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Prologue

A joining of the Literary Club's Sesquicentennial Observance so proximate to the celebration of the millennium may have heightened reflections contrasting our current understanding and experience as we approach the 21st Century to that of the 19th Century and early 20th Century. Such reflections constitute the loosely woven themes of the papers of this evening's budget.

1

Mr. Clayton & the Gas Bag

Of course, they're not everybody's choice.

But to my mind, old city directories make agreeable bed-time reading. They're calming. They don't produce an adrenaline-rush, or quicken the pulse with outrage or amorousness; nor do they force you to check the closet for hidden maniacs. Like strolling through Spring Grove on a fine day, perusing an old city directory conveys a reassuring sense of fait accomplis. Nobody listed in Cincinnati's 1840 directory is likely to telephone at supper-time soliciting subscriptions for a cocktail benefit at the Westin. Everybody is safely dead, their houses pulled

down, their businesses defunct. It is somehow reassuring in this uncertain age to know that the law of attrition is still to be depended on.

One hundred, fifty-eight years separates us from the 1840 city directory. The same span of years projected into the future puts us in the year 2156 — a date so remote to our thinking that efforts to imagine it are almost as futile as efforts to imagine a typical day in the Kingdom of Heaven. If we do speculate about 2156, or indeed any date more than twenty-five years in the future, we tend to slip into the speculative vocabulary of science fiction, a vernacular now familiar enough to have lapsed into cliché. The unknowable has become a commonplace — therefore, presumably, less threatening. Every conceivable scenario has been rehearsed, from death rays to man-eating cockroaches, horror upon horror, conjured up in the apparent hope that if we think the unthinkable, actuality probably won't be so bad. Against nightmare adversaries America's finest stand foreshore: Buck Rogers, a dead ringer for the guy who coaches Little League; Luke Skywalker, the boy we hired last summer to cut the grass. They're all feeling a little self-conscious in their tights and silver tunics, but they're smart, wholesome kids, quick on the draw, and the future can't be but so bad if they're in charge. Jules Verne may deserve credit for inventing science fiction and the space-explorer as Hero, but the real, live, flesh and blood space-explorer antedated Verne by nearly a century.

On a recent late night-perusal of Shaffer's 1840 Cincinnati Directory, I was brought up short half-way through the letter "C" by the stated occupations (not one but two) of Richard Clayton, who lived at Second and Sycamore. Clayton, it seems, was both a watchmaker and an "aeronaut." In 1840, watchmakers were no rarity in Cincinnati, but Richard Clayton faced little competition in the second of his stated professions. True, he did not call himself an "astronaut" or a "cosmonaut," but even so, the word "aeronaut" jolts the ear with an anachronistic ring — as if he professed to be an 1840 computer programmer or radiologist.

The word "aeronaut" was not itself brand new in 1840. It had been cut out of whole cloth in 1783 to fit two intrepid Frenchmen who were the first human beings to float above the surface of the earth. For twenty-three minutes these first-ever aeronauts, riding high in their hot-air balloon, saw the world as no other men had seen it. Within a month another Frenchman, J.A.C. Charles, who had experimented with the listing properties of hydrogen, clambered aboard a balloon of his own devising and broke his predecessors' record. Lighter-than-air hydrogen kept the ingenious Monsieur Charles aloft for nearly two hours, and carried him twenty-seven miles from his place of departure.

Aeronautics came to the New World in the first years of the 19th century. Its earliest, most visible, proponent, Charles Ferson Durant, a Baltimorean, promoted air-flight vigorously. His technical skills, great though they were, paled beside his genius for self-promotion. Thanks to showmanship and a cooperative press, ballooning caught America's attention and shortly became a passion. But staging aerial shows was risky business and not cheap. Over and above the obvious danger to the aeronaut, the balloon itself was costly to construct and often suffered extensive damage when it came down. To make the venture profitable, the aeronaut and his backers needed a large urban audience prepared to pay for a close-up view of the launch — no easy matter, when citizens could simply stand in the streets and enjoy a view almost as good for nothing.

The difficulties of transporting balloon, basket, and gas-generating equipment across the mountains on poor roads discouraged East Coast aeronauts from venturing into the thinly settled areas west of the Alleghanies. Nevertheless, as early as 1815, Cincinnati newspapers record that an unmanned balloon eighty feet in circumference was released as part of the annual Fourth of July celebrations. Cincinnatians had to wait another twenty years to witness a manned ascension. In the autumn of 1834 one Thomas Kirkby, a Baltimorean and probably a protege of Charles Ferson Durant, came to town with a balloon and high hopes of making a fortune. As his first order of business he

set about constructing an enclosed amphitheater on Court Street between Race and Elm as a means of corralling paying customers. Excitement gripped the little town, intensified by two postponements necessitated by faults in the gas machine, but at last, on December 18, 1834, Kirkby rose from the amphitheater to the cheers of between four and five thousand paying spectators on the inside and a similar number on the outside. Kirkby's first flight took him as far as Clermont County. A second flight, which he staged nine days later, also drew a large a crowd, but alas, his gate-receipts failed to cover his costs. Shortly thereafter Thomas Kirkby, Ohio's first aeronaut, packed up his balloon and his hydrogen-generating equipment to try his luck elsewhere. He left behind, however, a city whose appetite for ballooning had been whetted, and at least one young man, Richard Clayton, who was eager to satisfy that appetite.

Clayton, an Englishman by birth, and a watchmaker by trade, had doubtless been present at Kirkby's lift-offs from Court Street. Keen to blaze his own trail through the skies, he set aside his watchmaking tools to construct something on a grander scale: in his own words, "the largest and most splendid silk balloon in the United States." Standing nearly fifty feet high, with a capacity of 18,000 cubic feet, "The Star of the West," was indeed a splendid creation, giving promise of a dramatic lift-off and an extended flight. Considering its size, it was constructed in record time. Just fourteen weeks separated Thomas Kirkby's second launch and Richard Clayton's first, a clear indication of Clayton's determination to capitalize on the ballooning craze that gripped the Queen City.

On March 26, 1835, Clayton placed an advertisement in the Cincinnati Daily Gazette, dramatically illustrated with a cut of the Star of the West touching down in a river. A steamboat stands by, ready to snatch the balloon and balloonist to safety. The ad proclaimed that Mr. Clayton "intends making an ASCENSION, with his stupendous Aerial Machine, from Cin.[cinnati] on WEDNESDAY, April 8th." Further, he promised to "let down a Parachute. . .containing a living animal, which will descend with safety to the earth."

Although the launch was scheduled for 4 o'clock the afternoon of April 8th, by 1:30 spectators – at fifty cents a head – had filled the amphitheater almost to capacity. Anticipating early arrivals (though perhaps not in such numbers), and acknowledging that there was little entertainment to be had from watching the gentle aspirations of the gas machine, Clayton had laid on a concert of light music to help pass the time. As it happened, both musicians and gas-machine worked overtime – the former to compensate for the inefficiency of the latter. It was nearly five o'clock, an hour later than advertised, when Clayton climbed aboard and directed his assistants to release the lines and cast off. The Star of the West rose rapidly, to the cheers of the spectators below. After it had reached an altitude of a mile, Clayton, true to his promise, dropped a basket overboard. Inside was a twenty-pound dog. Dog and basket fell precipitously until, to the audible relief of the crowd, a parachute opened. Thereafter, it descended gently, though as it approached the ground it appeared to be headed right into the canal. A last moment puff of wind brought the precious cargo safely to terra firma. The dog became an instant celebrity, and according to one reporter, achieved so much notoriety in that one half hour that he could have run for vice-president.

In just a few minutes the Star of the West was out of sight, heading in a south-easterly direction. Clayton kept a meticulous record of the flight, noting his altitude, the temperature, which soon dropped into the 20s, and the communities he passed over: Williamsburg, in Clermont County, Portsmouth, Gallipolis, and Charleston. Finally, at 2:30 in the morning, he came to rest in the top of a tree in Monroe County, West Virginia. He wisely remained in the basket for the rest of the night, then clambered down at daybreak to find help. Within a few days he was back in Cincinnati, exulting in his triumph: a record-breaking 9-1/2 hours aloft, and a safe flight of 350 miles.

Eager to build on his success, Clayton scheduled another flight for the Fourth of July – his intended destination: "the Atlantic Sea Board." A storm and a leaky balloon brought him down far sooner than

intended: just eighteen miles from Chillicothe. Another attempt that same year ended with an explosion, but the indestructible Mr. Clayton escaped injury by parachuting to safety. In all, he made eight flights in 1835 and 1836. During that period one can assume that watches left with Richard Clayton for cleaning and adjustment were sadly neglected. Nevertheless, he stayed in the watchmaking business, and some ten years after his last flight he was still identifying his watchmaking shop as the one "commonly called 'Clayton's Balloon Store.'"

Cincinnati in 1835 was not Cape Canaveral. Nor was Richard Clayton, Allan Sheppard or John Glenn. But his pluck and ingenuity were of the same order. Some might argue they were of a higher order, because he did all of it by himself. He launched himself into the blue, solo, in a vessel of his own devising. He stood alone at the helm, all decisions were his to make. It was one intrepid man exploring a new element on his own, bundled up in his greatcoat, stamping his feet to keep warm, checking the thermometer with the aid of a phosphorus bottle he had made himself — alone in the dark over a dark earth. No worldwide support group tracked his course; no command-center provided minute-by-minute up-dates. It may not have been a giant step for mankind, but it undoubtedly ranks as high adventure, and a heroic achievement on the part of Richard Clayton, Cincinnati watchmaker.

Virginus C. Hall

2

Millennial Quickenings:

The Hubble Space Telescope and The Expanding Universe

Edwin Powell Hubble's life spanned two of the centuries we are hearing about this evening. Born in 1889, he studied physics and astronomy at the University of Chicago where, his biographical notes

comment, he also was known as a heavyweight boxer – from this distance an improbable association. He strayed from his orbit after his undergraduate work, took a law degree at Oxford and practiced law for a period before serving in World War II. He then returned to Chicago and obtained his Ph.D. in Astronomy. Most of his career was spent at the Mt. Wilson Observatory in California where he was a pioneer in determining the existence of galaxies beyond our own galaxy, the Milky Way. Therefore, it was thought appropriate in 1983 – Hubble died in 1953 – to honor him and his work by naming the largest observatory in space, so far, the Hubble Space Telescope. The development of this telescope and what we are learning from observations made by it are the vantage points I have chosen to describe some millennial quickenings. Our understanding of the universe is changing profoundly and rapidly.

But first, as is my wont, I will interpolate another end of the century story. This story is more personal rather than scientific. The story begins as the year 1989 came to an end, long before space telescopes were in many people's minds. My old mother, I say old as she observed and celebrated her 105th birthday this month, and also the holder of a graduate degree from the University of Chicago, told this story several years ago to the friends and family gathered to greet her on her 100th birthday. "One of my earliest memories," she said, "is of my mother and father wakening me in the middle of the night. There were bells ringing and whistles blowing. And my parents said to me, 'always remember this night, it's the beginning of a new century'." It was January 1st, 1900, the 20th Century. And then my mother took up a bell in her hand and rang it clearly, and she took the whistle and blew it lustily- to the great entertainment of all present – and then declared, "and now we have the beginning of another new century." Her second 100 years. From this you can understand that she has every intention of ringing in the year 2000, the 21st Century.

Astronomy is the oldest science. Our ancestors saw that the appearance of the heavens was ordered and predictable. The moon and the bright planets moved

against an apparently fixed backdrop. Although the stars did not change position relative to one another, the stars visible at night changed with the seasons. People realized that the passage of time or their position on earth could be calculated by observing the positions of the stars.

At first it was assumed that the earth was the center of the universe. Though some in ancient Greece thought the sun might be the center, it was not until Copernicus (1473-1543) proposed that the earth did not hold a prime position in the scheme of things that general perceptions of our position in the universe began to change. The telescope was one of the most vital inventions to further this understanding.

The modern science of astronomy was born through the work of Galileo who built a refracting telescope which was more powerful than any other to that date. Galileo lived from 1564-1642. Then in 1672 Isaac Newton exhibited his reflecting telescope, using mirrors rather than lenses to direct and focus the light and more of the universe was open to scrutiny. It was not until the 20th Century, however, that the true scale of the universe and the lesser significance of the earth and our solar system began to be clear. The Milky Way in which the sun is one of hundreds of billions of stars, is only one of billions of billions of galaxies in the universe.

The possibility of an orbiting telescope was first proposed in the early 1920's. Such forward thinking was regarded with skepticism at a time when air travel was still a novelty and it was not until the early 1960's that it began to be taken seriously. Space travel was advancing by leaps and bounds - Sputnik was launched in 1957, the first manned spacecraft from Russia in 1961 and the Apollo 11 mission to the moon in 1969.

The proposal that was eventually to become the Hubble Space Telescope was put forward in 1977 with an estimated cost of \$450 million dollars and a launch date set for 1983. To share costs and ideas, the European Space Agency became a partner with NASA, a step viewed positively by most. Science and academe

have often led the way in developing international cooperation. Technical and other issues postponed the launch date until 1990, at which time the cost had more than tripled to \$1.6 billion dollars. The Space Telescope Science Institute was established at Johns Hopkins University (STScI) and became the center of the administration and science of the Hubble Space Telescope.

The Hubble Space Telescope was designed to make a large number of very different recordings over the entire range of astronomical observations, for example, from ultraviolet to infrared frequencies. Its special niche is helping astronomers to determine the crucial distance ladder, meaning the distance from earth of various galaxies of increasing age. The telescope has provided confirming evidence that the universe is continuously expanding – a concept I am still trying to assimilate – including the finding that the further away a galaxy is from us, the faster it is moving away from us.

The distances involved are confounding to me. Our earth is something over 4 billion years old. The Hubble Space Telescope is now identifying galaxies over 12 billion light years distant, and therefore over 12 billion years old. Light from the sun takes 8 minutes to reach us, a light year is about 66,000 times more distant than from the earth to the sun. Twelve billion light years remains unimaginable to me.

Will the universe continue to expand, and if so, how rapidly? Will it eventually collapse as stars and galaxies do? The Hubble Space Telescope is playing a vital role in helping us find the answers to these questions.

The science and technology making the Hubble Space Telescope possible are wondrous and fascinating to me but I am not going to attempt to edify you about them as I am very much in the process of digesting the information as it is now pouring forth. And my mastery of the material falls far short of being prepared to enlighten you. Further, the science and technology are changing and advancing with end of the century speed. One clear indication of this is that servicing space

missions to the Hubble Space Telescope have been sent to the telescope every two to three years to adjust, update, and expand its capabilities. It was designed to have a fifteen year service life from 1990 to 2005, a goal which seems very attainable. Around that time a much larger and more powerful space telescope will have been created and then launched. The creation of this instrument is now the stimulus for very energetic scientific debates.

Some of this information may seem esoteric to you — it has at times to me, but this past year or so there have been discoveries which have caught my attention with a new impact. The new understanding of how galaxies, stars and planetary systems, such as our own, are formed define processes which would apply throughout the vast, limitless universe. And we are now identifying planets beyond our solar system which in all probability can support life such as evolved here on earth. Even the most recent issue of the Harvard Magazine, that well known astronomy rag, reports an item, "Orbiting other suns". It notes that in 1997 a group of Harvard astronomers discovered the ninth extra-solar planet (a planet orbiting a star other than the sun) and that in June of this year, Swiss and American astronomers announced a 10th planetary discovery. We can anticipate that we will be discovering billions and billions of solar systems as we have now realized that there are billions and billions of galaxies. So I'm expecting that "out there" there are vast numbers of planets, or planets beyond numbering, similar to our earth and that life exists on those planets.

All of this wounds my narcissism in a manner I have yet to resolve. The working through of these blows to my self esteem is my end of the century task. We all start out life feeling we are the center of the world and struggle to learn to share the world stage increasingly as time goes on. And now to learn that there could be billions of other worlds!

I take solace in recalling a favorite story of mine by Dr. Seuss, Horton Hears a Who. Horton, an elephant, was splashing in the cool of a pool in the heat of the day when he was distracted by a small

noise. He looked around and saw nothing but then heard the sound again and realized it was a voice coming from a small speck of dust floating through the air, blown by the winds. Gradually Horton is given to understand that there is a whole world of living things and buildings and towns and even a mayor of the town living on this small speck of dust. And the story chronicles Horton's efforts to make everything safe for all the inhabitants of the speck of dust for, as Horton declares, "A person's a person no matter how small".

So even though we have to share pride of place with billions of other worlds, we can assure ourselves that our individual lives, friends, families and communities have significance. Dr. Seuss' story concludes by having all of the many, many voices of those living on the speck of dust shouting together so that they will be heard by Horton and others and thus made safe. Every voice counts - no matter how small - or so I am telling myself as our speck of dust, the Earth, is blown ever onward through space by the solar winds.

John A. MacLeod, M.D.

3

Millennial Madness

Everyone likes to celebrate. It's better of course if you have a reason but that's not essential. A good party needs no excuse. Still, on January 1, 2000 we in the West will have a splendid, indeed unique, occasion for celebrating: ringing in the beginning of a new millennium. Never mind that billions of people in the rest of the world - indeed the vast majority of the earth's population - will remain indifferent to our curious cultural rite. The fact is that among us preparations are moving ahead at full speed and extravagant cost. Stephen Jay Gould

calls it millennial madness. With less hyperbole the Economist speaks of date-fever.

Whether it is madness or fever, there is no denying a quickening tempo of preparations. The most spectacular of them is the British government's construction of a giant Millennial Dome in Greenwich, England at a cost of \$1.9 billion. When completed the Dome will be twice the size of Britain's biggest football field. Tony Blair's government is hoping to attract twelve million visitors, each of whom will presumably pay \$50 to admire this marvel. The Vatican has no grandiose building plans but is bracing for 30 million or more pilgrims in the year 2000. Germany is budgeting \$79 million for an "Expo 2000" to be held in Hanover. The French are planning about 100 projects, big and small. Among the zanier ones is the laying of a giant white egg by the Eiffel Tower, filled with TV sets linked to channels around the world.

Russian government intentions, on the other hand, are, as Winston Churchill once observed, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." On February 6, 1998 President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree entitled "On Preparations for the Third Millennium of Christianity." Despite the decree, nobody knows what is being prepared. Of course that will not deter Russian revelers. Traditionally Russians begin by drinking to the new year once when it strikes by Moscow time and again when it strikes in each of the other ten time zones that span the country. In addition, they observe two New Year's holidays, one according to the old Julian calendar still used by the Orthodox Church, and one according to the Gregorian calendar adopted by the Bolsheviks in 1918. Conscientious carousers truly intent on toasting an all-Russian new year will have over twenty occasions to do so.

On our side of the Atlantic a number of activities are planned, but they are likely to be overshadowed by the fact that 2000 is a year of presidential and congressional elections. Nevertheless there is a White House Millennium Project to which Hillary Clinton is devoting special attention. This includes a scheme to encourage children to record their grandparents' reminiscences, and Internet links between American and

foreign classrooms. Outside the White House, the National Endowment for the Arts has set aside a modest \$5.8 million to fund 29 "millennium projects," one of which will be a photographers' survey of end-of-the-century America. In the private sector, National Geographic has already begun publishing a series of articles under the general heading "Making Sense of the Millennium." On a scholarly level, The American Historical Review, our most prestigious historical journal, will publish a special issue on "The Millennium" in December 1999.

What, exactly, will we be celebrating with the advent of 2000? Truth to tell, it is a number in our calendar, itself an arbitrary system of counting years, months and days. Of course, all calendars are arbitrary, not just ours. In one way or another they are all based on the three cycles that are genuinely natural: the rotation of the earth on its axis, the revolution of the earth around the sun, and the circling of the moon around the earth. All else is human invention, especially how these rotations and revolutions are divided up and packaged, as well as when the counting of years begins.

The great variety of calendars humans have devised illustrate the point. Our neat even number of 2000 represents no such thing in these other calendars. Instead, what we designate as the year 2000 will be the year 6236 according to the first Egyptian calendar, the year 5760 according to the Hebrew calendar, the year 5119 according to the Maya Great Circle, the year 2544 according to the Buddhist calendar, and the year 1420 according to the Muslim calendar. For the Chinese it will be the Year of the Dragon. True, the Western calendar is used worldwide for purposes of international trade, travel and diplomacy. In 1949 Communist China was the last major country to adopt it. But for religious observances, ethnic rituals and personal commemorations, the Chinese, Muslims, Buddhists and Jews adhere to their own calendars.

The fact that the Western calendar has become an international standard is a consequence of the enormous wealth and power wielded by the Western nations. Yet while the Western calendar is now indispensable in this

age of global communications – one can only imagine the chaos and confusion that would ensue without it – attaching special significance to the number 2000 is peculiar to us. Ironically, that special significance itself is no longer what it once was. It has changed from a religious belief to a secular concept.

The original definition of millennium derived from Chapter 20 of Revelation, the last book in the Bible. It relates a tale of apocalypse – the imminent end of the present temporal world, the final destruction of the unrighteous, the resurrection of the righteous, and the return of Jesus who, along with the resurrected Christian martyrs, will reign for a thousand years. At the end of this millennium all the dead will be resurrected, there will be a Last Judgment and time will truly end. Jesus had predicted the apocalypse would take place within his own generation. That did not happen. But its failure to materialize did not dampen the enthusiasm of those who continued to believe that apocalypse would inaugurate a millennium of bliss. Every subsequent generation down to our own era has had its millenarian movements, sometimes with tragic results. The thirty-nine suicides of the Heaven's Gate cultists in March 1997 is the most recent example.

As we approach the year 2000, the primary definition of millennium has shifted to a quite different meaning – the completion of a secular period of a thousand years in human history. The shift is linked to the belief of early Christians that earthly time would last for six thousand years, at the end of which the apocalypse would take place. Human history, they believed, began four thousand years before the birth of Jesus and would end two thousand years after His birth. The man who firmly set these dates was Archbishop James Ussher, the Anglican Primate of All Ireland, which Stephen Jay Gould reminds us is "an ecclesiastical title for a leader among bishops, not a zoological designation for a monkey's uncle." Despite the impish irreverence, Gould readily acknowledges the importance of the famous chronology Ussher published in 1650. After a prolonged, careful investigation of the sources, Ussher concluded that Jesus was born in 4 B.C. and that therefore the world actually began in 4004 B.C. The error in dating Jesus' birth was made by

Dionysius Exiguus – Dennis the Short – a sixth century abbot in Rome who invented the anno Domini calendar that counts years from "the year of the Lord." It is the calendar we still use today. Dennis the Short's mistake means that the true year 2000 A.D. has already passed; it should have been 1996. That bit of esoterica hasn't disturbed anyone of our era, which indicates how secularized the notion of millennium has become. Two thousand years after the birth of Jesus, most of us in the West look forward to the inauguration of another thousand years of human history, not to a cataclysmic destruction of the present order.

Dennis the Short made one other calculation that has been the cause of endless vexation and fruitless argument. In starting his anno Domini calendar with the birth of Jesus, he called that year A.D. 1 instead of zero. Dennis did not know about zero. The concept did not exist in sixth-century Europe. The zero we use today was invented by the Hindus at the end of the sixth century and reached Europe via the Arabs some five hundred years later.

The dispute as to whether the millennium begins January 1, 2000 or January 1, 2001, or when a new century begins, stems directly from Dennis the Short's ignorance of the zero. Calendar pundits have insisted that new centuries begin with the year one, not with the year zero. At the end of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, their view predominated. On January 1, 1901 The New York Times in a lead headline proclaimed "Twentieth Century's Triumphant Entry" and then went on to describe the festivities in Times Square. My grandfather was there as a young, newly arrived immigrant from rural Russian; he was awed by all the flashing lights. But we are now in the age of pop culture. People overwhelmingly prefer to begin the new century and millennium with a nice even zero. The majority has prevailed; they have the numbers.

If in the year 2000 there are still ardent believers in apocalypse who are disappointed that all the unrighteous are not destroyed and all the righteous not resurrected to a purified world of bliss, they might want to switch to the Maya calendar and wait a

dozen years. On December 23, 2012 the Maya Great Cycle of 5,131 years comes to an end. At that time, the Maya believe, all things will cease to exist and an entirely new world will be ushered in to start the next great cycle. The creation of the Maya calendar is a wondrous tale to tell. But not now; I am out of time.

Arnold Schrier

Epilogue

So — now you have our bells and whistles. Happy centuries to you, both 20th and 21st and also happy sesquicentennial year as well. May you have a good millennium, whenever you choose to celebrate it.

SOURCE

December 7, 1998

John H. Wulsin

On Monday morning, July 1, 1879 three men met at the Chicago South Station, each with assorted gear for outdoors and each with his own prized, even venerated sailing canoe. And so here begins a tale.

Today, sailing canoes are museum pieces, unknown to LL Bean and boat shows, but in 1879 they were faddish icons of the adventuresome gallant. Like much of the paraphernalia of the sporting world, they were developed and popularized by the well-to-do, daring gentry of the British empire, who bored at home, prowled the remote and uncharted stretches of the foreign world in search of fact and fame and happy in the face of danger.