When Buildings and Battleships Fly

MARVELOUS POSSIBILITIES IN THE NEGATION OF GRAVITATION

Washington Professor Claims to Have Discovered Earth's Greatest Secret

THE discovery of perpetual motion, the transmutation of metals and the annihilation of gravitation are mysteries which have baffled the minds of men ever since, and probably long before, the dawn of civilization.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century whenever these fascinating subjects were broached, the scientist could only answer, and rightly, too, "Impossible," for he had neither theoretical data nor experimental evidence to indicate that such things could be.

With the advent of radium, however, a long step was taken looking toward the ultimate realization of these little-understood phenomena, for by its wonderful manifestations of radiant energy it has given us an insight into the actuality of what we term perpetual motion, projecting as it does its corpuscles carrying electric charges and capable of doing work without losing any of its original weight and without cessation; likewise it offers an analogous condition to that of transforming the baser metals into those of precious worth, since it is now known with certainty that radium changes into helium.

These are not mere glittering generalities, but cold, hard facts, obtained by rigid experiment by such observers as Becquerel, the Curies and Lord Ramsey.

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BUT gravitation! Is this attractive force which draws bodies upon or near the surface to the earth to forever remain without the pale of man's analysis? Radium offers no solution for the mysterious attraction, although Newton did solve its laws.

When asked what gravitation is it is easy to say that it is the force which causes every particle of matter in the universe to attract every other particle. But just what this force may be is another and more serious question and as difficult to answer as "What is electricity?"

In either case the laws governing their actions are quite well known, and since all kinds of energy, such as light, heat and mechanical motion, may be changed from one to another, it has been assumed that gravitation is merely another phase of electric or magnetic action, and according to the extraordinary experiments of Professor Scharf, of Washington, D. C., it would seem to verify the theory that there is a very close linking between these different forces.

Professor Scharf's postulates seem to be based upon sound deductive and experimental reasoning in that he begins with the simplest fundamental tests in electricity, namely, electric attraction and repulsion. If two pieces of paper or other bodies are equally charged with the same kind of electricity, say of the positive sign, they will instantly repel each other, regardless of gravitational force.

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THIS can be easily tried by heating a couple of strips of newspaper, to expel the moisture, and then in a dry room rub them briskly with the finger tips, when they will fly apart. But this is not all that occurs; for wherever a charge of positive electricity is generated there will be in the immediate neighborhood an equal charge of negative electricity.

In Professor Scharf's description of his experiments in electrically elevating the body against the contending force of gravity he does not say how or by what means this negative charge is absorbed or conducted away whilst the earth and its complementary subject are positively charged; but with a fundamental principle of such gigantic import as the one he is wrestling with it is but natural that he should desire more time to verify his deductions.

That the earth is charged with electricity there can be no doubt, though it is not always charged to the positive sign. This is the reason that telegraphers must search sometimes for what is called a good ground; but there are places where the earth is constantly positive, and in such a place would the anti-gravitation test best succeed. Again such a condition might be produced artificially.

The writer has often noted, when working with X-ray coils of high potential, say of eighty or one hundred thousand volts, that if he accidentally touched one of the terminals a peculiar lifting sensation quite like that described by Professor Scharf always resulted.

This may or may not have been due to the repelling force exerted between his own body and the earth being charged with positive electricity; but it is a significant fact, nevertheless.

According to the laws of electrostatics, which state that electric charges of like signs repel each other and electric charges of opposite signs attract each other, it is reasonable to believe that if the earth and the subject were both negatively electrified the same result of repulsion would be manifested.

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UNDER these conditions it may not be very far from the mark if we assume that Professor Scharf has devised ways and means for charging the human body to a degree of electrification equally with that of the earth. That it requires a certain potential, that is pressure, of positive electricity, there can be no doubt; but there is no difficulty in producing a potential of any voltage up to a million.

One of the simplest methods for obtaining these high potentials is by means of a frictional machine such as physicians use in giving electric treatment. It comprises one or more glass disks two or three feet in diameter set on an axis and arranged so that they may be revolved. On one side of the glass disk a cushion made of silk or leather presses firmly against its surface; this generates the electricity, and on the opposite side are some metallic points attached to a ball of metal called the prime conductor, which gathers in the positive electricity.

If a subject is now placed on a glass plate to insulate him from the earth he may be charged with electricity to his fullest capacity, and then if the earth is similarly electrified, or if, as Professor Scharf asserts, gravitation is a phase of electricity, the subject must be repelled from its surface. Any object, theoretically, even if it were a battleship or a skyscraper, must be repelled from its surface. Any object, theoretically, even if it were a battleship or a skyscraper, must be repelled if it and an equal mass of the earth were similarly charged.

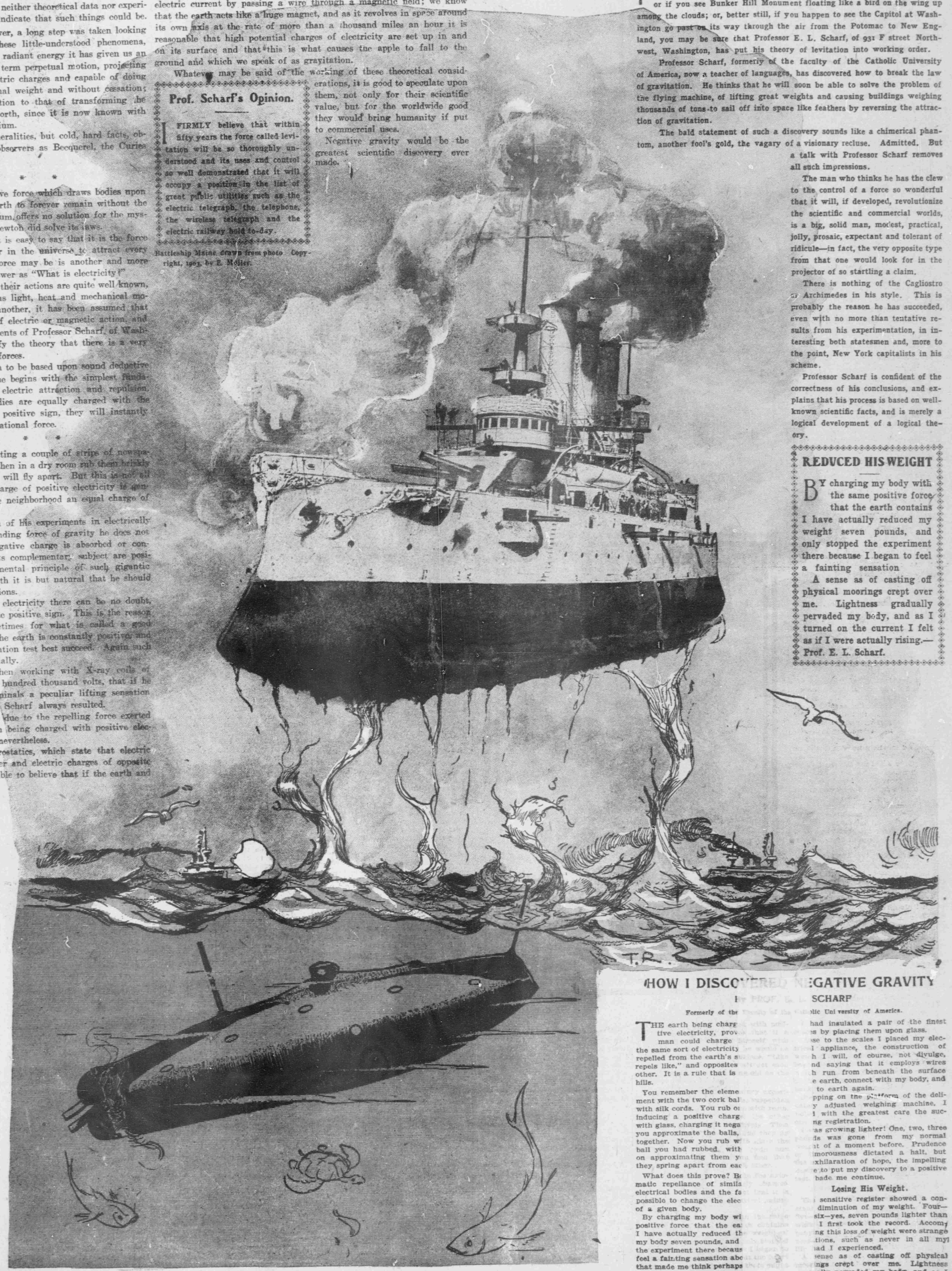
One cannot say absolutely that gravitation is of an electrical nature; but yet we know how easy it is to convert electricity into magnetic lines of force by merely causing a current to flow through a coil of wire, and conversely it is just as easy to transform magnetism into an electric current by passing a wire through a magnetic field; we know that the earth acts like a huge magnet, and as it revolves in space around its own axis at the rate of more than a thousand miles an hour it is reasonable that high potential charges of electricity are set up in and on its surface and that this is what causes the apple to fall to the ground and which we speak of as gravitation.

Whatever may be said of the working of these theoretical considerations, it is good to speculate upon them, not only for their scientific value, but for the worldwide good they would bring humanity if put to commercial uses.

Negative gravity would be the greatest scientific discovery ever made.

Prof. Scharf's Opinion.

I FIRMLY believe that within fifty years the force called levitation will be so thoroughly understood and its uses and control so well demonstrated that it will occupy a position in the list of great public utilities such as the electric telegraph, the telephone, the wireless telegraph and the electric railway hold to-day.



Battleship Maine drawn from photo Copyright, 1903, by E. Muller.

IF you see the Flatiron Building rising in the air some evening and calmly sailing off toward Westchester, like Santos-Dumont's flying machine; or if you see Bunker Hill Monument floating like a bird on the wing up among the clouds; or, better still, if you happen to see the Capitol at Washington go past on its way through the air from the Potomac to New England, you may be sure that Professor E. L. Scharf, of 931 F street Northwest, Washington, has put his theory of levitation into working order.

Professor Scharf, formerly of the faculty of the Catholic University of America, now a teacher of languages, has discovered how to break the law of gravitation. He thinks that he will soon be able to solve the problem of the flying machine, of lifting great weights and causing buildings weighing thousands of tons to sail off into space like feathers by reversing the attraction of gravitation.

The bald statement of such a discovery sounds like a chimerical phantom, another fool's gold, the vagary of a visionary recluse. Admitted. But a talk with Professor Scharf removes all such impressions.

The man who thinks he has the clew to the control of a force so wonderful that it will, if developed, revolutionize the scientific and commercial worlds, is a big, solid man, modest, practical, jolly, prosaic, expectant and tolerant of ridicule—in fact, the very opposite type from that one would look for in the projector of so startling a claim.

There is nothing of the Cagliostro or Archimedes in his style. This is probably the reason he has succeeded, even with no more than tentative results from his experimentation, in interesting both statesmen and, more to the point, New York capitalists in his scheme.

Professor Scharf is confident of the correctness of his conclusions, and explains that his process is based on well-known scientific facts, and is merely a logical development of a logical theory.

REDUCED HIS WEIGHT

BY charging my body with the same positive force that the earth contains I have actually reduced my weight seven pounds, and only stopped the experiment there because I began to feel a fainting sensation

A sense as of casting off physical moorings crept over me. Lightness gradually pervaded my body, and as I turned on the current I felt as if I were actually rising.—Prof. E. L. Scharf.

HOW I DISCO[illegible]EGATIVE GRAVITY

[illegible] SCHARF

Formerly of the [illegible]olic Uni versity of America.

THE earth being charg[illegible] tive electricity, prov[illegible] man could charge [illegible] the same sort of electricity [illegible] repelled from the earth's s[illegible] repels like," and opposites [illegible] other. It is a rule that is [illegible] hills.

You remember the eleme[illegible] ment with the two cork bal[illegible] with silk cords. You rub o[illegible] inducing a positive charg[illegible] with glass, charging it nega[illegible] you approximate the balls, [illegible] together. Now you rub w[illegible] ball you had rubbed, with[illegible] on approximating them y[illegible] they spring apart from ea[illegible]

What does this prove? B[illegible] matic repellance of simila[illegible] electrical bodies and the fa[illegible] possible to change the elec[illegible] of a given body.

By charging my body wi[illegible] positive force that the ea[illegible] I have actually reduced th[illegible] my body seven pounds, and [illegible] the experiment there becaus[illegible] feel a fainting sensation abo[illegible] that made me think perhaps [illegible] be danger in the experiment [illegible] had insulated a pair of the finest [illegible]s by placing them upon glass. [illegible]se to the scales I placed my elec[illegible] appliance, the construction of [illegible]h I will, of course, not divulge, [illegible]nd saying that it employs wires [illegible]h run from beneath the surface [illegible]e earth, connect with my body, and [illegible] to earth again.

[illegible]pping on the platform of the deli[illegible]y adjusted weighing machine, I [illegible] with the greatest care the suc[illegible]ng registration.

[illegible]as growing lighter! One, two, three [illegible]is was gone from my normal [illegible]t of a moment before. Prudence [illegible]morousness dictated a halt, but [illegible]xhilaration of hope, the impelling [illegible]e to put my discovery to a positive [illegible]bade me continue.

Losing His Weight.

[illegible] sensitive register showed a con[illegible] diminution of my weight. Four—six—yes, seven pounds lighter than [illegible] I first took the record. Accom[illegible]ng this loss of weight were strange [illegible]tions, such as never in all my [illegible]ad I experienced.

[illegible] sense as of casting off physical [illegible]ings crept over me. Lightness [illegible]ally pervaded my body, and as I