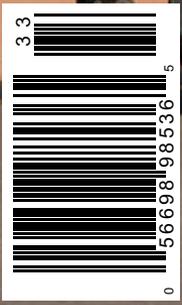
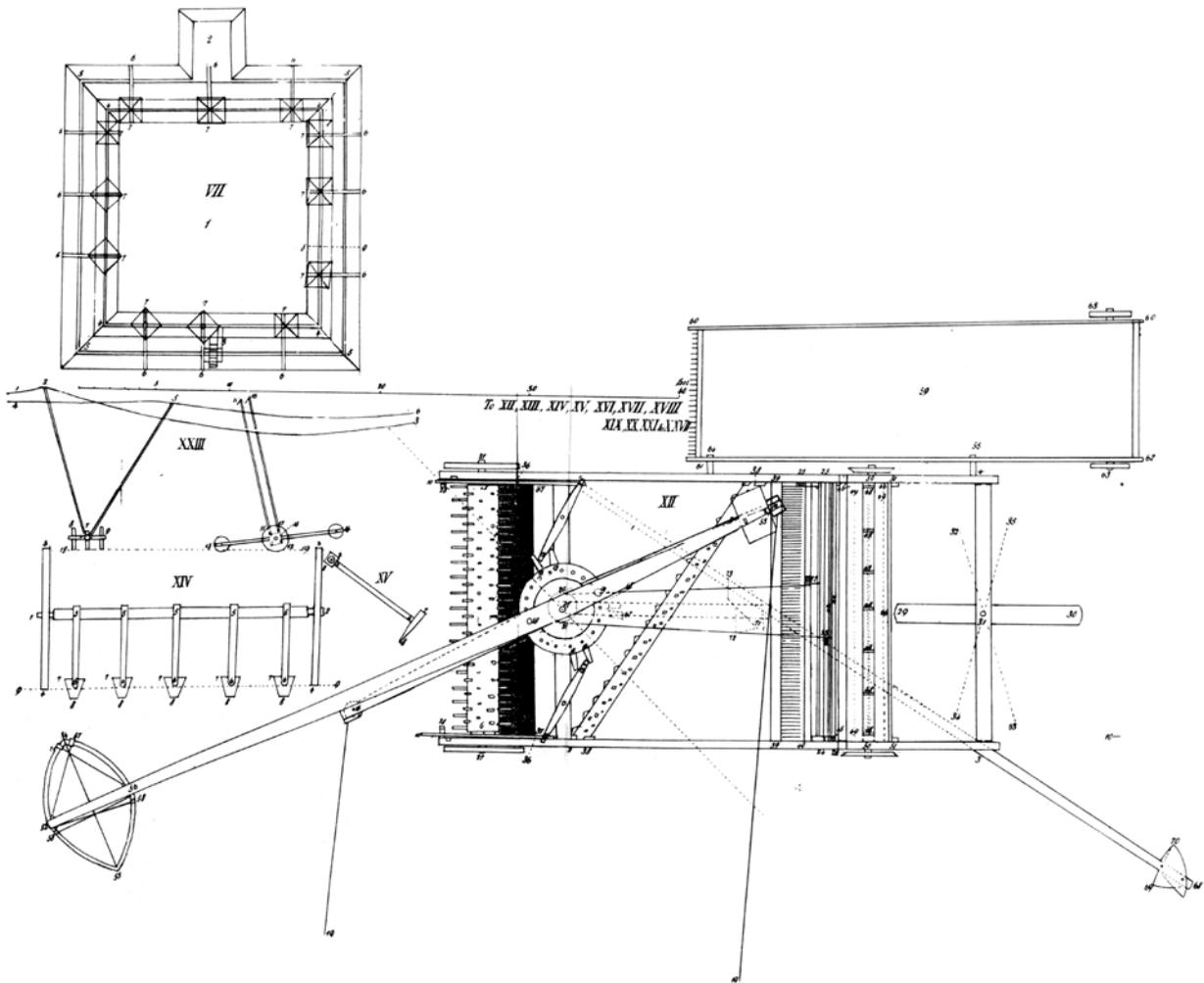


# Cabinet

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John Adolphus Etzler's design for his Satellite, which was finally demonstrated to an inebriated crowd in 1845.

## A COUNTERFEIT UTOPIA

ROBERT ANTONI

In 1831, the year Hegel died in Berlin, two of his disciples led a group of seventy or so destitute working-class pilgrims on a voyage to America, which Hegel had anointed the land of the future, the place where “the burden of World’s History shall reveal itself.”<sup>1</sup> The two men, young German engineers, planned to establish an experimental agrarian commune in Pennsylvania, where one of them, John Adolphus Etzler, had previously lived in the 1820s.<sup>2</sup> But before their ship docked in New York, the two leaders quarreled and the pilgrims split between them. Etzler and his band ended up in the area around Cincinnati, following in the footsteps of other German emigrants who had previously founded communes in the Midwest, notably George Rapp, a quasi-minister who after breaking with the Lutheran church in Germany had established a settlement in Indiana called New Harmony.<sup>3</sup> In an introduction to Etzler’s collected works, Joel Nydahl states: “Biographically speaking, [he] suddenly emerges from a blankness of years and just as abruptly withdraws behind an opaque obscurity that is both frustrating and puzzling.”<sup>4</sup> The only thing that is certain about Etzler during the next decade is that he was on the move, seeking converts to his ideas—and failing.

The other leader, John Augustus Roebling, we know more about. He settled with his followers on a farm outside Pittsburgh, where he later founded a village called Saxonburg. But his farm failed, and he soon converted it to a factory to mass-produce his newest innovation: an improved form of wire rope. In his hometown of Mühlhausen, Roebling had qualified to build bridges as a teenager; now, in Pittsburgh, he used wire rope to build his first suspension bridge. He patented the rope in 1842, and would eventually use it in what remains one of the most elegantly poetic, madman-monstrosities ever imagined: the Brooklyn Bridge.

Shortly after parting from his compatriot, Roebling would recall, “I still respect Etzler and have the greatest opinion of his mind and heart, only he has too stubborn a head, offends all the world, is not a businessman, not in the least, and he does not know how to ingratiate himself with people or how to behave toward them.”<sup>5</sup> Roebling was right. Before long, Etzler had lost his followers in Ohio. They were humble people, who sought only a small improvement over what they had escaped in Europe. And the Americans Etzler pontificated to had similarly modest ambitions.

But Etzler had, in addition to his socialist theories, other tricks up his sleeve. Just as Roebling dedicated his

life’s work to the poetic simplicity of wire rope, Etzler had his machines. At least he had plans for them, and before long, working models. Although his machines became more and more complicated—more capable of extraordinary wonders, the larger his schemes grew—Etzler always insisted that anyone with a little engineering experience might have thought them up. They were much more important in principle than in fact. And it was this lack of practicality, an inability to make things that worked in the real world—Roebling’s forte—that was Etzler’s undoing.

The only thing of real importance, as far as Etzler was concerned, was the *spirit* inside his machines. Or, rather, the omnipotent, untapped spirit that his machines could capture and put to work for humankind: Mother Nature. Etzler calculated the power of the wind over the surface of the globe, of the oceans’ waves, and of the sunlight shining everywhere. His numbers filled his pages. And they were staggering—almost all of this raw power, he claimed, was unexploited. Even the smallest part of it could do more work than all the men on earth could manage with their sinews and sweat—Etzler calculated this too. And Mother Nature never tired.

His machines were many, but there were two principal ones. His universal land machine, powered by the wind or by water falling over a wheel, he called the Satellite. It was a plow-like apparatus with a long, fiercely spiked wheel in front and a tall pivot above, the latter connected by two ropes to a power source. This “prime mover” (the waterwheel or windmill, which Etzler claimed would work *ad infinitum* if used in conjunction with one another and a large reservoir) pulled alternately on the ropes, shifting the pivot back and forth, and—after the movement was captured and regularized by a series of cogs and gears—turning the spiked wheel in front. The Satellite dragged itself over the earth, pulling whichever (and as many) specialized “attachments” the operator connected to it. The machine’s ropes unwound from a central spool in an outward-moving spiral—round and round its “orbit”—hence the Satellite’s name. It would perform almost any task asked of it over solid ground: mow down the forest, level hills and mountains, dig canals, prepare and sow the fields. It was capable of transporting entire buildings. And it cost not a penny to run.

His wave-powered, universal water machine was the Naval Automaton. It was a horizontal metal platform, held beneath the hull of a vessel by articulated bars in the calm waters beneath the waves’ undulations. The pressure of the waves at the surface moved the hull up and down, while the platform remained undisturbed,

and the articulated bars connected to the platform turned cogs and gears within the machinery, which in turn rotated an axle (or any number of axles). The Naval Automaton harnessed the muscle of the waves to turn a paddle wheel or propeller; it could weigh anchor, pump out the bilge, and, like the Satellite, accomplish virtually anything asked of it. More impressively, the Naval Automaton provided the immense power needed to move giant flotillas of liana-tied bamboo rafts, which Etzler called “floating islands.” These were capable of carrying entire villages—not only the people, but also their buildings and fields—across the largest bodies of water on the globe in just a few days.

. . .

The first time I encountered Etzler was in *Voices in the Street*, a memoir by the Trinidadian writer Olga J. Mavrogordato. It is a fanciful collection of sketches of historical figures from Trinidad and Tobago, but mostly it describes the old buildings and colonial estate homes. I’d never managed to read the book completely, but I always kept it near my desk, and I’d occasionally look at the old photographs it contained. I knew it included a reference to a relative on my mother’s side, William Tucker, who was credited, under the heading “Transport,” with having established at the age of fifteen the island’s first taxi, a donkey cart popularly called “the Van.” Young William drove it along an unpaved track between Port of Spain and Arima, delivering passengers and parcels.

That my relative drove a donkey cart was not very impressive. This is probably why it took me several years to stumble across a short passage on Etzler and something called the Tropical Emigration Society in a note, in one of the book’s appendices, about Conrad Fredrick Stollmeyer, a notable Trinidadian figure and father of the man who built “Stollmeyer’s Castle,” the most outrageous and pretentious mansion in the capital. (I’d also heard him referred to as “shit-sliding Stollmeyer,” for an early scheme in which he collected all manner of feces, probably human as well, and molded them into bricks that he sold for fuel at five cents each.) I’d never heard of Etzler, and I was fascinated. But what intrigued me even more was the concluding sentence—almost an aside—which noted that despite the tragedy that befell his society, it was thanks to Etzler that several well-known families became established in Trinidad. At the end of the list of five surnames, I found “Tucker.”

. . .

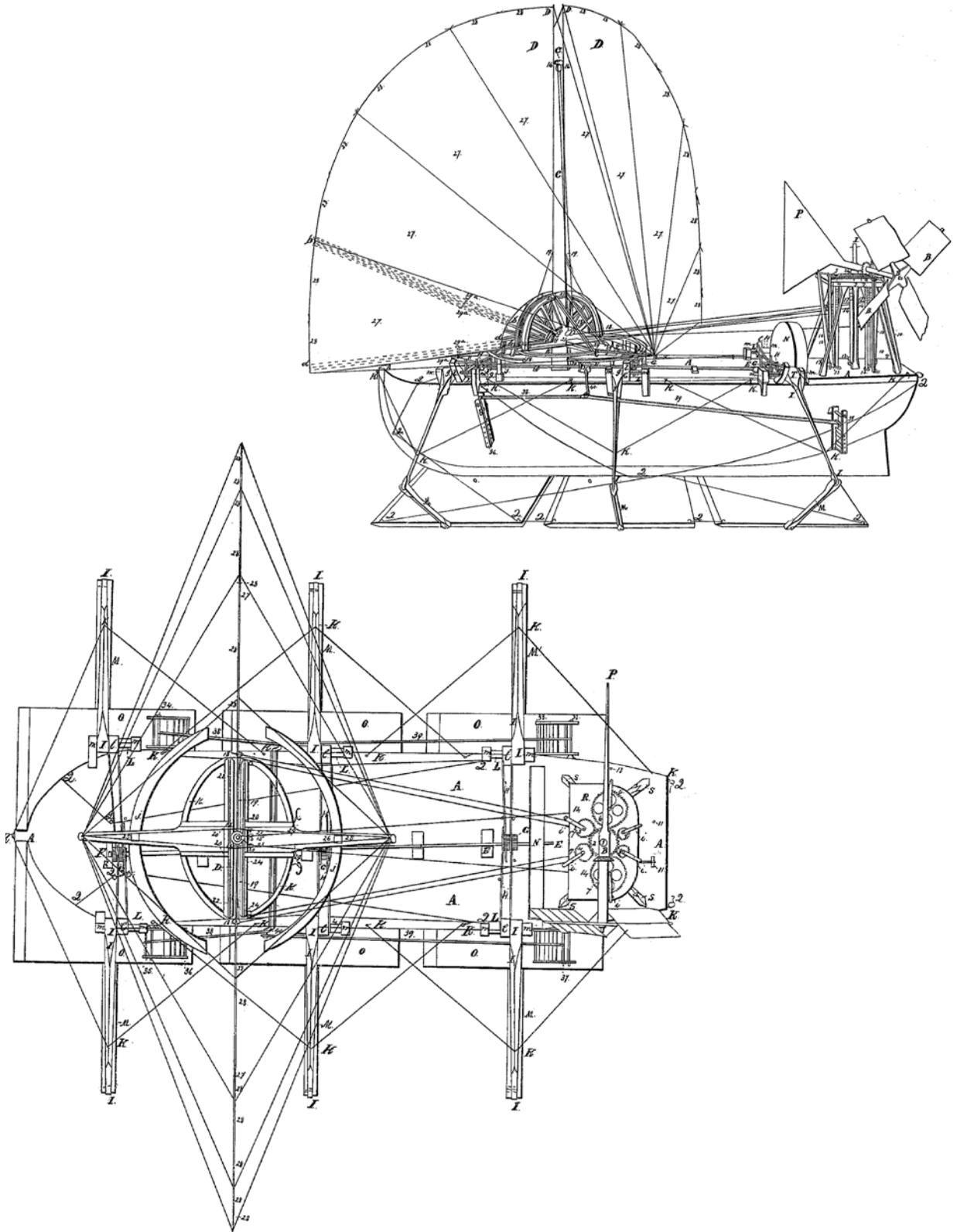
Dismayed by his failure to gain followers in the west,

Etzler explored the south, but there he encountered the deplorable institution of slavery, which his conscience could never condone. Etzler then moved to Pittsburgh in 1833, where he took a job as editor of an American-German newspaper and settled for a while. What his activities had been during the previous three years, other than relentless travel, is hard to say, but he’d found time to prepare what would become his first treatise, printed that same year in Pittsburgh: *The Paradise Within the Reach of all Men, Without Labour, by Powers of Nature and Machinery*. In it, he unveiled his ideas for the Satellite (the actual plans and mechanical drawings would come later), and for the new world his machine would establish. He opened with an evocation:

*Fellow-men! I promise to show the means for creating a paradise within ten years, where every thing desirable for human life may be had for every man in superabundance, without labor, without pay; where the whole face of nature is changed into the most beautiful form of which it be capable; where ... he may provide himself with means unheard of yet, for increasing his knowledge of the world, and so his intelligence, he may lead a life of continual happiness, of enjoyments unknown.*<sup>6</sup>

A good portion of *Paradise* is dedicated to Etzler’s calculations of the powers of Mother Nature, and what they might be used to accomplish once captured by the Satellite and his other machines. With all our needs provided for effortlessly, the division of labor would instantly topple: a swift, silent, unstoppable revolution would establish a new order of rational human beings living in perfect harmony, freed forever from all drudgery. And Etzler estimated that it would happen overnight.

He went further: following Charles Fourier’s plans for his phalanxes, Etzler described the environs of his new communities. The landscape would be manicured into lush gardens, “various sceneries of art and nature,” the most beautiful imaginable. He dreamed of fields, full of fruits and flowers, intersected by neat paths; of people gliding in lovely gondolas along shining canals; of aqueducts, colonnades, ponds, fountains, terraces, sculptural works, amphitheaters, and pavilions. The inhabitants of these communities would live in elaborate structures built of slabs prefabricated from a vitreous substance of varying translucent hues. Amid grand parlors and hallways, cupolas and porticoes, each person would occupy a private apartment “one hundred feet long and twenty wide.” There would be “movable boxes” to transport them between levels. Any resident



From John Adolphus Etzler's 1842 US patent application for his Naval Automaton.



Killarney, also known as Stollmeyer's Castle, Port of Spain. Completed in 1904, the extravagant residence was originally built by Charles Fourier Stollmeyer, son of Conrad Fredrick Stollmeyer, for his family. When Stollmeyer's wife found it too ostentatious, the house was instead given to their soon-to-be-married son.

*may procure to himself all common articles of his daily wants, by a short turn of some crank, without leaving his apartment. He may at any time bathe himself in cold or warm water, or in steam, or in some artificially prepared liquor for invigorating health. He may, at any time, give to the air in his apartment that temperature that suits his feeling best. He may cause at any time an agreeable scent of various kinds.<sup>7</sup>*

Despite its outrageous claims and promises, the publication did not cause much stir; try as he might, Etzler couldn't get people to read it. He went so far as to write a personal letter to President Andrew Jackson, who, like everybody else, refused to listen. Further disheartened over his failure to find a group of followers—much less to sway the masses—Etzler disappeared again, but not on foot this time. He set sail for Haiti, though it is likely that he traveled to other islands as well. Now Etzler realized that in the tropics, closer to the equator, not only were there vast tracts of available land suitable for taming and transforming with his Satellite, but Mother Nature also offered up her gifts in far greater abundance.

If the surface of the globe contained two hundred million square miles, Etzler calculated, about half of it was free of winter. He estimated that one acre in the tropical zones would feed sixteen people; so one square mile, cultivated by his Satellite, would feed ten thousand individuals. One hundred million square miles would therefore sustain one trillion people, a thousand times the earth's population.<sup>8</sup>

...

My mother had never heard of Etzler or the Tropical Emigration Society. Neither had my other relatives in Trinidad, nor anyone else I could think to ask—including Michael Anthony, one of Trinidad's foremost historians and a descendent of Stollmeyer. Etzler, or memories of him in Trinidad, seemed to have dissolved into thin air.

The only story my mother could tell me about my earliest relative to land in Trinidad, William Sanger Tucker, was vague and terrifying: immediately after arriving in Port of Spain in 1845 and settling his wife and three daughters, William left with his fifteen-year-old son (also called William) on a trek into the jungle. She had no idea why. Three weeks later, he was brought back to Port of Spain in a hammock—carried by his son, an African, and two Warahoon Indians—suffering from something they called the "Black Vomit." Whether he had malaria, dysentery, yellow fever—or all three together—she didn't know. He died the following morning.

Now I realized that my mother's mysterious story made sense if William Sanger Tucker and his son had been part of Etzler's disastrous experiment. I was determined to find out.

...

We lose track of Etzler in the tropics. He doesn't surface again until 1840, when he sailed into New York harbor from Port-au-Prince. He returned to Pittsburgh, and may even have paid a visit to his old friend Roebling, who, according to his son, considered Etzler the "greatest genius" he'd ever met.<sup>9</sup> But despite all his efforts to promote his ideas, Etzler remained unread, unpaid, and unacknowledged. Then everything changed.

Scarcely a month after he had returned from the Caribbean, Etzler traveled back to New York to attend a celebration in honor of Fourier, who had died three years previously. At this fete, he met the man who would become his first and greatest acolyte: Conrad Fredrick Stollmeyer, a fellow German intellectual (socialist, scientist, mathematician), who had immigrated to Philadelphia a few years before, where he established a publishing house, opened a bookstore, and edited a German-American newspaper. Stollmeyer's other distinction was that he was president of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, a passion he vented to the fullest in his newspaper. Stollmeyer angered his pro-slavery neighbors to such an extent that at one point they burned down his publishing house and tried to string him up from the doorway of Philadelphia's German Zion Church—as a warning to foreigners against meddling in Yankee affairs.<sup>10</sup>

After meeting Etzler, Stollmeyer read his *Paradise*: he was an instant convert. Stollmeyer brought Etzler back to Philadelphia, where the two began to scheme. Intellectually, they were a perfect match, but Stollmeyer was also practical and a businessman. The first thing he did was publish Etzler's second treatise, the book he'd been working on all those years in the Caribbean: *The New World, or, Mechanical System, to Perform the Labours of Man and Beast by Inanimate Powers, that Cost Nothing, for Producing and Preparing the Substances of Life*. Stollmeyer edited the manuscript, smoothed over Etzler's convoluted language (he would remain Etzler's editor to the end—of everything, right down to his personal correspondence.) *The New World* contained the first complete description of the Satellite, as well as mechanical drawings. Stollmeyer went further: in 1841, he arranged for Etzler to patent his Satellite and, the following year, his Naval Automaton. (He would later secure patents for Etzler's machines in Britain and

several other European countries.) Rather than giving his machines away to the world, as Etzler had been trying his hardest to do, the inventor now owned them.

Stollmeyer redirected Etzler in still more practical ways. He insisted that the place to take his ideas was England, not America, which he considered a nation of closed-minded, racist hillbillies. In England, the working class was also destitute but they were comparatively educated and already predisposed toward socialism, as were certain capitalists and even some of the aristocracy. But Etzler, it seems, added his own twist: they'd get British citizens to emigrate to the tropics. (All Etzler's enterprises begin with emigration; utopia always starts with a clean slate.) And now it was as if he had pulled a name from a hat: Trinidad, he decided, jewel of the Caribbean, with its large tracts of exploitable fertile land. And it was only a stone's throw from Venezuela, where another *continent* of unused terrain awaited.

In the summer of 1841, Stollmeyer left for London to ready England for Etzler, like John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus. Stollmeyer began by publishing regular dispatches in the *Northern Star*, a newspaper that served as an organ of Chartism, a widespread working-class movement for political and economic reform. By the following year, Stollmeyer had constructed the first Naval Automaton, and, in anticipation of an Atlantic crossing, he announced a test voyage to the other side of the English Channel. But only a few hundred yards down the Thames, the craft sank; instead of generating horizontal propulsion, the submerged platform pulled it under. Stollmeyer and his followers leaped into the cold water and swam for shore. But rather than become dismayed, Stollmeyer made plans for a still more grandiose project: a floating island.

Meanwhile in the United States, where Etzler was struggling alone to find a following, Henry David Thoreau finally got around to finishing his long book review "Paradise (to be) Regained," which he published in the November 1843 issue of *The United States Magazine, and Democratic Review*. Thoreau spends most of his time paraphrasing Etzler's *Paradise*, and his mad mathematics. Toward the end, though, rather than confronting or condemning the author, he simply dismisses him: "There is absolutely no common sense; it is all common nonsense. ... [Etzler] has more of the practical than usually belongs to so bold a schemer, so resolute a dreamer. Yet his success is in theory, and not in practice, and he feeds our faith rather than contents our understanding."<sup>11</sup>

Thoreau's essay seemed to coincide with Etzler's own dismissal of the United States, and he finally left

to join his friend in London. By now, Stollmeyer had established his own printing press on the Strand. He had gained for Etzler some small notoriety, especially among Chartists and socialist intellectuals, and he'd already begun stirring up the working class. Now Stollmeyer published Etzler's third treatise: *Emigration to the Tropical World: For the Melioration of All Classes of People of All Nations*. He stepped up his promotional schemes, and by the time Etzler had disembarked, his audience was ready.

By October 1844, the two men had established the Tropical Emigration Society, a joint-stock company through which capitalists could invest in the scheme; more importantly, even the poorest members of the working class could begin setting aside their shillings in anticipation of sailing off to Trinidad (each one-pound share bought them their own acre of tropical land, one half to be cultivated with Etzler's Satellite within the first year of arrival, the other half to be used as the society determined). *The Morning Star, or Herald of Progression*, the society's official journal, was established under the editorship of James Elmslie Duncan, a Chartist and poet. The *Star's* directive was straightforward and singular: "If any topic has precedence it will be the plans of that greatest of scientific men—ETZLER!" And his promise, announced in the *Star*, found an eager audience among the destitute factory workers and tradespeople of Britain, who "hitherto the despised of all men, and the befouled of calumny, will speedily make themselves the princes of the earth: for *science* shall be their slave."

Etzler and Stollmeyer split up to cover more ground. They traveled Britain, demonstrating Etzler's models, lecturing, and winning converts to their collective cause—as well as making themselves rich in the process. In Oxfordshire, an engineer was hired in April 1845 to construct a life-sized working Satellite, but Etzler had already gone to Trinidad two months earlier to search for land and his diagrams were difficult to decipher. Eventually, the machine was finished and in September, Stollmeyer announced that a demonstration would take place on a farm christened Satellite Field.

Stands were erected, as were food stalls, beer booths, and a gin palace. A small, steam-driven locomotive—rather than a waterwheel or windmill—stood in as the "prime mover." A trench was dug beneath the locomotive's wheels so that they turned in mid-air, and the Satellite's ropes were attached to them; when the locomotive's wheels began to turn, they would pull alternately on the ropes. But there were complications: the locomotive slipped from its moorings; a rope of the

“connective apparatus” caught in a pulley and frayed. By the end of the long day, with the majority of the three hundred spectators drunk and dangerously crowding the field, all was ready: the wheels of the prime mover were set in motion, the Satellite’s great upper pivot vibrated back and forth, and the spiked wheel churned and ripped up the ground. But only a few minutes later, before the machine had clambered barely eighty yards, it toppled and bent, a slightly curved scar stretching out in the earth behind it. Other than Stollmeyer, no one was convinced that the machine had accomplished anything at all, but the investors in the audience needed to believe, and the “official results” of the test soon conformed to this necessity.

A month later, in October 1845, Stollmeyer took the occasion of the Tropical Emigration Society’s first anniversary to list its accomplishments in the *Star*: there were 2,148 conscripted shares in the hands of 1,557 subscribers—representing 7,000 family members. More significantly, the society now owned a proven Satellite, crated up and ready to accompany the first “pioneers” to Trinidad. By November, subscriptions had doubled to 5,000 shares—representing nearly 17,000 people. The society had branches in thirty-six British cities, eight in London alone.

Etzler had sailed for Trinidad with Thomas Carr and Captain Charles Taylor, two representatives of the company. Their directive was to secure a tract of up to seventy thousand acres of free government land for the society’s first settlement in nearby Venezuela. Etzler stayed in Port of Spain while Carr and Taylor sailed to the Paria peninsula on the nearby Venezuelan coast to search on their own for property. None appeared to be readily available; however, the two men identified one plantation offered for sale for \$2,500. When they returned to Trinidad, Etzler was dismayed at the news and set off on his own to Caracas to lobby government officials for free land. Carr and Taylor also returned to Venezuela, and in desperation finally settled on a small estate on the Venezuelan coast across the Gulf of Paria from Port of Spain: Guinimita. Etzler being unreachable, the two decided to purchase the land, which consisted primarily of swamp, for \$550 (conceivably in US currency). Carr and Taylor then transported supplies and peons to the land to prepare for the pioneers’ arrival.

In November 1845, Stollmeyer set sail for Trinidad to join Etzler. But the Tropical Emigration Society seems to have been the last thing on their minds: they threw themselves into another project, a second joint-stock company they had previously established, and made a killing on, in London: The Trinidad Great Eastern and

South-Western Railway, With a Branch to the Harbour of Port Royal.<sup>12</sup> This was to be Trinidad’s first rail system, and it would take advantage of the “wooden rail,” which Etzler and Stollmeyer had themselves tested and proven to be advantageous over steel rails in every conceivable way (it was the era of the great railway bubble companies). Additionally, while Etzler offered his Satellite for rent or sale to planters in Trinidad, the industrious Stollmeyer took up his old project of building a floating island, now with bamboo poles tied together with tropical vines—the official business of yet another joint-stock company he and Etzler had founded in England, the Venezuelan Transit Company.

A few days before Stollmeyer’s arrival, the society’s first thirty-seven pioneers had in fact landed in Port of Spain, only to find that Etzler was still away. Carr, who had come from Guinimita to meet them, announced that their “humble cottages” presently consisted of several bamboo poles stuck in the mud. He also informed them that Captain Taylor was dead: he had, Carr explained, foolishly drunk four coconuts in an exhausted and agitated state. It was only when Stollmeyer arrived that order was restored among the concerned pioneers. He sent defectors on their way (some returned to England, some went to New Orleans, while others joined the local work force), and the twenty-three men, four women, and ten children that remained were taken by Carr back to Guinimita to continue preparing the estate (another ship carrying many more members was on its way).

Disaster ensued. Some of the pioneers, like Carr, slept in the open air, or beneath a tarpaulin. Others sequestered themselves in Taylor’s former abode: the unventilated hulk of a schooner that had washed ashore. For sustenance, the pioneers survived on what supplies they’d brought with them, or food cooked by the peons—principally wild game, including iguana and agouti. They spent their days slashing the brushwood or attempting to drain the swamp—their only source of drinking water, other than coconuts and rainwater—while being attacked by countless tropical insects. By night, the sand flies devoured them.

In short order, they contracted what they called the “Black Vomit,” or, simply, the “fever.” Their only medicine was a small box of homeopathic pills under Carr’s charge. After only a few weeks, nine had died on the estate, and five others expired shortly after being brought back to Port of Spain. Eventually Sir Henry Macleod, governor of Trinidad, appointed a committee to investigate the tragedy and to shut down Guinimita for good. The committee’s report states: “Never, probably, did any body of European immigrants, since

Europeans first became immigrants to the tropical climates, find themselves in such a state of destitution and unmitigated misery, as these unfortunate beings during their brief location at Guinimita.”

Neither Stollmeyer nor Etzler had ever set foot there.

. . .

My first task was to obtain Etzler’s publications and whatever copies of the *Star* remained. The latter I obtained in microfiche from the British Library and I began to read, searching for the surname “Tucker.”

Eventually I found it. Then I came across it again and again: the Tucker family—William Sanger Tucker, his wife, three daughters, and his fifteen-year-old son—had indeed counted themselves among the first members of the Tropical Emigration Society to sail from London. Furthermore, Tucker and his son had accompanied the group of pioneers who went to Guinimita. Tucker was among the first to succumb, but he did not expire at the settlement: he was returned to Port of Spain in a hammock carried by his son and three others, only to die the following morning. (My mother’s maiden name, Tucker, exists in Trinidad today thanks to that fifteen-year-old boy, who married and had several children, including a son he named William, my great-grandfather.)

I was to discover something else, something far more valuable: a letter, written by Tucker to his friend Thomas Powell, a bookkeeper who served as secretary of the Tropical Emigration Society. It had been fished out of his pocket on his deathbed and sent to London, where it was later published in the *Star*. It contains the only description we have of Guinimita, the settlement where Etzler’s great experiment came to fruition, and collapsed in a matter of weeks. Etzler himself, after denying any culpability, left Trinidad for Pennsylvania, and from that moment he disappears from the pages of history.<sup>13</sup> Stollmeyer likewise disclaimed any responsibility for the tragedy (“every death at Guinimita can be attributed to individual selfishness and carelessness”), but he seems to have had his fill of Etzler; he did not follow him back to the United States. He remained in Trinidad, and his family would become one of the island’s wealthiest, a fortune that started with his “shit bricks.”

Tucker’s letter opens: “Friend Powell—You may recollect requesting me to send a true statement of this place after I had given it careful examination. I have not hastily formed my opinion, as it has taken more time to study and learn the property. Now for it.” He describes Guinimita Bay, and the lay of the land, the compound, and Carr’s gardens. He describes the marine life, the

forest behind the estate, and the animals that inhabit it. He talks about the geological formations and the weather: “The summer in England is more oppressive than here. The fresh breeze from the sea, morning and evening, is delightful. It is rather oppressive from eleven to three o’clock, but not more so than the dog days with you.” He mentions he has caught the “fever,” and tells a story about his helpmate, John, a black man, who has been stricken with the illness. He asks Powell to bring various tools with him when he comes from England, and concludes: “I wish you were here, as I am sure you would be of great help to Mr. Carr. I have given him a description of you and he is anxious to see you. . . . It is time some of you were here to bear part of the responsibility; but please remember the spades, &c. Come then and put your shoulder to the wheel. There is plenty of hard work, but there is also plenty of good living.”

1 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of History*. Quoted in Steven Stoll, *The Great Delusion* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2008), p. 104. Stoll, an economist, is the only author who has published a book-length study of Etzler. Patrick R. Brostowin also wrote an unpublished doctoral dissertation on Etzler at New York University (1969).

2 The emigration of German professionals and intellectuals was illegal, and Etzler had already been jailed after his return to Germany in 1829.

3 Rapp had first founded a commune in Pennsylvania called Harmony before moving to Indiana to establish New Harmony. He later returned to Pennsylvania and founded a third community, Economy.

4 Joel Nydahl, “Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of John Adolphus Etzler* (Delmar, NY: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1977), p. xv.

5 Quoted in Steven Stoll, *The Great Delusion*, p. 39.

6 John Adolphus Etzler, *The Paradise Within the Reach of All Men, Without Labor, By Powers of Nature and Machinery* (Pittsburgh, PA: Etzler and Reinhold, 1833), Part 1, p. 1.

7 *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 76.

8 *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 98.

9 Quoted in Steven Stoll, *The Great Delusion*, p. 40.

10 Patrick R. Brostowin, unpublished dissertation.

11 Henry David Thoreau, “Paradise (to be) Regained,” *The United States Magazine, and Democratic Review*, vol. 13, no. 65 (November 1843), pp. 460, 462.

12 Here Etzler seems to have misread the map of Trinidad, or to have confused it with a map of Jamaica: Port Royal was the latter’s capital city before its name was changed to Kingston.

13 He would also disappear, for the most part, from the collective memory (and unconscious) of Trinidad, for which there seems only one explanation: Etzler’s experiment was so brief, and so horrific, that the participants in Trinidad could only repress it.