mysterious lights repassed the city, going northeast, on Wednesday night cannot be gainsaid, and the belief grows apace that some fortunate mortal has solved the mystery of aerial travel, has constructed his vessel in some quiet spot and is making a thorough test of its capacities before presenting it to the view of an incredulous public.

1896 November 21 (Sat.) San Francisco Call, p. 8.

GUN AND GAME. / First-Class Duck Shooting Can Now Be Had—Up in a Balloon. /...

William J. Ahern, president of the Sportsmen's Protective Association, has thrown a light on the mysterious balloon or aerial flying ship that was seen passing over the city of Sacramento one night recently. While conversing with some members of the association last evening, Mr. Ahern incidentally remarked that it would not be many moons when local sportsmen will have an opportunity of shooting wild game without committing a trespass or passing under huge signs notifying hunters to keep off the mud.

"Now this balloon business is all right," remarked the eagle-eyed president, "and what a surprise we will give the Cordelia Club boys when we will anchor our flying-ship over a favorite canvasback pond and commence pumping lead on the backs of those delicious birds.

"I can assure you, gentlemen, that we will get around the law all right unless the Supreme Court decides that the air immediately over the lands of the preserve clubs is private property. Of course in that event we might just as well give up all idea of shooting, but we will wait and see how matters go. This airship is all right, but I am not at liberty to state anything concerning the flying puzzle until the machine is adjudged perfect by the inventor."

1896 November 21 (Sat.) Sausalito (Calif.) News p. 3.

San Rafael News.

A bright light was observed Saturday evening on the summit of Mt. Tamalpais, and much curiosity was excited. It was a huge bonfire in celebration of the opening of the hotel at the terminus of the Scenic Railway.

Vacaville Reporter, Nov. 21, p. 4. Suisan. Did you see the stars fall?

NOVEMBER 22

1896 November 22 (Sun.) Los Angeles Times, p. 29.

FLYING MACHINE AGAIN. [ed.]

The wonderful flying machine, like Dunham, the San Jose murderer, seems to be capable of appearing at widely separated places within short intervals of time. Wednesday its reported appearance created great excitement at Sacramento and was the subject to which was devoted several columns of space in a San Francisco paper. Now comes the report that it was seen flying over the home this morning. It had an electric searchlight, so the rumor has it, underneath and its occupants were heard in conversation. Whether the language was Volapuk, down east Yankee or that of the Fiji Islands could not be discerned. A member of the night watch of the home guard was said to be the observer, but the report was the subject of so much jest that early in the day he declined to have anything further to say about it. The strange appearance is said to have been just before daybreak. Certain it is the mysterious craft is a matter of common talk today among members of the home.

1896 November 22 (Sun.) (Sacramento, CA) Record-Union, p. 12.

ONE WAS SEEN IN NEW YORK. / Something Similar to the Sacramento "What-Was-It?" / The Alleged Flying Machine Was Probably What is Known as the "Ignis Fatuus." /

Incidental to the mysterious aerial visitor that sailed so gracefully over the city on Tuesday evening last, and which has caused so much speculation as to whether it was a flying machine, a paper balloon or a stray meteor, the following from the New York "World" of the 16th may be of interest to some of our readers. It is contained in a dispatch from Savannah, N.Y., and is headed, "Angelic Vision, or Paper Balloon? - A Floating Phenomenon Seen by a Score of Citizens in Several Wayne County Villages." The dispatch reads:

"In this Wayne County village and in the neighboring town of Butler a vision, said to be that of an angel, has been vouchsafed to fully a score of citizens, all of whom admit the fact, though reluctantly.

"The vision was seen November 1st, but not until this week did the phenomenon become generally known.

"Landlord Hutch Newton of the Newton House, in this village, was the first to see the alleged angel.

It was then floating in the air at a height of about 300 feet, and seemed about a quarter of a mile away. The figure was larger than an ordinary man, had the traditional wings, which were motionless, and wore a shining white robe. It was inclined at an angle of about forty-five degrees towards the northeast, in which direction it was apparently drifting with the wind. Its hair, which was long and of a golden color, stood out behind. One foot was slightly drawn up, in the familiar attitude of artistically conceived angels.

"Mr. Newton said nothing of the vision for more than a week, fearing ridicule, but another observer mentioning the sight in his hotel, he acknowledged having seen it. Others who saw the thing are Ernest Everhart of South Butler, and James Pritchard of Slyburgh, and there are said to be fully fifteen others who earlier admitted it, but have since recanted.

"The figure drifted a distance of about eight miles, and was last seen at twilight in Butler, near the Cayuga County line. One observer who saw it through field glasses contends that it was made of paper, inflated with gas, and this theory is generally accepted by the more intelligent, though the superstitiously inclined shake their heads."

Of course the strange visitor seen by the New Yorkers on Sunday night last was not the same that was seen here on Tuesday night, as the latter traveled so slow that it was in sight for more than a half-hour. But as that was about the time the "shower" of meteors was due, it is quite likely that other places than Wayne County, N.Y, and Sacramento County, Cal., were favored by wandering meteors.

Three weeks ago, or thereabouts, the "Record-Union" announced a similar visitation. On that occasion a ball of light (not of fire) came from the west, apparently only a few hundred feet above the earth, and traveled in a straight line across the sky north of the city, finally disappearing in the northeast. As it passed opposite the city, leaving a line of light in its wake, it separated into several fragments, or balls, one connected with the other by a line of light.

Undoubtedly the light seen here last Tuesday and the one just referred to were of the same nature, as well as the one seen in New York, but whether they were phosphorescent bodies of the "ignis fatuus" order or shooting stars is mere conjecture. The former is not an uncommon thing. Webster thus describes the "ignis fatuus":

"Fatuus, foolish; so called in allusion to its tendency to mislead travelers. A phosphorescent light that appears in the night over marshy grounds, supposed to be occasioned by the decomposition of animal or vegetable substances., or by some, inflammable gas; popularly called, also 'will-o'-the-wisp'—a misleading influence, a decoy."

Fresno Morning Republican, 11/22/p.1. The Arsp Exists (SF).

p. 2. The Chronicle says that if it weren't an airship with an electric light that hovered over the state capitol at Sacramento it might have been the ghost of Diogenes with his lantern. But is it reasonable to suppose that the ghost of Diogenes with his lantern would be wasting time haunting around the state capitol?

24,1. Collins; p.2 Fake sublime in its conception and magnificent in its execution.

25/1. People gone daft—fire ball (SF).

San Diego Union, 11/22/1. His Machine Flies (Collins).

1896 November 22 (Sun.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 13.

SAW THE MYSTIC FLYING LIGHT / Oaklanders Who Believe an Airship Hovered Over Them. / Say That They Saw a Dark Body Above the Gleam. / It Was Headed for San Francisco and Seemed About to Come to Earth. /

Oakland Office San Francisco Call, / 908 Broadway, Nov. 21.

Some one must be operating an airship in this portion of the State. Twice within the past six weeks it has been seen by reliable residents of Oakland, and on each occasion it has presented the same appearance.

Six weeks ago a young lady was riding a wheel on Telegraph avenue, when she saw a strange-looking object in the sky. It carried a powerful headlight, sufficiently strong to send out long bright rays into the darkness. It appeared to be going in a westerly direction and seemed to be gradually descending as it disappeared over St. Mary's College. She reported the affair to her brother, who is a motorman on the cemetery branch of the Piedmont road.

Last night a little after 5 o'clock, as a crowded car was going out toward Piedmont, the attention of the passengers was attracted to a peculiar-looking contrivance high up in the sky. The most peculiar feature of it was a powerful headlight and another light which seemed to be in the bottom of the machine and to shine directly on the earth. It came into view from the direction of East Oakland, passed over Piedmont, and according to the story of the passengers seemed to descend in such a manner as to indicate

that it would land somewhere in San Francisco.

Many of the passengers took up their morning newspapers to-day expecting to see a full description of the peculiar object that they had seen so plainly, and were surprised and disappointed to find no report whatever of it.

They were so convinced that it must have landed across the bay that some of them telephoned to San Francisco last night and made inquiries regarding it. As nothing was known of it, it is presumed that it must have changed course and landed somewhere else, for nothing can persuade those who saw it that it was not a genuine airship under full control.

All those who saw this strange object agree in its description and declare that it closely resembles the illustration that appeared in The Call last Thursday of the airship that scores of people witnessed as it passed over Sacramento last Wednesday night. Some of them distinctly saw the propelling arms and declare that they were in motion, but all are positive that the machine was brilliantly lighted, and that the lower light shed a large arc on the earth as it passed over, while the headlight could be seen for a great distance ahead of the machine.

One of the most mystified observers of the airship was Charles H. Ellis, the armorer of Companies A and F. Mr. Ellis is a middle-aged man and very deliberate in his manner of expression, and one not likely to be easily deceived. He declared this evening that he was as skeptical as a man could be when he first read about the Sacramento airship. He also declared that he had no alternative but to believe his own eyesight.

"I was going home to my dinner about half-past 5 last night," he said, "and was in the neighborhood of Twenty-fourth street and New Broadway, when I saw a strange-looking thing in the sky. It was coming from the eastward and at first I could see nothing but a bright light. When I first saw it the two lights appeared to be one and I thought it was a brilliant meteor. It was getting dusk, but the sky was clouded and just dark enough to permit any one to see plainly. The sky was sufficiently dark to make a background which would render any such object visible.

"As it came nearer I could see that there was some dark object along with the light. When it was nearly overhead I could clearly distinguish that it somewhat resembled a balloon traveling end on, with a bright light ahead, another one beneath it, and with what appeared to be wings both before and behind the light. It was at a great height above the earth, probably a thousand feet, but not so high as to make it impossible to distinguish what it was. I did not want to believe that it was an airship, as I had regarded the previous report of one in the light of a joke. This time, however, I had no alternative. I had to believe what I saw.

"As soon as it passed over St. Mary's College, it appeared to descend gradually, but regularly, as though under perfect control, and it disappeared in the direction of San Francisco. Of course it was too dark and the machine was too far away to distinguish anything like people or to hear any sounds such as were heard in Sacramento. But there is no doubt in my mind that it was an airship supplied with electric lights and well manned."

Another witness to the visit of the airship is Selby Yost, a motorman of the Piedmont road and a member of the Oakland Guard. He was a little behind time and was taking his car toward Piedmont, trying to recover the few minutes he was behind. As he passed Thirtieth street, a little boy stood in the road and cried, "Jee whiz, what's that?" The passengers heard it and immediately looked at the direction in the sky toward which the boy was pointing. They had no difficulty in seeing the airship.

"When I looked ahead," said Mr. Yost to-day, "I was mystified, and I may as well confess I was. I didn't like to admit to myself that I had suddenly gone crazy, but really for a moment I did wonder if my senses had deserted me. The passengers all reached out to look overhead, and those inside wanted to see what those outside were gazing at; so when they requested me to stop the car that they might all look I was practically forced to oblige them. They got out in the road and looked up at the airship, the most surprised crowd I ever saw in my life. There it was, sure enough, right overhead, and traveling on at a good rate, with its light blazing away, and the most uncanny-looking thing I ever saw.

"Airship or anything else, it was the most remarkable-looking object, and I am at a loss now to convince myself that I actually saw it. It was altogether a wonderful sight, and nobody could have ever made me believe that I would ever see such a thing. It was perfectly clear, and not only I but all the passengers saw it and watched it till it disappeared. I thought it must have landed across the bay, and I was somewhat surprised this morning to see that no mention was made of it in the papers. I would really like to have that thing found, so that I could satisfy myself as to how it worked, for a more interesting thing I have never seen."

Miss Hagstrom, who resides on Telegraph avenue, saw the same object about six weeks ago. The feature that impressed her most was the bright light which she distinctly saw. On returning home, she told her brother of what she had seen, but nothing more was thought of it until she read recently that a similar

object had been seen in another part of the State.

Charles Hagstrom, the brother of the young lady who witnessed this queer object in the sky, is also in the employ of the Piedmont and Mountain View Railways.

"When my sister first told me what she had seen I treated it as a joke," he said this evening, "and placed little credence in her story, believing that she had seen nothing more mysterious than a falling star or meteor. When I heard the same thing had been seen elsewhere, last week, and heard again last night of what was seen in this part of town, I am now convinced that my sister saw the same thing. I have talked to several people to-day who witnessed the object last night, and they are all confident that it was nothing more nor less than a genuine airship."

W.J. Rodda and his wife, who reside at a grocery store at 2042 Broadway, were also witnesses to the strange aerial visitor.

"When we first saw it," said Mrs. Rodda to-night, "we thought it was a balloon, and if it were not for the bright light I should still be inclined to think it was a peculiarly shaped balloon, but I never knew of a balloon to carry bright lights and travel at nighttime the way that did. I could not see any fans myself, but others say that they most undoubtedly saw the propellers which sent the thing along. As it passed over it angled downward, and if it kept on in the same direction it should have landed somewhere across the bay. I at once concluded that it was the same machine that had been seen in Sacramento. I believe that airships will be brought to perfection, and I wouldn't be the least bit surprised to hear that some one had already built a practical machine of that kind and was operating with it in this neighborhood."

Many of the passengers on Yost's car live out at Piedmont, and all are of the opinion that they saw a real airship.

An Oakland artist who crosses to San Francisco every day said this evening that the airship was seen from Golden Gate Park yesterday afternoon. "I was coming home last night," he said, "in company with a friend who had been out to Golden Gate Park. He told me that he and others had seen an airship during the evening and that it closely resembled the picture of the one published in *The Call*. He said that they tried to explain it by all kinds of means, but they came to the conclusion that it was the same machine. It was dusk when they saw it and the remarkable brilliancy of the lights on it attracted their attention. I shouldn't have thought any more of it, but to-day in this city I heard several people discussing it."

It is the prevalent opinion that some one in Alameda or neighboring counties has solved the problem of flying in the air, and has been for some weeks putting his experiment to a practical test. /

SAILED HIGH OVERHEAD. / Some Kind of Air Craft Seen by a Man Near Tulare.

TULARE, Cal., Nov. 21.—That airship is cavorting through the atmosphere that overhangs this vicinity. D.H. Risdon, who was working in an orchard near Tagus, four miles north of this place, sighted a mysterious object passing over at a considerable elevation yesterday afternoon.

A tramp was near at the time, and remarked that he never saw a balloon sail against the wind. But while the object overhead seemed to be sailing into the teeth of the wind, it may have found an opposite current in an upper stratum.

It was passing to the northwest and Risdon declares it was like an immense sheet spread out in the air. It soon passed out of sight. Risdon had not previously read or heard of the strange visitor said to have been seen at Sacramento, and as his reputation for veracity is excellent his story is generally believed.

[Pic: The Mysterious Flying Light That Hovered Over St. Mary's College, Oakland, and Then Started for San Francisco. It Is Exactly Like that Described by Sacramentans, and Similar to the Cut Published a Few Days Ago in "The Call" From a Description Furnished by One Who Saw It.]

1896 November 22 (Sun) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 36.

A LAWYER'S WORD FOR THAT AIRSHIP. / George D. Collins Says It Flies. / IT HAILS FROM OROVILLE. / Safely Housed Now Near San Francisco. / The Attorney Says He Has Seen the Queer Craft and Promises an Exhibition.

The mystery of the airship which has been amusing the State and puzzling some worthy citizens of Sacramento has made a change of base and now there are plenty of reputable people in and about San Francisco ready to make oath that they have seen the strange thing in the heavens and that in appearance and motion it was identical with the ship of dazzling lights and buzzing machinery which menaced a church spire at the capital.

More than that, there is a San Francisco attorney, George D. Collins, who asserts that the airship exists, that the inventor is his client, that the strange craft sailed without mishap from Oroville to San Francisco, that it did pass over Sacramento on its way to the bay, and that within a few days this invention,

which is the solution of one of the world's oldest and toughest problems, will be navigated in daylight, so that all San Francisco may see it, and that it will circle and rise and sink over the central part of the city.

And yet there are wicked skeptics who chuckle and make rude jests about an epidemic of humbug, and who poke all manner of fun at the good people who think they saw an airship in the sky.

Attorney Collins, who occupies offices on the second floor of the Crocker building, was seen about the matter at his home in Alameda last night. He said:

"It is perfectly true that there is at last a successful airship in existence, and that California will have the honor of bringing it before the world. I have known of the affair for some time and am acting as attorney for the inventor. He is a very wealthy man, who has been studying the subject of flying machines for fifteen years, and who came here seven years ago from the State of Maine in order to be able to perfect his ideas away from the eyes of other inventors. During the last five years he has spent at least \$100,000 on his work. He has not yet secured his patent, but his application is now in Washington. I cannot say much about the machine he has perfected, because he is my client, and besides he fears that the application will be stolen from the Patent Office if people come to know that his invention is practicable.

"I saw the machine one night last week at the inventor's invitation. It is made of metal, is about 150 feet long, and is built to carry fifteen persons. There was no motive power as far as I could see; certainly no steam.

"It is built on the aeroplane system and has two canvas wings eighteen feet wide and a rudder shaped like a bird's tail. The inventor climbed into the machine and after he had been moving some of the mechanism for a moment I saw the thing begin to ascend from the earth, very gently. The wings flapped slowly as it rose and then a little faster as it began to move against the wind. The machine was under perfect control all the time.

"When it got to a height of about ninety feet the inventor shouted to me that he was going to make a series of circles and then descend. He immediately did so, beginning by making a circle about 100 yards in diameter, and gradually narrowing in till the machine got within thirty feet of the ground. It then fell straight down, very gracefully and touched the earth as lightly as a falling leaf.

"The reports from Sacramento the other night were true. It was my client's airship that the people saw. It started from Oroville, in Butte county, that evening and flew sixty-five miles in a straight line directly over Sacramento. After running up and down once or twice over the capital my friend came right on a distance of another seventy miles and landed at a spot on this side of the bay, where the machine now lies, guarded by three men. The inventor found, during this trial trip, that his ship had a wave-like motion that made him seasick. It is this defect that he is now remedying.

"In another six days the trouble will be done away with, and it is then his intention to immediately give the people of San Francisco a chance to see his machine. He will fly right over the city and cross Market street a dozen times. I cannot tell you where he is housing the ship or what his name is, as I am under a pledge of secrecy, but it is a fact that the machine does its work perfectly, and will astound the world and revolutionize travel when it has been displayed before the public. The inventor can fly with it to New York to-morrow if he wants to.

"He has forsaken the ideas of Maxim and Langley entirely in building the machine, and has constructed it on an absolutely new theory."

The following dispatch from the Oakland office of the "Chronicle," received last night, would seem to indicate that the inventor has removed the defects spoken of by Mr. Collins and that, before giving his public exhibition in this city, he has still further tested the merits of his machine on the other side of the bay:

OAKLAND, November 21.—That Oakland had a visit last night from the mysterious airship seen at Sacramento, a score of reputable witnesses are prepared to swear. They do not pretend to describe it nor to account for its presence, but they are certain that the heavens had an unusual tenant last evening. A dozen passengers on a New Broadway car watched its flight from a point near St. Mary's College, and while the testimony they offer appears incredible there seems but little room for a mistake. According to their story the winged machine came from the north and seemed headed for San Francisco. The fact that it appeared to slow down and gradually descend strengthened that belief. Some of the fortunate witnesses seemed to think that possibly it was a toy balloon set off by boys, but that theory was disposed of almost at once by the presence of the monster light on the flying device.

Selby Yost was the motorman of the car and he got fully five minutes' view of the mystery. "I don't know just what to think about this matter," he said to-day, "but I will say that I saw something in the sky. I do not run on the cemetery division of the line, but was there last evening. It must have been about 5:30 o'clock and we had a heavy load of passengers. We were late and were running to make up time. There was a boy riding on the outside of the car and he suddenly drew my attention to the heavens. There above us was some moving object with a very bright light attached. Some of the other passengers looked at it

and finally near St. Mary's College I stopped the car for a few minutes to let them all get a look at it. I thought at first that it might be a small balloon sent up by some boys, but could not explain the presence of the light on that theory. The thing seemed to lower as it passed over the city and my impression was that it was moving toward San Francisco. It is all very mysterious and puzzling to me and seems almost too foolish to talk about, but we certainly saw some moving object high in the heavens and it seemed to be under control."

C.H. Ellis, armorer of Company A, was a passenger on the car on his way home to dinner, and he is able to describe the strange ship more accurately than Yost. "I have not the slightest doubt as to what I saw last evening," he said today. "I was very skeptical about this matter when I read about it in the papers, but am pretty well convinced now. I was a passenger on the car with Yost last night, and when my attention was drawn to the object in the air I looked at once. It was getting dark, but the light on the airship was very brilliant, and I thought that I could make out a movement of wings or propellers. It is hard to say how high it was, but it seemed to be miles in the air. It came from a northerly direction, and seemed to be going toward San Francisco. I immediately thought of the machine which passed over Sacramento, and came to the conclusion that the inventor had decided to come to San Francisco and tell his secret. I was surprised when I looked at the papers this morning and found nothing in them. I cannot give you any idea of the size of the machine it was so far away."

Mr. and Mrs. W.J. Rodda of Thirtieth street and New Broadway saw the mysterious aerial visitor also. Mr. Rodda is foreman of the Amador marble yard at the cemetery, and his wife looks after a grocery store which they own on New Broadway. Mrs. Rodda talked about the matter very freely to-day. "Of course we saw it," she said, when asked about the matter. "I was on the street with my husband and our attention was called to a light in the northern sky. At first we thought that it was a balloon, but later, when it got closer, we saw that it was not. It was larger and longer than a balloon, I am sure, for although it was too dark to make the thing out very well, I could see that much. We had read of the mysterious object seen in the air at Sacramento, and at once came to the conclusion that we were seeing the same thing. It passed right over us, and we got the best possible view of it. No, there can be no mistake about it.

Charles Hegstrom, a motorman on the Piedmont line, tells a strange story bearing on the same matter. He says that some weeks ago his sister came home from an evening bicycle ride with the statement that she had seen some mysterious thing with a bright light attached to it in the sky. She said that she was at the corner of Twenty-sixth street and Telegraph avenue and got a full, clear view of it. The members of the family were sure that the young lady must be mistaken, and the idea seemed so utterly ridiculous that it was hardly discussed. When they read the dispatches from Sacramento early this week they began to think that possibly the girl was not mistaken after all.

San Francisco, too, has been seeing funny things after dark.

On Friday night shortly after dusk the people of the Mission saw a mysterious light near Twin Peaks. A crowded Valencia street car was stopped at Sixteenth street to give the passengers a chance to view the aerial light. It is said to have appeared like an immense arc light, surrounded by a long, dark body, which showed a light edge. The light was very bright, say the witnesses, and was not a ray, such as comes from the searchlight at the Chutes. The light seemed to be moving slowly over Twin Peaks and finally disappeared. It was reported that it was seen again in the same place last night. An unverified report came from the Mission that a huge bird-like machine had been seen high in the air to the southward about 4 P.M. yesterday.

Night Clerk McGovern of the California Hotel was one of fifty persons who saw a most peculiar light the night before the papers were published that contained the story of the airship at Sacramento. His attention was called to it by the firemen of engine 2, and he watched it three hours. It was first seen over the Mills building a long distance off and high in the air. It appeared to be three lights, or rather one long, narrow, white light with a red center. It was moving slowly to the southward.

The first that was heard of this airship business was on Tuesday night, when dispatches were received from Sacramento telling how something marvelous had been seen in the heavens by a number of citizens.

Those who said they saw the strange craft said it was a cigar or egg shaped affair and had at least four occupants. The searchlight carried by the alleged ship attracted great attention and caused the mystery to be more talked of than anything else in the Capital City on Wednesday and Thursday.

R.L. Lowry of Sacramento also said he saw the ship, which to him appeared as an oblong mass, propelled by fanlike wheels operated by four men, who worked as if on bicycles, giving the machine motion against the wind. E. Wenzel and J.H. Vogel said they saw the machine moving off toward this city and heard the voices singing. T.P. de Long and G.C. Snyder also declared that they saw the vessel, while F.E. Briggs, a motorman, stopped his car that the passengers might see the ship, which was so high up that they could only discern its shape dimly. Dozens of persons were found who said they saw and watched

the light, which rose and fell and finally disappeared in the direction of this city.
[Pic.—George D. Collins, the San Francisco Lawyer, Who Says the Sacramento Airship Is No Hoax.]

1896 November 22 (Sun. morn.) Stockton Daily Independent, p. 1.

THAT SKY SAILOR / A San Francisco Attorney Says It's a Fact. / It Flew From Oroville to San Francisco. / He Says the Sacramento Stories Are True, as the Machine Soared Over the Capital. / Special to the Independent.

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 21.—The mystery of the airship which has been puzzling some worthy citizens of Sacramento for several days past has made a change of base and now there are plenty of reputable people in and about San Francisco ready to make oath that they have seen the strange thing in the heavens. A San Francisco attorney, George D. Collins, asserts that the airship exists, that the inventor is his client, that the strange craft sailed without mishap from Oroville to San Francisco, that it passed over Sacramento on its way to the bay and, that within a few days, the invention which is the solution of one of the world's oldest and toughest problems will be navigated in daylight, so that all San Francisco may see it, and that it will circle and rise and sink over the central part of the city.

Collins said tonight: "It is perfectly true that there is at last a successful airship in existence, and California will have the honor of bringing it before the world. The inventor is a very wealthy man who has been studying the subject of flying machines for fifteen years, and came here seven years ago from the State of Maine in order to be able to perfect his ideas away from the eyes of other inventors. During the last five years he has spent at least \$100,000 on his work. He has not yet secured his patent, but his application is now in Washington. I cannot say much about the machine he has perfected, because he is my client.

"I saw the machine one night last week at the inventor's invitation. It is made of metal, is about 150 feet long and is built to carry fifteen persons. It is built on the aeroplane system and has two canvass wings eighteen feet wide and a rudder shaped like a bird's tail. The inventor climbed into the machine and after he had been moving some of the mechanism for a moment, I saw the thing begin to ascend from the earth very gently. The wings flapped slowly as it rose and then a little faster as it began to move against the wind. The machine was under perfect control all the time.

"My client's airship started from Oroville in Butte county, in the evening and flew sixty-five miles in a straight line directly over Sacramento. After running up and down once or twice over the capital my friend came right on a distance of another seventy-five miles and landed on a spot on this side of the bay, where the machine now lies, guarded by three men. The inventor found, during this trial trip, that his ship had a wave-like motion and made him seasick. It is this defect that he is now remedying.

"In another six days it is his intention to give the people of San Francisco a chance to see his machine. He will fly right over the city and cross Market street a dozen times.

"The inventor has forsaken the ideas of Maxim and Langley entirely in building the machine, and has constructed it on an absolutely new theory."

[If "Tom Collins" had been quoted as authority for this story it would have sounded better to those who knew the name in the East as that of Joe Mulhattan's predecessor in Munchausenisms.]

NOVEMBER 23

1896 November 23 (Fri.) Daily Colusa (Calif.) Sun, p. 3.

11/23,3. Leon, who is building a flying machine in Hoboken, N.Y., says he will fly to Calif, in it. He expects to complete his machine this week.

24,3. The airship or craft seen at Sacramento returned, passing to the northeast. There is now little doubt that some genius has discovered aerial navigation and is making a test of his invention before letting out the secret.

Los Angeles Record, 11/23/4. Collins.

Los Angeles Times, 11/23/2. Sacramento's Visitation.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) (Eureka, Calif.) Daily Humboldt Standard, p. 4b.

The Sacramento people claim that an airship with a great electric searchlight passed over that city last Tuesday evening. Some of the citizens claim that they heard men in the airship talking. It is probable that some meteoric body passed over the city similar to the one we saw several weeks ago which seemed to come from the west and sweep slowly across the horizon toward the east. This was a most remarkable meteoric body. It looked like a succession of electric lights three in number and left a trail of light behind. It must have gone over Blocksburg as we had a letter from that place describing it. However it is not impossible that some countryman has invented an airship and was giving his neighbors an evening ride. It will yet come to pass,

Los Angeles Record, 11/23/4. A Practical Airship. / Collins, Oroville.

Los Angeles Times, 11/23/2. Sacramento's Visitor (white light believed to be that of an airship; mysterious parties, Oroville: parties who could give information if they would; deny knowing anything about an airship, but evidently are seeking to avoid publicity.)

1896 November 23 (Mon. eve.) Oakland (CA) Enquirer, p. 1.

THAT AIR SHIP. / It is Now Supposed to be in This Vicinity.

The playground of that alleged airship has been transferred from Sacramento to Oakland and various residents of this city claim to have seen mysterious lights in the sky last night. Thus far, that is all that anybody, with one exception, pretends to have seen. That exception is an attorney, George D. Collins, of Alameda, who says he was visited by a mysterious man a few days ago, who explained that he had perfected a flying machine and desired to protect his invention by a patent before making his discovery public. Collins does not give any details, or pretend that he rendered the mysterious stranger any service in the matter but says he saw the machine, that it is 150 feet long, that it is operated by huge wings and that the inventor "can fly with it to New York to-morrow if he wants to."

Oroville is fixed upon as the birthplace of this airship but the Orovillians repudiate the honor and will have none of it.

p.4. What seems to cast doubt upon the great air ship story is not so much that it flew from Oroville to San Francisco, or that it is in that city and can't be found, or that a craft 150 feet long was built in a small country place unknown to all the people who pay such close attention to their neighbors' affairs, or that it is a lawyer who vouches for the truthfulness of the tale—not one of these circumstances would wholly discredit the narrative; but then—"there are others." For one thing, the air ship has been seen in too many places. Instead of merely poising its gauzy wings over Sacramento, in an air line flight from Oroville to San Francisco, the strange craft has been seen sailing the heavens over the southern end of the San Joaquin valley and in several other localities equally distant. Still, this would not discourage us, if they did not have the air ship in too many places at the same time. We might have believed that it sailed up and down and all around the State, but when they claim that it was in some of these other places at the same hour when it was wafting itself over the peaceful hills of Piedmont, overstrained credulity lets go with a snap, and we are ready to admit that somebody has been faking.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) Oakland Tribune, p. 1.

FLOATING IN THE AIR. / The Mysterious Bark Is Seen by Many Reputable Oaklanders. / ALL THE STORIES COINCIDE. / It Was Plainly Visible About 7 O'clock Last Night. / MANY RUMORS ARE AFLOAT. / Attorney Collins' Story Is Believed by His Friends. /

That a huge airship has been hovering over Oakland for the last few nights has in the minds of many been conclusively proven. A number of persons whose integrity is unquestionable have seen the strange navigator of the air and this number includes many whose skepticism has been pronounced.

Last evening at about 7:30 o'clock, the passengers on an Alameda car were startled by the sight of a brilliant stream of light high in the heavens off in the direction of Haywards. The passengers distinctly saw the outlines of an airship and watched its maneuvers high in the skies.

The ship resembles a huge bird in its outlines and seemed to rise and fall in its course. A light streamed from the head of the ship, throwing a white stream of light for several hundred yards.

As the outlines of the airship were plainly discerned, the passengers in the street car became greatly excited. The phenomenon had first been noted by a man who had been idly watching the heavens. As

soon as he perceived the light, he attracted the attention of the other passengers and all intensely interested, watched the peculiar machine as it made its way through the skies. It was high in the heavens and appeared to be of huge size. When first seen it seemed to be floating over San Leandro. It moved rapidly, going at least twenty miles an hour. It shot across the skies in the northwest, then turned quickly and disappeared in the direction of Haywards.

Not only was the airship seen by the passengers, but many other residents of this city distinctly saw the brilliant light and the huge bird-like body floating in mid-air. None of the spectators were acquainted with each other and yet their stories are startlingly similar, agreeing as to time, direction of the airship and descriptions. These facts leave little doubt in the minds of many people that a successful airship has been invented and is navigating the heavens.

Miss Wilson, a daughter of Captain Wilson of the police force, and her friend, Miss Hunter, are among those who viewed the strange sight. The two friends accompanied another young lady to the street car about 7 P.M. yesterday, when their attention was attracted by the peculiar light in the skies. The huge bird-like body from which the light emanated was clearly visible and both young ladies are positive that it was an airship. It followed the same course as described by the passengers on the Alameda car.

Other Oaklanders bear similar testimony. Officer Carson was startled by the strange sight and his story is not to be shaken by scoffers. His experience was like others.

Attorney A.A. Moore told a Tribune reporter this morning that Attorney George D. Collins of Alameda informed him (Moore) two days ago that a successful airship had been invented and that the inventor was a client of Collins. The story of its aerial navigations were a fact [sic], he declared, and the public would learn more concerning it in a few days.

A clerk in Attorney Collins' office corroborated this statement and also said that it was a fact that the airship has been navigating the heavens above Oakland, Haywards and vicinity. He furthermore added that the airship left last evening for Los Angeles. This will account for its manoeuvres last evening when it was seen hovering in the northwest.

As all the persons reading the accounts of the airship are reputable persons, a general belief in the story is gaining ground.

The inventor's attorney, George D. Collins, withholds his client's name at present. The machine is run by compressed air and generates its own electricity for the powerful arc light. Further particulars in regard to the invention Mr. Collins declines to give at present.

Oakland Times 11/23,1. LIKE A BIRD. / A Veritable Flying Machine. / Hovering Like an Owl Over Oakland. Has Wings, Wheels, and a Glaring Searchlight. / Built by a Rich Yolo Man Who Has Spent Thousands Upon It

There is a genuine and successfully manipulated air ship hovering about Oakland somewhere, according to the stories lately told, and it behooves people out late at night to be on the watch for the strange craft or it may swoop down upon them at any time, for the ship only sails about at night. It has a party of men aboard to manipulate it and casts its weird electric searchlight across the skies in a glaring way.

The presence of the ship was first heard from as sailing about at night over Sacramento, then it headed this way and has been seen hovering about the Piedmont country, according to witnesses, only last Friday night.

Some color of truth is given the story by that told by George D. Collins.... (It is perfectly true...absolutely new theory—AF p.21).

Petaluma Daily Courier, 11/23/3. The airship has again gotten mixed up with the imaginations of Sacramento people. It has also captured the wavering ideas of Oakland and San Jose romancers.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) Evening Bee (Sacramento, CA), p. 1.

HAVE WE GOT 'EM AGAIN? / Not So Much of a Ha! Ha! After All, It Appears / OR ARE PEOPLE GOING CRAZY? / The Air Ship Inventor Hovered for a While Over the Cliff House and Lighted up the Seals—San Francisco Gone Mad, Too? /

The mysterious light concerning which so much has been said appeared over this city again last night, and for over an hour was viewed by hundreds of people. The aerial visitor hove in sight about 5:30 p.m. and moved in a southwesterly direction along the horizon. When first seen it was at an altitude of about 40 degrees, and seemed to move with a wavering motion. At times the light would almost disappear, only to flash out again with renewed brilliancy. The throngs which lined K Street commented upon the

strange sight in various ways. Some declared that it was a balloon, others that it was a meteor and one man said that it was the planet Venus.

WAS NOT A METEOR.

Weather Observer Barwick, when the object was described to him, said that it could not have been a meteor, for the reason that it was in sight too long, nor could it have been an ordinary balloon, because the wind was south-southwest, and the object appeared to move against it. Mr. Harwich suggested that it might have been a ball of fire similar to those which were seen in the heavens for several days following the last great comet, only he cannot understand how it was that the light seemed to gain and lose in brilliancy.

SAW THE OUTLINE.

The most remarkable story told in connection with the strange appearance last night is that told by Edward Carragher, proprietor of the Saddle Rock Restaurant. Mr. Carragher, when shown the light, procured a pair of powerful field glasses, and declares that through them he saw some large body apparently supporting an arc lamp. The shape was very indistinct, but he was positive that the light was attached to something of considerable bulk.

There were others who claimed they could dimly define something similar to that which was seen by means of the glass, but it is hard to understand how this could be, because the light was seemingly at a great distance from the earth.

IS NOT A HOAX.

After the affair had disappeared in the western horizon, a score or more of practical jokers started up K Street, stopping at every corner to peer into the sky and talk excitedly about an air ship. In this manner many people were misled and the impression got out among those who did not see the light that the whole thing was a hoax. Such, however, is not the case, as all who were on the streets of Sacramento between the hours of 5 and 6 o'clock last night can testify. Opinions may differ as to what the uncanny looking visitant was, but there can be no doubt that between the hours mentioned a most remarkable sight was witnessed by hundreds of people.

HAS SEEN THE SHIP.

The San Francisco Chronicle of yesterday contains an interview with George D. Collins, a San Francisco attorney whose office is in the Crocker building, in which Collins says:

"It is perfectly true that there is at last a successful air ship in existence, and that California will have the honor of bringing it before the world. I have known of the affair for some time and am acting attorney for the inventor. He is a very wealthy man, who has been studying the subject of flying machines for fifteen years, and who came here ten years ago from the State of Maine in order to be able to perfect his ideas away from the eyes of other inventors. During the last five years he has spent at least \$100,000 on his work, but has not yet secured his patent, but his application is now in Washington. I cannot say much about the machine he perfected, because he is my client and besides he fears that the application will be stolen from the Patent Office if people come to know that his invention is practicable.

"I saw the machine one night last week at the inventor's invitation. It is made of metal, is about 150 feet long and is built to carry fifteen persons. There is no motive power as far as I could see; certainly no steam.

FLOPPED ITS WINGS.

"It is built on the aeroplane system and has two canvas wings eighteen feet wide and a rudder shaped like a bird's tail. The inventor climbed into the machine, and after he had been moving some of the mechanisms for a moment I saw the thing begin to ascend from the earth very gently. The wings flapped slowly as it rose and then a little faster as it began to move against the wind. The machine was under perfect control all the time.

"When it got to a height of about ninety feet the inventor shouted to me that he was going to make a series of circles and then descend. He immediately did so, beginning by making a circle about 100 yards in diameter and gradually narrowing in till the machine got within thirty feet of the ground. It then fell straight down, very gracefully, touching the earth as lightly as a falling leaf.

SAW THE CAPITOL.

"The reports from Sacramento the other night were true. It was my client's airship that the people saw. It started from Oroville, in Butte County, that evening, and flew sixty-five miles in a straight line directly over Sacramento. After running up and down once or twice over the Capitol my friend came right on, a distance of another seventy miles, and landed at a spot on this side of the Bay, where the machine now lies, guarded by three men. The inventor found during the trial trip that his ship had a wave-like motion that made him sea-sick. It is this defect that he is now remedying.

TO APPEAR AGAIN.

"In another six days the trouble will be done away with," continued Attorney Collins, "and it is then

his intention to immediately give the people of San Francisco a chance to see his machine. He will fly right over the city and across Market street a dozen times. I cannot tell you where he is housing the ship or what his name is, as I am under a pledge of secrecy, but it is a fact that the machine does its work perfectly and will astound the world and revolutionize travel when it has been displayed before the public. The inventor can fly with it to New York to-morrow if he wants to.

"He has forsaken the ideas of Maxim and Langley entirely in building the machine, and has constructed it on an absolutely new theory." /

CONCERNING THE AIRSHIP. / A Telegram Which May Have Some Bearing on the Subject.

OROVILLE, Nov. 23.—The rumor that the airship which is alleged to have passed over Sacramento was constructed near this town, seems to have a grain of truth in it. The parties who could give information if they would, however, are extremely reticent. They give evasive answers, or assert they know absolutely nothing about it.

Not a single person that saw or knew of an airship being constructed near here can be found and yet there is a rumor that some man has [been] experimenting with different kinds of gas and testing those that are lighter than air. The experiments were made some miles east of the town and no one is able to give any names of the parties, who are evidently strangers and seeking to avoid publicity. /

Our Citizens Are All Right. (From SF Report)

Many of Sacramento's best citizens are said to still believe they saw a real air ship Wednesday night and heard people in it talking. Never mind, Lady Somerset and Miss Willard are coming, and will of course visit Sacramento. /

What Kind Do You Mean? (From the Fresno Republican.)

Up in Sacramento some of the people claim to have seen a mysterious air ship coursing through the air against the wind. Spirits, boys, spirits! /

No, the Same Old Brand. / (From the Oroville Register.)

The Bee puts a dozen or more witnesses upon the reporter's stand to prove that an air ship passed directly over Sacramento this week. The reporter must have struck a new brand which is stronger than his ordinary drink. /

The Bee's Assurance Goes. / (From the Nevada Silver State.)

However, whatever it was, or whatever it pretends, it cannot be reasonably denied or doubted that the thing actually occurred as alleged by our frightened neighbors of Sacramento. For we have the assurance of The Bee that the whole population of the city was not drunk between 6 and 7 o'clock that evening. The Wicked Reporter Man. / (From the San Jose News.)

The story doubtless originated in the brain of some ingenious newspaper reporter in Sacramento, who has prepared the narrative with considerable care, going so far as to secure the co-operation of alleged witnesses, a comparatively easy matter, as there are many people who would "stand in" to support an improbable yarn of that kind considering it a huge joke. /

Oh, Now, You Stop! / (From the Woodland Democrat.)

A toy balloon was turned loose in Washington a night or two ago. It floated over Sacramento and the people were deluded with the idea that it was an air ship.

LIT UP THE SEALS. / The Airship Said to Have Done Some Hovering Over the Cliff House.

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 23.—The inventor of the mysterious airship which has been puzzling local scientists and others for the past week, is believed to be one "Dr." E.H. Benjamin, an alleged dentist, who has occupied rooms in an Ellis Street lodging house for the past two years, but so far he has successfully evaded all attempts to discover his identity. His attorney, Collins, when seen yesterday and pressed to tell further about the alleged invention and its machinery, said:

"This morning the inventor came to my office in the Crocker building, and told me that he had tested the merits of the ship in last night's storm with the greatest success. The wind currents were very contrary and the test was one that tried the merits of the machine in the hardest possible manner, but it came out of the ordeal in good order, having breasted the storm as well as any bird.

"He started from the locality where the vessel is housed and flew over Alcatraz and out through the Golden Gate, skirting the Cliff House and returning by the same route across the bay. He hovered over the seal rocks for fully ten minutes and played his searchlight on the seals. His intention is to make another trip this evening, probably over the same ground, running on his return trip as far as Sacramento."

STICKS TO HIS STORY. / Attorney Collins Tells More About the Ship— Hunting the Inventor.

This morning's San Francisco Chronicle announces that Attorney Collins sticks to his story concerning the airship invention and its successful test. The Chronicle reporter remarked:

"Several people are wondering, Mr. Collins, how this inventor can house his 150-foot vessel in a barn in the vicinity of Berkeley without having the existence of such a large structure discovered."

"That is easily accounted for," Collins replied. "The barn is not very long but it is tacked on to an

old dismantled two-story dwelling. The partitions have been knocked out, making the place practically one long room."

Collins went on to say that none of the larger parts of the machine had been made in this State; they had been manufactured in various parts of the East and shipped to Oroville and Stockton, where they had been gradually put together. When pressed to give some clew to the the inventor, he said:

"Well, I will tell you this much. The man lives on the south side of Ellis Street in the 600 block. He is six feet tall and 40 years old, has no occupation and is possessed of plenty of money. The place he lives in is a private house, where he has been for two years, making frequent trips during that time to various places to look after the construction of his airship. He keeps his own counsel and you won't be able to discover him. I can give you no closer information."

There are twenty lodging houses in that portion of Ellis street described by Collins. A complete search of all of them revealed the fact that in only one was there a lodger answering to the attorney's description of the inventor. This is 633 Ellis Street, rented by E.H. Keiser. Keiser has for two years leased his front room to a "Dr. E.H. Benjamin." This gentleman is six feet in height, about 40 years of age, and as far as his mysterious habits are concerned, Keiser said last night: "We have had him in the house two years now and don't know any more about him than we did the day he came in. He goes away on trips every little while to Oroville, Sacramento, and Stockton, sometimes staying a few days, sometimes a month. He has plenty of means and fills in his time when at his room in experimenting with various metals, principally aluminum and sheet copper.

"He is a dentist by profession, I think. I know he has friends, and one relative in Oroville, who are experimenting on some invention or other, but what it is I don't know. He has told me once or twice that attorney Collins does his law business for him, and I have often wondered what law business a dentist in a small way would be likely to have."

"Dr." Benjamin's name is not in the directory, nor in the list of dentists in the city. Nobody could be found last night who had ever heard of him practicing his profession. His room contains very little to show what his real business is. There are a few drawings and chart scattered around bearing trigonometrical figures, two very ancient teeth on a mantelshelf and a litter of aluminum and copper shavings all over the carpet.

According to Keiser's statements of his late movements, he was in Sacramento twice last week, has been out very late at night during the last month and has not been home more than a few hours in the last two days—a record that fits in seemingly with the stories of the airship's movements. Up to 2 o'clock this morning Benjamin had not returned to his room, and the flying machine was at latest reports being steered by its proprietor over localities several miles away from Ellis Street.

Shortly after 6 o'clock last evening people in the Mission thought they saw an airship. John Bagley, a mounted patrolman, was one of the first to discover a peculiar light up in the sky. He had just left the City Hall, and, like the greater part of San Franciscans, kept his eyes upon the Heavens. Almost above him he saw the light. He says that it was moving westward, at a height he could not well estimate. Its motion was not swift, but steady, and he says he watched it till the darkness swallowed it up.

The Call, in its account, under the head of Oakland correspondence asserts:

General W.H.H. Hart met Mr. Collins in San Francisco to-day and talked with him about the discovery. "I have no doubt," said the General, "that this affair is bona fide. I have seen the thing in the air myself, and believe the ideas of this Oroville inventor have proved to be practicable."

Mr. Tyler, Assistant Librarian of the San Francisco Law Library, was in company with his sister and Mrs. Philbrook on Friday evening and distinctly saw the airship a little later than it was seen in Oakland. This evidence fully bears out the statement of the passengers and motorman of the Piedmont car, who asserted that after it had passed over St. Mary's College it was headed for San Francisco. It was reported to-night that a newspaper which has up to this time apparently been unaware that an air ship has been flying around the State was intending to credit the discovery to a young dentist at Oroville. Mr. Collins was asked about this and said that it was absolutely without foundation, that the inventor is not a dentist and is nearly 50 years old.

Nautical men who have paid particular attention to the various descriptions of eye-witnesses of this air ship declare that the inventor has carefully followed out the principle of flying exemplified by the albatross. The machine itself closely resembles a bird, and when all the facts connected with its construction are made known it will doubtless be learned that the Oroville man took a seabird for his model and drew from it his inspiration.

In another part of its story, the Call says:

E.A. Lamkin, of 305 Larkin Street, says he saw the airship at an early hour last night making its way toward Sacramento and soon fading away in the distance like a falling meteor.

Walter Malloy, Deputy Sheriff and Commissary at the County Jail, says the light of the airship was

seen in San Francisco Tuesday evening. His statement is as follows:

"When I left the jail on Tuesday night I happened to look in the direction of Berkeley and I saw an unusual sight. It was a strong white light, seemingly moving. I thought at first it was a balloon with a lantern attached, but on a closer observation I thought I recognized a dark body immediately over the light, somewhat of a different shape from a balloon. The more I observed it the more puzzled I became as to what it was. Finally I dismissed it from my mind until next morning when reading the Call I saw that others had noticed the strange light. Now I am fully convinced that what I saw was the airship seen by others who were nearer to it than I was. Yet from my position on Kearney and Broadway I had a good view of it and I am ready to indorse what others have said regarding its appearance."

Max Roberts, an employe of the Western Union Telegraph Company, engaged in the capacity of a night watchman, says he saw the airship about 11:50 o'clock Wednesday night.

Knows Attorney Collins.

Judge-elect E.G.Hart said to-day that he is personally acquainted with Attorney Collins, who gave the story to the press of San Francisco concerning the air ship and its inventor. Collins was a candidate before the Republican State Convention a few years ago for Attorney-General. He is a graduate of the State University, is rated as a good lawyer, and, the Judge-elect says, has never developed extraordinary talent in the way of lying. /

THE BAY PAPERS. / The Way They Treat the Airship Sensation To-day.

The San Francisco papers to-day devote much space to the air ship story, and in the Call and Chronicle interviews are published with persons who assert that they saw in the sky what resembled an air ship.

The Call spreads over two pages with its account, embellished with a four-column drawing of the alleged ship. This is the confident way in which it heads up its story:

"A winged ship in the sky. It cleaves the air with pinions like a huge condor. All Sacramento sees the wonder. The inventor's lawyer describes the machine and says it is genuine. It was seen soaring near San Jose at midnight."

The Examiner is jocular, and has a series of pictures by Swinnerton showing the effect of the air ship craze on the population. The headlines read: "Queer things you see when-----. A mysterious wanderer of the skies perplexes people. The sea serpent has drawn in his horns and his nose is out of joint. Now an air ship appears in the darkest heavens and causes consternation. Policemen ring for the wagon. Stories of people who saw mysterious bright lights moving among the clouds at night time."

The Chronicle publishes a three-column picture of "the apartment of the man who, Collins intimates, is the inventor.," and heads the article: "Collins sticks to his airship story. He directs suspicion to Dr. F.H. Benjamin. The light is seen again. Thousands in Sacramento noticed a mysterious object in the sky."

The Chronicle in the course of its two-column story, says: H.J. Pyle, the patrolman at the Geary-Street carhouse, had his attention drawn to a light about 6:30 o'clock. It was very dark at that time, as the moon had not yet risen, and he, with several others, watched it for some time. He described the light as being more powerful than the ordinary street electric light and is of the opinion that a strong reflector was behind it. He thought it moved out over Fulton street, and said that when it reached Eighth Avenue it moved in a southwesterly direction and was lost to view.

Pyle's story is substantiated by Policeman De Guire, M. Drury, foreman of Fire Engine Company 26; D. Ryan, a conductor; John Fullalove, a gripman, and ten or twelve others. All say they saw it plainly and declare that they were not deceived. Gripman Fisher and Conductor Cooper, of the Geary-Street line, also saw something. "The machine was going against the wind at the time we spied it," said Fisher. "It would not be possible for it to have been a balloon." /

NO PATENT ISSUED. / The Sacramento "Airship" Has a National Reputation

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23.—At the Patent Office to-day nothing could be learned of the application for a patent on the flying machine alleged to be making successful flights in the neighborhood of Sacramento.

The rules of the office forbid any disclosures of the names of applicants or the character of the inventions for which they seek protection.

Inquiry among patent attorneys known to control the Pacific Coast business failed to disclose any knowledge of the alleged success in aeronaut[ic]s. Professor Langley of the Smithsonian Institution, who has experimented scientifically for some time to demonstrate the best methods of solving the question of aerial navigation, excused himself from discussing the matter. His manner indicated plainly that he gave very little credence to the Sacramento reports.

A GENUINE AERIAL SHIP. / So Says the Inventor's Attorney. / Its Lights Seen Last Night. / Said to be an Oroville Invention, / It Was Seen Over Oakland on Saturday. / Statement of a San Francisco Lawyer. / The Inventor is His Client—Only the Lights Could be Seen Last Night. /

The mysterious aerial visitor that has been causing so much discussion and agitation since Tuesday last again gave Sacramento a call last evening, and the reputations of the whisky dispensed here bids fair to be vindicated.

About 6 o'clock the air-ship (which it now seems to be) passed over the city, or the southern end of it, and slowly sailed away and disappeared in the mists and darkness of the southeastern sky. That is, a large and bright electric light was seen by any number of persons, including those of the "Record-Union" office. It was not near enough, and the sky was too black to enable anyone to distinguish anything more than the large bright light carried by the air-ship, and which is evidently produced by an electric battery. It is unlike any other light, being clear and sharp.

The light came from the east at an elevation apparently of 500 or 600 feet, going in a southeasterly direction. It was in sight for over an hour, except that for intervals of a few minutes it would suddenly disappear, as if being obscured by some part of the flying machine to which it is supposed to be attached.

Ed Carragher of the Saddle Rock Restaurant states that by the aid of a night glass he was able to make out a dark object above the light, and the outline of the supposed air-ship.

All sorts of jokes have been made at the expense of Sacramentans since last Wednesday's publication of the stories of an air-ship passing over Sacramento, but it now seems the thing has been seen in Alameda and even in San Francisco. The San Francisco "Chronicle" of yesterday publishes the following statement made by George D. Collins, a reputable lawyer of that city, who says it was a flying machine that passed over Sacramento, that the inventor of it is his client, and that he made the trip last Tuesday evening from Oroville to a point in Alameda County. Says the "Chronicle": / MR. COLLINS' STORY. / SF Chron, 11/22/16. The mystery of the airship...new theory.

OVER OAKLAND / The Strange Visitor Seen There on Sat. Evening,

Yesterday's San Francisco "Call" has the following account of the airship having been seen over Oakland on Saturday evening: / Call, 11/22/13. Last night a little...practical test.

SAILED OVERHEAD, / Some Kind of Craft Seen by a Man Near Tulare, Call 11/22/13. That airship is...generally believed. /

AT FOLSOM ALSO, / The Aerial Tourists Took a Shy at the Big Dam.

A telephone message from Folsom last evening stated that the airship also passed near that town between 6 and 7 o'clock. Afterward it tacked to the southeast and disappeared in a dense cloud.

When seen at Folsom it seemed to be only a few hundred feet above the earth, but the night was so dark that the body of the ship could not be distinguished—nothing but the one bright light. /

AGAIN OVER OAKLAND. / It Passed There About 9 O'clock Last Night.

It was long after 7 o'clock last night when the air-ship became lost to view here, but a message from Oakland said it passed over there a few minutes after 9 o'clock. The people there plainly saw the headlight and several smaller ones behind it.

The air-ship seemed to those who saw it at Oakland to go gently down across the bay in San Francisco, but it probably passed behind the hills of that city, as the inventor is not yet, apparently, prepared to let the public view his machine. /

Heading for Mount Hamilton.

Late last night the last report from the air-ship was that it passed over San Jose at 11:30 o'clock and was going in the direction of the Lick Observatory.

23,p.8. The Air Ship Light.

What appeared to be an electric headlight on the airship that has been sailing about is probably produced by magnesium. This is a very light substance and makes an exceedingly bright light, even more brilliant than electricity and explains the possibility of the air-ship being so well lighted. An electric dynamo that would produce such a light would be too heavy to be carried.

23,6. NO MORE DOUBT. / The Existence of the Air Ship is Now an Established Fact. SF Call 23/1. For several days there...from the ridge. / SEEN AT SAN JOSE. / The Air Ship Was Pursuing Its Way Toward Mount Hamilton. Call, 23/1. Frank Everett...most of whom were in buggies. No one else who saw the ship could be found to-night owing to the lateness of the hour.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) (San Diego) Evening Tribune, p. 2.

Saw an Air-Ship.

The San Francisco Call prints a long account of an air ship which is said to have passed over Sacramento on Tuesday night last. The yarn would naturally be disposed of as a fake but for the fact that a dozen or more citizens of Sacramento are quoted as bearing witness to the statement, and who declare that they saw the ship. It is said to have contained four men, who managed it at will. The ship is said to have been navigated by propellers, apparently worked by man power. If the story is an invention it is told in a way to deceive the elect, and if it is true it is strange that the aerial machine had not reached San Francisco, whither it was said to be bound, in time for the Call to have verified the narrative of its Sacramento correspondent before giving currency to it. Still it may be true, and we are disposed to give the story the benefit of the doubt until further reports.

Later the ship is alleged to have arrived at San Francisco, and what purports to be an interview with its inventor is published, and we are bound to say that each addition to the tale renders it more improbable.

Nov.25/1. Red Bluff

San Diego Union, 11/23/1. That Flying Machine (Sacramento, Oroville).

(Santa Barbara) Morning Press, Nov. 24/1. SF's arsp; 26/1, Red Bluff.

San Diego Sun, 11/23/1 SF arsp. / 27,4. Red Bluff.

27,1. Giant Indian mummy found, Middlesboro, Ky.

1896 November 23 (Mon. eve.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 1, 5.

IT IS A FAKE. / Attorney Collins Repudiates the Air Ship. /Says He Never Saw It and Does Not Believe in It. / His Client's Invention Not Connected With the Strange Sights. / A San Francisco Man, Not an Oroville Millionaire, Wanted to Get a Patent. /

The airship story is rapidly going to pieces. The phenomenon of the heavens that "cleaves the air with pinions like a huge condor" has lost its chief support. The man who made it has melted away, and those who saw it are lying low. Mr. George D. Collins, attorney-at-law, who, according to the Call's story, knew the Oroville millionaire who invented and engineered the wondrous air vessel that was seen as a great light in the heavens, now proclaims this marvelous story a plain ordinary fake.

Mr. Collins is a jovial, practical kind of person, who would be little likely to take mystic flights into the heavens. He was in a particularly jocular mood when seen by a Bulletin representative this morning.

"Oh, I wonder what the papers are all doing me up in this ridiculous fashion for," he smiled. "Am I the airship Mr. Collins? Well, I don't know. I had a gang of reporters waiting on my front steps till 4 o'clock this morning to see me ascend into the stars or somewhere else, but I didn't ascend, not a bit of it.

"I never saw the airship and don't know anything about it. It is true that a man of standing in the community came to me, asking me to get out a patent on an air machine."

"An Oroville millionaire?" interrupted the reporter, eagerly waiting for an account of the great latter-day genius who had invented and sent forth the dark moving mass with its brilliant shooting lights into the atmosphere sea above the Sacramento valley.

"No, a San Franciscan. I don't know anything about Oroville or Oroville millionaires. This man came to me some time last week, Thursday, I think it was, to obtain a patent for an airship he had invented. I asked him for a description and model of the invention. He gave me a rough description and promised to bring the model in a few days. I expect him to-day or to-morrow with the model. But whether this airship has anything to do with the sights in the heavens or not, I don't know. I shouldn't think so. They have been faking me and the whole thing. I am anxious to hear what my client has to say about it.

"The description he gave me of the airship was very incomplete. It gave me no idea of the nature of the machine or of how it operates. It was in a very inchoate condition and quite unfit for legal purposes. I have yet to see the model.

"I really don't think my client's invention has anything to do with these mysterious appearances. And I assure you I would not be guilty of such a fake," Mr. Collins added, with a twinkle in his eye.

The attorney has been the recipient of some singular epistles, since he has been credited with the sponsorship of this marvelous creation of the ages. Harry Brasswell of Oakland, Cal., applied to him this morning for the position of cabin-boy and deck-hand on the airship. He states in his letter of application that he is a good, strong boy, although a little weak in the educational line, and has had experience in the United States Navy. Mr. Collins laughs merrily and like the man awakened out of his seven days' trance, wonders "where he is at."

The numbers of those who saw the "greatest invention" of the age are diminishing under the pressure of critical questions. It is large and dark and shines like a thing of fire, that is all anyone can say of it.

How, where and when it started on its aerial voyages, no one knows. The nature of its structure, the principle of its operation, the means of its ascent and descent, are questions that no one dares to answer.

There are some profane spirits who even claim that this wondrous winged thing of upper air was no more nor less than a child's fire balloon.

The fact that there are many people both of Sacramento and of this city who can stretch their imaginations to the extent of making strange things out of an unusual light in the heavens is not new. Dickens in "Pickwick Papers" gives a similar instance. It occurs during the night when Pickwick is endeavoring to hold conversation with Arabella Allen over a high stone wall. He carries a dark lantern and throws the light in all directions. The effect of it is told in the book as follows:

While these things were going on in the open air, an elderly gentleman of scientific attainments was seated in his library, two or three houses off, writing a philosophical treatise, and ever and anon moistening his clay and his labors /p.5/ with a glass of claret from a venerable-looking bottle which stood by his side. In the agonies of composition, the elderly gentleman looked sometimes at the carpet, sometimes at the ceiling, and sometimes at the wall, and when neither carpet, ceiling nor wall afforded the requisite degree of inspiration he looked out of the window.

In one of these pauses of invention, the scientific gentleman was gazing abstractedly on the thick darkness outside, when he was very much surprised by observing a most brilliant light glide through the air, at a short distance above the ground, and almost instantaneously vanish. After a short time the phenomenon was repeated, not once or twice, but several times. At last the scientific gentleman, laying down his pen, began to consider to what natural causes these appearances were to be assigned.

They were not meteors; they were too low. They were not glow worms; they were too high. They were not will-o'-the-wisps; they were not fire flies; they were not fireworks. What could they be? Some extraordinary and wonderful phenomenon of nature, which no philosopher had ever seen before; something which it had been reserved for him alone to discover, and which he should immortalize his name by chronicling for the benefit of posterity. Full of this idea, the scientific gentleman seized his pen again and committed to paper sundry notes of these unparalleled appearances, with the date, day, hour, minutes and precise second at which they were visible, all of which were to form the data of a voluminous treatise of great research and deep learning, which should astonish all the atmospherical sages that ever drew breath in any part of the civilized globe.

He threw himself back in his easy chair, wrapped in contemplations of his future greatness. The mysterious light appeared more brilliantly than before, dancing, to all appearance, up and down the lane, crossing from side to side and moving in an orbit as eccentric as comets themselves.

The scientific gentleman was a bachelor. He had no wife to call in and astonish, so he rang the bell for his servant.

"Pruffle," said the scientific gentleman, "there is something very extraordinary in the air to-night. Did you see that?" said the scientific gentleman, pointing out of the window, as the light again became visible.

"Yes, I did, sir."

"What do you think of it, Pruffle?"

"Think of it, sir?"

"Yes. You have been bred up in this country. What should you say was the cause of those lights, now?"

The scientific gentleman smilingly anticipated Pruffle's reply that he could assign no cause for them at all. Pruffle meditated.

"I should say it was thieves, sir," said Pruffle at length.

"You're a fool and may go downstairs," said the scientific gentleman.

"Thank you, sir," said Pruffle, and down he went.

But our scientific gentleman could not rest under the idea of the ingenious treatise he had projected being lost to the world, which must inevitably be the case if the speculation of the ingenious Pruffle were not stifled at its birth. He put on his hat and walked quickly down the garden, determined to investigate the matter to the very bottom.

Now, shortly before the scientific gentleman walked out into the garden, Mr. Pickwick had run down the lane as fast as he could, to convey a false alarm that somebody was coming that way, occasionally drawing back the slide of the dark lantern to keep himself from the ditch. The alarm was no sooner given than Mr. Winkle scrambled over the wall and Arabella ran into the house, the garden gate was shut and the three adventurers were making the best of their way down the lane, when they were startled by the scientific gentleman unlocking his garden gate.

"Hold hard," whispered Sam, who was, of course, the first of the party. "Show a light for just vun second, sir."

Mr. Pickwick did as he was desired, and Sam, seeing a man's head peeping out very cautiously within half a yard of his own, gave it a gentle tap with his clenched fist, which knocked it, with a hollow sound, against the gate. Having performed this feat with great suddenness and dexterity, Mr. Weller caught Mr. Pickwick up on his back, and followed Mr. Winkle down the lane at a pace which, considering the burden he carried, was perfectly astonishing.

* * * * *

As to the scientific gentleman, he demonstrated, in a masterly treatise, that these wonderful lights were the effect of electricity, and clearly proved the same by detailing how a flash of fire danced before his eyes when he put his head out of the gate, and how he received a shock which stunned him for a quarter or an hour afterwards, which demonstration delighted all the scientific associations beyond measure and caused him to be considered a light of science ever afterwards.

p.4. Now, if the Lick astronomers can only press the airship into their service, the new atlas of the moon will, perhaps, show some really interesting pictures.

The airship is a simple thing. Some greater wizard than Edison has simply succeeded in putting salt upon the tail of the roc of Arab story. Sinbad is with us again.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 1.

A WINGED SHIP IN THE SKY. / It Cleaves the Air With Pinions Like a Huge Condor. / ALL SACRAMENTO SEES THE NEW WONDER. / The Inventor's Lawyer Describes the Machine and Says It Is Genuine. / IT WAS SEEN SOARING NEAR SAN JOSE AT MIDNIGHT. / "The Call's" Exclusive Account of the Greatest Invention of the Age Is How Corroborated by Thousands. /

For several days there have been persistent reports that a huge airship has been seen in the vicinity of Oakland, Sacramento and San Francisco. The Call has contained daily and exclusive accounts of the appearance, and now there is an avalanche of testimony to the effect that many persons of truthful reputations have seen something like a huge seraph in the air, spreading its electric pinions and soaring faster than a giant condor of the Andes. So numerous have been the reports that the possibility of aerial navigation is now the absorbing theme of the day.

There is now a vast amount of corroborative testimony to the effect that there is a practical airship afloat in the azure spaces hereabouts, and the meaning of this testimony has been made clear by the positive statement of Attorney George D. Collins of Alameda that he has a wealthy client who is the inventor of the great aerial ship, and that it will soon be known to the entire world.

The ship was seen in Sacramento last night, and the evidence is increasing that the same great propeller recently passed through the heavens over Oakland and San Francisco.

The positive testimony of Collins that the airship is a reality has now been signally corroborated by the testimony of thousands of citizens of Sacramento who saw the great ship in the air last night. The following accounts from Oakland and Sacramento make the matter as clear as ordinary human testimony could do.

One of the most interesting of the corroborative stories comes from Thomas Jordan of San Rafael, who states that he found a machine-shop in a mountain fastness some months ago; that six men were working on an airship and that it would soon be completed.

In the first day's story of the airship, as printed in The Call, it was stated that an old hunter named Brown of Bolinas Ridge had seen an airship floating a few hundred feet above the pine trees one morning just as the fogs were lifting from the ridge. /

COLLINS' EVIDENCE IN. /He Knows the Inventor of the Ship.

OAKLAND, Cal., Nov. 23.—Attorney Collins was the busiest man in Alameda County to-day. During the first part of the day all his efforts were directed to keeping away from the carious throng that wished to talk to him and interview him and try to induce him to describe and draw pictures of the Oroville millionaire's airship. Not until late in the evening could he be induced to go into the parlor of his home on Union street, Alameda, and tell what he knew of the invention that has startled not only this State, but the entire country.

"A few weeks ago," said Mr. Collins, "I came from Washington whither I had been on important business. On my arrival in this State I met a gentleman who introduced himself to me, and when I told him where I had been he immediately said he was very sorry that he had not met me prior to my departure, as he had some important business to transact at the Patent Office in Washington which he would not trust in

the mail or by any other means than a trusted servant.

"I asked him what his business consisted of, but beyond telling me that he was an inventor, I got no further details from him at that time. He told me enough in an indirect manner to convince me that he was a man who had a secret that he evidently cherished dearly, but he enlightened me no further, and beyond exchanging cards, our acquaintanceship developed nothing more till later. A few days afterward he called on me at my office in San Francisco, but as he did not talk about business, I concluded that he had merely paid me a social call. I became greatly interested in that invention. I could not help noticing that there was a desire on his part to tell me more than I knew, and I could also see that he restrained himself from doing so. He called on me a second time, chatted about a few immaterial matters and departed, leaving me in wonder as to when he would confide anything further to me. Altogether, he made about half a dozen of these visits, and I concluded that he really did intend to talk business every time he came, but that his courage failed him as soon as he got in the office.

"Finally he got up courage enough to tell me he was not only an inventor but that he really had an invention. He asked me if he could place confidence in me. I replied, 'Do you mean as a friend or as an attorney?' He said, 'As both.' I told him that I could not recall any occasion in which I had violated a friend's or a client's confidence and that I thought I was fully capable of attending to any business he might wish me to transact for him. He said that if his secret were made public prematurely it would mean the loss to him of an immense fortune. He further assured me that it was an invention that anybody would willingly steal if they had the opportunity. I talked to him for a little while and succeeded in assuring him that if such were the case I, as an attorney, would be just as anxious to protect his interest as he would be himself.

"I am telling you the details of my first meeting with this inventor because they carry with them a good idea of the nature of the man and also are evidence of his sincerity and belief in the practicability of his invention.

"He is a resident of Oroville and a man of wealth, about 47 years of age, and a fine looking fellow. He does not talk for five minutes without convincing his hearer that he is a man of more than ordinary intelligence. The first time he talked to me of his invention he got as far as the word airship; then I laughed, and laughed heartily.

"What kind of whisky have you been drinking?" I asked him.

This made him indignant, and had I laughed any longer he certainly would have got very angry and I should have most probably have lost a client.

"I have not been drinking, sir," he said, 'and when I do it is not whisky.'

"Even that answer did not assure me, and again I said, 'Have any members of your family ever been in the lunatic asylum?'

"He did not appreciate this any more than my other remark, and drawing himself to his full height and stamping one foot on the floor, he replied, 'No, sir, I am a man of business. I have come here on a business errand, and had I not met you previously and been convinced that I could trust you I think our acquaintance would end right here. However, I can excuse your surprise, for everybody believes that an inventor must naturally be crazy until he has proved that his invention is practicable. Then, I suppose, people call him a genius. I have got over the crazy stage, but I do not yet claim to be a genius; but I certainly am practical.'

"He then proceeded to tell me of his invention. He has been working for several years, and in order to avoid suspicion on the part of local people he has had all the machinery and material shipped from the East in such manner as not to excite curiosity.

"Of course I am informed regarding nearly all the details, but I am not at liberty to talk about them. As near as I can recollect the propelling power is produced by compressed air, which works the arms and also produces the light. There is in the airship a little motor of sufficient power to produce the brilliant light that everybody has seen. As soon as he told me this I hinted that it would be a good thing to make the matter public, but he refused, saying that publicity would call attention to his work, would interfere with the progress of his caveat, and might prove the ruin of his enterprise. Now he is not so particular. He has informed me that it is sufficiently advanced for him to patent, and that he can take out successive patents for any other contrivance he may invent in order to make his machine perfect.

"The next time we met was quite recently and after the machine had been seen in various parts of the state. He told me that those fellows were right who talked to The Call reporter at Sacramento and were telling the truth. On the night that it was seen there he left Oroville in the afternoon, made a straight trip to Sacramento, which is about sixty miles, took a few turns over the Capitol, went off about fifty miles and descended. On that occasion he made sixty miles in forty-five minutes, but I understand that there is practically no limit to the speed which can be attained, provided the necessary machinery is made. I mean by this that the principle of the airship would almost admit of lightening speed, but that conditions that

have to be met of course limit its power of resistance.

"I believe, however that in a very short time it will be able to make three miles in two minutes, and the inventor tells me that more is possible.

"The machine did pass over Oakland last Friday night. The inventor came from Oroville and descended near Haywards. I do not know where the machine is now, but I think all day yesterday it remained where it descended. The inventor is making trips every night and has been doing so for over two weeks, and any night the people look in the sky they are likely to see him. A week ago he told me that it was nearly perfect, with the exception of a little wavy motion, which produced the sensation very closely allied to seasickness. This he was confident of preventing, and apparently from what is reported he has made the necessary adjustment to insure smooth flying.

"From every quarter I have received reports during the past few days of the machine, and although there are many who may still be skeptical regarding what is claimed for it, I thoroughly believe that it is now perfect."

R.B. Mitchell of the firm of Pierson & Mitchell, San Francisco, called on Mr. Collins this evening to discuss the merits of the new invention. Mr. Mitchell had the idea when he called that Mr. Collins had the inventor hidden in his house for the purpose of keeping him from the public. Mr. Collins, however, denied this and said that he could not really give any information of the inventor's whereabouts.

"I have no doubt," said Mr. Collins, "that if the night is at all pleasant the inventor is in his machine about half a mile over the earth startling some of the inhabitants of this State. To-morrow morning's papers may possibly inform you where he was at this time. I believe he has gone home, and if he has he certainly flew there."

Then Mr. Mitchell became very definite. /p.2/ He said: "Mr. Collins, I have known you for a long time to be a reputable man, and one who has a character to sustain. Now, on your honor as a professional man, do you profess to believe all that you have said and to put confidence in the scheme of this inventor?"

"From what I have seen of the man and his invention," said Mr. Collins, "I have no alternative but to believe implicitly all I have said."

General W.H.H. Hart met Mr. Collins in San Francisco to-day and talked with him about the discovery. "I have no doubt," said the general, "that this affair is bona fide. I have seen the thing in the air myself, and believe the ideas of this Oroville inventor have proved to be practicable."

Mr. Tyler, assistant librarian of the San Francisco Law Library, was in company with his sister and Mrs. Philbrook on Friday evening and distinctly saw the airship a little later than it was seen in Oakland. This evidence fully bears out the statement of the passengers and motor man of the Piedmont car, who asserted that after it had passed over St. Mary's College it was headed for San Francisco. It was reported tonight that a newspaper which has up to this time apparently been unaware that an airship has been flying around the State was intending to credit the discovery to a young dentist at Oroville. Mr. Collins was asked about this and said that it was absolutely without foundation, that the inventor is not a dentist and is nearly 50 years of age.

Nautical men who have paid particular attention to the various descriptions of eye-witnesses of this airship declare that the inventor has carefully followed out the principle of flying exemplified by the albatross. The machine itself closely resembles a bird, and when all the facts connected with its construction are made known it will doubtless be learned that the Oroville man took a seabird for his model and drew from it his inspiration. /

SACRAMENTANS STARTLED / Thousands View the Great Airship With Wonder.

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Nov. 22.—The entire city is in a fever of excitement, and all that can be heard on every side is airship, airship, airship. The mysterious aerial traveler paid this city another visit this evening, and this time it passed directly over the downtown portion of the city and exhibited to wondering thousands of the citizens its magnificent searchlight.

There could be no possible mistake, for there in plain view of all, moving slowly along with a slight wavering motion, was a large electric light, fully twice the candle-power of an ordinary arc light. The light was at an enormous height and still plainly visible, as the heavens were entirely obscured by a mass of dark clouds, which every moment threatened to burst into a drenching rain, and in consequence the mysterious light was thrown into intense relief against their dark background. The light first made its appearance over the lower portion of the city, and was moving slowly into the wind in a southwesterly direction. One of the first to see it was Isaac Gough on Second and K streets. As soon as he became fully satisfied that it was the much-talked-of aerial visitant he gave notice to all in the surrounding stores and hotels, and within a few minutes the streets were black with masses of excited people, all gazing heavenward.

As the news spread the housetops became black with people, and frantic men rushed wildly into

telephonic communication with their homes in order to inform their wives and families that high up in the heavens human beings were gayly sailing through the air toward San Francisco. The streetcars were an important factor in spreading the information as the motormen shouted the news to the bystanders as their cars rapidly threaded their way through the crowded thoroughfares, and it needed but a wave of the hand skyward to draw the attention of all to the heavens.

Jacob Zemansky, the well-known downtown cigar man, obtained a powerful telescope and watched the light until it faded into nothingness in the distance. In speaking of it he said: "It simply passes my understanding. If that was not an electric arc light of intense power then I never saw one. Looking at it with the naked eye it seemed to move in a straight line, but seen through the glass it rose and fell like a boat on a gently swelling tide. I could not distinguish any positive shape, only a dark mass of mistlike substance to which the light seemed to be attached."

Mr. Carraghar of the Saddlerock Restaurant also gives a similar description of the light and its movements, and states that in his opinion it was attached to an air-vessel of some description, and after being in plain sight for over twenty minutes it faded away in the distance.

Of the thousands who viewed the mysterious visitant this evening, the vast majority had been among the ranks of the most pronounced skeptics ever since the first publication of the subject in Tuesday's Call, for the reason that they are living in the lower part of the city and had failed to catch a glimpse of the light on its previous appearance, and in consequence its reappearance descended upon them like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky. For over a week they had laughed and jeered and treated the subject with scorn and derision, but here before their very eyes was the self-same vision which had greeted their friends and neighbors in the eastern portion of the city, and they were forced by the evidence of their own eyes to abandon their unbelief.

As soon as it became fully evident to all that the light was no meteor or star, a thousand stories were related of what people had heard and seen on its previous visitation.

Mr. Johnson, foreman of the Haggin ranch, in company with another gentleman, was driving across the bare plains adjacent to the city last Tuesday night when they plainly heard a merry chorus of human voices. The thing was uncanny and unreal. They were entirely alone; on all sides stretched bare fields without a bush or fence, no human being was visible, nor was there a possibility of secretion, and yet the merry chorus rang out distinct, but faint. They stopped their team and listened and looked, saw the clear bright light high over their heads, but did not dream that but a short distance above them human beings were floating along on the night wind and fearing the ridicule of their acquaintances, held their peace.

Another story which has come to light is that an employe of the paint shop of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company has received a letter from one of the inmates of the aerial ship, who was an old acquaintance. This letter, postmarked Oakland, stated that the writer had made one of the crew of an airship which made a most successful voyage last Tuesday night, and had arrived in the vicinity of Oakland about 12 o'clock. He stated that the ship had worked beautifully with the exception that the motion was very disagreeable.

He also stated that after making alterations and receiving patent rights the vessel would be placed on exhibition, and that this would occur before the first of the coming month. It is claimed that the painter's shopmates laughed the letter to scorn, and that he was so thoroughly convinced that his friend was not misleading him that he wagered \$20 that what his friend had written would come to pass. This story was related by several, but is not authenticated, as they would not betray the writer's name without his permission.

Colvin Brown, local representative of the Chronicle, was an eye witness of the mysterious light this evening. He has been a skeptic of the most pronounced type and was lo[a]th to believe the evidence of his own eyes. Center of a group of the corner of Seventh and K streets, he produced an almanac to endeavor to prove that the planet Venus had left her orbit and was coquetting with Sacramento. As his explanation was not received with favor he started off in search of Sergeant Barwick of weather fame to endeavor to prove the mysterious light to be a meteor on the warpath.

Of all the onlookers this evening the employes of the streetcar system are the most jubilant. They have been held up to derision for over a week; their lives made miserable by jocular inquiries as to the nature of the stimulants they mostly imbibe and various inquiries as to when they intended to take a trip, etc.

"I am heartily delighted that the entire city has seen this mysterious light to-night," said one of the motormen. "Now this eternal joshing will cease. My life has been a misery for the past week, but now all can see for themselves that we were not stretching the long bow. It is particularly aggravating, when one plainly sees a phenomenal occurrence and relates it, that he is treated as a gigantic liar."

Assistant Superintendent Ross of the streetcar system is also jubilant. "I was simply positive," said he, "that this light was of an electrical nature. I have made a close study of this mysterious agent for years.

I saw this moving light for upward of thirty minutes Tuesday night and was positive that it was electrical. Also I noticed its swaying and rising and falling movement and was convinced in my own mind that it was attached to a vehicle of some nature. At first I thought it might be in a balloon, but knowing that machinery requisite to produce a light of that volume and intensity would weigh upward of a ton, I concluded that it might possibly be that some one had solved the problem of aerial navigation, and this belief was strengthened by observing that the light was moving south against the wind. I am now almost convinced that the great problem has been solved and that within a short time the air will be peopled with ships."

This seems to be the public belief in this city to-night among all who have witnessed the reappearance of this mysterious light and never has there been witnessed such an overwhelming and sudden change in public opinion as its reappearance has caused. In the corridors of the hotels groups of excited people clustered discussing all the possibilities of this wonderful discovery. In the saloons healths are being drunk to the successful discoverer, and on all sides universal belief has taken the place of skepticism. Since the reappearance of this mysterious light this evening there has been a general search made for copies of Wednesday's Call which gave an exclusive account of the first appearance of the aerial visitant and a copy cannot be purchased for love or money. Those possessing them brought them out to read to their friends but refused to part with them. /

OTHERS WHO SAW IT. / Stories That Corroborate the Pact of the Invention

The following letter from San Rafael explains a phase of the story that has not yet come to light:
SAN RAFAEL, Nov. 22, 1896

Editor Call: The mysterious light mentioned in your valuable paper this morning as seen by several citizens in different parts of the State, and which seems to mystify yourself as well as your readers, is nothing more than an airship, and of this fact I am perfectly cognizant. I think now that I am released of my obligation of secrecy, which I have kept for nearly three months, as the experiment in aerial navigation is a fixed fact and the public or a few of the public at least have seen its workings in the air.

In the latter part of last August I was hunting in the Tamalpais range of mountains, between the high peak and Bolinas Bay. I wounded a deer, and in chasing it I ran onto a circular brushpile about ten feet in height in a part of the mountain seldom visited even by hunters.

I was somewhat astonished, and my curiosity prompted me to approach it, when I encountered a man who sang out: "What are you doing here and what do you want?" I replied that "I had wounded a deer and was chasing it." He said "that they had been camping here for a month or so and had not seen a deer, but if you think your deer is in the neighborhood I will assist you in finding it as we need a little meat in camp." This man went with me and in less than 500 yards found my deer. We carried it into the brush corral. And what a sight—a perfect machine shop and an almost completed ship. I was sworn to secrecy and have kept it till this moment. Six men were at work on the "aerial ship." It is this ship that a few people have seen at night on its trial trip. It returns to its home before daylight and will continue to do so until perfected. Yours, William Jordon.

E.A. Lamkin of 305 Larkin street says he saw the airship at an early hour last night making its way toward Sacramento and soon fading away in the distance like a falling meteor.

Walter Malloy, deputy sheriff and commissary at the County Jail, says the light of the airship was seen in San Francisco Tuesday evening. His statement is as follows:

"When I left the jail on Tuesday night I happened to look in the direction of Berkeley and I saw an unusual sight. It was a strong white light, seemingly moving. I thought at first it was a balloon with a lantern attached, but on a closer observation I thought I recognized a dark body immediately over the light, somewhat of a different shape from a balloon. The more I observed it the more puzzled I became as to what it was. Finally I dismissed it from my mind until next morning, when reading The Call I saw that others had noticed the strange light. Now I am fully convinced that what I saw was the airship seen by others who were nearer to it than I was. Yet from my position on Kearny and Broadway I had a good view of it and I am ready to indorse what others have said regarding its appearance."

Max Roberts, an employe of the Western Union Telegraph Company, engaged in the capacity of a night watchman, says he saw the airship about 11:50 o'clock Wednesday night. /

AN EXPERT'S OPINION. / Lieutenant George N. Chase, U.S.A., Talks of the Wonderful Discovery.

Lieutenant George N. Chase, U.S.A., the inventor of an "aerodromic system of transportation," was seen yesterday on the subject at his residence in Oakland. Mr. Chase has spent many years in investigating the subject of aerial navigation, and is thoroughly conversant with the practical and theoretical difficulties in its way. He has written a pamphlet setting forth his ideas, and outlining a sort of compromise "between aerial navigation and the present system of transportation, which many engineers have accepted as in the highest sense practical. He said yesterday: "I have read some of the accounts of the alleged 'airship.' One in a morning paper yesterday was rather confusing. The attorney for the inventor in his statement says that

it is 150 feet long, and that the inventor 'moved some of the mechanism,' and thereafter he saw it rise, the wings flapping to a height of about 90 feet, making a series of circles, and descend, etc. He says also: 'There was no motive power, so far as I could see.' For a patent attorney who made the application for the patent and drew up the specifications this is a remarkable statement. He says that his client has 'forsaken the ideas of Maxim and Langley,' and yet states that 'it is built on the aeroplane system,' the only system ever advocated by either—a system which I showed in my monograph published in St. Louis in 1894 was the only possible one. As I said then:

Experiment has demonstrated the fact that it is possible to construct a vehicle possessing the ability to arise in the air, carrying a considerable load, and capable of being propelled. The obstacles that have so far baffled man's ingenuity are his ability to control the machine even under the most favorable circumstances and his failure to provide energy enough to propel it to any considerable distance. This latter difficulty cannot be overcome by any known method of storing up potential energy in a structure which is designed to sever all connection with terra firma and in which levity becomes of primal importance. --- Flight is not a function of levity but of weight and power. Man if he [will] ever fly must closely imitate the flight of birds. The fledgling, after one or two abortive attempts, adjusts its motions successfully and naturally to the accomplishment of perfect flight. The rate of vibration of its wings and the inclination of their surfaces to the varying direction of the wind to the line of flight are instinctively changed with the rapidity of lightening. Given a machine which is capable of performing all the essential functions of a bird in flight it is extremely doubtful if the coolest human intellect could ever be trained to control it safely under all the conditions and circumstances which it must inevitably encounter.

"While I said," continued Mr. Chase, "that the conditions seem too many, or, rather the unknown quantities are at present too few, for a satisfactory solution of this problem pure and simple, still it must be conceded that considerable progress has been made since that was written toward the scientific solution of this great problem by Professor Langley, Maxim in England, Chanute in Chicago and Herr Lilienthal. I must say, however, that if it has quietly been solved upon a commercial basis in one of our back counties it is very surprising, and the secret has been remarkably well kept.

"One thing is certain—he is a rash man who in these days asserts the impossibility of anything in engineering." /

PASSED OVER SAN JOSE. / The Air Craft Said to Have Been Seen Sailing Toward Mount Hamilton.

SAN JOSE, Cal., Nov. 22.—Frank Everett, a young man residing in this city, claims to have seen the mysterious airship seen by the residents of Sacramento and elsewhere pass over the eastern portion of this city about 11 o'clock to-night.

Everett said he was standing on Santa Clara street, near East San Jose, when he distinctly saw the airship high up in the heavens. He claims that several persons who were in that vicinity also saw the ship, and that others whose attention was called to it saw the flashlight of the craft rapidly disappear. The ship was said to be going in a southeasterly direction, toward Mount Hamilton.

H. Erlich drove up while the crowd was standing gazing skyward and saw the light disappearing. To him some of the people said they distinctly saw the ship. Neither he nor Everett knew the names of any persons in the crowd, most of whom were in carriages. /

Experimenters Near Oroville.

OROVILLE, Cal., Nov. 22.—There seems to be some foundation that the airship which recently passed over Sacramento was built in this neighborhood, but no information can be obtained as to who the builder could be. Rumor has it that two parties were recently experimenting with new and light gas which they expected would outdo anything yet introduced for balloon purposes. It is also asserted by others that three or four comparatively unknown parties of wealth have been for several weeks experimenting with various gases and feel confident of solving aerial navigation.

[Pic., p. 1: The Great Airship That Is Startling the People of Many Cities. Drawn from Descriptions of the Inventor's Attorney, George D. Collins.

p. 2: Attorney George D. Collins, Who Knows the Inventor of the Great Airship.]

1896 November 23 (Mon.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 12.

COLLINS STICKS TO HIS AIRSHIP STORY. / He Directs Suspicion to Dr. E.H. Benjamin. / THE LIGHT IS SEEN AGAIN. / MISSION PEOPLE CLAIM TO HAVE WATCHED IT. / Thousands in Sacramento Noticed a Mysterious Object in the Sky. /

The mysterious light, supposed to be on an airship, that has for some days been flitting round the bay counties, seems to have at last paid its respects to San Francisco, though in a shy and demure manner and without any attempt to get into a very close acquaintance with the city.

Dozens of people in the Mission claim to have seen the peculiar arc light last night, and they say it did not have a pink tail, blue hair or anything of that sort. To cap this assertion, Attorney Collins again come to the front with a statement about its movements, which information he says was given to him personally yesterday morning by the inventor.

Collins when seen yesterday and pressed to tell anything further about the alleged inventor and his alleged machine said: "This morning the inventor came to my office, in the Crocker building, and told me that he had tested the merits of the ship in last night's storm with the greatest success. The wind currents were very contrary, and the test was one that tried the merits of the machine in the hardest possible manner, but it came out of the ordeal in good order, having breasted the storm as well as any bird.

"He started from the locality where the vessel is housed and flew over Alcatraz and out through the Golden Gate, skirting the Cliff House and returning by the same route across the bay. He hovered over the seal rocks for fully ten minutes and played his searchlight on the seals themselves. His intention is to make another trip this evening, probably over the same ground, running on his return trip as far as Sacramento."

"Several people are wondering, Mr. Collins, how this inventor can house his 150-foot vessel in a barn in the vicinity of Berkeley without having the existence of such a large structure discovered."

"That is easily accounted for," Collins replied. "The barn is not very long, but it is tacked on to an old dismantled two-story dwelling. The partitions have been knocked out, making the place practically one long room."

Collins went on to say that none of the larger parts of the machine had been made in this State; they had been manufactured in various parts of the East and shipped to Oroville and Stockton, where they had been gradually put together. When pressed to give some clew to the identity of the inventor he said:

"Well, I will tell you this much. The man lives on the south side of Ellis street in the 600 block. He is six feet tall and 40 years old, has no occupation and is possessed of plenty of money. The place he lives in is a private house, where he has been for two years, making frequent trips during that time to various places to look after the construction of his airship. He keeps his own counsel and you won't be able to discover him. I can give you no closer information."

There are twenty lodging-houses in the portion of Ellis street described by Collins. A complete search of all of them revealed the fact that in only one was there a lodger answering to the attorney's description of the inventor. This is 633 Ellis, rented by E.H. Keiser. Keiser has for two years leased his front room to a "Dr. E.H. Benjamin." This gentleman is six feet in height, about 40 years of age, and as far as his mysterious habits are concerned Keiser said last night: "We have had him in the house for two years and don't know any more about him now than on the day he came in. He goes away every little while on trips to Oroville, Sacramento and Stockton, sometimes staying a few days, sometimes a month. He has plenty of means and fills in his time when at his room experimenting with various metals, principally aluminum and sheet copper.

"He is a dentist by profession, I think. I know he has friends and one relative in Oroville who are experimenting on some invention or other, but what it is I don't know. He has told me once or twice that Attorney Collins does his law business for him, and I have often wondered what law business a dentist in a small way would be likely to have."

"Dr." Benjamin's name is not in the directory, nor in the list of dentists in the city. Nobody could be found last night who had ever heard of him practicing his profession. His room contains very little to show what his real business is. There are a few drawings and charts scattered around bearing trigonometrical figures, two very ancient teeth on the mantelshelf and a litter of aluminum and copper shavings all over the carpet.

According to Keiser's statements of his late movements, he was in Sacramento twice last week, has been out very late at night during the last month and has not been home more than a few hours in the last two days—a record that fits in seemingly with the stories of the airship's movements. Up to 2 o'clock this morning Benjamin had not returned, to his room, and the flying machine was at latest reports being steered by its proprietor over localities several miles away from Ellis street.

Shortly after 6 o'clock last evening people in the Mission thought they saw an airship. John Bagely, a mounted patrolman, was one of the first to distinguish a peculiar light up in the sky. He had just left the City Hall, and, like the greater part of San Franciscans, kept his eyes upon the heavens. Almost above him he saw the light. He says that it was moving westward, at a height he could not well estimate. Its motion was not swift, but steady, and he says he watched it till the darkness swallowed it up.

At about the same time Gus Riechers, a gripman on a Geary-street car, believes he spied the machine, or the light upon it. He says he kept it in sight for about half an hour during his trip to the terminus of the road. Several passengers on the dummy also saw some mysterious light and watched it as it glided along through the darkness.

H.J. Pyle, the patrolman at the Geary-street carhouse, had his attention drawn to a light about [6]:30

o'clock. It was very dark at that time, as the moon had not yet risen, and he, with several others, watched it for some time. He described the light as being more powerful than the ordinary street electric light and is of the opinion that a strong reflector was behind it. He thought it moved out over Fulton street, and said that when it reached Eighth avenue it moved in a southwesterly direction and was lost to view.

Pyle's story is substantiated by Policeman De Guire, M. Drury, foreman of Fire Engine Company 26; D. Ryan, a conductor; John Fullalove, a gripman, and ten or twelve others. All say they saw it plainly and declare that they were not deceived. Gripman Fisher and Conductor Cooper of the Geary-street line also saw something. "The machine was going against the wind at the time we spied it, said Fisher. "It would not be possible for it to have been a balloon."

Collins' statement concerning the intentions of the inventor with regard to the route of his trip last night is seemingly substantiated in part by the following dispatch received by the "Chronicle" from Sacramento.

SACRAMENTO, November 22.—The peculiar light which excited the people of this city a few nights ago appeared again to-night, and this time it was witnessed by thousands of people. During its passage across the southern part of the city, which occupied nearly an hour, K street was filled with people who watched it until it disappeared from view.

The light was first seen by those in the neighborhood of Third and K streets at 5:30 p.m. It was then south of the city about 40 degrees above the horizon, and from there on it seemed to travel downward toward the southwest until it disappeared from view about 10 degrees above the horizon line. The wind, at the time was south-southwest, and the light seemed to be traveling almost against it.

Its appearance was that of an arc lamp and its light was a clear white. Occasionally it would die out in luster, at which time it was surrounded with a hazy halo, but would almost immediately regain its brilliancy. As it traveled through the sky it seemed to have a waving motion.

Weather Observer Barwick, in an interview to-night, said that the object could not have been a meteor, for the reason that it traveled too slowly, but suggested that it might have been a ball of fire similar to those seen following the last big comet and which were very erratic in their course. He says that the only thing against this theory is that the light varied in its brilliancy. Everyone here is talking of the affair and hundreds believe that it was a light from an aerial ship.

Nick White, city editor of the Record-Union, who got a good view of it, expresses the belief that it was the light from a flying machine and declares that he at one time saw several smaller lights in addition to the larger light. When the direction changed, but one of the lights was visible.

Ed Carragher, proprietor of the Saddle Rock Restaurant, took a look through a field glass and declared that the light was attached to some larger object, whose shape was not distinctly defined in the darkness.

From Oroville, the locality where Attorney Collins says most of the ship was put together, comes the following dispatch:

OROVILLE, November 22.—The report that the supposed airship, which passed over Sacramento, started from a point near Oroville and was built near here, seems to have some foundation, but it is impossible to learn the truth. It is asserted that parties residing about three miles east of the town and in a thickly wooded section, not traversed by roads have been experimenting with different gases for some time past. One man, who is an expert chemist here, was heard to let slip a word or two about parties who were experimenting with a new and very light gas which would supersede the one now in use for balloons. It is impossible, however, to get more than rumors, mere whispers, and it is impossible to say whether they are pure fabrications.

It is asserted by more than one person that comparatively unknown parties with abundant means have for some weeks past been experimenting with different gases and that they were sanguine of having solved the problem of aerial navigation. The form of the airship they are supposed to have constructed is a matter of uncertainty. No one can say how the vessel is regulated or what means are used to govern its speed. It is rumored that such a vessel has been constructed near here by Eastern people, who desired to escape prying eyes and sought seclusion. It is evident that more, than one man was engaged in the project, but it is impossible to learn any of the names or give any details about the vessel itself.

p. 6. The airship which has caused so much discussion should be materialized if only for the sake of the people who are confident that they have seen it. This mysterious vessel bears a striking resemblance to the sea serpent. Every season we have the circumstantial details of the size and appearance of these monsters of the deep, but no one has yet produced so much as a patch of the skin of the serpent or one of the teeth which it exposes. We would like something tangible from the mysterious aerial visitor—something that would appeal to the skeptics and would remove their doubts which at present are many and grave.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 12.

QUEER THINGS YOU SEE WHEN— / A Mysterious Wanderer of the Skies Perplexes People. / The Sea Serpent Has Drawn in His Horns and His Nose Is Out of Joint. / Now an Airship Appears in the Darkened Heavens and Causes Consternation. / POLICEMEN RING FOR THE WAGON. / Stories of People Who Saw Mysterious Bright Lights Moving Among the Clouds at Night Time.

Lord, how the world is given to flying! That is not exactly what Falstaff said, but it comes to the same thing. The sea serpent has been called in. His melancholy trail no longer slavers the silly season. His hairy head erects itself no longer on the practical horizon, and of his horns and hoofs there are none to tell. In fact, the sea serpent's Roman nose is out of joint and he has been superseded in the affections of the people by a mysterious "airship."

That some object not yet explained or accounted for has been seen traveling the skies in different parts of the State for several nights past appears to be established by the testimony of credible witnesses. What the thing may be nobody knows. That it is an airship capable of carrying human freight seems impossible of belief in view of the record of failure in the past. If some joker has turned loose a fire balloon to perplex and mystify that might account for the "airship" on an intelligible basis.

There are men who see queer things when they don't have a gun and others who encounter wonders of an early morn or even at dewy eve when it has been more dewy than the law allows. Of course they saw something, but what it was nobody seems to be able to say with any sort of intelligible accuracy. A Sacramento man wandering in the immediate vicinity of a brewery, saw a great light and a dark mass moving up and down the sky. The "dark mass" and the red light is the favorite shape which the uncanny thing assumes. There is vague talk of patents, but nothing tangible in the shape of applications or patents on file. Nobody seems to be able to describe what they have seen except in the most general way. This is the silly season, and a set of graceless jokers might have fun with all California by turning loose a dozen wildcat balloons that would wheel and circle and flame through the sky.

The Oroville people, by the way, laugh at the statement that anything like an "airship" has been built in their neighborhood and scout the whole story as a fake. But there is lots of testimony on the other side and it may speak for itself.

George D. Collins, an attorney of this city, says, for instance, that not only is the airship a veritable, palpating fact, but what is more—he knows the man who made it, and who soars by himself through the star-lit heavens, causing a maze and wonderment among the lowly ones of the earth beneath. Mr. Collins, however, is bound by a double-locked oath of secrecy not to divulge the name of the inventor—for the present at least. He says the airshiponaut is his client and has applied for a patent upon his wonderful machine. If the experiments now being made prove successful, and the patent be granted, then Mr. Collins will introduce his modest client to an applauding world and assist in placing the laurels on his brow. The lawyer confesses that he knows nothing about the mechanisms or the motive power of the cloud-skimmer for the very simple reason that the inventor told him nothing about it. The airship man will trust no one, not even lawyers, displaying in this latter respect a mark of wisdom that distinguishes him as a true genius. If the creation of the inventor fulfills his expectations, then he will give it to the world, at so much a gift. Until he comes down from the clouds, however, and discloses his identity, or unlocks the padlock that now hangs suspended from the lips of Mr. Collins, the man of the machine will be unknown to fame.

"This airship is not a creation of fancy, but an existing fact," says Mr. Collins. "I have not seen the new wonder, but I represent the inventor, and speak knowingly when I say that he has made a machine which skims through the air with the ease and grace of a bird. What is probably more to the point, the helmsman is in absolute control of the movements of the vessel. The vessel can be made to rise to any altitude desired, describe circles or take an abrupt angle.

At present I am under a solemn pledge of secrecy not to make public the name of the inventor, though I may say that he is a resident of San Francisco and has been for more than seven years past. The greater portion of his time has been devoted to the perfection of this airship. He has spent thousands of dollars—not less than \$100,000 I should say—and is now of the opinion that he has at last solved the mystery of aerial flight. He has tried it under every possible weather condition, and the vessel has behaved beautifully through it all. Last night he was out in the storm and I was informed by him to-day that the airship did everything expected of it. He sailed across the Golden Gate and over Alcatraz Island to the other side of the bay, where he landed. When off the island the wind struck the vessel with terrific force, but she stood up bravely through it all.

"There is one error which I wish to correct, and that is concerning voices said to have been heard on the airship. The inventor tells me that he has never taken any one with him on these night voyages. He supposes the impression of voices arose from the clanking noise made by the machinery.

"If everything goes well the name of the inventor will be given to the public within two weeks. The application for a patent was sent off four days ago, and will probably receive immediate attention. What the motive power of the airship is I do not know, though I have an idea that it is compressed air. In fact, I am about as ignorant of the actual workings of this wonderful creation as any one for the very good reason that my client has told me practically nothing. He will not trust anyone for fear his idea may be stolen."

Now comes Night Clerk McGovern of the California Hotel, who solemnly avers that he saw a peculiar combination of moving lights in the skies that may have been the airship. Mr. McGovern is accustomed to being up of nights, and he is a reliable man, not prone to excitement, and of an unimaginative nature, as most night clerks are.

"About 2 o'clock last Thursday morning," he says, "I saw in the heavens two white lights moving slowly to the westward. They looked like two stars joined together. At intervals a red light appeared between the two white lights. My attention was directed to the phenomenon by a crowd of men who were observing the object from the corner of Kearny and Bush streets. I watched the lights for half an hour and, during that time, they moved about a tenth of the distance across the heavens. I could not determine how the lights were suspended in the air, for, on account of the darkness of the night, I could see nothing but the blazing lights."

Additional testimony was collected last night in favor of the existence of the airship. Neil Rearden, a policeman attached to the Seventeenth-street police station, detected the bright lights of the sky-skimmer about 6:45 o'clock last evening. He saw the white and red lights moving rapidly through space, and, fearing that some one was making away with a Mission drug store, the faithful and alert policeman at once ran to the nearest alarm box, at Twelfth and Folsom streets, and notified his superiors. The patrol wagon was sent out, but when it reached Rearden's beat the supposed airship had changed its course and was over another man's beat. The alarm, however, called out Sergeant Monahan, Corporal Heggerty and Policemen Montanya and Folsom, who were in the station-house when the wakeful Rearden sent in his message.

The officers at once rushed out on the street, prepared to charge the night rider of the skies with disturbing the peace of the Mission. They saw the lights in the heavens, but on account of the distance could not recognize them as the illuminators of any drug store in their district. They went as far as Capp and Seventeenth streets, watching the floating beacons. At that corner a crowd of people had collected, also watching the lights.

"The ship, or whatever it was, had two lights, one appearing to be much larger than the other," said Corporal Heggerty, in describing the apparition. "The larger was a white light, and the smaller a red one. The red light appeared to be beneath the white light and in a line with it. At first I thought it was all a hoax about an airship, but I was very much surprised when I saw the lights. They swept along at a lively rate, and soon disappeared. The machine, if such it was, appeared to have come from the direction of Mount Diablo. Its course was to the south and west, toward the ocean. It passed over Twin Peaks, and then we lost sight of it. Of course, we could not tell whether it dropped into the ocean or not. Twin Peaks were in the way."

Sergeant Monahan and Policemen Folsom and Montanya corroborated the statements of the Corporal. All the policemen saw the moving lights in the heavens, and were correspondingly impressed and astonished.

Policeman Moriarty is yet another star-wearer who saw those wonderful lights last night. Mr. Moriarty is a very careful observer, and nothing that crosses his beat escapes his watchful eyes.

"Shortly before 7 o'clock this evening," he said, "I was at the corner of Mission and Third streets, and saw what I suppose was the airship floating in the sky. I watched it cross Mission street. A number of people on the street also saw it, and watched it until it passed out of sight."

The course of the mysterious aerial lights is traced from Mission and Third streets through the Mission district to Ocean View, for they were seen at the latter place last night by numerous people. Conductor Phil Murray of the San Mateo electric line saw the supposed airship about 6:50 o'clock, when his car was at Ocean View. He directed the attention of his passengers to the lights in the sky, and they left the car to observe them. Frank Page, the motorman of the car, also saw them. Page and Murray informed Receiver Bohls and Timer Peter Leonard of the remarkable sight when the car arrived at Thirtieth street after returning from Holy Cross Cemetery.

It is believed in Oakland that all the stories about an airship floating over the town are the results of practical jokes with hot-air balloons. The witnesses all say that the supposed airship consisted principally of a light, and was seen over Blair Park.

Superintendent Tiffany of the Piedmont electric road said: "I made a thorough investigation to-day of the story told by some of our men of an alleged airship seen floating over St. Mary's College on Friday evening. My opinion is that the object was only a toy balloon. Ever since last summer when we had balloon ascensions at Blair Park the small boys of this portion of the city have been wild over ballooning.

They have great sport sending up toy paper balloons with miniature parachutes attached to them. The favorite plan is to attach oil-soaked rags to these toys, setting them afire and enjoying the spectacle of an aerial conflagration on a small scale. This has been repeatedly done to my knowledge in the vicinity where the light was seen Friday night. That is the solution of this so-called mystery. So far as I could learn among our men, none of them saw anything but a light.

"I had a long talk with Selby Yost, one our motormen, and he admitted that he saw nothing but a moving light in the sky. It might have been a meteor or a toy balloon—or an ocular delusion, for that matter. The airship proposition was, I found, not considered for a moment."

C.B. Morgan, formerly a School Director of Oakland, and a very conservative and highly educated man, says he saw a peculiar object in the sky yesterday afternoon while standing in front of his house at Brush and Fourteenth streets, Oakland. He said:

"I was called to the sidewalk by my son, who told me that a man had discovered the long-looked-for flying machine. When I first saw it, the machine was high up in the clouds in the direction of Blair's Park. The man on the corner, whose name I do not know, said he had seen it rise from the direction of the park and sail westward at a low level for almost twenty minutes. Then it rose to a much higher altitude and continued its westward course. Just at this time I first caught sight of it.

"It appeared to be a balloon. That which aroused my curiosity most was the change of course from westward to directly east. It moved very rapidly when it changed to the easterly direction, and soon passed out of sight over the low foothills back of East Oakland."

Brother Walther, Director of St. Mary's College, said:

"I gave no special thought to the light that was seen Friday night, because there was nothing to attract my attention to it until I heard some of the people about the college discussing the airship story. I found, upon talking to several students and members of the faculty, that none who observed the illumination gave any thought to it except to surmise it was a meteor, although it moved rather slowly for that. Nothing, I learned, was visible except the light, and that was of such a character as to cause no special comment. Speaking of airships, the consensus of opinion among the college people was that the idea was absurd. I am confident that vivid imagination has contributed largely in manufacturing out of this speck of light or flame an inhabitant of the sky. The successful operation of an airship under the conditions here described would be impossible in my judgment. Besides, had this been a ship of the air, under absolute control, there is no question that the State of California is not big enough to have concealed it from view until the inventor was ready to make a trial. On the whole there is nothing in the affair, save this, that there was a light seen in the sky on Friday night by a number of people in this vicinity, none of whom gave it a second thought. The airship tale, I imagine, is a huge joke."

George H. Strong, who has been in the patent business for many years, and who knows all about the various attempts that have been made to perfect flying machines, said last night at his Oakland home that he did not believe that the machine claimed to have been seen in the sky was anything more than a hot-air balloon.

"There has been nothing that has been described that would not be the description of a hot-air balloon," said Mr. Strong. "I do not believe that any such ship, of such a size, could be started from any city and returned to any place in this State where it could be concealed. It is now reported to have been roaming about the skies for several nights. During this time it must have rested somewhere, and to my mind it would have been impossible to have hidden it where it would not have been found."

Elmer Benjamin, a salesman employed by Sherman, Clay & Co., is said to be the inventor of the brilliant piece of mechanism so many persons say they have seen trailing the sky nearly every night during the last week. Benjamin formerly practiced dentistry, but for the last two or three years he has occupied his present position.

HORNBROOK OR COLLINS?

Has the Famed Oriental Warrior Changed His Name?

OROVILLE, November 23.—Nothing can be obtained here to verify the statement as to the flying machine made by George D. Collins of Oakland. Collins is unknown here. There is no wealthy man living here who came from Maine, or any other state, in the past seven years, and there is no one here that a diligent search can uncover who knows anything at all about a flying ship having been invented here or having left here for Sacramento. Herewith are given some of the views of prominent citizens:

"I have read the airship article in the San Francisco 'Chronicle' and consider it a hoax. In fact, I know it to be, so far as its hailing from Oroville or the vicinity is concerned."—E.W. Fogg.

"There is not a word of truth in the airship story. Such a structure could not have been made in this vicinity without some of our citizens knowing something of it. It is a fake of the rankest kind."—John C. Gray.

"I never heard of an airship in this vicinity. There has been a great deal of wind up here lately, but

no ship. I think it a pure fake."—Warren Sexton.

"The 'Chronicle' story of the airship is true. It was inflated with 'Chronicle'-'Call' explanations of their change of opinions on the silver question, rose light and airy and sailed straight for the moon on November 3d."—A.F. Jones.

WHAT SACRAMENTANS SAW.

Bright Lights That Moved in the Heavens, and a Weird Craft.

SACRAMENTO, November 23.—Since last Wednesday morning when the first airship story was sprung on an incredulous and skeptical world the absorbing topic has been this aerial mystery. And to-night again hundreds of people claim to have seen moving lights in the heaven, but no ship. The only point on which the lucky observers of Tuesday evening agree is that all saw a big light, as bright as one or two arc lights, moving southwesterly at different heights. In order to compare the statements of these observers "The Examiner" reporter called on some of them this evening, and these are the tales as they told them:

Emil Wengel [?], barkeeper at the Sacramento brewery, on Twenty-eighth street—I saw the light but did not see the machine. I heard a voice from the machine declare they were bound for San Francisco.

Charles O. Broyles, a mechanic, who was in the same company—I saw the light and heard singing in the vicinity of the light and recognized the tune as "Just tell them that you saw me." I could not distinguish the words, though recognizing the tune. When the light got about to N street it turned about due east. (A more sudden change, of course, than any one else noticed.)

J.H. Vogel, bartender—I saw the light and above it a dark body dimly outlined in the form of an egg, with the small end forward. I heard a muffled buzzing of machinery. (He was with the others close to the electric car line.)

The man who retains the most vivid picture in his mind of this aerial voyager is R.L. Lowry, formerly an employee of the street railroad, living now at Twenty-eighth and O streets. He said:

I was standing near the Sacramento brewery when my attention was directed skyward by hearing a voice up there call out: "Throw her up higher; she'll hit the steeple," evidently mistaking the tower on the brewery for a church steeple. Then I saw the light. It seemed like a light within a globular glass covering that magnified it. Above the light I saw two men seated as though on bicycle frames and working with a bicycle movement. I heard one of them say: "We will get to San Francisco about half-past 12," but not mentioning whether midnight or after noon. Above these two men, who seemed to be working their passage, was a kind of mezzanine box capable of holding two or more people, but I saw no others. Above this was a cigar-shaped body of some length. There were wheels at the side like the side wheels on Fulton's old steamboat.

Charles H. Lusk, assistant cashier of the street railroad—I saw the light only. It seemed about 1,000 feet high. It grew dim and brighter again as if passing through a mist. I saw the craft rise and fall and vary its course as though guided by an intelligent mind.

This evening the lower part of the city was again thrown into excitement by the appearance of a bright light about forty degrees above the horizon. It was watched along K street from Fourth to the river by hundreds of people, who all declare that it moved southwesterly until the buildings shut off the view, and then they moved down and many followed it until in the distance it seemed about ten degrees above the horizon. But no one saw any outline of a ship, though one grey-headed enthusiast solemnly declared that he heard the sound of a banjo or guitar and felt sure that there were ladies in the party.

Captain Nick E. White watched it intently. He says he saw the light change its course as if it had made a circuit, and that he distinctly saw five lights during this maneuver. Hundreds of men testify to seeing this light pass over the city all the way from Twenty-fourth street west to the river, but no one was lucky enough to see the airship.

[Cartoons by Swinnerton: Had been looking upon the airship when it was red (drunk carried by policeman into paddy wagon). Invented the airship (nut with wheels in his head). The airship bug (flying around man's head). Floating in a troubled sea of light and shade (as drunk sees streetlamp). One man who saw it (restrained in mental institution).]

[SF Chronicle, 11/23, p.12. THE APARTMENT OF THE MAN WHO COLLINS INTIMATES IS THE INVENTOR OF THE AIRSHIP.]

1896 November 23 (Mon.) (San Francisco, Calif.) Evening Post, p. 1.

EXTRA / A MYSTERY OF THE SKIES / News of the Flying Ship Is Eagerly Sought / Its Flight Witnessed by Many Observers / Inventor and Machine in Hiding / Lawyer Collins Says He Has Not Seen It and Knows Very Little of It. /

The aerial mystery is the sole absorbing topic of conversation throughout the length and breadth of the city.

Every one queries of his friend, "Have you seen it?" and following a negative answer comes the question, "Well, have you seen anybody else that has seen it?"

Certainly there are people in large numbers both in this city and in Sacramento who say they have beheld a rare phenomenon coursing the air on three different nights last week. In Sacramento so close did the wondrous affair come to the surface of the earth that one observer heard an occupant of the wonderful ship declare that he was bound for San Francisco, and another witness who perceived the passage of the mechanical bird heard the music of a banjo twanging out the tune, "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me," as the freak machine passed out of hearing.

Whether the aerial navigator did or did not tell his objective point there are people in this city who are willing to take their oath that on Saturday and Sunday nights they witnessed a wonderful spectacle in the shape of an oval shaped machine skimming through the air with the ease and grace of a bird, and lit up from the inside with red and white lights.

One of these observers was no less a person than Policeman Neal Rearden of the Seventeenth-street station, who, after witnessing the apparition for a few minutes became convinced that a Mission-street drug store had been called to glory, and he very promptly sent in a fire alarm, but before the engines had reached his point of vision the phenomenon had passed out of existence.

There is only one man in this city who knows of the existence of any successful air ship, and he is George D. Collins, the attorney, and he only knows of it, he says, through the representations of the inventor, who dropped in upon him suddenly at his office last week and expressed his desire to get a patent out for an air ship, which he declared had been successfully tested.

Mr. Collins says that his client started in to tell of the wonderful powers of his invention, but the lawyer told him that until he brought the model of the machine discussions on these lines might be [(post)poned]. The inventor therein fully concurred, and left Mr. Collins' office with the promise that today he would return with a complete model of the ship, in which he declared he had been making excursions for some time past.

He was to return with the model this afternoon, but up to 3 o'clock he had not reached the offices of his attorneys.

This morning the offices of Attorney Collins, in the Crocker building, were crowded. There were reporters representing all the newspapers of the city, artists lying in wait to sketch the features of the mysterious man of the strange machine, should he put in an appearance, representatives of the leading scientific and local societies, strangers and cranks who had come to visit the lawyer to offer suggestions and to make inquiries.

After admitting to his private office a "Post" reporter, Mr. Collins wearily asked whether the mission of the visitor also concerned the air ship.

"I have told my connection with this matter so often," said the attorney, "that I can almost repeat what I have previously said word for word but to be brief I will tell you that much that has been attributed to my lips is absolutely false.

"I have once and for all never seen the air ship and actually know very little about it. Last week a man came to me whom I know to be responsible in a financial way and in every sense in the full possession of his mental faculties. He told me that he had invented an air ship, and that he had successfully solved the problem of aerial navigation. He told me that he had made his way to this city in his flying machine, and that since his arrival he had made several trips at night in order to test his invention, which had proved to be successful in every working detail.

"He told me that he wanted to secure a patent for it at once and asked me to proceed in the matter without delay. /p.3/ My response was that I could do nothing in the matter until I had a model of the ship in hand, and with positive promises that he would bring me the same as soon as he could complete it he left my office and I have not seen him since. He did not tell me the locality in which he had the ship concealed, and he expressed the greatest anxiety, lest some one should behold his invention and rob him of his ideas. Of course I have heard of the remarkable sights which people have been beholding in the skies at night, but have no grounds for believing that what they have seen is the airship which my client professes to have invented.

"It is of course a little singular that the news of the invention and the phenomenon recently seen at night should come into public notice at the same time, but I have not seen the machine as yet and until I do I shall be skeptical of its existence despite all the false statements which have been put in my mouth concerning the matter."

1896 November 23 (Mon.) San Jose (CA) Daily Herald, p. 3.

THAT AIRSHIP. / A Flying Journey to New York Late This Month. / Cheap Fare For the Round Trip—
Lookout For the Stars. /

A grand excursion to New York and return will be given on the 35th of the month. The famous Airship, the Sky-Scraper, will leave at 9 A.M. on that date. Fare for the round trip, \$4.33. All who anticipate going should communicate with the agents at Eleventh and Santa Clara streets at once.

Doubtless the public will be glad to know that they will have such an early opportunity of taking a flying trip to the East. The fare is so reasonable that almost any one can afford the trip and it will be made so quickly that but little time will be lost.

The start will be made from the elevate(d) station at 11th and Santa Clara where the ship will be moored on the evening of the 24(,) the date on which she returns from a trip to China, The departure will be at 9 o'clock sharp. Sacramento will be reached at 9:03½ and a stop made for passengers there. Breakfast will be taken at Salt Lake at 9:30.

The Sky-Scraper will then rise much higher than before on her journey, crossing the Rocky Mountains and over the Mississippi valley at a great elevation. She will pass over Chicago at a lower altitude in order to allow her passengers a view of that city. She will not stop, however, in the Windy City, as all her births (sic) have been secured by those who board her at Salt Lake. Passengers will be landed at the fifth Avenue Hotel, New York for dinner at 2 P.M. After enjoying the sights of the city and taking in a roof garden, Vanderville, the ship will leave for San Jose, Arriving there at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 35th. The return trip being in the night will be made a little slower. Passengers who desire can remain in their births until 9 A.M.

Captain Longridge desires to impress upon all that they must keep their heads inside the windows on the return trip lest they should hit a star. The Animal Navigation and Lala Palula Flying Company will not hold itself liable to any one who is hurt by hitting a star if they stick their heads out the windows.

Secure your tickets at once.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) San Jose (Calif.) Daily Mercury, p. 8.

MYSTIC AIRSHIP. / Said to Have Passed Over This City Last Evening. / FLYING LIGHT MOVING EAST. / Assertions That the Strange Visitor Sailed Across the Heavens in the Direction of Mount Hamilton. /

The mysterious airship, which startled many people in Sacramento Wednesday night and which was claimed to have been seen by several persons from a street car in Oakland Saturday evening and again over Sacramento last evening, was reported to have passed over this city about 11 o'clock last night.

The strange air vessel is said to have suddenly come within sight of a group of people on East Santa Clara street, near Naglee Park.

Persons in the group claimed to have seen the ship distinctly and said that the paddles could be plainly seen revolving.

Frank Everett, a resident of Santa Cruz, who is visiting in this city, made the following statement last evening: "I was returning from East San Jose about 11 o'clock last evening when I noticed a crowd of people standing in the street and seated in vehicles on Santa Clara street, near Naglee Park. I asked what was the matter, and they stated that an airship had just passed above them. I looked up and could plainly distinguish a bright light passing through the air in the direction of Mount Hamilton. Several of the crowd said they had plainly seen the airship as it passed above them and had been able to distinguish the paddles, used as propellers. The people were strangers to me, but seemed to be much surprised at what they had seen. The light I saw was moving in a zigzag manner.

H. Erich of this city stated that as he was driving a buggy from East San Jose to this city his attention was attracted by the crowd on Santa Clara street. He stopped and asked what was the matter. He was told that an airship had been seen and saw a light darting through the darkness in the direction of Mount Hamilton. He said he was unable to detect what the light was as it was only visible to him for a few seconds and then disappeared. He only recognized Everett in the crowd and received from him the same statement regarding the assertions of other members of the crowd in regard to seeing the airship, as is given above. He knew no one else among these congregating at the spot.

Owing to the late hour at which the report was received in the city it was impossible to locate any of the persons who have seen the strange visitor. / [continues from SF Call, 11/23]

1896 November 23 (Mon. eve.) Woodland, Calif., Daily Democrat, p. 2.

Davisville Doings. /....

It seems that my aerial bicycle, of which mention was made in the Democrat several years ago, is still a thing of wonder to those whose eyes see without understanding it. Shortly after its conception, my friend Harry completed a small machine, in which we made a trial trip at night. On that occasion we were sighted from Stockton and San Jose, but as we kept well up in the air, we passed as a slow-moving meteor, but on our second voyage of last Tuesday evening the steering gear did not work very well and we came near getting mixed up with the Eton church steeples of Sacramento. The machine is among the possibilities, but as yet it does not come up to our ideal, which is 400 miles an hour and perfect control as to height and distance.

1896 November 23 (Mon.) Woodland, Calif., Daily Democrat, p. 3.

Capay Cullings.

Capay, Nov. 23. Several Capay residents insist that they saw the airship last night about 9 o'clock. It was in a southeasterly direction and slowly moving southward. / 24. We haven't lost any airships.

Wed. eve. Nov. 25. Grafton Gossip, p. 3. Knights Landing, Nov. 25.—Check your baggage by the airship.

City News. It is all very well to poke fun at the airship, but it will be a reality some day.
27.2. The supposed airship may be one of Flammarion's shooting stars that failed to shoot, but lost its reckoning and is wandering about in space.
Airships, otherwise known as Calloons [Call-oons], continue to go up in various parts of the country and of course hot air is not a factor in the occurrence; everything is expected to go up since McKinley's election.

1896 November 23 (Mon. eve.) Woodland, Calif., Daily Democrat, p. 3.

AERIAL NAVIGATION. / The Airship Said to Have Been Invented by Dr. Benjamin. / Formerly Resided in Woodland and Said He Had an Invention That Would Revolutionize the World. /

A dispatch from San Francisco states that the airship which is said to have been floating around in the air for several days is the invention of Dr. Elmer H. Benjamin, who is a dentist and was for a short time a resident of Woodland.

He first commenced visiting Woodland about eight years ago. He was traveling for Sherman & Clay, as a piano agent. He introduced himself to Dr. Holmes and said he had practiced dentistry under Dr. Hill, of San Francisco.

His visits after that time were quite frequent for six or seven years. He has not been here for about a year and a half, but Fred Holmes saw him in Sacramento about seven months ago.

He frequently went to the office of Dr. Holmes, who considered him a good dentist, and he treated several patients for Dr. Holmes.

He had neither a diploma nor a recommendation, and hence opened no office of his own.

He never mentioned airships during conversations with Dr. Holmes, but one day he patted him on the back and remarked: "Doc, I am working on an invention that will one day revolutionize the world."

There are many residents of this city who remember Dr. Benjamin, and some of them believe that the airship is a reality and that he is the inventor.

Saw the Airship.

Dr. Amiel Morris, of this city, was in Sacramento Sunday evening. While in the Saddle Rock Restaurant, between 6 and 7 o'clock, he was called out by the proprietor to see the so-called airship. He saw what appeared to be a ball of fire, about 600 feet high, southeast of the town of Washington. It was in sight nearly an hour.

NOVEMBER 24

1896 November 24 (Tues.) (Chico, Calif.) Morning Chronicle-Record, p.3.

THAT WONDERFUL AIRSHIP. / Many Chico People say they Saw It Sunday Night.

It is often said (and truthfully, too) that rumors fly. However this may be, the rumor that there had been seen in Sacramento and other places, a queer ship, with electric lights attached and carrying passengers, that floated through air as easily as ordinary ships float on the "mighty deep," flew to this city. Not only was the flying rumor current here, but, if we are to believe many good citizens of Chico, the ship also flew near here.

This remarkable occurrence is said to have happened Sunday evening, at a few minutes before 8 o'clock. The ship, as described by one who claims to have seen it, was floating along over the foothills to the eastward of this city. It appeared to be about 1000 feet high and had two electric lights attached. One was hanging below the ship and cast a wide ray of clear white light beneath the aerial traveler. The other light was attached to the bow or front end of the ship and looked like a locomotive headlight.

The ship was traveling in a northerly direction and as it passed between the gazers and the moon, which had just arisen above the lofty peaks of the Sierras, its outline was plainly discernable. The ship remained in view for more than a minute and then disappeared in the dark clouds in the north.

This is really a remarkable instance, and if we are to believe many in Chico, whose veracity there is no room to doubt, this wonderful conveyance, ship, balloon, or whatever it might be, passed near our city Sunday evening. It is said to have been seen over Sacramento on the same evening at about 5:30 o'clock, but it seemed to be going in a southwesterly direction.

It is said that the machine was built near Oroville, and a dispatch from that place says that there may be some truth in it, as a man, who has been experimenting with different gases, has been around there for some time.

A San Francisco attorney named George D. Collins says:

"It is perfectly true that there is at last a successful airship... (inventor from Maine, flew from Oroville over Sacra, over Capitol)... and landed at a spot on this side of the Bay."

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Daily Morning Union (Grass Valley, Calif.), p. 3.

Was It an Air Ship? / A Strange and Startling Object Seen Sailing Through the Skies Saturday Night.

Reports are current to the effect that an air ship which has been sailing in the skies over Sacramento, San Jose and other cities toured over the eastern portion of Nevada City at a late hour Saturday night.

A number of people who happened to be up at that hour of the night vouch that a strange and startling object was seen sailing through the eastern heavens, the object evidently being headed south. There was a strong light which cast a shadow from its high altitude. Among those who saw the alleged airship is a prominent physician and several others who do not hold a certificate in the Liars' Club. Nov. 24, 1; 25,4. Fake arsp in SF.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Los Angeles (CA) Express (eve.), p. 4.

THAT MYSTERIOUS LIGHT.

The mysterious light attached to the strange body in the heavens has been seen not only in Sacramento but also in San Francisco. While there is a good deal of joking and incredulity manifested about the aerial ship, and the story of Attorney Collins' wealthy and inventive client, yet there can be no mistake about the testimony of the persons both cumulative and corroborative, who saw the strange light moving about in the heavens at Sacramento, Oakland and San Francisco. Prof. Langley, who has done a good deal of experimenting in the way of aerial navigation, apparently discredits the matter.

It has been stated by scientists who have given much time and thought to aeronautics, that before the century closed a successful appliance would be devised with which terrestrial bipeds would be able to soar like birds. If this thing is sure to occur it might as well occur in California as anywhere else. Probably it was the superior climate of California that attracted the alleged inventor of the aerial machine that displays the strange and effulgent luminary. It may be that some practical jokers, with a toy aerial body to which a light had been attached have been operating coincidentally in the three cities above named. Suffice it to know that this phenomenon has been witnessed by people who would scorn to prevaricate.

It is to be hoped that the matter is neither a hoax nor a phase of whimsical joking. The discovery of an aerial machine that operates with the ease and grace that Attorney Collins describes concerning the invention of his client would be a great boon to mankind. From the period of the Renaissance man has been studying the question of aeronautics but none of them have progressed any further than "Darius Green and his flying machine." Many thousands of dollars have been invested in the experiments, but no

successful tests have been made or anything that promised success assured. That the ancients appreciated the inestimable advantages of the celerity that flying through the air brings, was attested by Herodotus, who in speaking of the warrior Driokiete said that he could only be swifter had he the wings of Hermes or a contrivance to fly with himself. It has been the hope and aspiration of all ages that some means should be found for traveling through the air. It has always been the idea, though this has not been borne out by the meteorologists of today, that flights of machines through the air could be effected quicker than by terrestrial locomotion.

According to the dispatches yesterday the machine of the unknown client of Collins breasted a severe storm and came out successful. If it is a machine operated by a man that is causing hundreds to wonder up north, then the scheme of successful aeronautics has been discovered. The failures in this direction, however, have been no numerous that most people will be content to wonder and await developments.

No wonder San Francisco is the home of the airship. People there are so flighty.

If the light seen by the people of the north is attached to a flying machine, the inventor need not worry about the wolf. He will realize the aphorism about the predilection of the people of this age to push a good thing along.

1896 November 24 (Tues. morn.) Los Angeles Times, p. 6.

Is There An Airship?

The San Francisco papers, especially the Call, devote considerable space to a new flying machine said to have been invented near Oroville, county seat of Butte county, which is reported to have made a trip through mid-air from that place to San Francisco during the past week. If so, the old Icaran story ceases to be a graceful fiction, worthy only of insertion in the Latin reading books with which modern classic instructors seek to enliven the dull grammatical studies of Tandley, Murray and Dr. Peter Bullion.

The solemn silence that surrounds this long-needed contribution to the needs of modern science is said to be attributable to the difficulty experienced by inventors in obtaining a patent for such an invention. It seems that, some twenty years ago, a man designed an airship which was all well enough in its models, but failed when applied to larger vessels built for the purposes of aerial transportation. It also is recorded that the inventor had no difficulty in selling large blocks of the capital stock of his company, but the dividends declared were of the Fenian persuasion. Hence the Patent Office at Washington, in order to prevent what our Semitic friends would call a "geschwindle," resolved to issue no more patents until the success of such a machine became an assured fact.

If the picture of the aerial vessel given by the Call be a correct one, the new machine has no particular amount of beauty to waste upon "the desert and illimitable air" in which it pursues the path marked out by its navigator, who goes from Oroville to the metropolis, like Bryant's waterfowl, "lone, wandering, but not lost." It is as ugly as a carrion buzzard and can probably fly much further without pausing to regale itself upon the festering carcass of the traditional government mule.

What will be the consequences if this uncanny greyhound of the zenith is an absolute reality? A garroter can leave Oroville after supper, rob a man at the "panhandle" of Golden Gate Park and be at home again in the metropolis of "suffering Butte" by bedtime. Should he afterward be arrested he will at once proceed to establish an alibi on the ground that he was at home in the land of hydraulic nozzles and bedrock flumes during the entire evening.

Again, suppose the noble army of "gay Lotharios" see[s] fit to utilize this newly-invented jigger, what is to become of the husbands of delinquent better halves? A man can run off with another man's wife at dark and the erring couple will get their breakfast in Salt Lake and their supper in Chicago the next day.

Still worse if this thing is really an undeniable success what will be the fate of the railroad and steamship lines? If a man can step out of the elevator at the Hollenbeck and be landed in San Francisco inside of six hours, who will care to consume two days on board the Santa Rosa, or swelter away twenty hours in one of Mr. Huntington's snail-like trains over the hot and arid plains of the San Joaquin Valley? And will Mr. Pullman put on a line of palace flying machines to tax the eyelids of his fellow-mortals at the rate of 5 cents per wink?

And just imagine this great monster during a heated political campaign, with Mr. Bryan making a dozen speeches per day (a task to which he is quite equal, judged in the light of past events.) beginning at Lincoln, Neb., in the morning and closing up at Helena, Mont., in the eventide. There is no telling where this evil is going to end. Should royalty approve this "blahsted Yankee" invention, the Prince of Wales can go to Monte Carlo to "buck the tiger" in the morning and be back by sundown for his game of baccarat

at Tranby Croft.

Well, "seeing is believing," and whenever this phantom ship shall arrive at Los Angeles, under the skillful pilotage of some stalwart Vanderdecker from Thompson's Flat or Nimshew Ravine, The Times will believe that the skill of man has conquered the ozone, as it has long since subdued the sea and made the yeasty waves of ocean to be his willing servants. Till then we are content to wait.

(Modesto) Daily Evening News, 11/24, p. 1. Brief Social News.

Modesto is not behind in having seen the mysterious flying machine. Several people claim to have seen the remarkable aerial traveler going eastward last night at 11 o'clock. All that could be seen were two lights, one brighter than the other. It traveled quite rapidly but steadily in a horizontal direction.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Napa (Calif.) Daily Journal, p. 3.

THE FLYING SHIP. / Was It Seen by Napa Citizens a Few Weeks Ago? /

Editor Journal—Several of our townsmen will recall what was supposed at the time to be a strangely appearing meteor moving along the northern sky nearly a month ago. Its singularity consisted in the slowness of its motion and its elongated and sectional appearance as it rode the upper air. All who beheld it pronounced it a thing of beauty, and wondered at the duration of its flight. Since the "aerial ship" excitement in other portions of the State and the announcement by many witnesses that a sky traveler bearing electric lights had been seen moving slowly through space, it has been thought more than probable by at least one of our citizens (Mr. Kennedy) that this "meteor" was in fact an aerial motor, possibly on its trial trip. It was moving, Wall says, "on a level plane, and remained in sight at least one minute." J.C. Jacobson kept in it view while he was traveling "at least one block" on the street. Notwithstanding these witnesses have been pronounced "a brace of nocturnal liars," they persist in their statements, and it is more than likely the facts will sustain them. Wall is especially enthusiastic, declaring the chain of light in its broken appearance resembled "three illuminated links of celestial sausage." "And it was a beauty," continued Wall, calling to mind that celebrated poem of Wm. C. Bryant addressed to a water fowl:

"Vainly the fowler's eye / Shall mark thy distant flight

To do thee wrong; / As darkly painted

On the crimson sky / Thy figure floats along.

"Just think," still continued the "Boss," "what the close of the 19th century is bringing us—power by gravitation and the ability to fly like a 'bird.' I am proud of the age in which I live, and when I 'go up higher' I will have much news to report from the planet earth, betyerlife." "Yes, it was a ship. I have long expected it but never dreamed it was so near." And Wall moved his repairing "squad" to the next crossing. / Civis.

1896 November 24 (Tues. eve.) Oakland (CA) Enquirer, p. 13.

LIGHTS ALOFT. / Seen in This Vicinity Several Evenings, / By Various People at Widely Separated Points. / As Yet However No One Has Had a View of the Nocturnal Visitor. /

The press dispatches from Sacramento of last Tuesday evening, told of strange lights seen in the sky there during the evening by numerous reputable witnesses, who claimed it was an air ship traveling about apparently at the will of men who were passengers. Naturally the story was discredited and the whole affair denounced as a great hoax. The next day, however, a large number of people were found who testified to having seen the strange visitor, but none were able to say what it was. Among these were the daughters of Mayor Hubbard, R.L. Lowry, J.H. Vogel, E. Wenzel, David Carl, T.P. de Long, Frank Ross, assistant superintendent of the street car line; G.C. Snyder, foreman at the car barn; Charles Lusk, secretary of the company; F.E. Briggs, a motor-man; H.W. Marsh, E. Caverly and M.T. Shelly.

The Sacramento Bee of Wednesday evening says: "Startled citizens last night living at points of the city along a rough diagonal line, yet far distant from each other, declare that they not only saw the phenomenon, but they also heard voices issuing from it in midair—not the whispering of angels, not the sepulchral mutterings of evil spirits but the intelligible words and the merry laughter of humans. At those intervals where the glittering object, as if careless of its obligation to maintain a straightforward course, descended dangerously near the housetops, voices were heard in the sky saying:

"Lift her up, quick; you are making directly for that steeple."

"Then the light in the sky would be seen obeying some mystic touch and ascending to a considerable height, from which it would take up again its southwesterly course. The light sailing along

the line of K street, so it appeared from those in the eastern part of the city, although it appears that after it had passed Fourteenth street it was wafted far south of K. Laughter and words sounding strange in the distance, though fairly intelligible, fell upon the ears of pedestrians along the course of the light who had paused to look up at the novelty."

THE OAKLAND VIEW.

Various residents of this city declare that they also have seen the mysterious light and talk of it as an airship. The first notice of it antedates the dispatches from Sacramento. Six weeks ago a Miss Hagstrom while out riding her bicycle saw and was impressed by the strong light.

Friday evening lights were seen about 5:30 by Charles H. Ellis, armorer of Companies A and F. Selby Yost, a Piedmont motorman, and a number of passengers on his car, W.J. Rhoda and wife of 2042 Broadway, Officer Carson and by an Oakland artist who was in Golden Gate Park during the evening. Attorney S.F. Daniels and his family also saw a light and discussed it for fully thirty minutes before it disappeared. "The light," said he to-day, "looked like a headlight on an electric car and was several hundred yards above the horizon. Balloonists do not go up in the night and travel about in the dark, and while I do not say this is an airship I would not be at all surprised to find that it was. Aerial navigation is sure to be solved sooner or later."

A couple of hours later the same evening a bright light was seen, by a number of people, towards Haywards. It appeared to be traveling northwest, then the course was changed and it disappeared, going eastward. Several people on the Alameda electric car saw it at that time. Miss Wilson, daughter of Captain Wilson of the police force, and her friend, Miss Hunter, accompanied a third young lady to the car about that hour and they saw the mysterious light and they say it followed the course described.

Attorney George Collins of Alameda says that a man who claimed to be the inventor of an airship desired him to secure patents thereon and said he would have a model made and bring it to the attorney. "I have not seen the airship," said Collins last evening, "and do not know whether or not the invention is of any value, but I am not fool enough to say that the testimony of all these people who have seen lights traveling in the heavens are lies. I know that more wonderful things than airships have been invented and am ready to believe that aerial navigation has been solved."

General W.H.H. Hart says he has seen the thing in the air and believes a bona fide discovery has been made.

Mr. Tyler, assistant librarian of the San Francisco Law Library, with his sister, and Mrs. Philbrock, saw the supposed airship Friday, after it was seen in the northern part of Oakland. From this it would have appeared to circle from this city to San Francisco and thence south and around towards Haywards.

MAYOR SUTRO'S VIEWS.

Mayor Sutro of San Francisco says there is not the faintest doubt in his mind that the aerial courser passed over Sutro Heights a short time ago. "I have not seen it," he says, "but some of my people have, and their narratives were told several days before the papers had the story. They say it was not over 500 feet above the ocean when it passed the Heights and appeared to have a search light. I certainly think that some shrewd inventor has solved the problem of aerial navigation and that we will hear all about it within a short time. It would not be any more wonderful than the invention of the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph or the X ray, and it would seem that some one must hit the proper appliances when so many smart men have been working on the problem."

Samuel Foltz, advertising manager of the Call, Colonel Winton, excursion agent of the Southern Pacific Company, M.H. Cohen, a Hayes street car line conductor, and other San Francisco people say they have seen the strange light and are confident some one has solved aerial navigation.

The Enquirer's correspondent at Berkeley sends in the following:

BERKELEY'S CONTRIBUTION.

"Berkeley is not behind other towns in receiving the honor of visits from the Collins-Benjamin airship and can claim precedence over all other places in the State in one respect, for the mysterious visitor seems to have been observed in the University town before even Sacramento got a glimpse of it. D. Lapham, real estate dealer of Stanford place, declares that he saw the wandering light three weeks ago, though he is not able to equal other witnesses in description of the 'dark body,' bird-like oscillating motions or albatross wings.

"It has been suggested that Mr. Lapham saw the search light of the Chutes in San Francisco. Last night a body of men were on Shattuck avenue gazing intently skywards and mystifying passersby directing their attention to a moving light in the heavens, but the latter was invisible to those not in the joke.

LAST EVENING'S SHOW.

The mysterious light of the heavens was seen last evening by Mrs. E.H. Crawford and Miss Kate N. Bassett, who reside at 522 Tenth street. The ladies after some hesitation told their experiences. "I went to my south window about 10:30 last evening," said Mrs. Crawford, "to see if it was raining. I noticed a light

off in the south and watched it because it was the only light visible. In a few moments it disappeared and later came to view again. It looked like the search lights I have seen at the World's Fair and in New York City. I called Miss Bassett and we both watched it for fully fifteen minutes and until it finally disappeared.

"When first seen it appeared to me moving away from us and gradually sank until out of our sight. Miss Bassett said it must be an electric light with a tree waving in front of it but this was not the case as it was too high and then I looked this morning but there was no tree anywhere near where we saw the light. Neither of us saw an airship but we did see lights that we do not understand and shall take much interest in watching this evening and for sometime to come to see whether the light is to be seen any more.

"Before I went to bed, about 11:15, I again went to the window and the light had returned and was moving eastward slowly but steadily. I could not tell how far away the light was or anything about it, but having read the accounts in the papers concluded that the light must be the same as seen by others in this vicinity."

p.4. It is now ex-Attorney General Hart who comes forward to vouch for the truthfulness of the airship story. Is there any other lawyer who covets the same kind of advertising which Mr. Collins has been obtaining?

A couple of planets shining in the blue overhead and a hot air balloon with lantern attached, let loose by a practical joker, can do wonders in convincing the intelligent people of two cities that there is an aerial ship whizzing about in the evening sky. Last night belief in the Oroville airship sank when Venus went down in the West, but it rose again when Jupiter came up in the East. The supposition was that the marvelous craft had circumnavigated the globe from west to east and was coming up on the other side.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Oakland (Calif.) Times, p. 1.

AIR SHIPS SURE ENOUGH. / Toy Balloons Captured Out in Berkeley.

A portion of the air ship mystery has been solved. Last night two young men were discovered sending up balloons from the neighborhood of Blair park.

The balloons went up all right, but owing to the strong south wind that was blowing, they were driven directly over the town of Berkeley. They passed so low that it could be easily seen that the light was kept in the air by several toy balloons fastened together.

The boys admitted that they had been sending up the balloons for several nights "just for fun."

Nov. 28,3. AIRSHIP LITERATURE. / Librarian Peterson Makes a List of Books and Articles.

The preparation of special list upon important topics of the day is a new inauguration in our public library. These lists are placed in a prominent place in the library and the inquirer is shown at a glance everything in the library upon the question. The following was recently posted:

Early Aeronautics, Harper's 39:145.

Flying Machines, Pop. Sci Mo. 8:453.

Aerial Navigation, Cent. 42:829.

Problems of Aerial Navigation, Forum 8:542.

Possibility of Mechanical Flight, Cent. 20:783.

Problem of a Flying Machine. LeConte in Pop. Sci. Mo. 34:69.

Birds in Flight and the Flying Machine, N. Amer. R. 161:405.

Wellner's Sail Wheel Flying Machine, Pop. Sci. Mo. 46:629.

Aerial Navigation, Arena 10:386.

Aerial Navigation and Flying Machines, Cosmop. 16:382.

Gliding Flight, Cosmop. 16:459.

Development of Aerial Navigation, N. Amer. R. 159:344.

New Light on Problem of Flying, Pop. Sci. Mo. 44:744.

Maxim's Experiments on Flying Machines, Cent. 49:444.

See also article Aeronautics in cyclopaedias.

Aerial Navigation, by Mansfield.

1896 November 24 (Tues. eve.) Oakland Tribune, p. 1.

A CLUE AT LAST / George Carleton Knows Who Made the Mysterious Airship. / A PLEDGE TO SECRECY. / He Insists Though That the Matter Is Thoroughly Reliable. / THE TALE OF THE TEST. /

No One Reports Any Flights as Occurring Last Night. /

It looks as though the mysterious flying machine has shaken the Scotch mists of Oakland from its wings. When last seen it was heading S-S-E, and last night it did not make its appearance at all. The weather may have been too wet, or the apparatus too far away. But had it appeared probably no one could have been much wiser, for this unknown Darius Green is wrapped in mystery, and when he alights from his aerial flight evidently folds up his invention, tucks it up under his vest and quietly goes up the back stairs so as not have to answer embarrassing questions from his family and the cook as to "where he was at."

Yet this man of mystery has taken more than one into his confidence, and that one has told a friend, who told George Carleton, the city electrician, singer and pioneer of Oakland. Nearly everybody knows Carleton and will attest to his reliability. He will vouch for the honesty of his informer and his informer swears that the man who told him that he saw the wonderful machine work is reliable. All of these men know the name of the inventor. Carleton is the one who told the story this morning but he kept all names to himself. "I was pledged not to divulge them, and I'd saw my leg off first," he replied to all questions touching identity.

"I heard the story last night from a friend of mine who is also a member of my lodge of Masons. It was he who talked with the man who saw the machine, and I was told the name of the inventor by my friend. As I understand it, the trip was made near Oroville. The inventor made an ascension of several hundred feet, flew off four or five miles, circled around a few times and landed as nicely as could be. This my friend's friend saw. Both men are reliable and neither of them have figured in the matter before."

There are many skeptics and many believers in the mysterious airship. Theoretically, such a machine is certainly within the pale of possibilities, and the fortune that awaits the maker of a successful machine is enough to enlist plenty of capital. John Lockhead, a San Francisco mechanic and inventor, made one a few years ago. His model worked like a charm, flew around the laboratory and heeded its rudder well. The late William C. Ralston, formerly president of the Bank of California, became interested in the affair, and spent, it is said, \$100,000 in constructing a large machine. Miscalculations were made somewhere, and it never worked. Ralston was drowned off Meigge wharf so soon after the unsuccessful trial, and as the purse was withdrawn a new machine was never made.

The Pennington Company of Chicago had a patent which worked quite successfully and was on display at the World's Fair, but the owner of most of the stock went "broke" and nothing was done with the patent.

Petaluma Daily Courier, 11/24/3. The Santa Rosa Press states that half a dozen Santa Rosa people have seen the air ship and also that Wm. B. Haskell testified (not under oath), that he too saw the monster.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Red Bluff (Calif.) Daily People's Cause, p.

A Singular Phenomenon. / Was it an Air Ship That was Seen Tuesday Evening?

The "Air Ship" craze struck Red Bluff last evening. The mysterious "light" was seen in the west by many after 6 p.m. sailing slowly westward.

Evidently this was the same light seen in Eureka on the 29th, the following description of which is taken from the Eureka Watchman:

A curious light was seen over the entrance Thursday night...no solution has yet been offered.

The writer viewed the "air ship" last evening. She was most beautiful and traveling at the rate of about one thousand miles per hour. The master of the ship was God, who was also her designer. Her name is Venus and she has been sailing on the same course ever since before man had less sense than now.

Venus, the most beautiful of planets, appears low on the western horizon now about 6 p.m. During the last week her size has greatly magnified on account of refraction due to a more than the usual amount of moisture in the atmosphere. She was the "air ship" seen by some of our people last evening, and also by our friends in Eureka, on the 19th. Providing there is a clear horizon those who wish can see her this evening between 6 and 6:30 p.m. low down in the sky a little south of west. / Maurice Connell

Did you see the air ship last night? No! Well, there are many who say they did, and made it the subject of much discussion to-day. Tues. Dec.1, p.4. Wonder where the air-ship landed?

No wonder San Francisco is the home of the airship. People there are so flighty. Nov.27,4. The air-ship craze has subsided.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Riverside (CA) Daily Press, p. 1.

THE GREAT AIR SHIP STORY / Generally Believed to be a Big Fake. / ... /

The Airship a Fake.

San Francisco, Nov. 24.—For several days the papers have been publishing sensational reports about an airship which was reported to have passed over Sacramento and a night or two later was seen over Oakland and San Francisco. The story is not generally credited. The inventor cannot be found and those who are reported to have seen it are not willing to give definite testimony. George D. Collins, attorney, whose name has been connected with the inventor as applicant for a patent, admits he was retained for such service, but ridicules the story of the Sacramento flying machine. He says the story is a fake, but declares that his client is working on a machine, which is a combination of aeroplane and tailless kite.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) (Sacramento, CA, d.) Record-Union, p. 1.

THINK IT A CANARD. / Chicago Inventors Do Not Believe an Air-Ship Has Been Made.

CHICAGO, Nov. 23.—Chicago inventors do not put any credence in the report of a successful flying machine having been made in California.

Octavio [sic] Chanute, who has been making long scientific investigation into the complex physical problems which must be overcome in the successful air motor, said to-day he could not command patience to read the full account of the new ship, because of its patent absurdities.

"The solution of air navigation has been 'solved' so often at one jump by inventors, cranks and journals," said he, "that it is () too late for even the public, which does not lay claim to any special information upon the subject, to be fooled. I look confidently for the eventual mastery of the problem of air travel. So do many men whose opinions I respect highly, and whose attainments in scientific pursuits must command attention, but I do not expect to see the whole complex problem with one fortunate achievement (sic).

"Air locomotion is not merely getting a vessel to rise in the air. Furnishing a motive power sufficiently light and strong is a big part of the task. Other things must also be studied out just as difficult. I do not believe this Western inventor, whoever he is, has mastered any single one of these problems, and he will go down to fame if he shows the way through the least of them."

Williams, the inventor of the Albatross flying machine, who experimented under Mr. Chanute in Indiana last summer, is also skeptical of the California achievement.

William Avery, who operated one of Mr. Chanute's models, and who is working on a machine of his own conception, says he thinks the California story is a canard.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Sacramento D. Record-Union, p. 8.

NO AIR-SHIP LAST NIGHT. / It Gave the Capital City a Very Cold Shake. / Lawyer Collins Changes His Tune a Little, But He Still Has a Client. /

The airship did not pay the Capital City another visit last evening as had been expected. The weather was stormy, and the probability is that for prudential reasons the Captain did not take his craft out for the customary nocturnal trip.

The San Francisco papers claim to have run down lawyer Collins' client and found him to be one Dr. E.H. Benjamin, an individual who has been occupying a room at 633 Ellis street in that city. E.H. Keiser, who lodges in the same house, says that Benjamin passes as a dentist, but that he is there very little of the time and is quite a mysterious sort of individual. He is represented as a man who has plenty of money and is always experimenting with metals, such as aluminum and copper.

So much for the alleged inventor of the strange aerial craft. Now comes the San Francisco "Bulletin" of last evening, after several other papers of that city had published interviews with lawyer Collins—in which he reiterated that the airship was a reality—with a statement that Collins denies having said anything of the kind. He is thus reported as having said to an interviewer:

COLLINS'S LATEST (SF Bulletin, 11/23/1) "I never saw., in his eye.

COLLINS REITERATES.

A "Post" reporter also had an interview with lawyer Collins yesterday, and to him he reiterated in part the statement originally published. After admitting to his private office the "Post" reporter, Mr. Collins wearily asked whether the mission of the visitor also concerned the airship. (Post, 11/23/1). "I

have once...working detail.

A HUNTER'S STORY.

Yesterday's "Call" published the following letter: (Call, 23/1.) San Rafael...William Jordan.

WHO CAN EXPLAIN?

It is not at all strange, perhaps, that persons who have not seen the brilliant light that is supposed to be carried by the airship should continue to scout the idea that there is really such a thing in existence. But those who have seen the light (or lights) moving through the darkness only a few hundred feet above the ground, and have watched it for an hour at a time, have ceased to believe in the toy balloon or jack o'lantern theories.

And there can be no use in denying the fact that a dark object has been seen just above this bright light. This much can be proven by reputable persons in this city. It therefore remains for someone who scouts the idea of an airship to explain by what other agency these manifestations could be made possible.

It must be either supernatural or natural (including scientific). The first theory is, of course, so improbable as to remove it at once from controversy. If some freak of nature, it should be possible of explanation. The only other theory left is that man's ingenuity has again—as it has often done—startled the scientific world, this time by perfecting a contrivance that will float in the air.

In the light of the results of experiments made in recent years, can it be safely said that this is impossible?

There may be no airship, as so many persons contend, but will they please explain why there cannot be?

AERIAL RHYME.

In the absence of the springtime the airship has began to stir up the rhymsters, and all sorts of "odes" may now be looked for. The first has arrived. It was received by a prominent business house yesterday, and is alleged to have come from one of its customers, but more likely it is the product of someone connected with the house. Here it is:

I see'd it! I see'd it! / Away up in the air,
And the geeses and the duckses / Stopped in their flight to stare.
At the aerphone, or balloonephone, / A sailin' round up there.
I see'd it! I see'd it! / 'Twas a funny-lookin' sight,
A sailin' round about the stars / With its incandescent light—
Sashaying first with Jupiter, / Then dancin' round the moon,
An' bowing to Andromedear— / Was the electrified balloon.
I see'd it! I see'd it! / And a friend of mine will swear
That he too see'd the new masheen / A flyin' round up there.
He's way up in astronomy, / An' never tells a lie,
An' knows the name of all them things / A shinin' in the sky.
He see'd it! He see'd it! / And he's a man you cannot fool,
'Cause he always was a studyin' / When he used to go to school;
And he says it ain't a comet, / Or a meteorick stone,
Or some ole durn-fool planet / A-goin' it alone.
He says the time's a comin', / And comin' pretty soon,
When every one'll be a-ridin' / In an aerephone balloon.
I see'd it! I see'd it! / It's as sure as gospel's true!
It ain't going to be so long / Before the air you travel through!
And balloon trains will be runnin' / From Bombay to New York,
And customers a comin' / From Milpitas and from Cork;
And when they read the papers / They'll read them in the skies;
So, get ready for conditions / When you have to advertise
To the nations of Liberia— / Or a Siberian loon—
It will take high advertisin' / When you're up in a balloon.

San Diego Union, 11/24/1. That Flying Machine (no longer credited.)

1896 November 24 (Tues.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 1.

COLLINS AND THE AIRSHIP. / The Lawyer Sticks to His Interview in The Bulletin. / A Morning Paper Misquoted Him. / Besieged by Scientific Gentlemen and Cranks. / He Is an Agnostic and Doesn't Know. /

Laughing Over the Efforts to Make Him Sponsor for the Airship. /

Attorney George D. Collins is laughing, and the more he laughs the more he finds to laugh at.

"Oh, now, what are the papers saying I am hedging for?" he began merrily to a Bulletin representative this morning. "Hedging? Well, I have tried to tell my story consistently, but I can't get any one to believe me. I suppose they have to say I am hedging to support their own previous statements, which need support pretty badly.

"Why, my airship grows larger and larger. It is expanding indefinitely. The first day I was its sponsor; to-day I am hedging it on behalf of its sponsor. Eventually, I shall be accused of maliciously burying it instead of giving the public the benefit of it." Here Mr. Collins laughed inordinately. He has a contagious way of making a joke that carries to his hearer the conviction that the world is a farce, anyway.

"The whole thing is the product of the imaginative brains of the newspaper reporters; but whatever it is, it has struck me.

"The ghost stories these morning papers are printing about me are getting wilder. Why, I didn't deny the interview in The Bulletin last night! It was all right.

"Some one asked me if I called the airship a fake. I said I did not. How can I presume to say whether these people who claim they saw it are insane or not? I am a thorough agnostic on the subject. I wouldn't impeach the testimony of these worthy people for worlds, or in any way question their honesty. There may be an airship and there may not be; all I say is that I don't know anything about it.

"As for my client, I have heard nothing whatever from him or about him since this bubble was started. He is becoming almost as mythical as the machine."

Mr. Collins smiled broadly as he read in a morning paper the following words reputed to be part of an interview with him: "We mailed the papers regarding the patent to Washington last week, and expect to hear soon of their arrival." "Whew!" exclaimed the attorney, his eyes fairly scintillating with fun and his face distorted with laughter, "that's made out of whole cloth!

"Injures my business to have these stories afloat, does it?" Mr. Collins continued reading down the column. "Why there was a lady in here this morning who called to see the man of whom she had read so much in conjunction with the wonderful airship, and she said she thought she might just as well bring a little business in with her.

"I don't know who Dr. Benjamin is; I never saw him or heard of him. A lot of cranks come in here, but I am so anxious to get rid of them I don't inquire their names. A scientific man came in here yesterday and wanted to know if I was cognizant of the spontaneous energy of an active agent that pursues the ambient space. I told him I didn't know a thing about it. He sighed and said he feared that I was injuring modern science.

"All my time is consumed in explaining my position. Nobody believes me. I am stood up a hundred times a day and buttonholed about my airship. I try to escape, but I can't. It has struck me, you see. Each one wants me to make an exception of him. 'In dead earnest, now,' he begins, 'don't you know something about the airship? Just take me into confidence.' Everything I say is distorted into an explanation of the phantom ship.

"They even say that I saw the thing in operation, don't they? Mr. Collins' melodious laugh again rung forth.

"Why, I never said such a thing. How could I?"

"All I can say is that some people may have seen an airship cleave the heavens, but I did not. I haven't a diseased imagination, and I don't know whether it is possible for such a thing to exist or not. It may be, I simply don't know.

"Oh, I get lots of funny letters and see lots of funny people, and I think they are likely to get worse. One man wants space for a peanut stand on the airship; another for a barber shop. Another one swears that the airship must be a verity, because the Mayor saw it, and the Mayor belongs to the same party as he. This same man has an airship of his own that he is anxious to show to me for me to compare with the one he insists that I have seen.

"Ah! Here is a letter from a young lady, but she won't give me her name. She sends me a stamp for reply. She wants me to secure her the exquisite pleasure of a first trip on my friend's airship. She says she does not doubt my word. She is adventurous in spirit, she informs me; in fact, there are no bounds to her love of adventure. She believes in scientific inventions, too: in fact, she is what might be called an enthusiast." Here Mr. Collins laughed again. He laughs all the time and wonders if the joke will ever end. /

ALL ABOARD. / The Airship Will Sail from Broadway Dock. /

The airship Meteor is scheduled to fly from Broadway dock at 11:30 tomorrow night for Oroville, Sacramento, Alameda, the Chutes, Blairs Park and Stockton. The speed of the ship will be regulated so as to enable her to make the round trip in about ten hours, during which time travelers will be comfortably housed in the after cabin just abaft the aluminum gas tanks on the port and starboard sides, close to the

stern fan tails.

Gentlemen with whiskers are respectfully requested to keep well in the rear of the machine's bird-like beak. The ship must present a smooth surface to the wind, as it is necessary to reduce friction to a minimum.

It is not yet decided who will command the Meteor. Some people mention Captain Bennett, some mention Chief Wharfinger (or) George Root. Some say Dan'l Cole is a fair navigator of the ozone, and there are others. Some stevedores on the mail dock hint that the ship will be placed in charge of a policeman, while others at the Pacific-street pier declare that the light thing will be given over to a clerical gentleman to avoid unpleasant complications in even of collisions with falling angels. However, the steward's department will be under the management of a crippled mariner.

The new airship Meteor should not be confounded with the swift river boat Emma. The Emma is the vessel that weathered a fearful gale off Petaluma last Thursday and lived to recline on the Mission mud flats to have her smokestack repainted. Then there is the new Emma, a barge-like affair, with a wheel amidship and a shape all over like the largest portion of a potato bug making a course for the regular winter glut of tubers on Clay-street wharf. No, the new Emma looks awfully much like the Meteor, but she couldn't fly any more than could an old slipper with tin buzzers on its sole.

The Meteor, on the other hand, is one of the finest double-back-action-triple-expansion-double-bottomed-shot-proof craft that has arrived in port minus a grain charter for some time. She works from both ends and the middle, and can go on her beam ends in midair without creating so much as a zephyr. She resembles a football with wings when on the port tack and a large platter on a skate when on the starboard. She flies well before the wind, and by taking a reef in her forward gas meter can reduce the expense of operating to the cost of a tallow candle. She has no safety valve, but in case of heavy rains apply a match to the midship ventilator, just over the engine room, near the steering gear, and the machine will do the rest. Don't forget to register before leaving port of entry, however.

Fireworks in midair will be a feature of the excursion.

The Cathode ray will be used, as it would be dangerous to shoot off anything a blind man could see without the use of the apparatus. Five-minute stops will be made at any cloud-bank excursionists may wish to try to break. Sky blue chips will be furnished on application. St. Peter will cash in your checks and see that you get a square deal.

Life airboats will be provided in case of accident. Gentlemen who cannot find seats in the boat—which are stowed in the windship gas tanks and have the appearance of punching bags with propellers attached—will please put on the wings of morning or else save themselves by giving way to a flight of imagination. Ladies with balloon sleeves should not crowd those who follow the latest fashions and let their sleeves to the waist. Babies with powerful lungs will please keep themselves well filled with wind.

Superior sleeping accommodations can be had by applying to the chief engineer. He will furnish you with a hose, a special meter and a small sign labeled "Don't blow out the gas; you might take a tumble yourself." Don't blow about your past achievements; you might interfere with navigation. Don't smoke; the clouds are bad enough as they are. Don't fall overboard; you'll never know what struck you if you do.

On arriving over in Alameda gentlemen will please swallow their tobacco, as there is a city ordinance against public exhibitions of expectoration. Never try to take advantage of a man who is down. Try to entice people to rise to your own level.

Having agreed to all these things and fully made up your mind that you will brave the dangers of swift currents of air and run the risk of blowing yourself in on a shooting star, and having a rather breezy time with a cyclone, proceed to the Harbor Police Station and ask for the use of a nice soft cell until sailing time, and if you're real nice they'll give you a through ticket for Stockton the following morning.

James S. Tyler.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 4.

THE AIRSHIP. /

For two days a good many people actually believed that the problem of aerial navigation had been solved, and that airships would soon be subject to call somewhat as hackney coaches now are. The airship was represented as so obedient to its helm that it could be directed to the shed in which it was kept when not on duty with as little difficulty as attends the navigation of Oakland ferry-boats. For two days or so nothing was too wild to be believed. The distinguished party which hovered over Sacramento for an hour or so, whose voices could be distinctly heard in lively conversation, was even subject to conjecture as to identity. No one claimed that voices could be distinctly recognized as the voices of known individuals, but there was no question as to voices. Skeptics were silenced with the remark that the marvels of electricity

were unknown a generation ago. But few years have passed since long-distance conversations could be carried on by telephone. Navigating the air could hardly be a greater feat, it was urged, than crossing the Atlantic in six days must have seemed before the expansive power of steam had been measured. Aerial navigation may come in time, but it will hardly burst upon the world in full perfection. There will be a good deal of experimenting before an airship can be summoned to make day or evening calls between cities located hundreds of miles apart.

1896 November 24 (Tues) San Francisco Call, p. 1.

THE APPARITION OF THE AIR. / Oaklanders Say Its Frame Was Like the Body of a Bird. / ATTORNEY COLLINS' TALE SUPPORTED. / Another Lawyer Who Was Informed of the Alighting of the Flier. / MOVING LIGHTS ONCE MORE MYSTIFY THIS CITY. / Dr. Benjamin Disclaims the Invention—Mayor Sutro's Testimony and That of Other Reputable Citizens Offered. /

Testimony concerning the existence of an airship which is supposed to be navigating the air over the bay cities by night and hiding from observation in some secluded place before daybreak came in yesterday from many sources. Many persons saw mysterious lights moving overhead. But the projectors of the phenomenon which has caused intense and general interest seem to revel in mystery.

Among those who yesterday told of seeing the lights carried about by an aerial visitor were Mayor Sutro, Colonel Menton, the excursion agent of the Southern Pacific Company: Samuel Foltz, advertising manager of The Call; Professor C.H. Murphy of the Polytechnic High School, also many others.

What they saw or heard from others who saw the moving light is told in the subjoined account. They all tell practically the same story, which is that the light appeared quite high overhead and that it moved very fast. They did not all observe it to be moving in the same direction.

Dr. Benjamin, who has been supposed to have invented a flying machine or airship, which is supposed to be the cause of the phenomena observed overhead during the past few nights, was in the City yesterday, and last evening was interviewed by The Call. Dr. Benjamin said that he did not know anything about the airship. At the same time he conceded that if he did know of such an invention of his own, he would consider it wise not to give any information concerning it until he had secured his patents. Dr. Benjamin said that Mr. Collins is his attorney, and admitted that he visited Mr. Collins yesterday afternoon. This, in connection with the fact that Mr. Collins admitted that he is attorney for a man who claims to have invented an airship, must be taken for what it is worth.

Concerning this mystery it should be clearly understood that The Call does not aver that an airship has been invented, nor does it deny that such is the fact. There is no intention on the part of The Call to deceive its readers. The statements which have been made by reputable citizens are given, and these will undoubtedly be carefully considered and the consensus of public opinion will place the true value upon the different circumstances. There are several theories to account for the mysterious moving light, which do not necessarily imply the existence of a flying machine or airship.

There is no doubt that many people firmly believe in the airship. There were many such who sat up late last night to watch for the appearance of such a vessel. Many stood on roofs and in other elevated places, in the rain, until late, hoping to get a glimpse of it. At the hour of going to press the whole matter remained a mystery.

Henry W. Bradley of the law firm of Stanly, Hayes & Bradley made a very interesting statement which will be widely read.

The most circumstantial story yet told came from Oakland last night. Passengers on a streetcar claim to have been attracted by the light overhead and looking upward they saw distinctly the outlines of an airship, which resembled a huge bird in its outlines and which seemed to rise and fall in its course. Many residents of Oakland say that they, also, discerned the outlines of the vessel. /

BODY LIKE A BIRD. / What Spectators Across the Bay Say That They Saw.

OAKLAND, CAL., Nov. 23.—There is a general impression in this city that the airship which has been seen so often recently is being housed somewhere in Alameda County when it is not being tested by its inventor.

The whole population is about equally engaged between discussing the qualities of airships and looking at the sky expecting to see the winged machine parting the clouds. Reports are continually being received of its being seen in the neighborhood of Berkeley and Haywards, as though the inventor were confining his experiments to the low land between the hills that skirt the northern boundary of the county and the bay. Several people saw the light over Haywards last night, and the number of people who have seen it in North Oakland is constantly increasing.

Last evening the conductor wearing badge No. 26 of the Alameda electric line reported seeing the

affair over Fruitvale. He says it had a powerful headlight and there appeared to be several smaller lights on board.

Mayor Davie is a firm believer in the existence of the airship. "I doubted the story of those who declared they had seen it," said the Mayor to-day, "but when I looked through the names of the reputable people who unhesitatingly assert that they have seen it I doubt it no longer.

"I have always believed in the practicability of airships, and a few years ago old Dr. Freeling had a model that closely resembled the picture published of this invention, and he told me before he died that when aluminum was brought into use the secret of air-flying would be solved. I have no doubt that some one has built a machine, because many of those who have seen it are certainly entitled to credit."

Attorney A.A. Moore heard the story of the airship a few days ago. "I did not talk with Mr. Collins," he said, "but I was talking with a friend, an attorney, who told me that Collins had talked with him about a client who had invented an airship."

Last evening at about 7:30 o'clock the passengers of an Alameda car were startled by the sight of a brilliant stream of light high in the heavens off in the direction of Haywards. The passengers distinctly saw the outlines of an airship and watched its maneuvers high in the skies.

The ship resembles a huge bird in its outlines and seemed to rise and fall in its course. A light streamed from the head of the ship, throwing a white stream of light for several hundred yards. As the outlines of the airship were plainly discerned the passengers in the car became greatly excited. The phenomenon had first been noted by a man who had been idly watching the heavens. As soon as he perceived the light he attracted the attention of the other passengers and all intensely interested watched the peculiar machine as it made its way through the skies.

It was high in the heavens and appeared to be of huge size. When first seen it seemed to be floating over San Leandro. It moved rapidly, going at least twenty miles an hour. It shot across the skies in the northwest, then turned quickly and disappeared in the direction of Haywards. Not only was the airship seen by the passengers, but many other residents of this city distinctly saw the brilliant light and the huge, bird-like body floating in midair. None of the spectators were acquainted with each other, and yet their stories are startlingly similar, agreeing as to time, direction of the airship and description. These facts leave little doubts in the minds of many people that a successful airship has been invented, and is navigating the heavens.

Miss Wilson, a daughter of Captain Wilson of the police force, and her friend, Miss Hunter, are among those who viewed the strange sight. The two friends accompanied another young lady to the streetcar about 7 P.M. yesterday, where their attention was attracted by the peculiar light in the skies. The huge bird-like body from which the light emanated was clearly visible, and both young ladies are positive it was an airship. It followed the same course as described by the passengers on the Alameda car. Police Officer Carson and John Strickler, the flagman at Fourteenth and Broadway, also declare that they saw the airship.

[Seems like something missing, but this is true to the article.]

"The representatives of the afternoon papers were almost hysterical in their demands that I discredit The Call's interview. I wish to say right here that I have not a word to take back of all that has been reported. It was a truthful, reliable interview and The Call is the only paper that has reported me correctly. The stories in the evening papers that I had denied the interview were false and the writers actually told me they were going to write such stuff before they left my office.

"Since the fact was published that I am the attorney for the inventor I have not seen my client. We mailed the papers regarding the patent to Washington last week and expect to hear soon of their arrival. I do not know when I shall see my client again, but I expect him any day. He is a man that impressed me with the idea of being perfectly able to manage his own affairs, and I have no doubt he knows what he is doing.

"I wish to correct one idea that seems to be prevalent. Some papers have published the fact that the inventor is an Oroville man. I have not said so. He is a San Francisco man but he has constructed his machine near Oroville. I did say this afternoon to the reporters of the San Francisco evening papers that the story as published in the Chronicle was a fake. Not only that; I told the young fellow from the Chronicle that he had grossly misrepresented me in his interview where he quoted me as having said I saw the airship work, the inventor having come here, and, after talking to me a while, getting into it and moving away. The statement that I had seen it working at all is false.

"As I told you before, as I told him, and as I now repeat it, all I know is that I have been appealed to by a man who appears perfectly sound to act as his attorney in securing for him a patent on his invention. It would be presumptuous [sic] for me to say the story that an airship was being worked about the bay was a fake, when it is taken into consideration the number of people who state their reputation on having seen one. Even if it was not the ship of the man who came to see me, it is not for me to say that these people

have not seen an airship. There is more than one man at work on the question of aerial navigation, and some one is bound to solve it as they did the steam-engine and the electric-car. I am as skeptical regarding the actual working of the craft as any one, but am not such a fool as to say that it is an impossibility.

"I was told in this city to-day that the Chronicle had secured a man—one Dr. Benjamin, I believe—to maintain throughout that the invention is his and that he is the one who has been going about the heavens at night. He is to say that he has paid me \$500 as a retainer and that I am to have \$1500 when the patents are issued. This is along the line of their story as first told, and it must be kept up at any cost. I desire to denounce the whole story in advance as a pure fake to support the wild imagination of one of their reporters. It places me in an unfair light before the public and injures my business to have such stories set afloat when there is not the least foundation for them.

"When the Examiner man came to me Sunday afternoon he told me that his paper had the whole story and knew the inventor and would publish it this morning. They did not particularly care, he said, for my version, but would like to have it just to verify what they knew. The bold bluff did not work and the story in to-day's Examiner trying to ridicule the affair, but at the same time leaving loopholes to escape, was the result.

"There is no denying the fact that the public has been aroused to a high pitch of expectation by the reports published. The Examiner sent a man to me to-day who said they had treated the whole affair as a huge joke, but found that people were looking at it in a serious manner and they were ready to give the news as received, regardless of how improbable it might look. He asked me to give a true account of the matter as far as I knew anything, but when I denied having seen the machine work or having ridden in it he laughed and said I was hedging." /

KNOW OF THE AIRSHIP. / Attorney H. W. Bradley Was Informed of Interesting Facts.

"I am at a loss to know how you could have ascertained that I know anything about the airship," said Henry W. Bradley of the law firm of Stanley, Haye & Bradley, of this City, yesterday, to a representative of The Call.

"Do you know anything about it?"

Mr. Bradley hesitated a moment, then said: "The man you want to see is George A. Collins, the attorney. All I can say is that if Collins said what is accredited to him in a published interview this morning, Collins knows what he is talking about, and I will say, further, that Collins would scarcely take part in a fake story, because he would have more to lose than to gain by so doing.

"Now, there is that first publication in The Call about the airship. That undoubtedly was by telegraph from Sacramento after 1 o'clock in the morning, for it states it was after midnight that the object was seen over that city. Then there is McGovern at the California Hotel, who told me Saturday night that he saw it between 2 and 4 o'clock in the morning. I know that it landed at 3 o'clock—

"Where?"

"You have made me say more than I intended to," replied Mr. Bradley, with a look upon his countenance which seemed to say that he wished he had remained silent; then as a faint smile lighted up his features: "I cannot tell you where it landed; that is, I do not feel at liberty to state where. The man you want to see is Collins.

"You must understand that I cannot speak about this matter, but will say this: The Call has been consistent in this matter. It is on the right track, and it must not back water; and then it got ahead of all the other papers on a big piece of news.

"Then there is A.L. Hart of Sacramento, who stated that if certain parties of that city declared that they had seen the object he believed what they said."

"Where is that wonderful and much-talked-about airship now?" was asked.

"That I cannot tell you, but I will say this: I was to have inspected it to-day, but for some reason the invitation I expected did not reach me; possibly because the premature announcement in The Call has interfered with projected plans, or it may be the weather.

"I wish to place myself right in this matter. While in conversation with a gentleman three or four days before the first publication of the airship story in The Call I was told that such an invention was in existence and the difficulty of navigating the sky would soon be overcome. The gentleman who gave me this information did so in confidence, a confidence that I will not betray. As an attorney I could not afford to do so and as a man I would not.

"There is another reason I have for not wishing to give expression to my knowledge or views, which is this: Several of the newspapers have published interviews with Mr. Collins and other papers have asserted that he denied the truth of the statements attributed to him. Now, it would not look well for me to make statements contradictory to his or have him deny statements that I made. Therefore, I will keep silent."

Mr. Bradley stated that he is in no way connected with the airship scheme, either as an attorney or as

a friend to the parties most concerned.

"Do you believe that the existence of an airship at the present time is possible?" was asked.

Mr. Bradley smiled and cautiously answered: "Was the airship not seen by hundreds of respectable citizens in Sacramento, San Francisco, Oakland, and other places? I would not presume to dispute their statements."

"Then you believe that we have such an invention that has proved a success?"

"Yes, I believe what my friends tell me. However, I am not an authority. All I know, that is, all I think I know, is from hearsay testimony alone. I have never seen it, and I do not expect to make a trip in it as it has been reported." /

SEEN LAST NIGHT. / Many Persons In This City Gazed Upward and Wondered. /

The mysterious light was seen last night in this City by a gentleman of undoubted practical experience. Samuel Foltz, advertising manager of The Call, was looking out from his residence at 1157 Stanyan street about 9:15 p.m., when he noticed a light traveling in the direction of Berkeley. He at first thought he was dreaming, but looking again he called out the people residing in the house and all agreed that the light corresponded in appearance with that attributed to the mysterious flying ship.

Mr. Foltz said that the light was apparently that of an ordinary lamp; that it was located about 300 feet above the earth, and was, when sighted, above the locality of Van Ness avenue, and that it was traveling direct and with tremendous velocity toward Berkeley. The light remained in sight about four minutes, when it passed out of view.

C.H. Murphy, a teacher at the Polytechnic High School, told an interesting story last evening: "I was coming down Valencia street about 9:15 to-night," said Mr. Murphy, "and I noticed the phenomenon. Above, at an elevation of possibly 4000 feet, was an electric glow, which was moving toward the park at the rate of one mile per minute. This was observed by hundreds of persons. Every one on Valencia street might have seen it. There was only one light. This had a vibration or wave. There was no fake about this. When I saw the light I was on the south side of Valencia street." /

OVER SUTRO HEIGHTS. / Airship Seen by the Mayor's Employes a Few Days Ago.

None of those who have seen the mysterious moving lights in the heavens that are believed to be those of an airship is more firmly convinced that a flying machine hovers nightly over the bay cities than Mayor Sutro, and the story he tells to support his expressed belief is vastly interesting.

The Mayor is nothing if not practical, and he says that there is not the faintest doubt in his mind that the aerial courser passed over Sutro Heights a short time ago and that it was a genuine airship and doing a very fair job of air-sailing.

"I have not seen the airship myself," said the Mayor after the meeting of the Board of Supervisors yesterday, "but some of my people at the heights have, and their stories leave no doubt in my mind as to the truth of the stories The Call has published on the subject.

"Their narratives were not given me after the paper got hold of the matter, but were told several days ago when no such thing had reached public print.

"When I reached home one evening, about the length of time ago I mention, I found them in a great state of excitement, and when I inquired the reason of the agitation they told me of a strange spectacle they had witnessed a short time before. They told me that shortly after dark they had seen a strange, brilliant light coming in from the direction of the sea.

"At first little attention was paid to it, but as the light drew nearer all became very much interested and watched the brilliant spot closely.

"As it approached the heights they saw that it was not over 500 feet above the ocean and was moving swiftly and with a slightly undulating motion.

"When almost over the beach two lights were discernible, one apparently being below a misty-looking mass and the other behind it.

"They paid particular attention to the latter, as it threw a long ray of light, similar to that cast by a searchlight, far out into the darkness. They told me that this stream of light was 500 feet long, but I presume that, while it seemed that long, it was in reality much shorter.

"They watched it until it disappeared in the direction of the City and saw it turn toward the north just before it passed from view. Now, these people would not try to tell me ghost stories, and I know that they saw just what they described.

"I certainly think that some shrewd inventor has solved the problem of aerial navigation and that we will hear all about it within a short time. It would not be any more wonderful than the invention of the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph or the X ray, and it would seem that some one must hit on the proper appliance when so many smart men have been working on the problem."

It has been stated that the airship passed over the Seal Rocks a short time ago and played its light on the seals, and it may be that this was the occasion when it was seen from the heights.

COLONEL MENTON SAW IT. / Three Lights in View as the Mystery Sailed.

Colonel W.H. Menton, the excursion agent of the Southern Pacific Company, lives in the Supreme Court building at the corner of Larkin and McAlister streets. He is confident he saw the mysterious aerial peregrinator Sunday night. This is his story as he told it yesterday:

"Last night, at about 20 minutes of 8 o'clock, the elevator-boy came to my door and told me if I wanted to see the airship to go to the window. My wife and two lady friends went at once to the window, and looking out toward the park, say at an apparent height of about 100 yards, saw three lights. One shot its rays toward the northwest, another toward the southwest, and one, the most brilliant, poured its light directly toward the earth. These lights had the appearance and intensity of searchlights.

"I am sure," continued Colonel Menton, "that it was neither a star, meteor nor any other wanderer of the heavens. The light was far brighter than any of the electric lights I saw just below, in and about the park.

"It was traveling toward the west, and we saw it distinctly for ten or fifteen minutes. We all gazed at it until it disappeared in the distance. It neither rose nor fell, but maintained an even course parallel with the earth." /

CROSSED THE GATE. / And Some Time Later Was Seen Over the Twin Peaks.

M.H. Cohen of 510 Baker street, a conductor on the Hayes-street car line, saw an object in the sky at 7:05 last Sunday evening, which he believes was the airship. The object seemed to be 300 or 400 feet above the earth. Speaking of the sight yesterday he said: "I first saw it at Market and Eighth streets. It seemed to be moving across the Golden Gate and a flash was occasionally displayed. I called the gripman's attention to it, and he looked and said, "It might be the airship." Two gentlemen on the rear end of the car saw it. I told the receiver and the night watchman about what I had seen. The car left the ferry at 7:13 o'clock, and at First street I saw the object again directly over the Twin Peaks. The forward light seemed to be steady. I informed Frank Allen, the machinist at the carhouse, and he remarked that he had seen a similar object and called the attention of two ladies to it.

"I did not see the object again until I got to the top of Pierce-street hill. Then it seemed to be coming back again from Twin Peaks. We left the park at 7:51, and looking back from Ashbury street got a good view of it. A light was flashed downward for a few minutes. The night /p.2/ [TAKEN FROM THE RIGGING] / was dark, and while the flashes of light could be seen distinctly, the object could only be seen vaguely. There were thirty passengers on the car who saw it. The gripman's name is G.W. Britton. Another person who saw the object in the air was J. Wyatt, conductor on the car following mine." /

BENJAMIN TALKS. / Is Inconsistent, but Refuses to Father the Invention.

Dr. E.H. Benjamin, the man who has either by chance or for a purpose been suggested as the inventor of the airship, was seen at 633 Ellis street last night by a Call reporter. He had retired and was asleep, but arose, partly dressed, and cordially invited his late visitor into his room, a large single-bed chamber at the front of the boarding-house and with a bay-window overlooking Ellis street. Dr. Benjamin is a sinewy built man above the average height, and with a large mustache and brown hair and gray eyes.

He frankly denied having any connection with or personal knowledge of an airship, but his avowals of willingness to impart the information were it his to give were not consistent with his acknowledgements that a man with so very valuable an invention, not completely perfected and not yet securely patentable, would be justified in lying in a straightforward manner in order to divert from himself all attention that might result in his being persistently followed and the whereabouts and design of the flying device made known.

During a long conversation he said in part:

"I am a dentist and have been for twelve years. I am 34 years old and a bachelor. I have a married uncle in Placerville; his name is F.W. Benjamin and he is a practicing physician of some means. George Collins is my attorney, for I have known George for a long time and whatever little law business I have wanted done I have had him do it. I saw him to-day and he laughed heartily when I told him that they had me the inventor of the airship. He is a shrewd fellow. Well, I only wish I was the inventor. But I am inclined to think I would be afraid to go up in it.

"It is true that I am an inventor, but along other lines. My inventions have to do with dentistry, and consist in patented crowns and bridges for teeth and a reducer to draw the gold bars in making gold caps without seams. Then I have a number of other little dental inventions. Since my name appeared this morning in connection with this affair my friends have joshed me a good deal about being the inventor, and I have told some of them that they may have a ride with me tomorrow if the night is favorable. I have given some thought to the possibility of inventing an airship.

"I firmly believe that there is an airship somewhere near here, and that it will not be long before the public sees it, for as yet, as I understand the newspaper accounts, no one has really got a good view of an airship so much as of a brilliant, moving searchlight. I expect to be followed for a while and given a warm

reception until people are convinced that I am not the man they are looking for." /

HE IS WELL KNOWN. / The Alleged Inventor Recently Visited in the Interior.

Dispatches were received last night from Woodland and Oroville concerning Dr. Benjamin. The list of towns claiming him while he has been supposed to be the inventor of an airship is lengthening, like the list of towns that claimed Homer.

A Woodland dispatch claimed that Dr. Benjamin visited Woodland first about eight years ago, when he was traveling for Sherman & Clay.

He became acquainted with Dr. L.B. Holmes and many others, and treated patients in the office of Dr. Holmes, who considered him a proficient workman. He has not been in Woodland for about a year and a half. He told some friends that he would soon complete an invention that would revolutionize the world. The fact that he has a wealthy uncle in Oroville probably gave rise to the rumor that an Oroville millionaire had built the airship.

A dispatch from Oroville alleges that Dr. Benjamin is a native of Carmel, Me. He was in Oroville November 15 visiting his uncle./

READY TO SAIL IN AIR. / Court Judges Asking for Passes and Others Seeking Positions.

George D. Collins, who claims to be the attorney for the inventor of the airship, has evidence that there are persons who believe that there is a real airship afloat. One of these, a boy who has been in the navy, has written to him making application for position of cabin-boy or deck-hand. A large part of his time is taken up answering questions. Judges of the courts have already made application for passes, he says, and he has no end of chances to discuss the mechanism of the vessel. With all this, Mr. Collins throws a dash of cold water on some enthusiasts who base their theories upon alleged utterances of his.

"I am sorry to see," he said yesterday, "that the newspapers have been attributing to me such an extensive knowledge relative to this airship. In truth I know very little about it.

"On Thursday last there came to my office a former client of mine for whom I had prosecuted a claim against the Crocker estate about six months ago, and asked me to get out a patent for him for an airship he said he had invented. I said I could not do anything unless he produced a model, and he said he would have one made at once. He attempted to give me a description of the invention, but I told him it would be of no use to me. I am now awaiting his return with the model. He may call any day. When he brings the model I will make application for his patent.

"I know nothing about the airship. I do not know what it is made of, what power propels it, nor where its inventor now is. I am just as skeptical and incredulous regarding it as anybody can be.

"The reason I believe this airship that people claim to have seen is his invention is that on the day he called me he remarked:

"Did you see an account of my airship passing over Sacramento this morning?"

"I told him I had not seen it.

"He then said: 'I passed over Sacramento last night and arrived on the other side of the bay this morning at 3 o'clock. I have solved the problem of atmospheric navigation.' /

Balloon in the Sky.

OROVILLE, Cal., Nov. 23.—Several people in this vicinity saw a moving light in the heavens Sunday evening. To-day's investigations result in learning of a Portuguese, living in Cherokee, who sent up an experimental balloon last evening inflated with gas from a fire attached to it in which turpentine and resin are the principal parts. There is no doubt this is the light seen here. The Portuguese says he does not think his balloon sailed more than twelve miles. It was his intention to send up another to-night but rain prevented it.

[Cartoon, p.1: (Man sees flying naval ship w. searchlight) SCOTT—"An airship? Of course not. That's the last cruiser I bid for and lost. I've been wondering ever since what became of it."]

1896 November 24 (Tues.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 6.

AERIAL NAVIGATION.(ed.) /

The manner in which the Sacramento story of an aerial ship has been received strikingly illustrates the condition of the public mind in regard to the possibility of an early accomplishment of success in navigating the air. The story came upon us so unexpectedly that comparatively few people believed it, and yet the consciousness of the great strides that have been made toward success in this enterprise was such that very few were found to declare an absolute skepticism concerning it.

It is beyond question that we have been for some time on the verge of success in this much sought after system of navigation. The project has long since passed from the hands of quacks and eccentrics into

those of learned scientists and accomplished inventors. What has been done by Maxim, by Langley and by Lilienthal is sufficient to make it evident that human ingenuity is capable of dealing with the problem and successfully mastering it.

The strange part of the story from Sacramento is that it brings the airship home to us in California when we were looking for it in the east or in Europe. Models of airships have been on exhibition in nearly all the great cities of the world and some of them have shown remarkably good results. Had the story of the airship come from London, or even from Chicago, it would have been much better received. It was too much of a surprise, however, for the general public to learn that the great ship had been built and had sailed forth from Oroville.

We have in this another illustration of the old question, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" It is hard to believe in an airship coming from a place where nobody expected so much as a balloon. Nevertheless, if it proves true and the airship shows herself visibly to us all it will then be remembered it is not the first time that great discoveries have come from places whence they were least expected.

It was from the little obscure village of Philadelphia, in the wilderness of Pennsylvania, more than a century ago, that came the discovery of electricity and the invention of the lightning-rod. It was from a poor barber-shop in a British village came the invention which enables sea captains to determine with accuracy their exact location upon the ocean at any hour of the day or night, no matter how far they may have drifted from their course by winds and waves. A hundred instances of a similar character could be cited. If therefore the airship has come forth from Oroville it will not be an extraordinary thing in the history of invention.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 9, 10.

COY MR. COLLINS AND HIS AIRSHIP. / The Attorney Hedges on His Story. / NOW HE NEVER SAW THE THING / STRANGE LIGHTS OBSERVED IN THE SKY. / Plenty of Good People Who Are Sure They Have Seen the "Seraph of the Air."

"Airship" Collins—that is what the young lawyer's friends are calling him—says aloud that all men are liars, with a legal reservation in favor of "Airship" Collins. This is modest, at least, and modesty is an attribute which enhances the personal charms of even a promoter of miracles.

Collins during the last few days has been engaged alternately in getting into the witness box and then cross-examining himself on the accuracy of his own testimony. During this peculiar process he has succeeded in tangling himself up into innumerable knots and has finally arrived at a point where he has been forced, for want of material, to come to a sudden halt.

Last Friday he told a story about the inventor of an airship. The inventor was a millionaire, had constructed a successful machine, and had gone to Collins several weeks before to have him get a patent on the invention. He had sent the application on to Washington for his client, and then, at the inventor's invitation, had visited the airship, which it has been solemnly declared had "wings like the great condor of the Andes," and had seen it fly, circle about in the air, describe graceful curves, pirouette like a ballet dancer, and finally descend to earth "as gracefully as a falling leaf."

The inventor, however, was not quite satisfied. He wafted the intelligence to Collins' secret ear that the machine had a "wavy" motion. He would experiment some more. Then to his friend Collins he told another secret. In a few days, after preliminary rehearsals in Sacramento and around Alameda county, he would fly up and down Market street and let all San Francisco see the wonder. And Collins—Collins the demure and bewhiskered young patent lawyer, Collins the human safe deposit of his great secret—would share with him the adoration of a great city.

All this with bated breath and in a coy, hesitating manner, Collins whispered in strict confidence to everybody who would listen to him.

But yesterday he either had a visit from the irate inventor and an order to quit talking, or else he has just been aroused from a hypnotic condition into which some unknown Svengali plunged him a week ago. Like little Joe, he "don't know nothink about nothink." He indignantly repudiates the insinuation that there ever was an airship, and, as for his having seen such a thing fly—the very supposition is ridiculous. There certainly was a man who visited him a few days ago with some talk about a flying machine and a patent and a model, but beyond that he is not aware of anything in connection with the matter. He never sent any airship application to Washington, and in short any man who says he did is a liar and a son of a liar. Mr. Collins thinks it an insult to connect him in any way with anything so vulgarly improbable as an airship. He is sorry to have to tell two or three hundred people who have listened to his statements that they are—well, story-tellers, but he can see no other way out of it.

On Sunday the following scrap of conversation passed between two persons:

"Mr. Collins, on your word of honor as a professional man, have you seen this airship in successful operation?"

"Yes, I have."

But Mr. Collins was evidently in a trance at the time, for he doesn't now remember a word about it. So anxious is Mr. Collins to undo the wonder he has worked that he now declares his positive belief that no successful airship has ever been constructed. When he took a retainer from his client last Thursday morning Collins says he instructed the inventor to provide him with a model. Promising to do so, the inventor left and has not since returned.

It was all very well at first to be the attorney for the eighth wonder of the world and to entertain the ladies and gentlemen of the press from morning till midnight, but yesterday came some of the trouble.

A wild-eyed man put his head in at Collins' door and demanded fiercely to know if the lawyer was in. Having had some experience with cranks, Collins diplomatically replied that Collins was at the City Hall.

"What's he doing there?" demanded the visitor.

"He's working on an air ship, I think," the attorney responded gently.

"That's it!" exclaimed the intruder. "That's my air ship; he has stolen it—he has stolen my air ship."

Collins grew uncomfortable. He squirmed in his chair and finally suggested that the man who had had his air ship stolen should report the matter to the Chief of Police, and the unwelcome visitor departed. This was but one of many cranks who called upon the attorney during the day. There were men who had successful air ships of many kinds. One wanted to procure the agency for sale to the Japanese Government of the right to use it as a war vessel, saying he was sure of making a fortune for himself and Collins. Another came to retain him as his attorney in a suit for the Presidency of the United States by right of heirship, saying he had been referred to Collins as an expert on that sort of thing. The following communication came to Collins through the mail:

I thought I would write you a few lines to ask you if you have any position aboard that airship for a good, strong boy. I am a boy without much schooling and no trade. But a cabin or deck boy I am one of the best, but I guess you have no need for a cabin or a deck boy. If you need any boy to keep the thing clean, I would like to go in the airship. If you need any one you will do me a great favor by giving me the position. Yours until then.

P.S.—I can show a good discharge for five months' time I was in the United States Navy.

Another person who began the day yesterday with the idea that there would be great sport in assisting the attorney in this airship business was E.H. Benjamin of 633 Ellis street.

On Sunday Attorney Collins called on Benjamin at his Ellis-street residence and was closeted with him for some time. Later "Chronicle" reporters called at the rooms and found evidence to corroborate the attorney's statements previously made that he was about to visit the inventor.

Benjamin is a dentist by profession and a piano salesman by occupation. He has invented several dental appliances, he says, for which Attorney Collins has procured him patents. He says the aluminum and drawings found in his apartments last night were connected with those inventions and not with a flying machine. He is not a millionaire; in fact, his income depends rather on the sale of his inventions and occasional employment as a dentist's assistant or a piano salesman.

Yesterday Benjamin gravely invited those who broached the subject to take a ride with him in his nice new airship. He had a whole heap of fun out of the joke.

As the day wore on, however, and Benjamin became the butt of all the street jokers and found himself pursued by reporters, he came to the conclusion that the joke was not so funny after all. He paid a visit to Collins' office and after that consultation both the lawyer and himself denied all knowledge of any old airships, and Benjamin was particularly anxious to deny that he was an experimenter along the lines of aerial navigation.

Just now it is recalled that some twenty years ago the name "Tom Collins" was the synonym for a hoax of any kind. If you wanted to send your friend on a wild goose chase you sent him to the nearest saloon with the story that "Tom Collins" wanted him. When he arrived there he was informed that Collins had just gone to the next place, and so the victim was chased from pillar to post in search of the mythical Collins. If you received a message informing you that you had just won the capital prize in a lottery you scanned it carefully to be sure the name "Tom Collins" was not signed to it. As the name of Baron Munchausen and Joe Mulhatton have become associated with wondrous tales of the impossible, so the name of "Tom Collins" became associated with every popular hoax of the day. "Tom Collins" was the scapegoat of every recreant and inebriated husband returning home late at night.

The light which is said to shine like the head glare of a locomotive or the "Chronicle's" election return flasher was seen in several parts of the city last night and on Sunday, it is declared, by many hundreds of people.

"I saw the light, and am satisfied that it was attached to an airship," said Policeman Clarence

Coogan. "I first noticed it in the vicinity of Golden Gate Park. It was unusually brilliant, and seemed to be traveling toward Oakland. After watching it for some time through a field glass I noticed it disappeared below the horizon.

James A. Hall, an attorney had his attention drawn to the light shortly before 7 o'clock. It seemed to be attached to some dark object. After hovering around in the vicinity of the Cliff House, he says, it gradually traveled eastward, and finally disappeared when apparently ten or fifteen degrees above the horizon.

"I am satisfied that the mysterious light was attached to an airship," remarked Police Captain Wittman last night. "I closely observed the phenomenon and was struck by its unusual brilliancy. My attention was first called to it shortly after 6 o'clock Sunday night. It seemed to be traveling in a southerly direction and moving rather slowly."

Dan Dougherty, driver of the hospital ambulance, was returning from the Cliff House when he noticed the mysterious light. It was very dark at the time, and he and several others watched it for some time. After hovering over the Park for ten or fifteen minutes it struck out in an easterly direction and finally disappeared. Dougherty is sure that the light was attached to an airship.

"While I am a trifle skeptical about the airship story," said Dr. J.H. O'Brien, "I am inclined to believe that the light was attached to some dark object. I first saw it about 6:30 o'clock Sunday evening. It appeared to be traveling in a southerly direction. As it changed its course I saw three other smaller lights, but only for a few seconds. I watched it until it finally disappeared, as I thought, some distance from Oakland."

Assistant Police Surgeon Thompson saw the light through a powerful field glass. As it traveled through the sky it had a waving motion and at times would become dim.

Dr. James F. Kearney saw the light shortly before 7 o'clock Sunday evening. At times it would become dim, but would immediately regain its brilliancy. He is convinced that it was attached to some dark object. As it passed over the bay he says he distinctly saw three smaller lights in addition to the larger one.

According to the stories told to Mayor Sutro by his employes at the Cliff House, the airship was seen in that vicinity about two weeks ago. Speaking about the matter yesterday, the Mayor said: "It was about dark one evening, about two weeks ago, when I reached the Cliff House, and, as I alighted from the car, a number of my employes rushed up to me and began telling me about having seen a strange object hovering over the Seal rocks. According to their story, the object came in from the sea and passed directly over the Cliff House, stopping its speed only for a second while over the Seal rocks. It seemed to be about 500 feet above the earth, and it was too dark to get a view sufficient to describe it. The bright light that seemed to be attached to the rear end of the object, apparently a searchlight, was visible to all, and as it passed rapidly out of sight, going in the direction of the city, it left my men full of wonderment as to what it could be."

A. T. Cooper, a mechanical engineer who has been employed in various rolling mills of the city, claims to have seen the mysterious airship through a powerful telescope on Sunday night, and he gives a detailed account of his observations.

"Sunday evening about 8 o'clock," he said, "I saw the airship through a telescope from Market and Fifth streets. With the naked eye nothing but the moving light could be seen, but through the telescope the machine was plain. To me it seemed to be shaped like a cartridge, and the light was on the rear end. At the time I saw the ship it was going in a westerly direction, and it continued on its way toward the sea till it disappeared. The end was flat, not pointed, and on it were four large propellers, which were similar to the large screws on ocean steamships. Two of these propellers were at the top of the back end and two were at the bottom.

"But the most surprising thing of all was that I saw two men standing within the machine, some distance in from these propellers. I saw them distinctly, because they walked about and, under the glare of the powerful light at the end, their movements could be easily seen. A friend of mine saw the same thing, and neither he nor any one else who looked through the telescope had any doubt that two men were in the machine. There were several who used the telescope and all of them plainly saw the ship and its occupants."

W.H. Menton, real estate and excursion agent of the Southern Pacific Company, has seen three remarkable lights floating in the air, and though he can by no means bring himself to believe that they came from an airship, he cannot account for them in any other way. Mr. Menton said: "At 8:20 o'clock Sunday night the elevator boy in the old Supreme Court building, at the corner [of] McAllister and Larkin streets, where I live, came to my room and told me to look at an airship in the sky. I looked out the window and just south of the panhandle of the park I saw three very bright lights close together. They all seemed to start from nearly one spot. Two of the rays of light were horizontal and one was perpendicular.

It seemed as if one light was on the port side of an airship, if one may believe in such things, another was on the starboard side and the third was from the bottom and pointing downward. I watched the lights for some time, but could not reason out what caused them. They moved slowly southward and finally disappeared in the distance over Clarendon Heights. The lights seemed to be 200 or 300 feet above the arc lights near the park. These electric lights were dim, but the mysterious lights were bright, being fully three or four times stronger. The rays were long and narrow and seemed to fade away from the central point. I was not the only person who saw the lights. There must have been 200 people in the street looking at them, for I watched the peculiar rays for ten minutes before they faded away entirely. Many people were watching from their windows and I could hear persons in the street talking about the lights."

Joseph K. Carter, the expert who has been retained in the settlement of the Pacific Bank troubles, says that on Sunday evening while returning from Berkeley he reached the ferry at 6:15 o'clock and boarded a Howard-street car to go to his home in the Mission.

"After taking a seat on the dummy," he said, "I heard the gripman tell some of the passengers about the traveling lights he had seen on his down trip. All looked, but could see nothing from that point. As we made the turn into Howard street at East street the strange beacon was in full view. I don't pretend to account for it, but I know what I saw—a light, not like the fitful, flaring light of a hot-air balloon, but a steady electric flare. Except when it was obscured by tall buildings, we saw it until we neared the Mission, when it was lost in the mist. It seemed to be moving closer to the earth. Whether it was going with or against the wind I cannot say. I only know that it was something out of the ordinary."

Out in the Western Addition a big crowd of people watched a mysterious glare in the sky for over half an hour early last evening. Most of them jumped to the conclusion that it was the headlight of the airship, but a few of the skeptics who investigated the matter thoroughly declare that it was a fire balloon and nothing else. In support of their idea they say that the light was of a dull red color, and that it drifted out to sea with the wind. So great was the excitement in the Mission that many people living down in the hollows actually took the gleam of the electric lights on the crests of the hills as evidence of some strange phenomena and gazed up at the brilliant flickering for a good while before they found out their mistake.

Over at San Leandro and Haywards there was a mysterious atmospherical seance on Sunday night that was witnessed by several people. Each of them, since his experience, has been the center of a little knot of admiring friends, and every half-hour there is a levee and a period of speech-making, during which the all-absorbing topic is the "What is it?" let loose on the good people of California.

B. Taffelmire, foreman of the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards Electric Railroad power-house, saw the thing and saw it distinctly. He was standing outside the power-house at Elmhurst, and just before 11 o'clock the new planet came into his ken. Its magic electric light was on show, as usual, and the side lights were glittering away like demoniacal eyes. Their gleam played on the sides of a long, narrow object that seemed to have the shape of an outriggered racing boat. The lights were about half a mile away from Taffelmire, and as he watched them they passed rapidly over Haywards going in the direction of Sunol[1].

George Silva, a barber, saw the object at the same time. His description of its appearance is the same as that given by the electrician.

William Umhoff, a contractor and builder of Haywards and one of the oldest residents of Alameda county, is another who stands up boldly and affirms that he saw a real airship right over his head. He said yesterday: "I had a good view of it and cannot be mistaken about its shape or appearance. It had one very bright light in its bow and two others at either side. I don't drink and never suffer from the staggers and I know what I am talking about. The thing was an airship and nothing else. It passed rapidly over the hills toward Sunol and ran along with a wavy motion, just like a vessel in a moderate sea. I watched it till the Cowen ridge shut it out from my view."

Edward Davis, Tim O'Neill and A.B. Hartnell are three young men living three miles from Haywards who not only saw the object but actually had the audacity to chase it for about half a mile over the hills. They were waiting along a wagon trail on Cowen ridge Sunday night when the lights came into view directly over the crest of the hill in front of them. They stood and watched it for a few moments as it sailed directly over their heads, about 400 feet from the ground, and then they turned and ran along in the same direction. It was going only about four miles an hour and its bulk was distinctly visible directly above them. They had been following it for about five minutes at a steady trot, they say, when O'Neill saw a head peer out over the side of the machine. The object immediately began to gain speed and in a few moments passed swiftly out of sight, going, all three think, at fully twenty miles an hour.

Haywards and San Leandro are full of stories of this character.

If Attorney Collins has filed an application for a patent on an airship the knowledge has not yet leaked out in Washington City. A dispatch from there yesterday says:

"At the Patent Office to-day nothing could be learned of any application for a patent on a flying machine alleged to be making successful flights in the neighborhood of Sacramento. The rules of the

office forbid any disclosure of the names of the applicants or the character of inventions for which they seek protection. Inquiry among the patent attorneys who are known to control the Pacific Coast business has failed to disclose any knowledge of the alleged success in aeronautics. Professor Langley of the Smithsonian Institution, who has experimented scientifically for some time to demonstrate the best methods of solving the question of aerial navigation, excused himself from discussing the matter. His manner indicated plainly that he gave little credence to the Sacramento reports."

Concerning the connection of Dr. Benjamin with the alleged airship the following dispatch received last night from Woodland says: "E.H. Benjamin, reputed to be a dentist, has visited this city several times during the past year. His visits were generally of a few weeks' duration. He was never engaged in business here permanently. He is quite well known and is spoken of as being a very intelligent man. As far as can be learned he never built or spoke of building any airship in Woodland, and if he was an inventor no one knew it."

An Oroville dispatch to the "Chronicle" last night says: Dr. F.W. Benjamin of this town is an uncle of Dr. E.H. Benjamin, the reputed inventor of the airship, which is attracting so much attention. Dr. E.H. Benjamin comes from Maine, and has been in California about eight years. Dr. E.H. Benjamin is an inventor and was in Oroville on Sunday, November 15th, to see his uncle upon business. He left here to return to San Francisco on the morning of the 16th. Dr. F.W. Benjamin says his nephew is of an ingenious turn of mind.

"The airship that attracted so much attention in Sacramento and which was believed to have started from this locality appears to have been seen by a number of residents of this section or else their eyes deceived them. M.H. West, one of the oldest and best-known citizens of this town, says a gentleman told him he saw the moving light with something attached to it. He was unwilling to be thought a fool, hence would not give his name to the public.

"A young man, while out driving saw a mysterious light in the south, but was unable to tell much about it, yet realized that it was something out of the common.

"Mrs. George H. E[va]ns, wife of the superintendent of the Banner mine, a few miles from Oroville, and near the edge of Table mountain, has seen a bright light in the heavens. It was not a star, for the sky was overcast with clouds, and the stars could not be seen. She could not tell whether anything was attached to the light or not.

"S.B. Onyett and wife of Palermo were returning home from Oroville when they saw a moving light in the heavens, but were unable to distinguish anything of the size or shape of the body attached to the light. They were unwilling to say anything about the matter at first because they were afraid of being laughed at."

A Santa Cruz dispatch under date of yesterday says: "Several people here claim to have seen an airship sailing over this city at night a few days ago. They say they thought at first that it was three stars moving in a straight line, but are now convinced that it was an airship."

In response to a message sent to Berkeley from this city last night, saying that a mysterious light was visible here and asking if anything of the kind could be seen from that portion of the bay, an answer was received to the effect that the light had passed over the Berkeley campus, moving with the wind in a northwesterly direction, and that it had been seen in transit by several people.

An Oakland dispatch says: "A man representing himself as Manager Alexander McEvoy of the 'American and International Detective Agency' of San Francisco, spent to-day at Piedmont, and claims that he has exploded the airship story as far as Oakland is concerned. He gave it out here to-night that he went there in the interests of a San Francisco paper, and succeeded in finding a boy who has been flying a wonderful kite. The latter, according to McEvoy's story, was about 9 by 12 feet in size, and by a movable battery a light was operated on it. There were reflectors around the light to increase its brilliance, and it was claimed that by the use of the two lines the kite could be swing across the heavens. He claimed that he made a series of experiments to-night. Lights were seen over Piedmont to-night."

p. 6. It may not be an airship, but whatever it is it doesn't lack for wind and gas.

The mythical airship has served to make a topic for conversation during several dull days and to demonstrate the abnormally devalued credulity of a morning contemporary which got its news of the aerial wonder from this paper. The attorney who fathered the first reports of its reality will have some difficulty in ridding himself of the sobriquet of "Airship," which bids fair to cling to him.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) (San Francisco, CA) Evening Post, p. 6.

THE AIRSHIP HAS BEEN NAMED / Nauticulus Flambeayon the Title Advanced by a Scientist. / Latest

Developments Concerning the Aerial Mystery. /

That the airship has come to stay there is no longer any doubt.

San Francisco may be what Lillian Russell called a "Reub" town, and in the estimate of James Sorbeit the locality may be jay, but one thing is certain, that if the present airship should turn out a failure, it has come nearer to being a success than any other which has ever been produced.

Last night bookmakers made wagers into the thousands and from the tenor of the odds at which Peter Gabney bet Ed Purser \$2000 to \$300 (?), the existence of the airship would seem reasonably secure.

As yet no knowledge of the daily whereabouts of the wonderful aerial mystery has been discovered, but its nightly flights have been carefully observed by attentive and wondering eyes.

From those who are supposed to know most of the location of the wonder during the day it would appear to be stationed about five miles outside of San Leandro, where it rests in a large barn, guarded by three armed men, but despite this clue it has not yet been accurately located.

The only man in the city whose interest in the mystery is diminishing is Attorney George D. Collins, and his falling appreciation of the marvelous advent of the aerial wonder seems to be in exact proportion to the increasing enthusiasm of the public of California.

"I hope the fellow who told me that he had invented a flying machine will never darken my doors again," he said this morning in a very disgruntled way. "I have had enough of him and of his air ship and of the vast army of friends, cranks, scientific correspondents, interested in the subject, to last me for the balance of my life.

"I have absolutely nothing new to say on the subject so far as the inventor or my knowledge of his ship is concerned. I have not seen him and I don't expect to see his ship even though some people took positions on the top of the house of a neighbor of mine to see whether the airship would not call for me at my skylight last night.

"The only thing new about it is that a gentleman came here this morning who claimed to be a great scientist of France, and who told me that I showed the greatest ignorance when I applied to the new invention the vulgar appellation of airship. He said the proper name for it and one which would accord with the dignity of science was 'Nauticulus Flambeayou,' and I suppose he ought to know. /

KNOWS THE INVENTOR. / George Carleton of Oakland Is Pledged to Secrecy.

OAKLAND, Nov. 24.—Here comes a new nameless man who has seen the mysterious flying machine and furthermore knows the name of the inventor.

George Carleton, the City Electrician, is the one who knows the story, but he was pledged to secrecy, and says, in response to questions: "I would rather saw my leg off than tell."

Nearly everybody in Oakland knows Carleton and will bear witness to his reliability. He vouches for it for the man who told him the story.

"It is an attorney who told me of it," said Carleton this morning. "He said that he did not want his name mixed up in the affair one way or another, so I will not say any more of him other than that he is a member of my lodge of Masons, lives in Oakland and practices in San Francisco. He told me the name of the inventor, but pledged me to secrecy and further he said that a friend of his saw the machine work. He did not say where, but I inferred that it was in the vicinity of Oroville. As I understand it the machine went up all right, flew off some four or five miles, circled around a few times and returned."

(San Francisco) Evening Post, 11/24, 1. [Pic. (Series of 5 humorous illustrations)]: A KINETOSCOPE INTERVIEW WITH ATTORNEY COLLINS ON THE PAINS OF BEING GODFATHER TO AN AIRSHIP.

Don't know anything whatever about any airship. /

The reporters have been hunting me until it is absolutely unendurable. I don't have any chance to attend to my business. Besides, all sorts of people are chasing me in regard to the alleged ship. One young man wants a job as cabin boy on it, alleging five years' experience in the navy as a qualification. Long-whiskered gentlemen come and call me an enemy to science because I cannot tell them anything. /

Last night the reporters camped on my doorstep and staid [sic] until 4 o'clock this a.m. At midnight I asked them to go away, as I couldn't sleep, and they laughed at me. /

All I know is that a gentleman not a crank called upon me to get him a patent of an airship. He tried to explain his machine, but I told him I would require a model. He went away and never returned. I don't know that this thing seen in the sky is his ship or, in fact, any more than I have told you. I have been fearfully misrepresented by the morning papers. /

It has become unbearable!

1896 November 24 (Tues.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 9.

HAVE YOU SEEN IT IN THE SKY? / The Light That Never Touches Land Nor Sea. / Last Night It Made a Visit to the St. Nicholas Hotel. / An Hour Later a Detective Saw Two Men Send Up an "Airship." / AERIAL LANTERNS FROM BLAIR PARK. / The Reputable Citizen All Over the Coast Is Now Telling What He Sees When He Stays Out Late. /

The historic bird of Sir Boyle Roche which contrived to be in two places at the same time would, notwithstanding his varied accomplishments, have had a parlous time to keep up with California's pet "airship." The monster is everywhere by turns and nowhere long. In Tulare he flaunts a scornful tail in the face of the cocked-up moon; in Sacramento he goes kiting up and down the midnight heavens; in San Francisco he has wheels; in Oakland he clanks a wild uncanny clink, and in Siskiyou he flames in the forehead of the morning sky.

Even since the fabled Daedalus melted his waxen wings in the heat of the inconsiderate sun it has been the dream of the dreamers to spurn dull earth and sail the ether blue; and now at last a California dentist soars in the empyrean, defiant and clanking. Can this be the Shortridge Thunderbird once more come to terrify the groundlings with his ethereal flights, or is it merely a scarecrow that blew away?

This extraordinary bird was again much in evidence last night. Possibly he had not sense enough to go in out of the rain. Perhaps he was starting away to Washington to get out a patent on himself. But never fear; we shall all hear from him again—this unfeathered songster. The papers have been wont to brag about the "ubiquitous reporter," but his ubiquity is a small circumstance alongside of the prevalence of this flying scarecrow. California can't lose him, and what is more, cannot spare him so long as the silly season endures.

From Siskiyou to San Diego and from the Sierra to the Sea this blessed fowl parades the heavens like a weathercock wary of sitting on something that won't hatch, and the whole State say, More power to his elbow, and may his shadow never grow less, for by and by when we find his nest we will ask him to deliver us from Mr. Huntington.

Perhaps that's the reason that, o' nights, so many San Francisco people now follow the advice of the Concord philosopher and "Look up and not down."

That ghostly light, balloon or whatever it is, passed over the southwestern portion of the city last night, between 9 and 9:30 o'clock. Dozens of people saw it, and all agree substantially as to what they saw. They agree that it was a large round steadily burning light as bright as an electric arc lamp and of a decidedly reddish hue. It was first seen in the direction of the Potrero and moved steadily but rapidly over the city at a height of several hundred feet, finally disappearing off in the direction of the Park.

Some one in the St. Nicholas Hotel, at the intersection of Hayes and Market streets, saw the light about 9:25 o'clock, and called the attention of others to it. Soon everybody in the hotel crowded to the west windows looking out on Polk street. From that point a view of the entire northwesterly portion of the city can be had, and those who reached good points of observation first watched that moving light and shouted back to those behind them tidings of the movements of the sky-traveler.

Mrs. A.M. Gardner of Napa, wife of Dr. Gardner, Superintendent of the Napa asylum, was one of these. "I saw this object or light or whatever it may be, first way down in the direction of the Potrero," said she. "It rose slowly and steadily until apparently about on the lower cloud line. I could see nothing but a large red light, as large as a big incandescent light. It was rainy and dark out, but I could see the light move across the city. It had a sort of wavering motion, but, as I say, moved forward steadily and in one plane. I could see nothing behind, or below, or above the light—nothing to which the light could be attached. Once in a while it would disappear for a second as if going behind a cloud. The last I saw of it it disappeared over between the towers of St. Ignatius' Church, and was apparently moving toward the Park and ocean."

Dozens of others around in that section of the city stood out in the rain in the middle of the street and gazed in absorbed wonder at the sight.

Barkeeper Meyer, in the saloon at No. 5 Ninth street, gave the alarm to those persons within earshot. He dashed out into the middle of Market street bareheaded, coatless and breathless and yelled in wild delirium:

"Look at the flying machine!"

A crowd soon gathered. In it were many presumably sober men, among them Dr. J.A. Black, J.S. McDonnell of the St. Nicholas pharmacy, Charles P. Barbee and James Kennedy of 1604 Market street and James McDonald of 1218 Mission street.

Switchman A.L. Francis, who swings lanterns for the Sutter-street road at the Market-street crossing, said he thought it was one of his cars broken loose, and he caught himself waving a signal toward the heavens to warn the aerial traveler off from earth. He said the light looked for all the world like a Sutter-

street car headlight off duty.

All the barkeepers in the neighborhood were especially valuable afterward in telling of the sight and they mixed drinks and talked of red lights for the rest of the night.

Alexander D. McEvoy of the American and International Detective Agency, whose office is in the Mills Building in this city, last evening discovered the source of at least some of the mysterious lights, perhaps all of them. By quiet investigation he learned that Blair Park, in the northern suburbs of Oakland is the place of operation of two men who have been hoaxing the people of Oakland and this city. He stationed himself in the park and watched for what he might see. At exactly twenty-eight minutes after 10 o'clock he saw rising from Inspiration point, a high shelf on the Piedmont hills, about five hundred yards from his place of observation, an object kiteshaped, about ten feet in length, with wheels like little windmills. On the sides of the structure were lights, and from it hung a Japanese lantern, red in color and about one foot in diameter. It moved slowly before the wind. He plainly saw two men on the point and accosted them as they descended the path. They told him that they were sending up objects such as he had seen to mystify the people and to give them material for newspaper articles.

"There is something in the air," that is plain, but people who have seen this something differ in their descriptions to such degree that this errant light might be anything from a Quixotic planet to a Vagrant drug store. Yet these same people who give the descriptions are trustworthy citizens with reputations for veracity equalled only by the mariners who have seen the sea serpent.

Attorney George D. Collins has been credited with knowing a thing or two about this fly-by-night aerial rover. A large part of this credit is traceable to another lawyer, a law college classmate of Collins, Frederick Bradley of the firm of Stanley, McKinstry & Bradley. He is an old friend of Mr. Collins, but whether he will maintain the friendship seems to be in doubt. Yesterday Mr. Collins was inclined to send heavenward that prayer of all men in public life: "Lord, deliver me from my friends." Perhaps Mr. Collins is inclined to be cautious and over-sensitive. The newspaper men and flying-machine enthusiasts who called upon him at his house on Union avenue, Alameda, Sunday night were extremely attentive, and they left there early the next morning after an all-night vigil on the front porch. And that new turkey-red carpet in the outer reception room of his office in the Crocker Building, of course, was ruined by the throng that tramped over it yesterday. But about the vigil on the porch and the destruction of the carpet, Mr. Collins will see Mr. Bradley later.

Mr. Bradley says that Mr. Collins told him on Thursday last that he had seen an airship of wonderful construction, but Collins now says that Bradley "has wheels," or something worse.

"It was on the 12:15 o'clock ferryboat, last Thursday night," said Mr. Bradley, yesterday, "that Mr. Collins told me he had been to see a wonderful air ship invented by a client of his. He made no secret of telling me and I did not consider that I violated any confidence when I told a friend about the thing the next day. He told me that a man whom he had never seen before had come into his office Wednesday and said that he desired to get out a patent on an air ship. When Mr. Collins asked for details the visitor invited him to inspect the marvelous affair, and they made an appointment to go together, the day following. They went, taking the Oakland ferry and then the train. Collins told me just the place, but I do not like to state.

"They walked some distance after leaving the train and stopped finally at an old barn. It was locked, but Collins' client had the key. On entering Collins saw, as he told me, a strange-looking affair made of white metal, and this metal, he was told, was aluminum. His guide did not explain much to him, but invited him to get on and have a ride. Mr. Collins declined to do so, but his guide climbed up, pulled a rope that drew aside a big skylight, turned a clamp or two that set some unknown power in action, and the white machine, with the man on it, shot up into the air. It had two side flaps of some flexible material that worked slowly, with a wing-like motion, like the pinions of a large bird. It rose steadily upward for about 200 feet and then descended easily and touched the ground within ten paces of the place where Collins was standing.

"He told me he did not have time to make a very close examination. He noticed there was a big light forward, like a searchlight. There was a sort of cabin, and his strange guide told him this craft could carry six men, and that he was satisfied he could make one that would carry twenty men easily. Moreover, Mr. Collins told me that he and his client returned together to the city and parted from each other with the understanding that they should have a trial trip on Sunday or Monday and invite several friends. Mr. Collins invited me to go on this trial trip, and I have been waiting to get word from him to know the time and place. I intended merely to get a good look at the thing, for I have too much regard for my life to take any experimental voyages."

That's Mr. Bradley's narration of Mr. Collins' statement to him. What Mr. Collins said yesterday to a newspaper man was entirely different.

"The notoriety I am getting about this airship matter is getting to be more than monotonous," said he with a show of righteous indignation. "Bradley must have been drinking to have imagined I told him all

such rubbish. Most emphatically I deny having ever told him anything of that sort, and I can't imagine what he means by putting up any such a joke on me. I have never seen any airships and never proposed to take a ride in one.

"All I know of airships is just this: On last Wednesday a man came to me, introduced himself and said he desired to get out a patent for an airship. He started to tell me about it, but I interrupted him to ask if he had a model of his invention. He said he had not. I told him we could do nothing about getting out a patent until he had a model, and he went away saying he would get a model made and would come back this week. I took his name and address, but I do not feel at liberty to give them out. I presume he will call again, and I will do what I can for him. Perhaps he went to some one who knows Bradley to get that model made, and in that way Bradley fixed up that long yarn about me.

"I have been dumfounded to see some of the statements credited to me that have appeared in some of the papers. I never told any one that I had a rich client from Oroville, or that his name was Dr. Benjamin, or anything of that sort. All I know about airships I have told you now, and I am prepared to take my oath on this. I have been grossly misrepresented, and I wish I knew of some way of getting redress; but I do not.

"This Dr. Benjamin referred to is a dentist. He is a client of mine and an old friend, and I am trying to help him get out a patent on a new sort of gold crown for teeth. He has been experimenting for some time and calls upon me frequently. He has nothing whatever to do with the airship project."

Up to about two months ago Dr. E.H. Benjamin was employed in the piano department of Sherman, Clay & Co. He left there because he desired, as he explained, to practice his profession, dentistry, and he set up an office in the house occupied by Dr. S.W. Dennis and his son at 113 Powell street. While there he has been engaged upon several inventions, all in the line of dentistry, so far as known by Dr. Dennis. He has been rooming at 633 Ellis street, but he left there yesterday, leaving word that he would not be home for a week. Evidently he went to Oroville, for a telegram from that town to "The Examiner" received last evening gives the information that he laughed at the suggestion that he knows anything about any air ship and declared untrue the whole story of his connection with an aerial traveler.

Mayor Sutro recalls that when he arrived at the Heights at 8 o'clock in the evening about three weeks ago he found all of his servants standing in the yard discussing a peculiar object they had seen a few moments before. The Mayor says his servants told him that they had seen something fly in from the ocean not more than 500 feet from the ground and pass rapidly eastward. The men said they could distinguish a row of lights on the side of the object and a large white light resembling a searchlight at the rear.

The strange lights were seen also by several persons in this city. All who say them agree sufficiently as to the speed and the direction in which they were moving to prove beyond all question that they were not of meteoric origin as was suggested at the time.

The most reliable information that can be obtained in regard to the strange light over Oakland on Friday night last is from G.B. Daniels of Piedmont and his family. Mr. Daniels is a well-known Oakland business man and his father is an attorney and formerly was Police Judge. Both father and son saw the light.

"My father was on the car with the passengers who say they saw an air ship," said G.B. Daniels yesterday. "The car was standing at the transfer point at the corner of Twenty-fourth street and Broadway. All saw this light which seemed to be over St. Mary's College, and which moved toward San Francisco in a southwesterly direction. None of them at that time said they saw any air ship or anything wise except the light, but you never can tell what a person will see after he has been thinking over things for a while. Out at the house my family all saw the light and they called my attention to it. It looked to me just as the searchlight at the Midwinter Fair used to look from my house. None of us, however, thought that we saw any ship or heard any noises, but it moved too steadily and slowly and too near the earth to be a meteor."

George E. Plummer of San Antonio avenue, Alameda, well known in society and politics across the bay, believes that he has seen the air ship. On Monday night, November 16th, he was going home with his wife at about 9 o'clock from a whist club gathering where only lemonade was served when his attention was attracted by something that looked like a fire balloon in the sky over the hills in the direction of San Leandro. "It was moving apparently though I cannot say that it was going very fast," he said yesterday, "and it appeared to me very much like a balloon. The light was white and brilliant as a star. I was struck with its brilliancy and never saw anything like it before. It is not a fact that I heard singing, nor was the song, 'Just Tell Them That You Saw Me.'"

LIGHT OVER WOODLAND.

A Physician and an Attorney Saw the Strange Thing of the Air.

WOODLAND, November 23.—Several citizens of Capay insist that they saw something like a ball of fire traveling southward Sunday night. It was in sight about an hour. Dr. Morris, a trustworthy citizen, saw an object about 7 o'clock Sunday night west and south of Broderick. He thinks it was 400 or 500 feet

high. It looked like a ball of fire, save that it was not red, but pale like an electric light.

Ed Mering, a well-known lawyer of this city, says he saw a strange light a few nights ago, but thought it was a meteor. I was so slow and eccentric in its movements that he remarked when he reached home that he had never seen a meteor like it. He decided to say nothing about it, and only changed his mind when the matter became a topic of general public interest.

No Patent Asked.

WASHINGTON, November 23.—At the Patent Office to-day nothing could be learned of any application from California for a patent for a flying machine.

[Cartoons: Vanquished, the Sea-Serpent Prepares to Die of Grief. Mr. Huntington's View of the Aerial Flight. "Same Old Octopus," Said the Mayor. Nat Goodwin Believes It Is Following Him. Just Before Attorney Collins Woke Up.]

[11/24,1. AWFUL FATE OF AN AIRSHIP (The Call crashing after balloons, representing two men, deflate)]

11/24/6. Another explanation of the phantom of the airy skies is that the Shortridge senatorial boom has burst its moorings.

The editor of our esteemed contemporary, the "Call," signs the triple-column extra type announcement: "The 'Call' has ever been free from fakes and vile sensations of all kinds. It has never been suspected even of blackmail." A paper that has not been suspected "even of blackmail" certainly has cause for pride. It can afford to celebrate until the lambent heavens are one flashing expanse of crimson airships, shedding pink parrots and fiery snakes, even if it be constitutionally incapable of "fakes" and "sensations."

1896 November 24 (Tues.) Santa Cruz Sentinel, p. 3.

"Sentinel" Local Jottings.

Sam Davis and T. J. Krauth are among those who claim to have seen the airship sailing over Santa Cruz a few days ago. They said it looked like three stars moving in a straight line.

Dr. E. H. Benjamin, who is supposed to be the inventor of the airship, is well known in Santa Cruz, having frequently been here as representative of a San Francisco piano firm.

1896 November 24 (Tues. morn.) Stockton (CA) Daily Independent, p. 1.

THE AIRSHIP AGAIN. / Two Bright Lights Appear to Duly Sober People.

At 10 o'clock last night several well known residents of the northern part of the city telephoned the Independent that they had seen the airship sailing off in a southwesterly direction and that it was heading in the direction of San Francisco when last seen. In appearance it was of the form of the pictured craft that has covered the pages of the metropolitan papers the past two days. The bright and swiftly moving object was seen by half a dozen persons, who were quite positive that it was the flying thing that has made so many persons scan the heavens every night for several days.

Others who looked for the creation of the Sacramento and San Francisco fakirs strained their eyes till they were positive they saw the ship. Closer investigation proved distinctly that two lights were far above the earth in the western heavens yet the night was rainy and very dark. Changing positions it was found that the lights that seemed so far away were the reflections of electric arc lights on the wet wires of the line running along El Dorado street. With a vivid imagination the lights seemed to be moving as one changed his point of observation and the search for the strange object soon caught passers by until dozens of heads were turned heavenward and gently falling rain filled eyes and faces with wetness that called for handkerchiefs before the search was abandoned.

Many persons thought enough of the story to spend hours in scanning the heavens last night and if it had been a clear night many more would have been out to be laughed at.

THE AIRSHIP STORY. / The Inventor Is Alive But the Machine is Inactive.

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 23.—The story of the airship is not generally credited. The inventor cannot be found and those who are reputed to have seen it are not willing to give definite testimony. George D. Collins, the attorney whose name has been connected with the inventor as applicant for a patent, admits he was retained for such service, but ridicules the story of the Sacramento flying machine. He says that story is a fake, but declares that his client is working on a machine which is a combination of

aeroplane and tailless kite. Attorney Collins, however, says he has not seen the flying machine and he discredits its alleged performance. The name of the inventor is withheld and he cannot be found.

(Santa Barbara) Morning Press, 11/24, p. 1. SF's airship.

1896 November 24 (Tues. morn.) Daily Record (Stockton, Calif.), p. 4.

NOT THE AIRSHIP. / A Rumor Becomes Current Last Night That Sacramento's Aerial Visitant Flew Over Stockton.

"Did you see anything of the airship?" was a question which got started about town early last evening owing to a little incident and two hours later, although started as a joke, people were asking each other seriously, "Did you hear anything of the airship passing over the city?"

The meteoric flight of the alleged aerial monster that flashed athwart the heavens above Sacramento a few nights ago was not a nightly visitant to this section. Two electric wires became crossed on Main street opposite the Yosemite house, and the fitful flashes which it gave out soon gathered a crowd.

Some joker suggested that the airship was passing over and from that remark the idea became current and passed for whole cloth among many who did not know the circumstances.

Nov. 24, p. 4. Mysterious work going on in Oroville.

Stockton Evening Mail, Tues. Nov. 24, p.1. Dashes Here and There.

Last evening a report spread on the streets that the airship was circling the heavens in this vicinity, and many persons scanned the sky in the hope of seeing it. The report was caused by the crossing of two electric wires, which gave out a light that looked as if it were from high up in the heavens. Some joker gathered a crowd about him and made them believe that the light came from the airship.

p . [Inquiry to Wash, reveals no flying mach, but Patent Office can't disclose; Langley is no comment but disdains.]

1896 November 24 (Tues. eve.) Woodland, Calif., Daily Democrat, p. 3.

WAS IT AN AIRSHIP? / Curious Phenomenon Witnessed by Two Reputable Citizens of Woodland. / Three Bright Lights Followed by a Brilliant Train Passed Directly Over This City. /

That there is a mysterious light moving about in the upper atmosphere, there seems to be no doubt. So many reputable and truthful people have seen it at various times and places that it does not seem reasonable that they can all be victims of a hallucination.

We do not take any stock, however, in the generally accepted theory that the mysterious object is an airship. It is more reasonable to suppose that it is some aerial phenomenon produced in a perfectly natural way and susceptible of a rational and scientific explanation.

In the Examiner of today is a story of a mysterious light seen navigating the air in the vicinity of Woodland on an uncertain date. The Democrat is able to throw some light on this story.

About three weeks ago, and several days before the phenomenon was first announced from Sacramento, L. Charmak and a gentleman who requests us to withhold his name were standing in front of Mr. Charmak's place of business. The hour was between 8 and 9 in the evening. Suddenly a moving light, or, more properly, lights, appeared in the southwestern portion of the city. Mr. Charmak's attention was called to it. The unusual visitor was traveling in a northeasterly direction, and when first seen was apparently over the residence of A.D. Porter.

As it reached Main street it suddenly arose 100 feet or more, but continued its forward movement in the same direction. It traveled more slowly and it was half a minute from the time it came in sight until the Capital Hotel shut it out from view.

While it was traveling broadside Mr. Charmak and his friend had an opportunity to get a good view of it. There were three distinct lights closely resembling an arc light. They were close together and a uniform distance apart, and were followed by a long train of light like that which usually follows in the train of a shooting star, except that it was white.

Their first thought was that it was a meteor, but its proximity to the earth, eccentric movements and unusual form hardly warranted such a theory. The more they thought about it the more their doubts increased. The circumstance was not mentioned at the time except by the gentleman who was with Mr. Charmak. In the family where he boarded he spoke of it, expressing the opinion that if it was a meteor it

was the most extraordinary phenomenon of that character he had ever witnessed.

Neither of these gentlemen pretends that the mysterious light they saw was an airship. They have no theory to account for it. They related what they witnessed, and people can draw their own conclusions.

1896 November 24 (Tues.) (Woodland, CA) Yolo Semi-Weekly Mail, p. 1.

MUST BE AN AIR SHIP. / Attorney Geo. D. Collins of Oakland Knows, and Has Talked With the Inventor. / Dr. A. Morris and W. W. Campbell of Woodland Saw the Mysterious Vessel. /

The airship theory, which has been occasioned by the floating of strange and mysterious lights and sounds over the city of Sacramento, and of which the dailies of the coast have been full lately, seems to have developed into something tangible.

According to Monday's Call Attorney George D. Collins, of Oakland, knows the inventor, an old gentleman of Oroville, and has conversed with him about his invention and has a general description of its construction and motive power.

The theory is strengthened considerably in this community by the fact that two men of Woodland had the pleasure of seeing the mysterious winged vessel with their own eyes in Sacramento, Sunday night. Dr. A. Morris says that he saw it sailing over that city. He could not describe it accurately, he saw a confused mass with lights aboard. W. W. Campbell, in Zimmerman's drug store, gives a more vivid description of the machine. He said it was about thirty or forty feet long, that it soared two hundred feet above the earth and described graceful circles in its course. He further states that there is no doubt concerning the nature of the thing, it is an air ship, easy in motion and well lighted.

Late Monday afternoon a report was circulated on the streets that Dr. E. N. Benjamin, who was in Woodland quite a while, was the inventor of this airship. The reports seem to have originated from a dispatch to that effect from San Francisco and also from the fact that while here he told Dr. L. B. Homes that he was then working on an invention which would revolutionize the world when completed.

To some extent he resembles the character as described by Attorney Collins in speaking of the mysterious monster, both as regards age and general characteristics. Dr. Benjamin was in this city the last time about two years ago. He was quite intimate with Dr. Holmes, spending considerable of his time in Dr. H.'s office. It was during one of these calls that he told him of his invention. /

LATER—Last night's Bulletin said: The airship story is rapidly going to pieces. The phenomenon of the heavens that "cleaves the air with pinions like a huge condor" has lost its chief support. The man who made it has melted away, and those who saw it were lying low. George D. Collins, attorney-at-law, who, according to the Call's story, knew the Oroville millionaire who invented and engineered the wondrous air vessel, now proclaims this marvelous story a plain ordinary fake. When seen by a Bulletin representative this morning, he said that the extent of the whole business was that a San Francisco man had come to him and asked him to get out a patent on an airship. He knows nothing of Oroville or Oroville men. [same in The Mail of Woodland, 11/24/1.]

NOVEMBER 25

1896 November 25 (Wed.) Daily Californian (Bakersfield), p. 2.

It is reported that the Call's flying machine was seen by two different parties passing over Bakersfield last night, going in the direction of Tehachapi. The men who saw it could not be found to-day. Tues. eve., Nov. 24, p. 2.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) (Chico, Calif.) Morning Chronicle-Record, p. 3.

SEEN AGAIN. / Many People of Chico Gaze at the Supposed Airship.

What was supposed to have been the wonderful airship was seen again at about 6:30 last evening by many people in this city. It appeared to be a large light suspended high in the western heavens, and remained in sight for several minutes, then finally disappeared from view.

This second appearance of the strange light was the subject of much talk about town last night.

The appearance of the light was certainly something out of the ordinary, and its second visit to this neighborhood, but at almost opposite points of the compass, makes a very perplexing question for the

doubtful ones to answer. Many people saw it last night, and we could give the names of dozens of our most highly respected and reputable citizens who witnessed the strange phenomenon, and expressed their opinions as to the light. They were all a unit on one phase of the subject; that the light which had been seen in the west was not a star, it appeared too large for that, and they also declared that it moved. At one time the light completely disappeared from view, and then suddenly reappeared.

It remained in one position for several minutes, and then moved away, the light finally disappearing from view, and it was not seen again.

The heavenly visitor, when first seen, was directly west from this city and appeared to have an altitude of several hundred feet. It was plainly visible from any of the streets running westward, and in the business portion of town the corners were all blockaded with excited people, intently gazing at the western sky, and many were the conjectures as to the nature of the light.

(Eureka) Daily Humboldt Standard, Nov. 25 p. 1. Red Bluff.

(Eureka) Daily Humboldt Times, Nov. 25 p. 1—SF daft over arsp—5 balloons sent up & newspapers deluged with reports.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) Fresno (CA) Morning Republican, p. 2.

THAT AIRSHIP. /

That airship which twice has swooped down upon the citizens of Sacramento—causing the Bee to inquire in largest headline, "Have we got 'em again?"—and which has furtively showed itself to a select number of San Franciscans and Oaklanders, may be a fake, but it bears a more than ordinary amount of the fingermarks of truth for a story of that character. If it is a fake, it will take its place among notorious and successful ones. If it is not, a new world opens before mankind.

It is just as well to admit that the Sacramentans, at any rate, have seen something out of the ordinary in the heavens above that city, and it is equally evident that if it is not a ship of the air it is very difficult to imagine just what it may be. That so many people should unite in mistakenly supposing that they have seen something extraordinary in the sky is not a reasonable presumption. They have seen something unusual. The only question is what it may be.

That a successful airship may have been invented is not at all incredible. That the air could be navigated has been the dream of man ever since he first began to think for himself, and if the dream shall now have become a reality, the fact will be no more strange than is many another of this wonder-discovering century. Nor is the present mystery surrounding the movement of the airship, if an airship there be, particularly remarkable. Its inventor might be testing his new invention before giving it to the world, or he might take a sort of fantastic pleasure in witnessing the wonder of the people to whom his invention comes as a marvel and a revelation. Thus far the mysterious appearance of the airship is not inexplicable.

But there is a question which, more than these, causes one to wonder whether the airship can be more than a thing of the imagination. It is this: How could the inventor, in these days of postal services, telegraph, telephone and gossiping newspapers, have perfected so wonderful a machine, and one requiring so much space for its manufacture, without the fact becoming known to the world at large? That such a thing would be possible seems incredible. It is the most difficult feature of the airship story to believe. Nothing else in the story is so suggestive of a fake.

But suppose that the story is true; suppose that a practical airship has been invented, who can conceive of all that the wonderful invention will mean to the race of man? What will become of railroads as a means for the transportation of travelers, when a machine that will cost comparatively little will carry them at the rate of ninety or more miles an hour for a fraction of the expense? Who, for instance, would go to New York by rail when he could board an airship here at noon today, and be in the great city tomorrow evening? If the things announced in the Sacramento story are true, the world's transportation of passengers will be revolutionized.

Think, too, of the part that this aerial machine would play in the "noble science of warfare." Let one of them hover over a city and drop a few bombs of dynamite or some other explosive, and the history of that city would be ended. War would become an unspeakable horror. Is this a possibility of the machine, which should be dreaded? Be not too sure. Is it not entirely conceivable that man, in very knowledge and fear of what they might do to one another, would declare a universal truce, that warfare would be forever ended and that mankind would meet in that "parliament of peace" of which the poets have dreamed? It seems probable, and if this would be the case, it would be the supreme work of the airship, for there could not well be a greater.

Let somebody else write of other possibilities lying dormant in the airship, for the field is of the widest. It may well be that the story which comes down from the capital city is a fake, although some of the indicia of truth are upon it, but if it is not, we are standing in the dawn of a new day when the world will be in no small degree revolutionized. The revolution will be a long way from complete, however; human nature will not be changed.

Just why that flying machine should be hovering over Sacramento like a buzzard over a dead horse, is one of the things that puzzle. If the legislature were in session it might be supposed that the aerial monster has a keen scent for the sack—but then it is not, and the mystery continues to mystify. /

Yesterday the writer said that the story of the Sacramento airship, if it was not true, had engendered a thriving brood of magnificent liars. Today he makes the statement without qualification of any kind, for none is necessary. In the first place the dispatches said that Attorney George D. Collins had asserted that he knew the airship existed. Now they assert equally positively that he says nothing of the kind. An airship would be a very useful invention, but a patent extinguisher of prevaricators would fill a more important place in the world, even if it should annihilate a majority of us.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) Oakland (Calif.) Times, p. 3.

LIGHTS ALOFT. / Seen in This Vicinity Several Evenings. / By Various People at Widely Separated Points. / As Yet However No One Has Had a View of the Nocturnal Visitor. /

The press dispatches from Sacramento of last Tuesday evening, told of strange lights seen in the sky there during the evening by numerous reputable witnesses, who claimed it was an air ship traveling about apparently at the will of men who were passengers. Naturally the story was discredited and the whole affair denounced as a great hoax. The next day, however, a large number of people were found who testified to having seen the strange visitor, but none were able to say what it was. Among these were the daughters of Mayor Hubbard, R.L. Lowry, J.H. Vogel, E. Wenzel, David Carl, T.P. de Long, Frank Ross, assistant superintendent of the street car line; G.C. Snyder, foreman at the car barn; Charles Lusk, secretary of the company; F.E. Briggs, a motorman; H.W. Marsh, E. Caverly and M.T. Shelly.

The Sacramento Bee of Wednesday evening says: "Startled citizens last night...look up at the novelty."

THE OAKLAND VIEW.

Various residents of this city declare that they also have seen the mysterious light and talk of it as an airship. The first notice of it antedates the dispatches from Sacramento. Six weeks ago a Miss Hagstrom, while out riding her bicycle saw and was impressed by the strong light.

Friday evening lights were seen about 5:30 by Charles H. Ellis, armorer of Companies A and F, Selby Yost, a Piedmont motorman, and a number of passengers on his car, W.J. Rhodda and wife of 2042 Broadway, Officer Carson and by an Oakland artist who was in Golden Gate Park during the evening. Attorney S.F. Daniels and his family also saw a light and discussed it for fully thirty minutes before it disappeared. "The light," said he to-day, "looked like a headlight on an electric car and was several hundred yards above the horizon. Balloonists do not go up in the night and travel about in the dark, and while I do not say this is an airship I would not be at all surprised to find that it was. Aerial navigation is sure to be solved sooner or later."

A couple of hours later the same evening a bright light was seen by a number of people, towards Haywards. It appeared to be traveling northwest, then the course was changed and it disappeared, going eastward. Several people on the Alameda electric car saw it at that time. Miss Wilson, daughter of Captain Wilson of the police force, and her friend, Miss Hunter, accompanied a third young lady to the car about that hour and they saw the mysterious light and they say it followed the course described.

Attorney George Collins of Alameda says that a man who claimed to be the inventor of an airship desired him to secure patents thereon and said he would have a model made and bring it to the attorney. "I have not seen the airship," said Collins last evening, "and do not know whether or not the invention is of any value, but I am not fool enough to say that the testimony of all these people who have seen lights traveling in the heavens are liars. I know that more wonderful things than airships have been invented and am ready to believe that aerial navigation has been solved."

General W.H.H. Hart says he has seen the thing in the air and believes a bona fide discovery has been made.

Mr. Tyler, assistant librarian of the San Francisco Law Library, with his sister and Mrs. Philbrook, saw the supposed airship Friday, after it was seen in the northern part of Oakland. From this it would have appeared to circle from this city to San Francisco and thence south and around towards Haywards.

MAYOR SUTRO'S VIEWS.

Mayor Sutro of San Francisco says there is not the faintest doubt in his mind that the aerial courser passed over Sutro Heights a short time ago. "I have not seen it," he says, "but some of my people have, and their narratives were told several days before the papers had the story. They say it was not over 500 feet above the ocean when it passed the Heights and appeared to have a search light. I certainly think that some shrewd inventor has solved the problem of aerial navigation and that we will hear all about it within a short time. It would not be any more wonderful than the invention of the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph or the X ray, and it would seem that some one must hit the proper appliances when so many smart men have been working on the problem."

Samuel Foltz, advertising manager of the Call, Colonel Winton, excursion agent of the Southern Pacific Company, M.H. Cohen, a Hayes street car line conductor and other San Francisco people say they have seen the strange light and are confident some one has solved aerial navigation.

The Enquirer's correspondent at Berkeley sends in the following:

BERKELEY'S CONTRIBUTION.

"Berkeley is not behind other towns in receiving the honor of visits from the Collins-Benjamin airship and can claim precedence over all other places in the State in one respect, for the mysterious visitor seems to have been observed in the University town before even Sacramento got a glimpse of it. D. Lapham, real estate dealer of Stanford place, declares that he saw the wandering light three weeks ago, though he is not able to equal other witnesses in description of the 'dark body,' bird like oscillating motion or albatross wings.

"It has been suggested that Mr. Lapham saw the search light of the Chutes in San Francisco. Last night a body of men were on Shattuck avenue gazing intently skywards and mystifying passersby directing their attention to a moving light in the heavens, but the latter was invisible to those not in the joke.

LAST EVENING'S SHOW.

The mysterious light of the heavens was seen last evening by Mrs. E.H. Crawford and Miss Kate N. Bassett, who reside at 522 Tenth street. The ladies after some hesitation told their experiences. "I went to my south window about 10:30 last evening," said Mrs. Crawford, "to see if it was raining. I noticed a light off in the south and watched it because it was the only light visible. In a few moments it disappeared and later came to view again. It looked like the search lights I have seen at the World's Fair and in New York City. I called Miss Bassett and we both watched it for fully fifteen minutes and until it finally disappeared.

"When first seen it appeared to me moving away from us and gradually sank until out of our sight. Miss Bassett said it must be an electric light with a tree waving in front of it but this was not the case as it was too high and then I looked this morning but there was no tree anywhere near where we saw the light. Neither of us saw an airship but we did see lights that we do not understand and shall take much interest in watching this evening and for sometime to come to see whether the light is to be seen any more.

"Before I went to bed, about 11:15, I again went to the window and the light had returned and was moving eastward slowly but steadily. I could not tell how far away the light was or anything about it, but having read the accounts in the papers concluded that the light must be the same as seen by others in this vicinity."

1896 November 25 (Wed.) Oakland Tribune, p. 1.

YOU CAN'T MISS IT. / Just Look at the Sky and You Will See the Airship. / SO SAY THE CREDULOUS. / It Was in Red Bluff and Also Oakland Last Night. / EXPERIENCES ARE RELATED. / All Sorts of Rumors Are Floating About the Town. /

RED BLUFF, Nov. 25—Many residents assert they saw the alleged airship in this neighborhood last evening.

It was first noticed about 7 o'clock, and was thought to be a particularly bright star, but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction towards the mountains.

It finally disappeared over the mountains.

The summit of the mountains could be seen above the mysterious light as it moved west.

Soon after its disappearance a telegram from Chico stated the supposed airship had come from the direction of Red Bluff, and after making a few turns had returned in the direction from which it came.

Several citizens say that while at the first only a light was visible, that later the body of an egg shaped object was visible moving quickly through the air.

The theory that it was a star was rejected because of its distinctly rocking motion, which was like the motion made by a kite.

SEEN IN OAKLAND.

Many Believe in the Mystery / Recite Their Personal Experiences.

The fact that what was apparently the same mysterious object, is claimed to have been seen earlier in the evening by a large number of Oaklanders, causes some doubt to arise in the minds of many.

The meteoric display which an astronomer predicted for the 13th of this month, has been brought into the case and now it is being claimed that the visions are nothing less than meteors and comets which are participating in Heaven's pyrotechnic display one by one.

Charles White of East Oakland says he is positive he saw the airship last night. He crossed on the 6:15 o'clock ferry from San Francisco and says that while on the cable car to the boat a number of passengers noticed what appeared to be the mysterious visitor in the heavens near South San Francisco. It rapidly approached and raced the boat across the bay, beating it so badly that it was hovering over Alameda by the time the boat docked. From the train the passengers saw the light continuing in the same direction and later, when on an Eighth street electric car[,] could plainly discern it, though then the object was far distant.

A.B. Parker, conductor of the car, corroborates the story, for he, with a number of others watched the strange thing until it disappeared from view.

A small-sized scare was started today, when the present location of the air-ship was said to be in Alameda. A visit to the location described revealed nothing but the remains of an experimental torpedo boat which had been built some years ago.

The uncertainty of the thing has been causing much speculation and now the streets are lined with an inquisitive throng, all gazing heavenwards.

Petaluma Daily Courier, 11/25/3. The air ship beats the shooting stars all hollow as an excuse to Maria at 3 A.M. [sic].

1896 November 25 (Wed.) Sacramento (CA) Bee, p. 5.

BUTTE COUNTY HAS 'EM. / Even Old Staid Tamaha Ought to Take the Gold Cure.

Red Bluff, Nov. 25.—Many residents assert that they saw the alleged airship in this neighborhood last evening. It was first noticed about 7 o'clock and was thought to be a particularly bright star, but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction towards the mountains. It finally disappeared over the mountains.

The summit of the mountains could be seen above the mysterious light as it moved west. Soon after its disappearance a telegram from Chico stated the supposed airship has passed that town soon after 7. After it vanished it again passed over Red Bluff and then a telegram from Leesville said the supposed airship had come from the direction of Red Bluff, and after making a few turns had returned in the direction from which it came.

Several citizens say that while at first only a light was visible that later the body of an egg-shaped object was visible, moving quickly through the air. The theory that it was a star was rejected, because of its distinctly rocking motion, which was like the motion made by a kite.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) (Sacramento, CA) Record-Union, p. 8.

THAT AERIAL MYSTERY. / Several Persons Confident They Saw It Pass Over the City This Morning.

Several persons who were standing at the corner of Third and J streets at 2 o'clock this morning assert that they saw the mystery of the skies pass over this city, going southwestwardly. As it appeared to them there was a very bright light which seemed to be attached to a large body, the shape of which could not be distinguished.

A dispatch from San Francisco at an early hour this morning contradicts the street rumor that an airship had been seen hovering over that city last evening.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) (San Bernardino, Calif.) Daily Sun, p. 2.

THAT FLYING MACHINE. /

It seems to be established beyond doubt that a strange visitor of some sort is just now disturbing that part of the heavens which extends over San Francisco and Sacramento and the intervening territory, and even the scoffers at the news as first stated have been forced to admit that the mass of testimony is so great

as to put the question of its existence beyond doubt.

The first appearance of the strange aerial craft was in the sky above Sacramento last Wednesday night, and a number of people saw lights moving across the sky, circling like a bird and tacking like a ship. But these reports were at first discredited by every paper in the state save the Call. Its correspondent at the capital gathered testimony from a sufficiently large number of credible witnesses, and the paper at once took the position that that airship was no myth.

But the scoffers have at last been forced to admit that there is more than imagination in the stories, and now half of San Francisco is confident that the flying machine has been seen floating high over the city, that it has gone out to sea, returned and circled the peaks about the bay, and thrown its uncanny search light athwart the fog which rolls in from the ocean.

After poking fun at the reports until it became no longer possible to contradict the testimony of so many witnesses, the Examiner at last says:

That some object not yet explained or accounted for has been seen traveling the skies in different parts of the State for several nights past appears to be established by the testimony of credible witnesses. What the thing may be nobody knows. That it is an airship capable of carrying human freight seems impossible of belief in view of the record of failure in the past. If some joker has turned loose a fire balloon to perplex and mystify, that might account for the "airship" on an intelligent basis.

Nothing has appeared recently which has created half the interest in the state, which is now centered in the air ship, if such it be. But if the problem of aerial navigation has really been solved, the successful inventor cannot long keep his secret from the world.

San Diego Union, 11/25/2b. Aerial Navigation and Gravitation.

The good people up north are much exercised and are watching with great interest every item in the papers regarding the airship that has been seen hovering over Sacramento and Oroville, and from accounts so far given it seems more than likely that the solution of the great problem of aerial navigation is near at hand. This fact will no doubt stimulate curiosity regarding the bicycle ride that Prof. [Avery] will take Thanksgiving day, Nov. 26, on a wire strung from the tower on the Hotel de Coronado to the chimney on the power house, distant about 300 yards. This remarkable feat is in the same line with aerial navigation and demonstrates one of the laws of gravitation.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 1.

HIGH IN AIR. / Red Bluff Has a Bad Attack of Airship. / Circles the Town Like a Huge Bird. / Weird Lights That Flame Across the Sky. / And Through It All There Is That Rocking Motion a Kite Might Take. /

RED BLUFF, Nov. 25.—Red Bluff has "got 'em." Although the residents of this city were apparently sober last night, yet the airship that has been puzzling San Francisco and Sacramento for the past few days was seen at two different times in this city. At about 6:45 o' clock a crowd who were standing on the corner of Walnut and Washington streets noticed almost directly west of them what appeared to be a star, but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction toward the mountains. Dr. J.A. Owen, who was in the crowd, called to several others who were near, and the crowd watched the object till it went out of sight over the mountains. C.H. Chase, the attorney, says that he saw it first while standing on the corner of Main and Walnut streets and that it was rapidly moving towards Leesville. He watched it for about twenty minutes, at the end of which time it disappeared over the mountains. Mr. Chase says that it was going directly west, as part of the time when the ship was on this side of the mountains and so that he could see the summit of the mountains above it, he noticed, that it was going neither north [n]or south, but appeared to be getting further away.

Soon after the object had passed out of sight a telegram from Chico was received stating that the object had passed over there a few minutes previous. W.H. Hughes, a carpenter, climbed to the top of the City Hall after it had disappeared and says that after making a few turns it came back over the mountains and a few minutes later it again passed over this place.

A telegram was a short time later received from Leesville saying that the strange craft had gone as far as that place and from there had turned and gone back towards Red Bluff. Several people say not only that the light was visible, but on the return trip the body of the object was seen. The witnesses compared it in shape to an egg. Many thought that the light was from a star, but this theory was spoiled by the rocking motion of the machine. It was precisely like that of a kite.

One of the injured, John Fisher, had his back broken and will probably die.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) San Francisco Call, p. 1.

MISSION OF THE AERIAL SHIP / Will Probably Be Used to Destroy the City of Havana. / ITS DESTINY IN GENERAL HART'S HANDS. / Interesting Details of the Powers of the Mysterious Conqueror of the Air. / VAST FORTUNES IN EXPECTANCY FOR ALL CONCERNED. / Oakland People Claim to Have Seen Intricate Evolutions in Midair—Venus and Jupiter as Fair Deceivers. /

Ex-Attorney-General W.H.H. Hart now has charge of the destinies of the airship, which has hitherto been under the legal wing of Attorney George D. Collins. The reason for the change is said to be due to the loquacity of Mr. Collins. The inventor, who is said to be extremely desirous of maintaining his incognito, thinks that Collins talked not wisely and too much.

General Hart admitted his new and mysterious responsibilities yesterday and then made the sensational announcement that the airship was to be used in the service of the Cuban insurgents and intimated that Havana was to be the first point of attack.

While the new custodian of the secrets relative to the aerial mystery states that he has not himself seen the wondrous invention[,] he expresses himself as confident that it can do all that has been ascribed to it by those who claim to have seen it in operation above the earth. He expects to make a fortune out of it for all concerned within a few months.

It is now reported that the inventor is a Dr. Catlin, who was assisted in the work of construction by Dr. E. H. Benjamin.

While The Call is not in a position to give it as a positive fact that a successful airship has been constructed and put into operation, neither is it prepared to say that the thousands of people who claim to have seen such a thing are mistaken. In this connection it regrets that it has to call attention to two deliberate attempts of the Examiner to play upon the credulity of the people.

One of these attempts was made in Oakland on Monday and another hoax was attempted in this City last night. Both were feeble and ineffective, and acted only as boomerangs on that "Monarch of the Fakers."

Considerable excitement was created in this City last night by the mistaken idea that got abroad that the airship was visible. The peculiar flight of Venus across the western horizon and the brilliant reflection from Jupiter in the east caused this false impression.

Oakland again contributes an interesting chapter to the aerial history of the last week. Among other things it is asserted that the airship was seen performing intricate evolutions in midair.

All the secrets of the mysterious airship are now in the hands of ex-Attorney-General W.H.H. Hart. The responsibility of their keeping was legally transferred yesterday from George D. Collins to that gentleman.

Mr. Hart spoke freely and fully of the machine, but declined to divulge the name of the inventor and owner, its present location or its mechanism.

It was learned by a Call reporter from another source, however, that the name of the inventor and owner is Dr. Catlin; that he was assisted in his work by Dr. E.H. Benjamin and George Applegate, and that the machine is housed within a short distance from San Francisco.

Attorney Collins was visited by the airship inventor yesterday morning, and according to Mr. Collins' story, the latter asked to be relieved from anything further to do with the aerial mystery. His client, he said, asked him to recommend another attorney, and the result was that a visit was paid to the office of the ex-Attorney-General, whose offices are a few flights higher up in the Crocker building. After a short consultation the mysterious client was under the legal protection of Mr. Hart.

"General, I understand that Dr. Catlin, the inventor of the airship seen in various parts of the State within the past week, has placed his interests in that wonderful creation in your hands," was the first remark addressed to the new custodian of the secret, of which the world is to-day anxiously and impatiently awaiting an explanation in detail.

After admitting that such a transfer had been made only a few hours before, the ex-Attorney-General, without further preliminary, went on and made a series of most astounding revelations in reference to the machine and its ultimate purpose. This is his story exactly as he told it:

"There are two inventions and they are very much alike. One was perfected in the East and the other in California. I have been concerned in the Eastern invention for some time personally. The idea is to consolidate both interests.

"I have seen the machine invented in the East and I am convinced it will work all right, and from what I have been told I don't see any reason why the machine invented in California cannot be worked.

"My plan of utilizing the invention would be different from that of other people in the way of making money out of it, and in order to do so there would have to be complete secrecy in regard to it.

"I have very little doubt the California invention will work. The whole trouble in the problem of aerial navigation has been a question of motive power. In this they have the right motive power, which is without question sufficient to work the ship, and that is by electric storage batteries.

"My plan of operating this invention requires it to be kept as secret as possible. I propose to use it wholly for war purposes, and within the next five or six months it will be put to the test.

"From what I have seen of it, I have not the least doubt but that it will carry four men and 1000 pounds of dynamite.

"Before it is brought into practical use, however, two important modifications must be made. It must be so constructed that if it should be injured while over a body of water and drop, it will float like a boat. The bottom will also have to be protected so that the cylinder cannot be penetrated by rifle bullets or weapons of small caliber.

"Because we expect to use it for war purposes is the reason I will not give the names of the persons who are interested in it. We don't want to be arrested as filibusters on the first trial of the machine.

"This machine will be tested in the neighborhood of San Francisco from time to time. I don't expect to see it myself or even get a look at it. I have had a full description of it, however, from the people interested. I was with them this afternoon for some time.

"I believe it can be used so that the inventor and the parties interested can make from \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000 out of it in five or six months.

"Four men or two men can operate it. From what I know of it, I am quite convinced that two to three men could destroy the city of Havana in forty-eight hours .

"This machine is being tested in California owing to the favorable character of our climate. There is one drawback to the invention and that is that the inventor cannot cause it to stand still; it must be kept moving like an arrow. Otherwise it is under perfect control. There is no doubt about this. It can be made to rise from a dead standstill. I cannot go into details about its construction, but will admit that it is of cylindrical shape, is built of aluminum and has wings, but I cannot tell you even how many wings it has.

"I do not know yet whether or not an application for a patent has been made. But if one has gone on to Washington I shall try to withdraw it, as I do not think it will be good policy for us to let the information that would thus be furnished become public, owing to the purpose for which we first propose to use it. We would rather make \$5,000,000 in six months than \$100,000 for fifty years.

"I am quite positive that The Call is right in what it has reported, but I can't say, of course, whether this machine is the one that has been seen by the people of Sacramento and other towns.

"Before the invention is put to a practical test as a war engine it will be remodeled with the changes I have suggested, and the new machine will be a combination of both inventions."

"Does the inventor, your client, sail on these trial trips that are being made?" was asked.

"That I cannot tell you, because I have not talked of this phase of the matter with him."

"How much longer will these experiments in California continue?"

"That I can't tell you, but probably until they become fully satisfied with the working of the ship." /

THE FIRST TRIP. / Over One Hundred Miles Covered in a Few Hours.

Probably the most interesting story told of the much-talked-of airship comes from one recently admitted into the inner circle of confidence and who it is believed carries a little bunch of airship stock in his inside pocket. It was only under a promise of concealing his identity that he consented to tell of what he knew of the recent movements of the mystery of the clouds. In speaking thereof, he said:

"One of the surprising features of the affair is that the inventor has been able to keep his invention away from the prying eyes of the public so long. As you may suppose, it took some time to construct the ship."

"Where was it constructed?" he was asked.

"Well, it is no use to keep that a secret any more than it would be for a hen to keep secret the location of her old nest after the brood is hatched and away. It was built not such a great distance out of Oroville at the home of the inventor's aunt. The statement of other -parties to the effect that the material was brought from the East and put together in this State is correct. The men worked hard for some time to get the parts together in the right shape, and several short experimental flights were made to test the batteries and machinery . "

"Then electricity is the power used?"

"Yes: one of the forces of nature that is made use of. The ship carries a storage battery. The hull is of aluminum. But I must not say too much about the thing itself, for I have never seen it yet. The first night that it was seen by the people in Sacramento was the first time that the inventor made a practical test of the strength, buoyancy and speed of his ship.

"He started out alone, for, to tell the truth, even his assistants were a little timid about venturing off the earth. Well, the doctor started out alone and went to a great elevation, when he discovered that one of

the copper bearings was becoming heated and he wanted to get nearer the earth. He slowed up his speed and began to come down, and as he approached the earth he realized that he had lost his course to some extent, for he could not clearly make out the nature of the country over which he had been and was passing.

"High hills and low hills have about the same appearance to a man high up in the air, you know. At last he made out that he was approaching a large town, for he saw many electric lights, and in order to be sure of his bearing and location he steered straight for the lights. He soon recognized that he was close to Sacramento. To tell the truth he had dropped lower than he intended and the lights on the airship attracted the attention of a large number of people of that city.

"The next morning an account of the mysterious light in the sky over Sacramento was published in The Call. The people of Sacramento made one mistake, and that is they did not hear voices. It was the noise of the machinery and the hum of the wheels that they heard and mistook for voices and songs. I have no idea that the doctor either sang or talked to himself, for he was entirely alone, as I said before, on the first voyage.

"He spent the night sailing around in the sky and about 3 o'clock in the morning he landed in the barnyard of a farm situated in one of the bay counties. He put his airship into the barn and locked the door, for he had previously made arrangements to that end. The ship worked splendidly and behaved most satisfactorily. Of course there were improvements to be made and several changes were necessary. But taken on the whole everything went well.

"This was the very first trip of the new airship. Since then he has been out nearly every night, so I am told, and as he has not limited himself as to distance the ship has been seen at night by people in many localities. There, that is all I am going to tell you this time." /

AN INVENTOR'S OPINION. / Dr. C.A. Smith Has No Doubt That an Airship Is Being Tested.

"Have I seen the airship? Well, I can't say that I have," said Dr. C.A. Smith, the inventor, when seen in his office in the Spreckels building last night. "But I have no reason to doubt that it is an airship the people in this City and other cities have seen in the heavens for the past few nights.

"I have been experimenting on air machines for the past forty-eight years and have invented no less than thirty useful machines, some of which have been used in every State of the Union. I know of its practicability as I have had a model running through the air.

"I expect to have machinery ready for business in the beginning of next April to make a trip across the continent. It will be 160 feet long from bow to stern and 125 feet cylinder [sic]. The main body will be 125 feet long. The front end will be a cone, as it is a scientific fact that a cone presents less resistance in passing through the air than any other solid body. The gas compartments will be in the upper portions of the cylinder and cone, and after being filled with hydrogen and acetylene gas, recently discovered, they will be hermetically sealed. The sheet aluminum to be used is lighter per square foot than the oiled and varnished silk used in making balloons.

"The rear end of the ship will be made like a frustrum [frustum] of a cone and the air will thus pass freely back to the propeller, which will drive the ship. In the interior will be a cabin for passengers 35 by 40 feet, entirely partitioned off from the gas. In the bow inside of the shell will be a pilothouse, from which the rudders will be operated and controlled. It will have windows, so that the pilot can see in all directions.

"A horizontal rudder of sufficient dimensions will steer the ship up or down, and a vertical rudder will steer it to right or left. Both will be on the stern. The wings will extend the full length of the cylinder and in flight will be used as aeroplanes, like the wings of the larger birds, and in crossing currents of air they will be closed. When in a light atmosphere, too light for the gas, the wings can be utilized to carry the ship up into the atmosphere.

"There will be a wellhole in the bottom for an anchor and above will be a capstan on which the rope will be wound. The ship will land by deflecting the wings and the horizontal rudder; the propeller will drive the ship forward, the aeroplane, wings and rudder steering it to earth. It will pass above a platform where an anchor rope will be fixed, and the capstan will then draw it down onto the platform.

"I can get a Maxim engine which weighs 320 pounds and produces 180 horsepower. The ship will carry from twenty-five to thirty passengers. I calculate that the ship will run at a speed of 100 miles per hour and perhaps more.

"As to light, we can have a storage battery to give all that is necessary. The gas will be inclosed in aluminum compartments, so that it cannot escape, and this will insure permanent buoyancy, and, as a consequence, absolute safety.

"I do not know who is the inventor of the airship that people say they see flying through the atmosphere. When it is placed before the public it will, I think, be seen that it is identical with the one I have described."

VENUS AND JUPITER. / These Celestial Orbs Mistaken by Thousands for the Airship.

An amusing phase of the airship mystery was developed last night, when that inoffensive planet Venus, sinking in the west, was mistaken for the clipper of the clouds scudding across the empyrean. That the bright light which excited the curiosity of many thousands on Market street about 6 p.m. was nothing more than Venus there seems to be no room for logical doubt in view of a statement obtained from such an authority as Professor Davidson last night.

Avoiding scientific details it will be sufficient to say that the planet Venus is at this season of the year almost at the full, and may be seen any clear evening after dusk traveling rapidly from east to west until she disappears below the horizon.

As soon as the professor heard the story, shortly after 7 p.m., he got out his telescope and had no difficulty in identifying the supposed airship as an ordinary, everyday star.

At 6 o'clock last night or thereabouts the cry was raised on Market street that the headlight of the much-talked-of airship was plainly visible at a lofty altitude in the neighborhood of the Chutes. Excited groups of men and women rapidly gathered in every direction and all eyes began to scan the skies. Sure enough a bright speck of light was at once distinguished high in the heavens and at that time seeming to be out toward the west in a line with Market street. After an interval it was noticed that the light had changed its position somewhat, moving apparently west and north. Speculation ran riot, but the consensus of opinion was decidedly in favor of the airship theory, to which the gradual movement of the light seemed to lend a color of probability. A few unimaginative ones were sufficiently prosaic to suggest that the light was merely the star Venus, but the majority quickly scouted that suggestion as absurd in the highest degree.

It is safe to assume that Venus has been acting just as she did last night for many years past, but never before, as far as can be learned, has she been mistaken for an airship.

Nob Hill and various other portions of the City also had their crowds of heavenward-gazers viewing the unembarrassed Venus in the firmament. On California-street hill there were the buds and beauties of society in elegant wraps and gallants equipped with lorgnettes, while near the water front binoculars were brought into requisition.

Later in the evening Jupiter, scintillating brightly east of the zenith, drew the attention of thousands in a similar manner. Some claimed it was the airship, which had reached that position by a circuitous route.

But those who had seen what they confidently asserted were the lights of the airship declared that neither of these celestial beacons resembled the lights that had previously crossed their vision.

BERKELEY, Cal., Nov. 24.—The mysterious airship, or at least a big light that was taken for it, was seen by a large number of Berkeleyans to-night. It appeared to be hovering over the bay, and a large crowd gathered at the corner of Center street and Shattuck avenue to watch it and speculate as to what caused the light. The ship, or whatever it was, soon disappeared without allowing any of the spectators to see more than a moving light like that of a searchlight.

CHICO, Cal., Nov. 24.—Although discredited by many as being a hoax and a phantom story, yet there are many people who firmly believe in the airship. Last evening about 7 o'clock a bright and sparkling light was seen in the sky west of Chico. The light seemed to be traveling with great rapidity in a northwesterly direction. Many people living along Fifth street were out with craned necks looking at the mysterious fire, and all who saw the aerial light will vouch for the certainty of an airship.

RED BLUFF, Cal., Nov. 24.—Fully fifty people in Red Bluff are now willing to vouch for the reality of the airship. What appeared to be it passed a few miles west of Red Bluff about 7 o'clock this evening at an elevation of probably 2000 feet. In a few minutes it fell fully 1000 feet and all the time was traveling rapidly westward. It finally disappeared over the Coast Range Mountains, going in the direction of Eureka. The light only was visible and appeared to be about the size of a good-sized arc light. /

FAKING OF THE FAKER. / Underhand Attempts to Discredit the Airship Story.

Just as the theatrical audiences were leaving the theaters last evening at 11:30 o'clock a balloon with a light attached to its base shot up into the air immediately over the Examiner's business office on Market street and attained an altitude of about 100 yards, when it passed over the buildings on Market street, opposite Mason. Those who saw the balloon /p.2/ shoot into the air from the corner of O'Farrell and Market streets are positive that they discerned the picture of "Faker Billy" on the alleged aerial ship, which caused many people to crane their necks and cry, "Oh, there she goes!"

The balloon swept along rapidly and attained a height of at least half a mile before it struck a new current, when it changed its course and slowly drifted in the direction of the Alameda marshes, where in all probability the remnants of it will be discovered by some duck-hunter tomorrow.

OAKLAND, Cal., Nov. 24.—One of the funniest stories in connection with the airship was that told by a so-called detective-reporter, who came over here last night from San Francisco to create some imaginary men playing with an imaginary airship on Inspiration Point. This individual came over about 10 o'clock and boarded a Piedmont car. He asked the conductor for his name and number, and requested the carman to take a good look at him so that he could prove he had really been to Blair's Park. The

detective must have been of a very amateurish disposition, for before he reached Piedmont the conductor knew what his mission was, and that he was connected with the American Detective Agency, and that he was working for the Examiner.

The conductor referred to is No. 13 and his name is Crist. The man who claimed to be an Examiner reporter was a large man with a black mustache. On coming in from Inspiration Point he went straight to the Examiner branch office, on Broadway, and left for San Francisco on the 11:20 broad-gauge train. His plan, as outlined to a friend, is this:

He was to tell a story of having gone to Inspiration Point, where he saw two men who were working with a machine like a balloon placed lengthwise, to which was attached a light and some arms and an apparatus like a kite. When the detective-reporter approached the two men were to run away and pack their traps with them. The detective-reporter further stated that he had been perfecting his plans for several days, so as to upset the Call's story.

Conductor Crist said to-night: "I was accosted by an individual last night who wanted my name and number. I gave him the latter when he told me he was an Examiner reporter. After promising me faithfully not to use my name and saying he wanted it to prove that he had been out to Blair Park I gave it. He came out on the 9:38 car and reached the park at 10. He wanted to know what car he could take back in order to catch the 11:22 local. I told him to get the 10:53, and I presume he did. He could have reached Inspiration Point and returned if he hurried, but as it was so wet and slippery I doubt if he ever saw the point."

The Examiner amused Oaklanders this morning by publishing the following:

Alexander D. McAvoy of the American and International Detective Agency, whose office is in the Mills building in this City, last evening discovered the source of at least some of the mysterious lights, perhaps all of them. By quiet investigation he learned that Blair Park, in the northern suburbs of Oakland, is the place of operation of two men who have been hoaxing the people of Oakland and this City. He stationed himself in the park and watched for what he might see. At exactly twenty-eight minutes after 10 o'clock he saw rising from Inspiration Point, a high shelf on the Piedmont hills, about 500 yards from his place of observation, an object kite-shaped, about ten feet in length, with wheels like little windmills. On the sides of the structure were lights, and from it hung a Japanese lantern, red in color, and about one foot in diameter. It moved slowly before the wind. He plainly saw two men on the point, and accosted them as they descended the path. They told him that they were sending up objects such as he had seen to mystify the people and to give them material for newspaper articles.

The absurdity of the above can be appreciated when it is stated that at exactly 10:28 o'clock last night, and for hours before and for hours after, the rain fell in torrents, and a "Japanese lantern red in color and about one foot in diameter" would have lived about half a second. Detective McEvoy said he saw the apparatus "500 yards from his point of observation." A man who could see through 500 yards of last night's storm on Inspiration Point would make a fortune in a dime museum. /

A HIGH-SPEED WORM. / W.J. Kenney Furnished One for an Airship, He Thinks.

There is no one among the watchers of the mysterious moving light in the sky who scans the skies with more interest than does William J. Kenney of Kenney & Payton, model-makers and bicycle dealers, 519 Valencia street. The reason for Mr. Kenney's interest is that he believes he is the maker of some part of the aerial wonder.

Mr. Kenney's skill is responsible for a contrivance known as a "ball-bearing worm."

"A man about 45 years of age, wearing a gray mustache and appearing to be a professional man, called on me about three or four weeks ago," said Mr. Kenney last evening, "and laid before me his plans for an unusually large and high-speed 'worm.' I immediately concluded that he was intent on making an improvement on the cyclometer, a bicycle run by a small gasoline motor, and proceeded to fill his order.

"He explained that he wished the worm and gear to be practically frictionless, and I suggested that the journals of the piece of mechanism be fitted with ball bearings. He acquiesced and gave me the measurements, and we went to work. For two weeks we labored on the worm and finally completed it.

"The party who gave us the order failed to give us his name, but appeared to have plenty of money and paid one bill, \$143, without a question. He was very anxious to have the piece of machinery completed, and when it was finally done he took it and left the store in a hurry.

"We have not seen him since, and until all this talk of an airship thought nothing more of the matter.

"When the aerial wanderer was finally seen, however, it dawned upon me that the man who bought the worm was interested in this airship and that my production was a part of it.

"To strengthen my belief I had many mechanical problems before me. First, the gear of the arm was too high for a cyclometer and it was just the thing to compress air or run a small dynamo.

"In view of the terrific speed it would produce it was worthless for any other use. Lastly, the peculiar actions of the man who ordered the worm have convinced me beyond a doubt that the machine is

now being used on this airship." /

EVOLUTIONS IN MIDAIR. / Peculiar Performance of the Aerial Visitor Above Oakland.

OAKLAND, Cal., Nov. 24.—Oakland was beside itself to-night with excitement. For over two hours a large light attached to something was seen cruising over the city toward San Francisco and back again. About 7 o'clock the report was started that the airship was to be seen, and people at once began to congregate in the streets and gaze at the heavens.

The excitement commenced when the 6:30 train from San Francisco arrived at Broadway. While crossing the bay the passengers had observed the strange thing in the sky, and the interest increased with the number of beholders. They watched the movable light, which alternated between remaining stationary and taking flights in the sky.

Of course many were skeptical and declared it was a brilliant star or possibly a planet, but when they received visible proof that it did not remain many minutes in any one particular constellation they joined the majority and agreed that they were looking at a veritable airship.

Soon after the arrival of the train the strange thing was seen over Oakland, south of Sixth street, and as it passed across Broadway the street was crowded. One of the most noticeable features of it was the frequency with which the light was put out and made to shine again. This was afterward explained by one of the spectators who watched it with a powerful glass and stated that he could see the machine performing evolutions which caused the light to shine in different directions. It did not appear to move rapidly, but it was at a great height above the earth and was somewhat unsteady in its motion, which somewhat resembled that of a ship in a seaway.

As it passed over the city thousands of people saw it and were anxious to add their testimony that it was a genuine air vessel. Among them were Colonel Garrity, City Electrician Carleton, George Hatton, managing editor of the Tribune; Melvin Holmes, ex-deputy Superintendent of Streets, and scores of others.

The mystery of the skies was watched every foot of its course by curious thousands.

The aerial rover appeared to cross the bay and hover over San Francisco for a time and then return. While passing over the city the light disappeared for a time and when it was again visible the machine was over East Oakland. As soon as it crossed Thirteenth avenue Deputy Constable Robinson announced its approach and as it went by fully 5000 people turned out to see it.

"I am willing to make an affidavit that I saw the airship," said Deputy Robinson to-night. "There was no fake about it and we could plainly see that it had a motion like a ship. It wheeled around over Alameda and then seemed to cross over San Leandro toward Piedmont." By the time it was headed for Piedmont the excitement was intense. Proprietors and clerks came to the shop doors; bartenders left their beer pumps; ladies stopped walking and directed their attention heavenward; cable and electric cars slacked up so that passengers might peep at the wondrous light.

At the Galindo Hotel the windows were thrown open and guests appeared with all manner of spyglasses and looked at the traveling light. Sometimes they declared that there were several smaller lights visible and that they could see a dark object, but it was too high in the air for any of them to detect the nature of its wings, or tail, if it had any.

At Fourteenth and Broadway a large crowd gathered and grew excited as the remarkable light cruised around and occasionally disappeared. The play of lights caused many to think that the party who was directing the thing of the night was signaling to some one on the earth. Everybody agreed that no tricks with kites or balloons could account for what they saw, for the light was so brilliant and powerful that to produce it a dynamo of no mean capacity must be carried.

Melvin Holmes, ex-Deputy Superintendent of Streets and a man well known in Oakland, leveled a glass at it and declared it is an air traveler of some description.

George Carleton, the City Electrician, who is better known than almost any man in this city, knows the name of the inventor. Carleton was taken into confidence by a friend of the inventor, and he vouches for the honesty of his informant. Anybody who will doubt George Carleton when he says a thing is true does not know the man. Carleton told his story this morning, but he kept all names to himself.

"I was pledged not to divulge them, and I'd saw my leg off first," he replied to all questions touching identity. "I heard the story last night from a friend of mine, who is also a member of my lodge of Masons. It was he who talked with the man who saw the machine, and I was told the name of the inventor by my friend. As I understand it, the ship was made near Oroville. The inventor made an ascension of several hundred feet, flew off four or five miles, circled around a few times and landed as nicely as could be. This my friend's friend saw. Both men are reliable, and neither of them have figured in the matter before."

Fred Gattee of 858 Broadway, as soon as he heard that the machine was over Oakland, rushed for his telescope and declares that he distinctly saw the machine perform some evolutions in the air. While he could not see the details he is positive that he saw it maneuvering.

Manager Jesse Halsted of the Oakland Theater watched the machine cross over Oakland, and with a

pair of opera-glasses satisfied himself that he saw an airship.

The mysterious light of the heavens was also seen last evening by Mrs. E. H. Crawford and Miss Kate N. Bassett, a teacher at the Harrison-street school. The ladies after some hesitation told their experiences. "I went to my south windows about 10:30 last evening," said Mrs. Crawford, "to see if it was raining. I noticed a light off in the south, and watched it because it was the only light visible. In a few moments it disappeared, and later came to view again. It looked like the searchlights I have seen at the World's Fair and in New York City. I called Miss Bassett, and we both watched it for fully fifteen minutes and until it finally disappeared.

"When first seen it appeared to be moving away from us and gradually sank until out of our sight. Miss Bassett said it must be an electric light with a tree waving in front of it, but this was not the case, as it was too high, and then I looked this morning, but there was no tree anywhere near where we saw the light. Neither of us saw an airship, but we did see lights that we do not understand, and shall take much interest in watching this evening and for some time to come to see whether the light is to be seen any more.

"Before I went to bed, about 11:15, I again went to the window and the light had returned and was moving eastward slowly, but steadily. I could not tell how far away the light was or anything about it, but having read the account in the papers concluded that the light must be the same as seen by others in this vicinity."

Dr. J.H. Buteau was another who stood amazed as he viewed the strange visitor passing through the heavens. "I was at Seventh and Market streets this evening," said he, "when I noticed a very strong clear light down near the horizon, moving along in the face of the wind. The movement was very steady, and it made good time, although we watched it for fully ten minutes. As it receded it appeared to go lower, but that would be natural if it was moving on a level. I am at a loss to account for the display, as I am incredulous regarding the talk that it is an airship. It might be a light attached to a balloon moving in an upper stratum of air. We could see it go behind buildings and emerge later on the other side as we watched its movements."

The mysterious machine finally disappeared over toward Contra Costa County, and before midnight all Oakland was satisfied that it had seen the airship. /

FAITH IN SONOMA. / J.B. Loser Saw a Mysterious Rapidly Moving Brilliant Light.

SEBASTOPOL, Cal., Nov. 24.—The report that an airship has been observed floating around in various sections of the State has created widespread interest in Sonoma County, and it now transpires that several citizens whose integrity is unquestionable have noticed the mysterious craft flying through the air at night with a headlight as brilliant as an electric flash.

J.B. Loser, proprietor of the Analy Hotel at this place, gives a graphic description of the vessel, and his story is corroborated by the testimony of numerous citizens both here and at Santa Rosa. He says that while driving to the county seat a few evenings ago he observed what appeared to be a brilliant light in the heavens. A few moments later the dazzling object seemed to be less than a mile away and then it gradually wended its way in an eastern direction and finally disappeared. Mr. Loser says that it was a phenomenon such as he had never seen before, and he thinks that the strange object was nothing more nor less than the mysterious craft that has been seen in other sections, as it tallies exactly with the description given in the papers. /

SIGHTED TRIPLE LIGHTS. / A Rapid Aerial Traveler Observed in Placer County.

BOWMAN, Placer County, Cal., Nov. 24.—The articles published in The Call and other papers in reference to the observed mystical aerial traveler have aroused great interest here. Several persons in this locality have been favored with a view of the strange visitor.

C.T. Musso, a fruit rancher, and several members of his family affirm that about four weeks ago and shortly after dark they saw a singular sight, which they are now convinced could have been nothing else than the much-discussed airship. Mr. Musso says he saw "the prettiest sight that his eyes ever viewed." It appeared to be three very bright lights moving horizontally and easterly at a rate of perhaps 100 miles an hour.

A.H. Thompson, a painter, states that at about the same time he saw a similar sight, which he describes as being three very bright and large lights appearing about eight feet apart, and the forward one as being larger and brighter than the rest, and moving horizontally eastward rapidly and gracefully.

Professor S.D. Musso states that about two weeks ago he and his wife saw a similar sight moving in the same direction and with about the same velocity. He feels quite confident that it was not a meteor, as there were three lights appearing about seven feet from each other in a direct line, the forward one being larger than the other two. The light, he states, was different from a meteoric light, the velocity was too slow for a meteor, and it was traveling horizontally as long as it was seen, which was for several minutes. /

SANTA ROSA EXCITED. / People Willing to Swear the Light Had Huge Wings.

SANTA ROSA, Cal., Nov. 24.—The excitement over the airship has reached Santa Rosa, and the

presence of a bright light in the heavens to-night at 7:30 set hundreds of people star-gazing. The light appeared to be moving in an easterly direction, occasionally disappearing entirely from view with a dull red glow, only to reappear more radiant after a few seconds. It was impossible to see anything beyond the light, owing to the distance, but when it finally disappeared there were many people willing to swear that the object beyond the light had huge wings.

This light to-night revived the rumors of an airship invented by a man at Mark West that was said to have been entirely successful as far as the upward and onward direction was concerned, but it persisted in going off at an angle without warning.

One Saturday night, just before midnight, several reputable gentlemen of this city reported seeing a bright light moving in a southwesterly direction. It was first observed about two miles southeast of town, just above Taylor Mountain, and seemed to come from toward the Sacramento Valley. It moved quite swiftly and disappeared in the direction of Alameda County. This is vouched for by Charles Winters, a well-known merchant, and William Rohrer of the firm of Rohrer, Einhorne & Co.

John Stump of Orr & Stump, a would-be wag, and several others sent up a small balloon with a lantern attached this evening, but the presence of the big light in the east made his fake fade into insignificance.

While it is just possible that the light seen to-night was the work of some bold aeronaut there was nothing visible to show a balloon, and there are hundreds who believe it to be the famous airship that startled Sacramento. /

SAN JOSE STARTLED. / Several Persons Claim They Saw the Airship Traveling in that Vicinity.

SAN JOSE, Cal., Nov. 24.—People in this city were startled tonight about 11 o'clock on beholding a bright light moving rapidly in the heavens, and they are convinced that they beheld the famous airship. It was seen moving in the direction of Gilroy, as was testified by Eugene Barre, Dan Manning and Jerre Sullivan, who are employes of the Sunset Telephone Company. The light was of such a character that the parties are convinced that it was none of the ordinary lights in the sky. About one hour afterward others saw the same mysterious light moving northeasterly very rapidly, as if it were returning from the direction of Gilroy. These parties, James Stanley and M.J. O'Brien, are also positive that they beheld the rapidly moving light of the airship.

[pic, p.l: Two Centuries of the Flight of the Airship; From Bird Wing to the Maxim Machine; p.2: Soaring Between Heaven and Earth (article on ideas of flight through the ages).]

1896 November 25 (Wed.) San Francisco Call. p. 4.

YE EDITORS BID VALLEJO GOOD-BY / All Enjoy a Visit to the Mare Island Navy Yard. / That Airship Comes Up as a Subject Requiring Much Discussion. / . . .

VALLEJO, Cal., Nov. 24,—The members of the California Press Association were up with the lark, this morning and ready for their trip to the navy-yard at Mare Island. That is, they would have been if Vallejo were given to larks, but in their absence Editor Barcar of the Vacaville Reporter suggested that it was about time the airship was going to bed.

The airship was a prolific source of argument among the knights of the shears prior to the pleasure excursion, and the opinions in its existence and attributes were many and varied.

Willis of the Sacramento Record-Union asserted in tones of the most positive conviction that he saw it Sunday night hovering over Sacramento and then going to the southward with a peculiar, wavy flight. He described it as a bright light with an opaque body dimly discernible over it, and says it was about 1000 feet from the earth.

J. A. Filcher, president of the State Board of Trade and proprietor of the Placer Herald, thought it a serious proposition when the Chronicle had taken up what it at first designated as "a Call fake." He thought that fact proof enough that there was something sailing in the air, whether it was an aerial machine or not.

J.E. Walden of the Napa Journal thought it a mighty fishy story, but didn't like to disbelieve the many persons of known veracity claiming to have optical evidence of its existence. If it had appeared in any other paper than the Call he should have paid no attention to it.

Brother Pennycook of the Vallejo Chronicle is still a confirmed skeptic, and remarked in a jocular manner that there must be a considerable quantity of bad liquor imported into the State in the last week or two.

W.M. Denlo, a Vallejo blacksmith present, said Ves Wilson, the sheriff of Butte County, while staying with him a day or two ago declared that he knew for certain such a machine was being built near

Oroville. Some of the editors were so eager for news that they wanted to hunt the Sheriff up and "pump" him for more, but he "had went."

F.W. Johnson, business manager of the Marysville Appeal, said he saw the airship very plainly over that city a few days ago, but did not care to say anything about it for fear of being laughed at. Then everybody laughed....

1896 November 25 (Wed.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 16.

MARS AND VENUS UNDER SUSPICION. / Planets Stay Out Late at Night. / AIRSHIP HUNTERS SEEK THEM / "Aluminum" Benjamin Throws Up The Sponge. / "Conjurer" Collins Explains the Reasons Why He Didn't Do What He Did. /

The United States ship Collins of the Aerial Navigation and Irrigation Company was out again last night on a few more of its trial trips, and the sky was filled with mystery, fire balloons and other things from dark to daylight.

As soon as it began to grow dusk Venus started to display her charms and flashed all the colors of the rainbow down into the darkness beneath. Immediately some highly excitable and impressionable citizen discovered that the illumination wasn't Venus at all, but the airship Collins. He stood in the middle of Market street, oblivious to the danger of being run down by a cable car, pointed his finger impressively at the glimmer and said, "Ah!"

That settled it. In five minutes he was surrounded by a crowd of people, who gazed in wonder at a sight that has been visible since the reign of the Pharaohs and for a few million years previous to that time. One man said that it wasn't the airship, and another promptly called him a liar. The sympathies of the crowd went with the latter and the skeptic was ignominiously turned down.

Then they began to feast their imagination on the planet. Somebody distinctly saw an oven door open and shut, another pointed out two wings and a tail, while a third called the attention of everybody to the fact that the "thing" was on the move. The fact that it only takes every star in the heavens six hours to travel from zenith to horizon didn't cut any figure. They wanted to think that Venus was the airship, and they thought so to their hearts' content.

At a few minutes after 7 o'clock, however, the planet sank out of sight. The hour was early. There were crowds on all the street corners, and the airship enthusiasm was beginning to fade away perceptibly when some humble searcher of the heavens got his eagle eye on Mars— poor, inoffensive old Mars, doing his duty as usual at the same old stand, and supremely indifferent to any effect his presence might have on the people of San Francisco.

The ruddy glow that is given out by the war god at all times was intensified by the bright, clear weather, and, led on by the enthusiastic discoverer, people again began to "see" things.

Many of them, by some unearthly process of reasoning, evidently believed that the new center of attraction was the same object that they had seen disappear below the horizon in an entirely opposite direction, half an hour before. The old furnace-door chestnut raised its unabashed head again, and this time half a dozen people distinctly saw a stoker shoveling in coal.

After that the crowds seemed to dissolve into factions. Two or three fire balloons were sent up from different parts of the city and the allegiance of the watchers was divided between them and Mars. One of the balloons with an extra large cargo of alcohol aboard sailed round gayly for over half an hour and won numbers of adherents, all of whom were willing to wager everything they had or even expected to have in the world on the proposition that it was a real live airship.

One of those enterprising traders who cater to the whims of the moment and who is quick to seize on any public excitement and turn it to his own advantage had a telescope, or rather the outer shell of a telescope, on the streets. The fact that the instrument was devoid of glasses of any kind did not detract at all from its money-making power.

All the enthusiasts with a spare quarter about them wanted to get a good, square look at something in the sky. It didn't matter much what it was—the moon or any old thing. In every case the imagination was quite sufficient to round out any defects that existed in the telescope. Everybody who paid 25 cents saw the airship distinctly and they all went home happy.

"Airship" Collins and his partner, "Aluminum" Benjamin, had several consultations yesterday. They have finally decided to forget everything they ever knew. If in future a question of any kind is propounded to either one of them they have made up their minds to go off to Petaluma together and have a private meeting before giving an answer.

If Collins is asked the time, he will beg to be excused till he has consulted his friend Benjamin. If anybody wants to know from Benjamin something about a reliable cure for toothache, the inventor will

have to appeal, before replying, to his friend Collins. There is between these two gentlemen such a community of interest that this course has become absolutely necessary.

"Airship" Collins yesterday morning, before entering into the compact mentioned, made a few statements to some of his visitors in connection with his present troubles. He explained the situation in a thoroughly lucid manner as follows:

"I know nothing whatever about any airship, and never saw one in my life. The inventor, when he took me to see his machine the other day, explained its workings to me and gave me a practical exhibition of its flying powers. I know nothing about airships, and certainly never came into contact with "Aluminum" Benjamin in my life. It is true, and I do not wish to deny that I have seen Benjamin in my office and had dealings with him many times, but what I desire to explain is that I am not in a position to make any explanation. Explanations do no good and only complicate matters. Now, I always try to make straightforward statements, and don't like complications. If you have ever been mixed up with airships you will appreciate how it is yourself."

"Aluminum" Benjamin came into the "Chronicle" office yesterday and said that he wanted to throw off the mask. This continued deception was killing him. He was the inventor of an airship, and had been working on the proposition for seven years. He had the whole thing nearly ready for the public, and was only waiting to perfect a few details before springing it on an anxious world.

Benjamin has a serio-comic air about him that fits in well with the eminently respectable and judicious sidewhiskers that are exhibited by his senior partner. An operetta with laughing gas effects, airship searchlights from the wings, and a stage setting of witches cauldrons and calf-bound legal volumes would fit in well with the pronounced characteristics of both the stars in this modern enigma of the heavens.

And still the search for that airship and its owner goes untiringly on. The fact that Thomas Johnson has been away from home for three nights is eagerly seized on as a possible explanation of the phenomenon and a clew to its inventor. If John Smith has been heard to remark at any time since his birth that people in Sacramento were not a thousand miles away from a correct solution of the affair, John Smith is forthwith shadowed and run to earth in the effort to mix him up with the airship.

It isn't safe for a man to visit a machine shop or inquire about the price of cogwheels in a hardware store nowadays without bringing down on his head the suspicion that he knows more about that strange light in the sky than he cares to tell.

The Disease Still Spreading.

PLACERVILLE, November 24.—A bright aerial light was seen to pass over this city in a southerly direction this evening. It alternately raised and lowered as if borne upon an air wave. Among those who witnessed it are many of the most reputable citizens of this place.

p. 6. The airship craze appears to be spreading, if one may judge by the crowds gathered on several corners last night and the interest which was shown in the planet Venus. These street crowds were sure that the planet was the mysterious ship as a certain haziness in the atmosphere gave Venus an apparently swinging motion. It is of such illusions as this that airship hoaxes are made.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) (San Francisco, Calif.) Evening Post, p. 6.

AERIAL MYSTERY PARTLY SOLVED / Bohemians Use Illuminated Balloons. / The "Clipper of the Sky" a Tame Monster. / ATTORNEY COLLINS DISENCHANTED. / He Declares That He Believes the Whole Thing Will End in Smoke. /

The mystery has been solved—partially, at least.

Of course, there is no need of explaining what mystery is referred to. Beside the airship every other possible problem days ago sank into insignificance.

It is, therefore, the singular appearances nightly occurring in the sky to which reference is made.

Upon these the comparisons of certain choice spirits of the Bohemian Club throw a flood of light.

Harry Dimond is one of the guilty parties. Hugo Toland is a second, "and there are others."

In view of what they have to say, the strange voyager of the sky becomes a very tame monster, indeed.

The statement made as to the actions of the Bohemian Club members mentioned, given in brief, is to the effect that for several nights past they have been amusing themselves and gulling the public by means of a number of large hot-air balloons. Of these one, if not more, has been let go every evening from the roof of the club building. To each of them has been attached a sponge—sometimes two—saturated with alcohol, which, being ignited just before the balloon is flown, serves the double purpose of causing a

longer flight through keeping up the warmth of the air within the filmy globe, and of affording wonder-seekers opportunity to persuade themselves that they are really gazing upon some wonderful electrically illuminated "clipper of the clouds." Thus far the joke would appear to have been as successful as its results are sensational.

Of course there are people who will probably not be willing to accept this explanation, and among them will probably be quite a number who caught "cricks" in their necks looking up no longer ago than last night at—something.

This "something" in numerous instances proved to be Mars or some other remote planet. Sirius, the dog star, being also credited with having helped on the delusions of that great proportion of the public which, in the words of Barnum, loves to be humbugged. But not everything that was seen is thus to be accounted for.

P.S. Chappelle, for instance, who lives near the corner of Pine and Jones street, declares that he repeatedly saw something that could not possibly have been a star: "As I was taking a car at Stockton and O'Farrell streets," he said, "I noticed something overhead, sailing steadily and quite rapidly westward. I could not make out any outlines, but there were two lights, one ahead and a little lower than the other. I thought they looked like electric lights and considered that—at a wild guess—they might be 2000 feet high. Many other people also saw them.

"I took the car to go home and saw the same light afterward at Pine and Jones street, and at Hyde and Pine I called my wife out to look, and also showed the light to Mose Gunst, who lives at Bush and Hyde. He, in turn, brought out Mrs. Gunst to see the strange sight. All this time the thing, whatever it was, had moved far to the westward and seemed to be dipping down low somewhere over the Park. When I first noticed the light down town it was about half-past 6 o'clock."

A rather odd addition has been made to those who sit in the seats of the scornful as to the air-ship, this being none other than George D. Collins, formerly the attorney for the alleged inventor. He has now washed his hands of the "clipper of the clouds" and everything connected with it, and he couples his declaration to this effect with another even more significant.

"You may say for me," he remarked this morning, "that I don't believe that the thing will ever be heard of as an actual, practical reality. I've never seen it, not even a model or a plan of it, and I've no reason to believe that there ever was such a thing in existence other than that furnished me by the unsupported statement of the alleged inventor. He has transferred his business and his affections to General W.H.H. Hart, and I am heartily glad of it. I urged him to do it, and I sincerely congratulated both the General and myself afterward on the transfer of the business. I had to get rid of it or go crazy through being bothered by a thousand and one people seeking information and people with wheels in their heads. Look at what somebody left for me this morning."

It was a business card, reading as follows:

"Mr. Blank Blank, Accident Preventer and Longevity Promoter. No.— Powell street, San Francisco."

"I like a joke," added Mr. Collins, "but this is too much of a good thing."

If Mr. Collins is glad to get rid of the airship and its inventor General Hart seems equally well pleased to take both in charge. He insists that the inventor has a good thing, but counsels him against trying to take out a patent or doing anything which may serve to make his apparatus public property. "I tell him," explains the General, "that his fortune lies in selling his machine to some government to be used as an instrument of war. The patriot party in Cuba has our preference, and there the machine will very properly first be used."

p. 1. [Pic. (Series of 5 humorous illustrations): SOME PEOPLE WHO SAW THE AIRSHIP LAST NIGHT.]

1896 November 25 (Wed.) San Francisco Examiner, p. .

AIRSHIPS NOW FLY IN FLOCKS. / So Many That They Spangle the Void Air With Light. / Moreover, the Inventor Has Changed His Legal Advisor. / His Attorney Now is W.H.H. Hart, Who Has Two Airships on One String. / HOW MR. COLLINS TALKED TOO MUCH / General Hart Advises That the Ship Be Sold for Millions to Cuba and Used to Destroy Havana. /

It is a winged ship in the sky. It is an "apparition seen and gone," like "joys we dote upon." It is a searchlight. It is a lantern from a kite. It is shaped like unto a cigar, and verily it is alight, though no one has seen it smoke. It is like a camel. It is backed like a weasel. Or like a whale. Oh, very like a whale. It is also very like a bird—the Shortridge Thunderbird, in fact, or the Shortridge lightening bird. It is

"streamed like a meteor to the troubled air." It is a toy balloon, and it is Venus, the evening star that "sets ere Mercury can rise."

It is vagrant. It appears over Twin Peaks. It rests over Telegraph Hill. It vegetates over Oakland. It adds to the glories of New Sacramento. It sends a thrill through Woodland. And every person is a child again and peers into the air and repeats his nursery rhyme: "How I wonder what you are." It came out first last evening just after sunset and was rediscovered as many times as there were people looking, and the number of people looking seemed, from the crowds on the streets, to be the entire population of San Francisco. The visitation in the upper air dazes our world. The first paragraph of this scientific treatise tells exactly what is this mystic stranger and what it is like. Now for the proof.

It is an airship. It is a flock of airships. Are there not several? Who can doubt it? Has not "The Examiner" received a letter direct from the inventor? If any one doubts that it is an airship "The Examiner" will show him the envelope that contained the letter. There is other proof, almost equally strong, the word of W.H.H. Hart. Now, Mr. Hart is a lawyer and a General. He was the hero of the war of words in Tom Fitch's eloquent speech placing him in nomination for Attorney-General. Subsequently he was elected Attorney-General of this State. He was and is the principle attorney for Florence Blythe Hinckley in the vast litigation over the estate of Thomas Blythe; and did not the "airship" pause a moment last evening while directly over the Blythe property on Market street and bob up and down as though making a military salute to the General? What more proof can be asked?

General Hart is now attorney for the inventor of the airship, or the flock of airships. Yesterday he was substituted in this important and confidential relation for George D. Collins. The reason for this substitution will develop in due time. In a relation of such importance the facts must come in orderly sequence.

General Hart acknowledges his retention as attorney for the airship or ships. In his office in the Crocker Building yesterday afternoon he told of his engagement. An inquisitive man was asking him questions, beginning this wise.

"I have called to ask you for information of the airship.

"Yes," answered the General, "and what have I to do with the airship?"

"I am told that you are the attorney for the inventor."

"I should judge from certain publications that I have seen that Mr. Collins is the attorney."

"I am informed that you have been substituted for Mr. Collins."

"Whence is your information?" asked the ex-Attorney-General.

"Mr. Collins."

"Yes, it is true," then shyly admitted the General. "I have consented to be his attorney. We have already agreed upon a plan of action. My suggestions have been accepted. These differ somewhat from the course he intended. He desired immediately to procure a patent on the airship that he has invented. I advised him not to ask for a patent and he has taken my advice.

"As I told him, an airship might not be a very profitable vessel of communication for ordinary commercial purposes. Suppose he obtained his patent and advertised that he would carry passengers. In the winter time he could not expect much patronage in the eastern part of this country or in Europe. The weather is too cold for airship trips. In California the weather is mild, but how many people are there here who would care to take a ride in an airship and to pay a price that would give the inventor a reasonable profit?"

The inquisitive man suggested a campaign of education to get people into the habit of riding in airships.

The General barely heeded the interruption. He was speaking seriously upon a serious subject. "Of course he might make something by constructing his airships and selling them. But as soon as he obtained his patent and the principle was made public somebody would invent a better airship and his profit would be gone. Suppose even that he should make \$100,000 a year, fifty years would pass before he received \$5,000,000, and the man who invents an airship certainly is entitled to millions. Therefore I advised him to keep his invention an entire secret, trusting that no one would steal it from him. The chance that somebody else will learn something of the principle he has discovered, of course, we must take."

"Then what can he make of his airship to bring him commensurate profit?"

"An engine of war!" answered the General, with a motion as though reaching for his sword. "The use of the airship is for military purposes. I advised the inventor, and he agreed with my views, that he should employ his invention in war. I assure you that I believe that by means of this airship a great city could be destroyed in forty-eight hours."

"Cuba!" came involuntarily to the lips of the inquisitive man.

"Exactly," answered the General. "That was my suggestion. Offer this airship to the Cubans for a price that would repay the inventor at once and supply him with a sufficient fortune. Undoubtedly

venturesome men would take whatever risk there might be in manning the airship for a generous share of the proceeds. From this ship Havana might be destroyed in forty-eight hours. You see, there are ample reasons that the inventor should not be known. He might be arrested as a filibuster. Therefore I advised him to say nothing about his invention. He was anxious to make a public statement and to disclose his identity as so much matter about the airship has been printed, but he sees the reason in my counsel and will say nothing."

"Do you mean that the airship could reach Havana from San Francisco in forty-eight hours?"

"No, I did not say that," answered General Hart, "I said that from the airship the city could be destroyed in forty-eight hours. The ship would be taken to Cuba or to the neighborhood."

"Where is the ship now?"

"That information I do not care to give. I may say that some slight improvements must be made before this airship is thoroughly satisfactory. Now in the East an airship---"

"Are there more airships than one?" asked the inquisitive man of this military oracle who was peopling the void air with flying engines of destruction.

"Yes. I was just going to tell you," said General Hart. "I am interested in a device for storing electricity, a storage battery, in fact, much lighter and otherwise better than any other battery yet invented. A man in the East is using this storage battery in an airship he has constructed."

"Where is this inventor?"

"Well, I think there is no harm in telling you. He is in New Jersey. His name has been printed in the papers within three weeks. I shall not come closer to identification of him than that. I saw him and saw his airship while I was East. My interest in the storage battery that he uses brought us together."

"Do you represent that inventor?"

"Yes, I may say that I represent both him and the California inventor," answered the attorney with two airships tied to his string. "I have advised a consolidation of their interest, and this advice is taken. The good points of each machine will be used. I will say to you frankly that I believe the Californian invention is better than the Eastern invention. The only trouble with the airship made in New Jersey is that it will not stay in the air. It moves through the air, but its course is toward the ground. The Californian inventor has a machine that will stay in the air. The appliance that keeps it in the air is a great parachute that opens automatically when the ship descends and closes automatically when the ship ascends. The parachute is something of the shape of a hat"—and the General illustrated the automatic movement of the parachute with his brown Alpine hat which had recently been in the rain, pushing it together with his hands to show the closing as the airship ascended and then pulling it open to show the effect of descent. "This hat-shaped parachute keeps the ship in the air and makes the descent very gentle when the ship comes to the ground. It seems, however, to impart to the ship a wavering motion as it leaves the ground, upward bound. This is a defect to be remedied. This parachute is the principal advantage of the Californian invention over the New Jersey invention. But the New Jersey man has so constructed his ship that should it drop into the sea it becomes a water boat. The Californian airship has not this advantage. If it should drop into the water the occupants might be drowned. I believe, however, that by a slight change in the form the Californian airship can be made to become a water boat as well. For the safety of the passengers I think this modification should be made."

"Are the two airships similar in construction?"

"Yes, similar in many respects," responded the attorney. "It is remarkable that two men working at opposite ends of the continent should have developed machines so much alike in many respects."

"Has the local airship been in the air?"

"Yes, it has been in the air. I have no doubt that the object seen in the air over Sacramento and over Oakland, and possibly also over Twin Peaks, this city, was the airship. The light that is seen, I may tell you, is a reflected light, not a direct light, like a headlight. Some people who have seen it say that it looks like an arlight. Of course it is not an arlight. That is absurd. To provide the current for an arlight would require almost as much power as to operate the ship."

"Have you seen it in the air?" asked the inquisitive man.

"Not the local invention. I have seen the New Jersey invention in the air, however," was the answer. "I believe thoroughly, however, that the airship constructed in this State has been in the air. I believe the inventor. I have no idea that he is insane. I believe also Mr. Collins, in whom I have great confidence and for whom I have great respect. Why not? The thing necessary to send up an airship is sufficient power. Heretofore this power could not be obtained without over-weighting the airship. Storage batteries were too heavy. Compressed air could not be used satisfactorily. Now light and powerful storage batteries can be obtained. That solves the problem. No gas is used. Gas would require a material used in construction that would expand. This is not a balloon. The material of which the airship is made is aluminum. The motive power is electricity in storage batteries. Now you have as much information about it as I deem it right to

impart.”

The inquisitive man had another question: "Suppose the two inventors would not consolidate their interests and the Cuban junta should bid for one airship and Spain should bid for the other---"

The ex-Attorney-General did not wait for the end of the question. "I am as certain as I can be of anything," he resumed, "that within a few months the airship will be flying as the operator directs, with the wind or against the wind. The defects to be remedied are few. There is the wavering I spoke about and there is also difficulty in keeping the ship stationary in the air. I am assured by the inventor that his ship will carry a ton in weight."

"If the ship flies by night, why is it not sent up in the daytime?"

"That I cannot answer. I did not ask the inventor. He left here but a short time ago. I believe he is not well known in this State. He is a foreigner—an Italian, I should judge, from his appearance."

The inquisitive man had one more question: "Why were you substituted for Mr. Collins in the position of attorney for the inventor?"

"Because the inventor said Mr. Collins talked too much," answered General Hart, seriously.

"So you have advised your client to say nothing about the airship, and you will say nothing about it yourself?"—this from the man who asked questions.

"Yes, that's it!" said General Hart. The inventor told me this afternoon I should not see him again for a week." The General glanced through the window as though expecting a flight of airships to his office. He excused himself again from giving any information, and turning to his desk applied himself to a study of the latest decisions on the laws of aerostatics.

Close upon this unsatisfactory conversation with General Hart came to "The Examiner" this significant letter:

/November 24, 1896. /

To the Editor of "The Examiner"—Sir: As there seems to be a good deal of skepticism as to whether or not a ship capable of navigating the air has finally been invented and constructed, this is to inform the people of San Francisco through your columns that Thursday night, November 26th, at about [8]:30 o'clock, I will approach the city from a point in the direction of the Cliff House, at an elevation of about 1,000 feet. I will return over the same course about 11 o'clock. I am making some experiments in the heavy winds outside the Golden Gate. I am then going over the Sierras with my ship and will probably not be back for several days.

As the secret is soon to be made public, I desire to prepare the people for it and to convince them that an airship is at last an actuality, and that another era is at hand when transportation methods are to be revolutionized. Respectfully, THE INVENTOR.

General Hart should beware. He is in danger of losing his client. The inventor threatens to cross the Sierra and the wavering caused by the hat-shaped parachute has not yet been steadied.

Having proved that the mystic light above is "reflected" and from an air ship now the necessity comes to prove that it comes from Venus, the evening star. Between 5:30 and 8 o'clock last evening throngs upon the streets gazed at a bright light in the West and shouted, "That's it, that's it, right over the Twin Peaks." That was it, or, to be more gallant, that was she. This assertion is made with all the weight of the knowledge of the genial astronomer Professor George Davidson. The professor looked out of his back window when a reporter asked him to tell something about that bright light in the sky. "That is Venus, the evening star," answered the Professor. "Here, look at it," and he pointed a telescope at "the bright light." Just Venus. Soon "the bright light" suddenly disappeared from sight. "It's gone," said the crowd. "A cloud," said the Professor, and that's all there is to that story.

Later in the evening ruddy Mars came into view, and immediately became an airship. Mars was immediately turned to profit by the proprietor of the nickel-a-throw telescope, which for years has been aimed skyward from either the corner of Grant avenue and Market street or the corner of Stockton and Market streets. He is the man with the musical voice who chirps "Lovely Moon" when the theatres close. But the telescope man has had no use for the moon during the past few evenings. It's all airship now, and the telescope man wishes airships might come in flocks forever. Last night he was surrounded from sunset until midnight by a crowd of fifty to two hundred people. The telescope was aimed at the red planet, Mars. Flakes of cloud were floating across the sky during the early part of the evening, and these would now and then obscure the star.

"There, the light has gone out," someone would shout, and then every eye would be strained into the fog bank, eagerly watching for the reappearance of the light.

"There it is again," would be the cry when a rift in the clouds brought the red planet again into view.

"A nickel a peep at the flying machine," was the telescope man's song, and the hardest work he had to do was to take in the nickels and keep in line those who were fighting with one another to get at the eyepiece. There were plenty of people willing to swear that they saw the "light" oscillate and bob around

most playfully. There were even those who could see the "dark object" to which the light was attached and not a few could discern the wings.

While Mars blazed serenely in the zenith, lights of various sizes and shapes flitted across the sky. Many of these were mystical, according to the condition of those who saw them, but close to midnight the watchers thronged the downtown streets at that hour were rewarded by the sight of a strange reddish light, floating high above all the buildings and gradually ascending skyward. It was first seen in the vicinity of Kearny and Post streets, whence it rose slowly with the wobbly motion affected by all aerial travelers that have been seen lately hereabouts. There was no hallucination about this light, and all the scoffers who chanced to get a glimpse of it grew serious as they noted the majestic movement and the thorough business-like air that attended its ascension.

As the weird light moved across the center of the city, steered steadily southward either by the wind or by some unknown mechanism known only to those concerned in its flight, cheers burst from the crowds of watchers. In a short time other lights rose heavenward from the same corner. When the crowd on Kearny street observed that some relation might exist between this particular flock of airships and the roof of the Bohemian Club the cheers were silenced.

Then of course the "bright light" is a lantern hanging from a kite. This can be proved by cumulative evidence from many sources. W.H. Hammon, forecast official in the Weather Bureau, has made a study of construction of cellular kites and has used them in scientific study of the currents of the air. Mr. Hammon says every movement of the strange lights described by people who have seen them could be made by lanterns attached to such kites as he makes and uses. The lights could be made to move in a low, majestic sweep by drawing in and letting out the string. The kites are covered with cloth, and can be raised in the rain as well as in dry weather. Mr. Hammon confesses that he was strongly tempted to send up a kite bordered with lanterns, but he restrained his desire, and he declares that he does not know that any of the enthusiasts in flying cellular kites, of whom there are about twenty in San Francisco and Oakland, have been playing a joke upon the people.

While the people of Central California have been watching the flight of flocks of "air ships," a notable citizen of San Francisco, none other than the redoubtable James F. J. Archibald, leader of the paper chase, social hero and insurance agent, has been preparing to perform a deed of daring in aeronautics. Mr. Archibald has recently taken a spin through the East, visiting in New York, Cleveland and Chicago. From Chicago comes the news of his purpose to fly. When the people of New Mexico see Mr. Archibald paper-chasing in the skies they may take him for an airship or a Shortridge thunderbird, and this publication is made to warn them what to expect. The facts are related in the following telegram:

CHICAGO, November 24.—James F.J. Archibald of San Francisco left Chicago for the West on last night's train with an idea in his head. All he needs is a balloon and possibly a parachute.

His first stop will be at Albuquerque, N.M., for it is sixty miles by stage from that point that his present center of interest lies. Mr. Archibald has frequently heard that 500 Navajo Indians long ago were stranded in their barren home on top of a plateau-like mountain half a thousand feet high, by the sliding away of the earth on the only accessible side of the hill. That landslide left the home of these Indians cut off from the world by four great precipices. According to tradition they lacked the ingenuity to find a way down so they starved to death. Their bones lie there in the New Mexican sands, whitening, according to Mr. Archibald's best knowledge and belief.

Now Mr. Archibald proposes to see for himself. The gratification of his curiosity will in large measure repay the trouble and financial outlay, though he suspects that reward in the nature of Navajo baskets, rich ores, blankets and skeletons awaits him.

It is in a balloon that Mr. Archibald will lift himself to the top of this mysterious mountain, and it is in a parachute that he hopes to let himself down. After the expedition he will be prepared whether to confirm or to laugh at the legend. The explorer on leaving Chicago did not take a balloon. He said he would rent one in Albuquerque.

Mr. George, who represents Mr. Archibald's business interests during the absence of the latter, has not been informed of the fugitive purpose of his principal, and hence cannot give any light upon the reason of this outburst for scientific research. John Crooks, who was the umpire of the paper chases that Mr. Archibald gallantly led over the hills of Marin, has not been admitted to the confidence of Mr. Archibald concerning the ascension. Therefore the underwriters and society must depend upon press telegrams for information of the discovery of the bones of the Navajos, rudely cut off from their neighbors by the descent of the mountainside.

However, San Francisco has sufficient now to engage its attention in watching Mars "wobble" and inspecting the flocks of thunderbirds visible every night and growing.

PLACERVILLE, November 24.—This evening at half past 6 o'clock lights were seen in the heavens passing from north to south over this city and declared by several reputable citizens who saw it to be an

airship. It was visible for five minutes and traveled against the wind with a rocking movement.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) San Jose (CA) Daily Herald, p. 8.

THAT AIRSHIP. / PASSED OVER RED BLUFF LAST EVENING. / Statement of Credible Witnesses as to What They Saw. / Special to the Herald.

RED BLUFF, Cal., Nov. 24.—Many residents assert that they saw the alleged airship in this neighborhood last evening. It was first noticed about seven o'clock and was thought to be a particularly bright star but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction toward the mountains.

It finally disappeared over the mountains. At the summit of the mountains could be seen above a mysterious light as it moved west [?]. Soon after its disappearance a telegram from Chico stated that the supposed airship had passed that town soon after seven.

After it vanished it again passed over Red Bluff and then a telegram from Leesville said that the supposed airship had come from the direction of Red Bluff and after making a few turns had returned in the direction from which it came. Several citizens say that while at first only a light was visible, later the body of an egg shaped object was visible moving quietly through the air.

The theory that it was a star was rejected because of its distinctly rocking motion which was like the motion made by a kite.

AIRSHIP SEEN HERE.

The airship microbe is spreading rapidly in California. It has attacked many persons in divers parts of the State and still it spreads. Some of the papers have intimated that the germ is caused by an especially bad article of corn or rye juice imported from Kentucky. But whatever the cause the fact remains that it is spreading.

Seriously some sort of a strange light has been seen flying through the air at great height by many people and at many places. The Herald has been aware of this fact for some weeks. About 40 to 60 days ago, a gentleman widely known and thoroughly reliable was returning to his home near Campbell one night from San Jose. He was accompanied by two grown daughters. When on the Alameda they were startled to see a queer light in the horizon above moving steadily but not so very rapidly in a southern direction. They were astonished at the sight and all the more so when they could see what appeared to be persons or wheels moving around near the light.

None of them attempted to explain it. To them at the time it appeared to be an airship but they held their peace and awaited developments. They are now satisfied that it was the air-ship of which so much has been said. It passed over San Jose and disappeared from view in the direction of Gilroy.

It appears that the people of the upper Sacramento valley have seen the ship as the telegram above shows.

Last night it is claimed that a number also saw the airship pass over this city.

1896 November 25 (Wed. morn.) San Jose (Calif.) Mercury p. 5.

SAILED OVER AGAIN. / Another Visit From the Supposed Airship. / SEEN BY SEVERAL PERSONS. / It Passed Over the Electric Tower About Eleven O'clock and Was Visible for About Fifteen Minutes. /

San Jose was favored with another visit from the mysterious airship last night about 11 o'clock, at least so several people believe.

A message was received at the telephone office from San Francisco at about a quarter to 11 stating that the airship had started from that place about 6:30, and to be on the watch for it. It was seen passing over the Ingleside track about that time by Thomas Beston of 2247 Mission street.

The machine must have taken its own time to journey down here, for about 10 o'clock last evening it was seen by Mr. Whoff, an architect of Haywards, passing over that place.

The passing of the visitor over this city was noted by quite a number of persons. It was pursuing a southerly course, and seemed bound for Gilroy. It floated directly over the electric tower, and was visible by the frequent flashes it sent forth for about fifteen minutes, when it disappeared.

Eugene Barre, the night operator of the Sunset Telephone Company, was one who saw the sight, as he had kept watch for it. When seen in regard to the affair, Barre told the following story.

"A friend of mine, an operator in San Francisco, saw the machine flying over the Ingleside track at about 6:30. At about 10:45 he telephoned me to be on the watch for it as it was moving toward San Jose. I kept a sharp lookout from that time on, and about 11 o'clock I saw the arrangement over the electric tower. It did not seem to me to be over fifty feet above the tower, and was moving south at a very slow rate of

speed. The ship was visible by the frequent flashes thrown from it. The light was strong and looked as if it were a gas or an electric light of high power. The flashes were only for a moment at a time, but from what I could see during that time it was shaped something similar to a carrot. The bottom of the car seemed bright, as if made of aluminum or some other bright metal. The rate of speed must have been very slow, for it was visible for over fifteen minutes."

Several of the other boys employed at the office witnessed the flight of the machine at the same time as did Mr. Barre and corroborated his tale. The ship could not have gone very far south, as about midnight it was seen passing over this city in swift flight bound in the direction of, and presumably for, San Francisco. On the return trip the light was seen by several parties.

M.J. O'Brien, a compositor, was going to bed when his nephew, James Stanley, called to him that the airship was coming. He rushed out and saw a bright light moving rapidly northward over the city. They watched it until it disappeared and concluded that it was the far-famed airship.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) (San Jose) Evening News, p. 2.

The report comes from Gilroy that a resident of that place who was out late Monday night not only saw the airship, but declares that he saw two of them. It is said that those who are familiar with the varied effects upon the mind of Gilroy's justly celebrated vintage do not regard the statement as improbable; that the man might have seen a whole fleet of airships.

p. 2. Reports of views of the airship are coming from all parts of the Coast.

1896 November 25 (Wed.) Santa Cruz (Calif.) Sentinel, p. 3.

Several Santa Cruzians say they saw the airship sailing over this city Tuesday evening.

(Santa Barbara) Daily Independent, 11/25. Red Bluff.

Santa Cruz Surf, 11/25/1. Venus and Jupiter. / An amusing phase...circuitous route. [SF Call, 11/25/1]

(Santa Rosa) Daily Republican, 11/25/3. The Airship.

The airship has been discovered and the occupants were on their way to the Boston Lunch Counter to eat, where they got a good meal very cheap and started on their return trip to Oroville.

Napa Register, Nov. 20, 4. White Lady appeared in Berlin—phantom heralds death of a Hohenzollern. 27,4. A "mysterious wanderer of the skies," as the San Francisco papers write it in big headlines, is perplexing the people in and around Sacramento, Stockton and San Francisco, particularly the first named city. It is claimed to be an airship by some and San Francisco lawyer George D. Collins claims that he knows it to be such; and, furthermore, asserts that he knows the inventor thereof. Time will tell whether Mr. Collins knows whereof he speaks or not.

1896 November 25 (Wed. morn.) Daily Record (Stockton, Calif.), p. 1.

THE AIRSHIP SEEN. / It Passed Over Stockton Last Night. / Visible for Ten Minutes—It Shot Through Space at a Rate of Sixty Miles an Hour. /

Since the alleged embodiment of one of Jules Verne's wildest dreams shot across the sky above Sacramento last week, it has been a very easy thing to see an airship darting through space in the nocturnal watches, and everyone who gives testimony as to its reality is booked as "a reputable citizen." People have even gone so far as to say that the man-made aerolites are being manufactured now and that Stockton has ordered three. If that is the case one of them passed over the city last night, but the engineer evidently did not recognize the place and went on down the valley. Stockton has some people who are known to possess as much veracity as the inhabitants of the Capital city, and they say they saw the airship last night.

Nightwatchman Maxey was covering his beat at the State Asylum for the Insane at about 8 o'clock when, according to his testimony, a meteoric flash caught his optics. It seemed to be about as far north as North street when first seen, and perhaps a mile to the east of the male patients' building. He called Coroner Fred Clark, Supervisor Lorenz and Storekeepers Turner and Anderson to witness the strange sight, and they all agreed that it was the airship. (Witnesses upon taking stand testified that they had not been drinking at the time afore mentioned.)

The atmosphere was extremely hazy which rendered the light somewhat dim, but its continued

course in a horizontal line assured them that it was not a shooting star. They watched it for about ten minutes when finally it disappeared to the southeast. The wondering spectators to the mysterious courser of the heavens could not agree on the speed of the bird of passage, estimating it variously from at forty to sixty miles an hour. The form of the machine was not visible, and the witnesses would not swear that they heard the whirr of the "paddies" fanning the rarefied atmosphere of the upper regions, but they said that they were willing to be classed with the host of others who have testified that some vast visitant of the night has for the past week been hovering over the earth at various places within the ken of mortal man.

Stockton Evening Mail, Wed. Nov. 25, p. 1. Do They See Meteors?

"According to astronomers this is about the period when the earth is passing through the orbit of meteors," remarked a gentleman to-day, "and this suggests the idea that possibly it is meteors that those people see who talk about an airship. Of course many of the reports sent out are faked, and persons are boldly quoted in print who never made the statements attributed to them; but in other cases people actually do believe they have seen an airship, when most likely they have merely seen some meteor."

p. 4. The airship craze has broken out at Red Bluff, where the aerial visitor was seen last night. Stockton can hardly afford to be singularly sane on this subject.

The airship fake has caught on beautifully. The Sacramento Bee is to be congratulated.

NOVEMBER 26

1896 November 26 (Th.) Alameda (Calif.) Daily Argus, p. .

THAT AIR SHIP. / Justice Morris Is Sure He Saw the Machine. /

Justice Morris is a firm believer that the air ship story is no myth. He stated to an Argus reporter, to-day, that on last Thursday night he saw a light over Oakland, that very much resembled a huge star. "But," said the justice, "it was so low down, apparently, that I am sure it was no star. I had not heard about the air ship at the time, and I am firm in the belief that what I saw was an air ship."

George E. Plummer of San Antonio avenue and Attorney H.W. Bradley of 1604 Morton street are quoted by this morning's San Francisco papers as giving some credence to the air ship story.

(Eureka) Daily Humboldt Times, 11/26/3. Blood showers in Olden Times (from St. Louis Republic). Oakland Times, 11/26,2. The airship editor of the Call office is said to keep ice on his head constantly.

The airship was seen in Red Bluff at the same time it was seen in Oakland and San Francisco.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Fresno (CA) Morning Republican, p. 3.

WAS IT THE AIRSHIP? / A Mysterious Light In the Sky. / SEEN BY MANY PEOPLE / Most of Whom Believe It Was An Aerial Craft—Its Appearance. /

There are several hundred people in Fresno who solemnly declare that they saw the airship last evening that has set all Sacramento and San Francisco agog. Bonanza cocktails, absinthe frappe or even vulgar steam beer, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, had nothing to do with the case. There are some among those who saw the peculiar light in the western heavens who doubt that it was the searchlight of an aerial machine, but most of them acknowledge that it did not resemble a star. What could it have been, then?

Ever since the airship was first reported to have been seen a number of Fresnoans have been keeping close watch of the skies, determined not to miss the fin de siècle wonder should it make its appearance in Fresno. For three nights they vainly strained their eyes and almost dislocated their necks gazing into the depths of the empyrean, but yesterday their patience was rewarded and they "seen" it. Who the first man was to catch a glimpse of the airship is as hard to find out as it has been to discover the gentleman who swatted William Patterson, Esq., and may never be known; but that, after all, is a secondary matter.

The strange craft was discovered in the sky about 6:30 o'clock. Some one on Mariposa street near J shouted, "There's the airship!" and a moment later hundreds of pairs of eyes were gazing at the object. It was rather high up in the western horizon, traveling, seemingly, in a northwesterly direction. The time during which it was visible is stated differently by various persons. Some say it was in sight as long as five minutes; others say not over two. One man declares he watched it for at least seven minutes.

The object appeared to be several miles distant, and its progress, though seemingly slow, must have

been quite rapid, judging from the statements of those who watched the airship. It then took a sudden swoop upward, when it disappeared behind the houses. The light was not at all like that of a star, and its peculiar motion makes it altogether unlikely that it was such. There was intense excitement while the airship was in sight and some one suggested that it be signaled; but before any rockets could be obtained it had disappeared.

Among those who saw the airship were Smith, the druggist; J.S. Hermann, the clothier, and John Hamilton, steward at the Hughes. Mr. Hermann discredits the theory that the light was that of Venus, for he saw it vanish suddenly and he doesn't believe Venus would do such a thing.

M. Page Minor, who returned from Stockton yesterday, says he saw what he supposed to be a remarkably brilliant meteor while on his way from San Francisco to Stockton, but he now believes he caught a flash from the airship's headlight. Others who saw the airship spoke as follows:

Telegrapher McDonald of the Postal Company—I saw the light and do not believe it was a star. Its motion was totally unlike that of a stellar body.

Louis Scholler—I saw it and am firmly convinced that it was the airship. The light seemed to me to be double, as if there were one in front of the craft and one behind. I watched it very intently and am satisfied from its motion that it could not have been a star. It must have been several miles distant and made very rapid progress. The light was irregular, as if it were being turned in different directions.

Dante R. Prince—I was eating a plate of garlic soup when I heard the excitement and learned what it was about. I rushed out of the restaurant and saw what, if it was not an airship, must have been cousin German to it.

Jimmy, the bootblack—It was the air ship sure enough. I not only saw the light, but the outline of the ship. It was egg-shaped and had wheels on one end, which went round in great shape. Guess they were the propellers.

Others who saw the object were A.B. Parker of the Expositor, Paul Austin of the electric works, Maurice Rorphuro, etc. The traveling astronomer who has his stand on the corner of Mariposa and J streets also saw the light, but he said it was Venus, and very few persons now take any stock in his knowledge of that celestial beauty. Nearly everybody who was sober is convinced it was an airship and the citrus fair managers will be asked to request the inventor to exhibit it at the fair.

Fresno Semi-Weekly Expositor, 11/26, p.8. Red Bluff.
Yreka Union, 11/26/3. Sacramento

1896 November 26 (Th.) Georgetown (Calif.) Gazette, p. 2.

The wonder of the week has been the mysterious air-ship which passed over Sacramento Sunday night, and was also seen at San Francisco and Oroville. The fact that it was seen by many respected citizens whose testimony agrees in many respects, certainly gives some plausible reason to believe that an aerial motor of some kind was traversing the air. Some of the newspapers josh it as a fake, or a joke which some kite-flyer had perpetrated upon the public. If it was not an aerial motor, the parties who sent up the contrivance for the purpose of exciting the wonder and amazement of the people succeeded admirably. If it was a successful aerial motor, instead of being of local or California origin, as the Call is inclined to believe, is it not equally as reasonable to presume that it could have made a flight of thousands of miles as well as a hundred, and therefore might have started from east of the Rockies. But as this is an age of big fakes as well as wonderful inventions, the public are prepared to meet either.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Grass Valley, Calif, Daily Morning Union, p. 3.

THE ALLEGED AIR SHIP. / Numerous People Saw a Strange Light in the Heavens.

The people of this city are becoming aroused over the stories in the newspapers about an alleged air ship or flying machine, which people in different parts of the State claim to have observed of late.

Several people in this city say they plainly saw a strange light in the western heavens at about 6 o'clock last evening. It looked as though it was far away but was very bright. A Union reporter enquired of a number of people who were named as having seen the light and found among them the following who stated that they observed it: Justice Holbrooke, Sheriff Getchell, Deputy Sheriff Neagle, a man named Patterson and several others. They all describe the strange light about the same, saying that it is oblong and raises and drops occasionally. Those who witnessed it think that it was in the direction of Sacramento.

1896 November 26 (Th.) (Healdsburg, CA) The Tribune, p. 8.

The airship that has been seen soaring in the sky in various parts of the State and startling the populace has been seen in the vicinity of Healdsburg, too. Jas. McClish, who is a pioneer and a reliable citizen, declares that he observed the strange object floating about high up in the air the first night it made its appearance. At about 6 o'clock in the evening he saw the engine's light flashing over his farm a few miles south of town at quite a tall elevation. His family also saw it and it was a mystery to them what it was until they read about the craft of the atmosphere in the newspapers. They first supposed that it was a meteor, but it traveled too slow for that and its course was horizontal. Mr. McClish stated also that the light emanated from a dark object, whose form, however, he could not discern in the darkness.

(Lakeport) Lake County Bee, 11/26, 2. If the wonderful airship which is taking mysterious flights through the heavens each night proves to be a reality, what will become of the Funding Bill? /p. 3 SF

1896 November 26 (Th.) Livermore (CA) Echo, p. 3.

LOCAL ECHOES. /

Station agent Mitchel has—perhaps—seen the light of the mysterious airship. At any rate, at about 6 o'clock Friday evening he saw a brilliant light at apparently a considerable height above the hills northwest of town, too large for the light of a lantern and too small for that of a burning building. Other parties in town saw the same light, and it is possible that after all the airship has not slighted Livermore.

p. 2. SAID TO BE AN AIRSHIP. /

If the testimony of a large number of people of standing and respectability be accepted as true, the flying machine has at last emerged from the realm of possible possibilities and become a reality. One day last week the Sacramento Bee and San Francisco Call each published circumstantial accounts of such a contrivance, which, it was stated, had been seen to pass over Sacramento by a large number of people; but readers were incredulous and, refusing to be sold, remarked "Fake." But on Sunday several of the San Francisco papers published the stories of a number of Oakland and San Francisco people each of whom had seen the mysterious visitant floating in the air, and their descriptions of the strange craft are identical with those given by Sacramento people, while the Call printed a picture and published a statement of an attorney, named Geo. D. Collins, who avers that the flying machine is an existing and successful fact and that he is acting on behalf of the inventor in the matter of securing a patent on the device; in view of all of which it appears quite certain that the question of aerial navigation has at last been solved, and that to California must be given the credit of being the home of the man who has furnished a solution of one of the greatest problems of this age of invention.

1896 November 26 (Th. eve.) Los Angeles Record, p. 1.

SAW THAT AIR-SHIP. / Some of the Witnesses Were on Cars and Some on Skates. / Can be Seen to the Best Advantage From Col. King's Observatory or from Bob Kerns'.

The airship from nowhere has crossed Tehachapi. At least George Smith, the book dealer, on Second and Main streets, insists that he saw the aerial navigator and its lights, while on a Pasadena car last night. Others of the passengers, Smith alleges, also drank in the remarkable sight. Walter F. Parker, the mayor's secretary, insists that he saw the air ship while star gazing last night, and Robert Kern, the well known boniface [innkeeper], also adds his testimonial to the general credence of the reports made. None of these gentlemen ever gaze on the wine when it is red, hence their tale does not perhaps need an affidavit.

p. 2. What with mysterious airships lighting the nights in Central California and a day time apparition of a winged female angel in several parts of Wayne county, New York, it seems that we are upon the eve of extraordinary developments—or degeneration.

Los Angeles Times, 11/26, p. 2. Red Bluff.

1896 November 26 (Th.) The Mail (Los Gatos, Calif.), p. 1.

The New Air Ship. /

For the past two weeks, sundry individuals in the neighborhood of Sacramento and San Jose have been greatly exercised over what they suppose to be an airship, which they claim to have seen sailing high in air over the aforesaid cities. In Sacramento quite a number of people whose veracity appears to be unquestioned, claim to have heard the voices of people singing and shouting in the strange craft above the clouds. This was at first regarded as imagination on the part of the beholders, or the effect of a too liberal indulgence in "Tanglefoot" fluids, but the evidence keeps coming in and accumulating until it looks as if some inventive genius has actually solved the problem of navigating the air with a winged ship. At this writing it is stated in the S.F. papers that a shop, employing several men, has been discovered in the mountains above Sacramento where this perambulator of the heavens was manufactured. It is quite likely that the mystery will soon be solved, and the question settled as to whether or not the business of this country will all be done on the land and sea. If the air ship is a success, it is not at all unlikely that a cut in railroad fares will be made at no distant day.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Oroville (Calif.) Register, p. 2.

REGARDING THE AIR SHIP / A Number of Our Citizens Interviewed / Some Think the Story a Plausible One While Others Pronounce It a Gigantic Fake. /

G.W. Braden said: "I think it is a possible thing and will take place in the near future, but I do not believe the present sensation and regard the air ship as a fake. We all believe in the possibility of air navigation, but I hardly think they have yet solved the question."

"I believe in the air ship for we heard the voices that proceeded from it as the strange vessel was passing over the town." Such was the answer of Ben Morris, the shoe dealer.

"I have not given it a thought," said S.S. Simon, "for I believed it was a pure fake, a hoax."

"I was awakened at night by a flash of light which I believe came from the air ship. I think the navigation of the air possible and practical and am confident the question has now been solved," said Jas. Havey, Superintendent of the Gas Works.

"It seems curious that so many people could have been mistaken," said Frank Atkins, "if there is nothing in this, all these people could not have combined to help create a sensation. There must have been something that made them believe they witnessed an air ship in the heavens."

"I think it is a fake," said C.L. Duhem. "The American people will run their legs off for a fake and are always ready to believe in anything."

"I don't think it is impossible," observed Sam Marks after a moment's reflection. "More wonderful things have been invented and why not that? We have been using balloons to float in the air for hundreds of years. We have light and strong material and all that is required is to obtain the right kind of driving power. It may be that Collins has some kind of machine which he intends to place on exhibition in San Francisco and charge admission to see it. People will pay their money to see the machine no matter whether it can fly or not."

"I think it is all right," said W.C. Topping, "there is something in it. Something in the air. I don't believe it was built around here or that anyone here has seen it. People have been working upon it for a long time and I don't see why it should not have been perfected."

John Godfrey said, "When it has simmered down it will amount to nothing. It is a balloon or a light of some kind that people have seen floating in the air."

"I received a special information in this matter," responded E. Tucker. "This airship I am informed is a new method of going up Salt River. It is to be here about the 5th of December and Bryan is to be on board. The ship will stop at Sacramento and take Grove I. Johnson as a passenger and then make one landing in Oroville which will be in my backyard giving me a chance to take passage."

"I am of the opinion that it is a fake. Flying in the night I regard as a dead giveaway in this matter. I have perfect faith that they will build vessels which will navigate the air, but the trials I am satisfied will be made in open day light when the successful air ship is tested."—John Edwards.

R.E. Robinson answered, "I think it is a fake. Scientifically I regard it as a possibility, but this particular ship I believe is a fake."

H.G. Bradley said, "I think the proportions of the air ship as stated is a giveaway. Why, it would take four hundred donkey engines to raise such an air ship from the ground."

"I am confident it is a josh gotten up by some one. I think the whole thing is a sell, a hoax. I don't see how it could be otherwise," said W.J. Schneider.

George Geisse said, "I regard the whole thing as a fabrication, a fake and do not believe anything of it."

"I think the thing is a farce," said T.J. Kelly. "I don't believe any one here or in any other place ever saw an air ship."

"I don't think there is much in it," said Ira Bullard.

"I hardly know what to think," answered C. Sinbad. "I have no doubt but what such a thing can and will be made but I cannot tell whether this is a genuine invention or simply a newspaper fake."

We find the ladies are regular disbelievers in the air ship! We asked the opinions of quite a number and all were against the theory of the mysterious vessel.

Mrs. A.F. Jones said, "I think the whole thing is a made up story, a fake and do not believe anything in it."

Mrs. Jones continued: "I looked for three evenings to see if I could see any mysterious light or moving vessels in the heavens but failed to see anything resembling an air ship."

Mrs. Dr. Reardan answered, "I think it is all nonsense and do not believe there is anything in it at all."

Mrs. Judge Gale answered, "I think it is a regular hoax, nothing of it at all but is simply made up by the newspapers."

Mrs. Ed Harkness replied, "I thought for a moment last evening I had seen the wonderful air ship. I opened the front door and saw something bright and shining in the sky but it proved to be the electric light glistening upon the telegraph wire. I am not a believer in any ship and think these stories are all made up for effect."

"I think it is a simple newspaper story, one that has been made up without any truth in it whatever, but simply for sensational purposes," replied Mrs. Dr. Karsner in answer to our inquiries. /

Communicated. / Oroville, Nov. 25th.

S.S. BOYNTON, Dear Sir—Like everyone else I have airship on the brain, also I'd rather not have my name mentioned. I don't like to be laughed at, but I should like to call your attention to an odd coincidence. I have cut two descriptions of the peculiar light seen lately, from the San Francisco Chronicle, one from Sunday's paper and one from yesterday's, and I want to call your attention to the similarity between those descriptions and the very strange "meteor" seen north of this town on the evening of October 23d, about 6:30 p.m. I saw that meteor myself and so did a dozen others here on the hill, and I think you mentioned it in the Register the next morning. It seems strange that if there is nothing in the story that three people in as many different places and at as many different times should have seen the same thing.

That light, if you remember, did not go out like a meteoric light, it disappeared by Table Mountain somewhere and I remarked at the time that it was the queerest "shooting star" I ever saw.

This letter is not for publication and I'd rather you would not mention my name. I only wanted to call your attention to what seemed to me to bear out the air ship theory, and if you cared to investigate, to find out if anyone else noticed the same thing. If necessary I can give you the names of several who saw the "meteor."

Night Clerk McGovern of the California hotel was one of fifty persons who saw a most peculiar light the night before the papers were published that contained the story of the air ship at Sacramento. His attention was called to it by the firemen of engine 2, and he watched it three hours. It was first seen over the Mills building at long distance, off and high in the air. It appeared to be three lights, or rather one long, narrow, white light with a red center. It was moving slowly to the southward.

A Santa Cruz dispatch under date of Tuesday last says: "Several people here claim to have seen an airship sailing over this city at night a few days ago. They say they thought at first that it was three stars moving in a straight line, but are now convinced that it was an airship." / AIRSHIP. // AIR SHIPS GALORE. / Seen By a Number of Residents of this Section. / What Butte County People Know About the Aerial Visitor to this Section.

The San Francisco and Sacramento papers for the past two days have been filled with accounts of the mysterious air ship that has been sailing over the capital city. All agree in asserting that this aerial visitor started from or near this town and a number of names have been mentioned in connection with it. Among those to whom attention is directed by the inventor, is Dr. E.H. Benjamin, a nephew of Dr. F.W. Benjamin of this town. The Dr. is a dentist in San Francisco and is an inventor. He is well known here, having on several occasions visited Dr. Benjamin and wife.

The mysterious vessel has been seen by thousands of people in Sacramento but only a few have seen it in this vicinity.

M. B. West is one of our oldest and best known citizens. He asserts that a gentleman told him that he saw this air ship sailing in the night, but the man is afraid of being laughed at and made fun of, so refuses to give his name. He knows what he saw, but he is unwilling to be called crazy and crack-brained and other names, so will not say a word about the matter.

Another gentleman saw a light moving in the heavens, but he paid little attention to it and is unable to state what direction it was going, or how long it remained in sight.

A gentleman and [] home from Oroville distinctly []ship sailing through the heavens, or at least saw the moving light which they believed to have come from the ship.

These are some of the facts so far as we are able to gather them.

Some years ago a number of Portuguese miners at Cherokee amused themselves by sending up balloons by means of hot air and attached to these were bright lights which attracted much attention.

At one time some forty of them joined together in building a large balloon and attached a big light to it. This balloon was attached to the building now used by L.L. Vinton for a store at Cherokee and was fastened to the top of a pole which extended from the building.

The big balloon floated south over Table Mountain and attracted much wonder and comment by people living miles away.

The light which has so astonished the people of the capital city is a bright white light and by many is believed to have been a meteor or a ball of fire. The light, however, varied in intensity and brightness, now it burned clear and plain and then it sank away, as if almost going out. It remained in plain sight of thousands for nearly an hour.

The light in Sacramento was seen at 5:30, or soon after dusk, and passed across the southern part of the city about 40 degrees above the horizon. K street was filled with throngs of people watching the novel and interesting spectacle.

Dozens of theories have been advanced. Some think the air ship is genuine; others believe it a pure fake. Some assert that it is a light carried by a balloon, while still others are certain that it is a meteor.

Geo. H. Evans, Supt. of the Banner mine, told some of his friends that two directors of the Banner mine left England in an air ship on Nov. 12th to cross to the United States and he feels confident that these gentlemen have been sailing up and down the valley, trying to locate the mine.

Telegrams in the Call, Chronicle and Examiner and other San Francisco papers, assert that the mysterious visitor was seen at Folsom, (Indio), San Jose, and other points.

return, we learn of the intended flight of Andree and his balloon. Is it to be supposed that this hardy Norseman would essay so hazardous an attempt in search of something already discovered? We hope he will go quite as far north as Nansen did, and perhaps a few minutes farther, and that he will return as safely, but we believe his actual discovery of the pole would leave the world poorer instead of richer.

For like reasons we applaud the sea serpent for his efforts to preserve the mystery that now obscures him. Let him be seen as often as he will by prominent citizens of seaboard towns and veracious skippers. Let him raise his barrel-shaped head high out of the water, and trail his frightful length of vertebrae defiantly before the eyes of unbelievers, but we warn him now that his prestige will depart if he ever allows himself to be taken. That prestige rests entirely upon his half-mythical character. His capture, too, would be a distinct loss to the world. We should no longer feel that electric thrill of wonder in reading of his appearance. From being a star attraction with power over the emotions of fear and credulity, he would become a contemptibly familiar attraction at museums, aquariums and the like.

As for flying machines, they are become distressingly common—and yet they retain their hold upon the public mind, because they refuse to fly. The efforts of trained scientists have been little more satis-

1896 November 26 (Th.) Oroville (Calif.) Register, p. 4. [adv.]

THE VOICES IN THE AIR / The Mysterious Ship Passed Over Oroville. / The Strange Phenomenon Witnessed By a Number of Our Citizens. /

Thousands of readers in all parts of the State have been speculating as to the course pursued by the mysterious air ship after it left Sacramento on Tuesday night. Dozens of men saw the ship and heard the voices and the music, but none knew where the vessel went when it disappeared from sight.

We are unable to solve that problem, but last evening while the moon was playing hide and seek behind the patches of dark clouds that scudded rapidly across the sky, the mysterious vessel was seen to pass directly over Oroville. Moreover voices were heard and the words were made out distinctly.

County Surveyor B.L. McCoy, Railroad Agent W.H. Dixon and Deputy Co. Clerk C.F. Belding had all been out to visit their best girls and met near the postoffice.

Mr. McCoy, who is enthusiastic over the marvelous climatic attractions of Agna Caliente in Mexico, was just quoting the following lines about the climate there:

"There's not a day throughout the year that flowers do not grow;

There's not a single hour the streams do not unfettered flow;
There is not a briefest moment when the songsters do not sing,
And life's a sort of constant race 'twixt summer and the spring,"
when Mr. Belding caught his arm and said in a whisper, "look there," at the same instant pointing to the sky.

All beheld the wondrous aerial craft with its white light moving slowly northward toward Table Mountain.

As they watched and listened, almost holding their breath, someone leaned over the edge of the boat and said in a clear, distinct tone:

"Boys, when you desire to buy your girl a handsome Christmas present, don't forget that Elkman's drug store is the spot to go to."

Oroville Register, 11/26/4. News of the Air Ship.

At seven o'clock Sunday night a dispatch was received by U.M. Damon of the Postal Telegraph that the now famous air ship was seen passing over Sacramento last night at half past six.

The dispatch was from an operator in the Postal Telegraph and the sender said he saw the ship and that hundreds of people on the streets all saw the moving vessel. It was too far off to distinguish the outlines of the ship but the large electric light was plainly visible to all. This light seemed to rise and fall quickly as if the persons in the boat could easily raise or lower it at will.

(Los Angeles) Eve. Express, 11/26/2. Hart.

p.4. The airship was seen at Red Bluff, Chico and Leesville Tuesday night. If the thing is an airship operated by its inventor he is having more fun than some people have cats.

11/23/2 SF; 24/2 no patent; 25/1 Red Bluff; 4 Collins, A.T. Cooper w. telescope; 27/6 arsp again in Sacra (Call).

Petaluma Daily Courier, 11/26/4. Not Yet Arrived.—Citizens need not be unduly excited over the rumor that the [] airship has alighted on the Masonic Temple clock tower. The queer beings seen gyrating about on the dizzy height, handling winglike contrivances, are only workmen taking down the flagpole by the aid of braces to give it a coat of paint.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Riverside Daily Enterprise, p. 1.

THAT WONDERFUL AIRSHIP / Seen by Many Residents of Red Bluff. / BODY SAID TO BE EGG-SHAPED. / Several Reputable Citizens Aver That They Not Only Saw the Light, But the Body.

Red Bluff, Cal., Nov. 25.—Many residents assert that they saw the alleged airship in this neighborhood last evening. It was first noticed about 7 o'clock and was thought to be a particularly bright star, but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction towards the mountains. It finally disappeared over the mountains. The summit of the mountains could be seen above the mysterious light as it moved west. Soon after its disappearance a telegram from Chico stated that the supposed airship had passed over that town soon after 7 o'clock. After it vanished it again passed over Red Bluff and then a telegram from [Leesville] said the supposed airship had come from the direction of Red Bluff, and after making a few turns had returned in the direction from which it came. Several citizens say that while at first only the light was visible that later the body of an egg-shaped object was visible moving quickly through the air. The [idea] that it was a star was rejected [on account of] its distinctly rocking motion which was like the motion [].

Salinas Index, Nov. 26, 3d: Local Brevities. / Mysterious rumors have been floating around for a day or two past in regard to the launching (sailing rather) of a mythical airship. Its appearance is expected to be unexpected and sensational. So far as the Index could learn the embarkation is to take place across the river in the Toro, and the proposed course of navigation will bring it to the Court house in this city.

3f: Sacramento people have been somewhat worked up by the appearance of a strong electric light passing over the city at a considerable elevation. It is said to be a successful trial of an airship.

4a: A mysterious flying machine has been sailing over Sacramento, Oakland and other places. Its bright lights are always seen at night and the big daily papers are full of it. Bro. Bradford of the Owl sighted it as it passed over Salinas Saturday evening.

1896 November 26 (Th.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 10.

PUZZLES THE SCIENTIFIC. / Polar Exploration, Aerial Navigation and the Sea Serpent Unsolved.

There are three things [are] like unto the poor, in that they are always with us. These are the imminent discovery of the north pole, the capture of the sea serpent and the invention of a flying machine that will fly. Without doubt the newspapers of a hundred years hence will chronicle the consummation of each of these dreams as frequently as the newspapers of to-day, and without doubt the citizen of that day will be as reluctant to yield his belief in those announcements as the citizen today. Less than four months ago the wires flashed the news from the far north that Dr. Nansen had reached the pole and was on his way home to tell us about it. Now it is made known that the report was unfounded. Nansen had been heard from, and he, with his staunch boat, the Fram, reached latitude 86 deg. 14 min., a point 190 miles farther north than any arctic explorer has heretofore penetrated. But the pole remains in austere seclusion and resolutely refuses to be discovered. Doubtless this is for the best. Once discovered, interest in it will languish and die. Undiscovered it remains a goal for expeditions rife with adventure and rich in interest. Even as news comes of Nansen's return, we learn of the intended flight of Andree and his balloon. Is it to be supposed that this hardy Norseman would essay so hazardous an attempt in search of something already discovered? We hope he will go quite as far north as Nansen did, and perhaps a few minutes farther, and that he will return as safely, but we believe his actual discovery of the pole would leave the world poorer instead of richer.

For like reasons we applaud the sea serpent for his efforts to preserve the mystery that now obscures him. Let him be seen as often as he will by prominent citizens of seaboard towns and voracious skippers. Let him raise his barrel-shaped head high out of the water, and trail his frightful length of vertebrae defiantly before the eyes of unbelievers, but we warn him now that his prestige will depart if he ever allows himself to be taken. That prestige rests entirely upon his half-mythical character. His capture, too, would be a distinct loss to the world. We should no longer feel that electric thrill of wonder in reading of his appearance. From being a star attraction with power over the emotions of fear and credulity, he would become a contemptibly familiar attraction at museums, aquariums and the like.

As for flying machines, they are become distressingly common—and yet they retain their hold upon the public mind, because they refuse to fly. The efforts of trained scientists have been little more satisfactory than those of Darius Green. Yet the struggle goes on, because so little seems impossible in this age. It is nearly time for grandfathers to say, "Why, I can remember when you couldn't see through a stone wall!" And why should a man despair of flying? Otto Lilienthal, a German engineer, lost his life last month while experimenting with a flying machine of his own invention. The trouble was that his device really did fly. It is to be said for his brother inventors that they rarely approach closely enough to success to endanger life or limb. In the main their diversion is quite harmless. And the world will go on expecting them to succeed, but the world would lose a pleasant subject of wonder and speculation if they did.

The north pole, the sea serpent and the flying machine are baits for genius which we can hardly spare.—St. Louis Republic.

p.4. Well, well, the airship may be in order for effective campaign work by the time William Jennings Bryan arrives at a fighting chance of the Presidency.

Now, if somebody will only find the nest of the airship and get a few settings of eggs for distribution the domestic mare may find a rival worthy of her hoofs of steel.

1896 November 26 (Th.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 1.

HART STANDS BY HIS SHIP / A Confirmation of the Story Received From Sacramento. / THE MYSTERY AGAIN SEEN AT THE CAPITAL. / It Makes Its Appearance in the Company of the Deceptively Brilliant Venus. / JOKERS MAKE GENEROUS PURCHASES OF FIRE BALLOONS. / More New and Interesting Particulars Regarding the Local Invention Given by the Ex-Attorney-General. /

Either the reputed airship is one of the most gigantic hoaxes of the age, or it is one of the most wonderful advances made in mechanical science, and is the solution of the great problem of aerial locomotion which has enlisted the inventive genius of many centuries.

Whichever it ultimately proves to be, the subject is to-day the all-engrossing topic. Greetings are tuned to this key; heated arguments are evolved out of it; wagers are laid, and even physical strife has been engendered over the question whether or not there really exists a successful aerial traveler.

Though there were many new and interesting developments yesterday, nothing has yet been brought

to light that definitely and conclusively solves the mystery, and speculation continues as absorbingly as for the past week or more.

Ex-Attorney-General Hart in an interview fully confirmed his interview of the day before and added much interesting information to the first statement he made. Among other things he substantiated the first reports concerning the airship which came from Sacramento by affirming on the authority of the inventor that the airship was actually over Sacramento when the people there claimed to have seen it.

Sacramento, according to reliable witnesses, was again visited by the aerial vision last night, which put Venus into the shade by the more brilliant glow of its lights.

Considerable sport was enjoyed by practical jokers last night in dispatching fire balloons skyward, but they had no more the appearance of the alleged lights of the aerial mystery than the dull glare of a candle resembles that of an incandescent light.

Venus again beguiled people at some points, but her deceptive charms have evidently been shorn of much of their power by the publication of the story of how people had been mistaking her for her earthly and more interesting rival. /

HART CONFIRMS THE STORY FROM SACRAMENTO. /

General Hart was as reticent yesterday as on the day previous regarding the identity of the reputed airship's inventor or his whereabouts, but was more definite in his statements as to the identity of the flying machine, whose secrets are now reposing in his breast. His words were the first uttered by any reliable person positively connecting the invention in his charge with the peregrinating lights seen in the heavens at various places during the past week.

"As I stated before," said the ex-Attorney-General, "I have not myself seen the machine in action or at rest, and I cannot at this time reveal the names of the persons connected with its invention and construction for the reasons already stated. You know the idea now is not to get it patented, but to use it for war purposes.

"I do know, however, that it made a flight last night and was seen at East Oakland by a lady, Mrs. Taylor, the wife of W.J. Taylor, who is a bookkeeper and who lives in East Oakland. She saw not only the lights, but an outline of the ship. It was also seen by others in the same locality. I do not know what the movements of the machine are to be at any particular time, but I was told by my client that I would not see him again for some days, as he intended to make experimental trips with his invention right along for some time."

"People are inclined to be skeptical, general," remarked the reporter, "of the existence of the machine and expect some statement from you definitely connecting the lights alleged to have been seen traveling the air with the invention now in your charge."

"So far as the public is concerned," smilingly replied the attorney, "we do not care what they think of the matter. In fact, we would rather they believed it a thing of fancy. We are not asking the public for anything and do not propose to do so, and therefore don't propose to take them into our confidence."

"But your reputation is more or less at stake in view of the statements published in the newspapers and for which you have become sponsor."

"Well, all I can say on that score is that the interview with me as published in The Call is absolutely correct in every particular, and I will add this on the authority of a statement made to me by the inventor. He told me he actually went over Sacramento at the time the people there claimed to have seen the airship. The inventor has now practically decided to follow my advice to maintain as much secrecy as possible, and consequently I don't want to go into particulars about it."

"Where was it put together? Was it not in the vicinity of Oroville?"

"That is a question I do not care to answer."

"You have stated that you are satisfied the invention is a success?"

"Yes. I have implicit confidence in it and that it is a success, because it is very like the one I saw in New Jersey, and which I witnessed make a flight of fifteen or twenty rods."

"Did Dr. E.H. Benjamin assist in the construction of the machine?"

"I don't know Dr. Benjamin, and don't know whether he did or not."

"From what do you derive your confidence in the airship; from having seen it in actual operation, from a view of it at rest or simply from having seen the plans?"

"I have seen the plans. I have no doubt that when the machine is completed it will be a success."

"What do you mean by being completed?"

"When it is completed for the purpose for which it is now intended to utilize it—for war purposes. It would drown everybody in it if it were to fall over a body of water as it is now built."

"What are the other weak points that the inventor is trying to perfect by these trial flights?"

"From what I understand it has to be able to carry power enough to maintain itself in the air for a certain number of consecutive hours, say about six. It can now maintain itself for six hours, but not against

the wind. To sail against the wind or at angles to it more power is required than to go with it. Then it lands too quickly. There is no provision for maintaining it in the air when the power gives out."

"Is it not possible that people frequently take the planets, such as Venus, Mars and Jupiter, which now appear very clearly in the sky, for the airship?"

"In all probability. The airship sometimes displays one light and sometimes three. These lights are under control and can be used as desired by the person managing the airship. I have no doubt that you will have ample and unmistakable evidence of the existence of the invention in a few days. The machine will be made plain to the public, though my advice is to keep the details of its construction secret."

How this evidence was to be presented the general did not say, but allowed it to be understood that the machine would be brought so close to the earth's surface that its shape would be plainly distinguishable, as well as the lights that are now seen.

Picking up some telegrams, General Hart called attention to the widespread and deep interest the reports of the flights of the aerial wonder have created. "Here are telegrams from two New York papers," he said, "asking me to confirm the reports telegraphed East about the invention. One of them asks for 500 words, but all I shall say in answer is that I believe the airship will be a success and that the inventor insists on secrecy, and has nothing more to say at present." /

ALL SACRAMENTO AGAPE. / Thousands Confident the Airship Mystery Made Another Visit.

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Nov. 25.—Again the mysterious aerial visitant made its appearance over this city this evening, and within a few brief moments the entire city was in an uproar of excitement.

The floating searchlight was plainly visible to all the gazing thousands, and it so timed its arrival as to appear at the same time that Venus, the brilliant evening star, was illuminating the heavens. The onlookers found that a marked difference existed between Venus and her strange aerial competitor. This difference consisted not only in the marked color of the lights, but also in the size of the two lights. Large and brilliant as is Venus, queen of the heavens, the light shown by the mysterious aerial visitant proved to be fully three times as large.

When the searchlight of the winged visitor first appeared it was seen moving rapidly from the northeast and heading in a southwesterly direction. As it neared the southern boundary of the city it turned directly toward the west and after passing the city went south, being distinctly visible for upward of twenty minutes. It moved with far more rapidity than it had been seen to do in its two former visits, and this would be accounted for in case it be a veritable airship by the fact of the calmness of the atmosphere, there being not a breath of wind moving at the time of its first appearance.

Later in the evening it again approached the city from the west, having evidently made a circle, and passed away to the north and east, thus completing the circuit of the city, and allowing nearly all the residents a perfect view of the mysterious visitant. There were many, however, who failed to leave their houses in time to catch a glimpse of the swiftly moving light and who, when they did reach the open and gazed up into the ethereal vault, saw nothing but Venus; but the vast majority saw both—Venus and the moving searchlight.

Among the numerous groups gazing skyward this evening was one composed mainly of State officials and prominent lawyers of the city, and their expressions of amazement and, in cases, intense chagrin were very plainly expressed, often in vigorous though perhaps not eloquent or refined Saxon.

Hon. E.D. McCabe, secretary to Governor Budd, was one of this group, and as it was the first time he had witnessed the mysterious lights he was correspondingly astonished. During the past week he has been inclined to laugh at the theory that aerial navigation had been accomplished, and in speaking of the subject after the disappearance of the visitant he said:

"I am simply astonished, and will not attempt to give any explanation of this mystery. The light is certainly produced by electricity or magnesia, and can by no possibility be a star or a meteor. Again, there were seconds when it flickered and disappeared entirely from view, exactly as I have time after time observed ordinary arc lights to do when the current was interrupted.

"In my judgment it certainly resembled an extra large arc light, and it moved so rapidly that I was obliged to repeatedly step back several feet in order to keep it in view over the intercepting buildings. I am not prepared to say it is an airship, although it certainly looked as though attached to a body of some kind. I can only say that I am thoroughly convinced that it is a mystery and in my judgment neither a star nor a fake."

District Attorney Frank D. Ryan viewed the visitor for the first time. After expressing his astonishment he muttered: "And there will be strange sights seen in the heavens. Wars and rumors of wars. I shall certainly attend church to-morrow, for this may be the advent of the millennium." Then laughing he said:

"That thing is too deep for me. I don't understand it. It might be that aerial travel has been accomplished. It seems as strange and improbable as were the inventions of the telephone, phonograph

and electric power as applied to streetcars."

George A. McCalvy, Deputy Secretary of State, said: "I confess I am simply amazed, for ever since the first appearance of the reputed airship I have been a most pronounced skeptic. Attorney Collins of San Francisco is an intimate friend of mine, and I must confess that I have experienced considerable amusement by interviewing him by 'phone since his reported connection with the air vessel. In the language of the day, 'I have done many things to Attorney Collins,' but you may put me on record as saying that I am now fully convinced that there is more truth than poetry in the old adage 'that he laughs best who laughs last.' This light is certainly no fake and I am almost tempted to believe that the problem of aerial travel is solved."

J.A. Donlon, Assessor of Ventura County, was one of the onlookers. It required considerable persuasion to induce him to cross the street to catch a glimpse of the mysterious visitant, but the look of incredulity quickly left his face and he said: "This simply passes my understanding. That is certainly no star, and I won't attempt to offer any explanation."

Professor Dodge of Galt, who is in attendance on the Teachers' Institute, now in session, saw the light and declared that he could distinguish the outlines of a dark body connected with it, but so indistinctly as to be unable to give any idea of its shape.

Judge W.A. Henry was also an interested spectator, and also proclaims it not a fake, but a reality.

Charles T. Jones, the attorney, was a spectator, but firmly declined to give any opinion as to what the light was, except to say that he thought it was neither a star, a meteor nor a fake.

W.R. Stone of the Secretary of State's office was also deeply interested in the moving mystery. He said:

"It looks like an arc light and moves as though attached to some kind of vessel, and is certainly neither a lantern attached to a kite nor any kind of a fake that I can imagine. I must confess that I am stumped to find an explanation of the mystery other than that it may be an air vessel."

Such were the expressions of but a few of some of the leading men of note in this city, and there were hundreds who stood in close proximity to these few and who uttered similar sentiments.

Lieutenant Fred Martin, commander of the Signal Corps, who was an onlooker, said:

"It simply passes all explanation, and I am fully convinced this is no fake. This afternoon two gentlemen, Messrs. Haines and Fleehart, came into my office about 4 o'clock and told me that they had just seen the airship moving over the city in a northeasterly direction. They described it as a dark, misty object, traveling at an enormous height, yet visible against the clear blue of the ether. I did not pay very much attention to their story at the time, as I was inclined to think they might have seen a cloud, but they were evidently much in earnest in their deliberations and said that no clouds were visible and that the dark object moved with great rapidity. Now that I have seen this mysterious light coming from the same direction in which they saw it going, I am rather inclined to believe that they have been eye-witnesses of some mysterious air vessel." /

DR. BENJAMIN DISAPPEARS / The Friend of the Inventor Changes His Place of Residence.

Dr. E.H. Benjamin, formerly of 633 Ellis street, who is reputed to have considerable knowledge of the airship, has apparently disappeared, and as mysteriously as the light that so many thousands have seen in the heavens.

For two years past Dr. Benjamin had rented the front room of this lodging-house from E.H. Keiser, but yesterday the furniture, carpets and household fixtures were disposed of under the auctioneer's hammer. Where Mr. Keiser and his tenants have gone was not stated, nor was there a reason given except one given in the spirit of fun by a pretty brunette, who said:

"We have had to move for our self-protection. You see, since that airship story has been afloat, the representatives of the press have been calling here at all times of the day and night to see and interview Dr. Benjamin. Why, some of them have camped upon the front steps until 4 o'clock in the morning, and if they had not been personally known to the police no doubt the officers would have suspected that there was trouble in the house. Our house has become an object of curiosity to every one who passes, and dozens have stopped and looked up to the windows as though they expected to see the windows open and an airship or two fly out, and all because the name of Dr. Benjamin has been connected with the airship story."

"Where is Dr. Benjamin to-day?" was asked of the lady, but before she could answer the glib-tongued auctioneer chipped in and said: "He has gone to get his airship and take this lady to Europe, where he will marry her."

After the parties had joked to their own apparent satisfaction they gave this information. Dr. Benjamin left the house early in the morning—about 8 o'clock as near as they could judge. He said that he would be back at noon, but he failed to return.

Before leaving he packed up all his effects in trunks, which the auctioneer and his assistants moved

into a back room there to wait until the owner should return. Those who moved his effects found in his room some refuse copper which furnished food for comment for a long time. These consisted of a lot of copper cups about the size of ferules for small canes. As these to some extent resembled percussion caps, such as are used on the end of blasting fuse, it was suggested that the little cups were a part of the material to be used, as Attorney Hart suggested, for the destruction of Havana.

The romance of these little pieces of brass was shattered, however, when it was learned that Dr. Benjamin has been experimenting upon continuous bridgework for teeth and these little cups were the crowns for rows of artificial grinders. Many of these cups were taken away by the auctioneer's assistants for souvenirs, but upon being told that they were only unfinished store teeth the men tossed their copper cups into the street in disgust.

Dr. Benjamin did not return during the afternoon or evening and although in the evening a dim light was to be seen in one of the rooms no response was made to a call at the door. In truth the door bell was fastened on the inside. Thus Dr. Benjamin disappeared. Whether his effects have been removed or not is a matter of conjecture.

In connection with the movements of Dr. Benjamin there is one incident that apparently connects him with the inventor of the airship. It will be remembered that several people who claim to know much about the new ship of the skies have stated that it was built near Oroville and that its first flight was taken therefrom on the night that the lights were seen in Sacramento. Also that the inventor and owner is or was a wealthy resident of Oroville. The latter statement was made by Attorney Collins at the time when ex-Attorney-General Hart said that he talked too much. On that occasion Mr. Collins stated that the inventor was brought to him by a client. In the same interview he acknowledged that Dr. Benjamin has wealthy relatives in or near Oroville.

It was learned last evening that a few days before the appearance of the airship's lights over the Sacramento Valley Dr. Benjamin went to Oroville to see his relations.

His visit at that particular time has given rise to some speculation in the mind of Dr. Joseph D. Hodgen, secretary of the State Board of Dental Examiners, of 1005 Sutter street. Last evening Dr. Hodgen said:

"I have known Dr. Benjamin for some time. He comes from Maine, I believe. He is not a regular practicing dentist, but he gives much of his time to experiments in dental work. Of late he has been at work upon continuous plate bridge work in artificial teeth, an idea he got from a dentist from Oregon.

"About two weeks ago I met him with his gripsack in his hand on the street, and he told me that he was going to Oroville or Auburn for a week. I am sure, come to think of it, that it was Oroville and not Auburn. He said that he was going to see his aunt. I have not seen him since. The day I saw him was either on the 17th or the 12th inst. Soon after that I saw the first accounts of the airship over the Sacramento Valley." /

NEW CONVERTS. / Dr. Paulin No Longer a Skeptic on the Airship Proposition.

That each day is witnessing the conversion of many skeptics to the belief that the airship is a verity is shown by the willingness of these doubting individuals to become witnesses to their new faith.

Last night Dr. Paulin of 1757 Nineteenth street, East Oakland, took the trouble to telephone his interesting experience to The Call. He said:

"I never had any faith in the airship until to-night. About 8 o'clock Judge Horburgh, a neighbor, called to us and told us we could see the airship. We looked out and saw above us what appeared to be a group of four or five lights and above them was outlined something which had the form of a whale. It was moving toward the City. Then it changed its course toward Sausalito, and swerved again toward the City and soon went out of sight."

A night watchman at North Berkeley says that he saw the light Tuesday night distinctly, and watched it while it traveled from San Pablo and crossed over until it was back of the high hills of Berkeley. This may give some indefinite sort of a clew concerning the place where the alleged airship may be in hiding during the day, so this man thought.

A noticeable fact connected with the mystery of the alleged airship is that the light which is observed is seen to be traveling against the wind as often as with it. This would not be the case if the light were carried by a balloon or kite, as a matter of course. /

PRACTICAL JOKERS. / Lighted Balloons Sent Up in Various Parts of the City.

Toy balloons were sent soaring upward with hot air for a motor from several places along Market street last night. The wind was brisk, and when once the balloons were above the roofs they traveled along steadily and naturally attracted some attention.

Soon, however, the fuel which gave them motion consumed the balloon. There was no one who was stupid enough to believe for a moment that any such proposition as that had been sufficient at any time to deceive the many who have ascribed to the mysterious airship the possession of a large electric light.

Those who sent up the fire-balloons on Market street last night soon tired, observing that little interest was taken in them.

Several persons with apparently an idea of having a little fun at the expense of the public went to the top of Nob Hill last evening about 9:30 o'clock and sent up a hot-air balloon with a Japanese lantern attached to the bottom.

Instead of mounting rapidly to a great height the thing wobbled around and floated off on the wind over Kearny street toward the bay. For half a mile it scarcely rose 300 feet, and its construction and shape were plainly seen. The people on Kearny street jeered at the fake article floated over them, and several suggested that Mr. McEvoy of the American Detective Agency had changed his place of operation from Inspiration Point, near Piedmont, to Nob Hill, San Francisco.

A local fireworks company reported to-day that they had been doing a big balloon business within the last few days. In fact they have sold more of this kind of fireworks within a week than they have since the Fourth of July. Purchases have been made by people from Alameda, Haywards, Fruitvale, Oakland, Berkeley and San Francisco. /

AGAINST FAKERS. / A Vigilance Committee Formed in the Mission District.

Public interest in the airship is growing every day and with witless practical jokers people have no patience.

The prevalence of small hot-air balloons, carrying dingy lights across the darkened heavens, imposing on the credulity of persons looking for an aerial wanderer, has led to the forming of a vigilance committee. The committee is at present composed of but four members— James Peoples, Ed Perley, Gus Skelly and N.L. Peoples, and is known as the Mission Dolores Vigilance Committee. Although the organization has but few members each member is capable of making it thoroughly interesting for any man caught in the act of releasing a miniature gasbag. The most enthusiastic member is James Peoples, the captain, who measures about six feet four inches and is built in proportion. He is looking for and is anxious to meet a practical joker with a balloon under his arm. Then the trouble would commence.

"We take an occasional trip to Twin Peaks in search of balloon men," said Mr. Peoples, last evening, "but as yet we have not captured one.

"If we do find one all four of us (we measure all together something like twenty-four feet six inches) will jump all /p.2/ over him for his idiotic acts, and it is safe to say that he will reform." /

ATTRACTIVE VENUS. / Her Charms Still Beguiling Many of the Uninitiated.

AUBURN, Cal., Nov. 25.—People here have been inclined to discredit the existence of the aerial traveler of the heavens, but last night found several reliable citizens who can swear that they saw the light in the sky.

John T. Walsh, hospital steward, noticed a light in the western sky just about over Sacramento, forty miles distant. He called his wife and she and several of the hospital patients vouchsafe the story as true. Their description is that it was a round light of yellowish hue, nearly as large as the sun. It dipped and curved for a while and then disappeared. Dave Chamberlain noticed a light in the heavens when going to supper shortly after 6 o'clock, and when he reached home called his father's and mother's attention to it. Deputy Recorder Henry Hart is another who saw it.

FRESNO, Cal., Nov. 24.—The airship passed over Fresno at 6 o'clock this evening. Only the light could be seen. Some say it was Venus setting. The light passed over the city in a northwesterly direction. /

INQUISITIVE RIVALS. / Searchlights Seeking for the Warship of the Air.

VALLEJO, Cal., Nov. 25.—The searchlights on the monitors Monadnock and Monterey are flashing throughout the heavens this evening, in hopes of discovering the whereabouts of the great airship. Up to 8 o'clock no discoveries have been made and it is expected by the officers at the yard that some other course will be pursued by the air voyagers for fear that big Betsy and Alice on the Monterey will be trained on and fired at the warship of the air.

[Pic: Ex-Attorney-General W.H.H. Hart.]

1896 November 26 (Th.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 6. (ed.)

THE AIRSHIP.

Few things of recent occurrence have been more gratifying to The Call than the way in which its reports of the airship have been received by the public. That a story so strange and so seemingly improbable as this should have found a wide acceptance when coming from The Call is conclusive evidence that the people are aware The Call deals in no fakes, and that whatever it reports is well founded on reason and on fact.

Public opinion on the subject was well expressed by Editor Walden of the Napa Journal at the State editors' convention in Vallejo, in saying that while he was incredulous of the airship he did not like to disbelieve the many persons of known veracity claiming to have optical evidence of its existence. Mr. Walden added: "if the story had appeared in any other paper than The Call I should have paid no attention to it."

This and other expressions of popular confidence in the reliability and accuracy of the Call's reports on all matters of public interest are in the highest degree gratifying. It will be borne in mind The Call has never asserted the existence of an airship, and never has undertaken even to describe on its own authority the strange light which has been seen. It has given only the reports of those who claimed to have seen it, and who being persons of reputation and good standing in the community are entitled to public confidence in what they say.

The subject is one of popular interest and of no little public importance. It is, therefore, nothing more than proper that a newspaper which aims to give all the news all the time, and give it accurately everytime, should gather these reports and seek diligently to find upon what cause they are based. This is what The Call has done and will continue to do.

It is evident that so many men of good understanding cannot be wholly deceived in a matter of such a nature. There is certainly some cause for the strange lights which so many intelligent people have seen and described. That cause we are now seeking out. We have no intention nor object to deceive the public. We aim simply to make known the truth. The readers of The Call may rely upon it that they will receive as early as possible a full and complete explanation of the mystery whatever that may be. There is certainly some cause for the light and The Call will find it out.

1896 November 26 (Th.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 14.

THE AIRSHIP CRAZE FAST FADING AWAY. / STAR-GAZING HAS CEASED. / "ALUMINUM" BENJAMIN RISES TO EXPLAIN. / Bemoans His Unfortunate Lot and Says the Reporters Are Shortening His Life. /

Public interest in the airship proposition has waned considerably during the last twenty-four hours. People are tired of craning their necks and gazing into the sky on the invitation of any excitable person who takes it into his head that he sees something out of the common.

Besides, it is the general impression that the mysterious inventor has been fooling long enough. If he wants to "hold the crowd" it will be necessary for him not only to come out boldly and declare who and what he is, but also to let people see his invention under way in broad daylight, without the mystic glamour of heavenly constellations and fire balloons. Until that time it may be taken for granted that the airship story, like many another good story before it, has run its course.

"Aluminum" Benjamin, under whose glossy black hat works an untiring and romantic imagination, was on view all day yesterday, and seemed thoroughly satisfied with the universal homage paid him. He is a man with a naturally imposing appearance and unlimited belief in his own powers of explanation, persuasion and conversation generally.

"All this balderdash about me and Collins parting company is a fake—a bald-headed fake—and nothing else," he said yesterday. "Why, me and Collins are like brothers. This airship trouble has only brought us closer together, and he has acted like a dandy. The man that says I have gone off and joined forces with any other attorney is a liar."

Benjamin has been talking volubly for two days about a working model of his "'invention.'" He has been asked a dozen times to describe it, but has never yet managed to get beyond a vague preamble. He says that "It ain't so big as the Palace Hotel, nor yet so small that you can't see it," and with this lucid explanation his questioners have to be content.

Last night he made a heroic move and shifted his trunk from his Ellis-street lodging to a house on Eddy. He said that it had become necessary for him to change his quarters on account of the trouble that reporters were inflicting on him.

"Anybody 'ud think that I was a cattle thief, the way them fellers are camping on my trail," he said yesterday. "I can't eat in a restaurant but what there's three or four of them looking at me through the windows. Every night when I go home I've got to hold a reception for a couple of hours on my doorstep before I can get into the house. It's come to a point now where I'd almost as soon make the city a present of my airship as have any more trouble about it. Indeed, the only thing that stops me from making such a gift is that they would immediately give the machine my name, and I hate notoriety."

Here and there still remain enthusiasts who claim that the airship is a real and tangible creation and that they have seen it. The betting phase of the question has just been started by a man from over the bay,

and no doubt a few more people, as positive as he, will follow suit. He is D.P. Mitchell, a well-known Oakland painter, and he is willing to bet \$100 that the airship really exists. He said yesterday that he has seen the wonderful flying machine twice and that he was sure that he was not and could not be mistaken about the matter. "I saw this thing first about six weeks ago," he said, "and again about two weeks ago. The first time it was out over the bay early in the evening, and I could see it quite plainly, for there were three lights on it. The next time it passed over the city and I got quite a good view of it. Some of my men were with me and there was no mistake about it. It moved about as rapidly as a dove flies, and seemed to be under perfect control. I am not very sporty, but I am willing to lay \$100 that the airship exists. Yes, I would be glad to place the money under satisfactory conditions, for I feel sure that I would win it easily. I was not deceived by any star or meteor. I have a pair of eyes that do not deceive me, as a rule."

"The Real Inventor," as she signs herself, writes to the "Chronicle" that her plans have been greatly misunderstood. She intends to make a grand trial trip this evening over San Francisco and Oakland, and goes on to remark, "The powerful searchlight which has hitherto been used and which has excited so much general interest will be discarded and the car lighted in such a manner that its form and shape will be distinctly visible."

Ex-Attorney-General W.H.H. Hart, who has told a number of his friends that he is the new representative of the unknown airship inventor, is having lots of fun with everybody who visits him in connection with the affair. Hart delights in a little joke to liven up the dull round of legal work now and again. Unlike "Airship" Collins, however, he is not making a mystery out of it, and consequently will not experience the same shock to the nervous system that it was the misfortune of his fellow-attorney to receive.

It is probable that Collins will go to some hot springs' resort in the near future, where, by strict compliance with the demands of a vegetable diet, he may possibly recover from the effects of the nervous strain of the past week. /

ANOTHER LOCALITY INVADED.

At Red Bluff It Resembled a Star, an Egg and a Kite.

RED BLUFF, November 25.—Although the residents of this city were apparently sober last night, yet the airship that has been puzzling San Francisco and Sacramento for the past few days was seen at two different times in this city. At about 6:45 o'clock a crowd on the corner of Walnut and Washington streets noticed almost directly west of them what appeared to be a star, but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction toward the mountains. Dr. J.A. Owen, who was in the crowd, called to several others who were near, and the crowd watched the object till it went out of sight over the mountains.

C.H. Chase, an attorney, says that he saw it first while standing on the corner of Main and Walnut streets, and that it was rapidly moving toward Leesville. He watched it for about twenty minutes, at the end of which time it disappeared over the mountains. Mr. Chase says that it was going directly west, as part of the time the ship was on this side of the mountains and he could see the summit of the mountains above it.

Soon after the object had passed out of sight a telegram from Chico was received stating that the object had passed over there a few minutes previously. W.K. Hughes, a carpenter, climbed to the top of the City Hall after it had disappeared, and says that after making a few turns it came back over the mountains, and a few minutes later it again passed over this place.

A telegram was a short time later received from Leesville saying that the strange craft had gone as far as that place and from there had turned and gone back toward Red Bluff. Several people say not only that the light was visible, but on the return trip the body of the object was seen. The witnesses compared it in shape, to an egg. Many thought that the light was from a star, but this theory was spoiled by the rocking motion of the machine. It was precisely like that of a kite.

1896 November 26 (Th.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 6.

TIME FOR A REST. /

It is about time for some of the excitable people of this State to take soothing potions, go to bed, and try to sleep off the fancy that they are pursued by airships every time they venture out of doors after dark. For a week the nocturnal air has been populated with vagrant navigators, until many of the victims of the craze have reached a stage at which they are in danger of taking the Milky Way for an aerial White Squadron and seeing propellers on the moon.

This has certainly been one of the most remarkable crazes in the history of human delusions, but it is time for it to stop. There is no reason to suppose that an airship is lurking anywhere in our vicinity. When the first reports came from Sacramento there were no means of testing their accuracy. Reputable citizens

said that they saw strange lights moving through the air, and it was not known just how much reality was needed to set their imaginations at work. But we know now. We have seen thousands of trustworthy people gazing for hours at Mars and Venus, and endowing those usually sedate planets with every variety of erratic motion. We have seen these celestial wayfarers, which have never been known to stray from their ordained paths since the paleolithic man marked their course a thousand centuries ago, charged with eccentricities that would have disgraced an untamed meteor in its callowest days. And having had this luminous test of the value of ordinary testimony in a case of this kind we are justified in declining to take any airship seriously until it shows itself in daylight, or comes near enough to be readily distinguished from a respectable member of the solar system.

We have no doubt that a practicable flying machine will be evolved in time, but the chances are all against the revelation of one in the theatrical way in which the present alleged phenomenon of the skies is said to have made its appearance. Some of the ablest scientific men in the world have been working on the problem, advancing step by step toward the goal. Their progress has been a matter of public notoriety. It has made it practically certain that no airship can be successfully navigated without a long course of careful trials. Such trials could not be kept secret. It is to the last degree improbable that an unknown inventor should be able to bring such a machine to a perfection which Maxim and Langley have been unable to attain, and secure complete mastery over its motions in the air, without allowing it to be seen once in daylight.

Stories of mysterious airships afford good material for a decaying newspaper that lacks the means to obtain real news, but until they are better authenticated sensible people should read them only for amusement.

1896 November 26 (Th.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 10.

THE SCARECROW FLY-BY-NIGHT. / The Thunderbird preparing to Throw Eggs at Weyler. / Airships Come Not in Single Spies, but in Battalions Invading the Blue. / Plenty of Authority, but Most of It Has Filtered Through Three or Four Generations. / SCIENTIFIC MEN PRONE TO SCOFF / Every County in the State Has One or More Fiery Monsters Careening Up and Down the Heavens. /

Fly not yet, tis just the hour/When pleasure, like the midnight flower/That scorns the eye of vulgar light, /Begins to bloom for sons of night/And maids who love the moon. / Twas but to bless three hours of shade/That beauty and the mood were made./ 'Tis then their soft attractions glowing/Set the tides and goblets flowing./Oh stay! oh stay! / --Moore's Address to the Thunderbird. /

Nevertheless the Thunderbird will not stay for any or all of these attractions. He is busy getting ready to drop a hot bomb on Weyler's head. People who have ventured to suspect that he is a common, ordinary goose, addicted to cackle, are treated with reviling. He is a filibuster bird, he is, and he is ready to destroy Havana in forty-eight hours. The bird is preparing to throw eggs at Weyler.

The man who has not an airship in his backyard in these days is poor indeed. The man who has not seen a fleet of airships maneuvering in the skies has left California ashamed of himself. He is like the man who fell out of the balloon. He is not in it. They come not in single ships, but in battalions. The county or town in the State which cannot produce a machinery bird or two is hiding its head in shame.

In Santa Clara the monster was seen striding the blast in the direction of Gilroy. In Sonoma he was horsed upon the sightless couriers of the air. In Placer he flipped and flapped like tuppence in a rag, and in Alameda he is writing letters to the papers.

There was a faker yesterday on a side street who had gathered a bunch of listeners whom he was trying to interest in the virtues of soap—his soap. But somehow he could not hold their attention. It seemed as if every man in that crowd had a rubber neck. Then he understood, and he began:

"Why stand ye gazing up to heaven? Looking for airships, eh? Well, that is all right, but you won't see any airship to-day. There is an airship all right. I've seen it myself, and you'll all hear about it and see it in a few days, I know the man that made it, and he is straightening out the wavy motion that bothers him up in the clouds. That'll be all right, but you won't see it this afternoon, and as I was saying, this soap----"

There is not a respectable star in the heavens that is not in danger of being confounded with this vagrant fly-by-night, and a hot-air balloon is enough to cause a riot on the streets. Neither is there any lack of authority of a sort for stories. It is true that most of them have filtered through three or four generations of story tellers, for the family tree of the father of lies has many branches that overshadow the earth.

Still another ex-Attorney-General Hart has become entangled with the mysterious flying machine—or at least with one of the flock. This particular "ex" is A.L. Hart, formerly of Sacramento. Mr. Hart

confided to some friends a few evenings ago that he knew the lawyer who had been retained by the inventor of this bird or birds of the air, and who had taken a ride into the ether aboard the craft. Mr. Hart explained yesterday that he bases this statement upon information imparted to him by an acquaintance who said Lawyer Collins was the man, and that the latter had told him all about it. Collins, said Mr. Hart's friend, went into great detail in explaining the workings of the aerial navigating apparatus, and assured him that this same machine was the identical one which has so narrowly missed knocking down a few church steeples in Sacramento.

But now that Attorney Collins has found that the "time for disappearing" has arrived, and has repudiated all statements attributed to him regarding the mysterious airship, ex-Attorney-General Hart—that is, A.L. Hart—is unable to be of any further assistance in the way of clearing up the mystery surrounding the "strange light" that dodges among the clouds.

Another inventor came to the front yesterday, or, rather, permitted himself to be discovered—and to those who were inclined to be inquisitive he seemed willing enough to allow them to mistake him for the millionaire who is reported to have been lately soaring and singing in midair. He would not admit that this was true, but would vouchsafe inquirers a knowing smile and say, with a show of commendable modesty, that he'd rather not discuss the subject. This inventor does not hail from Oroville. He is a local man and his name is David Francouer.

"But you do not deny that you are the inventor of a flying machine?" Francouer was asked yesterday.

"Oh, no, not at all," was the reply. "I am free to confess that I believe I have solved the problem of aerial navigation.

"Have your experiments been successful?"

"Quite so. My machine is a veritable bird. After two years of hard work I struck the secret of combining both the balloon and aeroplane theories, and after that all was easy. Yes, my machine has traversed the air already, and the one I have now is capable of carrying twenty people across the continent without a stop."

"Have you made any experiments in the neighborhood of Sacramento, San Francisco or Oakland lately?"

Now, it was this question and similar ones that invariably caused Mr. Francouer to grow coy.

"No, I don't think I have ventured close to any of the places you mention," he would say.

But finally the inventor was asked what he intended doing with his airship—that is, for the present, prior to sailing to Havana and destroying that city in the interest of the Cuban revolutionists. He must have forgot himself.

"Why, I've rented a vacant store on Market street and I'm going to exhibit it to the public at two-bits a squirt," he replied before his friends could catch him and admonish him to shut up.

Lawyer George W. Monteith, not to be outdone by the ex-attorney-generals or by the visionary Mr. Collins, made a real discovery of a flying machine yesterday, and, like his rivals, immediately became mysterious.

Meeting a friend on Market street, Mr. Monteith seized him by the arm, hissed into his ear that not a word should be spoken, and then dragged him into a dark and deserted alley.

"Sh-h-h!" was the attorney's first admonition. "Not a word of this to anybody. I've found it, sure. It has wings and a long tail."

"Say, my old friend, it's plain to me that you have caught the airship malady, too," [said] the lawyer's victim, as he endeavored to disengage himself from Monteith's grasp.

"Haven't touched a drop, sir; but I tell you I have discovered the real airship—the one that's been cutting all these capers over the housetops at night. Why, I can take you to a man who can tell you all about it, and more than that, can show you a working model of the skyscraper in a minute. Listen, and I'll tell you how it happened. Do you know George Crossley? No? Well, he's the engineer of the Sprekels building. George has been acting mysteriously of late, and when I took him to task the other day he came right out and admitted that he had been assisting the gentlemen who were interested in the new airship, and that he had been practically superintending the recent experiments which have been astonishing everybody."

To prove his assertion Mr. Monteith hurried his friend to the Sprekels building and dragged him into the elevator.

"We will go and see the model first," he whispered, and they were both wafted to the third floor. The attorney led the way to a room and opened the door.

Well, there was a flying machine there all right enough—that is, a model of one—with its wings and tail and a propeller, which, by its rapid revolutions, was making a noise like a Japanese top. But the airship was not flying around the room. It was held securely to the ceiling by stout steel cords.

Dr. C.A. Smith, the inventor of Mr. Monteith's discovery, has had it on exhibition in this room for a

number of weeks, and is endeavoring to get some capital interested in the scheme in order that he might make some practical tests of his invention. He is certain that it can fly.

"No, I'm not the inventor who has been flying up and down the coast of late," said Dr. Smith when seen last evening. "I'm glad I'm not, for I have a better machine than the one that has been making those nocturnal flights. Of course I have never seen the latter machine, but I know mine is better. Do I believe that the problem of aerial navigation has been solved? Why, you talk foolishly. Of course it has. My dear sir, it is merely a question now of who has the more perfect apparatus. I have no doubt that somebody has invented something in which he has been floating about lately, but that does not bother me, for I know that I have the superior article. And what is more, I have it protected by patents. They can't steal it from me. My invention is intended to wipe out railroads and steamships, and is not for midnight pleasure parties."

Another anonymous inventor writes to "The Examiner" promising that his ship will be, as he spells it out, "visable to every one by daylight on Thanksgiving Day at noon," and he adds that none others are genuine. All the fly-by-nights he insists are fakes, for the safety lanterns on his ship are not big enough to be seen at any distance. So now look out for a daylight bird.

THICK AS GEESE.

Airships Over Oakland Grouped in Flocks in the Sky.

OAKLAND, November 25.—Mysterious lights were seen floating over Oakland and Alameda last night. Shortly before 8 o'clock a light shot up over Piedmont and drifted up into the clouds. About 9 o'clock another light was seen drifting in the vicinity of Alameda. Thousands of people saw the lights and many reputable citizens were ready to affirm that they had seen the mysterious airship.

Joseph D. Strong, who spent this evening in Oakland, said that he had obtained glimpses of "flocks of airships." They seemed to him to be going up in all directions, grouping themselves in the sky much as a flock of geese in spring time follow the parent goose and gander.

Another explanation of the wandering light that has been pursued over the hills of Oakland has been given. All of those who have seen the light have described it as being like the searchlight that shone over the Midwinter Fair grounds in San Francisco. The conclusion is that the light comes from the chutes each night and when reflected on the fog gives a weird appearance. Mrs. E.H. Crawford and Miss Kate N. Bassett, who reside at 522 Tenth street, saw the light several times during last evening. It raveled back and forth through the heavens just as described, and the ladies are satisfied that it was the searchlight at the chutes.

FRESNO DISAPPOINTED.

It Was Only the Planet Venus After All.

FRESNO, November 25.—An amusing incident occurred shortly after sunset this evening. A Thanksgiving crowd was drifting around the town when suddenly the report was circulated that the airship was in sight near the western horizon. Several hundred people gathered on Mariposa street looking westward, where a bright light appeared in the clear sky just above the coast range. When it became known that the object was the planet Venus the crowd melted away and pronounced the airship a fake.

HUNG A LANTERN IN THE SKY.

Auburn People Say It Is No Longer a Joke.

AUBURN, November 25.—The mysterious aerial traveler has been looked upon as a joke here until to-day. People can hardly dispute the word of Hospital Steward J.T. Walsh, who says he saw a lantern in the sky last night about 6 o'clock. It looked to be just over Sacramento, and had the shape of a round light half as large as the sun. Mr. Walsh's family, several inmates of the hospital, J.B. Chamberlain and family, Deputy Recorder Henry Hart, and other reputable citizens saw the light. It remained about half an hour.

[cartoons: Beats Edison—The Blind See Ships (vide X-rays to make blind see). The Inventor of the Airship (2 boys w. hot air balloon). Only Star Not Mistaken for an Airship Is Sad (Saturn crying).] [Poem: The Thing of Wheels and Cranks and Frolic.]

SF Examiner, Nov. 26 p.6—There is only one paper in the U.S. that can't see a joke in the airship story.

That ship is suspected of being on an expedition in quest of a castle in the air.
28, 6—Hardly had news of the airship's hostile intentions toward Havana been cabled there, than information was wired back that the guards of the city had been doubled.
Harpers Nov or Dec '96—"The Martian" by du Maurier.

1896 November 26 (Th. morn.) San Jose (Calif.) Daily Mercury, p. 5.

SAW THE AIRSHIP. / Description of the Mysterious Craft by a San Josean.

Large crowds collected at various points on the streets in this city last evening. All were gazing skyward anxious for a glimpse of the far-famed airship.

W.E. Watts, a teacher of bicycle riding, gave a description of the airship last night in an interview with a Mercury representative. He said he was willing to take an oath that he saw the machine last Tuesday night at 11 o'clock when he was on his return from a wheel ride to Gilroy. He said it was then only a few hundred feet above the ground. It was visible from a reflection of light on some large wing-shaped objects. Light, as if thrown from a search lamp, struck the earth near the Turn Verein shooting range.

Mrs. M.B. Dunn, who occupies rooms on the third floor of the Farmer' Union building, told a Mercury reporter last evening that she saw what she believed to have been an airship moving through the heavens late Tuesday night. Mrs. Dunn stated that at first she thought the object she saw was a group of stars, but when she saw the object moving west and disappear from sight she was satisfied it was an airship.

1896 November 26 (Th.) San Jose Daily Mercury, p. 6.

Los Gatos News. / MANY SEARCHERS FOR THE MYSTERIOUS AIRSHIP. /...

Los Gatos, November 25.—Los Gatons, to the number of a hundred or more, excitedly scanned the heavens last night in search of the mysterious airship. The planet Mars, which at this time of the year looks exceedingly large and distinct, came into unsought-for notoriety as the extensively heralded air craft. There are those who solemnly avow that the sea serpent's rival actually did cavort over the foothill town, and variously described the aerial object. One enthusiastic gazer swears there was a brass band on board.

p.4. As to that flying ship, there are plenty of rumors in the air.

(San Rafael) Marin Journal, 11/26p.3.

Marin county could not be kept out of the airship business. A citizen wrote to a city daily an account of a discovery he accidentally made on Mount Tamalpais of a big camp or tent, in which he found an airship which made nocturnal trips out over the metropolis, returning at will each morning before daylight. His letter was treated soberly, and contributed to the literature of the week, and the excitement on the subject. It was signed William Jordan, but there is no William Jordan here, and there was no thought that the letter would be taken seriously.

(Santa Barbara) Morning Press, 11/26, p. 1. Red Bluff.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Stockton (CA) Daily Independent, p. 2.

FEASTING ON THE FAKE. / San Francisco Has No Monopoly on the Airship. / Everybody is Expected to See It, but Up to Date the Reporters Are Conflicting. /

The muffled rumble of the wheels which have been throwing off the air ship excitement in San Francisco seems to have fairly reached this community and even those who disclaim the presence of any machinery just behind the frontal bone are vieing with each other in seeing just how near they can approach the dreams of Verne. The mysterious light which some with bland-like innocence assert they have witnessed peregrinating over this valley, has smothered out all explanations as to how the result of the 3rd of November was brought about, and the evident sincerity of some in describing the aerial visitor has won doubting Thomases over as far as the skeptical stage at least.

The last report came from Lathrop last evening when Mr. Sanguinetti telephoned to this city that even while he talked he saw a bright light, some darker than a star, approaching Lathrop from the east and continually growing brighter and more plain. He announced that if signalling would bring the thing down the people out that way would land it when it arrived. There was no late report to show whether or not the people of that place had captured the evasive illusion.

A steamboat captain, who claimed that he had steered entirely clear of schooners, also came in yesterday and before a justice of the peace prepared to make affidavit to the strange sight he saw while twelve miles up the river Tuesday night. He said he was sleeping the sleep of the just and was sure there was no opium aboard. About 12 o'clock he was called out of his bunk by his frightened Chinese cook, who called his attention to the rapid flight of a large light and the outlines of a cigar-shaped frame. It was moving north by south. The captain declared that there was a continual shifting of light in the vicinity of

the object and he thought he heard an occasional dull thud in the heavens like the sound of some explosive. The Chinaman refused to be quieted and left the boat when it stuck in the next mudbank.

One citizen interested in the cause of science was yesterday trying to raise a fund to employ a sober and reliable man to ascend the court house dome and after climbing out, take his place on the arm of Miss Liberty and put in the night with his eyes in the heavens and his hand on his heart.

Nightwatchman McKee's word on a mooted subject like this might be questioned by some owing to his location at the State Asylum, but he nevertheless comes forward with a clearer description of the mysterious monster than has yet been given by the most professional. Last evening at forty-five minutes and thirty-five seconds past 9 o'clock, he saw the ship pass nor'west just back of the asylum grounds and it swung down to within 210 feet of the ground. At the same time there were three loud reports followed by great gusts of wind, which evidently came from the flapping of the pinions of the ship. He thinks it was dynamite that was discharged and that it had something to do with the motive power of the monster. The ship was cigar shaped, but was smoking at both ends.

Billie Martin, the swift messenger at the Western Union was among those who were on the look out for the ship. Incidentally he started for the northern part of the city on his wheel to deliver a message just after Lodi called up to say that the air ship was coming south. In this part of the city there are mud puddles large and deep, and on this occasion they were veiled in darkness. With his eyes on the heavens Martin rode off the sidewalk and was soon trying to use his wheel for a life preserver. He considers it a sacrifice to the cause of investigation, and while not sure that he had the ship located, he has no doubts about the location and actual existence of the mud puddle.

Notwithstanding that every one laughs at the idea of there being such a thing as an air ship at large, there were many who had stiff necks this morning caused by their positions of observation during the night in the hope of catching a glimpse at the often heard of but seldom if ever seen "strange light."

1896 November 26 (Th.) Daily Record (Stockton), p. 2.

THE AIR-SHIP EPIDEMIC /

The longer the air-ship craze continues the more one wonders whence it hailed. A learned professor told the teachers the other night that "Before a wheel could run in any man's mill, it must run well in some man's head." This is a neat way to indorse theory, imagination or "wheels in the head." Applying the same principle to air-ships, it is quite conceivable that an airship must first exist in some fertile brain before it can sail around in the upper regions. The one that first agitated Sacramento and then took complete possession of the Call evidently had its origin in some brain that occasionally forages beyond the borders of the intensely practical.

But that does not answer the question. Who first conceived this air ship? If it were a reporter on a Sacramento paper he should at once be put in charge of the New York Journal. He is certainly a genius. But the readiness with which the public has seized upon this ideal ship exhibits what we may term the intelligent credulity of the public regarding the possibilities of invention. These imaginings, if, indeed they be such, are perchance, the forerunners of the actual air ship, as the wheel in the imagination is the forerunner of the wheel in the mill. Where so many visions of air ships exist at a mere suggestion, there must result eventually something more tangible.

No one would care to stake his reputation on the declaration that an air ships such as described is impossible, and consequently few care to pronounce the story a pure fake, though undoubtedly most people believe it to be nothing else. What puzzles the public more than anything else is the wild career of the Call, chasing this supposed delusion about the valleys and hill tops. No one had credited the Short-ridge with the sprightliness to even chase a fake gracefully. The antics of the overgrown metropolitan paper are fully as puzzling as the air ship itself.

All of this of course the Record stands ready to cheerfully rescind when the air ship is definitely located.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Stockton Evening Mail, p. 1.

ANOTHER NOTE FROM THE SKY / Dated "Off the Earth, November 25th." / The Occupants of the Airship Send a Communication to the Mail—Riding on Rain-Clouds. /

The airship is no fake. Hereafter a man may declare that he saw it circling the heavens, without offering to take his breath to the nearest drug store and have it examined. Neither will he have to go to the troublesome and sometimes difficult task of proving an alibi in reference to all saloons. Nor yet will he

have to disprove that he was ever an inmate of the State Insane Asylum. The man that has a few drinks in him need not imagine that he's "got 'em" should he see the airship traversing the regions of upper air as he is returning home in the early morning. Neither need the sober man accuse himself of inebriety.

The airship is a reality. When what was at first considered a strange phenomenon was seen in the heavens above Sacramento—a long ways above Sacramento, of course, for no one should imagine that the heavens are as near the Capital City as some of the rain clouds—well, when the strange phenomenon was first seen above Sacramento, the Mail scientific editor evolved the theory that the piece of flying brightness was a meteor that had kicked and bucked until it broke loose from some ether planet, like a refractory mule from a manger, and was now going the earth a footrace up where there is no dust. In support of that theory the scientific man strolled out by the State Insane Asylum and found the following note, written in lead pencil on a number of cigarette papers pinned together:

"While up in a balloon September 17th we were caught by a large meteor, and are now ripping around the world on it. Provisions almost gone, and tobacco giving out. Southward bound to h--- and gone. Tried to jump off at the State Insane Asylum, but couldn't make the riffle. / "METE. O. ROID, / "AL. LAFAKE."

To-day, however, a Mail man noticed a package on one of the pans of the scale which the goddess of justice holds over the County Courthouse. The discovery was made in looking to ascertain the time from the clock in the dome. His attention was first attracted by a hunk of fleecy cloud that hung from the parcel, and which was evidently put there to keep it from being blown away. Janitor Cole kindly volunteered to see what the package contained and learn why it was placed there. He went out on the balcony surrounding the dome, and took the parcel off its perch by means of a long pole. Upon examining it he found to his great surprise that it was addressed to the Mail.

The following communication was found to have been wrapped up in the package, which will be read with great interest by the entire scientific world:
Off the Earth, Wednesday night, November 25, '96.

To the Editor of the Mail—Sir: I saw by your issue of the 19th instant an article purporting to explain a strange phenomenon, which, I take it, was nothing more than our airship. In the article referred appears a communication signed by two—a Mete. O. Roid and an Al. Lafake. I wish, sir, that you would state that those gentlemen are not, nor have they ever been, on this airship, nor is this airship a meteor or any other such phenomenon. We alighted the other night out near a place, I think they called it French Camp, and there we found the copy of your paper. We took it up with us the next night and read it all through. In order to prove to you that what we say regarding our airship is true we will take one of your reporters out with us to-morrow, Thursday evening. Tell him to climb up to the roof of the Imperial hotel, and we will pass that way between 12 and 1 o'clock, and let a rope down to him. Tell him to bring us Wednesday's Mail; and say, if he can "buck a raffle" for a turkey, why, that would go first rate with us, for to-morrow will be Thanksgiving, come to think of it. Tell him to put a clothespin on his nose, for in the rarified atmosphere through which we go the nose-bleed is quite an epidemic. He might also bring two or three overcoats, for the weather is quite chilly up here, especially when riding on a rain cloud. We have had good weather, though, for we ride on top of the rain. We passed over your city the other night and waved our handkerchiefs at you. We don't know whether you saw us or not. The electric lights looked real bright.

By the way, how is Mayor Baggs? When he has to get off the earth we'll make him a flying machine, so that he can sail around up here. And, speaking of Baggs, that reminds us, we wish you would state in the columns of your paper that we have not taken to this machine to avoid our creditors. And, by the way, did you folks down there see or feel, perhaps, a shower of bird-shot? We heard a flock of geese flying a short distance below us the other night and peppered away at them, and afterwards wondered whether we were over Stockton or not. Hope nobody was out that late. We are just returning now from a visit to Hermet Island. We did not alight for fear that those women there would keep us. Remember the roof of the Imperial hotel between 12 and 1 Thursday night. Au revoir. / A. FLYMAN, ESQ., AND PARTNER.

The following, which is a copy of the letter picked up on the Courthouse lawn early this morning by Gardener Patterson, and which was addressed to Sheriff Cunningham, is interesting to say the least:

"Dear Tom—Come up and see me some time. I'm the same old highflyer, only I am not dealing in real estate just now. It's cold up here o'nights, but it'll have to be a good deal colder before I'll venture the hospitable cheer of San Joaquin county. We will be heard from in Mexico shortly. Yours in haste, / "J.F. MOSELEY."

RED BLUFF HAS 'EM, TOO. / That Nocturnal Airship Crossed and Recrossed the Range. / Associated Press Dispatch to the Mail.

RED BLUFF, Cal., November 25.—Many residents assert that they saw the alleged airship in this neighborhood last evening. It was first noticed about 7 o'clock and was thought to be a particularly bright star, but which was moving rapidly in a southwesterly direction, towards the mountains. It finally disappeared over the mountains.

The summit of the mountains could be seen above the mysterious light as it moved west. Soon after its disappearance a telegram from Chico stated that the supposed airship had passed that town soon after 7.

After it vanished it again passed over Red Bluff and then a telegram from Leesville said the supposed airship had come from the direction of Red Bluff and after making a few turns had returned in the direction from which it came.

Several citizens say that while at first only a light was visible, later the body of an egg-shaped object was visible, moving quickly through the air. The theory that it was a star was rejected, because of its distinctly rocking motion, which was like the motion made by a kite.

THE DISEASE STILL SPREADING.

PLACERVILLE, November 24.—A bright aerial light was seen to pass over this city in a southerly direction this evening. It alternately raised and lowered as if borne upon an air wave. Among those who witnessed it are many of the most reputable citizens of this place.

THE CRAZE IN SAN FRANCISCO.

SAN FRANCISCO, November 25.—The airship fad is upon us. Many people spend their nights watching the heavens. The search for that airship and its owner goes untiringly on. The fact that Thomas Johnson has been away from home for three nights is eagerly seized on as a possible explanation of the phenomenon and a clew to its inventor. If John Smith has been heard to remark at any time since his birth that people in Sacramento were not a thousand miles away from a correct solution of the affair, John Smith is forthwith shadowed and run to earth in the effort to mix up with the airship.

It isn't safe for a man to visit a machine shop or inquire about the price of cogwheels in a hardware store nowadays without bringing down on his head the suspicion that he knows more about that strange light in the sky than he cares to tell.

Stockton Evening Mail, 11/26,8. Some Successful Liars. / From the Fresno Republican.

It seems impossible that the story of that airship first seen at Sacramento is not a fake, and yet, if it is, it is developing some magnificent liars who hitherto have remained in obscurity. Various citizens of Oakland now have seen it, and a citizen of Tulare comes forward with a modest claim that he has seen it down there. The Tularean may have been drinking, but how about all of those residents of the "Western Athens?" One dare not suggest such a thing in connection with them. If there is no airship, the story of it is a fake sublime in its conception and magnificent in its execution.

(Susanville, Calif.) Lassen Advocate, Nov. 26, '96, p.2. Probably a Hoax (Sacra.)

Ventura Independent, 11/26/3. Caught on the Run. / A flying machine of human make or an aerial visitor from Mars is sailing over Sacramento city at night and mystifying the denizens of the Capital. Thousands have seen the wanderer with its bright light dashing swiftly toward Oroville. Some claim to have seen the men and heard them talking. If true, it is a wonderful invention and will make California still more famous as a land of wonders.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Weekly Visalia (Calif.) Delta, p. 2.

THE AIR SHIP. / IT WAS SEEN BY VISALIANS TUESDAY EVENING. / E. O. LARKINS TELLS ABOUT THE AERIAL VISITOR. / The Inventor's Interests Now in the Hands of Ex-Attorney General Hart—The Ship Will be Used in Destroying Havana. /

The aerial ship has been seen in Visalia.

A number of people in the south part of town saw the vessel in the air, and the sight created considerable excitement.

In an interview yesterday, with a Delta representative, Mr. Larkins said:

"Last (Tuesday) night about 7 o'clock Mrs. E.M. Jeffers came rushing over to our house, exclaiming, "Come and see the air ship!"

"The whole family immediately repaired to the back yard, and there, sure enough, just above the western horizon, blazed that mysterious light.

"At first it seemed to be traveling northwesterly in a straight line; then it moved upward, then downward, then to the right and again to the left, but all the time moving onward in its northwesterly course at an apparent speed of a train of cars, until it finally passed out of sight, as if gone beyond and behind the Coast Range mountains, and in the direction of San Francisco.

"Sometimes on its course the light for a moment would disappear, as if behind some object, but it would emerge again as bright as ever.

W.D. James and other parties witnessed the same phenomenon.

Mr. and Mrs. E.O. Larkins saw the same light in the same locality about a week ago.

It appeared Tuesday evening to be traveling for the neighborhood of the Kettleman Plains toward the San Francisco Bay.

Tuesday night, however, the light seemed to be brighter and larger than ever before, and a dark object, presumably the structure of the ship, could be seen near it.

Whether it be an air ship or a second return of the Star of Bethlehem or some other mysterious phenomenon the Visalians who have seen it say it is a reality.

The ship was seen at San Jose the same night about 10:30 o'clock. /

SEEN AT HANFORD. / The Flying Aerial Ship Observed in Kings County. /

The air ship was seen at Hanford Tuesday evening, the same night it appeared over Visalia. Last evening's issue of the Hanford Sentinel says that the aerial visitor was seen by Will Mathewson and Mont Hornbeak, two reputable and trusted young men of Hanford, whose antecedents are substantially correct and whose reputation for truth and veracity are fully 16 to 1, and give testimony that they saw a great light at an angle of 45 degrees in the heavens. The Sentinel also contains an illustration of the air ship as described by the two young men. The Sentinel says:

"The light was not a bull's-eye lantern, because it was too high up. It was not the north star because it was too low down; it was not a roman candle because the Romans are not in it nowadays; it was not a comet because it had no tail; it was not a meteor because it didn't meet anybody; it was not an electric light because Lacey don't do business that high up. It must have been an air ship because it was not in the water. The light was surrounded by a halo, the prismatic beams of which so dazzled the eyes of the beholders that the true form of the ship was obscured, but amid the outlines of its massive wings as their rapid strokes carried it through space at a rapid rate." [sic] /

THAT AIR SHIP. / C.H. Murphy, Formerly of Visalia, Saw the Aerial Vessel. /

Great excitement has prevailed In San Francisco and Sacramento over the supposed flight of an air ship. At first, it was thought it was a rank fake. Since then the aerial vessel has been seen by scores of reputable people, and it is believed that the air ship really exists.

The air ship is the sensation of the day. The city papers are full of news about the vessel that pierces the air like a condor.

C.H. Murphy, a teacher at the Polytechnic High School in San Francisco, who formerly resided in Visalia, has seen the supposed air ship, and in an interview with a Call reporter said:

"I was coming down Valencia street about 9:15 tonight (Monday) and I noticed the phenomenon. Above, at an elevation of possibly 4000 feet, was an electric glow, which was moving toward the park at the rate of one mile per minute. This was observed by hundreds of persons. Every one on Valencia street might have seen it. There was only one light. This was a vibration or wave. There was no fake about this. When I saw the light I was on the south side of Valencia street." /

THE SHIP'S FUTURE. / It Will be Used in Destroying the City of Havana. /

The SF Call says that all the secrets of the mysterious air ship are now in the hands of ex-Attorney General W.H.H. Hart,...

1896 November 26 (Th.) (Visalia, Calif.) Tulare County News, p. 1.

Local.

The airship which has attracted so much attention around San Francisco, was seen last night by County Auditor E.M. Jefferds and Attorney O.E. Larkin. Both gentlemen assert that they saw it about 7 o'clock p.m., traveling northwest in the direction of San Francisco. Both gentlemen were sober at the time, which by the way is supposed to be their normal condition, and the phenomenon has excited considerable interest hereabouts.

(San Rafael) Marin Journal, 11/26p.3.

Venus is visible in the southwest, and is so bright that, standing in the shade, you can see her before sunset. Perhaps she is responsible for some of the airship craze.

1896 November 26 (Th.) Tulare County (wkly) Times (Visalia, Calif.), p. 4.

THAT AIR SHIP AGAIN. / It is Seen in This County Near Tagus by a Man Who Drinks Water.

TULARE, November 21.—S.H. Risdon, a well-known gentleman of truth and veracity, says that yesterday afternoon at one o'clock, while at Tagus, he saw something not like a balloon nor an air ship, but more like a canvas sheet spread out, floating in a northeasterly direction at about an altitude of two thousand feet. He says he was pumping some water and a tramp came up and asked him for a drink. While drinking the water given him he saw the object floating in the air and called Mr. Risdon's attention to it. They watched it until it was out of sight and could see nothing but the canvas. Mr. Risdon had not read the papers in regard to an airship having been seen at Sacramento, nor had he heard of it. /

1896 November 26 (Th.) (Watsonville, CA) Pajaronian, p. 3.

The celebrated "air ship," with its moving lights, was seen by Watsonvillians, and they can produce certification that water was their strongest beverage. Chinese kites, with lantern attachments, or hot air balloons, are probably responsible for the "air ship" excitement.

The famous airship has been seen in this part of the country—at last a Watsonville citizen so affirms, and the word of a Watsonville citizen is good. Some of his envious friends affirm that he saw one of these big owls which have their home "high up in the steeple" of the Presbyterian church.

NOVEMBER 27

1896 November 27 (Fri.) (Auburn, Calif.) Placer Argus, p. 1e.

The airship, or at least an airship with electric attachment, has been seen cavorting the sky in the vicinity of Auburn by several of our most substantial citizens during the past week. Of course, the wildest conjectures are made as to the reasons for the visitation. Some of our citizens take it to be the shade of the late W.J. Bryan seeking an opportunity to "land." At latest newspaper advices he was in Denver and still greatly inflated, but had been anchored to Pike's Peak long enough for the Coloradoans to erect altars of worship. He may have slipped his cables and reached this coast, and quite likely would be glad to settle among his profound devotees at Allens and Roseville. Another conjecture is that Sutter and Yuba counties have been catching Sandyhill cranes and turning them loose with bullseye lantern attachments. The story that Venus, Jupiter and Mars have formed an electric "spike" team and pooled issues as a transportation company is discredited, although strongly urged by the Popocrats who believe in the Government control of transportation. In Redlands and San Bernardino the solution of the airship problem was readily found in the ascension of Bro. Scipio Craig with his nasal attachment as a searchlight.

p.4a. It may all be a hoax about the much talked of airship. We have known of Bohemians getting wheels in the head, but they do not often blossom wings, unless of the bat variety. If the machine that startled Sacramento really has angelic flippers, it must have resulted from too great an influx of Salvation Army "lassies" in the capitol city. Eh! McClatchy!

p.4c. The matter of aerial navigation seems to have passed beyond the practical joke and sensational period, and is about to take its place among the verities. We were extremely skeptical when we read the accounts in the Bee and Call of the passage of an airship over Sacramento last week, but the second visit to that city seems to have caught the ear and eye of the conservative Record-Union. The city papers now give the statement of Attorney George D. Collins who states that he is the attorney of the inventor of this new motor. For obvious reasons he withholds his name, but states positively that he is a former resident of Maine with ample fortune who came to this coast and located near Oroville, where he has perfected his invention. The ship made a second trip over the business portion of Sacramento Sunday evening, and the most skeptical now seem to be convinced. All that can be said at present is that the body of the airship has a metallic casing, which from necessity must be aluminum. The motive power is generated by side wings and the power to float by rarified air or gases. There is also a statement that sufficient electric force is

produced to supply lights of great power. What may result from this contrivance is of course hard to tell. One fact seems to be fixed and that is that it can be perfectly controlled as to direction. For many years we have had no doubt that aerial navigation would be one of the crowning features of this closing century. We still hesitate about endorsing all that has been claimed about the airship in question, but we have perfect faith that if it should not prove a permanent success that some one of its successors will. We are glad that California bids fair to be the center of the first real development on the subject of aerial navigation.

(Auburn) Placer County Republican, 11/27/3. Local Intelligence.

Several Auburn people claim to have seen the much talked of airship, but the strangest part of this airship business is that none have ever seen it by daylight.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Daily Californian (Bakersfield), p. 5.

That Air Ship.

Several parties declare they saw the air ship about 8 o'clock yesterday evening in the heavens over toward Tejon. Mr. Goode, the fruit vender was one of the parties. He declares that all he could see was a monster red looking light, while the others who saw it claim that something encased the light. Mr. Goode says his eyes are bad and in consequence he could not see as well as the others. They all saw something and that is one thing sure, so they maintain.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Colfax (Calif.) Sentinel, p. 3.

The Local News.

Conductor Pearson and crew report having sighted the airship last Wednesday evening.

p. 2. Alta.

The people here have not observed the wonderful air-ship observed by so many of the honorable citizens of Sacramento, San Francisco and vicinity.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Daily Colusa (Calif.) Sun, p. 3.

Nearly every town in northern California has had a visit from the aerial "what is it?" except Colusa and we feel very much slighted.

And now Red Bluff has "got it." The citizens of that usually "sober" town are positive that they saw the alleged airship sail over that town Wednesday night. We understand that Alva English swears he saw two of them, but we are not surprised at Alva, he often sees double.

We were told that a certain young man on his way home Thursday night stopped in front of a two-story house where there was a light in a second story window and commenced to yell "airship, airship!" Quite a number gathered around him but were unable to convince him that it was several schooners in his head instead of an airship in the heavens that was troubling him.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Dixon (CA) Tribune, p. 2.

WINTERS. / Hayseed Tom.

While returning to his home, early one morning recently, after indulging in an all-night's sociable game of poker, "Windy Dick" states positively that he saw the mysterious object, which has caused so much newspaper comment of late, flying in the direction of Sacramento. He describes it as looking like a nickel-in-the-slot machine, with aces up, but "Windy" had been playing aces up rather hard all night and his word is good to those who believe him.

It has been suggested here that the flying ship, which has been hovering about Sacramento recently, may have contained a band of fallen angels from heaven in search of the fifty-four thousand Populists who failed to make their appearance on the 3rd inst. They may want an explanation.

DAVISVILLE. /

It seems that my aerial bicycle, of which mention was made in the Democrat several years ago, is still a thing of wonder to those eyes (that) see without understanding it. Shortly after its conception, my friend Harry completed a small machine in which we made a trial trip at night. On that occasion we were sighted from Stockton and San Jose, but as we kept well up in the air, we passed as a slow-moving meteor, but in our second voyage of last Tuesday evening the steering gear did not work very well and we came near getting mixed up with the church steeples of Sacramento. The machine is among the possibilities, but as yet it does not come up to our ideal, which is 400 miles an hour and perfect control as to height and distance.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Dixon (Calif.) Tribune, p. 3.

They Saw the Air Ship. /

A number of residents of the southeastern part of town became wildly excited Monday night over the supposed discovery of the airship that has been driving the citizens of Oakland, Sacramento and other cities daft. A powerful light was discerned with an opaque body above it and it appeared to be many miles away. Several close observers with good eyesight claimed that they could see a rocking motion as the weird craft careered through the heavens. The vantage-ground from which the phenomenon was observed was the intersection of Third and Mayes streets. It was suggested by someone that a clearer view of the ship as it passed could be obtained from a point near the cemeteries, where there were no intervening trees or buildings, and there was a general movement in that direction. They had not proceeded a block before it was discovered that the aerial visitor was almost upon them. A few steps further and the party discovered to their utter chagrin and discomfiture that an incandescent street lamp with the bracket that supported it, aided by the falling rain and a background of clouds, was responsible for one of the strangest optical delusions that they had ever experienced. The very mention of an airship is now enough to arouse the ire of a number of our worthy citizens.

Have you seen the airship? If not, you are not in the fashion.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Ferndale (Calif.) Semi-Weekly Enterprise, p. 4.

—Bob Robarts and Tack Francis swear they saw the airship in the heavens last evening. Joe Shaw was trying to locate it later on.

—The Red Bluff and Chico people claim to have seen the airship which has caused so much excitement in the Sacramento valley.

p.5. Local News.

—The airship craze has struck San Francisco and every night thousands of people are gazing into the heavens, looking for the "mystery," which so startled the residents of Sacramento recently.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Fresno (CA) Morning Republican, p. 3.

THAT AIR SHIP. / It Did Not Show Up Last Night. Seen in Visalia.

Quite a crowd gathered last evening at the corner of Mariposa and J streets to catch a second glimpse of the airship, but the craft did not put in an appearance. Venus was in the western sky in all her beauty, and a number of the people took a look at her through the itinerant astronomer's telescope.

Those who saw the air ship the night before and watched Venus last night, say it was impossible for them to have mistaken the star for the ship. The motion of the planet is altogether different from that observed in the light Wednesday evening, and they are more convinced than ever that the light was the headlight of the aerial craft that has caused so much excitement in the north.

It seems that the Hanford and Visalia people saw the air ship Tuesday evening and the descriptions given of the motion of the light by the papers in those cities make the claim that it was a star ridiculous. Stars don't hob around like a man looking for a lost collar button, and of course the Visalia and Hanford papers are telling the "honest truth."

While the Republican has not the original air ship on exhibition, it has what it believes to be a model of it. It is about five inches long, and looks like a bug. The body and wings are green, and the head red. In the rear is a propeller. It was brought in by a gentleman living in the country, and was found beneath the place where the airship was seen.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) (Modesto) Daily Evening News, p. 1.

Air Ship Seen Here.

Last night at 10:30 o'clock the residents of this section had an opportunity to see the much-talked of air ship. It was first discovered northwest of this city and was going in a straight direction toward Stockton. Only one light was seen but that took a steady course and was inclined toward the horizon. It was seen for nearly half an hour and when lost sight of seemed to be in the vicinity of Stockton as the reflection of arc lights are easily seen from this city. None of the many observers could see anything but the light somewhat larger than Venus. All who saw it are firm believers that it was under control and was the air ship. The large number of reputable persons who saw it preclude all possibility of it being a fake.

1896 November 27 (Fri. eve.) Oakland (CA) Enquirer, p. 4.

FAKE JOURNALISM. /

There is a point at which humbug ceases to be funny and becomes a nuisance. This point was reached by the "airship" newspaper fake several days ago, and the persistence of two or three papers in continuing to impose on the credulity of their readers is by turns pitiful and insulting. One of these papers, and that one the worst sinner in the lot, yesterday printed a self congratulatory editorial in which it first announced that people would not have believed the story if it had been printed in any other paper and next announced that it did not itself believe it—that is, says that it has never asserted there is an airship; it has only printed the assertions of other persons and let its readers judge for themselves. And it concludes its extraordinary article by remarking that there must be "some cause," and the-----will find out what it is and tell its readers. Meantime, so we infer, the journal in question will print airship stories daily so long as the interest lasts and will take in the nickels for the sale of papers.

This may satisfy one editor's view of the responsibilities of public journalism, but fortunately there is a larger number who would not agree with him. They believe that a newspaper is under obligation to do something more than to print idle tales and "let the readers judge" of their credibility. As they look at it, a newspaper's business is to sift as well as to gather the news—to try to find out which among the rumors of the day are true and which are false, and to tell its readers. And especially does it seem the duty of a public journal, if a humbug is being imposed on the people, or a large number of the people, through natural love of the marvelous, are deceiving themselves, to represent the case as it is and undeceive all who are amenable to reason. This love of the marvelous is acknowledged to be one of the worst weaknesses of the human mind, and it is not right to take advantage of the weaknesses of people to injure them. That it does inflict a distinct injury on people to mislead them by tales in which a few facts of science are employed to mask a battery of lies is a proposition so clear that it does not call for evidence to support it.

The class of publications to which we are now objecting are those regarding which the one who issues them generally feels a contemptuous skepticism but knows they will be swallowed greedily by persons more ignorant, or more superstitious than himself. For example, the haunted house story. There is not a city editor in San Francisco who believes in spooks or ghosts; each and all those editors are quite well aware that when a house is reported to be haunted by spirits who make strange noises at night, either there is a fact that will be simply explained by natural causes when found out, or that the story owes its existence to superstition, or that somebody has lied. All haunted house stories fall under one of these three heads, but knowing it well the newspapers continue to print such tales, and to exploit them day after day, merely because people will read. Again, not so very long ago a San Francisco paper printed a story of a perpetual motion machine said to have been invented by some local genius; it proved afterwards to be a case of calculated fraud which any good mechanic would have discovered; but a leading newspaper, whose editor was well aware that what was related could not be in accordance with the laws of nature, allowed the article to go into its columns.

It is humiliating, and it incenses any properly constituted mind, to see such things published in newspapers as sensations which conflict with the simplest principles of nature and laws of matter. A flying machine does not do this, but all the circumstances surrounding the recent sensation show that it is the rawest kind of fake.

Luckily there is a law of compensation in this as well as other matters, and it is in accordance with it that temporary gain made by a newspaper in pandering to its readers' excessive love of the marvelous is offset by eventual loss. A newspaper cannot humbug its readers and retain permanently their respect. They may continue to be readers, but their feeling is one of contempt.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Oakland (Calif.) Tribune, p. 4.

The Phantom in the Air. /

On almost any one of the last ten nights, when there were no storms one might have seen the "air ship" floating above the city and bobbing round with a very unsteady motion. Occasionally one would be lost in the distance. But most of them had a string to regulate their motions. The small boy has been busy for the last few days. He has furnished occasion for all the wonder-mongers to prick up their ears.

The small boy who has not the control of at least one air ship is not in it. Considering the small amount of capital that he could invest, he has furnished the best show of the season. He has brought out in San Francisco and Oakland, hardly less than twenty thousand people to witness his performance. Moreover, he has stimulated the publication of a great deal of literature about air ships. He is not ready to sail himself in his ten cent balloon, but he has made other people show their hands. In the meantime, he will illuminate the heavens with his toy balloon; and if any considerable number hear people talking overhead, he can readily take the credit of having supplied the "machines."

It does not matter that up to this date, no air ship save a balloon has ever lifted a man from the ground and enabled him to sail safely in the atmosphere a thousand feet; or that there is no scientific probability that an air ship has been, or will be invented which can make a safe passage through the air so that it would become a safe vehicle for transportation.

These negative propositions do not trouble the small boy. Did not Franklin draw electricity from heaven with a kite and a key? The small boy may be the herald of a great discovery. He has brought out all the available air ship literature, two thirds of which is fiction. But there has been a general report of progress all along the line. He will still send his air ship up on any still night, and continue to bait curiosity for the promotion of science.

Sacramento Bee, Nov. 27 p. 4 eds. A Coincidence Merely. (From the Yreka Journal.)

The report that an air ship was seen to pass over Sacramento one night last week has caused considerable excitement among residents of that city. A number of people declare they heard voices from the ship. Many theories have been advanced as to what these citizens really saw, and a peculiar feature being that most of those who saw the ship were in the vicinity of a large brewery.

A Rash Assertion. (From Stockton Record.)

Stockton has some people who are known to possess as much veracity as the inhabitants of the Capital City.

And now the Sacramento lover, as he proposes to go moon-gazing with his dear one, whispers "Will you airship with me?"

Sacramento Record-Union, 11/27, 2. "The story of the air-ship has awakened latent Californian talent in fictions of the Munchausen type, and those who like that kind of literature can now revel in it," says the Stockton "Independent." Sa

1896 November 27 (Fri.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 4.

A STARTLING PROPOSITION. /

A man of former prominence in this State is announced, through a paper of standing, as the agent or attorney of a man who proposes to destroy the city of Havana with dynamite. In apparent unconsciousness of the horror with which dynamite plots are regarded in all parts of the civilized world, this degenerate invites a subscription of \$10,000,000 to furnish the means by which a rich, populous and beautiful city may be destroyed. At a time when the world is devising ways to prevent wars with their inevitable consequences, this man, whom the people once honored with their votes for a high office, plans a scheme by which the horrors of war may be increased a hundred fold. Whether or not the plan is practicable does not matter. It tends to familiarize the public mind with methods of destruction that have been considered too horrible to contemplate. Assassination is a playful manifestation of hate compared to this plan of wholesale murder. And all for what? It is not proposed to do evil that good may come of it. It is not proposed to offer a sacrifice of lives in a forlorn hope to promote a righteous cause. The assassins of tyrants have been in darker periods represented as acting under a delusion that robbed assassination of its infamy. But this California lawyer, this man who was at one time the head of the Department of Justice

for this great State, now proposes to make murder a speculation. For a sum of money he proposes to destroy the capital city of the most populous island in the West Indies. This proposition is made without any seeming sense of its monstrosity. It is discussed with the same disregard of moral sense the hired bravado exhibits when asked to name his price for murder.

It is no wonder than an eminent clergyman said in his Thanksgiving discourse that California is noted for the startling irregularity with which society advances. If this eminent clergyman had seriously considered the dynamite proposition, he might have added that California is noted also for the startling irregularity with which civilization leaps backward into the dark ages. The fact that a proposition of this nature could be placed before the people of this State is a reflection upon our civilization. The least measure of punishment that could be anticipated from a self-respecting community would be a protest that would make the State an impossible place of residence for both the originator of the infamous proposition and for the agents of dissemination.

That law and journalism should have combined to make the destruction of great cities a legitimate speculation is much to be regretted. It is the province of law to teach how evils may be remedied through the exercise of reason. It is the province of journalism to show how society may lawfully protect itself from all kinds of desperadoes and anarchists. But in this case a lawyer uses a newspaper to familiarize the public mind with a scheme that an average jailbird could not contemplate without horror. The day for the promulgation of this project was badly chosen. It was a day when peace and good will were being invoked in public meetings and private residences. The churches were open that the people might be taught the blessing of peace and charity. In public halls all through the city the poor were invited to partake of the cheer of the season. On such a day the conscience of the people was startled by a proposition to wipe a great city off the face of the earth for the consideration of the sum of ten million dollars.

p.4. Has the airship retired to its perch permanently—or did some citizen unwittingly have a strange bird for his Thanksgiving dinner? The returns will be awaited with some degree of interest.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 14.

Viewed the Airship.

ALAMEDA, Cal., Nov. 26.—During the excitement of the past three evenings over the reported airship the wags have made life miserable for many of the Alamedans. Monday night Max Gundlach and J.A. Riley, two well-known business men, were upon the street corner with a section of tin-conductor of a gutter-pipe, looking through it and insisting that they had a telescope and could see the outline of the aerial monster. They refused to allow any one to look into it until they had been paid. Being so well known no one hesitated to pay the price asked. The people taken in refused to divulge the sell to others and so the joke went on indefinitely.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 14.

AS LARGE AS A BIG WHALE / W.H.H. Hart Tells of the Length of the Airship. / ANOTHER WILL BE BUILT / It Is to Be Used to Destroy the City of Havana for the Junta. / TEN MILLIONS IS DEMANDED. / No Trouble to Navigate the Sky Now That a Perfect Storage Battery Is Invented. /

The subject of the airship and lights seen by the people of half a dozen counties has not lost any of the interest in the public mind. Notwithstanding the fact that the weather was very cold last evening hundreds of people on both sides of the bay spent considerable time out of doors looking for the mysterious lights to reappear and skip across the sky.

Up to a late hour no lights were seen, and the impression was that the inventor and his assistants were taking a night off and enjoying a Thanksgiving dinner and a little rest.

The legal representative, however, says that the men never rest, but are hard at work improving and perfecting defective parts of the machinery. He promises that ere long the public will have positive proof that the ship exists.

Attorney W.H.H. Hart is as enthusiastic over the airship in which he is interested as though the matter were that of praise instead of ridicule on the part of the unbelieving. He seems to be thoroughly convinced that he has a good thing, and if there are those who regard the whole affair as a hoax or a fake Mr. Hart says they will have to remain in ignorance so much longer.

That it exists and has made successful flights he has no doubt, although he has not seen it.

Of those who are convinced that there is such a thing as an airship Mr. Hart said: "It will be a

matter of only a very short time before they can say, 'I told you so.' Even if I had not personal knowledge I would be very careful about branding the thing as a fake. The position of The Call has been fair and impartial. It has simply published the statements of those who saw that which they believed to be an airship, and has made no attempt to convince the general public that these people were either fools or had wheels in their heads."

The attorney, in the course of a long conversation upon this all-important subject, explained a number of features that heretofore have not been made public. In the first place he gave the length of the airship as about 125 feet and of a width in proportion to its length. This corresponds to the statement of W.J. Taylor of East Oakland, who said the airship he saw on Wednesday evening looked like a large whale. Another important disclosure was that the inventor and Mr. Hart have already discussed a proposition to construct another airship of not over fifty feet in length, to be used for war purposes principally.

"The one the inventor has now," said Mr. Hart, "is too large and uses up too much power in running against the wind—that is, it presents too much surface to the wind—and the one we are thinking of constructing will carry the same apparatus and power. The amount of power now used to operate the big airship will last twice as long and do much more service if applied to a smaller ship."

"Do you seriously consider the building of another airship?" was asked.

"Yes, if there is any inducement. I see in to-day's paper that the Cuban Junta wants to purchase Cuba's liberty from Spain for a hundred million dollars. Now our ship would secure the same results at a much less figure. I talked with the inventor yesterday morning and he said that if the Cubans would give him \$10,000,000 he would wipe out the Spanish stronghold of Cuba."

"Would he demand the cash in advance or its equivalent in securities?"

"Oh, no. The new Cuban Government would be good for such a debt. All he would want would be the dynamite. He would furnish the rest and do the job."

The attorney spoke of how the inventor with his airship and deadly explosive would do the job with as little emotion as though it was a nest of rats instead of a city of wealth, power and beauty. Resuming, he said:

"If such an agreement or contract is made the airship can be taken to New York and shipped by steamer to Cuba. My suggestion is that it be landed not far from the scene of operations. I advised that a balloon be used to raise the airship to the desired height, so as to save the power stored in the storage battery. When the ship is raised to the desired height the balloon can be cut loose and the airship go about its business. When it gets through dropping dynamite into Havana it would still have plenty of power left to get back to where it started from."

"And the inventor will do this job for \$10,000,000?"

"So he says. He asserts that he is not in need of money and that it will only take about thirty days to build a smaller airship. The material would cost considerable, as aluminum comes high. He could put the smaller ship into perfect working order for about \$25,000 or \$30,000, and I believe that he will construct such an airship before long."

The attorney was led off to the subject of the power used on the airship, and, as before, he said that it is electricity stored in a storage battery. He has an interest, he said—a part interest—in a new storage battery so light that it practically overcomes one of the greatest obstacles of aerial navigation. Mr. Hart continued, saying:

"For a long time scientists puzzled their heads over the question of how they could secure a large amount of power without carrying a large amount of weight. This has been accomplished in the Fargo storage battery in which I am interested. I can put in an airship a twenty horsepower battery that will not weigh over 100 pounds that will run continuously for ten hours. It does not require any more power to run the airship that my client has operated lately."

"Has he a Fargo storage battery in his ship?"

"Well, I am not at liberty to state at present. The inventor of the Fargo storage battery and the inventor of the airship are personal friends, and as I was interested in the new battery it may account for my being called into the airship scheme. I do know that this battery would give all the power such an airship would require and it can be easily charged from any common motor."

The destruction of Havana by an airship came once more before the eye of Mr. Hart, and he said that the charging of the storage batteries might be a matter of difficulty in the neighborhood of Havana. The destroyer would not dare to go too near to the Spanish fortifications, as it is not bullet-proof. It might be difficult to secure electricity in the little tropical island. The battery might possibly be charged on the deck of the steamer from a dynamo run by the steamer's engines, but even that would be attended by great risk considering the vigilance of the Spanish cruisers.

"Would not international complications arise out of an aerial warship leaving the United States to

destroy a Spanish city in Cuba?"

"Oh, no, not at all. The parties could go outside the jurisdiction on a chartered or purchased steamer and sign the contract and make all of the arrangements necessary. No, the United States would not become involved in any annoyance with Spain. At any rate, the inventor is ready to take the risk and send an airship to Cuba for war purposes as soon as the Junta is ready to talk business."

While much of this conversation was taking place Mr. Hart was at the Chutes showing his little boy the hot air balloon. After the huge smoke-filled bag had shot into the air with the daring athlete dangling to the end of the parachute crossbar, and the excitement was over, the attorney started for home. Just before entering the house he said: "You can tell the public that in a very short time it will have positive proof that the airship is a reality and not a hoax. I assert this, although I have not yet seen my client's airship. I am convinced that it exists, for I know that the main obstacle, sufficient power, has been overcome and that was all that has stood in the way of aerial navigation for years past." /

GLEAMED OVER SAN JOSE. / Several People Saw Lights Moving in the Air Above the City.

SAN JOSE, Cal., Nov. 26.—The mysterious airship, according to the statements of many persons of good standing, passed over this city again this evening about 7 o'clock. The lights of the machine alone are alleged to have been seen, but all of the parties who saw these from different quarters agree as to the character and course pursued by the supposed airship.

Robert Shiels, an employe of the San Jose Art Emporium, was on San Carlos street, near Eighth, in the company of two young ladies, when his attention was called to the moving light by persons residing in the neighborhood. Mr. Shiels claims to have previously been skeptical in regard to the airship, but stated positively that he is now satisfied he saw the lights of the machine.

He said he at first saw one light about the size of an ordinary arc electric lamp. He stood still and watched the light moving westerly. It began to lower and then two lights were visible. When it arose again only one light could be seen. The machine, he said, eventually took a southerly course, again displaying two lights which were visible for some time and then disappeared in the distance. George Brasted said he saw the light from the Julian street road about three miles from the city. His description of its size and course agreed with that given by Shiels.

S.S. Farley, proprietor of the Mayverne Creamery, saw one large light moving rapidly westward. A turn south was made when two lights were visible. Mr. Farley's wife, Percy Steeves and a Miss Harris, who are neighbors, were with him at the time the supposed airship and substantiate his statement. [?]

Mrs. B.P. Young, who resides at 328 East San Carlos street, stated that her attention was called to the supposed airship by the son of Mrs. Parkinson, who resides opposite, and who was sent to her house to tell her the airship was passing over the city. She went to the door in company with her daughter and a young lady, a Normal student, and they saw the moving light as stated. Each of these persons is satisfied that the lights they saw were attached to an airship. /

LIGHTS IN THE SOUTH. / Several Believe That the Airship Was Over Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Nov. 26.—The now thoroughly famous airship, which has interested so many people in Central California for many days and nights, has apparently passed over the Tehachapi range, and was seen in Southern California last night by at least three persons of excellent reputation for truth and veracity. One of these is George Smith, the bookdealer on Second and Main streets, who insists that he saw the aerial navigator and its lights while on a Pasadena car last night. Others of the passengers, Smith believes, also beheld the remarkable sight. Walter F. Parker, secretary of Mayor Rader, insists that he saw the airship while star-gazing last night, and Robert Kern, the well-known boniface, also adds his testimonial to the general credence of the reports made. None of these gentlemen ever gaze on the wine when it's red, hence their story does not need an affidavit.

It is also reported that Frank Smith, a brakeman on the Santa Barbara local train, saw mysterious lights in the San Fernando Valley last evening. The brakeman concluded that the overhead lights were meteors, and therefore did not communicate with any one on the train about the matter, but the proximity of at least three lights at the same time, moving on parallel lines, impressed him with the idea that the sight was a remarkable one. On relating his observations to a fellow-railroader here to-day, he was reminded of the airship of the bay region. He afterward secured copies of The Call, read up the whole story for the first time, and is now confident that the aerial navigator is what he saw.

A remarkable feature of all the stories is that the lights were all seen at the same time and each individual describes exactly what the others saw, viz.: triple lights dancing in a zigzag way and moving on parallel lines from northwest to southeast and passing over the mountains toward Riverside. /

Saw a Bright Light.

PETALUMA, Cal., Nov. 26.—Almost the entire population of Petaluma was on the streets last evening about 7:30 o'clock, watching a distant twinkling, brilliant light moving horizontally and southward as well, which, under telescopic scrutiny, further showed what was apparently a dark cigar-

shaped body, which evidently carried the light, so, though skeptics are numerous, no doubt Petaluma was treated to a far-away view of the much-talked-of airship.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 6 (ed.).

THE AIRSHIP HOAX. /

It is not astonishing that so many people who looked at the matter theoretically were deceived by the flying machine hoax. This is an age of such amazing wonders that an interrogation point has been placed at the end of the word impossible. A quarter of a century ago a man who would have prophesied a time when Jones could stand in San Francisco and talk with Smith in Oakland would have been taken care of by his friends. Yet the telephone has made it practicable for Jones to call up Smith in San Diego and converse as long as he pleases without raising his voice. At a time when a roll of wax will carry one's own speech down to posterity long after the speaker has passed beyond these voices, and when the vision can be projected along a single ray of keenest light through flesh and blood and wood and stone, what is there in the idea of a flying machine which seems incredible? The only wonder is that man did not invent a means of flight long ago.

Shall the sparrer and swaller / Beat us holler? as Darius Green scornfully queried.

But there is one astonishing thing about the recent or present hoax and that is the ease with which people's eyes have deceived them. Scores of reputable men say they have seen the dim shape of an airship in the light of the arc lights on its hull, yet they were plainly fooled by a flying scud of cloud through which the stars shone fitfully. Even Venus and Mars have been pointed out by excited gazers as part of the electrical plant of the aerial argosy. A stray fragment of some broken star from Flammarion's celestial avalanche has been enough to convince thousands that they had seen the rocking side-lights of an outlined vessel as it went surging before the gates of the empyrean. The soberest men "saw things" and swore to them. With a bit of luminous vapor the credulous mind could shape a winged monster of the air that even the spyglass could not betray to the overwrought senses, while the sound of wind in the telegraph wires came to his strained ear as the voice of the sky-pilot yelling orders to his crew.

It was a strange hallucination while it lasted and, indeed, is not over yet. An esteemed contemporary manages to see the thunderbird within an hour after each day's sunset. But in a day or two even its credulity will lapse and then the star-gazing public will wonder how it could have been so badly tricked by its imagination. Perhaps it may occur to some that it [is] not so surprising after all, when the cynical moderns of San Francisco have been so badly taken in by the phenomena of cloud and star, that the unlettered people of the Black Forest were wont to see gorgons and chimeras dire and the poor peasants of France the gracious figures of their embodied saints. Imagination goes a long way to account for miraculous appearances in the mediaeval past when its power over an every-day street crowd of Californians is so manifest.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 7.

KITE TAKEN FOR AN AIRSHIP. / A. H. Babcock Causes a Little Excitement in Oakland.

OAKLAND, November 26.—A.H. Babcock, an electrician, sent a monster box kite skyward this afternoon, and unintentionally convinced hundreds of people that the airship was a fact. High up in the air it really looked like a pair of small balloons with a car between the two. It attracted instantaneous notice, and so complete was the deception that the members of Babcock's own family gazed at it for a time under the impression that an airship was visiting Oakland. They were not convinced until they were given a change to tug on the line which held the kite.

The kite was in plain view of all the eastern end of the city, and even through a glass looked like an airship. To make the thing appear more real the line parted when the kite was nearly 1000 feet in the air. The kite circled around and then went off toward Fruitvale. It seemed to be lowering as it left the city limits, and the impression was created that it was coming down. Many of those who had been observing it started to follow it up in order to get a closer view. Babcock pursued the runaway kite on his wheel and managed to recover it from some boys near Highland Park. The kite is sixty-seven inches long and consists of two boxes of cloth supported by a stout framework.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 7.

GRISER SMASHES UP HIS AIRSHIP. / YEARS OF TOIL FOR NOTHING. / WAS A MACHINE THAT WOULD NOT FLY. / Recent Reports Were Discouraging to His Hopes and He Abandoned the Scheme. /

OAKLAND, November 26.—The flying machine, which so many Oaklanders have come to regard as a reality, has struck despair deep into the soul of John Griser, an inventive shoemaker, and has induced him to destroy a contrivance upon which he has spent years and years of toil in an endeavor to solve the problem of aerial navigation. John Griser's shop is at 374 Twelfth street. It is tucked away between two tall and more pretentious buildings, but very few people know that Griser lives in squalid quarters because all his spare money has gone for improvements on his flying machine.

As long ago as 1880 Griser cherished the idea of solving the problem which has baffled the ingenuity of man. He figured and planned on a dozen or more of machines, and finally struck the idea which he thought would win. He commenced the construction of an airship, and piece by piece he got it in shape for trial.

Patience and perseverance were necessary to his success, and he had both qualities in abundance. A score of times he built up a thing of wood and iron, with fan-like wings and unsightly fittings, and a score of times he sent it all to the trash heap. Then, at last, he struck the plan which promised to develop a ship able to do all expected of it. His contrivance was large and awkward. He gave up his sleeping-room back of his shop and placed the thing in readiness for trial. The body of the machine was much like a cone, and four flimsy wings swung from it. Slats, iron rods and canvas were planted upon each other neatly and to stay, and the whole machine, as explained by the enthusiastic owner, seemed able to fly if it but had the chance.

The chance came one morning last July, when Griser and a number of his German friends gathered on Franklin and Thirteenth streets before daybreak to try the invention. There were no people on the streets to inquire or look curious, and the trial was made. Griser took his position in the pecan-shaped boat, and started the treadle which was to furnish the power. The wings swung about obedient to the mechanism, but some of them hit the cobblestones and were demolished. The body of the ship wobbled around for a time as it lay across the car tracks, but never gave any sign of leaving the earth.

Again and again John Griser tried his machine. As fast as it broke he would mend it, and apparent defects were rapidly made good. The whole undertaking was a secret for a long time, and then people caught glimpses of the strange object during the early morning hours and waxed curious. They got in the way of going to see the trial flights and then John Griser ceased his endeavors altogether. He stored his wooden bird in a back room and let shoes go unsoled to tinker about it.

Time went on, but he could never perfect his contrivance.

Then came the story from Sacramento and elsewhere that an airship had been seen. Griser grew disconsolate and looked upon his own creation with suspicion. He satisfied himself that some one had anticipated his dreamed-of triumph, and then he gave up. He marched into his back room the other day and smashed his idol into smithereens. It went to the kindling pile, and now John Griser is back at his bench a wiser, a sadder and a more distrustful man.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) (San Francisco, CA) Evening Post, p. 3.

THEY SAY THEY DIDN'T DO IT / Hammon and McAdie Are Not / Sending Up Airships. / Weather Bureau Officials Disclaim All Responsibility for Them. /

Mr. Hammon and Mr. McAdie of the United States Weather Bureau deny with simulated or real indignation the reports that they are in any way responsible for the late "skylight" phenomena which is helping on the airship excitement.

They acknowledge that they have been flying kites, but insist that all their play of this character has been done in the day time and fair and above board. Neither have they been hanging lanterns to these same kites, nor have they in any other means been seeking to delude the public.

"The fact is," said Mr. Hammon, "we have only about one half way decent kite left to work with, and we're not loading it up with lanterns or taking chances on losing it in any way. Neither are we setting off hot air balloons. The nights are too plaguey cold of late to make any such tricks at all funny according to our notions.

"As for the airship," continued Mr. Hammon, "I'm satisfied that we'll have such a thing some time, but I don't look for it just now. I've no personal knowledge about the concern that is now said to be careering around the sky, but I'm very much inclined to think that it's all a fake. Not but that I'd be delighted to find myself mistaken. At the same time I'm not bidding for an opportunity to take any early rides in the craft. I am always modest about pushing myself forward in such circumstances, and many

admiring friends have frequently commented upon the retiring disposition which I am prone to manifest when there is a chance of breaking my neck by being forward."

At General W.H.H. Hart's office, which is now, so to speak, the headquarters for the Aerial Navigation Department of the Pacific, matters were rather quiet this morning. The General himself was busily engaged all day in court, and in his absence the attaches of his office handled the entire subject very gingerly. This might have been due to the fact that the General's late talk on the airship proposition, as quoted by his interviewers, has fairly sizzled and sputtered with dynamite, a few tons of which it is proposed to use in blowing up Havana and other royalist Cuban places in the interest of the insurgents. The General, it should be understood, sticks faithfully to the proposition of having the new clipper of the sky employed as an engine of war and destruction. To that end he has already counseled with the inventor in the matter of constructing another and a smaller, though equally powerful flying craft, which, it is believed, can be made use of to better advantage than the craft now asserted to be in existence. This, by the way, is said to be 150 feet in length, and the proposition is to have the new one only a third as long. A very few weeks of time and \$25,000 or \$30,000 would be sufficient, it is stated, to put the second craft afloat in the atmosphere.

It behooves Weyler, therefore, to be lively about striking that decisive blow. A little more delay and he may hear something drop.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) San Jose (CA) Daily Herald, p. 1.

AIR-SHIP "BUSTED." / Proprietor Dow Gives the Whole Snap Away. / SENT UP LIGHTED BALLONS AT NIGHT / The True Facts in regard to the Airships. The Snap Given Away. /

Air-ships were more numerous last night than usual. Possibly the dinners yesterday had something to do with this. According to accounts a flock of them were passing back and forth over the valley.

As a matter of fact the air-ships which have been seen here were balloons sent up from the rear of the "Dash" saloon. When proprietor Dow was asked about the matter this morning he confessed that there had been several sent up from his rear premises.

The first night when people said they saw them here there were one or two sent up[;] almost nightly since one or two are sent up. They contain a burning candle and when 300 to 500 feet up could easily be taken for an airship at a great height.

This is the secret of the air-ships in this place.

From Morgan Hill. What Effect the Airship Had on the Residents There.

Morgan Hill, Nov. 27.—Many residents of this place were startled last evening by an object high up in the heavens, coming from the north. All agree that it had the appearance of an airship. It was funnel shaped, with a bright light on the front end.

Colonel Bone, who has a residence on Nob Hill, who has had some experience with a Dakota cyclone, sought refuge in an abandoned well; George Edes turned his papers over to Jim Rea and started for the Dunne woods; Andy Sterrett thought it was the advance agent of prosperity and tried to flag it; Mr. Hart, the photographer, took several flash light pictures and now has them on exhibition; Dr. Higgins said he would like to take a trip as ship physician only he said he was afraid some tramp comet might switch its tail and knock the consarned thing into pye. Walter Moore received a dispatch from Huntington that it was a Southern Pacific '96 track walker, who thought the Monterey flyer ought to have switched off at Coyote to let him pass, Story came down to Show's office and took out an insurance policy on his flagpole, situated on Murphy's Peak, Will Brown borrowed a torch from Bryan headquarters and mounted on his swiftest mule and headed towards Gilroy to warn the people in that locality. Charles Covert threw himself upon the ground and appealed to it to take him but spare his dog; and it finally passed out of sight.

The damage resulting from this strange visitor will not be fully known for many years to come, but we state upon good authority that there will be many penal wills filed for probate from this locality. There are hundreds of citizens here willing to testify that this is an unbiased and impartial report of the first airship seen in Morgan Hill.

Local Brevities. The airship passed over San Jose again last evening according to the statements of reputable persons.

1896 November 27 (Fri. morn.) San Jose Daily Mercury, p. 5.

SAW MOVING LIGHTS. / Another Visit From the Stranger of the Skies. / MANY PEOPLE SAW THE SIGHT. / All of the Firm Belief That the Airship Passed Over San Jose Last Night. /

The mysterious airship which is claimed to be making nocturnal voyages in this vicinity, according to the statements of many persons, passed over this city again about 7 o'clock last night. The lights of the supposed ship only are claimed to have been seen, but the descriptions given of these lights agree entirely with those previously given by parties who claim to have seen the strange air machine. The parties who state they saw the lights viewed them from different sections, but agree entirely upon the course taken by the same. The statements as to the character of the lights also corroborate each other.

Robert Shields, who boards at the New York Exchange Hotel, and is an employe of the San Jose Art Emporium, claimed to have always been skeptical in regard to the possibility of there being an airship until the scene witnessed last evening satisfied him that such a machine was in existence and he saw the lights of the same.

Mr. Shields said: "I was promenading with two young ladies on San Carlos street near Eighth, when I heard some persons standing on a porch say, "Why, that must be the airship." I looked up and saw, apparently about nine hundred feet above the Normal School, a bright light rapidly moving west. The light cast a decided reflection. I stood still and the young ladies and I watched the light for several minutes. It went far west and then appeared to sink. We could then see two lights distinctly. The machine arose again and only one light was visible. It then took a southerly course and two lights, one behind the other, could be easily seen. We watched the lights until they disappeared from view in the south."

S.S. Farley, who is the proprietor of the Mavverne creamery, and resides at the corner of Seventh and San Carlos streets, said: "My attention was called to the airship by a stranger who knocked at my door and said the airship was passing. I ran to the door and in a moment my wife, Miss Harris, a neighbor, and Percy Steeves, who were in my place at the time, joined me. I could at first only see one bright light moving west rapidly. It then seemed to drop, and we lost the light behind a cloud. It reappeared in a few seconds, and then turned directly south. We could then distinguish two lights plainly, and watched these until they disappeared in the distance."

Mr. Farley believes the lights he saw were attached to an airship.

Percy Steeves, who resides on South Seventh street, corroborated Mr. Farley's statement.

George Brasted, who boards at the New York Exchange Hotel, said: "I was on the Julian street road about 7 o'clock, when I noticed a bright light rapidly passing over San Jose. It went due west, and then turned and took a southerly direction. I could see the light waving gradually. At first I thought that a fire balloon had been sent up, but after watching the light and seeing the systematic course it was taking west and then gradually turn south I became satisfied I had seen the headlight of the airship, and I believe so now."

Mrs. B.P. Young who resides at 328 East San Carlos street, thinks she saw the airship and described the sight as follows: "I was seated in the house with my daughter, Mabel Young, and a lady who is staying with me and attending the Normal School, about 7 o'clock this evening when Roy Parkinson, whose mother resides at the corner of Eighth and San Carlos streets, rang my door bell and said that his mother wanted me to come out and look at the airship, which was passing over the city.

"We rushed to the door and distinctly saw a bright light about the size of a large star moving rapidly west. We could see the light plainly, and it appeared to be moving in a straight line west. We watched it for several minutes and saw it move downward, and we lost sight for a few moments, as if it had descended behind a cloud. We saw it again arise somewhat and then change its course south, as if going toward Los Gatos. We followed it with our eyes until it disappeared from view in the south."

Many persons who heard of the supposed voyage of the airship last evening in a southerly direction believed that it would return north during the night and watched the heavens carefully in hopes of catching a view of the strange visitor. No further signs of the mysterious lights, however, were witnessed.

(San Jose) Evening News, 11/27/2. The air ship has driven the sea serpent out of business.

The man who has seen the airship is still in evidence.

Rank nonsense about the airship is still being given considerable space by the newspapers.

p. 3 (adv.) All A Flying / It is well known that many are working on this enigma...C. Togni, grocer.

(Santa Rosa) Daily Republican, 11/27/2. The people of southern California are much provoked because the airship appeared in this portion of the state and not in that. It is a humiliating scoop that is recorded against them this time.

Just possibly La Loie Fuller has been soaring through the air above California towns and has been regarded as an airship. This suggestion is made for the benefit of our dear friend, the daft San Francisco

Call.

(Selma, Calif.) Fresno County Enterprise. Nov. 27, '96 p.4.

The airship has appeared at Visalia and at Fresno. The Post explains the sensation as just a plain hoax for which the Bohemian club is responsible. From the roof of the club building paper balloons have been sent out to which were attached sponges saturated with alcohol and lighted.

Solano Republican, 11/27/3. Local Notes.

A great many of our citizens showed considerable interest in the planet Venus Tuesday evening, which they mistook for the mysterious airship.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Stockton Daily Independent, p. 4.

STOCKTON'S AIRSHIP. / It Went Up Last Night and Was Seen Above the City.

Stockton had an airship last night and more than one reputable persons saw it and knew it for an airship, but it did not create as much comment as it would have done a week ago, when the proposition was new to the people. It was a joke, of course, just as the Call's airship was, is and will continue to be. Several of the boys had purchased several balloons and fastening them together sent them up alight with burning cotton waste below to furnish the hot air.

The ship went up all right, but whether any one was deceived thereby is a question, as the watchman at the asylum was not out and the Chinese cook on the steamer was smoking his own hop. The boys had their fun with the proposition, however, and those who saw it enjoyed the possibility of the joke.

Stockton Daily Record, Fri. Nov. 27, p. 1. FIRST APPEARED HERE. / The Airship an Old Friend of Stockton's and Was Taken for a Meteor Weeks Ago. /

The airship conclusions have taken another direction, and instead of reaching out into the future or up into the heavens, are now snatching eagerly from the past. It is recalled that several weeks ago the people of this city were startled by an aerial visitor that was taken for a meteor or comet.

It was said to exhibit double lights. Observers said that it did not travel in the ordinary falling course of motions, but seemed to keep parallel with the earth, and even to rise or climb up further into the heavens.

It is now claimed that this phenomenon was the first appearance of the airship, and that Stockton is entitled to the glory of its first visit.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Stockton, Calif., Evening Mail, p. 1.

THREE STRANGE VISITORS, / Who Possibly Came From the Planet Mars. / Seen on a Country Road by Colonel H.G. Shaw and a Companion—They Boarded the Airship. /

For more than a week the papers all over the coast have been reporting the presence of an alleged airship or flying machine, which many reputable people claim to have seen on several occasions in the heavens at night. Whether or not there really is such a contrivance navigating the air the Mail is unable to satisfactorily determine, but some of the papers have taken the matter seriously and others have been disposed to make light of the statements. A couple of San Francisco attorneys have secured a lot of free advertising by claiming to have clients who have invented and tested successful flying ships, and the newspapers have filled several columns talking about the aerial mystery. /

The Mail makes the above statement merely by way of preface to a most remarkable story which is related by Colonel H.G. Shaw of this city, formerly of the Mail editorial staff. Colonel Shaw is at present engaged in collecting an exhibit for the Stockton Commercial Association to be displayed at the Citrus Fair which will be held in Fresno during the coming month. The gentleman was very reticent about relating the circumstance, as he said he had no idea that it would be believed by anyone, and he was loath to appear before the public as a romancer or as a man who had looked upon shoe-string when it was red. He tells the story as follows:

THREE STRANGE BEINGS.

"Were it not for the fact that I was not alone when I witnessed the strange sight I would never have mentioned it at all. Wednesday afternoon I went out to Lodi and Lockeford in company with Camille Spooner, a young man recently arrived from Nevada. I went to the places mentioned in quest of material to

form an exhibit to represent this county at the Fresno Citrus Fair. We left Lodi on the return trip, I should judge, shortly before 6 o'clock, and we were jogging along quietly when the horse stopped suddenly and gave a snort of terror. Looking up we beheld three strange beings. They resembled humans in many respects, but still they were not like anything I had ever seen. They were nearly or quite seven feet high and very slender. We were both somewhat startled, as you may readily imagine, and the first impulse was to drive on. The horse, however, refused to budge, and when we saw that we were being regarded more with an air of curiosity than anything else, we concluded to get out and investigate. I walked up to where the strange looking persons were and addressed them. I asked where they were from. They seemed not to understand me, but began—well, 'warbling' expresses it better than talking. Their remarks, if such you would call them, were addressed to each other, and sounded like a monotonous chant, inclined to be guttural. I saw it was no use to attempt a conversation, so I satisfied myself with watching and examining them. They seemed to take great interest in ourselves, the horse and buggy, and scrutinized everything very carefully.

WEIGHED LESS THAN AN OUNCE EACH.

"While they were thus engaged I was enabled to inspect them as well. As I have already stated, they were seven feet in height and very slender. I noticed, further, that their hands were quite small and delicate, and that their fingers were without nails. Their feet, however, were nearly twice as long as those of an ordinary man, though they were narrow, and the toes were also long and slender. I noticed, too, that they were able to use their feet and toes much the same as a monkey; in fact, they appeared to have much better use of their feet than their hands. I presently discovered that this was probably a provision of nature. As one of them came close to me I reached out to touch him, and placing my hand under his elbow pressed gently upward, and lo and behold I lifted him from the ground with scarcely an effort. I should judge that the specific gravity of the creature was less than an ounce. It was then that I observed him try to grasp the earth with his toes to prevent my lifting him. You can readily understand that their slight weight made such a provision necessary, or they might be blown away.

"They were without any sort of clothing, but were covered with a natural growth hard to describe; it was not hair, neither was it like feathers, but it was as soft as silk to the touch, and their skin was like velvet. Their faces and heads were without hair, the ears were very small, and the nose had the appearance of polished ivory, while the eyes were large and lustrous. The mouth, however, was small, and it seemed to me that they were without teeth. That and other things led me to believe that they neither ate nor drank, and that life was sustained by some sort of gas. Each of them had swung under the left arm a bag to which was attached a nozzle, and every little while one or the other would place the nozzle on his mouth, at which time I heard a sound of escaping gas. It was much the same sound as is produced by a person blowing up a football.

OF INDESCRIBABLE BEAUTY.

"From the description I give I do not want you to get the idea that these creatures were hideous. In appearance they were markedly the contrary. They were possessed of a strange and indescribable beauty. I can express myself in no other way. They were graceful to a degree, and more divinely beautiful than anything I ever beheld.

"The strangest part of the story is yet to come. It is the lights they carried. Each held in his hand something about the size of a hen's egg. Upon holding them up and partly opening the hand, these substances emitted the most remarkable, intense and penetrating light one can imagine. Notwithstanding its intensity it had no unpleasant effect upon our eyes, and we found we could gaze directly at it. It seemed to me to be some sort of luminous mineral, though they had complete control of it.

"Finally they became tired of examining us and our horse and buggy, and then one of them, at a signal from one who appeared to be the leader, attempted to lift me, probably with the intention of carrying me away. Although I made not the slightest resistance he could not move me, and finally the three of them tried it without the slightest success. They appeared to have no muscular power outside of being able to move their own limbs.

STRANGE AIRSHIP.

"Well, after trying in vain to move either of us they turned in the direction of the Woodbridge canal, near which we were, and as they flashed their lights towards the bridge we beheld a startling sight. There, resting in the air about twenty feet above the water, was an immense airship. It was 150 feet in length at least, though probably not over twenty feet in diameter at the widest part. It was pointed at both ends, and outside of a large rudder there was no visible machinery. The three walked rapidly toward the ship, not as you or I walk, but with a swaying motion, their feet only touching the ground at intervals of about fifteen feet. We followed them as rapidly as possible, and reached the bridge as they were about to embark. With a little spring they rose to the machine, opened a door in the side, and disappeared within. I do not know of what the affair was built, but just before it started I struck it with a rock and it gave no sound. It went

through the air very rapidly and expanded and contracted with a muscular motion, and was soon out of sight.

"I have a theory, which, of course, is only a theory, that those we beheld were inhabitants of Mars, who have been sent to the earth for the purpose of securing one of its inhabitants. I feel safe in asserting that the stories being told by certain San Francisco attorneys are clumsy fakes, and should not be given credence by anyone."

DASHES HERE AND THERE

Some practical jokers sent up a number of hot air balloons last night, as a take-off on the alleged airship. Several people saw the balloons and enjoyed a laugh.

Ukiah Republican-Press, 11/27/1. At Home and Abroad.

According to Conductor James Elwell the airship was distinctly seen Wednesday evening by many residents of Cloverdale.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Visalia Daily Times (Calif.), p. 2.

Out Again Last Night.

"Great Scott! There goes the air ship!" Such was the exclamation of a Visalian last night as he was going home from the postoffice after the train had come in. He pointed to the west and a "Times" representative noticed a light, sure enough. The light was moving in a northerly direction. It was the air ship returning to Oroville, perhaps, after a little journey up the San Joaquin valley.

People in Visalia have been noticing strange lights at night for many days, aye years, but they always called them shooting stars, meteoric glows, etc., before. Now we know they were air ships.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) Winters (Calif.) Express, p. 1.

WE'VE GOT 'EM. / The Airship Has Visited Capay, Winters and Woodland.

Yolo county is right in it—right at the head of the procession, and don't you forget it. Sacramento and Alameda haven't all the glory of seeing the airship, or of knowing who built it.

Last week Dr. Benjamin, the accredited inventor of the wonderful aerial navigator, was in Winters, where he is well known as a dentist and successful traveling salesman. In answer to inquiries as to his success in life, he said he was the inventor of a certain mechanism that would make him rich as well as famous.

The nightly flights of the aerial wonder had not then been discovered, and the doctor's friends knew not to what he alluded. But now it is all clear.

Having a warm friendship for Yolo county, what more natural than that Dr. Benjamin should want to view it from the vantage ground of his ship, from where its fertile fields, thrifty orchards and cozy homes, its mountains, vales, woods and streams are spread out in a grand birds eye view panorama.

And it came. Reputable gentlemen in Woodland saw it one night, but not having heard of the airship, gave little heed to what then seemed a phenomenon of the heavens. Last Monday night it was seen in Capay by a number of people. Tuesday evening about six o'clock, lights were seen moving along the hillsides west of Winters, going with a steady horizontal motion at an altitude about half way to the top of the mountain range. There were three lights, equidistant from each other, the center some feet higher than the front and rear light. They seemed, without a doubt, to be fastened to or a part of a huge body not discernible in the night, and moved steadily, but not very fast to the southward, finally disappearing beyond the lower hills.

John Sackett also saw the thing very distinctly. It was almost directly over his house, four miles west of Winters, and was not over three or four hundred feet high. The lights were visible several minutes, but rapidly disappeared to the southward. The Woodland Mail says Obe Lowe and Ed Archer, who were in Sacramento Wednesday evening, were among many who saw it there.

Lots of people saw the lights from the streets of Winters. Among them were Henry Judy, Sam Hoy, Bert Ireland, Maurice Nathan and others well known here. Richard Day won't own he saw it, nor will J.H. Wright, W.P. Womack, D. Eisner, J. Jeans, and other gentlemen whose modesty prevents them coming forth into the glare of publicity. Just the same we've got 'em, have 'em bad and often, and don't care who knows it.

1896 November 27 (Fri.) (Woodland, CA) Yolo Semi-Weekly Mail, p. 1.

THAT AIRSHIP AGAIN. / Obe Lowe and Ed. Archer Are Positive They Saw It Wednesday Evening. / A Large Number of People in Sacramento Also Witnessed Its Flight. /

Obe Lowe and Ed. Archer, who came over from Sacramento Wednesday night, most positively and emphatically declare that they saw the much-talked-of airship just previous to taking the train for Woodland. They say they have plenty of corroborative evidence, as a large number of Sacramentoans also witnessed the mysterious visitor. It was first noticed in the east and was traveling in a northwesterly direction. It remained visible for several minutes and had the appearance of a long, black object with a strong electric light on one end about the size of an ordinary arc light. It had a rocking motion, and as the light went up the body of the machine could be quite plainly discerned.

When they first related their experience they were subjected to a great deal of good-natured "joshing," but they soon impressed their listeners that they were seriously in earnest.

The Mail called up the Record-Union and learned that a light was seen in the heavens early in the evening in the vicinity of Perkins stations, and seemed to be traveling in the direction of Oak Park. A bright light was also seen Wednesday morning by some railroad workmen. Thus far the only thing visible has been the light. The majority of the people of the capital city are of the opinion that the secret of the mystery is an electrical or meteorical disturbance of some kind.

The Bulletin of last evening stated that the inventor had discharged Attorney Collins and secured the services of ex-Attorney General W. H. H. Hart. The latter admitted as much in an interview. [also in The Mail of Woodland, 11/26/1; see follow-up 11/28/2.]

Dr. Benjamin. /

Attorney Collins, who has gained a great deal of notoriety in connection with the mysterious airship, in an interview with the Examiner reporter, said: "This Dr. Benjamin referred to is a dentist. He is a client of mine and an old friend, and I am trying to help him get out a patent on a new sort of gold crown for teeth. He has been experimenting for some time and calls upon me frequently. He has nothing whatever to do with the airship project." Up to two months ago Dr. E. H. Benjamin was employed in the piano department of Sherman, Clay & Co. He left there to practice his profession, dentistry, and set up an office in the house occupied by Dr. S. W. Dennis and his son at 113 Powell street. While there he has been engaged upon several inventions, all in the line of dentistry so far as known. He has been rooming at 633 Ellis street, but left there yesterday. Evidently he went to Oroville, for a telegram from that town to the Examiner last evening says he laughed at the suggestion that he knows anything about any airship and declares the whole story of his connection with it [sic].

Cranks Galore. /

Attorney Collins, who has gained a great deal of notoriety in connection with a mysterious airship, in an interview with a Bulletin reporter said:

"Oh, I get lots of funny letters and lots of funny people, and I think they are likely to get worse. One man wants space for a peanut stand on the airship; another for a barber shop. Another swears that the airship must be a verity because the Mayor saw it, and the Mayor belongs to the same party as [he]. This same man has an airship of his own that he is anxious to show to [me] for me to compare with the one he insists I have seen.

"Ah! here is a letter from a young lady, but she won't let me give her name. She sends a stamp for reply. She wants me to secure her the exquisite pleasure of a first trip on my friend's airship. She says she does not doubt my word. She is adventurous in spirit, she informs me; in fact there are no bounds to her love of adventure. She believes in scientific inventions, too; in fact she is what might be called an enthusiast." Here Mr. Collins laughed again. He laughs all the time and wonders if the joke will ever end.

Was It the Airship? /

Woodland people are getting the airship craze or something else. It will be remembered that about three weeks ago a strange phenomenon appeared in the sky early in the evening, which at the time was described as a meteor, with three distinct parts or three different meteors traveling together. A great many people in this city saw it and it was talked about quite extensively at the time, but since then has been forgotten until the present agitation has arisen. It is now thought to be this airship which has caused so much general discussion. There certainly seems to be something in it, as the movement of the lights were slow and even and appeared to rise and fall at certain times. [also in Mail of Woodland 11/25/1.]

Yreka Journal, 11/27, 3. The Air Ship Mystery.

Reports have appeared in nearly every issue of the San Francisco papers for the past week regarding an air ship which people in various towns claim to have seen. While such a ship is possibly in existence, as it is a well known fact that many have been working to this end for years past, still it seems that if there is any truth in these stories which first came from Sacramento, something more definite regarding it could be learned. The conflicting articles which have appeared in the San Francisco papers are enough to condemn the story as a fake. It may be possible that an air ship is floating around, but most people are rather skeptical, and like the story of "Three Black Crows" believe the man who released a sand hill crane with a Japanese lantern attached to its leg, is responsible for all these stories about an air ship.

(Yuba City) Sutter County Farmer, Fri. Nov. 27, p.6. Nicolaus News.

It is said that some have seen the airship that is talked of so much. The captain was going to stop here for some refreshments but found that there were none and hurried on toward Marysville. Some think that is just newspaper talk while others think that nothing is impossible to American ingenuity.

NOVEMBER 28

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Weekly Antioch (Calif.) Ledger, p. 3.

A Strange Phantom.

There is a whole lot of hurrah in Sacramento and San Francisco about an air ship. A number of serious witnesses, in fact from San Diego to Siskiyou, and from the sea to the Sierras have rushed into print, in the city papers, declaring that they have seen a great sight and heard strange sounds in the midnight heavens. The great mystery was seen in Antioch by several parties. Col. Byrnes is willing to testify before a proper tribunal that on Monday evening, the 23d, when the rain was coming down in torrents, at thirteen minutes past nine o'clock, he saw the air ship pass over Antioch. He says the airy vagrant hovered over the residence of John Chase for a few moments, threw out a signal for Frank Wills and then passed on. Pat Maguire says that just as the thing passed over Antioch, or rather, when it halted, that a terrible gust of wind descended upon the town. Henry Dahnken says there is no doubt an air ship passed over Antioch at the time indicated by Col. Byrnes, and that it stopped and supplied wind where it was most needed. But strange to relate, both John Chase and Frank Wills declare that they did not see the wonderful air ship at all.

Arcata Union , 11/28/2.

Superstitious people and religious cranks are just now giving themselves much concern about a meteor, or some light in the air, that appeared one evening not long ago in the vicinity of Sacramento city. The strangest and most absurd stories have grown out of the appearance of this passing light, and it was not an evidence the world will come to an end within a week or two, the faith of some religious prophets will be much shaken.

p.3. (Snowy owls have arrive in considerable number in the area). Their appearance is as wonderful as the airship, and much more reliable.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Placer Herald (Auburn, Calif.) (wkly) , p. 5.

The Flying Machine.

The airship craze has struck Auburn and our people haven't got 'em either. Several citizens who have never been known to handle the truth at all carelessly assert that they discovered a brilliantly lighted barrel shaped object passing over town Wednesday night. It was "away up in the sky" as they put it, traveled very rapidly and had a sinuous motion up and down. While this is the time of year for the delicious "Tom and Jerry," it does not necessarily follow that these gentlemen had been indulging in that luxury, but those who are disposed to be skeptical say that the phenomenon of the skies originated in Auburn, and they don't propose to be faked. /

Alta and Towle. /

There is great excitement here over the air ship. It would be a very good plan for H. Schaw to make a machine and pursue the disturber through space. It would be a most interesting scene and he might make

a good thing at it.

p. 6. The foolkiller is getting the drop on a great many aeronauts this year.

Contra Costa Gazette, Sat. Nov. 28, p. 3. HAS THE AIR SHIP BEEN CONCEALED IN THIS COUNTY?

Has the air ship that has been attracting so much attention in Sacramento, East Oakland and other points been in hiding in Contra Costa county? The following from Thursday's Call indicates that it may have been:

"A night watchman at North Berkeley says that he saw the light Tuesday night distinctly, and watched it while it traveled from San Pablo and crossed over until it was back of the high hills of Berkeley. This may give some indefinite sort of a clew concerning the place where the alleged airship may be in hiding during the day, so this man thought."

Contra Costa Gazette, Sat. Nov. 28, p. 2b.

The recent reports from Sacramento and other points that an air ship with strange lights had been seen at night set our local jokers at work sending up balloons in the evening this week, and there has been considerable fun over the matter, but no one has been deceived by the joke. 21,2. Mastodons in Alaska.

Daily Colusa Sun, 11/28, p. 3. Who saw the airship last night?

(Downieville) Mountain Messenger, 11/28. Considerable excitement has been created down below by a supposed airship that is said to have been seen floating over Sacramento and Oakland. We have heard of no one claiming that they have seen the monster come up over the Slug Canyon hill yet, from which we would infer that nobody here has "got 'em."

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Daily Humboldt Standard (Eureka, Calif.), p.2.

THE AIR SHIP.

Either an air-ship has been invented or the people of the interior of the state have gone daft. The Chronicle and Call of the 25th contain whole pages of matter devoted to the strange appearances in the heavens at different points in the state. No sooner had the news gone forth that the Sacramento people had seen an air-ship flying over their city than a number of other towns and cities had the same experience. Up and down the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys the air-ship flew, first hovering over Red Bluff then over Tulare. Again it was seen over San Jose and Oakland flying at the rate of a hundred miles an hour. Some superstitious people think it a supernatural visitor, warning the people "to flee from the wrath to come;" others think it a hoax—a mere chimera of the brain—while others think that toy balloons have been sent up by parties who wish to play a joke on the people. There is no doubt that the Examiner, which is "monarch of the fakirs," has sent up one or more balloons, which credulous people have taken for air-ships; but there is as little doubt in the minds of many people that the question of aerial navigation has been solved and that some inventive genius has constructed a real flying machine. The newly discovered methods for the application of electricity as a motor power for machinery, and the manufacture of aluminum, a metal almost as light as the oil silk of which balloons are made, furnish the inventive genius with material and power to construct and navigate the air-ship. Whether the invention has been made to work to perfection or not, the time is not distant when a trip from San Francisco to New York will be made in an air-ship at the rate of 100 miles or more per hour. Many of those who read this will live to see it, and some of them will, no doubt, take such a ride.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Daily Humboldt Times (Eureka, Calif.), p. 4.

IS THE MYSTERY SOLVED? / Has the Noted Air-Ship Paid a Visit to Our City. / STORY OF AN INTERESTED PARTY. / One of Eureka's Residents Claims to be on the Inside—Can It be True? /

The following letter was received at this office on the 25th instant, but the rule of rejecting all unsigned manuscripts forced it to the waste basket. The deep interest taken in the doings of the mysterious air-ship, and particularly the interest Eureka appears to possess in it, leads to a suspension of the rule. Of course the Times cannot vouch for the truth of what follows, but it certainly reads like the honest statement which it purports to be, and we give it as such. It is left to the reader to fix upon the Eureka who is directly interested in this modern marvel. Here is the letter verbatim:
Eureka, Nov. 25th, 1896.

EDITOR TIMES:—An article in your paper this morning is my excuse for this writing. Your correspondent, who signs himself (or herself) "E H H," seems to have written for the purpose of showing your readers that recent newspaper reports, from various cities in this State, of an air-ship are without foundation. Probably he (or she) drew his (or her) conclusions from the fact that such machines have not heretofore had a place in our system of locomotion. Probably the same declarations were made by the same person twenty-five, or even twenty years ago regarding the then unsolved problems of electricity as we understand them today. But it is not my purpose to find fault with the writer's reasoning. I wish simply to throw a light on the absorbing topic, the air-ship; for that it is [an] air-ship which has been seen in operation by so many people I shall briefly demonstrate.

Everyone who reads knows that the scientific and mechanical world is alive with airships theories; that France, England and Germany are vieing with the United States in bringing into actual use this long-believed-in vehicle of the air; that men of brains and of wealth every where are struggling for first achievements in this new field of invention. In this the men of California are up with their fellows—indeed, I may say, a step or two in advance, for while others are still planning and perfecting, we have actually solved the problem.

Some months ago a small number of men were brought together (by invitation) in a quiet business office in San Francisco "to examine a certain mechanical contrivance, with the view to promoting its manufacture if found to be feasible"—very much in the same manner as any new enterprise is "worked." (Incidentally I may say that wealth had nothing to do with my becoming interested in this enterprise, but that certain facts in my possession, and certain experiences of a kind needed, prompted the invitation which I received.)

It is not necessary now to go into the details of the first or subsequent meetings. A few declined to venture, but the company was formed, and the work of construction, which had been carried on to considerable extent by the two men whose idea it was proposed to work out, was pushed forward as rapidly as possible. During the conference stage many things were discussed which it was thought might have a bearing on the outcome. At the first meeting it was decided that the best interests of all concerned would lie in absolute secrecy—so many new and valuable ideas and things as would necessarily enter into a successful air-ship could not be safely trusted to any who might choose to examine or investigate. The wisdom of the first step, which has been more and more apparent as the work progressed, is demonstrated in the fact that the "ship" was launched and made many successful voyages even before the world at large knew that such an undertaking was really underway.

When the organization was effected and in working order it was thought a machine, fully equipped, could be launched by mid-summer at furthest; but many unexpected hinderances had to be met, chief of which was the lighting apparatus, which, for a time, seemed to defy all skill and perseverance. The flight of the ship, the steering, the landing were all tested, except at great elevations, months before the lighting arrangements were completed. This light is described (for I have not seen it except as stated later on) as a wonderful piece of mechanism. The "ship" itself is simple, at least comparatively so. But I am not the historian, and shall not enter into details. That will be done later on, probably in one of the scientific magazines of the day. The pledge of secrecy has not been removed. But so much has been accomplished, and so many people have seen and marveled at the car, or "ship," as it glides solemnly above them—and moreover such wild speculations are indulged in by the credulous and incredulous alike, that I feel justified in thus placing the matter properly before the people, who have a right, at least, to prepare themselves for the many and radical changes soon to come.

The following extract from a letter received from one in charge of the company's affairs at the "depot" is pertinent here:

* * * * * Works completely. Your suggestion of three coils at the opening makes it perfect, when at 6073 feet elevation yesterday, the after valve stuck, and for a minute thought we should bring up at the moon, but the other coil had the reacting effect you said, and all went well. Went to head of valley, keeping well up until evening, and back to depot by zig-zag course. Used lights with good effect, could see towns and even man far below; 24 hours without sleep. Keep look out. If nothing goes wrong, will come your way 15th or 20th. * * *"

I confess a certain amount of excitement on reading the letter from which the above is extracted, for it gives many interesting details of the "ship" and of the voyages already made, but more especially because of the promised visitation from this modern wonder. I felt that I must go out and tell the glad news to friends and neighbors, but the pledge to secrecy held me back. So I could only wait and watch. It was a long vigil, for I could not rest until "the 15th or 20th." Would it come by day or night? The uncertainty kept me constantly on the alert. But it came. And none too soon for my nerves. On the evening of Nov. 17th, soon after six o'clock, a small white light came out of the cloud and drift[ed] away to the south-southeast. It wavered and paled, and shone again brighter than before—it certainly grew larger, and

then disappeared. I was in a feverish state, and must soon have made some outward demonstration, but suddenly a great white light flashed out from the heavens, almost within hailing distance as it seemed, and moved away toward the west, and finally passed out over the ocean and was lost to my sight.

The airship? Who can for one moment doubt it! And the great white light, in whose perfection I had been instrumental, but whose brilliancy I had not seen before. Well, I did not sleep that night. The dream was realized and I could afford to dissipate—rather, I could not avoid that kind of dissipation. On the evening of the 20th the mysterious visitor came again, but, though I did not expect it, I was not prostrated this time. I did not see the ship, only the light, whose powerful rays seemed to eclipse the dark mass I knew to be above it. Neither did I hear voices or [] from the direction of the passing ship. I am not aware that the ship or its light was seen by any of the people of Eureka, but I know it passed over the city and it will come again.

I withhold my name under the bond of secrecy until the history of the enterprise is made public. If the above, in the interest of truth and progress, would be of interest to young readers, give it to them. If not reject it without fear of offending.

(Eureka, Calif.) Western Watchman, Nov. 28 (Sat.), p. 3. That Mysterious March. /

The Watchman was the only paper in the county that reported the mysterious light seen on Thursday evening of last week, slowly descending out near the entrance, and now, if San Francisco dailies are to be taken in evidence, air ships are flying all round that city after night. But the light seen near the entrance from South Park is certainly no fake. The light has appeared on three evenings since Thursday of last week. Its course and action appears to be about the same each evening. All agree in saying that the light appears to be controlled in its movements. Watch for it from half past six to quarter past seven.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Folsom, Calif., Weekly Telegraph, p.2.

A Fake.

The airship story is rapidly going to pieces. The phenomenon of the heavens that "cleaves the air with pinions like a huge condor" has lost its chief support. The man who made it has melted away, and those who saw it are lying low. Mr. George D. Collins, attorney-at-law, who, according to the Call's story, knew the Oroville millionaire who invented and engineered the wondrous air vessel that was seen as a great light in the heavens now proclaims this marvelous story a plain ordinary fake. When interviewed he said: "Oh, I wonder what the papers are all doing me up in this ridiculous fashion for?" "Am I the airship Mr. Collins? Well I don't know. I had a gang of reporters waiting on my front steps till four o'clock that morning to see me ascend to the stars or somewhere else, but I didn't ascend, not a bit of it. I never saw the airship and I don't know anything about it. It is true that a man of standing in the community came to me, asking to get out a patent on an air machine."

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Weekly Galt (Calif.) Gazette, p. 3.

Last Thursday evening about half past 7 the flying machine passed over Arno district. It had two lights and was seen by several people. Some assert they definitely heard voices.

(Fresno Republican) It seems impossible...magnificent in its execution.
(Placerville) Mountain Democrat, 11/28/5. Did you see that airship?
Gilroy Advocate, 4/28/5.

Have you seen the airship? Look up, it is good practice, many have been looking down long enough. The aerial wonder has been seen at San Jose and may take a night trip down this way. (97 not on roll)
Los Angeles Record 11/28/2. Hart.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Ione Valley (CA) Echo, p. 3.

HAVE YOU SEEN IT WANDERING IN SPACE / THAT AIRSHIP WHICH HAS SET THE STATE TO TALKING / 'T WAS MADE IN AMADOR NOT IN FRANCE / A Full Account and Description of the First Successful Airship as Detailed to "The Echo" Representative Recently.

Just now the papers are full of accounts of a wonderful flying machine which is causing great

excitement all over the state. It has been seen by many people, but only at night, when its lights gleam out brightly and catch the eye of any who may be looking skyward or whose range of vision would take in the sky at the time this curious thing passes athwart the starlit domain. But none of those who saw the strange phenomenon know anything of its shape or workings except that it has two bright lights—one white and the other red. Where it was built and by whom has also been a mystery.

But on both of these points The Echo now has full information and also as to its size, shape, workings and the idea which led to its construction. The story was told to the editor of this paper by parties who are personal friends of the builder and who were in the cabin where it was built much of the time during its construction, but being bound by secrecy, they did not say anything about it until after the airship was launched.

In the first place this sky scraper was built and is now being operated by Felix Jacques Boichegrain, a Frenchman who has been prospecting in the hills of this part of the state for many years and who is well known in the mining regions of Butte, Plumas, Yuba, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Placer and Nevada counties. Beside being a prospector Boichegrain is a first class mechanical engineer and in early life was a sailor, having been at one time a lieutenant in the French navy.

But fortune had not worn any of her sweet smiles for the Frenchman during the past few years, and as the years had whitened his hair and dimmed his eyes he longed for the sight of his boyhood home in sunny France. He had brooded over his condition so long that he had become a monomaniac on the subject of returning to France to spend the remainder of his days, but he had no money to pay his fare across the continent and the ocean, and so he brooded more and more over the matter.

One day last winter as Boichegrain and a friend were returning from a visit to Jackson to their cabin in a ravine on the east of the Morrow grade, just as they reached the head of the grade they beheld a spectacle which was beautiful and fanciful in the extreme. The heavy clouds hung over Ione valley; the rain falling in torrents, but from a rent in the clouds back toward Jackson the sun shone through and illuminated one of those rain clouds revealing to the gaze of the beholders a picture of a huge black galleon with lugger sails outspread and a tail which looked like the rudder of a ship. At sight of this picture Boichegrain was strangely agitated and often on the way home muttered to himself in his mother tongue something his companion did not understand.

Soon after this Boichegrain purchased a quantity of heavy canvas and gum cloth with which he proceeded to build a huge balloon on the lines of the wonderful phenomenon which he had seen in the clouds that winter day. The balloon was thirty-two feet in height and twenty feet in diameter at its greatest expanse. Below this was swung a car which was sixteen feet in length, five and one-half feet beam and running to a point forward and aft. This car was also constructed of light materials and fastened to the balloon by strong insulated wires that were passed over the top of the balloon frame, being attached firmly to the frame at the top and sides.

The cage was also well secured with insulated wire and had a hold two feet deep and a deck of light sugar pine, it being four feet and six inches from the deck to the rail. The apparatus for manipulating the sails, steering gear and propeller was also located in the car. The sails were sprung on a mast which passed through the balloon at its greatest expanse, extending twelve feet on each side. The rudder is attached to the stern of the boatlike cage and is also made of light material.

Fearing that he might meet adverse winds on his journey to "la belle France" Boichegrain pondered long on what manner of propeller he should have, his choice being extremely limited on account of his poverty. He found a small steam drum at one of the mines and this he selected as the boiler which was to furnish the power to propel the aerial ship when the winds blew from the wrong quarter. Into this drum he drilled a couple of holes and inserted in them pieces of half-inch pipe two feet long, having stop cocks near the outer end.

In the forward end of the car was the propeller. A piece of two inch iron pipe about twenty feet long with three journals and bearings was the shaft of the engine. On the inner end of this was a wheel like a water wheel which was directly over the boiler, the half-inch steam pipes being a foot on either side of the perpendicular line from center to circumference. On the outer end of this pipe shaft was the propeller, which is the counterpart of the wheel of a turbine wind engine, with the exception that it could be shut up when not in use, thus obviating the resistance of the propeller when not necessary for the propulsion of the craft. In case of adverse winds the propeller wheel was to be opened, the stop cock on one of the steam pipes turned, as the craft went forward or back, the escaping steam causing the power head on the propeller shaft to revolve as rapidly as required, the steam being generated by two naphtha blower jets.

In the car was also situated the instrument for supplying hydrogen gas to the balloon. This gas was to be generated by having small streams of sulphuric acid play upon zinc plates which were submerged in water, the generating batteries being hermetically sealed in large glass bulbs except at the top, where were attached the hose conveying the hydrogen gas to the body of the balloon, alternating the bulbs and

renewing the zincs when any signs of weakness appeared in the batteries.

The craft was also provided with a powerful search light consisting of a large glass bulb containing a large carbon against the point of which a jet of gas was turned from the balloon and producing a very white and brilliant light. Another light was provided for the rear of the car which consisted simply of a flint glass bulb open at one end to admit the air and into which was turned a jet of hydrogen gas, producing a brilliant red light as the escaping gas came in contact with the air.

When he had completed his airship Boichegrain got into the car and started the batteries which generated the gas and prepared to test the flying qualities of his creation, his friends standing by and guying him for wasting so much time and expense on such a contrivance and telling him that he was a fool to try to be a bird and the other things men usually say about flying machines.

But the balloon was distending with gas and suddenly there was a snapping of the ropes which held the airship captive and with a bound as the guys parted the lugger rigged balloon shot up into the air and as she cleared the treetops a demoniacal laugh and cry of "*Ce monde est plein de fons,*" and "*Vive la France!*" were wafted back to those on terra firma. Other exclamations were made by Boichegrain but his words could not be distinguished. When up about five hundred feet the sails were spread, the lights forward and aft shone out with great brilliancy and the aerial wanderer started with the speed of the wind on its journey, passing nearly over the city of Sacramento.

It was on Tuesday, the 17th inst., that Boichegrain began his flight and as he has not returned and the airship was not provisioned for a long cruise his friends fear he has become entirely demented and will perish. Boichegrain's fate will probably never be known until the remains of his flying machine are found where she falls to earth when the gas in the balloon gives out.

Los Angeles Record, 11/28/2. That Air-Ship (W.H.H. Hart speaks about it.)

1896 November 28 (Sat. eve.) Nevada City (Calif.) Daily Transcript, p.3.

The Airship at Grass Valley.

Three residents of Grass Valley are confident that they saw the airship hovering over that town a few nights ago. They said they could distinguish its shape and see the lights. Thus far the strange craft has not been seen at Nevada City. There must be a difference in the glasses used by the people of each town.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Oakland (Calif.) Tribune, p. .

The Airship Story. /

There ought to be, at least, a grain of truth in the stories related by so many persons about an airship that has been sailing overhead. The story originated in Sacramento. It was a wild, incoherent account of something that had been seen by the least credible witnesses that could be found. There is no story so improbable that it will not find many concurrent witnesses and believers.

If some half dozen persons would publish an account of having seen a church edifice on a given night, sailing through the atmosphere, that story would be confirmed by a number of persons who had witnessed the same phenomenon. The witnesses would increase until so many had testified that it might become more than an open question of veracity. How could so many persons be deceived? In some cases there is an optical illusion. The image, or thing which the mind has formed, is described with many particulars.

The airship is a case in point. A light has been seen in the heavens. There might have been some electrical phenomena. A lot of mischievous boys could send up any number of illuminated toy balloons in the night. These would sail in one direction until caught by a counter current, and then sail in another direction. Five or six ingenious boys could create all the phenomena that have thus far been witnessed.

The air ship, it will be observed, only sails away in the night. It carries lights of course. Men can be heard talking. Once get the airship fairly in the heavens, and all the other circumstantial evidence can be quickly supplied. The mysterious man can be found who has been working at the air ship problem for years. There is just now a dearth of stirring news. What wonder that some of the newspapers have space for two columns about ships that sail in the heavens with the gig lamps burning brightly!

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Redwood City, Calif., Times-Gazette, p. 3g.

Henry Smith and F. Becker are sincere believers in the airship so minutely described by Attorney Collins of San Francisco, and which is now agitating the minds of scientists. Smith and Becker were out hunting last Sunday night on the marshes back of Flood's pond. Shortly after 10 o'clock their attention was drawn to a brilliant light far up in the sky. Both watched it in wondrous amazement until it passed from view. Their description of the supposed airship agrees precisely with that given by those who saw it as it passed over Sacramento. A large headlight threw out bright rays, above which could be seen a sombre object, cigar-shaped, with ponderous wings. The airship was going at a terrific rate of speed in a southerly direction and took about ten minutes to pass out of sight. Smith and Becker related what they had seen only to a few friends. They are modest young men and have no desire to gain notoriety by their names and photographs appearing in the San Francisco dailies. Incidentally, it might be remarked that both are total abstainers, so that no discredit can be placed upon the story from that source and what they say must be taken as gospel truth.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Sacramento Bee, p. 1 [?].

STILL THEY COME. / The Air Ship Said to Have Voyaged from Near Oak Park to Arno.

N.A. Bunce, of the Louisiana Tract, called at the Bee office this morning to declare that he had positively seen the air ship last evening. He said that it was about three miles from him at the time and was not more than 100 feet in the air. He declares it had one red and one white light and that he distinctly saw it flapping its wings.

A telegraph message was received by The Bee from Edward McGuirk at Arno to the effect that he, too, saw the air ship last evening and more than that he heard voices coming from it.

Next!

Nov. 28 p. 1. The Air Ship Heard From—The crew of the air ship has just sent a telephone to the Capitola Tamale Parlors...to prepare the turkey tamales for their refreshment, public invited.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Sacramento Evening Bee, p. 2.

SHIP AT OTHER PLACES. / Some Suggest Our Whisky. Some Take It Seriously. / SAW THE LIGHT; BUT NOT THE FLAPPING WINGS. / In One Town the People Get Mad When You Mention It—Fresno Envious of the Quality of Our Beverage—The Story Spreads Beyond the State's Border. / (From the San Bernardino Sun.)

It seems to be established beyond doubt that a strange visitor of some sort is just now disturbing that part of the heavens which extends over San Francisco and Sacramento and the intervening territory, and even the scoffers at the news as first stated have been forced to admit that the mass of testimony is so great as to put the question of its existence beyond doubt. /

Ship Remains to Be Seen, Too. / (From the Grass Valley Tidings.)

Whether the story of the air ship passing over Sacramento was a fake or not remains to be seen. But if it was not it has been the cause of bringing to light many liars who have hitherto been veiled in obscurity, and who have borne good reputations for veracity. /

Light? Yes; Ship? No! / (From the Oakland Times.)

The air ship passed over Oakland last evening at 7 o'clock. Plenty of people saw the [] gracefully with the wind, which was from the west. It was probably a thousand feet high, and vanished toward the foothills. /

That Danger Has Passed! / (From the San Jose News.)

It is said that there are several men in San Jose who have seen the flying machine, who will not admit it, fearing they may be regarded as eligible candidates for the Keeley cure. /

Thinks It a Reportorial Conspiracy. / (From the Stockton Independent.)

It was not the probability that an air ship could be made to travel as the Sacramento story related that was doubted. It was the way the story was written that caused doubts of its correctness. Private information from Sacramento says it was a "sell" concocted by the other reporters to deceive the Call correspondent who made the most of it. /

Had Never Heard of Stockton / (From the Stockton Record.)

Since the alleged embodiment of one of Jules Verne's wildest dreams shot across the sky above Sacramento last week, it has been a very easy thing to see an air ship darting through space in the nocturnal watches, and everyone who gives testimony as to its reality is booked as "a reputable citizen."

People have even gone so far as to say that the man-made aerolites are being manufactured now and that Stockton has ordered three. If that is the case one of them passed over the city last night, but the engineer evidently did not recognize the place and went on down the valley. Stockton has some people who are known to possess as much veracity as the inhabitants of the Capital City, and they say they saw the air ship last night. /

Must be a Hoax Now. / (From the Carson Appeal.)

The Bee's account of the big air ship at first regarded as a hoax is now being written up in all the Bay papers. /

If a Fake, a Good One. / (From the Fresno Republican.)

That air ship which twice has swooped down upon the citizens of Sacramento—causing The Bee to inquire in largest headline, "Have We Got 'Em Again?"—and which has furtively showed itself to a select number of San Franciscans and Oaklanders, may be a fake, but it bears a more than ordinary amount of the fingermarks of truth for a story of that character. If it is a fake, it will take its place among notorious and successful ones. If it is not, a new world opens before mankind. /

Saw Venus, Most Likely. / (From the Alameda Encinal [?].)

Now, in Alameda, last night it was different. Knots of people stood on the streets gazing at a bright light in the east, but could not perceive even the faintest outline of an air ship. The light was too high up for either an electric light or a railroad signal, and opinion was divided as to whether or not it was a star. While we watched the object it remained fixed in one position. /

Getting Mad About It. / (From the Dixon Tribune.)

A few steps further and the party discovered to their utter chagrin and discomfiture that an incandescent street lamp with the bracket that supported it, aided by the falling rain and a background of clouds was responsible for one of the strangest optical delusions that they had ever experienced.. The very mention of an air ship is now enough to arouse the ire of a number of our worthy citizens. /

Our Fame Spreads. / (From the Deseret Evening News, Salt Lake.)

The supposedly perfect air ship of California, to which considerable attention was given in the press dispatches of Sunday and Monday, and of which first mention was made in the News last week, continues to attract much notice. One reason of this is the mysterious night voyages which its builder is said to be making to the astonishment of very many Californians, who declare they see the strange craft, brilliantly illuminated, moving about each evening. Salt Lake City also has one eye-witness to the strange things that have been going on— Mr. Hardman, of an eastern merchants' protective agency in this city. He has been to San Francisco, and his account does not differ from that told in the News on Saturday evening. /

Our Whiskey Complimented. / (From the Fresno Republican.)

The Stockton Mail says that air ships "will be a reality yet." Order your drinks from Sacramento, neighbor, and see if it is not a reality now. /

El Dorado Offers a Solution. / (From the Placerville Republican.)

As the stern was turned toward the Placerville Observatory, something was seen stringing out into the air behind the ship. Professor Bland turned a powerful night glass upon it and as the ship disappeared he discovered that the object was a dead newspaper reporter hanging with a rope around his neck and branded LIAR in big letters across the seat of his pants.

We know how it is, boys, since the campaign is over and rainy weather has set in it is decidedly hard to get news. We feel for you. /

Either Way. / (From the Stockton Independent.)

Air ships are becoming as plentiful in these dull and dreamy nights as fireflies are in June in some countries. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that ornamental but rather inartistic romancers are becoming more numerous. /

A Supersensitive Reporter. / (From the Red Bluff Sentinel.)

It is very annoying to the average newsgatherer to get track of a good sized item and not be able to run it down, and as the foregoing is altogether second hand we hope our readers will "take it for what 'tis worth" with the understanding that the veracity of the writer thereof is not at stake. While we are perfectly willing to swear by what the gentleman said concerning this aerial what-is-it, we don't ask everybody else to do so. /

p.9: Local Notes. /

It is a singular thing that nobody has offered a sane explanation for the light in the sky which has developed so many liars in quarters where their existence was not dreamed. For that a whole lot of people are lying about what they heard and saw there can be no question. But there are hundreds of reasonably truthful citizens of this town who did see this light and did see it move overhead, and did see it disappear. And what they saw was not the evening star, which at present is very luminous and large. This much it is safe enough to admit. The rest of the story about flapping wings and lights of changing hue should be

taken with general allowance. N.A. Bunce, of the Louisiana Tract, declares that he saw all this, and Mr. Bunce is a trustworthy man, not only that, but his wife and daughter saw what he did. The only comment which can be made with reference to their version is that they must be mistaken. But why doesn't somebody tell us what it is that these people and hundreds of others did see?

1896 November 28 (Sat.) (San Andreas, Calif.) Calaveras Prospector, p.2.

THE AIR SHIP. /

There has been considerable excitement throughout the State during the week over the appearance of a strange object in the heavens above Sacramento and the cities about San Francisco bay. The daily papers have been filled with accounts of the mysterious visitor, and many speculations as to its real character have been indulged in. While the manner in which the subject has been treated gives to it somewhat the appearance of a huge fake of some kind, still there is a semblance of truth in it all.

There can be little doubt but that brilliant lights have been seen in the heavens, at different times, by many different parties. The names are given of reliable men who have seen the lights and watched their movements. Even in San Andreas there are parties whose word cannot be doubted, who say they saw the light in the heavens the same night they were first seen at Sacramento.

Aside from the lights that were evidently seen, the rest seems to be a mere matter of conjecture and newspaper rivalry. No one has seen any ship so as to describe it and no one knows, or if they know, will tell the name of the inventor or the nature of the invention. The Call was the first paper to endeavor to make a sensation out of the mysterious lights, and it has devoted several columns daily to sustaining its claim to a wonderful discovery. But even the Call tries to prove too much, and the most of its published interviews really amount to nothing. It admits too much corroborative evidence. After asserting that the invention originated at Oroville, and proving it to its own satisfaction, it admits another witness to prove the existence of the marvel, who swears he ran across the builders in the wilds of Tamalpais while out hunting deer.

It is very evident if an air ship has been invented that is practicable, and it has really been sailing about in the air for a week or so, the inventor has so far managed to keep his secret well, and that the city papers know but little about it. Why it should be such a secret does not become so apparent. In these modern days of wonderful inventions and progress in electrical and mechanical construction, no one will pretend to doubt the possibility or probability of such an invention as an air ship. It is simply the foolish method that is employed that causes the general public to look upon the whole thing as a hoax. If it has not already been accomplished we believe that aerial navigation is one of the things that is bound to come. If it does come it will quickly put an end to war as now conducted. No city or fortification would be strong enough to resist a few dynamite bombs dropped from above the clouds into its midst. The mind is almost appalled at the possibilities opened up by such an invention. Such great revolutions are not usually heralded by such childish performances as have characterized the movements of these mysterious lights. The unexpected may have happened, however.

Nov. 28, 1. THE FLYING MACHINE AND THE PERPETUAL MOTION MACHINE. / Two Great Inventions of the Age Just Perfected.

How strange it is that two of the greatest (?) inventions of the age have just been perfected and announced during the space of a week or two. There are the Call's flying machine and the Prospect's Perpetual Motion machine. What a grand era have we reached when we can transport our freight from the valley without the curse of muddy roads, and what a blessing when we can soar over a mountain top with the buoyancy of a bird. What a fine thing for our friend and neighbor, H.Q. Harwood, to get a job on this aerial conveyance. It is sure, though, that Dad will take some time in breaking himself from habitually saying, "O, Lord! Gee Doc. Git in there, you angels," etc. Then the Perpetual Motion machine will be heard on mountain sides, running mills and propelling mining hoists, stopping for naught until the brake is put on the combinations. The flying machine will convey the machinery and the motion machine will do the rest. Flying machines of the size for one man will be next in order, and then we can dart around like a bat. Grass and brush will grow to density in the public highways and the time will have come for man to chase eagles and hawks from place to place in merry glee. [] rocky crevices, secluded trees and isolated woods will be sought for the [] bird to build its nests and rear its young.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 4.

FIGHTING IN THE AIR. /

The Examiner gently chides The Bulletin for having taken the proposition to destroy Havana by means of an airship seriously. The scheme, our contemporary admits to be rather blood-curdling, but is considered interesting from a romantic point of view. It is not supposed that military authorities have been greatly disturbed by menace of the airship. In fact, General Weyler is more intent upon defending Havana from the insurgent forces than from the California General who derives his title from a civil office. But there are lots of people in the world who do not weigh either men or propositions scientifically. They take a man seriously if he takes himself seriously. It is not likely that California has heard the last of this dynamite scheme. It will be dilated upon as illustrating the characteristics of our people. The romance of the proposition will be visible indistinctly, if at all, through the smoke of a series of dynamite explosions.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 1.

IT FLITTED OVER SAN JOSE. / Aerial Lights Cross the Vision of Prominent Residents. / THEIR APPEARANCE MOST VIVIDLY DESCRIBED. / General Hart Takes Some of His Professional Friends Into His Confidence. / ATTACHES A BALLOON TO THE WARSHIP OF THE AIR. / The Public May Be Given an Aerial View of the Great Mystery of the Day at a Prearranged Time and Place. /

Interest in the great aerial mystery continues without sign of abatement. It still furnishes the main theme of discourse in all circles. Many are ready to make oath and stake all their earthly possessions that a veritable flying-ship has been hovering above the earth in this vicinity, while the scoffers are also in evidence, equally vociferous and insistent.

As yet, however, nothing has transpired that can be accepted as either positive proof or disproof of the existence of an aerial voyager, operated and controlled by human inventive genius.

San Jose has furnished one of the most interesting reports of the mysterious aerial lights that have yet been published. The strange moving illumination was seen there by a number of men of the highest standing in the community, and the description of the phenomenon by them is both vivid and clear.

General Hart now states that the inventor is a cousin of the electrician of General Antonio Maceo, commander of the patriot forces in Cuba. He also contributes much additional information relative to the reported ship of the air and has promised to intercede with the inventor to have the invention appear at a prearranged time and place for the purpose of gratifying the deep and widespread curiosity of the public. // PROFESSOR WORCESTER'S EVIDENCE. / The Well-Known San Jose Educator Scrutinizes the Mysterious Flier and Gives the Result of a Calm Examination.

SAN JOSE, Cal., Nov. 27.—An interesting account of the mysterious moving light which passed over this city Thursday evening, and which is supposed to be attached to an airship, is given by Professor H.B. Worcester, president of the Garden City Business College. Professor Worcester resides with his family in East San Jose. To a Mercury reporter who asked him regarding the strange light, he said:

"There was a small party at my house in East San Jose on Thanksgiving day and dinner was prolonged until about 7 o'clock in the evening. The company then repaired to the front of the house to enjoy some music and I went into the rear yard to get a lantern. I happened to look up and saw several miles away, apparently about over College Park or Santa Clara, a large light moving rapidly toward San Jose. In a second I surmised it was the mysterious light which people had seen and which was supposed to be attached to an airship. In order to call the attention of those in the house to the same I ran around the house to save time and called out that the airship was passing. Everybody rushed out into the front yard.

"Within the time it had taken me to run around the house the light had changed its course from east to southwest and had traveled several miles and was in a line over the southern portion of San Jose. The entire party saw the moving light and saw it go west, then turn south and then change to southeast. We watched the light until it disappeared behind the horizon.

"When the ship turned to the southeast I could distinguish two lights, one behind the other. The single light first seen was about the size of an engine headlight and had more the appearance of a large incandescent light than anything else. It was moving at the rate of from 60 to 100 miles an hour and it was only a few moments before it had disappeared behind the horizon.

"There were three things regarding the light which impressed me, viz.: Its velocity, its regular movement and its apparent intelligent control. The motion of the light would suggest the alternate flapping of wings.

"I have seen many fire-balloons, but the light I saw had none of the characteristics of such a toy. Its velocity was too great for a balloon on such a still night and its movements too regular. The light was about 1500 feet high when first seen and may have continued at that elevation, but it appeared to lower as it disappeared on the horizon."

Professor Worcester stated that his party consisted of Professor M.S. Cross of the University of the Pacific, Mrs. Dr. Allen, Mrs. Colonel Moore, Miss Annie Chase, Harry Worcester and himself. All of these, he said, saw the mysterious light and expressed their belief that it was under intelligent control. Among others who saw the sight was a party at Bella Vista, near Alum Rock, composed of Mr. and Mrs. Bert M. Babcock and Mr. and Mrs. Elton.

SAN JOSE, Cal., Nov. 27.—John Bawl, a farmer who bears the reputation of being practical and unimaginative, declared that he saw the airship in flight over his residence in East San Jose, on Monroe street, near Franklin, Thursday evening, and though it was moving rapidly and was at a considerable altitude, he was able to plainly distinguish its general outline and most striking features. He describes the great winged ship with vividness and realism. His wife and family corroborate his story.

"I was standing in the rear of my residence about 7 o'clock, or shortly before that," he said, "when my attention was attracted by some bright object in the sky about 150 yards distant, and bearing rapidly toward me from the northwest. I looked at it closely and observed it was lunging from side to side, sometimes swerving sharply to one side, but always maintaining a general southwesterly direction. It occurred to me that this was the famous airship, and I shouted lustily to my family and they all witnessed it as it came over our residence. It was so high up I could form no very definite idea of its size.

"It had a pair of wings which were constantly flapping not from side to side like a bird's, but with more of a forward and downward motion. Beneath it several feet hung a ball of red light which lit up the bottom of the ship and sent its rays far down below it. At the front was a cone-shaped projection which I surmised was a windbreak. The vessel lunged badly and once made a beeline to the west, but regained its course again. It varied in height considerably during the time I watched it. Its speed I judged to be about that of an electric-car doing its best."

Mrs. Bawl tells a similar story of the strange voyager of the air. /
NEARING SOLUTION. / General Hart May Give the Public an Aerial Exhibition of the Mystery.

Ex-Attorney-General W.H.H. Hart came a step nearer to disclosing the name of the inventor of the reputed successful airship yesterday. He also gave many new details regarding the marvel, and promised to confer with the inventor with the object of bringing the wonder of the air within the observation of the public at a prearranged time and place.

"Interest in the airship, general," remarked the reporter to the legal captain of the aerial warship, "continues unabated, and the public are anxiously awaiting more definite news in reference to it. They are demanding something more tangible than aerial lights at night."

"I am sorry that I am still unable to tell you all you want to know. I can tell you this, however: The inventor is a cousin of John Linn, the electrician of the Cuban patriot general, Antonio Maceo. Linn is now, of course, in Cuba, but was formerly a resident of Chicago, and is an American citizen. The inventor is not a Californian, but came here, owing to our favorable climate, to make tests of and perfect his machine."

"It is admitted that the power problem is the great one in aerial navigation, and in view of this a detailed description of the Fargo storage battery which you state is to be used on the improved and remodeled craft would be interesting," suggested the reporter.

"I would be glad to comply with your suggestion, but we have only made application for a patent for this storage battery in this country, and to expose its composition and construction would interfere with the procurement of foreign patents on it. I reiterate, however, that of my own knowledge I know that the Fargo storage battery has sufficient capacity to furnish power for a flying-ship, if the latter can be constructed to fly at all. This arrangement is different from all other methods that have been heretofore tried. No acids are used at all, and it will store electricity in any amperage and voltage. A 20-horsepower battery to run ten hours can be made to weigh 150 pounds, and to run six hours the battery would need to weigh not more than 100 pounds. Tests have been made which prove this. The man who invented the battery is not the man who invented the airship."

"Why not have the inventor, in order to satisfy public curiosity, bring his winged craft over a certain place at a certain time, giving him sufficient latitude for delays and baffling air currents? His programme could be announced through you to the public. He would thus run no risk of identification, nor would his invention be in danger of being exposed. Such an arrangement would be most gratifying to the public, and would, at the same time, most conclusively substantiate all the claims made on his behalf."

"He don't care to submit his invention to the public, and is perfectly indifferent to what the public thinks. I have an arrangement to see him on Monday, however, and will then endeavor to have him carry out the plan. When I last saw him he said he was going south to test his machine in the higher altitudes. He is experimenting on the difference between the heavy atmosphere near the ocean and the lighter air on elevated plains. You see he is preparing to carry out precisely what I have said in reference to Havana. I know he can and will do it, and he is not going to give out a description of his invention until he makes the attempt on Havana. I am quite convinced he will be at Havana within sixty days with one of those ships

equipped to do what he says it can do."

"This plan, then, of destroying Havana is a preconceived idea of his?"

"Certainly; and he came out here to work it out. I did not know him before he came to me on this matter, though I know his friends."

"Have you had any applications to sell stock in connection with this invention?"

"No, and there is none to sell. I asked my client if he wanted to sell any stock and he said no. He added that he had all the money he wanted, and did not care to take in any person or organize any company for the present. This was the only thing that gave me the impression that he might be off his pins. He is the first man I have struck of that kind in California. But I am quite convinced that he is not crazy nor a crank. He is thoroughly cool and logical in all he says, and his entire conduct is such as to inspire perfect confidence in his invention and faith in what he says."

In response to an inquiry as to how he looked, General Hart said he has a dark complexion and bears considerable resemblance to Arion, now performing at the Chutes. / HART GETS CONFIDENTIAL. / Discloses New and Important Features of the Aerial Mystery to Professional Friends.

General Hart told a cluster of friends, principally professional men, gathered in the Supreme Court rooms yesterday something more about the airship which his client has in view. "My client says that he has built one airship and has successfully navigated it," said General Hart. "The first ship cost him \$15,000. He says that he will now construct a second airship in the locality of Bolinas and that the expense will be \$30,000.

"So far as I know, the second ship will resemble the first. I am now willing to make public some more facts concerning the general structure of the ship which has been operated in this locality recently. The sustaining power is supplied from gas tanks, which are in the hull of the vessel and which are connected with the balloon which flies over the airship by a pipe. When the inventor wants to go up higher he lets more gas into the balloon out of the tanks, which are filled with condensed gas.

"When the inventor wants to fly lower he simply opens a valve in the balloon and the contrivance naturally descends, just as an ordinary balloon does. It appears to me that the unsafe part of the whole contrivance is this reliance upon the balloon, which is all that keeps the ship up. If the balloon would fall down would go the ship. For this reason I am frank to say I would not care to take a ride in the airship. Do I believe that the airship actually exists? Why, certainly!

"The inventor says that he has traveled 120 miles in the air in about six and a half hours, which is a little over twenty miles per hour. His storage battery he uses for power only to propel his air ship when he is sailing against the wind. When he is running with the wind or a few points off he needs no power, but naturally drifts, just as a balloon would.

"I believe that four pounds of dynamite thrown vertically downward from the deck of the airship would make terrific havoc among an enemy gathered below the ship. The dynamite throwing could be done most easily by hand. All that would be necessary would be simply to drop it.

"The condensed gas serves no purpose except to raise the airship. It has nothing to do with propelling it in any other direction.

"It may or may not be possible for my client's airship to sail the air from Key West to Havana. He thinks that it is possible. Whenever he arrives in Cuba his power would be nearly exhausted. Therefore it would be necessary for him to have a Cuban base of power supply. The location may be something like thirty miles from Havana. That would seem to me about the proper distance." / WAS NOT A PLANET. / Observations by a Clever Watcher of the Mysterious Light.

The following communication has been received:

Editor Call—Dear Sir: As public attention is at present very much taken up with the recent appearances of a strange light in the heavens here and in neighboring places, I venture to offer one or two observations made by myself personally on the occasion of the appearance of the strange light in the western sky some few nights ago, which attracted so much attention among our citizens. These observations you may take for what you may think them worth, merely prefacing my remarks by saying that in years gone by I made somewhat a study of astronomy, and took quite an interest in the heavenly bodies and their movement.

On the night in question I was one of a group of persons stationed near the edge of the sidewalk in front of the Flood building, southwest corner Fourth and Market streets, watching a strange bright light in the western heavens. At first it seemed to me as though I had sometimes seen the evening star look nearly as large and bright, and so I remarked to a gentleman in my immediate vicinity. But a closer observation seemed to show that it had not the steady and serene rays that mark the light of a planet. It was observed for brief intervals from time to time, and its altitude when I first observed it seemed to negative the idea of any terrestrial obstruction.

I then decided to make a practical test and take the bearings from some fixed object, taking the small building with its turret-like cone that forms a gore at the south side of Eddy street, at its junction with Market, and maintaining my position by a telegraph-pole at the edge of the sidewalk.

The light appeared to be in a straight line from where I stood with a point directly over the aforesaid turret-like roof that crowns the gore at the southwest corner of Eddy and Market streets. I soon observed that the light moved from over the point of the roof in an easterly and northerly direction, until at last it had crossed the path in the sky corresponding to the width of Eddy street, when it disappeared around the corner of the Baldwin Hotel.

The gentleman above referred to observed the same thing, and remarked that by stepping backward he could see it again.

This test proved conclusively to my mind that the light observed was not that of a planet, for if any one ever saw Venus or any other planet travel from the westward in a northeasterly direction he must have observed a phenomenon not recorded in ancient or modern times.

You may insert the above, if you deem it of sufficient interest, in your valuable paper. / Yours respectfully, Austin R. Reid, / 219 Geary street, City. / A

MODESTO HAS IT. / Prominent Citizens See What They Believe to Be Lights of the Aerial Destroyer.

MODESTO, Cal., Nov. 27.—Residents in the northern part of this city were treated to a sight of what was undoubtedly the flying machine at 10:30 o'clock last night.

J.E. Ward, cashier of the First National Bank, discovering what he believed to be the lights of the flying machine, aroused his neighbors, all reputable men, among whom were County Treasurer W.A. Downer, Deputy Treasurer W.B. Bell, C.P. Schafer, the bookkeeper of the First National Bank, Armory L.J. Maddux [?] and others. The lights were seen at a considerable height, going in a northwesterly direction toward Stockton. The lights moved steadily and at an even height from the ground. / SEEN AT TACOMA. / Sighted Near Mount Tacoma—Vari-Colored Flashes.

TACOMA, Wash., Nov. 21.—The airship phenomenon which has startled San Francisco has appeared here. Several reputable people have observed it. They believe it is an airship and that the inventor has either made two models and set one up in this neighborhood or was taking an evening spin from California to Puget Sound.

The airship seen here resembles that described by California witnesses in every particular. It possesses the same birdlike shape and moves swiftly with an up and down wavelike motion, varied occasionally by a dart forward and some times in slanting directions.

Last Tuesday night the operator of the airship is believed to have visited and explored the top of Mount Tacoma. Tuesday night Druggist George St. John closed his drugstore on Pacific avenue at 11:30 and went home. He reached his residence on Tacoma avenue fifteen minutes later and soon retired. It was a beautiful moonlight night and the window curtains a few feet away from the bed were left up.

Just about 12 o'clock Mrs. St. John saw the strange light and called her husband's attention to it. It appeared to be high up in the heavens east of Mount Tacoma and moving in a southeasterly direction. The /p.2/ distance from Tacoma must have been at least fifty miles. They watched the heavenly stranger over half an hour. They first saw it through a north window in their room, but after a while could see it through a window several feet further south without having changed their positions. This proves that the airship traveled a long distance during the time they were watching it.

Mr. St. John says that vari-colored lights were shot forth in all directions. They were emitted from each and both sides. Sometimes the light at one end or one side would be cut off. Some of the lights were white, others red, blue and green. These four shades were distinctly visible. When all the lights were shining the aerial monster seemed incased in a brilliant glow, having the appearance of a powerful electric searchlight. The size then seemed to be that of an arc light. It flashed often, sending the various colored rays shooting out from the center in every direction like spokes in the hub of a wheel. Sometimes it had a wavering motion and swayed back and forth in its course through the heavens like a vessel at sea in a storm, but the undulating motion was its chief course, being varied by frequent dartings.

The moonlight was not strong enough to permit a distinct view of Mount Tacoma, but the airship was seen to approach the neighborhood of the mountain at what seemed to be its exact height, and dart hither and thither as if an exploration was in progress.

The supposed airship was still in sight when Mr. and Mrs. St. John became tired of watching it and went to sleep. They spoke of the strange occurrence to many friends next day, but what they had witnessed was not made public until to-day. They have eagerly read accounts of the California airship, and declare that what they saw must have been the same or an exactly similar contrivance.

Hundreds of people are on the lookout here for another appearance of the airship.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 11.

THAT IMMORTAL PHANTASY / A Small Additional Crop from the Old Field of Airship Yarns. /

C.F. Merrill, agent of the Southern Pacific Co. at Antioch, has seen a "thing" in the air, and writes to tell the Chronicle all about it. He says :

"I don't suppose anyone will object to me having my say about the airship that seems to be creating a lot of excitement around these diggings. Up to last night I was as ready to pooh-pooh this airship business as any one in this State, but I must confess that I have changed my views slightly in favor of the 'thing.' I do not believe fully in the airship itself, but am very much on the fence at present. Here is what I saw last night:

"At 6:50 o'clock last evening my attention was drawn to a bright light directly to the south of the depot. I was sitting at the back of the office at the time, and distinctly saw the steady light in the heavens through the window and almost directly over a lighted lamp. We watched it (I say we, for there were several of us) moving in a westerly direction. Someone yelled 'airship,' then all was excitement. It passed over the first range of low hills, and was at one time distinctly seen shining below the top of Mount Diablo. We all watched it as it slowly ascended and then disappeared behind Mount Diablo in the direction of Oakland. From actual tests we found that we could not see the brightest star through the window of a lighted room, especially directly over a lighted lamp. Every word of this report of the airship will be verified by S. Cleaves, Nat Cleaves, Thomas Uren, C.F. Sweeney and John Chase, mail carrier."

1896 November 28 (Sat.) (San Francisco, CA) Evening Post, p. 3.

THE FLYING MACHINE. / One Is Being Built by a Client of General Hart. /

Attorney W.H.H. Hart's office in the Crocker building has become an asylum for visionary inventors, cranks and adventurers.

This morning an army of strange characters visited the lawyer's headquarters. Many of them carried rolls of designs under their arms, accompanied by explanatory details, describing all kinds of contrivances from airship that fail to fly to perpetual motion machines which refuse to work.

General Hart gives an audience to all who call. For the time being he has forsaken the practice of his profession to listen to the tales of invention. He has taken kindly to the flying ship craze, and is now as firmly convinced that the feat of navigating the air has been accomplished as he is certain that Florence Blythe Hinckley is the heir of her deceased father's millions.

"One of my clients," said Hart yesterday, "is now building an airship to cost \$30,000. It will resemble the one recently seen to flit through the skies over this city. When he finishes the vessel he will go to Cuba and blow up the city of Havana."

When asked for a description of this wonderful vessel, the General declined to give it, on the grounds that it would be a betrayal of his client's secrets.

1896 November 28 (Sat. morn.) San Francisco Examiner, p. .

WITH HERE AND THERE A GLEAM OF FAITH. /

If the light seen by the people of the north is attached to a flying machine the inventor need not worry about the wolf. He will realize the aphorism about the predilection of the people of this age to push a good thing along.—Los Angeles "Express." /

Have you seen the nocturnal flying machine? No? Then you are not in it.—Stockton "Mail."

Well, "seeing is believing," and whenever this phantom ship shall arrive at Los Angeles under the skillful pilotage of some stalwart Vanderdecker from Thompson's Flat or Nimshew Ravine, the "Times" will believe the skill of man has conquered the ozone, as it has long since subdued the sea and made the yeasty waves of ocean to be his willing servant. Till then we are content to wait.—Los Angeles "Times." /

And now the aerial monster has been seen sailing over the outskirt of Oakland. The "New Brew" must be a popular brand.—Chico "Enterprise." /

Surely Attorney Collins has done us out of a good thing. The wretch ought to have said in the beginning that the wonderful information which he had to disclose to the world was not true. We all could have enjoyed it in greater comfort and regarded the elaborate newspapers portrayals of it with much more complacency.—Santa Cruz "Penny Press." /

One who is skeptical about the practicability of airships must have had his ideas somewhat upset during the past few days. There is so much accumulated testimony to the effect that an airship has been

seen floating over Sacramento, Oakland, San Jose and other points that the story can hardly be an ordinary fake.—Grass Valley "Tidings."

It must be a remarkable quality of liquor kept in Sacramento just now. The ordinary article will assist a man to see snakes, but the capital brand seems to fill the sky with flying machines. Oh, for another Gough.—San Bernardino "Sun." /

The story of the airship has awakened latent California talent in fiction of the Munchausen type, and those who like that kind of literature can now revel in it.—Stockton "Independent." /

If it is a fake, it will take its place among notorious and successful ones. If it is not, a new world opens before mankind.—Fresno "Republican."

A couple of planets shining in the blue overhead and a hot-air balloon with lantern attached, let loose by a practical joker, can do wonders in convincing the intelligent people of two cities that there is an aerial ship whizzing about in the evening sky.—Oakland "Enquirer." /

The flying machine said to have been seen hovering around the country may be a hoax, but everything points to its genuineness.—San Diego "Vidette."

It is almost incredible that such a sweat as is now on can be created by a newspaper fake—and such a very poor fake as the "Call's" airship story.—Alameda "Argus." /

The men who think they saw an airship passing over Sacramento a few nights ago and heard voices in the heavens ought to change their drinks before it is too late.—Visalia "Times."

Your friend no longer has "wheels in his head": he has "seen an airship."—Danville "Sentinel." /

If that airship is really circling about at its pleasure, can carry a thousand pounds of dynamite as stated, and is intended for use in behalf of the Cuban revolutionists, General Weyler in his palace in Havana will be likely to hear something drop before long.—San Jose "Herald."

Let's hope that story about the making of a first-class flying machine isn't a fake. We'll shout for any invention that'll enable folks to travel along Riverside after this mud thaws out.—Spokane (Wash.) "Chronicle." /

The airship fake appears to be something like Banquo's ghost, "it will not down." Barnum was quite right when he asserted that "the bigger the humbug the better the American public was pleased."—Redding "Free Press." /

Some believe in the reported airship, while others laugh to scorn any such theory. If the inventor has discovered the way by which navigation of the air can be made his fortune is a certainty and the greatest discovery of the age has been made.—Washington "Press."

The machinery in the heads of a great many of the people in the bay cities is having a great time in turning out all kinds of airships —Santa Cruz "Record."

California airships are becoming quite numerous in the imagination of a lot of people. After they have worked the minds of the credulous sufficiently they may begin to travel through the atmosphere.—Santa Rosa "Republican." /

The fact that nobody has succeeded in lariatting the festive airship will not be accepted as evidence that the gas mechanisms on the Pacific Coast are not in excellent working order.—Santa Rosa "Press."

California's wonderful airship must be in the form of an air castle.—Anaconda (Mont.) "Standard."

1896 November 28 (Sat.) San Jose Daily Mercury, p. 5.

LIGHTS MOVED FAST / Prof. H.B. Worcester and Party Saw the Supposed Airship. / SEEMED INTELLIGENTLY GUIDED. / Traveled With Great Velocity in Apparently a Regulated Manner—Disappeared on the Horizon. /

An interesting account of the mysterious moving light which passed over this city Thursday evening and which is supposed to be attached to an airship is given by Professor H.B. Worcester, President of the Garden City Business College. Professor Worcester resides with his family in East San Jose. To a Mercury reporter, who asked him regarding the strange light, he said:

"There was a small party at my house in East San Jose on Thanksgiving Day, and dinner was prolonged until about 7 o'clock in the evening. The company then repaired to the front of the house to enjoy some music, and I went into the rear yard to get a lantern. I happened to look up and saw several miles away, apparently about over College Park or Santa Clara a large light moving rapidly toward San Jose. In a second I surmised it was the mysterious light which people had seen and which was supposed to be attached to an airship. In order to call the attention of those in the house to the same I ran around the house to save time and called out that the airship was passing. Everybody rushed out into the front yard. Within the time it had taken me to run around the house the light had changed its course from east to southwest and had traveled several miles and was in a line over the southern portion of San Jose. The

entire party saw the moving light and saw it go west, then turn south, and then change to southeast. We watched the light until it disappeared below the horizon.

"When the ship turned southeast I could distinguish two lights, one behind the other. The single light first seen was about the size of an engine headlight and had more of the appearance of a large incandescent light than anything else. It was moving at the rate of from sixty to 100 miles an hour, and it was only a few moments before it had disappeared below the horizon.

"There were three things regarding the light which impressed me, viz.: Its velocity, its regular movement, and its apparent intelligent control. The motion of the light would suggest the alternate flapping of wings.

"I have seen many fire balloons, but the light I saw had none of the characteristics of such a toy. Its velocity was too great for a balloon on such a still night and its movements too regular.

"The light was about 1500 feet high when first seen, and may have continued at that elevation, but it appeared to lower as it disappeared on the horizon."

Professor Worcester stated that his party consisted of Professor M.S. Cross of the University of the Pacific, Mrs. Dr. Allen, Mrs. Colonel Moore, Miss Annie Chase, Harry Worcester, Mrs. Worcester and himself. All of these, he said, saw the mysterious light and expressed their belief that it was under intelligent control.

Among others who saw the light was a party at Bella Vista, near Alum Rock, composed of Mr. and Mrs. F.W. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rengstorff of Mountain View, Mr. and Mrs. Bert M. Babcock and Mr. and Mrs. Elton.

John Bawl, a farmer who bears the reputation of being practical and unimaginative, declares that he saw the airship in flight over his residence in East San Jose, on Monroe street, near Franklin, Thursday evening, and though it was moving rapidly and was at a considerable altitude, he was able to plainly distinguish its general outline and most striking features. He describes the great winged ship with vividness and realism. His wife and family corroborate his story.

"I was standing in the rear of my residence about 7 o'clock or shortly before that," he said, "when my attention was attracted by some bright object in the sky about 150 yards distant and bearing rapidly toward me from the northwest. I looked at it closely and observed it was lunging about from side to side, sometimes swerving sharply to one side, but always maintaining a general southwesterly direction. It occurred to me that this was the famous airship, and I shouted lustily to my family and they all witnessed it as it came over our residence.

"It was so high up I could form no very definite idea of its size, but I judged it was about twenty feet long. It had a pair of wings which were constantly flapping, not from side to side like a bird's, but with more of a forward and downward motion. Beneath it several feet hung a ball of red light which lit up the bottom of the ship and sent its rays far down below it. At the front was a cone-shaped projection which I surmised was a wind-break.

"The vessel lunged badly and once made a great swerve to the west, but regained its course again. It varied in height considerably during the time I watched it. Its speed I judged to be about that of an electric car doing its best."

Mrs. Bawl tells a similar story of the strange locomotive of the air.

p.4. When it comes to seeing airships, San Jose is not to be outdone by the little villages of Oakland and San Francisco.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) (San Jose) Evening News, p. 2.

AFFECTS THE VISION. /

Reports regarding the air ship continue to appear in the local papers, all of them, however, being made by citizens who claim they have seen the arial wonder. It was explained in these columns a few days ago that a man in Gilroy had been reported as claiming that he had seen, not only one air ship, but two. In view of the explanation given at that time, it is not surprising to note that a teacher of bicycle riding in this city claims to have seen the air ship Thursday night, and he is willing to take his oath that he saw the machine last Tuesday night, "when he was on his way home from a wheel ride to Gilroy."

This man, fresh from a wheel ride from Gilroy, is quoted as being very specific in his statement regarding the air ship, claiming that it was only a few hundred feet from the ground; that it was visible from some reflection of light on some large winged object; that light as if thrown from a search light struck the earth near Turn Verein shooting range.

In view of the effects of Gilroy's justly celebrated vintage upon the average visitor, reports of this

nature will be given little weight by the conservative observer.

(San Jose) Evening News, 11/28/4. TWO AIR-SHIPS FOUND. /

This morning one of the air-ships that some people have claimed to have seen at night was found in the yard of E. Knickerbocker on North First street where it had fallen in its descent. It was a tissue paper balloon six feet high to which a sponge was attached.

Another was also found in the yard of W. W. Cowan on Divine street.

Others may be seen tonight.

Sausalito News, 11/28,3. San Rafael News/ (From the Marin Journal.)

Marin county could not be kept out of the airship business. A citizen wrote to a city daily an account of a discovery he accidentally made on Mount Tamalpais of a big camp or tent, in which he found an airship which made nocturnal trips out over the metropolis, returning at will each morning before daylight. His letter was treated soberly, and contributed to the literature of the week, and the excitement on the subject. It was signed William Jordan, but there is no William Jordan here, and there was no thought that the letter would be taken seriously.

Santa Cruz Sentinel, 11/28/1. The Airship. / On Friday evening the airship was reported as again being seen flying over this city.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) (Santa Rosa) Sonoma Democrat, p. 6.

AN ECCENTRIC STAR. / It Stirs the Curiosity and Credulity of Our Quiet Citizens. /

A number of people were occupied Tuesday evening in gazing at a star which appeared in the southeast sky about 45 degrees above the horizon. It seemed for the time at least to turn itself into a flashlight. It would increase in brightness up to a maximum, which was about equal in lustre to the evening star; its light would then gradually fade until it disappeared. It would then reappear in the same way and again go out of sight. This continued until the star got well up in the heavens and then it shone with a bright, steady light. We have no solution of the phenomena, because we don't know what caused this bright peculiar star to act in that eccentric manner, making a flash-light of itself, which, to say the least of it, was irregular and out of order, and excited the credulity and curiosity of substantial sub-lunar citizens who are unused to seeing stars depart from their accustomed paths of propriety. What can be expected of ordinary mortals when the stars themselves grow crooked.

[pic.: (bat with lantern, crowd below watching) That Air Ship. / Santa Rosans Who Witnessed Its Flight.]

1896 November 28 (Sat.) (Sonora, Calif.) Tuolumne Independent, p. 5.

The Airship, or Aeroplane. /

On the evening of Wednesday, from 6 P.M. to about 15 minutes to 7, a strange but bright light was observed in the west from Piety Hill. It moved distinctly from the following points of the compass: W. 25 degrees to the South, and returned again, moving more to the West, locality supposed to be somewhere in the San Joaquin valley, remaining in view nearly three-quarters of an hour. It then descended or was lost to view by the observers. The light seemed to flash downwards and not always of same force, but was of large dimensions. Considering its distance from point of observation, its elevation was considerable. It was most certainly some artificial electrical device. Whether it was the much talked of airships or not, the electric flashing light was an absolute fact. The supposition can only be that it was attached to some vessel floating in the air, which seemed to be under perfect control, yet the movement was undulating and somewhat irregular as the following eye witnesses can testify:

E.A. RODGERS AND FAMILY, / W. FRANK DRAKE AND FAMILY.

Sonoma Index-Tribune, Nov. 28, 2. County Gleanings.

The mysterious airship has been seen floating over Santa Rosa by a number of its rattle-weeded citizens.

(Yreka) Siskiyou News, 11/28,1. Look Out for the Air Ship (adv.).

Not that any such a mechanical device is apt to appear to the residents of Siskiyou county, but because it has become fashionable to have a "crink" in your neck looking skyward. If you don't see the

ship call at Pashburg's and look over his vast assortment of toys for the holidays.

p. 10. J.D. Gagnon of the corner is sojourning in San Francisco and will no doubt be able to see the airship.

Judge Chambers has been out at Little Shasta this week with Andrew Terwilliger which accounts for the airship.

Vacaville Reporter, Nov. 28,2. Wonder if the airship described in the Sacramento Bee is in any way connected with the advance agent of prosperity, whose location seems to be somewhat a matter of uncertainty?

p.4. Suisan. / Have you seen the airship?

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Visalia (Calif.) Daily Times, p. 2.

AIRSHIPPERY. / Some of the Queer Imaginings of Queer People.

"Airship" whiskey is the favorite brand in Visalia. Imbibers are guaranteed a glimpse of the elusive vessel after only a very few drinks,

The schedule time for the airship at this point is between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening. Get your glass ready and look toward the west. It'll be there (whether you see it or not).

And now Larkins has 'em. He has seen the airship. He describes it as having a wavering motion, which probably gives a good idea of the thing; also of the observer.

Visalia and Hanford also saw the fiery eye of the airship on the eve of Thanksgiving, but those who saw it differ widely in their descriptions of the monster. In this connection it has been observed that Hanford is a great place for soft drinks, while Visalia adheres tenaciously to its partiality for red licker.—Fresno Republican.

You are not "in it" if you don't get at least one good look at the air ship.

Dave Carter of Three Rivers is now a full-fledged convert to the airship theory. He and Charley Bahwell were at his brother Jim's last night, and all three saw the "thing." The latter says it was like a star, only it jumped around some, gradually working towards the northwest, falling lower and then disappearing.

The Hanford Sentinel came out yesterday with a cut of the air ship. It looks like a condemned cross between a measly flying fish and a badly disabled torpedo boat.

Our reporter has been trying to find the fellow who picked up a letter day before yesterday that fell out of the mystic airship. The holder of the letter has not been discovered. That letter will a tale unfold, it is thought.

M.J. Byrnes chaperoned a crowd last night who gazed at the airship for some time in open-mouthed wonder. The light was seen in a southwesterly direction, and it had the same old wavers.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) Woodland (Calif.) Daily Democrat, p. 2.

MORE AIRSHIP STORIES. / A Well-Known Lawyer Sees an Electric Light in the Skies. / If It Was a Mechanical Contrivance a Man on the Ground Could Not Have Operated It. /

If the so-called airship is an illusion it is a very clever one, and the man who is manipulating it thoroughly understands his business and is having a great deal of fun at the expense of people who are credulous.

That an unusual light has been seen floating in the atmosphere we do not doubt. Too many people whose veracity and sobriety are above suspicion have seen this light for us to question this fact.

The people of Woodland heard the remarkable story told by Ed Archer and Obe Lowe. It was fully corroborated by some of the most reliable men in Sacramento.

Friday night, about 10 o'clock, a well-known attorney who does not court any notoriety, and hesitates to make his name public because he does not want to lose his well-earned reputation for sobriety, discerned a bright but unusual light in the skies to the southwest of Woodland, traveling in a southwesterly direction.

The attention of the members of his family was called to the light, and nearly all the neighbors living close by were also aroused and saw the phenomenon, if such it may be called.

The attorney's first impression was that it was a group of stars, but he soon became convinced that it was an illumination produced by the agency of electricity, and of that he now has no doubt, although this must not be construed into an admission that he believes it was an airship.

Of course in estimating the rate of speed at which it was traveling the distance is an important factor.

Assuming that it was no farther away than Sacramento, and five or six hundred feet high, it traveled a distance of about twenty-five miles an hour.

All the people who saw the light agree that it was in sight fully an hour, and some fix the time considerably longer. Our informant sat at his window fully that long, but he does not know how long it may have been in the heavens before he discovered it.

He is fully satisfied upon another point. If it was a mechanical contrivance it could not have been manipulated by a person standing on the ground. The electric light can only be accounted for upon the theory that the contrivance was supplied with a storage battery.

About the same hour two officers of the Salvation Army were returning from Knights Landing. They also saw the light and fully corroborate the statements made above.

1896 November 28 (Sat.) (Woodland, CA) The Mail of Woodland, p. 2.

OBE LEFT TOWN. / He Was Subjected to Entirely Too Much Good-natured Joshing. /

It will be remembered that Obe Lowe went over to Sacramento Wednesday afternoon, and while there in the evening got a look at that mysterious aerial visitor generally known as the airship. On arriving in Woodland he related his experience to a Mail reporter, and the same appeared in Thursday's issue.

When he appeared on the streets he was besieged with friends who were anxious to hear his story. He repeated it to a large number, many of whom gave him a doubtful glance and then rustled around and sent their friends to him. In a short time he had a large crowd around him, and he finally became hoarse and weary in going through his part. All of a sudden it dawned upon him that he was being "jobbed," so he indignantly dismissed his audience and drove out to the ranch, where he remained until time for the theatre. When you see him, just ask him about the airship. [see Yolo S-W Mail, 11/27/1.]

NOVEMBER 29

1896 November 29 (Sun.) Daily Humboldt Times (Eureka, Calif.), p. 4.

Has It Visited Arcata? / A Strange Light Observed by Residents of That Place. / Was It the Airship?

The following letter was received last evening from a gentleman, whose truthfulness cannot be questioned:

EDITOR TIMES:—A high school student, several days ago, about half-past 6 o'clock in the morning, saw near the horizon, in a direction a little north of west from Arcata, a strange, large, bright light.

He went to school as usual. Another high school student who lives near Mad river had seen a light about the same hour, in the same place, and commented on it to the first mentioned schoolmate. Strange coincidence, don't you think?

Yours respectfully, etc.,

MIKROS.

Arcata, Nov. 28, 1896.

1896 November 29 (Sun.) Morning Union (Grass Valley, Calif.), p. 4.

BUILT AN AIR SHIP. / A Haywards Chicken Rancher as an Inventor.

OAKLAND, November 28.—W.H. Warren, a chicken rancher of Haywards, has come forward as a claimant for airship honors. He says that he has invented an airship capable of carrying one man and is satisfied that he has solved the problem of aerial navigation. He says he made a trial trip recently and had perfect control over his machine. He rose to a height of one hundred feet and maneuvered the machine in every direction. The machine is cigar shaped and is furnished with wings and a tail. The motive power is gasoline, but the inventor says he will use electricity. He got his idea from watching sea gulls fly.

Los Angeles Times, 11/29, p.26(?). (eds.) As the airship was seen near Red Bluff at the same time it was represented to have been seen at San Francisco, its inventor will have no difficulty in establishing an alibi at one place or the other.

1896 November 29 (Sun.) (Modesto, Calif.) Daily Evening News, p. 1.

Air Ship Seen Here.

Last night at 10:30 o'clock the residents of this section had an opportunity to see the much-talked of air ship. It was first discovered northwest of this city and was going in a straight direction toward Stockton. Only one light was seen but that took a steady course and was inclined toward the horizon. It was seen for nearly half an hour and when lost sight of seemed to be in the vicinity of Stockton as the reflection of arc lights are easily seen from this city. None of the many observers could see anything but the light somewhat larger than Venus. All who saw it are firm believers that it was under control and was the air ship. The large number of reputable persons who saw it precludes all possibility of it being a fake.

1896 November 29 (Sun.) Sacramento Record-Union, p. 4.

SOCIAL GOSSIP.

Since the advent of the "airship" that is making such a stir in scientific circles everywhere, and particularly in this part of the State, I have noticed some of our church steeples, which were threatened, it will be remembered, with annihilation by the strange bird on its trial trip, have been wisely cut down to a height that will be less likely to interfere with the future maneuvers of the already famous stranger.

* * *

Before Thanksgiving it was suggested by some one that the airship "seen" hovering so frequently above our town was the direct result of a scheme put into operation by some benevolent-minded person who desired incog to drop charity "Like the gentle dew from heaven upon the place beneath," in the shape of good fat turkeys, "the place beneath" being the kitchen doors of deserving persons. Since Thanksgiving has passed and the scheme failed to materialize, the wag has concluded that it must have been the shade of old Diogenes returned to earth with an electric lantern on a continued search for that "honest man." It is greatly to be hoped, if such be the case, that Diog. may be more successful in his search than some of us have been. / POLLY OLIVER.

1896 November 29 (Sun. morn.) Salinas (Calif.) Daily Journal, p. 1.

Two Airships.

Two airships were observed prowling around Salinas last evening just after dark. One of them was occupied with Indian spirits from Oyhee river, Idaho, who availed themselves of the first opportunity in aerial navigation to pay their respects to Bro. Hill of the Index for the kindly manner in which he transported them to the happy hunting grounds of the eternal city and made good Indians out of them with his trusty Henry.

The other was from Modesto. It was navigated by an angel bearing a parchment for Bro. Bradford, on which was recorded a list of his great deeds accomplished while running the "Strawbuck," and of which the people of Salinas have heretofore been informed through the columns of the Owl. [also in Salinas Democrat 12/5/1e.]

San Diego Union, 11/29/1. Telegraphic Brevities.

W. H. Warren, a chicken rancher of Haywards, Calif., says that he has invented an airship capable of carrying one man and is satisfied that he has solved the problem of aerial navigation. He says he made a trial trip recently and had perfect control over the machine. He rose to a height of one hundred feet.

1896 November 29 (Sun. morn.) The Call, San Francisco, p. 1, 2.

THREE AIRSHIPS, SAYS HART. / Over His Signature the Attorney Tells of His Client. / THE WHY AND HOW OF THE MYSTIC LIGHTS. / And Again the Brilliant Shafts Are Sighted Speeding Above the Bay Counties. / INTELLIGENT TESTIMONY OF STAID CITIZENS. / Spectators in Haywards Insist on the Aeronautic Theory—Professor Cross, the Linguist, Adds His Evidence.

No one has as yet identified the aerial voyager that is supposed to be displaying the mysterious lights that have shone down upon startled gazers in various parts of the State, but the number of those who have

seen what they are ready to swear was an airship is constantly growing larger.

While even many of those who have seen the flitting and gleaming lights are not prepared to declare they are carried by a full-fledged aerial craft they admit they can account in no ordinary way for the phenomenon.

There is, therefore, yet ample room for the mystery to be proved a fake, a hallucination or a verity. Meanwhile, and until the mystery is completely solved, The Call will continue to chronicle the news relating to it, taking nothing from nor adding anything to the reports it receives. Whenever definite and conclusive proof, however, is received, it will be given freely, fully and fairly, whatever it chances to establish.

General Hart received a visit yesterday from one of the men who, he stated, has been making trips with the mysterious inventor in his aerial vessel. The general declined to give any information of these trips. He stated, however, that this man and another mechanic in the services of the inventor had gone to the workshop of the inventor to assist in the work of completing a third and much improved craft. This remodeled vessel would be completed, he expected, in about a week.

It was to be a great improvement on the two airships already built, and when it has been properly tested was to be at once dispatched for the scene of its deadly purposes (Havana), which was to be overwhelmed with a shower of dynamite. Considerable time will be consumed, according to the statement of General Hart, in making the crew who are to go on the novel expedition familiar with the working of the vessel.

General Hart has contributed a full statement regarding his connection with the reputed warship of the air and tells some new and interesting things therein in regard to it. He also takes up the defense of the Cuban patriots in a most patriotic and martial spirit.

Professor M.S. Cross, dean of the University of the Pacific, now adds his testimony to that of the believers, and Haywards people of prominence tell some additional startling stories. /

SEEN BY PROFESSOR CROSS. / The Dean of the University of the Pacific Testifies to the Passage of the Conqueror of the Air.

Professor M.S. Cross, dean of the University of the Pacific and professor of ancient languages, is one of the best-known scholars and linguists in the United States. He is a brother of Senator Cross of this City. He stands very high in the estimation of all students and professors, so that his testimony on the aerial wonder will be received with profound attention. The following telegram, giving his opinion on the subject, was received yesterday:

SAN JOSE, Cal., Nov. 28.—Professor M.S. Cross, dean of the University of the Pacific, confirms the story of the airship's passage over East San Jose Thursday night. Professor Cross is known in this vicinity as a careful and conservative man of unimpeachable veracity, and his testimony has won scores of doubting Thomases over to a firm belief in the existence of an aerial craft in this vicinity. The fact that the head of a Methodist representative Educational institution on this coast has been fortunate enough to view this nocturnal visitor has well nigh silenced the scoffers.

"It was just about 7 o'clock on Thursday evening when my attention was called to the strange light in the air," said Professor Cross. "I was visiting at the residence of Professor Worcester and was called into the yard by him to view the airship. Whether or not it was an air ship of course I am not prepared to say, but certain it is there was a rapidly moving light in the heavens far too large and bright to be an electric street light. To my eye it appeared to be about six inches in diameter. It was moving in a southwesterly direction and apparently at a high rate of speed.

"The motion was not steady. It wavered and swerved, rising and falling slightly. The motion, however, was not that of a balloon. I have frequently watched balloons in the air, and the motion of this light was in no way suggestive of the manner in which I have always seen them behave. Moreover, it was a quiet night. What slight breeze there was I think was from the south. Yet this light traveled rapidly in a southerly direction. As it left us the light seemed to broaden. This suggested to us that there might be two lights which as the craft swung broadside to us joined rays and gave the appearance of a wide streak of light."

Professor Cross is confident that it could not be either a balloon or a natural heavenly body that he saw. "I will be very much surprised," he declared, "if something more than a balloon is not found to have been floating about. I see nothing very wonderful in the construction of an airship. From experiments already made there seems to be every reason to hope for success in aerial navigation."

The point where Professor Cross viewed the ship is about two blocks distant from where John Bawl, whose account appeared in yesterday's Call, saw it, and the two accounts tally precisely in point of time, direction and general movements. The ship was nearer the earth when Bawl viewed it. //

PASSED OVER HAYWARDS. / A Mysterious Light Traced From a Canyon of the Palomares Valley.

OAKLAND, Cal., Nov. 28.—The residents of Haywards are convinced that the peculiar thing,

airship or something else, that they have been watching pass over their town on numerous occasions, has its home somewhere among the canyons of Palomares Valley.

To-night the marvelous light was observed in such a manner as to forever set aside the idea that it is a star. Two parties, several miles apart, observed it. To one it was to the eastward and to the other it passed westward. When notes were compared it was agreed that it had passed over between the two observers.

Ed O. Webb, who is known all over the county as a man not prone to make assertions unless he can back them up, informed George Oakes, editor of the Haywards Journal, that he saw the airship traveling through the heavens in the direction of Castro Valley Wednesday evening about 9:30 o'clock. The brilliant light was plainly seen at his home and also by other members of the family.

Fred Hoyt also saw the light as it was floating leisurely along in the direction of the Liedel place, near San Lorenzo. He was so interested in watching the moving object and would no doubt have solved the mystery had he not lost his balance and fallen into a ditch that he did not see was in his path.

Carl Mohr furnishes the most startling information. He told Mr. Oakes that he saw the airship rise from a canyon near his place Thursday evening about 7 o'clock and proceed in the direction of San Francisco, and also saw it return. Mr. Mohr is very positive in his statement, and firmly believes that the machine is being housed near Lone Tree Cemetery.

About the clearest statement yet made regarding the mysterious airship comes from C.S. Long, C.W. Everett and H. Liedel, three of the best-known citizens of Haywards, who were crossing the railroad track at the depot in a buggy Tuesday evening, about 6:30 o'clock, when their attention was attracted to an exceedingly bright light in the direction of the bay and they watched it for some time. It was moving very rapidly, and while they could not swear that it was an airship they do not hesitate to say that it completely puzzled them.

"I was going home about 7 o'clock," said Mr. Hoosen, "when I met my brother, who called my attention to a remarkable light in the heavens. At the first glance I could see it was a powerful electric light. It was slightly south of east and was moving steadily across the country toward the bay. I have not been a believer in the published accounts of airships, but must now say that I have seen something that was not natural to the skies.

"The light was not a steady light like a star, but flickered like our arc lights here on the streets, and it looked like one of them some distance away. One peculiar feature of the light was the way it changed from time to time.

"It appears as if the operator of a searchlight was placing red and blue glass before the light occasionally so as to make the light more noticeable to any one who happens to be looking into the heavens. No star has ever done that in the past and I am not ready to believe that one is doing any such capers at present. If this was the first time the lights had been seen here I might not think so much of it, but residents have been seeing a light come from the hills on a number of occasions and make its way across the heavens toward the south. It was only corroboration of these to-night when I saw it,"

Editor George A. Oakes was another who saw the visitor to-night from his residence in the northern part of Haywards.

"I saw the light to-night for the first time," said he, "and am sure it was no star or fire balloon. It passed east of town and appeared to go across the bay, as if headed for lower San Francisco. The white light was not steady, and changed to a red occasionally. It is more than I can solve, and must be some one who has finally solved the problem of aerial navigation."

Jesse Hooson, a student at St. Mary's College, had a good view of the visitor at Haywards to-night.

"I was startled," said he, "on coming along the street to-night to see a very bright light in the heavens. It was like an arc electric light, and, naturally, I stood watching it. The thing was moving toward the southwest with the wind at first, but changed its course several times, and finally came up into the wind for some distance. It finally disappeared over toward Redwood City. The thing seemed to be operated by some one to see how it would answer a helm or guiding apparatus of some kind."

These parties already referred to saw /p.2/ the machine to the eastward. Now comes a story from a man who was evidently on the other side of it.

Steve Morrison of Haywards was in San Ramon, and coming home tonight he saw the aerial visitor in such a manner as to fix its location approximately. "I was driving over the hills from San Ramon," said he, "when I noticed a very bright white light in the sky west of me. It looked like an arc electric light, but was too high in the heavens for that, and then I knew there were no arc lights out in that part of the country. It was a surprise to me and I watched the thing very carefully. I first noticed it as I came up out of one of the small valleys and could see it move about until I went into another."

Marshal Ramage of Haywards tells a story which may result in clearing up the mystery of the affair. "It has seemed very strange that this mysterious light should be seen in this vicinity so often. It is possible that the thing, whatever it may be, is being kept up here somewhere. I know of only one place where it

would be possible for an airship to be worked out, and I can hardly believe that even there the material could have been taken in without exciting some suspicion. James Spiers, of the firm of Hinckley Spiers & Hayes of San Francisco, resides out in the Palomares Canyon, and is quite an inventor. His sons are great students also, and it might be that they have been at work on something of this kind, and have succeeded in getting a ship that will really travel through the air.

"I recently had a talk with a man who worked for them this summer, and he told me that a new trail had been constructed from the house up to the table land near the crest of the hill and in a canyon. I know the place, and it is hidden entirely from view and would be an ideal place for such work.

"I asked him what the trail was being constructed for, and he said he asked the same question and was told that all that was required of him was to do the work and not worry about what it was for. After this he completed the work without further questioning. He does not know to this day what the trail was built for, and I know of no one who has ever been on the place or on the new trail."

An interesting story was told by W.H. Warren in Crane's store on Thirteenth street. Warren is engaged in the chicken business above the Zelle place. According to his statement he has succeeded in inventing a machine that he states he made a trip in, reaching the height of 100 feet. This took place at San Pedro not over a month or so ago. He is quite a young man and a clever machinist. He has a complete working model capable of carrying one man. It is made in the shape of a cigar, with a round head, and built of a light frame covered with tin and fitted with wings, and a tail like a fan. The machinery is worked with gasoline. A trial trip was made and was a success.

The inventor objects to exhibiting his machine, as he has not yet secured a patent on it. He says he secured his idea from watching the flight of the seagull. The machine is now in San Francisco. He has not yet used electricity, but admits that it would be a great improvement.

George E. Toyne, who interviewed Warren for the Haywards Journal, said to-night that Warren had a partner whom he had sent to Oroville to see if he could learn anything of the plans of the new airship for the purpose of comparison. /

HART AROUSED. / His Martial Spirit and Patriotism Expressed With the Ardor of a Soldier. /

All of General Hart's martial ardor and spirit of liberty was aroused when he read the editorial in the Bulletin of Friday evening which called him to task for being a party to the proposed use of dynamite for the purpose of destroying Havana. The article in question reads as follows:

A man of former prominence in this State is announced through a paper of standing as the agent or attorney of a man who proposes to destroy the city of Havana with dynamite. In apparent unconsciousness of the horror with which dynamite plots are regarded in all parts of the civilized world this degenerate invites a subscription of \$10,000,000 to furnish the means by which a rich, populous and beautiful city may be destroyed.

At a time when the world is devising ways to prevent wars with their inevitable consequences, this man, whom the people once honored with their votes for a high public office, plans a scheme by which the horrors of war may be increased a hundred fold. Whether or not the plan is practicable does not matter. It tends to familiarize the public mind with methods of destruction that have been considered too horrible to contemplate. Assassination is a playful manifestation of hate compared to this plan of wholesale murder. And all for what? It is not proposed to do evil that good may come of it. It is not proposed to offer a sacrifice of lives in a forlorn hope to promote a righteous cause.

The assassins of tyrants have been in darker periods represented as acting under a delusion that robbed assassination of its infamy. But this California lawyer, this man who was at one time the head of the Department of Justice for this great State, now proposes to make murder a speculation, for a sum of money he proposes to destroy the capital city of the most populous island in the West Indies. This proposition is made without any seeming sense of its monstrosity. It is discussed with the same disregard of moral sense the hired bravado exhibits when asked to name his price for murder.

It is no wonder that an eminent clergyman said in his Thanksgiving discourse that California is noted for the startling irregularity with which society advances. If this eminent clergyman had seriously considered the dynamite proposition he might have added that California is also noted for the startling irregularity with which civilization leaps backward into the dark ages. The fact that a proposition of this nature could be placed before the people of this State is a reflection upon our civilization. The least measure of punishment that could be anticipated from a self-respecting community would be a protest that would make the State an impossible place of residence both for the originator of the infamous proposition and for the agents of dissemination.

That law and journalism should have combined to make the destruction of great cities a legitimate speculation is much to be regretted. It is the province of law to teach how evils may be remedied through the exercise of reason. It is the province of journalism to show how society may lawfully protect itself from all kinds of desperadoes and anarchists. But in this case a lawyer uses a newspaper to familiarize the

public mind with a scheme that an average jailbird could not contemplate without horror.

The day for the promulgation of this project was badly chosen. It was a day when peace and good will were being invoked in public meetings and private residences. The churches were open that the people might be taught the blessing of peace and charity. In public halls all through the city the poor were invited to partake of the cheer of the season. On such a day the conscience of the people was startled by a proposition to wipe a great city off the face of the earth in consideration of the sum of \$10,000,000. /

Commenting thereon yesterday he said:

"My attention has been called to the editorial in the Bulletin of last night. All I have got to say in reference to it is that the destruction of Havana by dynamite is not half as horrible as the press dispatches of the butcheries of Cubans by the Spanish authorities.

"Of course, in the event that Havana was to be attacked by the airship with dynamite sufficient time would be given for non-combatants to leave the city.

"The apathy shown by the Government of the United States in extending belligerent rights to the Cubans, in view of the atrocities of the Spaniards toward the Cubans and American citizens, is such that it is not to be wondered at that the genius of American invention should discover a means whereby justice can be done to those heroes who are fighting for independence against the oligarchy of Spain."

"For my part, I consider it far more noble to aid a struggling people like the Cubans, who are trying to free themselves from the oppressions of Spain, even though by dynamite, than to be silent and say nothing and practically wink at the atrocities shown the Cubans by the Spanish authorities.

"In the event that it should become necessary to capture Havana, either with artillery or dynamite, it would no doubt be horrible for those who are located in that city. But at the same time if it is necessary to destroy Havana in order that the Cubans may gain their liberty Havana will be destroyed. And, notwithstanding the Bulletin, I predict that within ninety days Havana will be destroyed unless it surrenders to the Cuban forces.

"It appears that the Bulletin is greatly afraid of dynamite, yet we all know that the Government of the United States has been experimenting with dynamite guns for months, and, in fact, they have reached such a point of perfection that it is proposed to use it in guns for harbor defenses in the United States.

"Does the editor of the Bulletin think it is proper for the United States to throw a few hundred pounds of dynamite at some foreign vessel and sink her or blow her up and kill or maim those on board, and that such an act is not proper for the Cubans, who are fighting for liberty? We would simply be trying to keep a vessel out of one of our harbors, while the people of Cuba are fighting for the most precious boon of mankind. I submit that it would be more proper for the Cubans to use dynamite than for the United States to destroy a foreign vessel with a dynamite gun.

"In the event, as I have heretofore stated, that the airship should be used for military purposes in and around Havana it would be better to have a base of operations within thirty or forty miles of Havana.

"There is no doubt that Maceo would throw dynamite into Havana giving them ample notice of that purpose. But suppose that he should give such a notice it is quite evident that the Spanish authorities would pay no attention to it. They would simply remain there and doubt the feasibility of the airship and the horrors of dynamite until they actually felt it. Therefore it seems to me that if the Bulletin would use a little more force in trying to persuade the Government to recognize the belligerent rights of Cuba it might save itself the horror of hearing that a few hundred people had been destroyed by dynamite.

"It seems to be the American policy of late to permit all kinds of atrocities and to permit its citizens to be trampled upon in foreign countries without making more than a mere protest. As an American citizen who has known something of the horrors of war I protest against such a policy, and for one say that it is necessary for the Cubans to begin using dynamite. The sooner they use it the better it will be for Cuba and American civilization.

"Certainly the generalship shown by Antonio Maceo and his associates and the fact that the part of the island of which they have control has opened free schools on the system of the public schools of the United States convince me that Maceo would be warranted in using anything that God has created or man invented to give the people of Cuba their political rights and freedom."

The attention of the Examiner has also been attracted to the Bulletin's editorials, and it comments thereon yesterday as follows:

An evening contemporary gravely criticizes ex-Attorney-General Hart for his scheme to destroy Havana with dynamite dropped from a cruiser of the air. The scheme is rather blood-curdling, considered as practical warfare, but it is extremely interesting from the point of view of romance. The romantic quality is highly developed in General Hart. Personally he would not hurt a fly. He never did hurt one, as far as known. But he received his nomination to office as a hero accustomed to revel in carnage on ensanguined battlefields.

What more natural than that his mind should dwell on new deeds, even gorier than those whose

narration gave him his fame? The exercise will please him, and it will do nobody any harm.

We can think of no one better qualified to be the custodian of an airship than General Hart. Our evening contemporary is wrong to chide him for the use he proposes to make of his charge. The more exciting he can make its programme the more the gayety of the commonwealth will be promoted. A reference to the airship was medicine that soothed even "California's" gloom on Thanksgiving night.

To this the Bulletin in its editorial columns last night rejoined as follows:

The Examiner gently chides the Bulletin for having taken the proposition to destroy Havana by means of an airship seriously. The scheme our contemporary admits to be rather blood-curdling, but is considered interesting from a romantic point of view. It is not supposed that military authorities have been greatly disturbed by the menace of the airship. In fact General Weyler is more intent upon defending Havana from the insurgent forces than from the California general who derives his title from a civil office. But there are lots of people in the world who do not weigh either men or proportions [propositions?] scientifically. They take a man seriously if he takes himself seriously. It is not likely that California has heard the last of this dynamite scheme. It will be dilated upon as illustrating the characteristics of our people. The romance of the proposition will be visible indistinctly, if at all, through the smoke of a series of dynamite explosions.

People are now curiously awaiting further developments in this paper warfare, with sympathy leaning toward the side of the Cubans' advocate and defender. /

SAW IT FROM THE DOME. / Graphic Story Told by George Scott, Assistant to the Secretary of State.

George Scott, assistant to Secretary of State Brown, was at Sacramento on the night of the first reported visit of the aerial wonder to that city. He gives a graphic account of what he witnessed.

"Three friends and myself were standing in front of the Capitol," he said, "when the strange light first met our gaze. I said that I saw the light moving in the southeastern part of the city toward the northwest, but some one in the group ridiculed the idea.

"He said it looked like a light in some distant house on the hills, and that the appearance of its moving was due to the mistiness of the atmosphere.

"I had the key of the building in my pocket and suggested that we go up into the dome and take a look at the phenomenon. We climbed up and there saw the lights very distinctly, sweeping across the sky toward the northwest. There were three of the lights, and they appeared to be attached to some body, of which we could only discern a dim outline.

"It's no use trying to tell me that there is no airship," he sententiously concluded. /

WAS NOT STARS. / Attorney Hurst of Woodland Satisfied Himself as to a Strange Light.

WOODLAND, Cal., Nov. 28.—M.D. Hurst, a well-known lawyer of this city, discerned a bright and unusual light in the skies about 10 o'clock last night, traveling in a southwesterly direction from Woodland. Nearly all Mr. Hurst's neighbors also witnessed the phenomenon. Their first impression was that the mysterious light was a group of stars, but closer observation convinced them that this was wrong. The lights appeared to be electric and were watched for an hour.

Mr. Hurst is fully satisfied that if the mysterious object was a mechanical contrivance it could not have been operated by a person on the ground. He watched it upward of an hour from a window in his home. He does not pretend to say that it was an airship, but insists that it was not stars. Two Salvation Army officers, who were driving from Knights Landing to Woodland, corroborate Mr. Hurst. /

Heard Them Talk.

UKIAH, Cal., Nov. 28.—E.G. Case, grand chief ranger of the Ancient Order of Foresters of the Pacific jurisdiction, and William Held, official stenographer of the local Superior Court, left this afternoon for Potter Valley, a small town twenty miles north of this city.

A telephone message was received from Held at 7:30 o'clock tonight containing the startling information that they had seen an airship when within two miles of their destination. The two gentlemen were driving along in a double team when the airship passed so close to them that their horses were frightened.

The gentlemen distinctly saw the aerial wonder. It was cigar-shaped and was evidently suspended from a balloon.

1896 November 29 (Sun.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 1.

HART'S INVENTOR HAS THREE AERIAL FLIERS. / A Full Statement Made Over the Signature of the Attorney for the Alleged Cuban Filibuster. /

In reference to the airship which has been puzzling and astonishing many of the people of California I will say this:

I have not seen it personally, but have talked with the man who claims to be the inventor. I have spent several hours with him. He has shown me drawings and diagrams of his invention and I am convinced that they are more adapted for the purpose for which he claims them than any other invention making such claims that I have ever seen.

It seems to me that the evidence that The Call has been enterprising enough to collect in reference to this airship, the character of the people who have seen the same, the fact that it moves against the currents of air as well as with them, the fact that it has the power to dart from side to side or forward, ought to convince the people that there is something in the invention.

I asked the gentleman who claims to be the inventor what his desires were in regard to carrying on the business, and he stated that he did not desire any money; that he didn't ask or want any one to invest in it; that he was not a citizen of California, and that he had come here to perfect and test his airship as the climate and currents of air were most suitable to his purpose. He further stated that he had progressed so far since coming to California that California certainly was entitled to the honor of its invention, as it was in quite a crude state when he first came here; that he had two airships already constructed. One, he said, was of large size, capable of carrying three persons, the machinery, the fixtures and 1000 pounds of additional weight, and another that was much smaller, capable of carrying one man, the machinery, fixtures and 500 or 600 pounds of other matter.

He also stated that he was a cousin of Mr. Linn, who was Antonio Maceo's electrician, and that he expected to take it to Cuba for the purpose of aiding in the capture of Havana as soon as he could perfect it and acquaint his associates with the handling of it.

He was a man of dark complexion, dark eyed and about 5 feet 7 inches in height and weighed about 140 pounds. He looks considerably like the gentleman playing the part of Arion, the aerial acrobat, but is a little taller.

He claims to have three assistants with him, all of whom are mechanics; that he uses two kinds of power, gas and electricity; that his lights are sometimes produced by electricity and sometimes by gas, with the aid of reflectors.

He claims to have moved 120 miles at one flight and in a little less than six and a half hours, and at that time was not going wholly with the currents; that he uses electricity for propelling his vessel against the wind, and uses gas largely on going with the air currents. He does this in order to save power.

He proposes to build another airship, and in fact one of the parties interested with him has told me that they are now at work on the third airship, which is to be more commodious and more perfect than the other two, and that it would be so constructed that in the event the machinery got out of order and it should fall into the water it could be used as a boat by detaching a portion of the airship. When this is completed and ready for use the inventor intends to leave California for Cuba.

So far as the electrical power is concerned, the Fargo electric storage battery is of sufficient capacity, as to power and lightness, to furnish the requisite power for aerial navigation, and the inventor proposes to use this power in connection with the other for his operations. The battery can be stored to its full capacity, which is 20 horsepower, in 17 minutes.

I am of the opinion that this airship will be a success, and that its success is far more probable at this time than the Morse telegraphy was at the time he first offered the same to the public.

So far as the public is concerned this inventor does not ask anyone to invest in the enterprise. Perhaps this may be evidence of insanity. I will admit that this is the first time to my knowledge that anybody had anything in California in which he did not want anybody to invest money. / [signed] W.H.H. Hart.

[pic: Viewing the Mysterious Aerial Lights From the Dome of the State Capitol.]

1896 November 29 (Sun.) San Francisco Chronicle, p. 28.

STILL ANOTHER INVENTOR. / THIS TIME IT IS A HAYWARDS MAN. / Says He Has Solved the Airship Problem, and Takes a Ride.

/ Oakland Branch Office of the "Chronicle." / 950 Broadway, corner 9th St.

OAKLAND, November 28.—The people of Haywards, in common with the rest of the residents of Alameda county, have been taking great interest in the much-talked-of airship. Their interest has been intensified now by the discovery in their midst of an airship inventor, and one, moreover, who says he has built a flying machine that will actually fly.

W. H. Warren is the name of this ingenious person. He derives the income that enables him to carry on his scientific work from a chicken ranch.

About a month ago Warren completed a working model, capable of carrying one man, and took it down to San Pedro for the purpose of testing its practical value. In speaking of this trial trip he expresses himself as being satisfied that he has solved the problem of aerial navigation. He made the trial himself and found that he had perfect control over his machine. According to this statement he rose to the height of 100 feet and at that elevation maneuvered his invention in every direction.

The model is made in the shape of a cigar with a round head, being lightly constructed and furnished with wings and a tail like a fan. Gasoline is the motive power, but the inventor says he will use electricity in the larger model now in course of construction. He got his ideas from watching the flight of a sea gull. The model is now in San Francisco, where it will remain until the inventor has protected his product of ingenuity by patent rights.

1896 November 2[9] (Sun.) San Francisco Examiner, p. [22].

THE MOST PRACTICAL AIRSHIPS OF THIS GREAT AGE OF INVENTION. (general discussion of airship experiments). [Illus.: various airship designs.]

p. 23. HOW SOME OF THEM FLEW AND HOW SOME OF THEM DID NOT FLY. (discussion of aviation experiments; "Darius Green and His Flying Machine.")

Airship Hoaxes and Other Jokes....

Joe Mulhatton, an erratic newspaper man, was the author of several successful hoaxes. His story of an immense meteor that fell in Kansas attracted attention throughout the country. His most famous hoax was an account of thirteen hunters who hired a stage-coach in a small town in Texas and started to explore a great uninhabited region in the western part of the State in search of game. One of the party made a playful allusion to the bad luck supposed to attach to the number thirteen, but nothing more was thought of it. They never returned, but years afterwards a traveler came across the ruins of a stage-coach in which were thirteen skeletons. The Louisville "Courier-Journal," in 1883, contained an account by Mulhatton of an immense underground river flowing under Birmingham, Ala. While excavating for the foundation of a large building the stone crust that supported the few feet of earth above the river had been pierced, and it was breaking and giving way all over the city. Several buildings had fallen and one corner of City Hall had settled four feet into a fissure which was rapidly widening, and soon the entire building would go down into the dark underground river.

[Illus: various airship designs.]

p. 33. Send Up Your Own Airship. /

Now that everyone is scanning the sky at night for airships and traveling balloons perhaps the boys and girls who read this page would like to send up some of their own.

It is a simply easy matter to make a fine balloon, and this is the way to do it, as told by Colin Story, a San Francisco boy:

Procure a few sheets of well-woven tissue paper and cut the gores (fig. 1); paste these carefully together, making in all fourteen strips; look carefully over the surface, and see that there is no slit or hole left. (Fig. 2): cut the bottom and off evenly all round, take a piece of thin wire and twist it into a circle the size of the neck of the balloon, then have two cross-pieces a little bent in the middle to hold a piece of soft cotton, which must afterward be dipped in spirits of wine, the circular wire being then pasted on the bottom of the balloon. To inflate the balloon some one must hold it up by the top, and having thoroughly saturated your piece of cotton, place in the center of the wires and set fire to it, being very careful not to set fire to the balloon; when the air is well heated within, the balloon will rise to a great height.

[Illus.: a gore; completed balloon.]

1896 November 29 (Sun.) San Jose (Calif.) Daily Mercury, p. 7.

SAW THE AIRSHIP. / PROFESSOR M.S. CROSS TELLS OF THE STRANGE MOVING LIGHT. / The Dean is Positive What He Saw Could Not Have Been a Balloon. /

To the list of reliable witnesses already too formidable to be lightly contradicted, concerning the existence of an aerial visitor in this neighborhood on recent nights is added one whose testimony has had

great weight with many hitherto skeptical. Professor M.S. Cross, Dean of the University of the Pacific, saw the airship on its flight over East San Jose Thursday night and is convinced that it was neither a balloon, as practical doubters insist, nor an optical illusion, as is urged by more subtle skeptics.

The standing of Professor Cross, both on the score of his personal reputation and the position which he holds as head of the conservative educational institution of Coast Methodism, makes his testimony of the greatest weight.

"It was about 7 o'clock when my attention was called to the airship," said Professor Cross last evening. "Of course I am not prepared to say it was an airship. Certainly it was a light moving strangely through the sky and one for which I am unable to account on any other theory. I was visiting at the residence of Professor Worcester in East San Jose Thursday night. About 7 o'clock Professor Worcester, who was in the yard, called to me to come and see the airship.

"I immediately rushed out and by that time Professor Worcester said the ship had moved a considerable distance. We were not able to see any wings or anything of that kind. What we did see was a ball of light apparently about six inches in diameter. It was moving very fast in a southeasterly direction. Its motion was not steady, but it seemed to waver from side to side. Its altitude seemed to vary also as we watched it.

"How fast it was traveling of course I was unable to tell. It appeared to me to be going very rapidly, and if it was very far distant its speed must have been very great.

"I am confident it was no balloon. It was going too rapidly to be carried by the wind. It was a quiet night, what little breeze there was being, if I remember correctly, from the south, yet this light traveled in a southerly direction. Furthermore, a balloon has a peculiar up and down motion which the lunging of this light in no way resembled.

"Just before it disappeared the light seemed to broaden. Some people say the ship they have seen has two lights and perhaps as the ship veered to one side the two lights were exposed giving the appearance of one broad light. We were not able to watch it more than two or three minutes."

The point where Professor Cross saw the balloon is about two blocks north of where John Bawl claimed to have seen it. The stories tally exactly as to time, direction and general characteristics. The ship was lower when Bawl observed it. Professor Cross' story corroborates that of Professor Worcester.

1896 November 29 (Sun.) (Santa Barbara, Calif.) Morning Press, p. 2.

THE CALL'S AIRSHIP.

The "Call" and its air ship is supplying a "live" topic of conversation. The position taken by the journal in question, in an editorial on this subject is that the paper simply reports the testimony of witnesses of "unimpeachable veracity" and does not vouch for the existence of the air ship. The editorial further explains that the story would have been received with absolute confidence if the manifestation had had as a background London, or Paris, or Berlin; but that people could not conceive of anything of such transcendent importance in the scientific world actually coming into existence so near home. Then the "Call" editor rushes into a peroration. Continuing in the same line of thought he says:

"It was from the little obscure village of Philadelphia, in the wilderness of Pennsylvania, more than a century ago, that came the discovery of electricity and the invention of the lightning rod. It was from a poor barber shop in a British village came the invention which enables sea captains to determine with accuracy their exact locality upon the ocean at any hour of the day or night, no matter how far they may have drafted from their course by wind and waves."

Franklin is all right; but, in the name of the immortal Captain Jenks, what is meant by the second illustration. Have the wheels of airships found a lodgment in the editor's cranium? The storm tossed mariner, the ship owner and the merchant would contribute liberally to such an invention and the marine insurance companies would go out of business.

No one doubts that Maxim and others are making great progress with machines of aerial navigation, but the "Call" seems to be a "little ahead of the game."

Santa Cruz Sentinel, 11/29/2. Santa Cruzians are said to have seen the airship. We have always maintained that Santa Cruz liquor was as strong as can be obtained elsewhere, Boulder Creek excluded. If there is any thing in the air or under the water that Santa Cruzians can't see, we want to be taken behind the curtains and allowed to see it.

1896 November 30 (Mon.) (Bakersfield) Californian, p. 4.

THE AIRSHIP. / Bakersfield People Who Are Sure They Saw It.

Pon the air all boundless and underless [?] we glide.

Up, up amid the stars, sweeping the clouds aside.

Look up, look up, you suckers below and wonder there,

Dazzling your brains to know what in thunder we are. (Frazzling?)

Thus sing the airship sailors as they stand on the deck of their wonderful ship in its nightly voyages through the heavens over Bakersfield and the surrounding country.

There are many here who declare as no more a josh—not this song, but seeing the airship. Now comes [] A. Hughes, of Hughes drug store, and declares that he saw something set against the western horizon early [Friday] evening that was very surprising, to say the least of it—very unusual to say more. It looked like a great moving, white looking length, similar in appearance to a street electric light. Mrs. Hughes also saw it and also a young man living with the family. It was not very high, and it was moving slowly toward the south. Mrs. Webster, at the Land Company, avers that on Thanksgiving evening as she and her husband were driving home from Poso, they also saw a wonder in the heavens. It showed blue and white lights. They looked at it through a telescope, and it appeared to be balloon like in its construction. It was gliding slowly along toward the south.

Mr. and Mrs. Webster related this story to a few people in the Land Company office. Inasmuch as the public is so incredulous over the airship stories that have been reported of late, they do not care to say much about it. Hence the meagreness of the story.

A long time ago when the divine Tennyson dipped into the future, he / Saw the heavens filled with commerce, argosies of magic sails, / Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bails.

It may be that time has stolen unawares upon the world, and that by this time next year all about this mysterious something seen in the heavens of late by incredulous people, will be part of the pioneer history of air navigation. Quien sabe?

So in the light of this possible fact, keep your eyes open and heavenward these nights and watch for that mysterious heavenly visitor.

Daily Californian (Bakersfield), Mon. Nov. 30, p. 2.

The Call continues to add to its list of men of unimpeachable character who solemnly aver that they have seen some wonder in the sky which they believe to be an airship. The rivals of the Call still continue to maintain that the whole thing is a fake. If so, then some of the most prominent citizens of the State, college professors and others, must be a conscienceless lot of liars. What a joke it would be on the jealous contemporaries of the Call if the airship should turn out to be an actuality.

Daily Colusa Sun, 11/30/3. Attorney Hurst Views the Strange Light (from SF Call, 11/29/1).

The wild hurrah about airships was followed by the football craze, and now the excitement about both has melted into thin air.

1896 November 30 (Mon.) Daily Humboldt Standard (Eureka, Calif.), p. 4.

Local Odds and Ends.

Three responsible gentlemen of this city, one a county official, another an attorney and the third an engineer, claim that they and their families saw the airship on Saturday night. They watched it for 20 minutes and claim that many other people will testify to the correctness of their statement.

p.4. It has been proven almost beyond a doubt that the air ship entered Abe Abrahamson's store room and stole two dressed turkeys and several chickens the night before Thanksgiving.

(Eureka) Daily Humboldt Standard, Mon. Nov. 30, p. 4b. Sellers' Air-Ship.

Colonel D.K.B. Sellers has discovered an air-ship—in fact he discovered one before the election and filled it with gas from his own lungs, saying that the rise in the price of wheat was due to a ten million dollar gold syndicate organized to elect McKinley and corner the wheat market so as to wring the money out of the consumers of flour. He sent out little balloons filled with his "laughing gas," making the same statements to the voters. But his air-ship was as great a fake as any that has since been launched. The Standard punctured these little balloons by pointed truths and called the attention of its readers to the fact

that his statements about wheat were not correct....

Fresno Morn. Republican, 11/30p.1 / ANOTHER AIRSHIP. / A Chicken Rancher Solves Aerial Navigation.

OAKLAND, November 28.—W.H. Warren, a chicken rancher of Haywards, has come forward as a claimant for airship honors. He says that he has invented an airship capable of carrying one man, and is satisfied that he has solved the problem of aerial navigation. He says he made a trial trip recently and had perfect control over the machine. He rose to a height of 100 feet and maneuvered the machine in every direction. The machine is cigar shaped and furnished with wings and a tail. The motive power is gasoline, but the inventor says he will use electricity. He got his idea from watching seagulls fly.

1896 November 30 (Mon.) Oakland Tribune, p. 5.

EITHER MARS OR VENUS. / Professor Burckhalter Tells of the "Airship's" Light. / HE LAUGHS AT THE TALES. / The Astronomers, He Said, Have Not Noted Anything Unusual. / WHAT THE WATCHERS SAW. / He Says the Present Theories Are All Pure Fakes. /

There is one confirmed skeptic in regard to the airship. He is Professor Burckhalter of the Chabot Observatory. His time has been taken up lately by persons who are anxious to view the aerial machine through the telescope. Many persons have advanced the theory that the airship is a clever advertising dodge of some gas company that is trying to boom a new kind of illuminating gas. Professor Burckhalter laughs at this theory as well as others.

"If there were any airship I would turn the telescope on it, you may be sure," said Prof. Burckhalter today. "What people have been taking for the brilliant electric light of an airship is nothing more or less than one of the two planets, Mars or Venus. People want to believe in the airship, and it is astonishing the way they deceive themselves. Venus is as brilliant as an arc light and does move very slowly through the heavens. Anyone who pays a little attention to the heavens might be deceived into believing it an electric light gleaming through the clouds. Last Saturday night when there was such excitement over the airship, what people were looking at was the planet Mars, which appeared very brilliant that evening.

The theories in regard to the airship are pure imagination. If there were any strange objects in the heavens, we would certainly know of it, and all these theories are, I believe, pure fakes."

1896 November 30 (Mon.) (Sacramento, CA) Record-Union, p. 3.

NUNAN AND THE AIR-SHIP. / Pat Relates His Soul-Harrowing Experience. / How He Was Beguiled into Taking a Ride in the Sky-Scraping Craft. /

A group of men were seated around the stove in the back room of an up-town saloon a couple of nights ago, engaged in a vigorous discussion. It was not free silver they were debating, but airship possibilities and probabilities.

There were a couple of men in the crowd who believed an airship had been sailing about, but the others were skeptical, and the discussion was waxing warm when Patrick Nunan entered and took a seat close to the stove. He was not long in getting into the airship discussion, and insisted on being heard.

"Now, me byes," said Pat, as he rubbed his cold hands together. "Oi'll till ye phwat Oi know about the airship, if ye'll listen an' not put in yer oars till Oi get through wid me story.

"Well, a couple of wakes ago Oi was out in the counthry near—but niver moind where it was. Oi wax makin' a short cut for Sacraminto across the fields, an' sat down at the foot av a three to rist an' have a pull at me poipe, whin Oi saw a felly comin' t'wards me, d'ye moind. Whin lie came up to me he looked about in a scared sart av a way, an' thin he turned to me an' sez he, 'Hello, Pat!' sez he.

"'Sure an' ye hev me name all roight,' sez Oi, 'but phwere 'n the divil did ye foind it out?'

"'Niver moind about that,' sez he, 'but till me, phwere are ye goin',' sez he.

"'O'm goin' to Sacraminto, wid the help o' God an' a pair o' good sound ligs,' sez Oi.

"'Well, thin, ye needn't wark there,' sez he, 'for ye cun roide wid me.'

"'Oi'm yer mon!' sez Oi.

"He towld me in a sart of whisper to folly him, an' he lid the way to a thicket, phwere he showed me a big machine the loike av which no livin' mon iver gazed an befoor.

"'Phwat the divil koind av a waggin is that?' sez Oi. 'Phwere's yer harse?'

"'He's gone ter grass,' sez he. 'Harses ain't in anny more,' sez he. 'All ye hev to do is sit shtill an' Oi'll take yer fer a roide the loike av which ye niver injoyed befoor,' sez he.

"An' bad sess to him, he did. There wuz two chairs in the contrivance, an' Oi sat down an wan av thim an' he an the ither, a-facin' me, d'ye moind. He put his finger an some koind a plug an' prised it, loike that. Thin a pair av big wings an the machine begin ter flap. A lot av wheels set ter buzzin' an' begorra the thing begin to roise aff the ground! Me hair begin ter roise, too, an' Oi thried ter jump out.

"Houl an!" he cried, 'phwat ther divil are ye thryin' ter do? Sure ye'd be killed, mon, af ye jumped out, for we're up in ther air!' sez he.

"Shtop!" Oi yilled, 'an' lit me go home ter me wife an' little wans! D'ye take me fer a turkey buzzerd?' sez Oi.

"But ther divil a hair did he care how much I hollered. He jist turned his eyes upward, loike a dyin' calf, an' gazed at the hivens, an' all ther toime we waz goin' higher and higher. There waz nothin' fer me ter do but sit shtill.

"Well, Oi looked out av a little windy by me soide, an' Oi could see that we waz passin' over Sacraminto, an' all ther toime we were goin' higher an' higher."

The crowd hitched up their chairs a little closer as Pat stopped to wet his throat with a glass of whisky and then he proceeded with his strange story.

"Thin it waz that Oi begin to feel a toightness in me chist, an' Oi could hardly brathe. Oi looked at me companion an' saw there waz somethin' wrong wid him, too. His face waz ez phite as a shate, an' by all that's good an' houly blood waz runnin' out av his nose an' mouth!

"Oi thried ter spake ter 'im, but me vice waz gone! Me tongue waz as thick as the head av a pizened pup an' as dhry as thet av a militiaman an the Fourth av July! Sez Oi to mesilf, 'Oh, if Oi only hed a schooner av beer!' sez Oi, but there wasn't a wayside inn annywhere in soight.

"An' all this toime we waz goin' higher an' higher. Thin me companion fainted an' fill fram his chair to the bottom av the machine. Oi looked at 'im for a moment an' thin Oi filt mesilf a-goin', an' thin iverything aroun' me grew black an' Oi waz, as the lawyers say, non compass mentiss—Oi didn't know nothin'.

"Afther a bit Oi came to an' thried to roise, whin Oi pitched forrard an' me head came in contact wid some part av the worrucks—the doynamo or somethin' av the soort—an' may the divil take me if the whole thing didn't shtop roight thin an' there, loike the gran'father's clock in the song, d'ye moind.

"Thin, the divvil waz to pay, sure enough, for the machine pitched forrard an' begin to go down! Ah, me friends, the thoughts av it is almost enough to dhrove one to dhrink.

"Yis, me bye, Oi'll take wan wid ye, an' thin conclude me shtory, for there isn't much lift av it." And Pat swallowed about four fingers of Kentucky whisky that first saw the light of day when it emerged from a Sacramento basement.

"Well, as I befor informed yes, the airship waz now goin' down as fast an' smooth as iver ye saw a glass av the craythur go down the throat av a man after a night's bat, an' Oi'll niver forget the harrar that came over me on that momintous occasion. As we discindid me breath came back to me, an' the swellin' lift me throat.

"We were goin' down loike a rocket an' Oi soon found that we would shstrike in the ocean. As we neared the wather I gave a yill that would have done cridit to a Comanche Indian, an' thin we sstruck!"

"Oi could feel the cowld stuff rushin' into me mouth an' ears an' there waz a light flittin' about, an Oi could hear the voices av me little darlints who were cryin' an callin' for Papa! Thin a hilpin' hand seemed to take hould av me an' lift me up, an' Oi asked, 'Phwere did she stroike?' Oi idintified the vice av me lovin' woife Bridget, as she said:

"Stroike, is it? Ye dhrunken villin, ye'ye upsit the washtub I set by the bed to bathe me fate, an' now look at the flure that I scrubbed an' claned only this blissld marnin'!"

"Me frinds, Oi looked aroun' me, an' be me sowl, Oi waz in me own house! Oi'm under the imprishin Oi had been dramln'."

Then the barkeeper turned out the lights and the crowd groped their way out into the cold frosty night.

ANOTHER VERSION. / A Washington Man's Story of the Recent Air-Ship.

Now comes the Woodland "Mail" with its explanation of the airship mystery. It declares that King Lee of Washington, who is something of a hunter as well as politician, had wounded and captured a huge pelican and when it was () to soar aloft he turned it loose with a Japanese lantern tied to one of its legs.

Occasionally, Lee says, the pelican would squawk, and this was what some persons heard who said the occupants of the airship were singing as they passed over Sacramento.

This is pretty rough on the warblers of the upper air currents.

Sacramento Bee, Nov. 30,4. Another Slap at Sacramento. / (From the Marysville Appeal.)

Stockton and Sacramento are now quarrelling over the veracity of the denizens thereof. Strange how some people are everlastingly chasing rainbows. /

Probably Just as Hazy. / (From the Vacaville Reporter.)

Wonder if the air ship described in The Sacramento Bee is in any way connected with the advance agent of prosperity, whose location seems to be somewhat a matter of uncertainty.

1896 November 30 (Mon.) San Francisco Bulletin, p. 4.

OUR LATE MARTIAN VISITORS. /

Our versatile and esteemed contemporaries have evidently exhausted their wit on the phantom airship which has recently absorbed so large a share of the public attention. It does not appear whether there was only one of these weird celestial visitors or a flock of them. They were seen at various points around the Bay of San Francisco. In the interior they were observed to circle around mountain tops. Observation established the fact that in this city they were seen most frequently in the vicinity of isolated barrooms. The opinion that was general in relation to them at first was that it or they, as the case may be, were not at all celestial in their origin, but terrestrial in every sense of the term. The consensus of opinion was that there was only one of them, and that it was simply the airship whose advent has been so long expected. Even the utilitarian aspect was gravely considered, and what it was destined to accomplish both in peace and war was pointed out with great minuteness by our more scientific contemporaries.

There appeared to be a general agreement among those who were fortunate enough to witness the apparition that it displayed two lights—a red one and a white one close by—but the body of the machine was but faintly outlined. The Gradgrinds who are numerous in nearly all communities, and especially prominent in this, have averred that they were nothing more than Japanese lanterns, which being red, with a lighted candle inside, would exhibit a red light, with a white one contiguous. These lanterns, in the prosaic minds of these investigators, were attached to toy balloons, and were let off at night by amusement seekers, individuals anxious to compensate for the non-appearance of Flammarion's showers of meteors said to have been due just at this time. But no great faith need be placed in the conclusions of these dull persons. There is not one of them who could ever be made to see a sea serpent in a shovel-nosed shark nor a hobgoblin in the scarecrow of a corn field.

But their unreliability in this case seems to have been demonstrated more clearly than usual if the late discovery in relation to the airship should be confirmed. It is reported that a manuscript of strange characters has been found in the vicinity of the Twin Peaks. No such form of writing had ever been seen before. By an application of the system employed in deciphering the Champollion stone, some of the secrets which it contains are said to have been penetrated. It is regarded by those who have examined it to be a diary of dwellers in Mars who have been visiting our globe, and must have been dropped from the airship in one of its flights in the neighborhood in question. It would seem from it that our Martian visitors were not at all delighted with their trip, nor what they saw. They could not comprehend our slow and painful system of locomotion. The people they saw seemed to plod along with leaden legs, whereas the light Martian, in his luminous planet, skims along over the surface without the least muscular exertion, and at any speed he pleases. The painful plodding march of Greer Harrison to San Jose, of which glimpses appear to have been gained in the Martian airship, was a source of uproarious merriment.

The general aspect of things did not suit the visitors from another world at all. The biting north wind which has been blowing for some days, made the Martian nerve twinge after a most unpleasant fashion. Nor could they understand at all the things which came into the line of their vision. The City Hall was taken to be the mausoleum of some long departed Cheops. The lofty elevations which we call skyscrapers, pierced with square holes in regular order to the top, were not understood. People with the remarkable slow terrestrial step were seen rushing into and out of them, but for what purpose no Martian of them all could divine. The idea that they could subserve any purpose of habitation or business never appears to have entered one of their heads. The Park alone recalled glimpses of their beautiful Mars, though no canals were visible. But while nothing in particular was pleasing to these heavenly immigrants, the cartoons of some of our contemporaries, which they managed to hook up, and were in a sense ideographic to them, were especially displeasing and made them resolve to float away to some other and more inviting portion of our globe.

1896 November 30 (Mon.) The Call (San Francisco), p. 1.

HART'S ROUTE CONFIRMED / Aerial lights Seen Flitting in San Fernando Valley. / SIMILAR

PHENOMENON SEEN IN ALAMEDA. / Brief Review of the Remarkable Developments of the Past Week. / SAGE REFLECTIONS MADE BY MAYOR DAVIE. / Sees No Cause for Surprise in the Claim That Aerial Navigation Is Possible. /

It is now about ten days since the first report regarding the elusive and mysterious aerial lights came from Sacramento. Since then developments in reference to them have been rapid and sensational, but mystery still surrounds the object and the human agency that are said to be responsible for their appearance.

At this time the history of the myth, phenomenon, airship or what ever it may prove to be, will bear a brief review. This is given that the readers of The Call may the more readily and intelligently grasp the present situation.

Incredulity, deep and general, greeted the first report which credited the lights to an aerial voyager. Next it was announced that George D. Collins, an attorney of this City, was the legal representative of the inventor and manipulator of the wonder of the starlit sky. This honor Mr. Collins did not disavow, but was unconquerably obdurate when it came to a question of disclosing the name of his client, the location where the marvel was put together, or the place where it found exemption from the eyes of the curious.

The knowledge that this interesting information was lodged in his legal custody caused him to be besieged by newspaper reporters, speculators, investors, cranks and a horde of curiosity-seekers. Under the pressure thus put upon his time and patience, he made numerous statements relative to the matter that was absorbing public attention and his connection therewith.

Unfortunately these statements, as published in the various newspapers, did not fit together quite as accurately as a scientifically constructed edifice should. Among other things he allowed it to be inferred that a Dr. E.H. Benjamin had aided in the construction of the invention.

Meanwhile reports continued to come to hand daily of strange and luminous visions. Men well and most favorably known in scientific, official, professional, business and educational circles claimed to have seen these nocturnal visitations of moving lights at great altitudes. None, however, appear to have secured a clear view of the body to which it was supposed these aerial lights were attached, though most observers of the phenomenon stood ready to assert that they were guided in their course athwart the horizon by human power. Sacramento, Oakland and San Jose furnished the most frequent and startling descriptions of the mystery.

Suddenly came the news that ex-Attorney-General W.H.H. Hart had been substituted for Mr. Collins as the legal custodian of the secrets and destinies of the reputed airship.

This was followed by the announcement, on the authority of General Hart, that the airship mystery was only incidental to a full-fledged and extraordinary filibustering scheme for the capture or destruction of Havana, the stronghold of the Spanish authorities in Cuba, by the use of dynamite. He further informed the startled public that the aerial warship to be used in this enterprise would be designed to carry half a ton of dynamite, in addition to its necessary appurtenances and crew. He also, over his own signature, averred that two airships were now in readiness to sail the ethereal blue, and that another, on modified and improved plans, was in course of construction. As soon as this last-mentioned craft was completed and the crew made thoroughly acquainted with its handling it was to take flight, he said, to Havana, there to aid the Cubans in their struggle for independence.

For his advocacy of the use of dynamite General Hart was taken to task by the Bulletin, which was tentatively abetted by the Examiner. This attack elicited a spirited and martial-toned rejoinder. The fear in the public mind now is that the scene of war may be transferred from the carnage-stained fields of Cuba to the unoffending columns of the local newspaper.

Shortly after the name of Dr. E.H. Benjamin appeared in connection with the mystery of the air he disappeared from his lodgings at 633 Ellis street, where he had lived for two years, leaving nothing more than a carefully locked trunk behind. Yesterday morning he called for his baggage and then "flew the coop," as the detectives phrase it, leaving no trace as to his future movements, but on the contrary taking precautions to cover his tracks.

Saturday night reputable people of Alameda aver that they saw the floating lights, and an electrician states it bore all the characteristics of an electric light.

Anderson, a town about ten miles south of Redding, lays claim to the honor of a visit from the aerial nondescript on Saturday night.

Mayor Davie contributes some pertinent philosophical reflections to the literature of the topic of the day.

Dispatches from Los Angeles last night state that the strange lights have been seen in the neighborhood for the past few days.

General Hart had something further to say yesterday on the use of dynamite in war.

"In the event that an airship could be made to destroy a city," he said, "that in itself would firmly

establish the peace of the civilized world. It would be realized that it would be no use to fight against such means. The very fact that such a thing could be done would bring about universal peace. The result would be that the nations would resort to arbitration in all matters of international differences. It would no longer be a matter who has the biggest cannon and who can shoot the farthest. There would be no use for navies or fortifications and thus would be brought about absolute peace."

He also took occasion to explain that the 120-mile flight referred to in yesterday's Call was made with the larger airship. The smaller one, he added, is capable of moving much more rapidly. By going with the atmospheric currents and using the electric power at the same time, he claimed, it can attain a speed of forty to fifty miles an hour.

One point that has been noticed is that Attorney Hart intimated several days ago that the course of the airship would be southerly and dispatches confirmatory of this were last night received from Los Angeles. /

OVER ALAMEDA. / The Mysterious Lights Made Their Appearance on Saturday Night Last.

Alameda had another spell of excitement over the airship on Saturday night, when the mysterious light that has been puzzling residents of the towns about the bay made its appearance over the southern portion of the Encinal city.

Shortly after dark the family of a gentleman living at Versailles station, while observing the heavens from the southern windows of the house[,] saw a big white light suddenly appear high in the air about over Bay Farm Island. It seemed to flare out in a second as though something that had obscured it had suddenly been removed. All watched with breathless interest while it rose, passing rapidly westward meanwhile to a greater height, where it seemed to pause for an instant. It then turned toward the south and passed on in that direction.

It appeared about the size of a man's head when first seen, but grew smaller and smaller until it passed out of sight. The time that elapsed between the first appearance and the disappearance was about twenty minutes, and all agreed that it seemed to lurch from side to side as it went southward.

A gentleman visiting at the house, who has had considerable to do with electric light power, and who saw the aerial mystery, is convinced that it could have been nothing else than an electric light of great power. /

ANDERSON IN LINE. / Her Citizens Claim to Have Seen the Aerial Mystery in Its Flight.

REDDING, Cal., Nov. 29.—Anderson, located about ten miles south of Redding, is either in line with other cities of the coast or else her citizens have the same "night owl" proclivities, for it is current talk that the aerial monster passed over Anderson last evening about 20 minutes past 8. Her citizens claim to have seen the stranger in its flight.

It was first observed from the corner of East Center and Ferry streets by a reputable citizen noticing a peculiar light in the westward. He called the attention of others to the seeming phenomenon, and quite a crowd collected. It was generally conceded that this must be the long-talked-of airship. Its course was south and west, and the lights soon disappeared in the south. The light was large and brilliant and seemed to move in a steady course. /

AN ORAL REVERIE. / Mayor Davie Says Some Pointed Things About a Current Topic of Interest.

OAKLAND, Cal., Nov. 29.—Mayor Davie has seen a phase of human inconsistency during the past week that has amused him. It is best told in his own words:

"Whether there be an airship cruising nightly over this neighborhood," said his honor to a little group of friends yesterday, "is only a secondary matter with me at this time. If there be not one now, I am convinced that the problem of aerial navigation will soon be solved. What is now interesting me is the peculiarities of some newspapers and some newspaper readers.

"Early Sunday, as you all know, we find on our doorsteps small libraries which are called daily newspapers. We look through them and find that a good portion of them is occupied with the marvelous things that scientists perfect and prophesy. During the past few months this has been more the case than ever before. The newspapers publish all these things as facts, profess to believe them, and the majority of their readers accept them as truth. Being somewhat of a scientist myself, I am led to believe in many things that now appear improbable. But I have a precedent for it.

"A year ago if any one had told me that they could produce a ray of light that would photograph my watch through a wooden box would I have been called an ass for doubting him? Yet I have seen this very thing done. We have all read of the progress of aeronautics, and yet when a thousand reputable citizens declare that they have seen some kind of a machine navigating the skies, and believe their eyesight as proof that some one has done what the newspapers have told us for years is only a matter of time, most of those papers try to make us believe that they have been fooling us with their probabilities, and that their stories of scientific prophecies are all fool stories.

"Several years ago there was an old inventor named Dr. Seering who lived in this city. One day I

heard a conversation between him and the late Walter Blair, who build the Piedmont cable road. Seering told Blair not to think of putting his fortune into an expensive trench in the ground as in a short time electric-cars would be running all over Oakland. Blair laughed at the idea, put his trench in the ground and put his fortune into it, and electricity was substituted on his system after the road had been sold by the Sheriff. Dr. Seering fell dead on the street here about two years ago, but a few weeks before his death he told me that with aluminum and electricity an airship would soon be a certainty. I don't say this as proof that there is a successful airship now in use, but I will say that if I were to read in to-morrow's paper absolute proof that one has been constructed, I should not be any more surprised than Walter Blair was after he saw his mistake." /

SOUTH OF TEHACHAPI. / The Aerial Wonder Appears to the People of San Fernando Valley.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Nov. 29.—The operator of the California airship seems to find the climatic conditions south of Tehachapi very favorable for the evolutions of his bird-like machine.

Persons whose occupations keep them up late into the night relate experiences of having seen strange and peculiar lights during the past three nights moving about near the summit of the mountains or crossing the valleys at a rapid rate.

These visitations have heretofore been witnessed by only a few persons, but tonight scores of residents of East Los Angeles saw the flitting light in the direction of Pasadena moving along the foothills toward Santa Monica.

A Call correspondent took great pains this evening to verify the reports about the lights, and is now thoroughly satisfied that some very unusual spectacle was seen by a large number of persons, all of whom gave substantially the same description of what they saw, and there can no longer be any question but that some figure of huge outline and carrying a light has been seen in the San Fernando Valley and along the foothills extending from the valley to Santa Monica.

Motorman Millsap of the Downey avenue car line, which runs into East Los Angeles, gave the best description among the many interviewed. He is quite sure that what he saw is an aerial machine operated by a human being.

p.6: AN AERIAL ELOPEMENT. /

Come fly with me, my aeroplane / Is tugging at its anchor chain;

We'll slip our cable, mount, and feel / The old world drop below our keel,

Come fly with me, my airship waits / With wings a-flutter at your gates; While deep in night this planet gropes / We'll climb the upper stellar slopes.

Come fly with me beneath the arch / Of swelling blue we'll join the march— The stately constellations dance, / Down thru the heaven's wide expanse. Come fly with me, sweet to our ears / Will come the music of the spheres When yonder solar system jars / In the aria of the stars. Come fly with me, my love, we'll stray / Along the misty Milky-Way; We'll speed around the cycle track / Where wheels the whirling zodiac. Come fly with me, we'll chase the Bear / And Ursa Minor to his lair; We'll drag bull Taurus from his pen / And beard old Leo in his den. Come fly with me o'er starry seas, / We'll sail among the Pleiades. We'll tempt the astral gales that blow / Loud in old Saturn's beard of snow. Come fly with me, we'll soar and sail / Up where the comet whisks his tail; We'll take in Venus as we move / Along, and meet the Queen of Love. Come fly with me, away we'll bound / Where distant Neptune goes his round, Where Jupiter in glory turns / Where Mars, the ruddy war-star, burns. Come fly with me, out in the voids / We'll chase the fleets of asteroids; In airy race away we'll skip / With Argo Navis—skyey ship. Come fly with me, we'll take a run / Around some mighty central sun, And orb among the rolling spheres / Throughout the long sidereal years. Come fly with me, my aeroplane / With wings a-spread tugs at her chain.

We'll slip our lines, spring up and feel / The old world drop below our keel.

Tom Gregory / San Francisco, November 29.

SF Chronicle, 11/30/6. These Don't Fly Too High (jokes column)

1896 November 30 (Mon.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 6.

This Ought to Settle It. / From the Hanford "Sentinel."

Last night when the sullen black clouds of Jove were rolling in chaotic gloom and the storm king's wand was sweeping the heavenly vistas in an effort to command "peace be still"; when the whirling winds had parted and rifted the murky elements into billowy columns and the luminary of night had cast his silvery sheen upon the valley from over giddy Sawtooth's massive brow: when earth's firesides were still and the lamps had ceased to flicker over the dreamy pages of the student; when the dogs were off their

watch and the whippoorwill was picking its teeth with a blackberry brier, Will Matthewson and Mont Hornbeck, two reputable and trusted young men of Hanford, whose antecedents are substantially correct and whose reputations for truth and veracity are fully 16 to 1, witness and give testimony that they saw a great light at an angle of forty-five degrees in the heavens.

The light was not a bull's-eye lantern, because it was too high up; it was not the north star, because it was too low down; it was not a Roman candle, because the Romans are not in it nowadays; it was not a comet, because it had no tail; it was not a meteor, because it didn't meet anybody; it was not an electric light, because Lacey don't do business that, high up; it must have been an airship because it was not in the water. The light was surrounded by a halo, the prismatic beams of which so dazzled the eyes of the beholders that the true form of the ship was obscured, but amid the blaze of glory could he seen the outline of its massive wings as their rapid strokes carried it through space at a rapid rate. • • • There is a plan on foot to snare it next time it crosses this way.

1896 November 30 (Mon.) San Francisco Examiner, p. 8.

HIS VISION OF AN AIRSHIP. / Policeman Campbell's Early Morning Adventure With a Steer. / Active Poundmen With Riatas Come to the Rescue at a Very Opportune Moment. /

Policeman "Scotty" Campbell had an experience Saturday morning.

It happened in this way: Scotty's beat is on McAllister street, from Market to Fillmore, a district inhabited by peaceable citizens and servant girls, also peaceable. Being a good officer, Scotty long ago acquainted himself with the fact that the aforesaid peaceable citizens are all abed before midnight, and that the most romantic servant girl on the beat returns her mistress' sealskin jacket before 1 o'clock in the morning. This being so, it is not strange that at half-past 1 o'clock Saturday morning Scotty should seek to gain a much-needed rest by perching for a moment on the top of a freshly painted fire hydrant at the corner of Polk and McAllister streets. He gazed meditatively at the light in the clock tower of the Odd Fellows' building, and speculated vaguely on the possibilities of the airship as a factor in future warfare.

While thus engaged Scotty was wholly unconscious of the commotion that was in progress out in the Western Addition on account of the actions of some hilarious young men and a muley steer. The steer was a vagrant from a Butchertown band, and had been goaded by the young men until it thirsted for human blood. Having treed its tormentors, the steer turned its attention to two pound-men armed with riatas and professional seal. The chase led down Golden Gate avenue to Polk and down Polk to where Scotty sat on the hydrant deep in speculations concerning aerial navigation. He had just reached the point where he was about to decide the respective qualifications of Attorney Collins and Attorney Hard, when—Biff!

The curly pate of the muley steer had landed square in the middle of the policeman's back.

That settled it. Without unnecessary loss of time Scotty shinned up a Corinthian column that supports the porch of a convenient residence, and from that secure retreat shouted directions to the poundmen who had arrived on the scene. The steer was captured, and Scotty now has a true story to tell to a reporter on a morning paper that makes a specialty of real fly-by-night airships.

(San Jose) Evening News, 11/30/2. The local jokers appear to enjoy the airship fake, and continue to manufacture tissue paper balloons.

1896 November 30 (Mon. eve.) Woodland, Calif., Daily Democrat, p.3.

DAVISVILLE DOINGS /...That Mysterious Light.

What is it? This thing they call the airship I mean. It has not yet been my good fortune to see this mysterious wanderer, and at present the nights are too chilly for star-gazing. But accepting the stories told of it as wholly or partly true, we must believe there is something in them. It is certainly not a meteor. Meteors adhere strictly to a single direction and are generally in a hurry. It cannot be a kite or a balloon, for either of these must go with the wind. It cannot be a toy machine sent up simply to mystify the people, for the simplest of these would be too expensive for frequent repetitions, and I do not take stock in any airship, which, if of any size, would certainly require powerful machinery and produce a noise that would be heard a long distance. Now, I'm not going to say that it is not an airship, for in this age of scientific discovery, when one may talk to a friend across the continent, or by means of the X ray explore that same friend's internal structure, lights, liver and gizzard, at closer range; when one may listen to the songs and speeches of a past generation, or gaze upon the portraits of stars that lie beyond the reach of the Lick

telescope, I may doubt, but I will not dispute. If a man should tell me that he had discovered a practical route to Mars, or the moon, I should consider it possible. And so there may be an airship. I don't know and cannot say there isn't but supposing such a thing to exist, is it not almost incredible that some level-headed observer has not detected it before this? The inventor of this machine may have rendered it invisible by the use of some hue outside of the visible spectrum, like Ambrose Bierce's mountain lion, but still it must be a substance, and in its passage athwart the sky it must eclipse the stars that lie in its path. The arc it describes in passing from horizon to horizon would determine its distance. This obtained it would be an easy task to calculate its speed, and the time of passing a given star would fix its length. Its depth might be determined by the vertical distance of the stars eclipsed, and your trained observer be able to give a better sketch of this strange thing than the average man could obtain if it were lying on the ground before him. Why don't these influential journalists who talk so much about the airship get our old friend Barwick hold of it?